

The Pardes Center for Jewish Educators presents

# An Interactive SEDER EXPERIENCE

Sponsored by Paz and Rick Goldberg

in honor of the scholarship and teaching of Rabbi Alex Israel

Expanded  
Edition



Pesach is known as the time of 'our freedom' - *z'man heruteinu*. It is the holiday of leaving the bonds of Egyptian slavery to become a free nation following the Divine Will. However, this year, this message comes at a time when, for many, our physical freedoms have been limited, our emotional energy depleted, and our spiritual vigor challenged.

Seder night throughout the generations, no matter what the situation, was the time where Jews came together, as family, friends, and guests to retell, relive, and re-enact the eternal freedom given to us. No matter the circumstances, when we focus on our Jewish freedom story - we too become free. Even if we feel like slaves to our home (or in our home), to our children, technology, social media, our work, or Covid-19 - on Pesach night we *are* free!

To this end, the Pardes Center for Jewish Educators is proud to present this expanded edition of **An Interactive Seder Experience**. Some activities will help spur conversation about resilience and living through difficult times, as we are now, such as "Our Our Own Four Questions" on p.12, "Setting Your Teeth on Edge" on p.17, and "*Dayeinu*" on p. 32. Others can help you escape from the past few weeks, and have a freeing seder experience (see "Seder Scrabble" on p. 2 and "Step into my Sandals" on p. 28). All will bring your seder table alive. Use one, some, or all of them!

Wishing you a *chag bari, kasher v'sameach!*

**NEW**

# Seder Scrabble

 10+m 5+ yrs

**Contributor:** Ilan Weismark, Pardes Day School Educators Program '11-'13

**Portion of the haggadah:** Throughout the seder

**Advanced prep time:** 5–10 minutes to cut out the letter tiles, if using

**Materials needed:** Scrabble or Bananagram letter tiles (alternatively, you can cut out the letter tiles following this activity); envelopes/bags to hold the letter tiles

**Quick activity overview:** Seder participants raise the stakes by competing to craft the best Passover-related words.

## Instructions for Advanced Preparation:



Cut out letter tiles from p. 4, if using.

## Running the Activity:

1. At the beginning of the seder, everyone at the table should evenly split the letter tiles. If you have more than eight people, consider playing in pairs or groups of three. If there are young people at the table who cannot spell, they can be teamed up with older people who can. Each individual or group should have at least 24 letter tiles.
2. Throughout the seder, participants will be asked to make words that are associated with the different parts of the haggadah. Below are a few different ways to play. The host can decide which is best for their seder.

## Use All the Tiles:

Participants use their tiles to form words that are associated with a specific part of the haggadah (e.g. The Four Children, The Ten Plagues) or for Pesach in general. The goal is to use up all of their tiles to form words related to Pesach. They can either create separate words or interconnect words like in Scrabble/Bananagrams.

## Word Connection:

The winner is the player or team that can form the best word or words that associate with each part of the seder. The host of the seder is the judge. For example: During *Kadesh* (the first step of the seder where we make kiddush on the wine), participants could make words such as juice, grape, red, wine, sing, pour, vine, orchard, drink, bless, etc.

## Themes:

Choose a specific theme on which participants must base their words.

Theme examples: Israel, freedom, civil rights, Pesach foods, Pesach traditions, etc.

## Notes:

- If you do this activity just once on seder night, “Use All the Tiles” is the best choice as it pushes participants to think deeply and use all their letters in connection with the holiday and its themes.
- Seder Scrabble can be played at many different levels. If you have a table full of kids, consider playing “Word Connection.”
- If your seder is mainly for adults, play “Use All the Tiles” or “Themes” to allow the game to prompt a deeper discussion of that part of the seder.
- This game can be played once or several times throughout the seder.
- Everyone can keep their tiles throughout the seder or select new tiles each round.
- Print multiple pages of the tiles and allow for kids that need more tactile learning to retell as much of the story as they can using the letters.
- The aim is to have fun - participants may start using creative spelling as they run out of tiles. This can add to the fun!
- Try Hebrew letters for Hebrew speakers!
- If you want to make this a little easier, offer participants the option to trade tiles with one another.

A	A	A	A	A
B	B	B	C	C
D	D	D	E	E
E	E	E	F	F
F	G	G	G	H

H	H	I	I	I
J	J	K	K	L
L	L	M	M	M
N	N	N	O	O
O	O	O	O	P

P	P	Q	Q	R
R	R	R	R	S
S	S	S	S	T
T	T	T	U	U
U	U	U	W	W

W	X	Y	Y	Y
Z	C	H	H	O
U	A	E	I	O
U	S	S	T	T
R	R	A	A	E

# They Tried to Kill Us, We Won, Let's Eat:

## The Nuanced Nature of the Seder's Ritual Eating



**Contributor:** Aviva Lauer Golbert, Director, Pardes Center for Jewish Educators

**Portion of the haggadah:** Eating/discussing the seder's ritual food items

**Advanced prep time:** About 5 minutes to cut out "Table Vote cards" if using; about 1 minute to cut out "Personal Prompts card" if using

**Materials needed:** "Table Vote cards" if using; "Personal Prompts card" if using

**Quick activity overview:** Seder participants, using either freestyle sentence prompts or background information cards, are given the opportunity to think about the varied meanings of the seder's ritual food items, and to share which meaning resonates with them most strongly.

**Background information:** Full article *They Tried to Kill Us, We Won, Let's Eat* on [elmad.pardes.org](http://elmad.pardes.org)

### Instructions for Advanced Preparation:

 Print and cut out "Table Vote cards," found on pp. 6–8. Alternatively, if using, print and cut out "Personal Prompts card," found on p. 6.

### Running the Activity:

#### Table Vote:

As you go through the seder and reach the turn of each edible ritual item, give its "On the ONE hand..." card to one seder participant to read aloud, and the "On the OTHER hand..." card to another seder participant to read aloud (these cards depict the dual reasoning behind the seder's ritual food items). Give all of the seder participants a minute to decide which card resonates with them the most, then do a hand-raise vote and see which card gets the majority! Ask a volunteer from each voting group to share why they voted as they did. Feel free to let anyone with a third or fourth understanding of the ritual food item state their piece as well.

### Activity Alternatives or Supplements:

#### Personal Prompts:

As you go through the seder and reach the turn of each edible ritual item, hand around the "Personal Prompts card" to two or more seder participants. Allow each participant to share their ideas, and don't be surprised when they each answer in a very different way!



## Personal Prompts card

- For me, this food represents:
- This representation teaches me that:
- What resonates the most for me about this food item is:
- I identify with the people in the exodus narrative through the eating of this food because:



### ביצה | EGG

#### On the ONE hand...

The roasted egg on the seder plate is associated with the korban chagigah, the shared festival offering, brought by each person making the pilgrimage to the Temple. The seder plate egg itself isn't eaten at the seder, but some people eat other hard-boiled eggs during their seder meal. As a trace of the chagigah offering, the seder eggs are meant to make us feel joyful and festive.



### ביצה | EGG

#### On the OTHER hand...

In Jewish tradition, eggs are often seen as a symbol of death and mourning, or of the life cycle (as they are round, they represent the cyclic nature of life). In this case, one might see a suggestion of the rebirth of a nation out of the ruins of slavery in the seder eggs. In that case, eating eggs at the seder should evoke a cautious yet triumphant feeling... a sense that we can and will rise up, even after so many years of subjugation.



### זרוע | ZERUA

#### On the ONE hand...

The zerua – a roasted bone that is only referred to, but not eaten at the seder – represents the paschal lamb eaten for the first time on that night of anticipation and dread: the night of the plague of the firstborn, the night before the Israelites left Egypt. As such, the zerua recalls feelings of expectation and terror, all at the same time.



### זרוע | ZERUA

#### On the OTHER hand...

The haggadah reminds us that "God took us out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm – zerua netuyah – with awesome power, signs and wonders" (Deuteronomy 26:8). The Talmud, in various places, unpacks that metaphor by using the word zerua to mean strength, defense, or protection. Thus, the zerua is a symbol of God as our very own superhero – and therefore meant to evoke feelings of national pride and perhaps, even, of invincibility.





## כרפס | KARPAS

### On the ONE hand...

The karpas vegetable is a symbol of spring (appropriate, since Pesach is known as the "holiday of springtime") – the season of rebirth, when a long-suffered nation awoke to a new day. This makes the eating of karpas a hopeful act.



