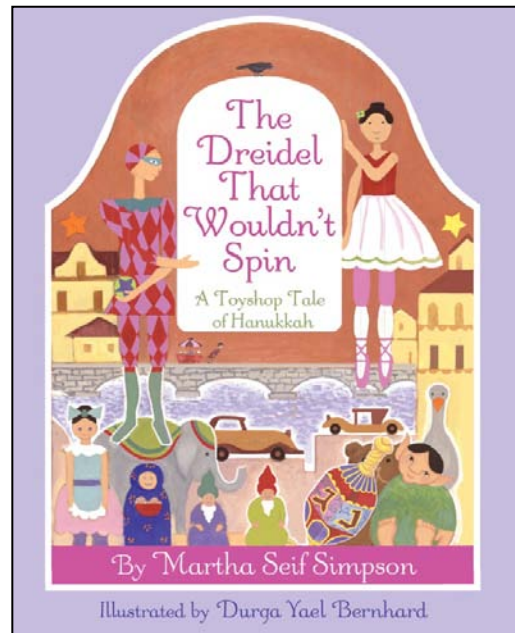


PART 1: Background on the book, the author, and illustrator

The Dreidel That Wouldn't Spin: A Toyshop Tale of Hanukkah

"This dreidel does not work!" the father had cried. "What do you mean?" the shopkeeper asked. "How can a dreidel not work?" It was certainly the most beautiful spinning top the shopkeeper had ever seen, with magical letters on its sides. But it just would not spin for two children who insisted on owning it! Later, the shopkeeper decided to try it one last time: would it spin for another child, one who carried the true spirit of Hanukkah in his heart?



- ❖ A beautiful holiday story about the joy of Hanukkah, the Jewish “Festival of Lights.”
- ❖ The simple message that wonders can still occur for those who are ready for them.
- ❖ An excellent, and fun, multi-cultural introduction to aspects of Jewish culture and Hanukkah. Opportunities to further explore the wonder of a non-European language.
- ❖ A useful appendix that explains the meaning of the Hanukkah holiday.
- ❖ Directions on how to play the dreidel game.
- ❖ Lexile Measurement of Text Difficulty: 530L (1st-2nd grades). Children ages five and up should be able to understand the book when it is read to them.

Publication Details

- ❖ ISBN: 978-1-937786-28-1
- ❖ Publication date: October 2014
- ❖ Price: \$16.95
- ❖ Book size: 8”x10”
- ❖ Page count: 32 pages, hardcover

Look for more information on the book, and additional resources, at
www.wisdomtalespress.com.

About the Author

Martha Seif Simpson is an author and children's librarian. She has served as the Head of Children's Services at the Stratford Library Association in Stratford, CT for the last twenty years. She is the author of five professional books for teachers and librarians and active in the American Library Association. Her first children's book *What NOT to Give Your Mom on Mother's Day* was released in 2013. She credits growing up in the Tifereth Israel Synagogue and helping out at her parent's small variety store with her idea for *The Dreidel That Wouldn't Spin*. Simpson and her husband live in Hamden, CT where she attends the Temple Beth Shalom Synagogue and is active in the Sisterhood. She has four grown children. Visit her online at www.martha-seif-simpson.com.



About the Illustrator



Durga Yael Bernhard began painting at the age of thirteen. She is an award-winning illustrator and author of many fiction and non-fiction books for children, including multicultural books such as *Around the World in One Shabbat: Jewish People Celebrate the Sabbath Together, While You Are Sleeping*, and most recently, *Never Say A Mean Word Again: A Tale from Medieval Spain*. Her lift-the-flap book *In the Fiddle Is a Song* was a *Child Magazine* Best Book of the Year and won the Please Touch Children's Museum of Philadelphia Award. She is a children's teacher of Hebrew, Judaica, and illustration. Ms. Bernhard is also a fine artist known for her religious and family-themed pieces. She has three children and lives in Shandaken, NY. Visit her online at www.dyaelbernhard.com.

PART 2: Sample questions for use in the classroom, library, home, etc.

Comprehension Questions: Read the story and look at the illustrations to answer these questions:



1. What is a dreidel? What holiday are dreidels associated with?
2. Why did the shopkeeper like the dreidel when he first saw it?
3. Three families come into the toyshop in the story. What clues do the text and illustrations give you about how rich or poor each family might be?
4. What do the text and illustrations tell you about the personalities of the three children? What do the pictures inside the front and back covers tell you about the boy who eventually keeps the dreidel?
5. The toys in the shop have very expressive faces that show their feelings. What do the toys think about the girl and the first boy who buy the dreidel? How do they feel about the third child?
6. What does the shopkeeper think about the children who come into his shop? Why do his feelings about the last boy change?
7. Here are some words that can be used to describe the people in the story. Match each word to the person or persons you think best fits the description:

humble	spoiled	disrespectful	respectful	demanding
wealthy	poor	careful	reckless	mysterious
angry	confused	thankful	show-off	kind
wise	greedy	generous	upset	content

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did the dreidel not spin for the first two children? Why did it spin for the last one?
2. Why does each child want the dreidel? What do you think is its real value?
3. Do you think the children are similar to or different from their parents?

4. How does the shopkeeper change during the course of the book?
5. Of the three families in the story, which do you think is the most fortunate?
6. The book does not say where or when the story takes place. Where and when do you think the story happens?

Challenge Questions: Read the Author's Note at the back of the book to help answer these more challenging questions, some of which might require further research:

1. What is a miracle? What is the miracle associated with Hanukkah? What is the "small miracle" that happened in the story? What do you think caused the small miracle?
2. The last picture of the peddler shows him pulling a cart that has the letters **אליהו** (pronounced *Eliyahu*) which is the Hebrew name for Elijah the Prophet. What did the peddler say or do that might indicate he might be Elijah?
3. According to Jewish folklore, Elijah is often accompanied by a crow. Just for fun, look through the book to find pictures of the black bird.

