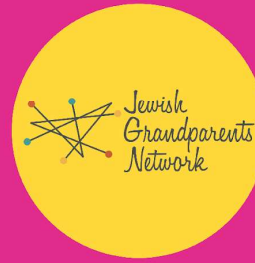




100 JEWISH CHILDREN'S BOOKS

For the Family Book Shelf

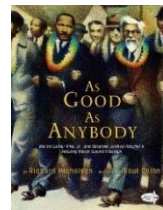


The Association of Jewish Libraries, with the support of the Jewish Grandparents Network, is proud to present a list of 100 classic and soon-to-be classic picture and middle grade books recommended for the bookshelves of Jewish children. The books on this list create a portrait of the Jewish world in real and substantive ways. Whether your absolute favorite Jewish children's book is here or not, you are certain to discover a new favorite or two in this comprehensive list.

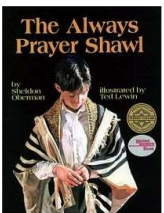
PICTURE BOOKS (Generally 4-8 Year Olds)



All-of-a-Kind Family Hanukkah by Emily Jenkins. Illustrated by Paul Zelinsky. In this Hanukkah story based on the classic children's book *All-of-a-Kind Family*, poetic language and exuberant illustrations perfectly capture the emotions of each of the iconic sisters as they prepare latkes and celebrate the holiday in New York's Lower East Side in 1912. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Schwartz & Wade/Random House Children's Books, 2018. Ages 3-7.** See also: *All of a Kind Family series* by Sydney Taylor.



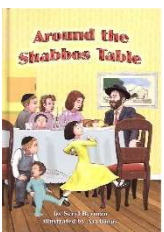
As Good As Anybody: Martin Luther King, Jr. and Abraham Joshua Heschel's Amazing March Toward Freedom by Richard Michelson. Illustrated by Raul Colón. This fictionalized parallel biography of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel presents a beautiful and inspiring tribute to a little known alliance in American history. Colon's stunning illustrations with subtle coloring bring the text, and the message of persistence, justice, and brotherhood, to life. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Alfred A. Knopf/Random House Children's Books, 2008. Ages 6-9.** See also: *Across the Alley* by Richard Michelson.



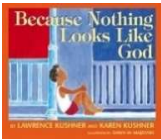
The Always Prayer Shawl by Sheldon Oberman. Illustrated by Ted Lewin. A prayer shawl, handed down from grandfather to grandson, wraps this story of Jewish tradition about connecting generations in warmth and happy memories. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Boyds-Mill Press, 1993. Ages 5-8.**



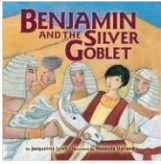
Bagels from Benny by Aubrey Davis. Illustrated by Dusan Petričić. After accepting compliments for the tasty bagels made at the family bakery, Benny's grandfather explains that God is really to thank for the delicious creations, causing Benny to begin leaving a bag of bagels for God every week at the synagogue as a demonstration of his gratitude. Based on a traditional tale. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Kids Can Press, 2003. Ages 4-8.** See also: *Bone Button Borscht* by Aubrey Davis and *In God's Hands* by Lawrence Kushner & Gary Schmidt.



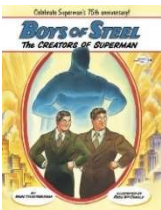
Around the Shabbos Table by Seryl Berman. Illustrated by Ari Binus. "In any seat, no matter where, in any spot, in any chair, whether it is here or there, I'll be happy anywhere!" is Tova Leiba's refrain as she gladly switches seats at the Shabbat table to accommodate her siblings. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Hachai Publishing, 2009. Ages 4-8.**



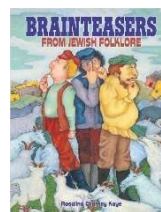
***Because Nothing Looks Like God* by Lawrence Kushner and Karen Kushner. Illustrated by Dawn Majewski.** A vibrant invitation to children and their adults to explore--together--what, where, and how God is in our lives. **Jewish Lights Publishing, 2000. Ages 3-7.**



***Benjamin and the Silver Goblet* by Jacqueline Jules. Illustrated by Natascia Ugliano.** Benjamin, the youngest of Jacob's sons, must accompany his brothers to Egypt and meet the governor (his long-lost brother, Joseph). This young boy's perspective remains true to the biblical narration while making it accessible to younger readers. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Kar-Ben Publishing, 2009. Ages 5-9.** Also in the series: *Abraham's Search for God*, *Sarah Laughs* and *Miriam in the Desert*, all by Jacqueline Jules.



***Boys of Steel: The Creators of Superman* by Marc Tyler Nobleman. Illustrated by Ross McDonald.** A picture book biography introduces Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, two shy, nerdy, bespectacled Jewish teens from Cleveland who invented an American icon of bravery, super strength, and altruistic invincibility. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Alfred A. Knopf/Random House, 2008. Ages 6-10.** See also: *Bill the Boy Wonder: The Secret Co-Creator of Batman* by Marc Tyler Nobleman.



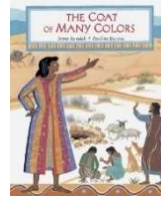
***Brainteasers from Jewish Folklore* written and illustrated by Rosalind Charney Kaye.** A collection of puzzling situations and stories from Jewish folklore, about outwitting others, coping with those in power, and learning how to live. **Kar-Ben Publishing, 1997. Ages 6-8.**



***Brave Girl: Clara and the Shirtwaist Makers' Strike of 1909* by Michelle Markel. Illustrated by Melissa Sweet.** In 1909, Clara Lemlich and her fellow garment workers bravely band together to create better job conditions. With resilience and courage, young Clara stands up for what she believes. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Balzar + Bray/ HarperCollins Publishers, 2013. Ages 4-8.**



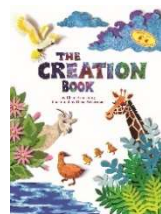
***Cakes and Miracles: A Purim Tale* by Barbara Diamond Goldin. Illustrated by Jaime Zollars.** In this moving classic, young, blind Hershel wishes he could help his mother more. When an angel appears in his dream, Hershel finds that he has special gifts he can use to help his mother bake for Purim. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Marshall Cavendish Children, 2010. Ages 5-8.**



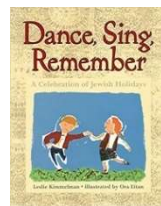
***The Coat of Many Colors* by Jenny Koralek. Illustrated by Pauline Baynes.** A simple, boldly illustrated retelling of the biblical story of Joseph. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2004. Ages 4-8.**
See also: *The Story of Queen Esther* by Jenny Koralek.



