

The Story of the Dreidel

When the Greeks ruled Israel many years ago, they wouldn't let Jewish kids study their religion. So the Jewish teachers put Hebrew letters on a top called a dreidel and used it to teach their lessons. Greek soldiers thought the kids were playing, but they were really learning!

The four letters on the dreidel mean "A great miracle happened there," meaning in Israel long ago. But dreidels in Israel today are different. Instead of the letter װ, there is the letter ך, meaning "A great miracle happened here". The miracle is that the Jewish people were able to defeat the people who oppressed them.

How to Play

Get a pile of peanuts, marbles, chips, or whatever you like as your markers and split them up equally. At the start of the game, each player puts one marker into the pot. Spin the dreidel. The Hebrew letter that appears shows how much you win:

ן (nun) means nothing. You don't win or lose anything.

ג (gimel) means you win the whole pot!

ה (hay) means you win half of the pot!

ש (shin) means you have to put one marker into the pot.

When the pot is empty, each player puts one marker into the pot.

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