

# Chanukah

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**Concepts:** freedom, miracles

**Vocabulary:** nes, gadol, haya, sham = a great miracle happened there; chanukah; s'vivon  
(Israeli dreidels say "po/here")

**Symbols/Custom:** Maccabees = freedom fighters; lighting the menorah; playing dreidel; eating latkes, soufganiot, gelt

**Props:** menorah picture with flames, laminated pictures of the ways we celebrate Chanukah, Chanukah O Chanukah book, dreidels, candle stick puppets

## Tips for Teaching This Unit:

1. Decorate a felt board (or poster) with laminated pictures of the things we do to celebrate Chanukah, such as eating latkes, playing dreidel, etc. Sing **Chanukah's Here**, and as students give their suggestions which you zip into the song, add the pictures to the board. The children love seeing the picture develop with their ideas! (This is appropriate for 3's and older.) If the song feels too long, you can shorten it by singing the first verse (Chanukah's here, it's time to celebrate!) a few times, interspersed by putting their ideas on the board, rather than zipping those ideas into the song.

### Chanukah's Here

by Lisa Baydush ([audio](#))

Chanukah's here, it's time to celebrate (3x) now!  
... let's spin the dreidel 'round (3x) now...  
... let's light the candles (right<sup>3rd</sup>) now (3x)...  
... let's eat the latkes (right<sup>3rd</sup>) now (3x)...  
... let's open presents (right<sup>3rd</sup>) now (3x)...  
... let's spend time with family (right<sup>3rd</sup> now) (3x)...  
Happy Chanukah!



2. We're so happy it's Chanukah! Sing **Hooray for Chanukah!** The verses can compare Chanukah to other holidays OR can be about the students' favorite things to do during Chanukah.

### Hooray for Chanukah ([audio](#))

from Drew's Famous Kids Happy Hanukah album

#### Chorus:

Hip hip hooray (hooray!) for Chanukah! (3x)  
Hey hey, what do you say, hooray for Chanukah!

I like Passover/Sukkot, yes I do,  
And I really like Purim/Thanksgiving too,  
But the holiday I like best,  
Is Chanukah, yes, yes, yes! (chorus)

I like latkes, yes I do,  
And I really like dreidels too,  
But the thing about Chanukah I like best,  
Is lighting candles, yes, yes, yes! (chorus)

## Candle songs...

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3. Ask the children if they can count to eight, and practice counting while alternately patting each leg. Explain that there are eight nights of Chanukah. Sing **Eight Little Candles**. This has been a highly engaging song for my students, ages 2-5, because of all the movement... fluttering fingers like candles, marching like Maccabees, spinning like dreidels and sizzling in their seats like latkes!

## **Eight Little Candles**

by Lisa Baydush ([audio](#))

### Chorus:

1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8!

1-2, 3-4, 5-6-7-8! (repeat)

8 little candles, shining, shining; 8 little candles shining bright!

8 little candles, shining, shining; Shining brightly for eight nights! (chorus)

8 little Maccabees, marching, marching; 8 little Maccabees, brave and strong!

8 little Maccabees, marching, marching; Marching as they sing this song! (chorus)

8 little dreidels, spinning, spinning; 8 little dreidels, spinning 'round!

8 little dreidels, spinning, spinning; Spinning dreidels all fall down! (chorus)

8 little latkes, sizzling, sizzling; 8 little latkes, good to eat!

8 little latkes, sizzling, sizzling; Sizzling latkes, such a treat! (chorus)

4. Another fun counting song is **How Many Candles!** This is a long song, but they enjoy shouting ONE-ONE-one-one-one at the appropriate time.

## **How Many Candles?**

by Jackie Cytrynbaum

How many candles? How many candles?

How many candles do we light?

On our Chanukah, on our Chanukah,

On the first Chanukah night?

One! One! One-one-one!

One candle burning, one candle burning

On the first Chanukah night!