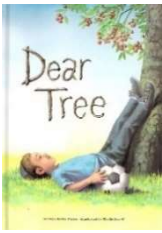
***Celebrate Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur: With Honey, Prayers, and the Shofar* by Deborah Heiligman, with full color photographs.** An attractive layout, featuring photographs of diverse Jewish communities, and informative text describe how the High Holy Days are celebrated around the world. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. National Geographic, 2007. Ages 6-9.** Also in the series: *Celebrate Passover: With Matzah, Maror, and Memories* and *Celebrate Hanukkah: With Light, Latkes, and Dreidels*, all by Deborah Heiligman.



***The Creation Book* by Chani Gansburg. Illustrated by Dena Ackerman.** This unique picture book about the Creation of the world uses rhyming couplets to detail the creations Hashem (God) brought into being on each passing day. **Hachai Publications, 2018. Ages 3-8.**

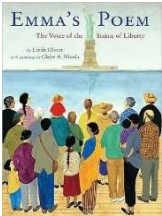


***Dance, Sing, Remember: A Celebration of Jewish Holidays* by Leslie Kimmelman. Illustrated by Ora Eitan.** Light-hearted writing and stylized illustrations give panache to this cheerful holiday collection. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. HarperCollins, 2000. Ages 4-8.**



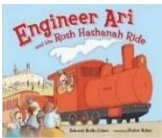
Dear Tree by Doba Rivka Weber. Illustrated by Phyllis Saroff. On Tu B'Shevat, the Birthday of the Trees, a young boy simply and sweetly states his wishes for the trees in the coming year including rain, blossoms, and fruit.

Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Hachai Publishing, 2010. Ages 4-8.



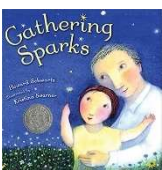
Emma's Poem: The Voice of the Statue of Liberty by Linda Glaser. Illustrated by Claire A. Nivola. This beautiful blending of words and pictures explores the life of Emma Lazarus and her work as a writer and humanitarian,

focusing on her inspiring words of poetry in "The New Colossus," which would become the permanent inscription for the Statue of Liberty. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children, 2010. Ages 5-9.** See also: *Liberty's Voice: The Story of Emma Lazarus* by Erica Silverman.

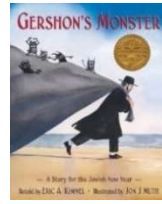


Engineer Ari and the Rosh Hashanah Ride by Deborah Bodin Cohen. Illustrated by Shahar Kober. When Ari is selected to engineer the first train

between Jaffa and Jerusalem, he fills with pride, boasts to his friends and neglects to say good-bye before he sets off. As the train stops to collect items to celebrate the Jewish New Year, Ari recalls the true meaning of the holiday, and apologizes. Charming, colorful illustrations give the reader a sense of what Israel's countryside might have looked like in 1892. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2008. Ages 4-8.** Also in the series: *Engineer Ari and the Sukkah Express*, *Engineer Ari and the Hanukkah Mishap* and *Engineer Ari and the Passover Rush*, all by Deborah Bodin Cohen.



Gathering Sparks by Howard Schwartz. Illustrated by Kristina Swarner. Dreamy, nature-filled watercolor, gouache, pastel paintings beautifully illustrate the Jewish concept of *Tikkun Olam*, or repairing the world, through an intimate dialogue between a grandchild and grandfather. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Roaring Brook Press/Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2010. Ages 5-9.** See also: *Before You Were Born* by Howard Schwartz.



Gershon's Monster: A Story for The Jewish New Year by Eric A. Kimmel. Illustrated by Jon J. Muth. When his sins threaten the lives of his beloved children, a Jewish man finally repents of his wicked ways. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Scholastic Press, 2000. Ages 6-10.** See also: *Gabriel's Horn* and *Big Sam: A Rosh Hashanah Tall Tale* by Eric A. Kimmel.



Gittel's Journey: An Ellis Island Story by Lesléa Newman. Illustrated by Amy June Bates. In this beautifully written, lavishly illustrated picture book, young Jewish immigrant Gittel unexpectedly must complete the journey from "the Old Country" to America on her own. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book.**

Abrams Books for Young Readers/Abrams Books, 2019. Ages 6-10.



Hannah's Way by Linda Glaser. Illustrated by Adam Gustavson. Hannah's teacher's attempt to arrange carpools for a Saturday class picnic puts

Hannah in a quandary. She cannot ride on the Sabbath, but she neither wants to miss the picnic nor draw attention to her Jewish heritage. Well researched illustrations with details of Depression Era northern Minnesota complement the story of how the community supports Hannah and helps her fit in, a message that serves contemporary populations as well. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Kar-Ben Publishing, 2012. Ages 5-9.**



A Hat for Mrs. Goldman: A Story About Knitting and Love by Michelle Edwards. Illustrated by G. Brian Karas. Kindly Mrs. Goldman, assisted by her young Latina next-door neighbor Sophia, knits hats for everyone in their neighborhood. But who will knit a hat for Mrs. Goldman? Sophia tries, and the result is much appreciated (if not perfectly executed). **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Schwartz and Wade Books/Penguin Random House, 2016. Ages 4-8.** See also: *A Baker's Portrait*, *Chicken Man*, *Max Makes a Cake*, and more, all by Michelle Edwards

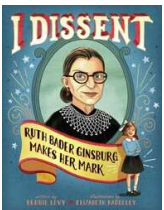


Here is the World by Lesléa Newman. Illustrated by Susan Gal. Here is a book of simple rhymes for each Jewish holiday (plus a baby naming). Here are recipes or crafts to enrich the celebrations Here is a lively description of each holiday. Here is the repetition of the rhyme that will keep young children reading along with the text. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2014. Ages 4-7.**



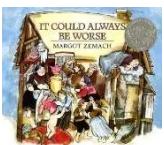
Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins by Eric A. Kimmel. Illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman. Hershel outwits the goblins that haunt the old synagogue so the village people can celebrate Hanukkah, in this fun tale with scary

monsters. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Holiday House, 1989. Ages 4-8.** See also: *The Adventures of Hershel of Ostropol*, *The Golem's Latkes*, *Hanukkah Bear* (previously published as *The Chanukah Guest*), *The Magic Dreidels*, *Simon and the Bear*, *Zigazak!* and more, all by Eric A. Kimmel.



