



A HORSE FOR HANUKKAH

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Hannah gets the horse she has always wanted as a gift for Hanukkah. The challenges of living with a horse—one that speaks Hebrew, no less!—in a cramped apartment soon become apparent.

We all know there are joys and challenges in living together as a family, with each family member bringing his or her own contributions and idiosyncrasies to the equation! In Hebrew, the term *shalom bayit* means a peaceful home. Jewish tradition teaches that we all must learn to make compromises in order to live at home in harmony. In this book, Hannah's family deals with the chaos brought about by Hannah's *Hanukkah* gift. Hannah comes to realize that her family's peace of mind is more important than her desire for this impractical pet. What moments exemplify your family working together as a team?

The end of the calendar year finds many families dealing with the "gimmies." One way to cope with a child's over-zealous wish list is to focus on giving. *Hanukkah* giving has its origins in giving *gelt* (the Yiddish word for money) to teachers, who traditionally hold a place of great respect. To take part in this tradition, your family might choose to donate art materials or outgrown toys to a women's shelter. You might also decide to give your time, perhaps at a local food pantry.

USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

Hanukkah is a great time to involve everyone in the holiday cooking. The family in this book likes to eat *latkes*

with lox (brined or smoked salmon, often served on a bagel with cream cheese). What foods do you like that might go with *latkes*? And who says *latkes* have to be made only of potato! Get creative—there are 8 nights of *Hanukkah*! Try Tex-Mex *latkes* with corn and salsa, or a tutti-frutti waffle *latke*.

Switch up the themes of your celebration each night of *Hanukkah*. Family game night might include Bingo or the classic *dreidel* game. (A *dreidel* is a four-sided top with each side representing how much "money" one puts in or takes out of the pot. Use different foods to bet with: chocolate-wrapped *gelt*, jelly beans, mini-marshmallows, or fresh peas.) Have a drama night and act out the *Hanukkah* story (or any PJ Library book!), complete with costumes. Save one night for gift-making. Treat grandparents and friends to a unique collage, hand-painted aprons, or a decoupage take-out menu holder.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

You might consider asking the following questions when reading *A Horse for Hanukkah*:

- How many different ways does Hannah's family celebrate *Hanukkah*?
- Can you find times to use the Hebrew phrases Golda says? Pj