

Lesson Plan: Leah's Magic Dreidel

Audience: Public School / Interfaith Classroom (Grades 1–3)

 Learning Goals

- Introduce Hanukkah as a cultural celebration
- Reflect on wish-making and unintended consequences
- Promote empathy and imagination

1. Introduction (5 min)

Explain Hanukkah simply and introduce dreidels as part of a game with symbols that mean 'everything', 'nothing', etc.

"Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday that celebrates light, hope, and standing up for what's right. During Hanukkah, families light candles and sometimes play a spinning top game called *dreidel*. Each side has a Hebrew letter and a meaning—like a mini game of chance."

2. Read-Aloud (15 min)

Pause to ask for predictions and reactions after each wish.

- "What do you think she'll wish for next?"
- "Do you think she'll get what she wants?"
- "What would YOU wish for if the dreidel worked for you?"

3. Guided Discussion (5–7 min)

Talk about wishes gone wrong and introduce simple meanings for dreidel symbols in English.

- “Have you ever wanted something, but it didn’t turn out the way you hoped?”
- “What makes a ‘good’ wish?”

Introduce simple dreidel meanings in English:

- Gimmel = all
- Nun = nothing
- Hay = half
- Shin = give one away

4. Activity: My Magic Dreidel Wish (15 min)

Students draw a dreidel, write a wish, and imagine what happens next—good and bad!

Use a worksheet or drawing page:

- Draw your dreidel
- Write a wish
- Then write or draw what happens when the wish comes true—both the good and the unexpected!

5. Closing Thought (5 min)

Sometimes the best magic is already in our lives. Ask: What’s something you already have that feels special?