

Tu B'Shvat

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Kesher Konekt.....Jewish activities at your fingertips for 4th to 8th Grade



Caring for the environment is an important theme in the Jewish tradition. The holiday of Tu B'Shvat is celebrated on the 15th day of the month of Shevat, honoring nature and trees and is often called the "birthday of the trees."

The Tu B'Shvat Story

ט"ו בשבט does not a pear in the 🇮🇱. It was decreed a holiday by the rabbi about 2000 years. People were mostly farmers in Israel. They had laws of charity to follow, which required that they know the Ages of trees & when the growing began. They chose ט"ו בשבט as the date for determining this cause it came when the winter rains were over and just before the new year began. They decided that whatever bloomed after ט"ו בשבט was of the new year. A farmer came a year older on ט"ו בשבט. This was important information. When people no longer were farmers (and no longer all lived in Israel), they mostly lived in cities & worked at city jobs. But they always remembered this Rosh Hashanah L'Elanot (new year of trees), cause it reminded them of Israel. And cause it came a day after appreciating other growing things.

www.jnf.org

MORE WAYS TO CELEBRATE TU B'SHVAT

- Read *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein & make a Giving Tree
- Research & create a Family Tree
- Grow plants from seeds
- Donate to Jewish National Fund & help reforest land
- Plant a tree in your community

Tu B'Shvat is a time to appreciate the natural world around us. Did you know that on Tu B'Shvat *Shehecheyanu* (a blessing for gratitude when experiencing something new) is said when you fulfill the tradition of eating a fruit you've never tasted before, or one you're eating for the first time this season? Try something new and say a blessing!

The blessing when eating fruit:

Baruch atah A-donoj, Elo-heinu Melech Ha'Olam borei pri ha-aitz.

Blessed are You Adonai our God who creates the fruit of the tree.

The blessing of *Shehecheyanu*:

Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-he-nu Me-lech Ha-olam She-heche-ya-nu Ve-ki-yi-ma-nu Ve-higi-a-nu Liz-man Ha-zeh.

Blessed are You Adonai our God who has sustained us and brought us to this day.

On Tu B'Shvat we eat a variety of fruits and nuts that are associated with Israel. The Kabbalists (mystics) in the 16th & 17th century, created a ritual for Tu B'Shvat similar to the Passover seder. Why not do one with your family? (lots of ideas online).

Because Tu B'Shvat is connected to the agricultural cycle of the land of Israel, it is customary to eat fruits grown in Israel—dates, figs, grapes, almonds, pomegranates, carob and oranges.

From these foods, there are 3 categories:

1. Fruits & Nuts with shells or peels: walnuts, almonds, pomegranates, coconut
2. Fruits with an edible outside and hard pit inside: cherries, olives, plums, apricots
3. A fruit where both the inside & outside are edible: grapes, blueberries, pears, apples

❓ SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT...HOW ARE PEOPLE LIKE THESE FOODS? ❓



On Tu B'Shvat we reconnect to the commandment *Bal Taschit*: Do not waste or destroy. Let Tu B'Shvat be a reminder to recycle, reduce and reuse.

RULES REGARDING FOOD-BEARING TREES IN ISRAEL

1. When any kind of food-bearing trees are planted in Israel, the fruit of that tree is considered forbidden and must not be eaten for ___ years?
2. During the ___th year of the tree's life, the fruit is an offering of gratitude to God.
3. In the ___th year, you may eat all you can! The tree gets to share its fruit and make the world a sweeter, happier, healthier place!

Answers to above questions: (1) 3 years (2) 4th year (3) 5th year

RECIPE CORNER



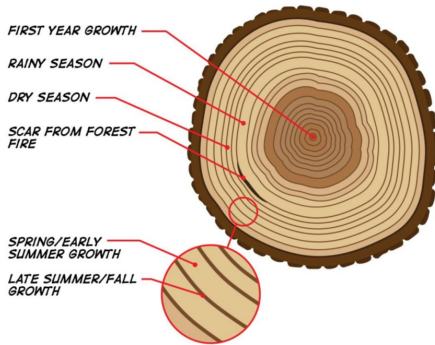
CHERRY BLOSSOM FRUIT TREE CENTERPIECE

- You'll Need:**
 1 orange and 1 grapefruit per centerpiece
 8-10 skewers per centerpiece
 stiff pink fabric, felt or paper to make flowers
 assortment of dried fruits and marshmallows
 a plate for the base
 tooth picks
- How To:**
 *Cut out pink flowers that are about 4 to 5 inches wide.
 *Fill up skewers with dried fruit, top with a flower and then a dried cranberry or raisin.
 *Assemble your base by attaching orange to grapefruit with tooth

Today, even if the date the tree was planted is unknown, there is still a way to find the age of a tree.

How old is a tree?

