

Happy Chanukah!

Summary

The student will understand that other cultures celebrate different occasions. Students will learn tolerance and appreciation for America's ethnic diversity.

Time Frame

4 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Large Groups

Materials

Have a paper menorah which can be found in almost any winter holiday book. I have removed the candles and copied them on a separate page.

Background for Teachers

Chanukah is a holiday celebrated by Jews all over the world. It usually begins sometime in December and lasts 7 days and 8 nights. It is a remembrance of a miracle that occurred in their history. For more information on the subject, please see below. This information can also be found on the chanukah link at <http://www.chanukah.com>

Nearly twenty two centuries ago, after the Jewish people had returned to the land of Israel from the Babylonian Exile, they were subject to the rule of many outside forces, one of which was the Seleucid Dynasty - Greek kings who reigned from Damascus. The Assyrians had conquered the land of Israel and, during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, sought to impose their Pagan religion. They outlawed Jewish religion practices and even placed an idol of the Greek God Zeus on the altar in the Holy Temple of Jerusalem. In the midst of this Jewish persecution, a group of resistance fighters known as the Maccabees (named after their leader Judah Maccabee) defeated the Assyrian army that occupied Jerusalem, and restored the sanctity of the Holy Temple. The temple was rededicated on the twenty-fifth day of the Hebrew month of Kislev.

Tradition holds that when the Maccabees entered the Holy Temple, they discovered that the Assyrians had defiled the oil which was used by the rabbis to light the temple's Menorah. Only one vat of oil remained - enough for only one day. This is when the miracle took place.... the Maccabees lit the Menorah and it burned for not one, but eight days. This is why we celebrate eight days of Chanukah.

Intended Learning Outcomes

The student will be able to identify a menorah, play the dreidel game, and re-tell parts of the Chanukah story. The student will see that different cultures have different customs.

Instructional Procedures

Instruct the students that not everyone celebrates Christmas. They do have winter celebrations, but Christmas is not one of them. They are different than the children are used to, but no less enjoyable. Differences are fun to learn, so we will be learning some of the different celebrations that people have.

The children will first gather around the computer where the teacher brings up the festival of lights (<http://www.chanukah.com>) and students will see how many candles are lit.

Have the students return to their desks. Using either the information from the Chanukah page or the

information in the background section to retell the story of Chanukah, after which each student will be given a copy of a menorah. The students will then cut out a candle and draw a flame on it. The activity will be repeated each day of Chanukah, and each time, match the menorah that is online.

Extensions

Some children may need help cutting the candles. In such situations, it may be beneficial to have the candles precut. Accelerated learners may take turns telling the story.

Assessment Plan

Assessment for this plan will be teacher observation. It will be easy to see if the children need help with their menorahs or not. If they have ingested this information and seem eager to learn more, go back to the web link and explore it further. There are other links referenced there with recipes, blessings, and other fun information about this special holiday.

Bibliography

Forte, Imogene December Patterns, Projects, and Plans (Incentive Publications, Inc. Nas,)

Authors

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