## כרפס | KARPAS

### On the OTHER hand...

Some see in karpas the Greco-Roman practice of starting a banquet with a course of hors d'oeuvres or finger foods, often dipped in sauces or dressings. On the seder night, we pointedly behave as "b'nei chorin" – free citizens, with the status of nobility. We are no longer slaves, and will act as high-class as we want!



## כרפס | KARPAS

### On the THIRD hand...

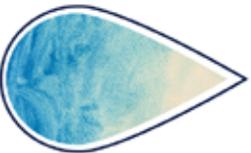
In the Talmud, karpas means parsley or cress or celery leaves – all of which resemble the agudat eizov, the bundle of hyssop, which, in Exodus 12:22, Moses instructs the Israelites to take and use as a sort of paintbrush to apply the blood of the slaughtered paschal lamb to the doorposts and lintels of their homes. This blood sign is to be used as a tip-off to God that these are homes of Israelites, not Egyptians, and thus should be "passed over" during the frightening plague of the firstborn. So eating karpas is meant to evoke the mixed feelings of prospect and desperation that the Israelites must have felt on that last night in Egypt.



## מי מלח | SALT WATER

### On the ONE hand...

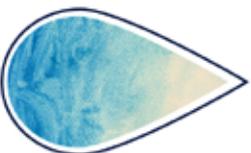
The salt water represents the blood of the paschal lamb offering that was painted on the Israelites' doorposts the night before they exited Egypt. This can be seen as a last chance "Hail Mary" to make sure they were redeemed by God.



## מי מלח | SALT WATER

### On the OTHER hand...

The salt water represents the sweat and tears shed during centuries of slavery – evoking a somber, grave reminiscence of our ancestors' suffering.



## מי מלח | SALT WATER

### On the THIRD hand...

The salt water corresponds to that of the Red Sea which the Israelites crossed, miraculously, in order to escape the clutches of their Egyptian captors. Dipping a vegetable into the salt water can almost evoke the heroic Nachshon, son of Aminadav, dipping his toe into the froth, then his foot, then stepping boldly into the sea – leading the people by example into the great unknown, before God split it into two, allowing them to walk through on dry land. Dipping one's vegetable into the salt water mixture can even be seen as a tipping of one's hat, or raising of one's glass, in a toast to the great Nachshon.





## תורת | CHAROSET

### On the ONE hand...

The charoset, with whatever recipe we use, is always sweet. Perhaps this is meant to evoke a sense of courage and making the best of things in the face of awful persecution – an edible version of the African-American slave songs sung during the workday to make the hours go by more easily. Additionally, the Talmud in Tractate Sotah 11b points out that charoset, made with apples, is also eaten as an homage to the apple trees under which, according to the midrash, the vigorous Israelite women gave birth to their children on their own with only divine help, and to the earth under those trees that swallowed up the children temporarily to hide them from the Egyptians seeking to murder them. Courage and boldness are sweet!



## תורת | CHAROSET

### On the OTHER hand...

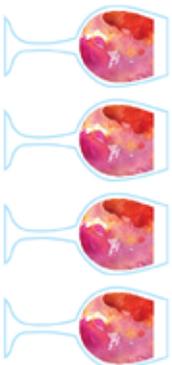
The charoset is made to look like the mortar used by the Israelite slaves to make bricks. In and of itself, that should evoke feelings of sorrow and suffering.



## י"ו | WINE

### On the ONE hand...

Wine represents joy and celebration – it is what Jewish tradition has us use in every situation of sanctification and marking of a special day or festival. We drink (at least!) four glasses of wine at the seder, increasing our sense of joy and levity. (When we recount the names of the ten plagues, the tradition is to remove a drop of wine from our glass for each plague listed, as we cannot allow ourselves full elation when we know that anyone – even an evil enemy – is suffering.)



## י"ו | WINE

### On the OTHER hand...

Wine, red wine, at least, can remind us of blood – both the initial plague of blood, which wreaked havoc on Egypt for several days, and the final plague of the firstborn, where all Egyptian firstborn humans and animals were executed. The wine can also remind us of the terribly distressing midrash in which Pharaoh liked to bathe in the blood of the Israelite baby boys.



## מצה | MATZAH

### On the ONE hand...

Matzah is the "bread of poverty" or the "bread of persecution." It is poor man's food – when one has no time to care for their own needs, one is relegated to preparing the quickest and easiest foods possible. As such, matzah can call to mind feelings of deprivation and even sadness. In some families, when they do yachatz – the symbolic breaking of the matzah in two and putting away the larger piece for later – they retell the story of the family member who, when he received a bit of bread in the concentration camp, would set aside most of the piece, since he never knew if he would get another piece at all tomorrow.



## מצה | MATZAH

### On the OTHER hand...

Matzah is the "bread of redemption." The haggadah has us ask and answer: "Matzah – why do we eat it? To remind ourselves that even before the dough of our ancestors in Egypt had time to rise and become leavened, the King of Kings, The Holy One Blessed be He, revealed Himself and redeemed them." As a symbol of our salvation, matzah is eaten while reclining: on the seder night we are not only free, we are nobility.



# Maggid Truth or Dare

15-25m  
over course of maggid

7+ yrs

**Contributor:** Rachel Friedrichs, Assistant Director, Pardes Center for Jewish Educators and Pardes Day School Educators Program '05-'07

**Portion of the haggadah:** Selected sections throughout *Maggid*

**Advanced prep time:** 5 minutes to preview the prompts and place them in your haggadah; 6 minutes to print and cut out prompts

**Materials needed:** Printed versions of the truth/dare prompts

**Quick activity overview:** Upon the recitation of certain key and pre-selected portions of *Maggid*, the facilitator poses to the seder participants a reflective 'truth' question or a silly 'dare' challenge connected to that part of the haggadah.

## Instructions for Advanced Preparation:



Print and cut out the 'Truth or Dare' prompt cards found on pp. 10-11 and place each one in your haggadah at the corresponding page. (Example: Place the Ten Plagues card in your haggadah at the page where the ten plagues are discussed.)

## Running the Activity:

Throughout the recitation of *Maggid*, there will be selected sections of the text where you will engage in a 'Truth or Dare' break, which you should explain to participants at the start of the *Maggid* portion of the evening. After reading one of these sections of the text (example: The Four Questions) indicate to the seder participants that it is time for another round of 'Truth or Dare.' Ask for a volunteer or call on a suitable participant to participate. Give them the choice of choosing to answer the 'truth' question or take on the 'dare' challenge. Then read them the appropriate question/challenge.

## Activity Alternatives or Supplements:

- Instead of engaging with all eight truth/dare prompts, consider only using the two-three most suitable for your seder participants, but then ask multiple people to respond to each prompt.
- To add a greater element of fun and surprise, instead of placing the truth/dare cards in your own haggadah to indicate the appropriate selections of text, place the cards in the participants' haggadahs. Specifically, place one truth/dare card in one haggadah for each of the selected texts. So, for example, one seder participant would have a card placed between the pages next to the Four Children/Sons, another participant would find a card next to the Ten Plagues, etc. The person who finds the next card in their haggadah either gets to read the 'Truth or Dare' prompt for another participant or gets to respond to it.
- So that no one feels put on the spot, you can add a 'lifeline' option so that participants can ask for help or pass the question/challenge on to someone else all together.

- Instead of Truth OR Dare, you can play Truth AND Dare - having participants both answer the truth question and take on the dare challenge.
- **Of course** feel free to modify, add or subtract any questions/challenges. Make the game your own and experiment with tailoring it to the participants who will be at your seder.

## 'Truth or Dare' prompts:

מעשה ברבי אליעזר

**The Tale of Rabbi Eliezer...**

**TRUTH**

These Rabbis got so engrossed during their seder they lost track of time. What is your favorite *leil haseder* story from years past (or from family lore)? Why was that seder so special?

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**DARE**

Stay up until it is time to say the morning *shema* - just kidding! But really, try to lose track of time like these Rabbis did. Don't look at your watch or ask anyone about the time until the end of *Maggid*.

מה נשתנה

**The Four Questions**

**TRUTH**

Add your own fifth question to this list - what else do you notice is different about this night? What is different from last year's seder? What about the seder and Pesach story do you want to know more about?

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**DARE**

Recite one of the Four Questions by heart - backwards!