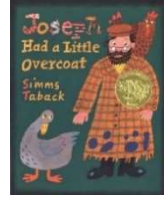
I Dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Makes Her Mark by Debbie Levy. Illustrated by Eizabeth Baddeley. This delightful biography of the late Supreme Court Justice teaches children that dissent does not make a person

disagreeable, and can even help change the world. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2016. Ages 4-8.** See also: *Ruth Bader Ginsburg: The Case of R.B.G. vs. Inequality* by Jonah Winter and *Dissenter on the Bench* by Victoria Ortiz.



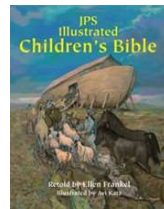
It Could Always Be Worse: A Yiddish Folktale adapted and illustrated by Margot Zemach. Unable to stand his overcrowded and noisy home any

longer, a poor man goes to the Rabbi for advice. The unexpected guidance leads to fun and a happy solution. **Farrar Straus Giroux, 1976. Ages 3-7.** See also: *Such a Library! A Yiddish Folktale Re-Imagined* by Jill Ross Nadler.



Joseph Had a Little Overcoat adapted and illustrated by Simms Taback. An old Yiddish folk song inspired this tale about a man who devises clever uses for his worn-out overcoat. Cut out illustrations add to the charm of this classic story.

Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Viking, 1999. Ages 3-7. See also: *Something from Nothing* by Phoebe Gilman and *My Grandfather's Coat* by Jim Aylesworth.

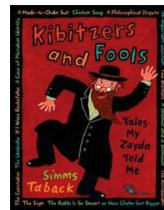


JPS Illustrated Children's Bible by Ellen Frankel. Illustrated by Avi Katz. Frankel succeeds in creating an age-appropriate interpretation of fifty-three of the most intriguing and familiar stories from the Bible that allow families

to glean the essence of Jewish teachings, ethics, and history. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Jewish Publication Society, 2009. Ages 5+.**

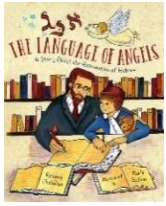


The Keeping Quilt written and illustrated by Patricia Polacco. A homemade quilt ties together the lives of four generations of an immigrant Jewish family, remaining a symbol of their enduring love and faith. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Simon & Schuster, 1988. Ages 4-8.** See also: *The Blessing Cup*, *The Bee Tree*, *The Trees of the Dancing Goats*, *Tikvah Means Hope*, and all works by Patricia Polacco.



Kibitzers and Fools: Tales My Zayda Told Me adapted and illustrated by Simms Taback. Brimming with humor and bursting with life, this is a dynamically illustrated collection of anecdotes and short stories about

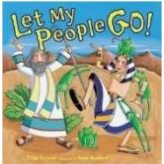
kibitzers, schlemiels, noodniks, meshuganers and other Yiddish characters. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Viking, 2005. Ages 4-8.** See also: *The Book Rescuer* by Sue Macy, *Goodnight Bubbala: A Joyful Parody* by Sheryl Haft, *Honey on the Page: A Treasury of Children's Yiddish Literature* edited and translated by Miriam Yudel, *Yiddish Saves the Day* by Debbie Levy,



***The Language of Angels: A Story About the Reinvention of Hebrew* by Richard Michelson. Illustrated by Karla Gudeon.** This beautiful picture book shares how Hebrew became an everyday language in Israel, after being out of use for two thousand years. The folk art illustrations are a joyous match for the charismatic little boy hero. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Charlesbridge, 2017. Ages 5-9.**



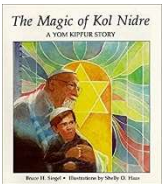
***The Mysterious Guests: A Sukkot Story* by Eric A. Kimmel. Illustrated by Katya Krenina.** During the festival of Sukkot, Eben builds a fancy sukkah, but he makes the poor stand in the corner and eat leftovers. His brother Ezra's sukkah is plain, but he welcomes all who come with a full heart. When the *ushpizin* (spiritual guests) visit, they bestow an identical blessing with very different results. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Holiday House, 2008. Ages 6-9.**



***Let My People Go!* by Tilda Balsley. Illustrated by Ilene Richard.** The Passover story is enlivened in this creative "Reader's Theater" rendition where everyone can take part as Moses implores Pharaoh to "Let My People Go!" **Kar-Ben Publishing, 2008. Ages 5-9.** See also: *Oh No, Jonah!*, *The Queen Who Saved Her People* and *Maccabee! The Story of Hanukkah*, all by Tilda Balsley.



***Never Say a Mean Word Again: A Tale from Medieval Spain* by Jacqueline Jules. Illustrated by Durga Yael Bernhard.** A universal story of friendship and cross-cultural understanding based on a Spanish legend. Samuel learns that the best way to prevent Hamza from ever saying a mean word to him again is to befriend him. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Wisdom Tales, 2014. Ages 4-8.** See also: *Feathers for Peacock* and *The Generous Fish* all by Jacqueline Jules.



