








The Hebrews' Exodus from Egypt and Passover

Overview:


Students will learn the story of the ancient Hebrews of Canaan and the significance of Passover in the Jewish religion.

Objectives:











At the end of the lesson students will be able to:

-  **Describe** the land where the Hebrews first lived, and point it out on a present day map.
-  **Tell** the story of the Hebrews flight from Canaan to Egypt and why they then left Egypt to return back to Canaan.
-  **Explain** the significance of the Passover holiday in the Jewish faith.
-  **Identify** what foods in the garden are important in their own cultural traditions.
-  **Compare** those with the foods found on a seder plate.





Preparation:

-  Prepare a Seder plate because this will be more “real” to the students than just the drawing/visual aid.




Vocabulary:

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Seder |  Passover |
|  drought |  monotheism |
|  famine |  leavening |
|  exodus |  to recline |
|  Moses |  Hebrews/Israelites |


Materials:

-  Map of the world
-  Map of Canaan and Egypt (see attached)
-  Serving trays and small plates and cups for each student to assemble their seder plate
-  Visual Aid: “Seder Plate”

On the Board:

-  Vocabulary
-  Student Reflection Questions
-  Timeline to illustrate the history of the Hebrews

Suggested Snack:

-  A Passover Seder:
 - Matzo
 - Grape Juice
 - Roasted eggs
 - Horseradish
 - Parsley
 - Salt water
 - Lamb bone
 - Charoset: <http://www.realsimple.com/food-recipes/browse-all-recipes/charoset>

Learning Activities:

I. Presentation (20 min.)

- A. Tell the story of the Hebrews using the timeline you have created on the board.
 - According to the Torah (the first 5 books of the Old Testament in the Judeo-Christian bible), god told Abraham to move his family from Mesopotamia and settle in Canaan. In 1,000 BCE a people called the ancient Hebrews (also known as the Israelites) built their kingdom in Canaan.
 - This land is today Lebanon, Israel, and Jordan.
 - Ask students to point out where Canaan was located on the world map.
- B. They lived there for about a century, worshipping their god.
 - This was unique, as most cultures at that time worshipped many gods and goddesses.
 - This made their religion, Judaism, *monotheistic*: the doctrine or belief that there is only one god.
- C. A long *drought* (a period of below-average rain in a given region, resulting in prolonged shortages of water) brought *famine* to the land. A *famine* is a widespread scarcity of food, caused by several factors including crop failure, population imbalance, or governmental policies. This phenomenon is usually accompanied or followed by regional malnutrition, starvation, epidemics, and increased mortality.
 - According to the bible, because of the famine the Hebrews decided to flee Canaan for Egypt in hopes of a better life. Unfortunately, when they arrived in Egypt, the Pharaoh made them slaves and forced them to build the pyramids and do other menial jobs.
- D. After many years, god sent a series of ten plagues to attack the Egyptians to force the Pharaoh to allow the Hebrews to leave Egypt. The last plague involved killing the first born in every family. But god passed over the homes of the Israelites, saving their first born. That is how the Jewish celebration Passover got its name.
 - The Hebrews took this opportunity to flee Egypt and go back to Canaan. The legend tells that it took them 40 years to return home.
 - Now, every year, the Jewish faith celebrates Passover as a commemoration of their liberation by god from slavery in Egypt and their freedom as a nation under the leadership of Moses (a prophet who led the exodus out of Egypt).
 - Because seven is a holy number in Judaism, Passover lasts for seven days and occurs in the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar (usually in April, according to our calendar). They celebrate with a *seder*: a Jewish ritual and ceremonial dinner.

2. Activity: A Passover Seder (25 min.)
 - A. Tell students that a seder is a very sacred ritual in the Jewish faith and that they should be respectful during the activity.
 - B. Tell students that at every seder there are seven traditional foods. Each represents some part of the Hebrew's journey out of Egypt. Present the students with a Passover Seder plate, along with a glass of grape juice, and discuss the significance of each item:
 - **Matzo** is flat bread with no leavening (yeast). They were able to make this flat bread quickly when they were fleeing Egypt because they did not have enough time to allow the dough to rise.
 - **Charoset (Haroset)** is made of minced apples with honey and walnuts. It symbolizes the mortar used to "glue" the clay bricks of the pyramids together.
 - **Bitter herbs** commemorates the bitter slavery endured by the Hebrews.
 - **Karpas** (usually parsley or celery) are always a green plant, to symbolize the initial flourishing of the Israelites in Egypt.
 - **Salt water** symbolizes the tears and sweat of enslavement, though paradoxically, it is also a symbol for purity, springtime, and the sea, the mother of all life. Often, a single bowl of salt water sits on the table into which each person dips their karpas during the seder.
 - **Roasted eggs** were a holiday sacrifice once offered by the Hebrews. The egg is also a universal symbol of springtime, new beginnings, and rebirth.
 - **Lamb bone** represents the lamb that was sacrificed by the Israelites on the eve of their exodus from Egypt.
 - **Grape juice** (usually wine for adults) was a royal drink to celebrate their new found freedom.
 - Tell students that it is customary to eat the seder meal while reclining. This symbolizes freedom, as royalty usually ate while leaning back on pillows.
3. Have students answer the Reflection Questions in their garden journals. (5 min.)

Student Reflection Questions:

1. Food is used during Passover to symbolize significant events in the Hebrew history. Write about any instances in your culture where you use food to celebrate or symbolize important events?
2. Why do you think some Jewish people believe it is important to commemorate difficult times in their history?

Assessment Questions:

1. Describe how Passover got its name?

- **God sent a series of ten plagues to Egyptians that made people sick and ruined their crops and livestock. The last plague killed the first born in every family. But God passed over the homes of the Hebrew slaves, saving their children.**
- 2. Explain what matzo is and why is it significant to Passover?
 - **Matzo is flat bread with no leavening (yeast). The Hebrews were able to make this unleavened bread quickly when they were fleeing Egypt because they did not have to wait for it to rise before they baked it.**
- 3. What does it mean for a religion to be monotheistic?
 - A. **Its followers worship only one god**
 - B. Its followers worships multiple gods
 - C. It is the only true religion in the world
- 4. What is a seder?
 - A. A stringed instrument played by Hebrews in ancient Egypt
 - B. **A ceremonial meal held during the seven days of Passover**
 - C. A Hebrew word for bread

Standards:

Common Core State Standards

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.



