



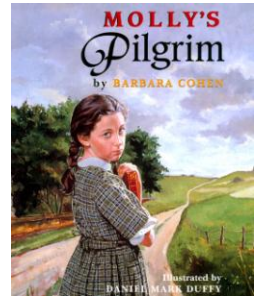
## **Thanksgiving Activity Based on *Molly's Pilgrim* (Cohen)**

**Grade Level** - appropriate for grades 3-6

### **Goals for the Lesson/Activitys**

**Students will gain familiarity with the ideas that:**

- Jews came to America looking for religious freedom
- Jews moved to America from a variety of countries



**Students will be able to:**

- Draw simple connections between the pilgrims' immigrant experiences and Jewish American immigrant experiences.
- Students will be able to research their family history and identify at least one of their own family's "coming to America" story

### **Materials needed**

Copies of *Molly's Pilgrim* by Barbara Cohen, or a copy of the video

Scraps of fabric, beads, pipe cleaners, white glue, tag board and a doll template

### **Technology needed**

If you are going to show the movie, you will need a projector, a screen, and a DVD player.

### **Background**

The book and movie *Molly's Pilgrim* (Barbara Cohen) tell the story of Molly, a Jewish girl who has recently moved to America from Russia. Molly is learning about Thanksgiving in school and studying about the Pilgrims, who came to America looking for religious freedom. All of the kids in her class must make a pilgrim doll, and Molly's mom helps her make one. But, Molly's doll does not look like a traditional pilgrim. Instead, it looks like Molly's mom! At first the kids at school laugh, but then Molly's mom explains that she too is a pilgrim because she came to America for religious freedom.



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### **Description of Activities**

**Read and Discuss:** Read the book or watch the movie together as a class. If reading the book as a class, try sitting in a circle or other special reading space. Questions for discussion include:

- Why does Molly feel different from her classmates? Explain how Molly learns that these are aspects that make her special.
- Describe what it means to have “freedom.”
- Why is America a good place to live if you want to have personal liberty? Free choice/will? Independence?
- Do you know of anyone who came to America for religious freedom recently or in the past?
- Many Jewish people have come to America for the freedom to be Jewish and to start a better life here. Do you know who in your family was the first to come to this country? What is their immigration story?

**Create** your own pilgrim doll depicting whoever in your family first journeyed to America. Or, recreate the doll that Molly might have made with her Mom.