5. **Twinkle Twinkle Chanukah Lights** is very sweet! 2's and 3's love this because they know the 'real' song. Do hand motions with this or use craft-stick candles... it segues nicely to the blessings and candle-lighting.

## **Twinkle, Twinkle, Chanukah Lights**

Twinkle, twinkle, Chanukah lights,

shining brightly for eight nights!

The shamas stands up straight and tall,

to light others one and all.

Twinkle, twinkle, Chanukah lights,

shining brightly for eight nights!

6. It's also fun to 'light' a laminated Chanukah with the 'flame' from their craft-stick candle while I sing **We Light The Chanukah Lights**.

## **We Light the Chanukah Lights**

by Helene and Michael Kates

### Chorus:

We light the Chanukah lights

We light the Chanukah lights (yes, we light them!) (repeat)

1-2-3-4, each night we add one more

5-6-7-8, my chanukah looks so great (chorus)



7. **Eight Little Chanukah Lights** is a real crowd-pleaser for adults as well as children, who particularly enjoy the verse 'don't let anyone (blow) 'em out,' blowing instead of singing the word 'blow.' The craft-stick candle prop works well with this song too.

### **Eight Little Chanukah Lights**

to the tune of This Little Light of Mine

Eight little Chanukah lights, we're gonna let 'em shine! (3x)  
Let 'em shine! (3x)

Gonna light another candle every night...  
Won't let anyone (blow) it out...  
Gonna shine our light for all to see...

### **Latke songs...**

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8. Tell the story of the **Five Little Latkes** sizzling in the pan. I made felt-board prop with a picture of a frying pan and five smiling latkes, as well as an iBooks prop to show on an iPad, but it works just as well with just the hand motions. This is a HUGE favorite for preschool – Kindergarten!

### **Five Little Latkes**

by Jackie Cytrynbaum ([prop](#))



Five little latkes sizzling in the pan  
One jumped out and said, "Catch me if you can!"  
And he ran and he ran all around the kitchen floor  
And when I turned around, he ran right out the door!

At the end, make a sad face because there aren't any latkes to eat. Usually, one of the children will come up with a good solution – make some more! Then sing **Take a Potato** with hand motions, followed by **Lots of Latkes**, a universal favorite!

### **Take a Potato**

by Ruth Etkin

Take a potato, pat, pat, pat;  
Roll it and make it flat, flat, flat;  
Fry it in oil, splat, splat, splat,  
Chanukah latkes just like that!

### **Lots of Latkes**

by Cantor Allen Lieder

Lots of latkes, lots of latkes,  
Lots of latkes, Lots – let's all eat 'em up! (repeat)

S'vivon sov sov, s'vivon sov sov (4x)

Maccabees, mac, mac, mac Maccabees,  
Mac, mac, mac Maccabees, mac, mac, mac,  
...mac, mac, mac, mac, mac, mac, mac, mac (repeat)  
...mac, mac, mac!

9. Latke songs aren't complete without the wonderfully silly song – **Yodelay-Do Potato** (appropriate for 4's and older). Zip in the ways the children like to eat their latkes (with applesauce and sour cream, with their mothers, for breakfast, lunch and dinner, etc.) Show Doda Mollie's video of this song... it's precious!

## Yodlelay-Do Potato

by Ellen Allard ([video](#))

I like to eat potato latkes, I like to eat them all day.  
And when I eat potato latkes, this is what I say:

Yodlelay-do potato Yodlelay-do potato  
Yodlelay-do potato latkes for me!  
Yodlelay-do potato Yodlelay-do potato  
Yodlelay-yodlelay potato!

### Dreidel songs...

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10. Let the children practice spinning dreidels while we sing **I Have a Little Dreidel**. Include lots of silly verses with 3's and older (at end of this document). Pause after: "I made it out of bread;" children should respond by asking in an exaggerated way, "BREAD?!" Let them suggest what the dreidels can be made of, and then think quickly!

