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THE VERY BEST SUKKAH A STORY FROM UGANDA

ACTIVITY GUIDE



MEET THE AUTHOR

Shoshana Nambi grew up in Mbale, Uganda's Abayudaya Jewish community, learning Hebrew at the nearby synagogue and teaching songs and the Torah portion to young children. In 2019 she and her 12-year-old daughter, Emunah, moved to New York City. Shoshana is now a rabbinical student on her way to becoming the first female rabbi from her community in Uganda.



MEET THE ILLUSTRATOR

Moran Yogev is an illustrator and graphic designer whose family's roots are in Ethiopia, Iraq, and Romania. She graduated with distinction from the Minshar School of Art in Tel Aviv. She lives on Kibbutz Hagoshrim in northern Israel with her husband, Nis, sons Adam and Omer, and their lovely dog, Meny. Moran used linoleum blocks to create the colorful artwork for this book.

LET'S TALK

Let's talk about community:

In the story, when Daudi and Rebecca's sukkah gets destroyed in the storm the whole village works together to help them fix it.

- Have you ever worked with other people to get something done?
- What is your favorite part of working with others?
- What was the most challenging part of working with a group?
- How did you overcome those challenges?
- How do you feel when you finally finished what you worked so hard on as a group?

Let's talk about unkind words:

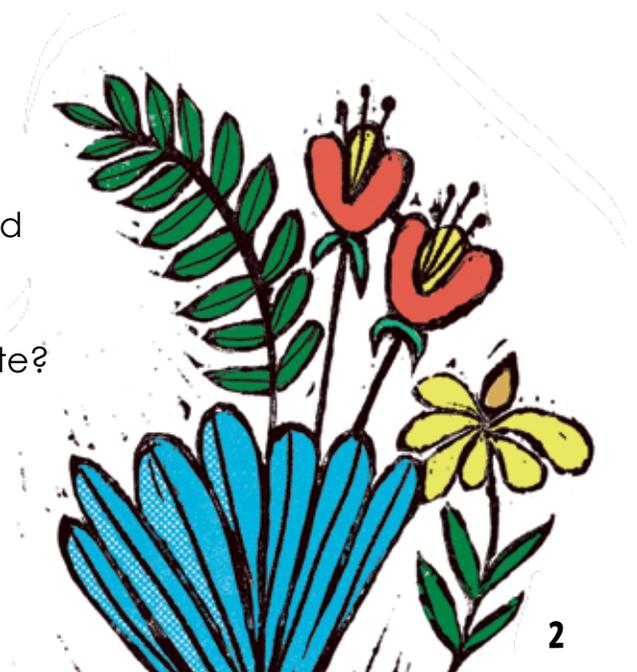
Daudi and Rebecca use fancy decorations in their sukkah. This makes some community members jealous because they cannot afford decorations like this. Some people speak unkindly about Daudi and Rebecca. Later the community feels badly about their unkind words and help Daudi and Rebecca rebuild their sukkah. Rabbis call this, *lashon hara* ("evil tongue" in Hebrew). *Lashon hara* is when you use unkind words or listen to someone else use unkind words.

- Have you ever felt jealous?
- How did this make you feel and what did you do about those feelings?
- Did your jealousy make you want to use unkind words?
- If you hear someone using *lashon hara*, what could you do to help them feel better?

Let's talk about Sukkot traditions:

In the book, the Abayudaya community celebrates the Sukkot holiday by building their own sukkahs, visiting their neighbors' sukkahs, and shaking the lulav and etrog.

- How does your family celebrate Sukkot?
- Can you think of another way to celebrate?
- What is your favorite part of the Sukkot holiday?



TRY THIS



DECORATE YOUR SUKKAH!

In the story, Shoshi and her community decorate their sukkahs. Dina hangs up her students' artwork, Nalongo sews pillows, and Moshe has bowls of fruit out in his sukkah. You can decorate your sukkah as well.

Try making these **paper chains** to decorate your sukkah.

Materials:

Scissors

Paper

Glue or tape

Step 1: Grab a few pieces of your favorite color paper. Have an adult help you cut your paper into strips. You can make it however thick or thin you want.

Step 2: Take one strip of paper and curl around so the two ends meet. Glue one end to the other and hold for a few seconds until it dries. You could even use sticky tape to connect the ends if you like.

Step 3: Poke your next strip through the middle of your first chain link. Curl the ends of the second strip together until they meet and then glue just like before.

Step 4: Keep doing this until you've reached the length of chain that you want. Then once you're all done you can hang it in your own sukkah!

Or make a **ushpizin gallery** to decorate your sukkah.