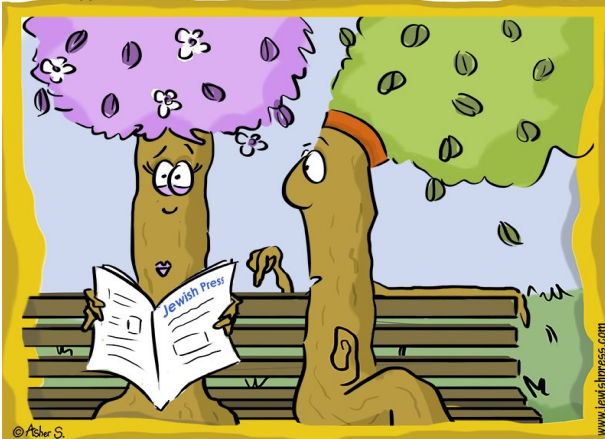
- Tree cookies are cross sections of tree trunks that foresters and teachers use to illustrate how trees grow.
- Tree cookies reveal the many different layers that make up a tree.
- Each layer can tell us something about the tree's life and the climate in which it grew.
- The light colored rings represent wood that grew in the spring and early summer, while the dark rings represent wood that grew in the late summer and fall.
- Together, one light ring plus the surrounding dark ring equals one year of the tree's life.



HOLIDAY HUMOR

A newspaper made out of both my grandparents combined just wished me a happy birthday. I'm not sure how I'm supposed to feel right now...

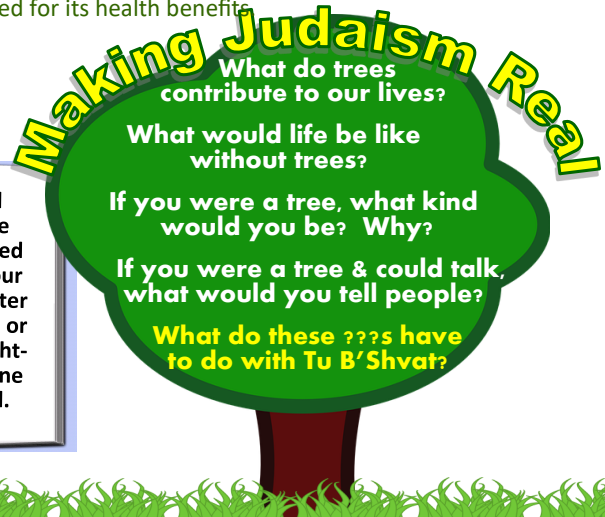
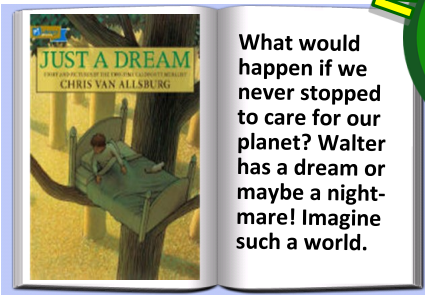
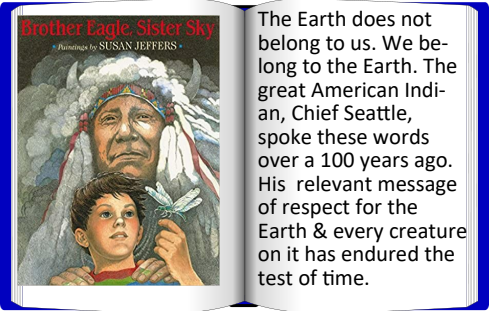
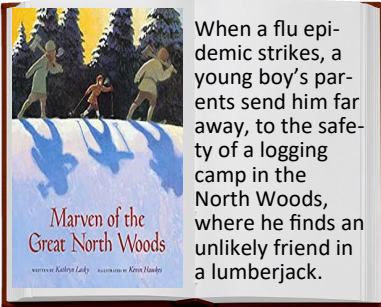
If it makes you feel any better, We're sitting on my grandparents from both sides right now...



ISRAEL'S TREES

- Acacia** (we've a few kinds): /שִׁטָּה shita – it has a major role in the desert ecosystem. According to the Bible, the Tabernacle was made from its wood.
- Almond**: /שֶׁקֶד shekedia - first (and quite pretty) bloomer of spring. The word for almond is shaken , שקד
- Black Mulberry**: /תות שחור tut shachor.
- Carob**: /חרוב charuv.
- Cedar of Lebanon**: /אֶרֶז הַלְבָּנוֹן arez halevanon – northern Israel; a symbol of power and prestige, with many Biblical references. King Solomon used this wood in constructing the First Temple.
- Citrus tree**: /פְּרֵי הָדָר etz hadar. Citrus fruit is פרי הדר /pri hadar. We've got terrific oranges, grapefruits, lemons, pomelos, clementinas, kumquats...
- Cypress**: /ברוש brosh – windbreaker, afforestation, wood source, ornamental.
- Date Palm**: /תַּמָּר tamar - Nutritious treat, like Nature's candy. Newer, still-closed leaves from the center of the tree are taken to serve as palm branches (lulav)– one of the four species used on Sukkot.
- Eucalyptus**: /אֶקְלִיפְטוֹס ekaliptus–forestation, windbreaker, soil protection, originally also for draining swamp areas in the north.
- Fig**: /תְּאֵנָה te-ena.
- Oak**: /מַלְאֹן malon - king of the trees.
- Olive**: /עֵץ זַיִת etz zayit . We in Israel can't imagine life without an abundance of olives and olive oil.
- Pomegranate**: /רִמּוֹן rimmon. Very popular, tasty, a great addition to tons of varied dishes, plus increasingly touted for its health benefits.