עשר מכות

**Ten Plagues**

**TRUTH**

Do you think that the ten plagues were a matter of justice or of retribution? Today, which of these do you think you fight for? How so?

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**DARE**

Act out (or strike a pose to represent) all of the ten plagues in under a minute.

דיינו

**Dayeinu**

**TRUTH**

What are some things in your life for which you are truly grateful? About which you can say, "I have enough"? How does recognizing the gifts in your life make you feel more free?

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**DARE**

Think of your own final stanza to add to the end of the *Dayeinu* - something for which you are truly grateful - and sing it to the tune of *Dayeinu*.

בכל דור ודור  
In Every Generation



**TRUTH**

In what way do you really, actually feel that you personally were a redeemed slave, as this portion of the haggadah charges us to do? In what way have you worked towards becoming more free this year?

**DARE**

You can choose someone who will be your 'taskmaster.' This taskmaster can ask you for help, to scratch his/her back, pour him/her some water, jump up and down five times, run around the table, etc. This dare can go on for the next 3-5 minutes, or until the next part of the seder, or until you wash your hands.

ארבעה בנים  
Four Children/Sons



**TRUTH**

In what ways do you identify with each of the four children/sons archetypes? Do different parts of the seder elicit these different sides of your personality?

**DARE**

One understanding for this part of the haggadah is that it is meant to teach us that everyone has a place at the seder and should be included in the storytelling. Choose four seder participants (NOT ones who represent a wise, wicked, simple and/or unable to ask child) and tell them why you are happy that they are included at your seder.

ברוך שומר הבטחתו  
Blessed is the One Who  
Keeps the Promise



**TRUTH**

We praise God for keeping God's promise - but God promised us that we would have to suffer before being freed and getting a *rechush gadol* (large fortune)! Share an experience that was really hard (where you suffered!) but in the end there was a great benefit. Was the suffering or difficulty really worth it?

**DARE**

Make a fun promise to someone at the seder table that will help them throughout the evening, and make sure to keep it! (Example: Promise the person next to you that you will make sure their cup of wine is always full, or promise the host/s that you will help clear the table after dinner.)

פסח, מצה, ומרור  
Pesach, Matzah & Bitter Herbs



**TRUTH**

Rabban Gamliel discusses the three key symbols of the Pesach seder - the shankbone, the matzah and the bitter herb. What symbolic item would be a meaningful addition to your seder? What is the most important theme of the night to you and how might you represent it at the seder table?

**DARE**

Say Pesach-Matzah-Maror 10, 15, or 20 times fast without mispronouncing the words.



**NEW**

## Our Own Four Questions - For This Night and Future Nights

 10+m 4+ yrs

**Contributor:** Gavriella Kornsgold, Pardes Experiential Educators Program '17-'18

**Portion of the haggadah:** The Four Questions/*Mah Nishtanah*

**Advanced prep time:** 5 minutes to cut out "Question Wheel" - one for each seder participant

**Materials needed:** Two versions of the "Question Wheel" - one geared towards children between the ages of 4 and 10, and one for children and adults 11 and up

**Quick activity overview:** Seder participants are invited to use the Four Questions as a jumping-off point for exploring what questions they might want to ask themselves throughout the year.

### Instructions for Advanced Preparation:



Print and cut out appropriate "Question Wheel" (found on p. 13) for each seder participant; place beside each person's plate.

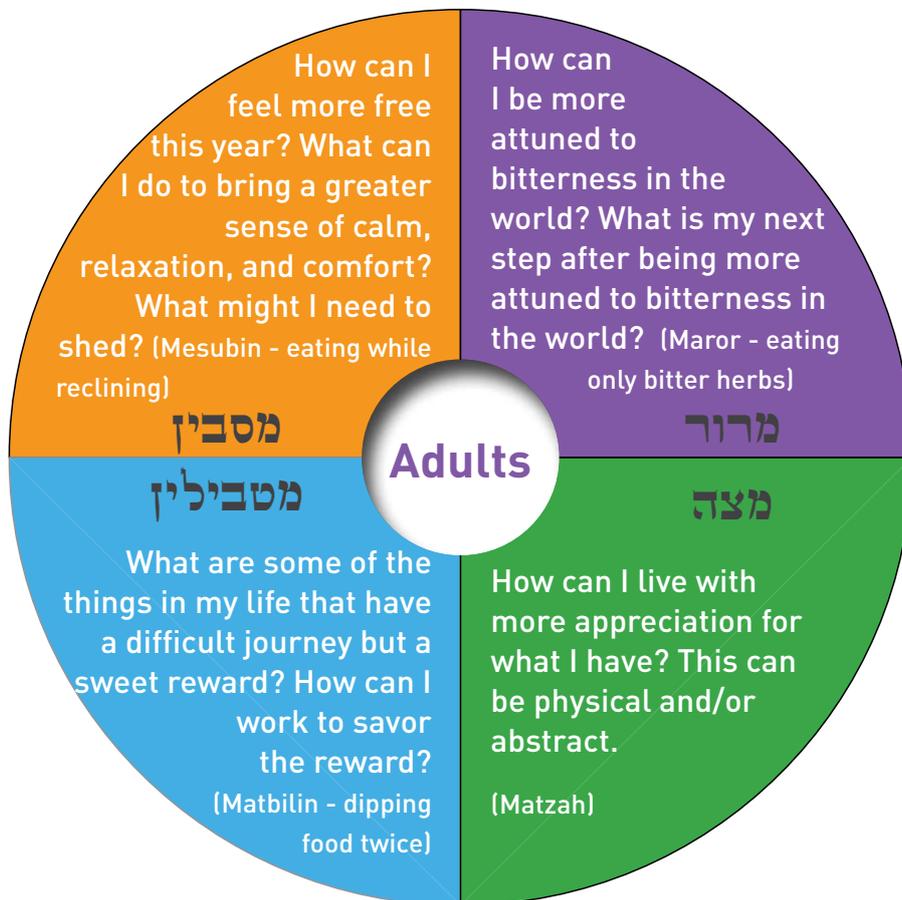
### Running the Activity:

There is beauty in tradition and how it can seep into modern lived experience. The *Ma Nishtanah*, a set of four questions that asks, "How is this night different from all other nights?", is an iconic part of the seder. The central themes of each question embody key elements of the Passover story and can open up our own individual questions for how this *entire* year can be different from all other years. The following activity creates an opportunity to think critically about the themes of the Four Questions and allows us to answer questions for ourselves.

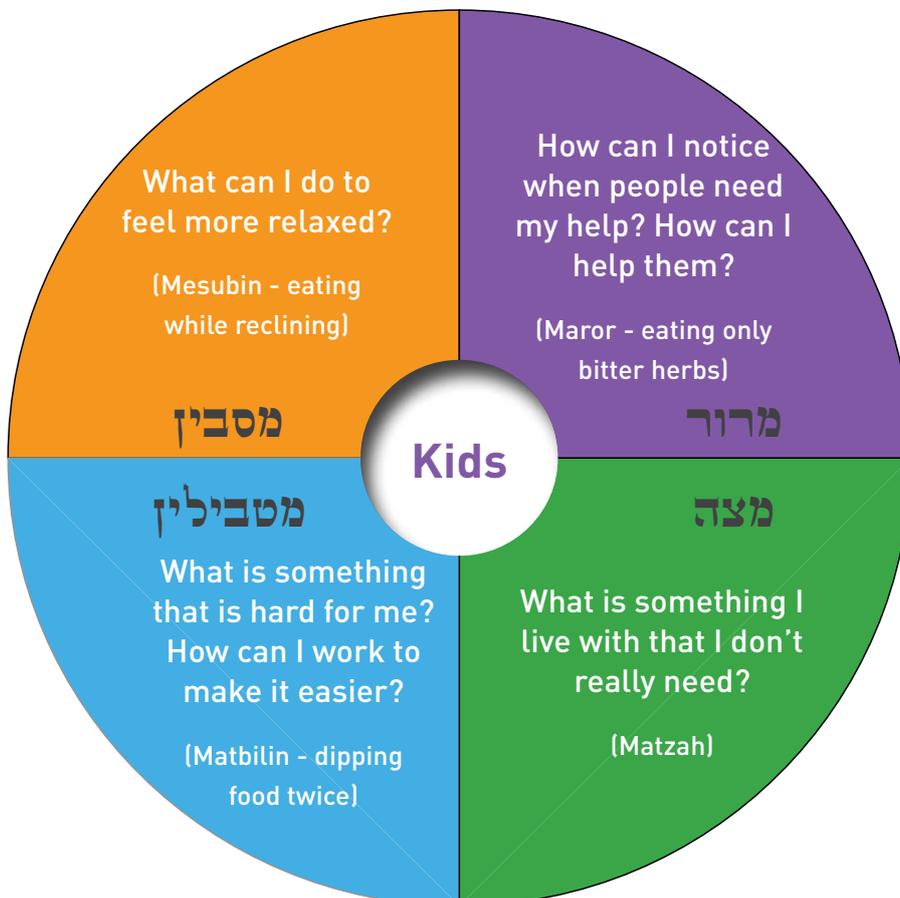
1. Each participant is provided with a "Question Wheel," which is comprised of four compartments, each relating to one of the Four Questions.
2. After reciting the traditional Four Questions, each participant should turn to the person either across from or next to them. This person will be their partner. Each pair can use the "Question Wheel" appropriate to their age. Participants will take time with their partner to respond to the questions provided.