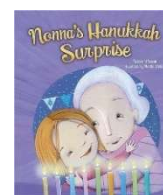
***The Magic of Kol Nidre: A Yom Kippur Story* by Bruce Siegel. Illustrated by Shelly O. Haas.** Three generations explore the magic of the Kol Nidre prayer while they observe the Yom Kippur service in synagogue. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Kar-Ben Copies, 1998. Ages 6-8.**



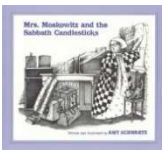
***New Year at the Pier: A Rosh Hashanah Story* by April Halprin Wayland. Illustrated by Stéphane Jorisch.** The author employs her own memories of community *tashlich* at the beach in this loving, charmingly illustrated depiction of Izzy, his family and friends as they gently apologize for misdeeds, grant forgiveness, and toss breadcrumbs into the sea as part of their Rosh Hashanah observance. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Dial Books for Young Readers/Penguin Random House, 2009. Ages 5-8.**



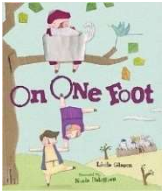
***Mommy, Can You Stop the Rain?* By Rona Milch Novick, PhD. Illustrated by Anna Kubaszewska.** The parents in this loving Jewish family comfort and reassure their young daughter who, frightened by a storm, asks if they can stop the rain, thunder, lightning, and wind. Includes a note to parents. **Apples and Honey Press, 2020. Ages 2-5.**



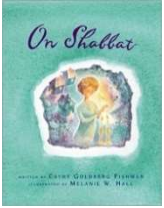
***Nonna's Hanukkah Surprise* by Karen Fisman. Illustrated by Martha Avilés.** When Rachel loses the special menorah her mother gave her so she could share Hanukkah with her Catholic cousins during her visit, her Italian grandmother comes to the rescue with a creative and crafty solution. **Kar-Ben Publishing, 2015. Ages 4-8.**



***Mrs. Moskowitz and the Sabbath Candlesticks* written and illustrated by Amy Schwartz.** Mrs. Moskowitz is unhappy in her new apartment until the discovery of her old Sabbath candlesticks prompts her to create a family dinner that turns her new dwelling into a home. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Jewish Publication Society, 1984. Ages 4-8.**

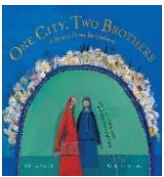


***On One Foot* by Linda Glaser. Illustrated by Nuria Balaguer.** A young scholar asks: "Can you teach me the whole Torah while standing on one foot?" He's repeatedly turned away before finally meeting Rabbi Hillel and fulfilling his quest. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Kar-Ben Publishing, 2016. Ages 5-10.**



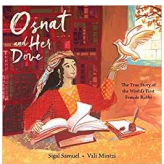
***On Shabbat* by Cathy Goldberg Fishman. Illustrated by Melanie W. Hall.** A holiday book that is both stylish and steeped in Jewish knowledge. The dreamy illustrations capture the spirit of the Sabbath. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2001. Ages 4-8.**

Also in the series: *On Hanukkah*, *On Passover*, *On Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur*, and *On Sukkot and Simchat Torah*, all by Cathy Goldberg Fishman.



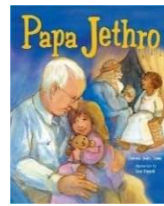
***One City, Two Brothers: A Story From Jerusalem* by Chris Smith. Illustrated by Aurélie Fronty.** Two brothers divide a field and its harvest. Each decides that the other needs the

larger share of the crop; night after night, they secretly cross the land to enlarge the other's supply of grain. Finally they meet during their crossing, and embrace in brotherly love. **Barefoot Books, 2007. Ages 4-8.** See also: *Yaffa and Fatima*, *Shalom*, *Salaam* by Fawzia Gilani-Williams.



***Osnat and Her Dove: The True Story of the World's First Female Rabbi* by Sigal Samuel. Illustrated by Vali Mintzi.** Osnat lived almost 500 years ago, in

what is now Iraqi Kurdistan. She would grow up to be the very first female rabbi in history. A little known, historic tale of feminism, bravery, knowledge, and miracles. **Levine Querido, 2021. Ages 4-8.** See also: *Regina Persisted: An Untold Story* by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso.



***Papa Jethro* by Deborah Bodin Cohen. Illustrated by Jane Dippold.** A young girl asks her grandfather why she goes to synagogue and he goes to church. He explains that she is Jewish and he is Christian and retells the biblical story of Jethro, the Midianite father-in-law of Moses. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Kar-Ben Publishing, 2007. Ages 4-8.**



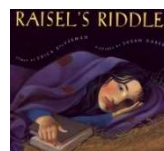
***The Passover Guest* by Susan Kusel. Illustrated by Sean Rubin.** Readers needn't be familiar with the original I.L. Peretz story, "The Magician", to be wowed by this fresh retelling, set in depression-era Washington DC. **AJL Holiday Highlights. Holiday House, 2021. Ages 6-10.** See also: *The Magician's Visit* by Barbara Diamond Goldin.



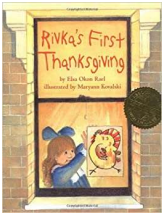
***The Purim Superhero* by Elizabeth Kushner. Illustrated by Mike Byrne.** Nate wants to dress as an alien for Purim but his friend wants him to wear a superhero costume like the other boys. Nate seeks guidance from his Daddy and *Abba* (father), who advise that being yourself makes you stronger. A positive portrayal of a Jewish family with two dads. **Kar-Ben Publishing, 2013. Ages 4-8.**



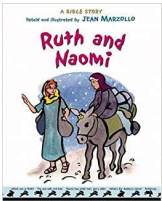
***The Rabbi and the 29 Witches* Written and illustrated by Marilyn Hirsh.** A wise old rabbi finally rids the village of the witches that terrorize it every full moon night in this humorous classic. **Scholastic, 1986. Ages 6-9.**



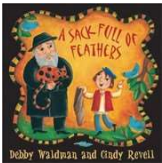
***Raisel's Riddle* by Erica Silverman. Illustrated by Susan Gaber.** A Jewish orphan girl finds happiness with her "prince," a rabbi's son who appreciates her learning as well as her beauty in this Purim-themed Cinderella tale. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1999. Ages 5-8.** See also: *Gittel's Hands* by Erica Silverman.