READING CORNER



TU B'SHVAT & ACTIVITIES



CENTER PIECE FOR TU B'SHVAT

What you'll Need:

- * 2 wide cans - mine are oatmeal cans (or one tall juice can)
- * Tree branches
- * Patterned paper or plain paper
- * String or thread and a needle
- * Hot glue and/or double sided foam tape

How To:

1. Wrap cans in paper, and if using two cans, glue the cans together with hot glue or double-stick foam tape
2. Decorate your can
3. Cut sticks to proper height for cans & secure to bottom of can with hot glue or pieces of duct tape if necessary for them to maintain their position within the can
4. Draw & cut out fruit slices
5. Using a needle and string or thread, make hangers for the fruit slices.
6. Hang them on the branches where desired, and voila, a cute centerpiece is born!



Aromatic Orange Lantern

Supplies:

- * Orange & Olive Oil

Instructions:

1. Gently score the perimeter of an orange, just close enough to see the fruit inside. Take care not to cut through the center of the fruit.
2. Carefully remove the peel from the fruit, one half at a time, by slipping your finger

between the peel and the fruit. Be sure to reserve the

center strand of pulp that shoots up through the center of the fruit. This strand of pulp, which is connected to the stem, will later serve as the wick.

3. On the top half of the orange, use a pairing knife to cut out a star, a tree, a leaf, or any design you'd like!

4. Set bottom of orange on a fireproof coaster/plate and fill the bottom quarter with olive oil. When you pour the oil into the orange cup, drizzle a little bit over the "wick."

5. Light your orange's wick!

6. Carefully position the cut out top of the orange centered over the flame. (flame must be fully unobstructed otherwise it will burn).

Take a moment to reflect in the aromatic light. expressing gratitude to the trees for their beauty and bounty.

Soak in the light all around!



Tu B'Shvat Word Search

See how many words you can find in the puzzle!

A	W	S	Q	Q	E	P	G	E	F	W	Y	C	S	L	L
C	Y	G	E	I	O	K	O	B	E	G	X	E	M	M	Y
Y	R	I	D	M	Q	N	N	O	N	V	S	O	Y	T	
J	A	F	E	D	V	X	G	L	U	E	B	N	L	X	D
F	U	G	I	A	V	R	O	I	N	L	D	E	S	E	P
A	R	G	Y	T	T	C	L	Q	F	J	E	W	S	E	O
A	B	D	Q	E	E	I	R	K	L	A	W	M	N	P	N
I	E	P	D	S	U	Z	S	E	N	N	M	R	B	A	B
S	F	T	I	Y	M	E	M	R	E	U	A	H	T	N	E
E	T	F	I	F	V	Z	N	U	R	A	A	E	B	S	H
E	V	A	T	I	T	T	L	T	V	R	S	S	P	R	I
N	G	N	L	I	E	V	E	A	I	Y	T	R	U	U	M
J	C	O	Y	E	H	B	W	N	C	Y	M	O	L	E	Q
Z	Q	T	S	R	E	D	E	S	T	K	F	G	M	B	D
L															

The words in the puzzle are: ALMOND BARLEY BSHEVAT DATES ECOLOGY ENVIRONMENT FIGS FOUR FRUIT GRAPES JANUARY JEWS NATURE NEW OLIVES POMEGRANATES SEVEN SHEVAT SPECIES SPRING TREE



Broccoli Stamped Fall Tree

Supplies:

- * White Cardstock
- * Brown/Red/Yellow/Orange Craft Paint
- * Fresh **RAW** Broccoli (can also use bunch of Qtips)
- * Small Paper Plate

Directions:

- * Using the brown paint, paint a tree on the white cardstock.
- * Now grab your paper plate and various colors of craft paint.
- * Squirt all the colors on the paper plate.
- * Take your piece of broccoli and using it like a sponge, dip it in the paint, then on the tree.
- * Repeat until the leaves/tree starts to look full.
- * When you have the design you like, set it aside to let it dry completely before displaying proudly!!!