11. More fun dreidel songs are:

### **Turn Little Dreidel...** *spin like dreidels and fall down when the music stops*

by Chane Mlotek, English by Rachel Buchman

Turn around, turn around, spin little dreidele  
Turn around, turn around, spin little dreidele  
Faster and faster and win little dreidele  
Chanukah's here tonight!



1-2-3, 1-2-3, spin little dreidele...

### **S'-vi-von...** *spin around on sov, sov, sov; give a thumbs-up for 'tov'*

S'-vi-von sov sov sov, Chanukah hu chag tov,  
Chanukah hu chag tov, s'-vi-von sov sov sov!

Chag simcha hu la-am, nes gadol ha-ya sham,  
Nes gadol ha-ya sham, chag simcha hu la-am!

S'vivos, turn and turn, while the lovely candles burn,  
What a wondrous holiday, watch us sing and dance and play!

Tell a story full of cheer, a great miracle happened there;  
It's a holiday of lights for eight days and eight nights!

### More fun songs...

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12. Other hit Chanukah songs for preschoolers include the following:

- a. **In the Window...** a capella with hand motions... I 'give out' imaginary crayons for drawing the window. This is great with 4's! I thought it worked fabulously to sing this soothing, meditative song right after the rowdy **How Many Candles**.
- b. **Everyone Can Be a Maccabee...** march with instruments.
- c. **Chanukah O Chanukah...** teach signs to 3's and 4's. I have a book with the lyrics, so it's fun to 'sing' the book to 2's and 3's.

- d. **The Maccabees...** they love the silly ending about how WE ate all the latkes!
- e. **Stand Up Like a Proud Maccabee...** stand up, spin around, shine your light and then sit down! Go faster with each repetition until everyone is giggling.
- f. **A Great Miracle Happened There...** I made a story book [prop](#) to accompany the song.

## I Have a Little Dreidel

I have a little dreidel, **I made it out of clay**;  
And when it's dry and ready, then dreidel I shall play!

**It has a lovely body**, with legs so short and thin;  
And when it gets all tired, it drops and then I win!

**My dreidel is so playful**, it loves to dance and spin;  
A happy game of dreidel, come play, now let's begin!

I have a little dreidel, **it's shiny, bright and new**;  
And every night of Chanukah, I'd like to play with you!

I have a little dreidel, **as big as big can be**;  
I cannot spin my dreidel 'cause it's way too big for me!

**My dreidel's very lucky**; it wins at every game;  
I'll let you know my secret; the letters are all the same!

I have a little dreidel, I got it **at Whole Foods**;  
It's organic, you can eat it, if you're in that sort of mood.

I had a little dreidel; I made it out of **air**;  
...but when I went to spin it, it wasn't even there!  
...I think I lost my dreidel, I can't find it anywhere!

I have a little dreidel I made it out of **applesauce**,  
but when I tried to spin it, it got a little lost!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of a **ball**;  
I cannot spin my dreidel 'cause it bounced right down the hall!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **blocks**;  
It's a really awesome dreidel, my dreidel really rocks!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **brass**;  
I brought it the JCC and showed it to my class!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **bread**;  
It looked so very yummy, I ate it up instead!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **broccoli**;  
and when I'm finished playing, I'll feed it to my doggy!

I have a little dreidel; I made it from a **broom**;  
I think I'll try to talk it into cleaning up my room.

I have a little dreidel, I made it from a **bush**  
But, when I tried to lift it, it knocked me on my tush.

I have a little dreidel; I made it from **cement**  
And now our lovely hardwood floor has a nasty dent!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **chocolate**;  
I couldn't spin my dreidel 'cause it melted in my pocket!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **cloth**;  
and when I went to spin it, it was eaten by a moth!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **crumbs**;  
Mom threw in the trashcan and now I'm feeling bummed!