**Note:** Questions can be answered one after another during the point in the seder that features the Four Questions. Alternatively, the seder leader can decide to raise each question at a different point in the night, whenever they choose.

3. These questions can be used for the entire year! Encourage seder participants to take the "Question Wheels" home and place them in a wallet, tape up on a bathroom mirror, or attach to a car dashboard - anywhere that can be a good daily reminder of how to frame this year.



## 4 Questions



# The *Other* Four Questions.....

5–20m

3+ yrs

**Contributor:** Reuven Margrett, Director of Digital Content, Pardes Center for Jewish Educators, and Pardes Day School Educators Program '05–'07

**Portion of the haggadah:** The Four Questions/*Mah Nishtanah*

**Advanced prep time:** 5 minutes to print and cut out slips of paper

**Materials needed:** Printed versions of the slips of paper, pen or pencil, bag or hat

**Quick activity overview:** This activity, based on the famous 20 Questions game, will get all generations engaged in the story and customs of Pesach – especially the custom of asking questions! Whereas in the original game a person would choose any person, place or object and others would ask up to 20 yes/no questions to discover what was chosen, in this version, participants choose a slip of paper on which a Pesach-related clue is written, and you only get to ask four questions to guess what it is.

## Instructions for Advanced Preparation:



Print and cut out the slips of paper found on pp. 15–16. Place them in a bag or hat and have them at the ready during the seder. There are some blank slips so that you can add your own ideas. To include children who can't read in the game, there should also be actual objects they can pull out of the bag or hat (if you include an object, then don't write the same object on a slip of paper).

## Running the Activity:

During the seder (before or after the traditional Four Questions) participants will draw a slip of paper out of the bag or hat in turn. They will not show that slip of paper to anyone else but should say aloud which of the four categories the clue fits into (people, place, thing/concept, extra challenge). The other people around the table will ask up to four questions in order to guess what is on the slip of paper. For example: Could it be found in Egypt? [No] Is it found on the seder plate? [Yes] Is it eaten? [Yes] Is it bitter herbs?! [Yes!] When the round is over move on to the next person around the table.

## Activity Alternatives or Supplements:

- Rather than give a clue to each person, you could ask one person to leave the room. Share the same clue with everyone at the seder. The person then returns and only they ask the questions, and everyone else responds yes/no.
- If only asking four questions is too hard – increase it to six or eight.
- Let children ask more than four questions.
- If you have a larger group don't play this game all at once; instead have a few rounds where three or four people have a turn, then carry on with the seder. (This game may get more silly as the seder progresses through the four cups of wine!)
- Have small prizes for children (or adults) who guess correctly.

Moshe	Pharaoh	Simple son/ child	Wicked son/ child
Eliyahu HaNavi (Elijah the Prophet)	First born child	The son/child who does not know how to ask	Wise son/ child
Seder plate	Zera (roasted bone)	Beitzah (burnt egg)	Maror (bitter herbs)
Charoset	Karpas (vegetable)	Salt water	Matzah
Elijah's cup	Pesach (offering)	10 plagues	Matzah ball soup
Afikomen	Egypt	Red Sea	Pesach cleaning

There are 4 Categories:  People  Places  Things or Concepts  Extra Challenging





**Kid-Friendly Objects**

- Piece of Matzah
- Vegetable (in a bag)
- Small Kiddush cup
- Toy frog
- Wild animal figurine (lion, etc.)
- Small hagadah

**Lavan**



**Rabbi Akiva**



**Rabbi Elazar  
ben Azaryah**



**Angel of  
Death**



**Freedom**



**Chad Gadya  
(one goat)**



**Rabbi  
Eliezer**



NEW

## Setting Your Teeth on Edge?

10-20m

7-99yrs

**Contributor:** R. Jeff Amshalem, Pardes Day School Educators Program '12-'14

**Portion of the haggadah:** The Four Children

**Advanced prep time:** 5 minutes to look over the activity and consider how to adapt it to personal goals and needs of seder guests; 3 minutes to print source sheets

**Materials needed:** "Background Texts" source sheet for each participant

**Quick activity overview:** Seder participants are invited to use the mention of the *Rasha*, or Wicked Child, as an opportunity to consider how any of their own negative Jewish experiences might be spoiling their and their children's ongoing experience, and how to transform those past negative experiences into a redemptive learning experience.

### Instructions for Advanced Preparation:



Print out "Background Texts" (p. 19) for each seder participant.

Seder leader should also pre-read the introduction below, and consider whether to print it out to be read aloud or how it might be paraphrased.

### Background Knowledge:

#### Jeremiah 31:28

*In those days, they shall no longer say, "Parents have eaten sour grapes and their children's teeth are set on edge."*

#### ירמיהו לא:כח

בְּיָמֵים הָהֵם לֹא-יֵאמְרוּ עוֹד, אָבוֹת אָכְלוּ  
בֶּסֶר; וְשָׁנֵי בָּנִים, תִּקְהִינָה.

#### Ezekiel 18:2-3

*What do you mean by quoting this proverb upon the soil of Israel, "Parents eat sour grapes and their children's teeth are set on edge"? As I live—declares the Lord GOD—this proverb shall no longer be current among you in Israel.*

#### יחזקאל יח:ב-ג

מֵה-לָּכֶם אַתֶּם מְשַׁלִּים אֶת-הַמִּשְׁלַל הַזֶּה  
עַל-אֲדַמַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר: אָבוֹת יֵאָכְלוּ  
בֶּסֶר, וְשָׁנֵי הַבָּנִים תִּקְהִינָה.  
חַי-אֲנִי, נְאֻם אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה: אִם-יְהִיֶה לָּכֶם עוֹד  
מִשַׁל הַמִּשְׁלַל הַזֶּה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל.

## Running the Activity:

### 1. Share the following introduction with the seder participants.

Even before recent changes in modern sensibilities around parenting, Jews have been taken aback by the seemingly harsh response of the haggadah to the *Rasha*, or Wicked Child: its advice is to “blunt his teeth” or “set his teeth on edge” and tell him that if he had been in Egypt he would not have been redeemed. Many sensitive and creative interpretations of this passage have been offered, but first of all let’s ask: What does the haggadah even mean when it says “set his teeth on edge”? The language is actually borrowed from an ancient folk saying recorded in the Prophets (Jeremiah 31:28, Ezekiel 18:2–3): “The parents have eaten sour grapes and the children’s teeth have been set on edge.” Having your teeth “set on edge,” then, is that wretched pang in your mouth when you pop what looks like a sweet grape into your mouth and instead you get a sour one. What’s unusual is that, in this case, it happens to you because your parents ate the sour grape. The prophets promise that in the times of the future redemption, this won’t happen anymore - rather, parents will stop passing on their ‘sour grapes’ to their children.

As parents, let’s ask ourselves, “What might be our ‘sour grapes’?” Perhaps the seder is a good time to consider what we can do to turn our ‘sour grapes’ into sweet, and pass those on to our children. The haggadah may be suggesting that the Wicked Children at seder tables across the world (or inside of us!) are acting negatively because their parents have passed on some negative experience/‘sour grapes’ of their own. The haggadah’s response to the *Rasha* asks us to take a reckoning of our own ‘sour grape’ experiences and transform them from something that sets our children’s teeth on edge into something redemptive.

