

Hanukkah: Eight Nights of Light

B1 | Adults / Teens | Reading + Vocabulary + Discussion | 50-60 minutes

BEFORE YOU READ

Talk with a partner. What objects help people remember an important story or event?

1. Match the words (1-6) with the definitions (A-F).

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------|--|
| 1. menorah | _____ | A. remember an important person or event |
| 2. dedication | _____ | B. a special candleholder used at Hanukkah |
| 3. miracle | _____ | C. continuing despite difficulty |
| 4. commemorate | _____ | D. the act of giving a building or object to a special purpose |
| 5. tradition | _____ | E. a custom passed through generations |
| 6. perseverance | _____ | F. an event believed to be caused by a divine power |

2. Read the article. The bold words are the vocabulary from Activity 1.

1. Hanukkah is a Jewish festival that lasts for eight nights. It **commemorates** the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem more than two thousand years ago. The word Hanukkah means **dedication** in Hebrew.
2. According to tradition, there was only enough oil to light the temple lamp for one day. However, the oil lasted for eight days. Many Jewish families remember this **miracle** by lighting candles on a **menorah**, adding one candle each night.
3. Families may sing songs, eat food cooked in oil and play a game with a spinning top called a dreidel. Children may receive gifts or gelt, which means money. Chocolate coins are also popular. These activities help young people remember the history.
4. Hanukkah is also associated with **perseverance** and religious freedom. Different families follow different customs, but the **tradition** of gathering and lighting candles creates a calm, shared moment over eight evenings.

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UNDERSTAND, DISCUSS AND WRITE

3. Comprehension. Answer in complete sentences. Use the article to help you.

1. What does Hanukkah commemorate?

2. What does Hanukkah mean in Hebrew?

3. What miracle is remembered at Hanukkah?

4. How do many families remember this miracle?

5. What ideas is Hanukkah associated with?

4. Discuss. Talk in small groups. Give reasons and examples.

- Why do repeated actions help people remember history?
- What family traditions make you feel connected to others?
- Should children learn the stories behind holidays?
- How can a small object become an important symbol?

5. Homework: Write a descriptive paragraph.

Write 120-150 words about an object, food or activity that helps people remember a story in your culture.

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ANSWER KEY AND TEACHING NOTE

Vocabulary matching

1. menorah - B
2. dedication - D
3. miracle - F
4. commemorate - A
5. tradition - E
6. perseverance - C

Comprehension answers

1. What does Hanukkah commemorate?

It commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

2. What does Hanukkah mean in Hebrew?

It means dedication.

3. What miracle is remembered at Hanukkah?

A small amount of oil lasted for eight days.

4. How do many families remember this miracle?

They light candles on a menorah, adding one each night.

5. What ideas is Hanukkah associated with?

It is associated with perseverance and religious freedom.

Teaching note

Compare matching answers before reading. Accept other article-supported comprehension answers; discussion and homework answers vary. Discuss customs respectfully, distinguishing religious, cultural and personal traditions.