

Lesson Plan: Leah's Magic Dreidel

Audience: Jewish Classroom (Grades 1–3)

Learning Goals

- Deepen understanding of dreidel symbols and meanings
- Reflect on the power of wishes and unintended consequences
- Explore the idea of appreciating what you already have

1. Warm-Up (5–7 min)

Prompt: What's something you've wished for... and what happened next?
Highlight unexpected results.

Write a few answers on the board. Highlight outcomes that didn't go as planned.

2. Read-Aloud (15 min)

Pause after each major wish to reflect. Ask students if they'd make the same wish and why.

- After the math wish: "Would you have made that wish?"
- After the dog chaos: "What would *you* do with that many dogs?"
- After the clothing mishap: "Why did that wish go wrong?"
- At the end: "Why did Leah stop and think before her final wish?"

3. Mini-Lesson: Dreidel Symbols (5 min)

Review meanings of ψ , η , γ , λ and what kind of wish might go with each. Draw a dreidel on the board and review the Hebrew letters:

- λ (Gimmel) – "You get everything"
- γ (Nun) – "You get nothing"
- η (Hay) – "You get half"
- ψ (Shin) – "You give one away"

Ask students:

"What kind of wish might go with each letter?"

4. Activity: Dreidel Wish Spinner (15 min)

Distribute blank dreidel templates. Students decorate their dreidel and write:

- One wish
- What they *think* would happen
- What might go *wrong* if the wish came true

5. Wrap-Up Discussion (5–8 min)

- “Why do you think Leah chose to undo her wishes?”
- “Is it better to wish for something magical, or make things better in real life?”
- The first time Leah wished, she spun first, and then made her wish.

Look back at the book and highlight that things started to go wrong when she *wished first and then spun*. Things only get back under control when she remembers, at the end of the book, to spin first and then wish. What do you think she learned along the way?