



The Jewish Education Center Of Cleveland's Óã-- a newsletter for educators

Vol. VII No. 6

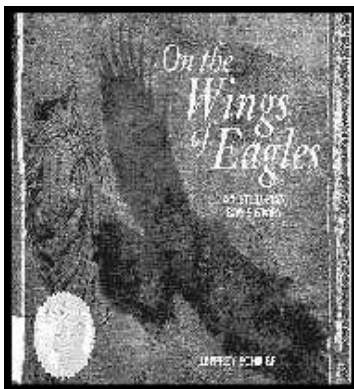
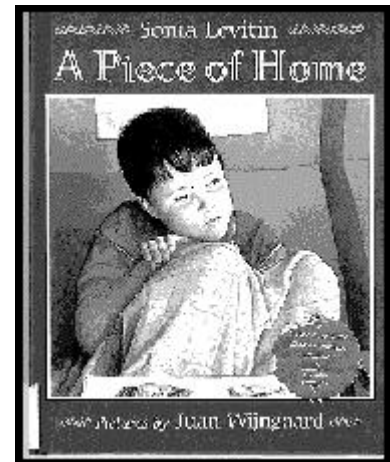
February 22, 2001

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Values of Pesah

A Piece of Home, by Sonia Levitin and illustrated by Juan Wijngaard (CT: Dial Books, 1996).

"Gregor and his family are moving to America. They have waited for a long, long time." So begins this appealing story about the feelings of a child as he leaves everything he has ever known and heads off to a new land. While his parents are eager to reunite with their relatives, and enthusiastic about the opportunities awaiting them, Gregor is anxious and afraid. Choosing from among his possessions, he takes his old blanket with him, using it for security but then feeling baby-ish when he meets his cousin, Elie, a boy of his own age who doesn't seem to need blankets to feel confidently American. The realistic illustrations extend the emotions of the story and readers of Gregor's age, in the primary grades, will be able to empathize with him.



On the Wings of Eagles: An Ethiopian Boy's Story, by Jeffrey Schrier (CT: Millbrook Press, 1998).

A *shamma* (robe) is the page background for this dramatic story that creatively combines Ethiopian art, customs, and history. Told by an Ethiopian boy to his friends as they sit around a campfire, the story is of the Beta Israel, who trace their Jewish descent from the Queen of Sheba and Menelik, her son with King Solomon. Persecuted for being "strangers" in the land of their birth, the situation grew even worse for them in the 1980's. In 1991 the boy's family had almost lost hope of escaping when El Al planes, "gleaming steel eagles," land in Addis Ababa. Thus began Operation Solomon, which carried 14,500 of the Beta Israel to Israel in less than 24 hours. A stirring artistic and literary experience for children in grades 3 – 6.

Escape from Egypt, by Sonia Levitin, (CO: Little Brown and Co, 1994).

Middle school students empathize with the experience of the Biblical exodus from Egypt in this gripping novel. Levitin explores the life of a Jewish slave living in Egypt, his attraction to a wealthy Egyptian girl, the controversy over whether to believe and follow the new leader, Moses, and the people's experiences in the desert. The reader feels the Israelites' desperation when there is no food or when Moses disappears on the mountain and the golden calf is created. The book features adventure, romance, and all the other qualities to make it a hit with adolescents.

-Reviewed by Linda R. Silver, JECC Librarian

On the JECC website (www.jecc.org):

The Curriculum Department has posted two mini-units on the JECC website for downloading and use by teachers. One is for the primary grades. It helps children see how *çñô* (*Pesah*) encourages us to relive the past, connects us to Jews worldwide in the present, and engages parents in teaching Jewish values to their children. The other is for high school students. This unit looks at *çñô* (*Pesah*) as a master story of the Jewish people, one that offers a lens into our beliefs and values. Each unit lasts approximately one month and has been created using the Understanding by Design (UbD) model of curriculum development.

Pesah Web Sites

Rabbi Leibtag presents a wonderful overview of the meaning behind the *äâôî* (*mitzvah*) to eat *äöî* (*matzah*).
<http://www.tanach.org/shmot/bo/bos1.htm>

The Education Department for the Jewish Agency for Israel has background information and numerous teaching ideas.

<http://www.jajz-ed.org.il/festivals/pesach/index.html>

The creators of **A Different Night: The Family Participation Haggadah** have placed online a selection of creative *Pesah*-related activities that will help students focus on some of the “big ideas” associated with the holiday.

<http://www.jajz-ed.org.il/hartman/activity.html>

Reviewed by Maury Greenberg, Director of Technology Resources



Find the *îî â-éôà* (*Afikoman*)

This activity is an exciting way to help primary age students recall information. Begin the game by hiding the *îî â-éôà* (*Afikoman*) under one of the furniture items, which are secured to the board by magnetic strips. As you ask questions on previously taught *çñô* (*Pesah*) material, the student who has the correct answer, searches for the hidden *îî â-éôà*.

Created by Favi Freund, Teacher Center Assistant.

-For further information please contact Marci Rogozen or Ronna Fox, Teacher Center Co-Directors

Parshat Hashavua: Shemot by Joel Levenson (NY: Melton Research Center for Jewish Education, 1999).

Based on the writings of Chancellor Ismar Schorsch of the Jewish Theological Seminary, this curriculum combines the use of text, role-playing, and video. It is imaginative in its use of selected themes from the text. Suitable for middle and high school.

To the Land I Will Show You: The Story of Moshe by Steven Bayar (Millburn, NJ: Ikkar Publishing, 2000).

A text curriculum on the Biblical and Midrashic passages of the *äüî* (*Moshe*) stories in the book of Exodus. Lessons begin with the text, followed by questions and an accompanying *ùðâî* (*midrash*). There is a section entitled “Jeopardy” where texts are presented from Rabbinic to modern times. An accompanying video is available. For middle and high school students.

-Reviewed by Bonnie Shapiro, Ratner Media and Technology Center Associate