



Passover themed activities

Mystery Objects

A mystery object can be something you see/hear/find with the class, something a student observes at home, or something the teacher found. If the mystery is a living thing which would suffer from being handled/brought indoors, you can take a photo of it!

- a. Introduce the mystery object. Give some background such as where it was found, what time of day, etc.
 - b. Encourage the children to make observations ONLY (no predictions of what it is). If possible, pass the item around so they can feel it and explore with their senses.
 - c. Next, allow the children to ask questions. Open ended ones work best (and not "is it a?") You can model some questions of your own.
 - d. Be sure to write down the children's questions and observations!
 - e. Talk with the children about what you can do to learn more. Can you look for books? Ask someone else? Can you take one of your questions and try to answer it - such as, What is inside it? or, Does it float?
 - f. Whether or not you get an answer isn't as important as encouraging observations, asking questions, and experimenting to learn more.
- Passover Connections:** Moses and the burning bush

Two ways to build

Talk to the children about what it means to be a slave. Some of the ideas that may come out of the discussion are not being able to make your own choices, always being told what to do, not being able to speak up or express your needs, having to work hard all the time with no benefit to yourself, doing a job that's beyond your abilities, never getting to do what you want to do, and being treated badly. Tell the children you're going to try an activity that will explore this concept.

- a) Using unit blocks/Unifix cubes, wooden blocks or any other construction item, show the class a structure you have made. Tell them they must make one exactly like yours, then set a visual timer. The structure must be made before the timer goes off or there will be consequences.
- b) After the timer goes over, pretend to inspect their work. Then explain that now we're going to try building again, but this time, they can use their materials to build whatever they want with no time limit.
- c) When everyone has had enough time, gather together and ask them the following questions:
 - a. How did it feel to have such strict directions? Was it fun?
 - b. What was it like when you had the freedom to do what you wanted?
 - c. Did you still feel limited during the second activity, because of the fear/anxiety from the first one?
 - d. How do you think it was for the Jews when they had first been freed after such a long period of slavery?
 - e. **Passover Connection: Freedom from a lifetime of slavery in Egypt**



The impossible task

Slaves were often required to do jobs well beyond their abilities. This activity lets children try themselves against an 'impossible' task.

- a) Fill up a wagon or sled with as many heavy items as you can (wooden blocks might work well for this).
- b) Try to make the wagon so heavy that even an adult must work hard to pull it.
- c) Let the children try to move it, one at a time.
- d) Now invite all the children to work together. Can they move the wagon? How did it feel to work as part of a team?
- e) Talk about how working together and helping each other makes everyone stronger! Being part of a community means having people to help get through difficult jobs.
- f) **Passover Connection:** Slavery, the importance of community

Who dirtied the water?

This activity focuses on how important water is to all living things. When a water source becomes polluted, such as with the plague of blood, there is a huge negative impact on the surrounding area. In this activity, we'll learn just how difficult it is to clean a water source after it's been polluted.

- a) Start with a clean container of water. Allow each child to add a pollutant such as vegetable oil, shredded paper, black pepper, food coloring ect...
 1. For older children, you can tie this activity in to human actions and pollution. Use the following representations:
 - i. Table salt- road salt
 - ii. Dirt- excess dirt washing away from erosion
 - iii. Black pepper- car exhaust/pollution
 - iv. Corn oil- motor oil
 - v. Shredded paper- litter
- b) Make note of how dirty the water looks now. Would anyone want to drink it?
- c) Using a 1- or 2-liter soda bottle, cut off the top to make a funnel and puncture the cap with a sharp object to make a small hole. Invert the funnel and place it into the bottom half.
- d) In small groups or all together use a variety of materials to try and fill the funnel so that it will filter the water. Good ideas included rocks (from tiny to medium size), gravel, sand, coffee filters, sieve, wool, cotton balls, cheese cloth, charcoal/ash, rags ect...
- e) Once the filter is ready, try pouring the polluted water into the funnel. Notice what collects in the bottom. How has it changed? Would you want to drink it now?
- f) **Passover Connection:** The blood plague, scarcity of drinkable water in the desert



Dam it up

The act of parting the Sea of Reeds was a show of G-d's strength and the power of nature. Let's explore the challenge of parting the waters.

- a) Either as a group, or individually, explain that we will be making a dam to stop the flow of water. This can be done in small or large plastic tubs, outside in a puddle, or by making a stream outdoors using water poured from a pitcher or a hose.
- b) Supply a wide range of both natural and non-natural materials. Examples include sticks, leaves, rocks, mud, clay, playdough, blocks, yarn, popsicle sticks, whatever you think might engage the children.
- c) When everyone's dam is ready, pour water on one side of the dam and observe if it leaks over to the other side. If the children want, let them try to 'repair' the leaks.
- d) **Passover Connection:** Parting the Red Sea, G-d's power