### 2. Now ask the adults at the table:

- Can you think of an experience you had growing up Jewish that may be negatively impacting the way you live today and/or raise your children?
- How might you transform this past experience into an opportunity for learning and growth?
- Name one concrete, actionable step you can take to redeem this experience and bring it into your life in a positive way, for your own sake and for the sake of those around you.

### 3. Then, ask the children at the table:

- The Wicked Child doesn’t want to participate in the seder. Instead s/he is acting out and misbehaving. What do you think s/he is doing? (Pouting? Complaining? Talking? Throwing food?)
- Sometimes we misbehave because we feel like we don’t belong. Maybe the Wicked Child feels like s/he doesn’t belong at the seder. What might make the Wicked Child feel that way?
- Do you ever feel like you don’t belong somewhere? What makes you feel that way? How do you act when you feel like you don’t belong?
- What would make you feel like you belong there?

### 4. Give seder participants the opportunity to share their answers to any of the above questions, either with their neighbor or with the whole table. Encourage them to not only dwell on the negative experience but also consider how to transform that negative experience into a positive, redemptive one.

## Background Texts

### Jeremiah 31:28

*In those days, they shall no longer say, "Parents have eaten sour grapes and their children's teeth are set on edge."*

### ירמיהו לא:כח

בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם לֹא-יֹאמְרוּ עוֹד, אָבוֹת  
אָכְלוּ בֹסֶר; וְשֵׁנֵי בָנִים, תִּקְהֶינָה.

### Ezekiel 18:2-3

*What do you mean by quoting this proverb upon the soil of Israel, "Parents eat sour grapes and their children's teeth are set on edge"? As I live—declares the Lord GOD—this proverb shall no longer be current among you in Israel.*

### יחזקאל יח:ב-ג

מֵה-לָּכֶם אַתֶּם מְשַׁלִּים אֶת-הַמָּשָׁל  
הַזֶּה עַל-אֲדַמַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר:  
אָבוֹת יֹאכְלוּ בֹסֶר, וְשֵׁנֵי הַבָּנִים  
תִּקְהֶינָה.

חִי-אֲנִי, נָא אֲדַנֶּי יְהוָה: אִם-יְהִי  
לָכֶם עוֹד מְשָׁל הַמָּשָׁל הַזֶּה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל.

# Who Are the Four Children?

## “Family Portrait” Picture Matching Game

🕒 10–15m

👥 4+ yrs

**Contributor:** Myra Meskin, Pardes Experiential Educators Program '14-'15

**Portion of the haggadah:** The Four Children

**Advanced prep time:** 5 minutes (printing and cutting)

**Materials needed:** Printed copies of the included picture sets (number of sets depends on number of seder participants - see below), scissors, paper clips or rubber bands

**Quick activity overview:** Participants will engage in a picture-matching game together, discussing and analyzing the characteristics of the four children/sons. Through this activity participants will be able to engage with each other in a visual and fun way, to discover new things about the identities of the four children/sons, as well as about themselves as Jewish learners.

### Instructions for Advanced Preparation:

Print out enough copies of the included pictures so that there will be one complete set of pictures (24 total) for every 3–4 people who will be at the seder. (Example: If you are having 10 seder participants, print three sets of pictures which totals 72 cards.) Cut out each set of pictures so that it creates a set of four cards; we recommend that you keep each set of 24 cards bound together with a paper clip or rubber band.



Print and cut out cards on pp. 22–27.

### Running the Activity:

1. After reading the section of the haggadah on the four children/sons, split the seder participants into small groups of 3–4 each, and feel free to mix generations! Give each group a full set of 24 picture cards. Instruct the groups to go through each set of four pictures (example: the seasons, body parts, colors, etc.), and divide them into four categories - wise, wicked, simple, unable to ask - based on which image they think best represents each of the four children/sons. For example: When looking at the four animals, is the wicked child better represented by the cat or the snake? When looking at the four body parts, is the wise child better represented by the brain or the heart?
2. Members of each group should discuss and challenge one another to explain/“*drash*” their choices. In the end, each group should have a stack of picture cards for each of the four children/sons, made up of one from each type of picture (example: the “wise child” pile might include a picture of a cat, water, green, the number 1, and a brain).
3. Finally, once groups have divided their picture cards into four categories based on the child/son they represent, invite each group to share their choices with everyone at the seder. While they’re showing their groupings, ask them to explain their logic - why did they make that choice? Once each group has shared, you can open the discussion to further questions: What was the decision your group disagreed on the most? What new characteristics did you learn about each child? For example, a group might explain, “We chose the cat as the wise child, which made me realize that sometimes being smart or

knowledgeable about something can also make you seem arrogant and less approachable, like a cat.”

4. Consider engaging all the seder participants in further follow-up reflection questions:

- Is there one picture/aspect of each of the four children/sons that I can identify with?
  - When am I like each of these four children/sons?
  - Which self have I been lately?
  - Which self am I bringing to our seder table this year?
- 



