



Celebrate with Us! Chanukah

Pre-Visit Activities

Learning Objective

To introduce children to the Chanukah story and vocabulary before they visit the museum.

Materials

- World map or globe



Dreidel

What is Chanukah?

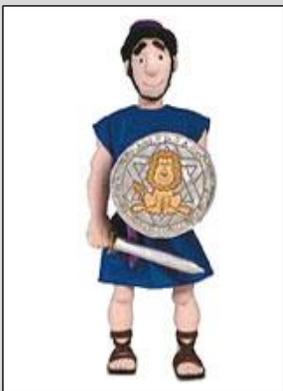
Chanukah is a Jewish Holiday celebrated every winter. During Chanukah, it is **tradition** to eat special foods, sing special songs, and tell a *very* special (and famous) story.

That special and famous story begins like this:

Thousands of years ago, an evil king named **Antiochus** (Ann-tee-oh-kus) ruled the land of Israel. King Antiochus wanted everyone to be just like him. “You will do what I do,” he roared. “Say what I say. Think what I think. Believe what I believe. AND anyone who doesn’t want to ... WILL. BE. PUNISHED!”

Punished? Hey! Is that fair?

What do you think? Well, the Israelites were very unhappy. After all, who wants to be told what to do, what to think, what to believe? Certainly not our hero! Certainly NOT **Judah Maccabee!**



“King Antiochus is wrong!” he declared. “And I will fight to set you free!”

Good plan, Judah Maccabee! So what happens next?

Find out when you visit the Museum at Eldridge Street!

Good words to talk about before you visit:

Dreidel: A spinning top with four sides. It is a special game played during Chanukah.

Freedom: The right to think, speak, and believe what you want.

Hero: The good guy! In the Chanukah story, Judah Maccabee is the hero. The opposite of hero is **villain**.

Israel: A country on the continent of Asia. Can you find it on a map?

Latkes: Potato pancakes fried in oil. They are a Chanukah treat!

Menorah: A special lamp with nine branches. Many people light the Menorah with candles. During the eight days of Chanukah, one new candle is lit every night using the ninth “helper” candle.

Miracle: Something amazing and wonderful that happens! So Amazing, you can hardly believe it!

Oil: A liquid that can be used for making light. Before candles, oil was used to light the menorah.

Olive: A type of fruit that grows on a tree. Olives contain oil.

Temple: A special building where people worship.

Tradition: A tradition is something we do the same way at the same time year after year. For example, it’s a tradition to eat turkey on Thanksgiving.

Villain: The bad guy. In the Chanukah story, King Antiochus is the villain. The opposite of villain is hero.



Questions to think about or discuss:

Chanukah is in the winter. What other holidays do people celebrate in the winter?

What are some of your favorite holidays? What are your favorite holiday traditions?

On the holiday of Chanukah, it is a tradition to tell the Chanukah story and remember the importance of miracles. What is something you would consider to be a miracle?