



Webinar Discussion Guide

Latkes & Laughter: Hanukkah Activities to Make Meaning and Memories with Grandchildren

By Andrew Davies,
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Purpose

This guide provides prompts for discussion of the JGN webinar “Latkes & Laughter: Hanukkah Activities to Make Meaning and Memories with Grandchildren,” led by Andrew Davies on December 4, 2025. The webinar shares ways to bring Hanukkah to life for grandchildren and families.

If you were not able to attend the session, you can view the recording in the JGN [Video Library](#). The guide is intended for groups of grandparents and program facilitators to discuss the ideas presented in the webinar.

Key Takeaways

- **Play Brings the Light.**

Hanukkah is a holiday of joy, light, and wonder — and play is one of the best ways to help children experience that magic. When *you* play, your grandkids will naturally follow. Lean into the silliness, the drama, and the interactive moments. If it’s fun for you, they will have fun as well.

- **Choose One Thing (and Love It).**

You don’t need to lead all the games, songs, stories, blessings, or traditions. Pick *one* game or activity you’re excited to share — on Zoom or in person — and do it with heart. A joyful, well-led moment will outshine a packed schedule. You can plan to try one new game on each night and repeat the ones they love.

- **“Yes, and” Hanukkah.**

Improv’s “Yes, and” mindset pairs beautifully with Hanukkah. The Maccabees said “Yes, and” to their moment — honoring tradition *and* taking bold action. We can do the same: honor what came before, then add our own stories, creativity, and light. Preserve our great traditions while adding your ideas and innovations.

- **Follow the Spark.**

The best Hanukkah moments often come from following a child’s excitement. If they love spinning dreidels or playing “*Anachnu*” (“We Are”) as donut monsters — stay with that spark. Their joy is the menorah; just help it shine brighter.

- **You Already Have What You Need.**

Many Hanukkah activities require no special prep — just imagination. A scarf becomes a dancing flame, a book becomes a doorway into a story, a simple candle becomes a treasure to find. Start with what you have and build from there.

Tips and Tricks

- **Interactive Wins Every Time.**

Ask questions, imitate sounds, act things out, use your body, use nearby objects — even on Zoom. If you’re sharing a story, ask kids to make the shapes of candles or spin like dreidels. Engagement turns tradition into memory.

- **Objects Make Everything More Fun.**

Small props help bring Hanukkah to life: dreidel, scarf or balloon, flashlight or candle (unlit!), chocolate gelt. These simple objects transform Zoom squares or living rooms into playful spaces.

- **Prepare for Success (Supplies Not Surprise!).**

If you want to use scarves, books, dreidels, candles, or printouts, gather them early. Having items ready sets you up for smooth, joyful play.

- **Follow the Kids’ Lead.**

Kids’ attention comes in small bursts — and that’s normal. If a game is too long, shorten it. If it’s going great, stick with it longer. Let the moment guide you.

- **Food is a Playground.**

Latkes, donuts, and even gelt can be playful tools: Pretend to cook, shape latkes from thin air, “smell” the donuts together, or vote on favorite toppings. Play with food *without making a mess*.

Discussion Questions

1. **Warm-Up Memories.** What's one Hanukkah tradition you loved as a kid — or that your grandkids love now? How might you bring that feeling to this year's celebration?
2. **Designing Your Celebration.** Will you celebrate in person, on Zoom, or both? How does the format influence what you want to lead?
3. **Picking Your One Activity.** If you could only choose *one* Hanukkah activity to share with your grandchildren this year, which would it be — and why? What two “bonus options” might you bring out if you have extra time?
4. **The Story of Hanukkah.** What resonates with you about the story of Hanukkah? What do you want to convey from the story to your grandchildren? How might you tell them the story or perform the story with them?
5. **Themes of Light.** Which Hanukkah theme resonates most with you this year — courage, resilience, joy, miracles, family, *ruach*/spirit, light? How might you help your grandchildren *feel* that theme through a game or story?
6. **Games and Play.** Which Mitzprov game (e.g., Antiochus Says, Anachnu, Catch the Candle, Wise Menorah, Find the Light) do you feel most excited to try? What age group or personality in your family would love that game most?
7. **Books and Stories.** What Hanukkah books have been meaningful in your family? How might you make story time more interactive — through voices, movement, or imagination?
8. **Food Traditions.** What food do you most connect with Hanukkah — and why? Is there a playful way to involve kids with that food (pretend play, cooking, decorating, sharing)?
9. **Reflection & Closure.** How can you create a reflective moment at the end of candle lighting or play time? Could everyone share a favorite part of the evening, a new idea they want to try, or something that helped them feel the “light” this year?