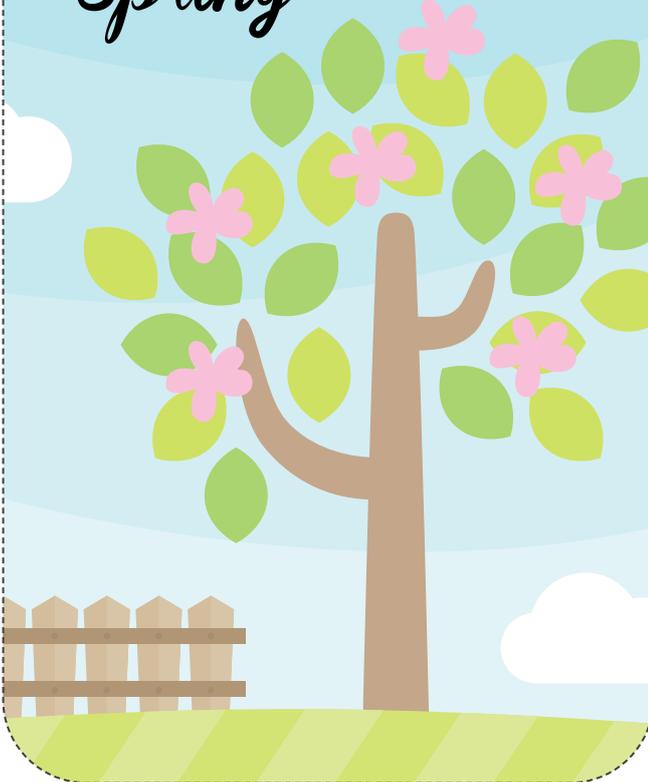
Autumn



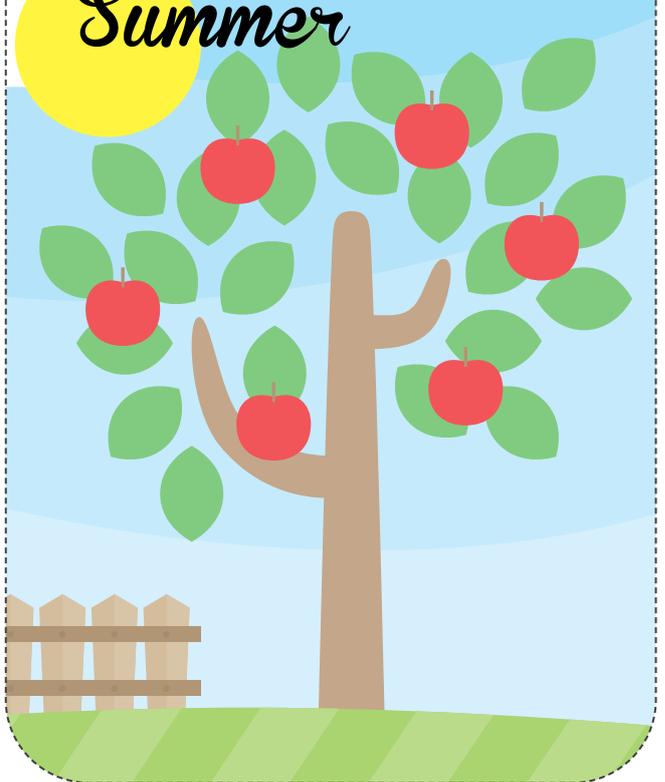
Winter

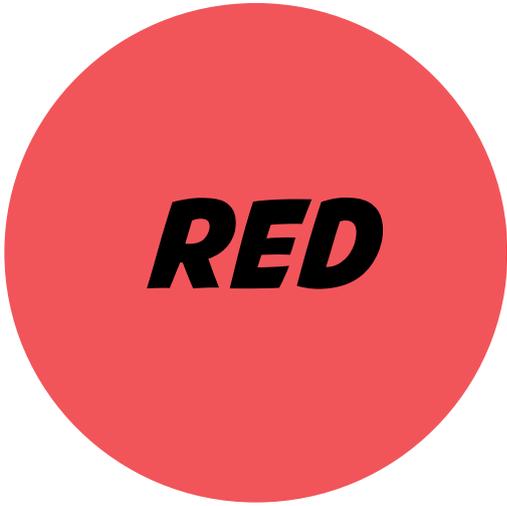


Spring



Summer

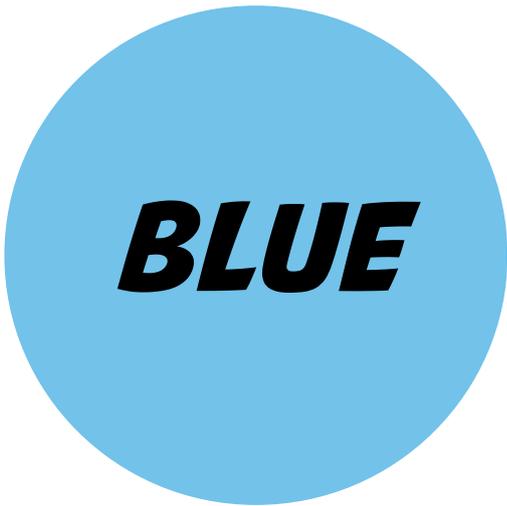




**RED**



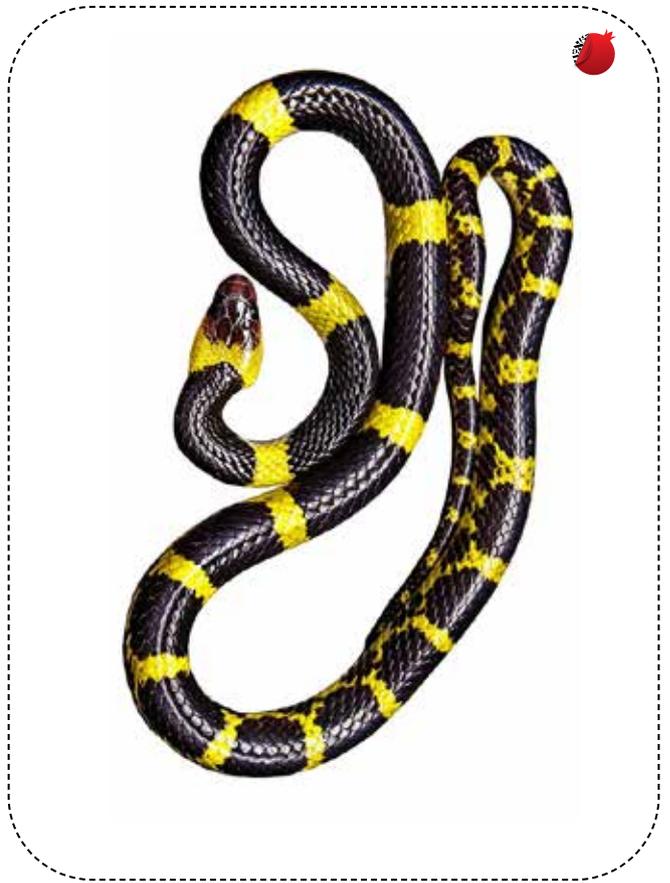
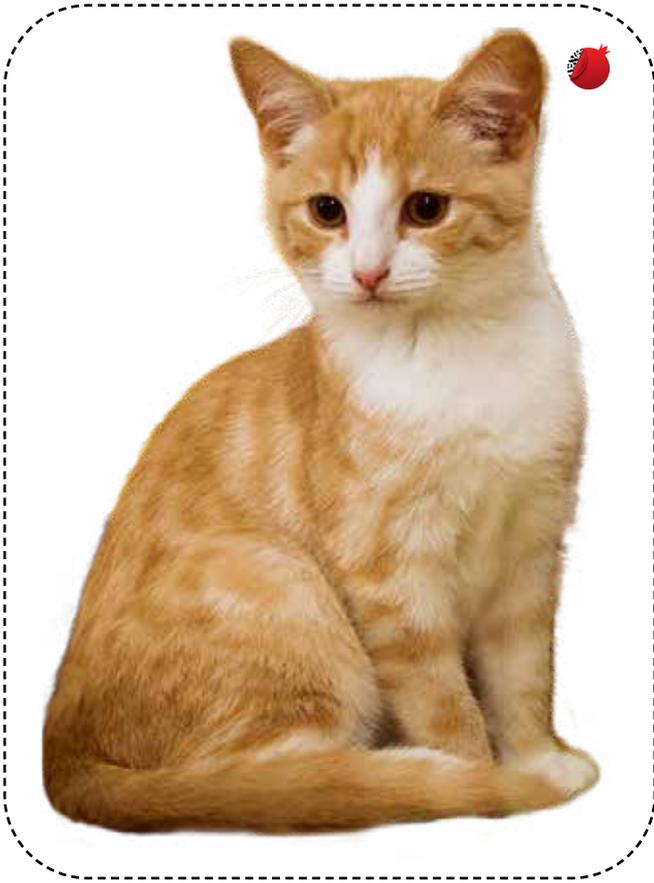
**YELLOW**



**BLUE**



**GREEN**





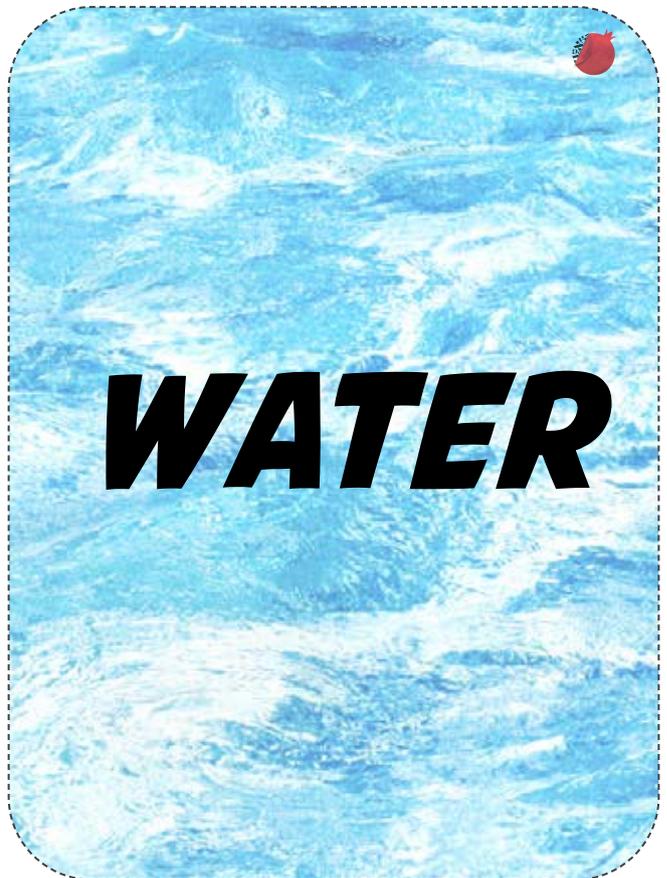
***EARTH***



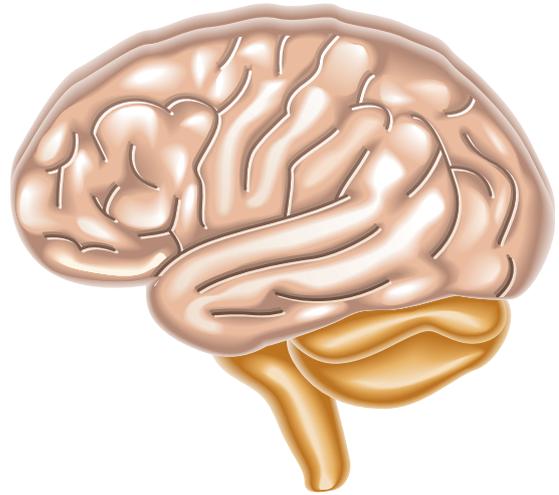
***WIND***



***FIRE***



***WATER***





0



1



2



3



**NEW**

## Step into my Sandals...

 10–15m  5+ yrs

**Contributor:** Hannah Perlis, Pardes Day School Educators Program '11–'13

**Portion of the haggadah:** The Ten Plagues

**Advanced prep time:** 5 minutes to cut out the “Dice Key” sheet

**Materials needed:** Dice, “Dice Key” printouts

**Quick activity overview:** Seder participants are invited to imagine themselves as characters in Egypt during the Ten Plagues.