Additional Resources

To learn more about Hanukkah and the dreidel game, here are some online resources for your own information or to share with children:

- Youtube has a number of videos that will be informative and fun for children, who can benefit from watching the dreidel game being played. Search youtube for videos that fit your needs, but two good ones are: "Dreidel Understanding the Hanukkah Game - InterfaithFamily" and "How to Play The Dreidel Game." Youtube also has videos with Hanukkah songs.
- There are many good web pages on Hanukkah and Jewish holidays. Here are two that are particularly good: for children or that offer additional resources:
 - <http://www.activityvillage.co.uk>
 - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/judaism/hanukkah.shtml>



THE DREIDEL THAT WOULDN'T SPIN— WISDOM TALES ACTIVITY GUIDE

PART 3

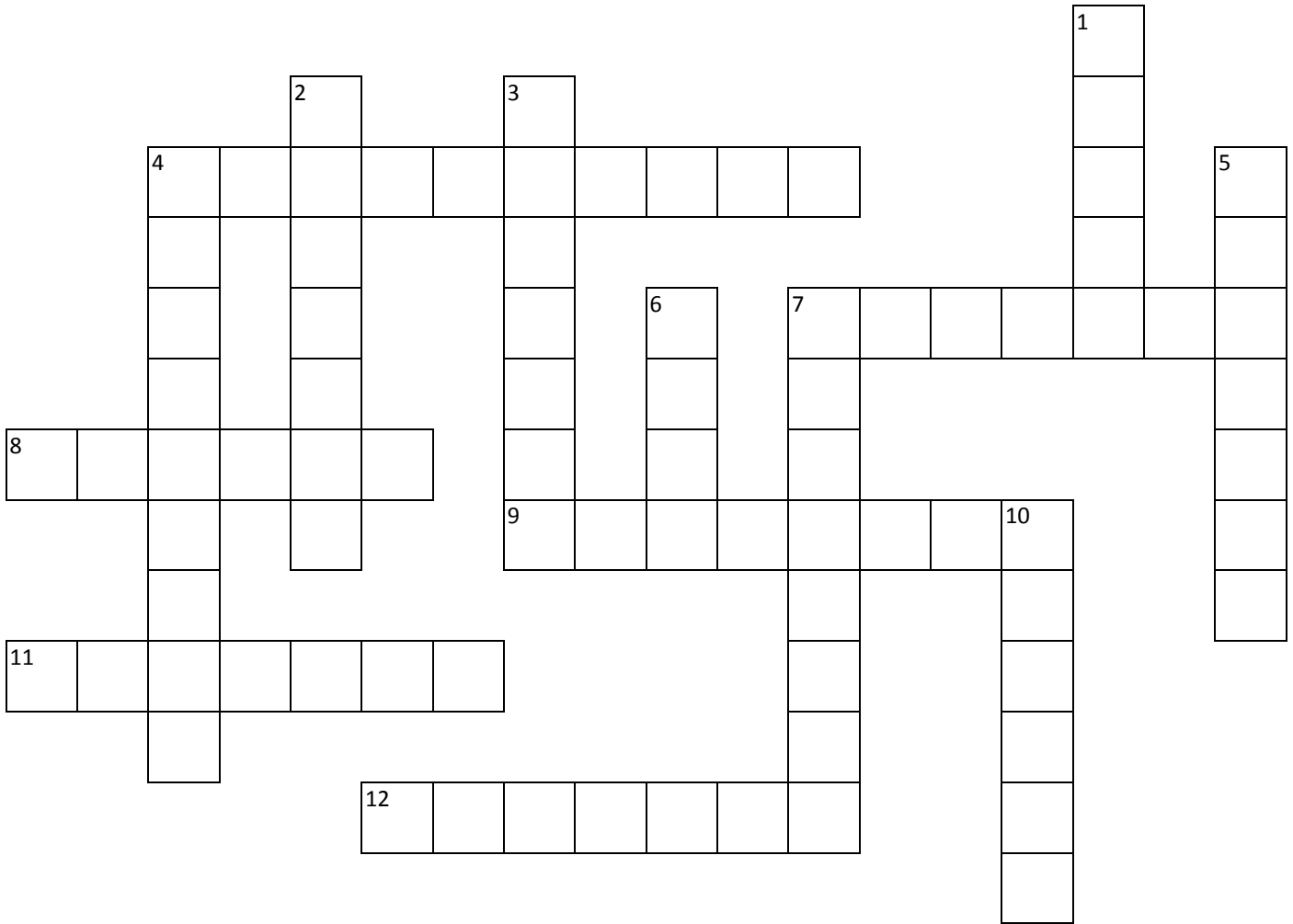


Crossword Puzzle Grid for



The Dreidel That Wouldn't Spin: A Toyshop Tale of Hanukkah

14 words



ACROSS

- 4** Person who runs the toyshop
- 7** Man who sells the dreidel to the shopkeeper
- 8** Where the shopkeeper displays the dreidel
- 9** December holiday
- 11** A spinning top
- 12** These are lit each night of Hanukkah

DOWN

- 1** The kind of miracle that happened here
- 2** Where the story takes place
- 3** Hanukkah candle holder
- 4** What the first father calls the shopkeeper
- 5** This occurs when the dreidel finally spins
- 6** What a dreidel does
- 7** What the first two families are carrying when they enter the toyshop
- 10** The dreidel's letters are in this language