It is a custom to invite ancient *ushpizin* (pronounced oosh-pee-ZIN), the Aramaic word for *guests*, into your sukkah. Traditionally, these seven ancient guests are the three patriarchs — Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob — along with Moses, Aaron, Joseph and King David. Today, some people include the names of important Jewish women as well. You can draw pictures of these people and make your sukkah into a beautiful art gallery featuring your ancient ancestors—and maybe some modern Jewish heroes as well!

MAP MATH

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

The Abayudaya community is located in the Eastern part of Uganda in Africa. How far away is Uganda from your home?

Directions:

- With the help of an adult, cut out the ruler to the right.
- Take a look at the map on the next page.
- Estimate the location of your hometown and mark that spot on the map.
- Find Uganda on the map.
- Measure the distance between the two. Using the map scale on the lower left, you can use math to figure out how long it would take you to fly to Uganda and visit Shoshi and the Abayudaya community.
- Try doing the math using the formulas below.

Find the decimal equivalent of the measurement by dividing the dividend by the divisor. *For example: 1-1/2 inches = 1.5 inches*

$$\frac{\text{---}}{\text{(DIVIDEND)}} \div \frac{\text{---}}{\text{(DIVISOR)}} = \frac{\text{---}}{\text{(QUOTIENT)}} \text{ inches}$$

Use this measurement and the map's scale (1 inch = 2,000 miles), to find the number of miles from your hometown to Uganda.

For example: 1.5 inches x 2,000 = 3,000 miles

Uganda is $\frac{\text{---}}{\text{(QUOTIENT FROM ABOVE)}} \times 2000 = \frac{\text{---}}{\text{(PRODUCT)}}$ **miles away from my home.**

An airplane can fly 500 miles per hour. How long would it take you to fly to Uganda?

For example, 3,000 miles / 500 miles per hour = 6 hours.

To fly $\frac{\text{---}}{\text{(PRODUCT FROM ABOVE)}} \text{ miles} / \text{at } 500 \text{ miles per hour} = \frac{\text{---}}{\text{(QUOTIENT)}} \text{ hour flight.}$



MAKE A CONNECTION

GET INVOLVED!

Be'chol Lashon (globaljews.org)

Be'chol Lashon (Hebrew for “in every language”) strengthens Jewish identity by raising awareness about the ethnic, racial and cultural diversity of Jewish identity and experience. Be'chol Lashon brings the historic Jewish commitment to civil rights and racial justice forward into the 21st century. Embracing the historical diversity of the Jewish people and, more importantly, the growing diversity of the community today is the most important step toward securing relevancy in an exciting American future.

Be'chol Lashon has established the Abayudaya Microcredit Fund. This fund provides an opportunity for entrepreneurial community members facing poverty to solve their own local problems through sustainable economic projects. The grants help them achieve their goals and improve their lives, providing a bridge between ideas and action for those unable to obtain loans from banks.

Kulanu (kulanu.org)

Kulanu supports isolated, emerging, and returning Jewish communities around the globe.

Kulanu helped establish two schools in the Abayudaya community. They have also helped to create a snack program, which later became a full-fledged school nutrition program, now providing two meals every school day to all students. In 2002, a Kulanu delegation visited Uganda with a Beit Din (religious court) to perform conversions for members of the Abayudaya community who wanted them. Ten years after this historic event, Kulanu and the Abayudaya are still working together to encourage Jewish learning and religion in the community, provide general education to Abayudaya children and youth, and support economic development and women's empowerment through various projects initiated by the Abayudaya leadership.

Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (rac.org)

For more than six decades, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (the RAC) has worked to educate, inspire, and mobilize the Reform Jewish Movement to advocate for social justice.

In the past RAC has helped support the Moses Synagogue in Mbale, Uganda and assisted individual Ugandans in making aliyah in Israel.

MAKE IT!

KALO BREAD

In the story Shoshi and her grandmother make kalo bread for Shabbat. You can try to make this too! In Uganda kalo bread is often eaten with a stew—yum!

Ingredients:

- 1½ cups of cassava flour
- 1 cup of millet flour
- 3 cups of water

Directions:

1. Add 3 cups of water to a saucepan and place on high heat.
2. Mix the cassava flour with the millet flour in a separate bowl.
3. When the water is fully boiling, reduce the heat to medium. Add the mixture of cassava and millet flour to the boiling water bit by bit as you mix. Using a wooden spoon continue to mix to remove any air bubbles that may have formed
4. When the kalo changes color from white to dark brown then it is almost ready. Make sure the kalo is not too soft and not too hard.
5. Kalo will stick to the edges of the saucepan. Use a plastic plate to scrape the edges and sides of the saucepan. Dip your plate in clean cold water and mold the kalo into a ball.
6. Keep the kalo warm by wrapping it in foil.

Be sure to follow this recipe with the help of an adult.