### Instructions for Advanced Preparation:



Print and cut out the “Dice Key” (found on pp. 29–31 and locate a single dice from a board game.)

### Running the Activity:

As we go through the Pesach seder each year, we imagine ourselves as if we left Egypt. We think about and try to “re-experience” the bitterness of slavery and the joy of the exodus. But what was it like for those in Egypt who experienced the Ten Plagues? Let’s take a closer and deeper look at what it would have been like to endure the *makkot*. Let’s also try to imagine and identify with different perspectives by “stepping into the sandals” of different roles in the exodus narrative.

1. Get ready to play by bringing a single dice to the seder table, along with the “Dice Key” printouts.
2. One at a time, each player takes their turn to roll the dice. They will need to roll the dice three times in a row to set up their scene - once to find out who they are, another time to find out which plague they are experiencing, and a third time to find out what they are going to share (a feeling, a memory, a hope, a fear, etc.). NOTE: Use the “Dice Key” to discover which number rolled matches with which character, plague, and prompt.
3. After rolling three times, the player then imagines themselves in their given situation and completes their prompt by sharing aloud with the rest of the seder participants.
4. Other participants can ask follow-up questions in the form of an interview.
5. Then, the next player takes their turn.
6. You might even choose to have two of the players interact with each other in their designated roles!
7. When all players have had a turn, discuss: what is something new you learned or realized by playing this game that you had never thought about or noticed before?

# Roll 3X to create your scene...



I am a/an.....

 עִבְרִי  
Hebrew/Ivri



 מִצְרִי  
Egyptian/Mitzri



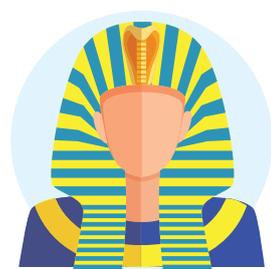
 מֹשֶׁה  
Moshe



 אַהֲרֹן  
Aharon



 פַּרְעֹה  
Pharaoh/Paro

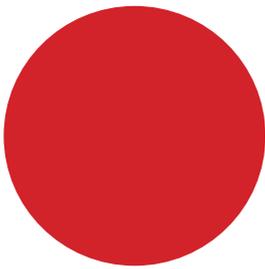


 מִרְיָם  
Miriam



# I am in this plague...


**דָּם**  
**Blood/Dam**




**צְפַרְדֵּי**  
**Frogs/Tzfardea**




**כְּנִים**  
**Lice/Kinim**




**עֲרוֹב**  
**Wild Animals/  
Arov**




**דָּבָר**  
**Cattle Disease/  
Dever**




**שָׁחִין**  
**Boils/Shehin**





I am going to share...

**1** A Feeling

**2** A Thought

**3** An Idea

**4** A Hope

**5** A Fear

**6** A Memory

### Sample

If I rolled a 1 three times in a row, then this would be my role/scene:



I am a...

**Hebrew...**

in the plague of

**Blood/Dam...**

and I am sharing a

**feeling** I have.

**Contributor:** Sefi Kraut, PCJE Faculty

**Portion of the haggadah:** Throughout the seder

**Advanced prep time:** 5 minutes (printing and cutting)

**Materials needed:** Printed out “*Dayeinu Sentences*,” the picture of a mountain, pen (optional)

**Quick activity overview:** Using the text of *Dayeinu* as a trigger, participants consider their own ‘*dayeinu*’ aspirations in life, and clarify how important they are.

## Instructions for Advanced Preparation:



Print and cut out each of the *Dayeinu* sentences (found on p. 33).

You’ll notice that there are three blank sentences so you can add your own ideas either in advance of the seder or at the seder with input of the others around the table. Also print out a picture of a mountain (found on p. 34).

## Running the Activity:

The word *dayeinu* means “it would have been enough for us,” and this refrain is part of a text that is popularly sung around the seder table. The text stresses that “it would have been enough” had God performed just one miracle for *Bnei Yisrael*...but then God outdid Him/Herself by providing another miracle for us and then another! For example, “Had He (God) provided our needs in the desert for forty years, and not fed us the manna, *dayeinu*. Had He fed us the manna, and not given us the Shabbat, *dayeinu*.” And the pattern continues. This text highlights the need to slow down and notice all the wonderful blessings that exist in our life. And it can also give us an opportunity to think about what matters to us most and why. We’re going to have fun doing both of those things by playing the game called *DAYEINU!*

1. To play, rank each sentence by placing it somewhere on the mountain. Place the statement that is MOST important to you at the top of the mountain and the statement that is least important to you at the base of the mountain.
2. You can involve LOTS of people in this activity in a few different ways:
  - Kids can predict how the adults around the table will rank the *Dayeinu* sentences and why.
  - Kids or adults can add their own *Dayeinu* sentences to the mix.
  - Print multiple copies of the *Dayeinu* sentences and have more than one person do the activity. Compare the ‘mountains’ and allow each person to explain why he/she ranked the statements in that particular order. Ask people around the table if they would have ranked the statements differently and why.

If my family is healthy,

*dayeinu.*

If my kids are enthusiastic about their Judaism,

*dayeinu.*

If I can attend the *bnei mitzvah* of my grandkids one day,

*dayeinu.*

If I achieve my professional goals,

*dayeinu.*

If I travel to all the places on my "bucket-list,"

*dayeinu.*

If I read a new book once every six months,

*dayeinu.*

If I learn to do one new thing every year,

*dayeinu.*

If I regularly give charity,

*dayeinu.*

If

*dayeinu.*

If

*dayeinu.*

If

*dayeinu.*

If

*dayeinu.*



# Do you Kiss Your Matzah?!

3-7m

2+ yrs

**Contributor:** Mordechai Rackover, Pardes Day School Educators Program '02-'04

**Portion of the haggadah:** *Motzi Matzah*/Eating the Matzah

**Materials needed:** Matzah, lips

**Quick activity overview:** There is an opportunity to reclaim matzah eating as a transcendent experience rather than one of affliction. Very often we hear complaints about the taste of matzah. But really, eating matzah can be seen as a massive gift.

## Running the Activity:

1. The seder facilitator can read (or paraphrase) the paragraph below to get participants thinking about their matzah a bit differently

*Have you ever noticed what people do when they really love something? They hug and kiss it. Our family and friends are here and we are happy to see them. We hugged and kissed when they arrived. Some people also kiss holy, very special, things. What are some things you have seen kissed? Tzitzit. Tefillin. The Torah. The Mezuzah. Some people kiss holy books when they put them away. Some people kiss bread if they have to put it in the trash! So did you know that some people kiss the matzah!? Matzah is also very precious. It is filled with love.*

2. Ask seder participants to consider the following questions:

- Why do you think the matzah is full of love?
- How might it make us feel to express our love for the matzah?

3. After giving participants time to think and discuss their ideas, here are some thoughts about the fundamental reasons we eat matzah that you could add to the conversation:

- I eat matzah because my parents and grandparents do/did.
- I eat matzah because the Torah says to do so.
- I eat matzah because it reminds me that God took us out of Egypt, because God loves the Jewish people.

4. Remind seder participants that when we kiss the matzah we can close our eyes and focus on something or someone we love. We can use that feeling to consider what great kind and loving things that person has done for us. That is a way to prepare to eat matzah with a full heart. For example, one can think about the great love and kindness that God has and does and shares with our people. When kissing and then taking a bite of the matzah, one can combine memory and emotion into the one simple act. The act of remembering that God made us free because of love can be infused into our eating of the matzah. After everyone has kissed and eaten their matzah, consider asking some reflection questions:

- In what ways did it feel different to eat the matzah with a *kavanah*/focus on love?
- Did the matzah taste different?
- Can we bring this *kavanah*/focus on love to other parts of the seder?