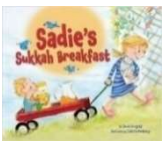
Rivka's First Thanksgiving by Elsa Okon Rael. Illustrated by Maryann Kovalski. Hearing about Thanksgiving in school, nine-year-old Rivka convinces her immigrant family and her Rabbi that it is a holiday for all Americans, Jews and non-Jews alike. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Simon & Schuster, 2001. Ages 4-8.**



Ruth and Naomi: A Bible Story written and illustrated by Jean Marzollo. In all her biblical retellings, Marzollo condenses details while preserving the stories' spirit and meaning. This one exemplifies *chesed* (loving-kindness), shown by Ruth and Naomi's caring for one another and by the kindness extended to them by Boaz. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Little Brown and Company, 2005. Ages 4-8.** Also in the series: *Daniel in the Lions' Den*, *David & Goliath*, *Jonah & The Whale* and *Miriam & Her Brother Moses*, all by Jean Marzollo.



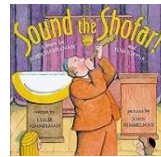
A Sack Full of Feathers by Debbie Waldman. Illustrated by Cindy Revell. Yankel loves to tell stories about his neighbors. He does not see the hurt these rumors cause as they spread and change. When the rabbi has him scatter feathers and try to regather them, he learns an important message in this retelling of an old folktale. **Orca Book Publishers, 2006. Ages 3-7.** See also: *Yettele's Feathers* by Joan Rothenberg.



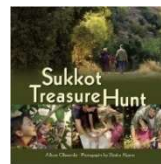
Sadie's Sukkah Breakfast by Jamie Korngold. Illustrated by Julie Fortenberry. Sadie and her brother Ori wake up early and decide to eat in the sukkah. After schlepping all the food and utensils outside, they decide breakfast would be nicer with guests: they bring out their stuffed animals. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. KarBen/Lerner, 2011. Ages 4-8.** Also in the series: *Sadie's Almost Marvelous Menorah*, *Sadie's Snowy Tu B'Shevat*, *Sadie and Ori and the Blue Blanket*, *Sadie and The Big Mountain* and *Sadie's Lag B'Omer Mystery*, all by Jamie Korngold.



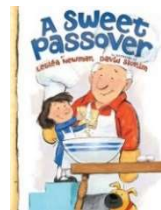
Soosie: The Horse That Saved Shabbat by Tami Lehman-Wilzig. Illustrated by Menahem Halberstadt. Set in Jerusalem in the early 20th century, a clever horse delivers challah on her own when the baker's boy feels too ill to drive the cart. **AJL Holiday Highlights. Kalaniot Books, 2021. Ages 5-8.**



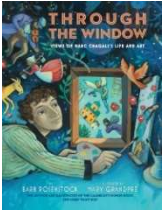
Sound the Shofar! A Story for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur by Leslie Kimmelman. Illustrated by John Himmelman. Uncle Jake gets to blow the shofar twice within ten days, as the family celebrates first Rosh Hashanah and then Yom Kippur. **HarperCollins, 1998. Ages 4-8.** See also: *Hanukkah Lights*, *Hanukkah Nights* and *Hooray, It's Passover!* all by Leslie Kimmelman



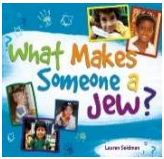
Sukkot Treasure Hunt by Allison Ofanansky. Illustrated by Elyahu Alpern. A family collects the four species needed to celebrate Sukkot in the area surrounding their home in Tsfat, Israel. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Kar-Ben Publishing, 2009. Ages 5-8.** Also in the series: *Harvest of Light*, *New Month*, *New Moon*, *What's the Buzz? Honey for a Sweet New Year* and *Cheesecake for Shavuot*, all by Allison Ofanansky.



A Sweet Passover by Lesléa Newman. Illustrated by David Slonim. By the last day of Passover, Miriam has had her fill of matzah. As the family recounts why Jews eat matzah on Passover, she is convinced and happily tries her grandfather's matzah brei. Recipe included. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2012. Ages 4-8.** See also: *Welcoming Elijah* and *Matzo Ball Moon* also by Lesléa Newman, and *Miriam at the River* by Jane Yolen.



***Through the Window: Views of Marc Chagall's Life* by Barb Rosenstock. Illustrated by Mary GrandPré.** Beautiful illustrations evoking Chagall's style accompany this lyrical biography that chronicles the famous artist's life from humble beginnings to world renown. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Alfred A. Knopf/Random House Children's Books, 2018. Ages 4-8.**



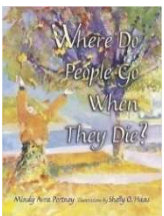
***What Makes Someone a Jew?* by Lauren Childers.** Is being Jewish a matter of how you look or how you live? Using everyday examples children can relate to, this colorful book helps them understand what it really means to be a Jew. **Jewish Lights Publishing, 2007. Ages 3-6.**



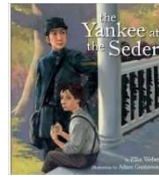
***What Zeesie Saw on Delancey Street* by Elsa Okon Rael. Illustrated by Marjorie Priceman.** A young Jewish girl living on Manhattan's Lower East Side attends her first "package party" where she learns about the *mitzvot* of generosity, courage, and community practiced by Jewish immigrants in the early 1900s. **Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1996. Ages 5-8.** See also: *When Zaydeh Danced on Eldridge Street* by Elsa Okon Rael.



