

# IN THE MONTH OF KISLEV

## In the Month of Kislev

by Nina Jaffe, illustrated by Louise August (Viking)

Themes: Hanukkah, Greed

Grade Level: K-3

Running Time: 11 minutes, iconographic

### Summary

This is the story of a Polish community preparing for the celebration of Hanukkah. One day, the children of a poor family stop under the window of a wealthy family in town, and thoroughly enjoy the aroma of potato pancakes cooking in the kitchen.

The children do this each day, until the owner of the house discovers them under his window. Angrily, the owner brings the children and their parents to the local Rabbi and insists on being paid by the family for the enjoyment the children have been getting from smelling the potato pancakes.

The story ends with a wise and creative solution to the problem offered by the Rabbi.

### Objectives

- Children will learn about Hanukkah.
- Children will explore concepts such as sharing, kindness and generosity.
- Children will investigate the meaning of family life.

### Before Viewing Activities

Share the book In The Month of Kislev with chil-

dren. Discuss new words like menorah and latkes with children. Then ask:

- What kinds of holidays do you celebrate at home?
- What is (would be) your favorite part of the Hanukkah celebration?
- What other solutions might the Rabbi have suggested for the problem between the families of Mendel and Feivel?

Have children in the group take turns describing their own winter holiday celebrations. Encourage children to bring objects from home which are symbolic of their holidays to school and share them with the group.

Explain that holidays are a time when our senses come alive. See if children can describe the different objects, foods, experiences that appeal to their senses of taste, touch, sight, and sound during their favorite holidays.

### After Viewing Activities

Use the following recipe to cook up a batch of potato pancakes for children to enjoy:

#### Potato Pancakes

#### Ingredients:

- 4 pounds potatoes
- 2 eggs
- 2/3 cup chopped onion
- 6 tablespoons flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons of salt

1/2 cup butter/margarine (makes about 16 latkes)

1. Wash and pare the potatoes. Shred the potatoes to make about eight cups. Drain.
2. Beat eggs until thick. Add potatoes, onion, flour, and salt.
3. Melt butter in large skillet. Form potato mixture into patties. Place patties in skillet. Cook patties on each side, about five minutes for each batch of patties.

Talk with children about the attitudes of Feivel and his family, and how their feelings changed at the end of the story. Ask children to think about times when they may have been treated unkindly, or experienced the anger of someone. Encourage children to talk about how this felt, and then to consider what people can do to show greater kindness toward one another. Discuss the music in the movie and how it "flavored" the viewing experience.

Other videos and films about Hanukkah and other holidays available from Weston Woods include:

CHICKEN SOUP WITH RICE by Maurice Sendak

THE CLOWN OF GOD by Tomie de Paola

MAX'S CHOCOLATE CHICKEN by Rosemary Wells

MAX'S CHRISTMAS by Rosemary Wells

MORRIS'S DISAPPEARING BAG by Rosemary Wells

ZLATEH THE GOAT by Isaac Bashevis Singer, illustrated by Maurice Sendak

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# THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

## THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Book by Clement Clark Moore, © 1997

Theme: Christmas

Grade Level: Pre-K - 2

Running Time: 7:00

## SUMMARY

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS is Clement Clark Moore's well known story in verse of the magic of seeing Santa at work on Christmas Eve.

## OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about Christmas traditions.
- Children will enjoy a story written in verse.

## BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about the Christmas holiday. Encourage those who celebrate the holiday to describe some of their holiday traditions. Then ask:

- What is your favorite part of the Christmas holiday? Why?
- When you think of Santa Clause, how do you imagine him?

Share the book *The Night Before Christmas* with children. Then ask:

- What magical things did Santa do that real people could never do?

## AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Have children talk about the feelings of the different characters in the story.