I have a little dreidel; I made it with my **dad**;  
We play with it for hours, the best Chanukah I've had!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **dirt**;  
but every time I spin it, I get a dirty shirt!

I have a little dreidel I made it out of **flowers**  
I really like my dreidel, I can play with it for hours!

I have a little dreidel; I made it all with **gimmels**;  
Playing with my dreidel makes winning really simple!

I have a little dreidel I made it out of **glass**,  
I really like my dreidel, it spins really, really fast!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **gold**;  
I think I'll keep my dreidel until I'm very old.

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **glue**;  
It really wouldn't spin, and then it stuck right to my shoe!

I have a little dreidel; I made it from a **guitar**;  
and if you do not strum it, it won't spin very far!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **gum**;  
But when I tried to spin it, it stuck right to my thumb.

I have a little dreidel I made it out of **hair**,  
but when I tried to spin it, it flew into the air!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **ice**;  
Eventually it melted, which wasn't very nice!

I have a little dreidel I made it out of **ice cream**,  
but my little brother ate it, which made me want to scream!

I have a little dreidel I made it out of **ink**,  
but when I went to spin it, it turned my fingers pink!

I had a little dreidel, I made it out of **jelly**;  
...I found the one from last year, but it got really smelly!  
...It is a little sticky, but feels good in my belly!

I have a little dreidel I made it out of **light**,  
And every time I spin it, it shines so very bright!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **lox**;  
It tastes good on a bagel, but smells worse than my socks!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **meat**;  
I can't stand to be near it, it smells worse than my feet!

I have a little dreidel, I made it out of **metal**;  
And if it doesn't spin at all, I'll use it for a kettle!

I have a little dreidel; I made it in my **mind**;  
An imaginary dreidel is the hardest one to find.

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **mud**;  
but when I tried to spin it, it fell down with a thud!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **paint**;  
Now our floor has a new pattern which made  
my mother faint!

I have a little dreidel I made it out of **pants**,  
and when I went to spin it, it did a little dance!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **paper**;  
It spins and jumps about, a frisky dreidel caper!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **paste**;  
It's the fastest dreidel ever, it wins every dreidel race

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **pickles**;  
And when I put it on my hand, it always spins and tickles!

I have a little dreidel I made it out of **plastic**,  
and when I went to spin it, I always feel fantastic!

I have a little dreidel I made it out of **playdoh**,  
but when I went to spin it, it turned into a potato...  
LATKE!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **rain**;  
I'll spin it in the sink and then wash it down the drain!

I have a little dreidel I made it **really mushy**  
and when I tried to spin it, it fell right on its tushie!

I have a little dreidel, made from a **Reese's  
Peanut Butter Cup**;  
I never got to play with it, because I ate it up!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **rice**;  
It wasn't great for spinning but it tasted rather nice!

I have a little dreidel made from **rubber bands**;  
I couldn't spin my dreidel 'cause it bounced  
out of my hands!

I had a little dreidel; I made it out of **sand**;  
but when I went to spin it, it crumbled in my hand.

I have a little dreidel; it's made it out of a **shoe**;  
It smells a little funny but... what can you do?

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **snow**;  
I baked it in the oven... where did my dreidel go?

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **soap**;  
I'll spin it the bathtub, I sure hope it will float!

I have a little dreidel, I made it from **spaghetti**,  
and when it really worked, people clapped and  
threw confetti.

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **spinach**;  
And when I spin this dreidel, you know this song is  
finished!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **straw**;  
It went 80 miles an hour, and broke the speeding law!

I have a little dreidel I made it out of **thread**,  
but when I went to spin it, it unraveled in my bed!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **water**;  
It really wouldn't spin, so I gave it to my daughter!

I have a little dreidel; I made it out of **wood**;  
But then I got a splinter, which wasn't very good!

I have a little dreidel I made it out of **yarn**,  
and when I went to spin it, it spun right up my arm.