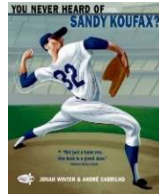
***When Jessie Came Across the Sea* by Amy Hest. Illustrated by P.J. Lynch.** A thirteen-year-old Jewish orphan reluctantly leaves her grandmother and immigrates alone to New York, where she works for three years sewing lace to earn money to bring her grandmother to the United States, too. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Candlewick Press, 1997. Ages 6-9.**



***Where Do People Go When They Die?* by Mindy Avra Portnoy. Illustrated by Shelly O. Haas.** This sweet book geared to young children offers a variety of appropriate answers to the title question, "Where do people go when they die?" **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Kar-Ben Publishing, 2004. Ages 3-8.** See also: *Zayde Comes to Live* by Sheri Sinykin

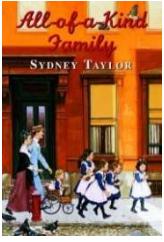


***The Yankee at the Seder* by Elka Weber. Illustrated by Adam Gustavson.** Based on a true tale, this beautifully illustrated story recounts the participation of a "Yankee Jew," Myer Levy, as a guest at a Virginia Passover Seder near the end of the Civil War. Ten-year-old Jacob sees the words of the Haggadah ring true, as all who are hungry are welcome at the table. A year later, Myer sends his thanks to the host family in a moving ending. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Tricycle Press, 2009. Ages 3-7.** See also: *One Little Chicken* and *Shimri's Big Idea: A Story of Ancient Jerusalem* all by Elka Weber.



***You Never Heard of Sandy Koufax?* by Jonah Winter. Illustrated by André Carrilho.** Koufax's rise from a Jewish boy in Brooklyn to one of the all-time greats of baseball as a Los Angeles Dodger is told in conversational style by an imagined teammate. A lenticular cover and magnificent artwork brings the left-hander's style to life. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Schwartz & Wade Books/Random House Children's Books, 2009. Ages 4-8.** See also: *Hammerin' Hank* by Yona Zeldis McDonough, *Lipman Pike* by Richard Michelson, *The Spy Who Played Baseball* by Carrie Jones.

MIDDLE GRADE BOOKS (Generally 8-12 Year Olds)

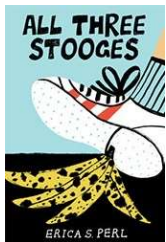


All-of-a-Kind Family by Sydney Taylor.

Five Jewish sisters share adventures on the Lower East Side of New York City at the turn of the 20th century in this beloved classic, the first in a series about first generation Americans. **Bantam**

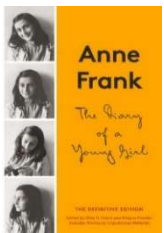
Doubleday Dell for Young Children, 1951. Ages 8-12.

See also: *More All-of-a-Kind Family*, *All-of-a-Kind Family Uptown*, *All-of-a-Kind Family Downtown*, and *Ella of All-of-a-Kind Family* all by Sydney Taylor.



All Three Stooges by Erica Perl. Noah's best friend loses his father to suicide. A comedy-buff, Noah's responses undermine his readiness to become Bar Mitzvah. Perl integrates details of modern Jewish life--and comedy--into this story of growth in a very difficult

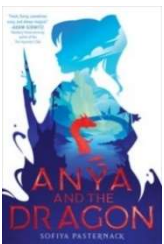
situation. Noah's two moms add LGBT representation to the story in a very natural way. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Alfred A. Knopf/Random House Children's Books, 2018. Ages 10-12.** See also: *When Life Gives You O.J.* and *Aces Wild* by Erica Perl.



Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank.

This is the must-read diary kept by Anne Frank while she was in hiding for two years with her family during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands. Originally written in Dutch,

it has been translated into many languages. **Bantam Doubleday Dell for Young Children, 1952. Ages 10-14.**



Anya and the Dragon by Sofiya Pasternack.

Heroine Anya's magical abilities are closely tied to her Judaism in this wildly adventurous tale set in tenth-century Russia and tinged with Russian folklore. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Versify/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt,**

2019. Ages 10-12. See also: *Anya and the Nightingale* by Sofiya Pasternack.



Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret by Judy Blume.

Faced with the difficulties of growing up and choosing a religion, a 12-year-old interfaith girl talks over her problems privately with God in this outstanding

classic. **Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1970.**

Ages 9-13. See also: *Starring Sally J. Freedman As Herself* by Judy Blume.



Benny Feldman's All-Star Klezmer Band by Alison Marks.

Shy Benny Feldman signs up his imaginary klezmer band to play in the school talent show, then must put together a real band in this hilarious and touching story of building friendships. **Green Bean Books, 2021. Ages 9-12.**

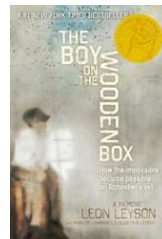


The Book of Secrets written and illustrated by Mat Tonti.

In this graphic novel, Rose and Ben receive a mysterious package from their Bubbe containing Jewish stories about outwitting fate through action and

personal agency. Soon they are on the run from a sorceress seeking the book.

Kar-Ben Publishing, 2020. Ages 8-11.



The Boy on the Wooden Box: How the Impossible Became Possible...on Schindler's list by Leon Leyson with Marilyn J. Harran and Elisabeth B. Leyson.

An inspiring memoir about Leyson's experiences during the Holocaust. He was one of the youngest children on

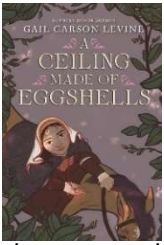
Oskar Schindler's list. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2013. Ages 10-14.**

See also: *I Will Plant You a Lilac Tree: A Memoir of a Schindler's List Survivor* by Laura Hillman.



Broken Strings by Kathy Kacer and Eric Walters. A violin and a middle-school musical unleash a dark family secret in this moving story, mixing the modern tragedy of the Twin Towers and the legacy of the Holocaust. **Puffin Canada, 2019. Ages 10-14.** See also any of Kathy

Kacer's other works.