Ask:

- How do you think the children felt just before they went to sleep?
- How do you think Santa felt about delivering presents on Christmas Eve?
- How do you think the reindeer felt when they finally finished delivering presents?
- Play a game of "What's In The Stocking?" Cut out a Christmas stocking shape from red construction paper for each child in the group. Tell children to think about things they might want to put in the stocking to help make the world a better place. You might suggest a soft teddy, so that everyone would have something to hug; a tree, so that the world would be filled with beauty; food, so that no one would ever go hungry. When children have finished filling their stockings, arrange them on a classroom wall under the title "Peace On Earth."
- Talk about the rhythm and rhyme in the story. Then give children an opportunity to create their own story in rhyme. Offer a beginning sentence, such as: "The winter morning was chilly and cold....." Have a child in the class offer the next rhyming line. Print the story on

the board as it unfolds. Continue until each child in the class has had an opportunity to contribute to the story. Later, print the story and display it on a classroom wall. Have children draw illustrations to accompany the story and display them along with the story.

. Encourage children to share some of their Christmas traditions with everyone in the group. They might bring in a Christmas stocking that is hung on their mantle each year, show photos of Christmas celebrations held in their homes, have a parent come in to mix up a simple holiday treat. Also, encourage children who do not celebrate Christmas to tell about a holiday that is special to them.

OTHER VIDEOS AND FILMS ABOUT CHRISTMAS AVAILABLE FROM WESTON WOODS INCLUDE:

- THE CLOWN OF GOD by Tomie dePaola
- THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY by Katherine Davis and Henry Onorati & illus. by Harry Simeone and Ezra Jack Keats
- MAX'S CHRISTMAS by Rosemary Wells
- MORRIS'S DISAPPEARING BAG by Rosemary Wells
- THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS by Robert Broomfield

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# SEVEN CANDLES FOR KWANZAA

## SEVEN CANDLES FOR KWANZAA

By Andrea Davis Pinkney

Themes: African American Culture/Holidays

Grade Level: K-3

Running Time: 12 minutes

### SUMMARY

Kwanzaa is a seven day festival during which time millions of families of African American descent rejoice in their ancestral values. This book follows the sequence of Kwanzaa week, showing how one family celebrates their faith and unity.

### OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about African American culture and traditions.
- Children will learn about the celebration of Kwanzaa.

### BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about the different ways they celebrate winter holidays with their families. Encourage children to share symbols of these holiday celebrations (Menorahs, wreaths, tree ornaments, candles, etc.) with their classmates. Then ask:

- What special things do you do to celebrate the holiday?

Share the book SEVEN CANDLES FOR KWAN-

ZAA with children. Then ask:

- What does the holiday Kwanzaa celebrate?
- What do the candles in the kinara represent?
- How is Kwanzaa similar to, and different from, the holidays you celebrate with your family?

### AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about the ways the family members worked together to celebrate Kwanzaa. Ask:

- How do you think the family members felt during this holiday?
- If you were one of the family members, what would you like to do to help?

Have a Kwanzaa feast in the classroom. Gather up recipes for traditional African foods, including collard greens and roasted yams. Let children work together, under adult supervision, to make some of these recipes. Invite other classes to come in and enjoy the Kwanzaa feast. Supply strips of colored construction paper and glue that children can use to weave their own mkeka or placemats that can be used during the feast. If possible, find colorful shawls, beads, and head pieces children can use to dress in traditional garb for the feast.

Invite someone who celebrates Kwanzaa to come to your classroom and describe the Kwanzaa celebrations with children. Ask the person to bring the

kinara and candles used in the celebration as well as any other symbols of the holiday that will help give children an "inside look." Encourage children to ask questions.

Talk with children about the kinds of gifts they might make for one another as Kwanzaa presents. Emphasize the fact that during Kwanzaa, the gifts that are exchanged are homemade. Later, supply art materials children can use to make simple gifts for one another. As children exchange gifts, have them discuss the reasons why their gifts are appropriate for their friends.

### Other multicultural videos and films available from Weston Woods include:

HOT HIPPO written by Mwenye Hadithi and illustrated by Adrienne Kennaway

MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS by John Steptoe

A STORY-A STORY by Gail E. Haley  
THE VILLAGE OF ROUND AND SQUARE HOUSES by Ann Grifalcone

WHY MOSQUITOES BUZZ IN PEOPLE'S EARS written by Verna Aardema and illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon

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