



THE LITTLE RED HEN AND THE PASSOVER MATZAH

Written by Leslie Kimmelman

Illustrated by Paul Meisel

Just as it happened in the original story, no one will help Little Red Hen. She makes the Passover matzah herself, but everyone wants to eat it. What's a chicken to do? A recipe for matzah and a Yiddish glossary are included.

In many Jewish homes there is a flurry of preparation during the days and weeks leading up to Passover. Cleaning is done on an order not duplicated in other seasons. The finest dishes are taken from the shelf for the seder (literally “order,” the feast in which the story of Israelite slavery and the subsequent Exodus to freedom is retold). Family recipes are recalled and foods generally not eaten during the rest of the year make a special appearance.

MAKING MATZAH

While making *matzah* for Passover may not be the norm in most Jewish homes today, it is an activity that can readily be accomplished with young children. (See the recipe at the end of this book.)

Dough made from wheat or other grain is considered to begin the leavening process after 18 minutes, hence the kosher *matzah* be prepared within that time frame. Once the flour and water are combined to make kosher *matzah*, the dough should be kneaded, rolled and baked within that time frame. Share special moments with your children by making *matzah*, timing yourselves until your crispy *matzah* is taken from the oven. Can you complete the process in 18 minutes? Of course you can! And your children will make a meaningful contribution to any seder your family attends.

USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

In the traditional story of *The Little Red Hen*, the friends who declined to offer any help in the process of making bread weren't permitted to share the product. How lovely and valuable a lesson is offered in this version where, after repeatedly turning down chances to participate in the work, the animals are still treated kindly, with *matzah* shared all around!

Consider reading both the classic *Little Red Hen* story and this delightful Jewish version with your children, comparing and contrasting the two accounts. As a great discussion topic, talk about the Jewish ethical precept famously stated by the sage Hillel, who advised that we treat all people as we would wish to be treated by them. That is the essence of Torah, said Hillel. It is such a fine lesson, whether learned from beautiful bread or magnificent *matzah*! Pj

LEARN MORE
PJLIBRARY.ORG/FAMILIES

VISIT
PJ Library's
FAMILY
Section