## Master Chef: Charoset Edition

10–15m 2+ yrs

**Contributor:** Stef Jadd Susnow, Pardes Day School Educators Program '07-'09

**Portion of the haggadah:** Before eating maror

**Advanced prep time:** 30 minutes (see instructions below)

**Outside texts used:** Mishna Pesachim 10:3, Talmud Masechet Pesachim 116a

**Materials needed:** Ingredients for charoset (see below), small mixing bowls and spoons

**Quick activity overview:** What is charoset and why does mine taste different than yours? Learn about the origins of charoset and how different communities interpret its recipe. Then make your own!

### Background Knowledge:

The mishna in Masechet Pesachim tells us to place charoset on our seder tables. **But what is charoset?** The gemara in Pesachim 116a gives us some clues. First, the mishna told us that we put charoset on the seder table even though it's not a mitzvah. The gemara then asks: So why do we need it? The answer: As an antidote for the maror (bitter herbs)!

But what if charoset actually is a mitzvah, as R. Elazar b'R. Tzadok in the mishna suggests? What's the mitzvah? R. Levi says: To remind us of the "apple tree" from the verse in Shir HaShirim that alludes to the Israelites leaving Egypt. R. Yohanan says: To remind us of the mortar that the Israelites used in enslavement. Therefore, Abaye tells us that the charoset should be both tart and thick. Tart to remind us of the apple, thick to remind us of the clay. R. Yohanan adds that the spices/seasoning in the charoset are to remind us of the straw, while the charoset reminds us of the clay.

Now let's create the recipe! To be the antidote to maror, maybe charoset should be sweet. We should include apples, but some suggest that "*tapuach*" actually referred to some type of apricot. How do we thicken it? And what seasonings remind us of straw?

Jewish communities from all over the world have different charoset recipes, due to differing traditions and availability of ingredients.

Most **Ashkenazi** charoset recipes are made from chopped walnuts or pecans and apples, spiced with cinnamon and sweet red wine or grape juice. Honey or sugar is sometimes added as a sweetener and binder.

**In Sephardi traditions**, charoset is more like a paste, made from raisins, figs and dates.

**Egyptian** Jews make it from dates, raisins, walnuts, cinnamon, and sweet wine.

**Greek and Turkish** Jews use apples, dates, chopped almonds, and wine. Italian Jews add chestnuts.

**Persian** recipes can include bananas, pears, vinegar, pistachios and pomegranate juice.

Some **Spanish and Portuguese** communities, such as the Jews of Suriname, add apricots and coconut.

**Yemenite** tradition calls for ground or whole sesame seeds to be added to the paste of figs, raisins and dates. The charoset can be spiced with cinnamon, ginger, cardamom, cumin and cayenne pepper. Traditionally, full sprigs of marjoram can be added to resemble the straw.

## Instructions for Advanced Preparation:

Before seder night, prepare as many of the above mentioned ingredients as you want and put them each in their own serving bowl. Feel free to add your own creative ingredients as well. Be aware that some ingredients, such as cardamom and sesame seeds, are considered kitniyot.

## Running the Activity:

Now for the fun! On seder night, before eating the maror, each seder participant (or small group of participants) will be given a small mixing bowl and will create their own unique charoset recipe from the prepared ingredients.

Encourage participants, as they are concocting and mixing, to think about which symbolic meaning of the charoset is most resonant with them. Should it be extra sweet to counteract the maror? Very thick so that it truly has mortar-like consistency? Ask seder participants to get creative: what symbolic value might the crunchy nuts, sharp spices (cayenne pepper!) or fruit juices have?

If your family has a competitive edge, a pre-designated judge can taste all the charoset concoctions and crown a winner – the Master Chef of Charoset!

Everyone then gets to enjoy their own charoset and share with other guests as the seder continues.

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NEW

# The Hillel Sandwiches of our Lives

🕒 10-15m

👥 7+ yrs

**Contributor:** Julia Laibstain, Pardes Experiential Educators Program '18-'19

**Portion of the haggadah:** *Korech*

**Advanced prep time:** 3 minutes to print out the "Life Categories" sheet

**Materials needed:** "Life Categories" print-out for each participant

**Quick activity overview:** In today's crazy world, it isn't always clear when difficult experiences will end and good times will start again. This activity invites participants to think in a more macro fashion about how sometimes it is even the hardest things in our lives that have ultimately yielded something positive.

## Instructions for Advanced Preparation:



Print out "Life Categories" sheet (found on p. 39) for each seder participant.

## Running the Activity:

Before Hillel (who lived during the first century BCE), Jews would fulfill the *mitzvot* of eating matzah, maror, and the paschal sacrifice all separately. But Hillel, the beloved sage, came around and decided that these items could not exist exclusive of one another - because **in life, the bitter and the sweet often come together**. Thus, the Hillel Sandwich is a nuanced and all-encompassing symbol eaten during the seder:

- one piece of the matzah represents freedom and the other our affliction;
- maror represents the slavery and suffering of our ancestors in Egypt;
- charoset (in place of the paschal sacrifice, since we don't have the Temple anymore) represents both the mortar of the storehouses we were forced to build as slaves, as well as the mortar of our Temple, the place where we worshipped God as a free people.

1. Hand out "Life Categories" print-outs to all seder participants.
2. Choose from among the following options to engage with the prompts and then do one of the following options:
  - Consider your chosen prompt and share your reflections with the person sitting next to you.
  - Pair up with someone of a different generation and discuss your thoughts on one or more of the categories.
  - At a smaller seder, consider having all participants share their reflections with the whole table.
  - Create groups of about three people, all of whom have chosen a different category, to discuss their personal reflections.

## School

Describe a time when you felt bitter toward school and you did not have freedom to do what you want. How did that make you feel? How did you cope with this and eventually seek freedom?



## Work

What is an instance in your professional life when you felt "enslaved" by your work, bogged down by your tasks, and how were you finally set free?



## Sports

Describe a time when you felt overwhelming feelings of affliction in the sport you play, when things were not going right. How did you find yourself free from those feelings?



## Relationships

Describe a relationship that made you feel tied down. How did you free yourself from those feelings?



## Places

Is there a place that you love and feel tied to, even when it does not bring you peace and ease? How do you manage that relationship?



## Art

Do you have an art practice that feels like --or is-- an obligation, yet your heartstrings are tied to it too? How do you free yourself from the pressure it puts on you and hold onto the mortar that is your passion?



## Politics

Describe a political climate in which you felt afflicted, or your views were not being represented in your country? Are you free yet? Whether yes or no, what is the mortar that is keeping you grounded to care about these issues?



## Israel

Have you experienced feelings of affliction toward Israel? Are they ones that can be set free? If no, what is the mortar that sustains the connection between you and Israel, even in times of affliction?



## History

Describe a historical event in which you felt bitterness, harshness, or disagreement. How did you find a source of freedom within that? What is the mortar that connects you to this historical event?



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### ELMAD: Online Learning Powered by Pardes

[elmad.pardes.org](http://elmad.pardes.org)

On Elmad, Pardes's online learning platform, you can find additional resources for kids and adults alike, such as:

#### The Interactive Parsha Experience

Complete with the summaries and related questions for the weekly parsha, this guide provides games, activities and other fun things to bring to your family table or couch on Shabbat. This interactive resource is produced by the Pardes Center for Jewish Educators and is appropriate for children of all ages. <https://elmad.pardes.org/topic/parsha/an-interactive-parsha-experience/>



#### The Parsha Discussion

This project, set up by Pardes faculty member Rabbi Alex Israel, is a weekly handout that is designed to stimulate a discussion around the Shabbat table, especially with teenagers, based around the parsha. <https://elmad.pardes.org/topic/parsha/the-parsha-discussion/>



#### The Pardes Shavuot Companion

Shavuot (it's right around the corner!) celebrates the giving of the Torah to the Jewish people and the holiday's Torah reading describes the Divine revelation of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. Our study guide includes nine short articles and three longer guided havruta pieces by our faculty. Like Pardes itself, these teachings allow the Torah to speak in ever new ways. <https://elmad.pardes.org/2017/05/the-pardes-companion-to-shavuot/>



**Pardes gratefully acknowledges the donors who support PCJE, including the AVI CHAI Foundation, the Jim Joseph Foundation, and the Crown Family.**