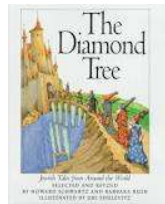
A Ceiling Made of Eggshells by Gail Carson Levine. From age seven, Loma relishes traveling with her beloved grandfather across fifteenth-century Spain, working to keep the Jews safe from the Inquisition. She soon realizes she must make personal sacrifices to help her people. The novel includes historical notes, recipe, glossary, and a link to a bibliography. **Quill Tree Books/HarperCollins, 2020. Ages 8-12.**



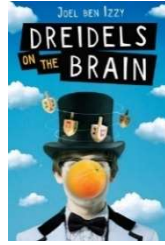
Confessions of a Closet Catholic by Sarah Littman. Justine Silver struggles to balance her family's expectations that she should be Jewish "but not too Jewish." Frustrated, she follows a Catholic friend's example: she gives up Judaism for Lent. Thus begins a search for identity and belonging that will resonate with readers of all religions. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Dutton Children's Books, 2005. Ages 10-13.**



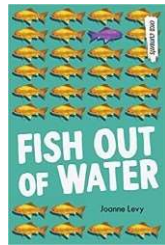
Death by Toilet Paper by Donna Gephart. Benjamin Epstein faces many challenges. His father is dead. He will soon be evicted from his home. Benjamin helps his mom by entering contests, including one for a toilet paper company slogan. When his aging grandfather moves in, trouble escalates. This realistic, deeply touching novel includes the right amount of kid-friendly humor to balance the pain. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Delacorte Press for Young Readers/Penguin Random House, 2014. Ages 9-12.** See also: *Abby, Tried and True* by Donna Gephart.



The Diamond Tree: Jewish Tales from Around the World by Howard Schwartz and Barbara Rush. Illustrated by Uri Shulevitz. A collection of traditional Jewish tales from many different countries. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. HarperCollins Childrens Books, 1991. Ages 8-10.** See also *The Day the Rabbi Disappeared: Jewish Holiday Tales of Magic* and *Invisible Kingdoms: Jewish Tales of Angels Spirits and Demons* by Howard Schwartz.



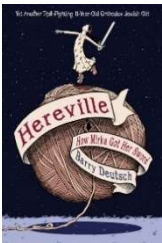
Dreidels on the Brain by Joel Ben Izzy. In this semi-autobiographical story set during Hanukkah 1971, 12-year-old aspiring magician Joel describes his family and life in the L.A. suburbs. His observations are frequently hilarious, even as his family faces significant challenges. Funny, serious, and heart-warming. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Dial Books for Young Readers/Penguin Random House, 2016. Ages 10-14.**



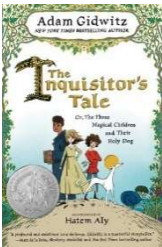
Fish Out of Water by Joanne Levy. A 12-year-old boy prepping for bar mitzvah is frustrated that he's not able to do the things he loves because they're too "girly." Uplifting and gentle, the novel exudes intergenerational warmth, family love, and friendship. **Orca Book Publishers, 2020. Ages 9-13.**



Get a Grip, Vivvy Cohen by Sarah Kapit. Eleven-year-old Jewish knuckleball pitcher Vivvy Cohen, who has autism, becomes pen pals with her favorite Major League baseball player after writing a letter to him as an assignment for her social skills class. **Dial Books, 2020. Ages 8-12.**



Hereville: How Mirka Got Her Sword written and illustrated by Barry Deutsch. Eleven-year-old Mirka, living in a contemporary Orthodox community, has more on her mind than learning the “womanly arts” her stepmother insists she acquire. She is on a quest to find a sword and slay a dragon in this amusing and refreshing graphic novel adventure. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Amulet Books/Abrams Books, 2010. Ages 8-12.** Also in the series: *Hereville: How Mirka Met a Meteorite* and *Hereville: How Mirka Caught a Fish*, all by Barry Deutsch.



The Inquisitor's Tale: Or, The Three Magical Children and Their Holy Dog by Adam Gidwitz. Illustrated by Hatem Aly. This adventure fantasy is the tale of strangers who become friends while on a quest to save thousands of volumes of Talmud. The beautiful illuminations reflect the medieval flavor of the book. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Dutton Children's Books/Penguin Random House, 2016. Ages 10-14.**



Journey to America by Sonia Levitin. In this fictional account inspired by the author's real life experience, Lisa Platt and her family escape Nazi Germany and make it to the United States after overcoming harrowing obstacles. **Simon & Schuster, 1970. Ages 9-12.** See also the new *50th Anniversary Edition* (2020).



The Length of a String by Elissa Brent Weissman. Imani's wonderings about her past and her adoption dovetail with the diary she discovers that belonged to her great-grandmother, a refugee during the Holocaust. A thoughtful exploration of family and Jewish identity starring a young Jew of Color. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Dial Books for Young Readers/Penguin Random House, 2018. Ages 10-14.**



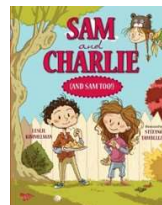
Meet Rebecca by Jacqueline Dembar Greene. Illustrated by Robert Hunt. The Jewish historical character in the American Girl Collection lives on the Lower East Side in 1914, hopes to be an actress, and tries to balance an American way of life with traditional Jewish values. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. American Girl, 2009. Ages 8-10.** Also in the series: *Rebecca and Ana*, *Candlelight for Rebecca*, *Rebecca and the Movies*, and *Rebecca to the Rescue*, all by Jacqueline Dembar Greene.



The Nazi Hunters: How a Team of Spies and Survivors Captured the World's Most Notorious Nazi by Neal Bascomb. A stunning account of the mission to capture Adolf Eichmann by an elite team of Israeli spies. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Arthur A. Levine Books/Scholastic, 2013. Ages 12+.**



A Place at the Table by Saadi Faruqi and Laura Shovan. Pakistani Muslim Sara and British Jewish Elizabeth meet in a school cooking class where they gradually navigate friendship, family problems, and fitting in. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Clarion Books/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2020. Ages 9-12.**



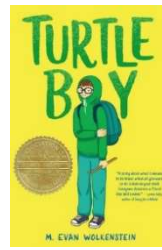
Sam and Charlie (And Sam Too!) by Leslie Kimmelman. Illustrated by Stefano Tambellini. The five brief stories in this early reader, accompanied by colorful illustrations, highlight the value of friendship and its ups and downs, and seamlessly integrate Jewish practice into everyday life. **Albert Whitman & Company, 2013. Ages 5-9.** Also in the series: *Sam & Charlie (and Sam Too!) Return!* and *Sam & Charlie (and Sam Too!) at Camp!* by Leslie Kimmelman.



