



## 3-D Dreidel Decorations

### **Topic**

Making dreidel decorations for Hanukkah

### **Grade Level(s)**

All, with modification

### **Goals for the Lesson/Activity**

#### **Students will:**

- Connect to the history of Hanukkah through dreidels
- Appreciate the artistic possibilities of dreidels
- Create their own dreidels

### **Materials needed**

- Dreidel pattern and dreidel letter sheet (both available for download)
- Cardstock – Two 8.5 x 11 pieces per dreidel
- Materials to decorate the cardstock, such as: markers, bingo inkers, liquid watercolors
- Hole punch and ribbons for hanging the dreidels
- Scissors
- Invisible tape
- Markers
- Copies of the Hebrew letter template (optional download) and glue sticks

In advance of the lesson, photocopy the dreidel patterns onto the cardstock. You will need one cardstock copy with pattern A on it and one cardstock copy with pattern B on it for each dreidel (together they form a set). If students are unable to write the Hebrew letters, also make copies of the dreidel letters (on colored paper if possible).

### **Technology needed**

Optional laptop and projector or smartboard – While students are working, consider showing the collection of videos located in the JTeach.org [Hanukkah Blendspace](#). Note in particular the first video, which includes an interesting (if not necessarily historically accurate) background about the origin of dreidels.

### **Background for Teachers**

While legends state that dreidel playing developed as a way to cover up Jewish learning and ritual during the oppressive regime of the Assyrian Greeks, history shows that the Jewish game probably developed from an Irish/German spinning-top game.



## 3-D Dreidel Decorations

Regardless of its origin, playing dreidel has been a part of Hanukkah celebrations for generations. Traditionally, dreidels were made of lead or wood. Over the last 50 years, Jewish artists have been inspired to experiment with both the shape and the materials used in crafting dreidels. There are magnificent dreidels made from different metals, beads, clay, plastic and even glass, shaped into everything from spinning ballerinas to spaceships! The common element on these spinning tops is the four letters which adorn the sides and enable the dreidel game to be played.

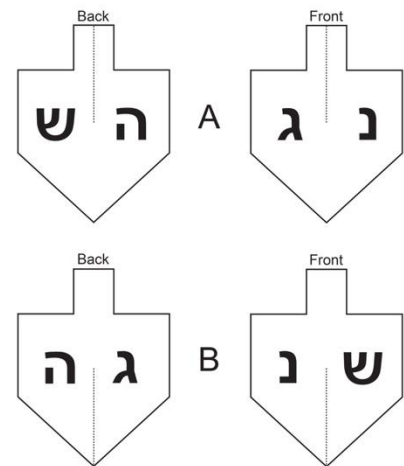
Dreidels used outside of Israel have the letters נ (nun), ג (gimmel), ה (hey) and ש (shin), written on them, representing the first letter of each word in the phrase: נס גדול היה שם (nes gadol haya sham), a great miracle happened **there**.

Dreidels used in Israel have the letters: נ (nun), ג (gimmel), ה (hey) and פ (pey), written on them, representing the first letter of each word in the phrase: נס גדול היה פה (nes gadol haya poh), “a great miracle happened **here**.”

If your synagogue/school/building houses a gift shop or display case, check to see if dreidels are on display. If so, begin this lesson with a short “field trip” for dreidel inspiration!

### Description of Activities

1. Explain that dreidels have evolved from simply being basic toys to being artistic ways to beautify the holiday of Hanukkah (see Background for Teachers for more information).
2. Hand out a set of dreidel sheets – one sheet copied from pattern A and one sheet copied from pattern B – to each student and have them cut out the dreidel shapes.
3. Now have students cut along the center cut lines as indicated, being careful not to cut past the center point on each dreidel.
4. Decorate all the sides of the dreidel.
5. When dry, write or glue the dreidel letters on the dreidel. Lay the dreidel pieces flat and use the guide at the right to place the letters.
6. Use the hole punch to add two holes on the top of part A.





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7. Interlock the two dreidel pieces together to form the 3-D dreidel. Make sure matching letters appear on the same side of the dreidel.
8. Use small pieces of invisible tape in the seams to keep the dreidel from collapsing. Thread the ribbon through the hole and hang your dreidel!

### **Differentiation Options**

Knowing that students learn in a variety of ways and modalities, the following options are provided to adjust the above lesson to meet the unique needs of your learners.

#### ***For learners who need more assistance***

- Cut out the two dreidel parts beforehand. Encourage students to decorate the dreidel pieces. Have the Hebrew letters pre-cut into squares for easy gluing. If helpful, lightly write the letters on the dreidel pieces and then have students match your prompt with the printed letter and glue it down on top. Ask *madrichim* to help with the assembly of the final decoration.

#### ***For learners who need extension opportunities***

- Students research the history of the dreidel and use one of the free presentation apps (Try: Prezi <http://prezi.com>, Google Slides <http://slides.google.com> or Educreations <http://www.educreations.com>) to create and present their own version based on what they learned.