***The Six-Day Hero* by Tammar Stein.**

Twelve-year-old Motti discovers that there are many types of heroes as his tiny young nation of Israel fights for survival in the Six-Day War of 1967.

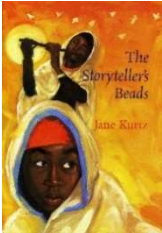
Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Kar-Ben Publishing, 2017. Ages 9-13. See also: *Beni's War* by Tammar Stein.



***Turtle Boy* by M. Evan Wolkenstein.**

Will's bar mitzvah service project helps him face challenges in his own life in this engaging story. Bullied at school and a loner, turtle-loving Will completes a bucket list of milestone activities for a terminally ill friend and gains the

strength to face his own upcoming surgery. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Delacorte Books for Young Readers/Penguin Random House, 2020. Ages 10-14.**



***The Storyteller's Beads* by Jane Kurtz.**

A blind Jewish girl and a Christian girl overcome prejudice and suspicion as they help one another on a hazardous exodus from Ethiopia to a refugee camp in the Sudan.

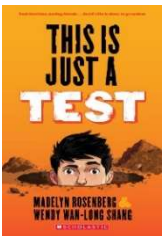
Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Harcourt Brace, 1998. Ages 8-12.



***Vive La Paris!* by Esme Raji Codell.**

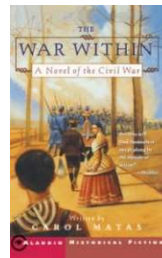
Black, non-Jewish fifth-grader Paris McCray learns about life, bullying, and kindness, from the friendship of her Jewish piano teacher Mrs. Rosen, a Holocaust survivor with a sense of humor.

Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Hyperion Books for Children, 2006. Ages 9-12.



***This is Just a Test* by Wendy Wan-Long Shang and Madelyn Rosenberg.**

David Da-Wei Horowitz is preparing for his Bar Mitzvah, trying to appease both his Jewish and Chinese grandmothers, digging a fallout shelter, and trying to balance his friends. Add a little 1980s David Hasselhoff and Betamax for a quirky and fast-paced read. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Scholastic, 2017. Ages 8-12.** See also: *Not Your All-American Girl* by Wendy Wan-Long Shang and Madelyn Rosenberg.



***The War Within* by Carol Matas.**

During the Civil War, General Grant issues an order expelling all Jews from the territory under his control. Affected teenager Hannah Green, a Southern belle in the making, questions many of the values she took for granted,

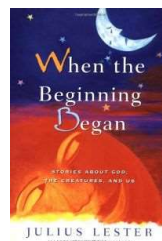
including slavery. **Sydney Taylor Notable Book. Simon & Schuster, 2001. Ages 10-14.**



***Too Far from Home* by Naomi Shmuel.**

Illustrated by Avi Katz. Eleven-year-old Meskerem, an Israeli Jew of Color, is half black Ethiopian and half white American. She faces prejudice when she enters a new school just as Israel is coping with a

large influx of new immigrants from Ethiopia. A fascinating glimpse of modern Israeli society. **Kar-Ben Publishing, 2020. Ages 8-12.**



***When the Beginning Began: Stories About God, the Creatures and Us* by Julius Lester.**

Illustrated by Emily Lisker. A collection of traditional and original Jewish tales that interpret the Biblical story of the creation of the world from

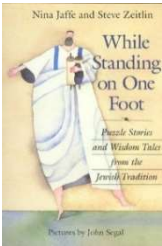
the iconic Jewish Black writer. **Sydney Taylor Honor Book. Harcourt Brace & Company, 1999. Ages 10-12.** See also: *Let's Talk About Race* by Julius Lester.



***The Trouble with Good Ideas* by Amanda Panitch.**

A spooky story about a girl who creates a golem (a Jewish mythological creature) to babysit her ailing grandfather before realizing that golems ultimately turn on their creators. **Roaring Book Press, 2021.**

Ages 8-12.



While Standing on One Foot: Puzzle Stories and Wisdom Tales from Jewish Tradition by Nina Jaffe. A collection representing thousands of years' of folktales, legends, and literature, captures the wit, wisdom and lore of Jewish tradition. Each story contains an entertaining conundrum young readers can attempt to solve. **Henry Holt & Company, 1993. Ages 8-10.** See also: *The Mysterious Visitor*, *Tales for the Seventh Day*, and *The Uninvited Guest*, all by Nina Jaffe.



The Whole Story of Half a Girl by Veera Hiranandani. When Sonia's father loses his job forcing her to move from her small, supportive private school to a public middle school, the half-Jewish half-Indian sixth-grader experiences culture shock as she tries to navigate the school's unfamiliar social scene. A thoughtful story, told with affectionate humor. **Delacorte Press for Young Readers/Penguin Random House, 2012. Ages 9-12.** See also: *Mira in the Present Tense* by Sita Brahmachari and *My Basmati Bat Mitzvah* by Paula J. Freedman.



White Bird: A Wonder Story written and illustrated by R.J. Palacio. This beautifully illustrated graphic novel connects the Holocaust to familiar contemporary characters, as Julian from the *Wonder* series learns his grandmother's powerful story of rescue in Vichy-occupied France. **Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner. Knopf Books for Young Readers/Penguin Random House, 2019. Ages 8-12.** See also: *Hidden: A Child's Story of the Holocaust* by Loïc Dauvillier and *Lily Renee: Escape Artist* by Trina Robbins.

AJL extends special thanks to Jewish Grandparents Network for underwriting the creation of this list; and to Kathy Bloomfield, Rena Citrin, Ellen Cole, Rachel Kamin, Chava Pinchuck, Heidi Rabinowitz and Lisa Silverman for developing this list.



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<https://jewishlibraries.org/>



The Jewish Grandparents Network began in August 2017 with a conversation

about the under-recognized role of grandparents and the complex dynamics of today's "new Jewish family." We believe that Jewish grandparents are essential assets for our communities, our families, and our future. The Jewish Grandparent Network seeks to develop and steward the spaces and partnerships that will advance the wonderful blessings that grandparents represent.

<https://jewishgrandparentsnetwork.org/>