



Family Discussion Guide

Light up
Literacy



RATIONALE

This discussion guide is designed to facilitate a discussion among family/friends about Reading Village as they gather to share the Hanukkah ritual of lighting the menorah on the seventh night of the holiday. The seventh candle is being dedicated to Reading Village, a not-for-profit organization that is dedicated to eradicating illiteracy in Guatemala. Reading Village's mission is to give the gift of reading to a child.

REQUIREMENTS

Materials: Hanukkah menorah, Hanukkah blessings, candles, matches, Reading Village candle dedication and discussion questions, favorite storybooks

Time: 30 – 60 minutes

Room: Comfortable room

Number of people: Unlimited

Age level: 3 – 103

DIRECTIONS

1. Recite the Reading Village candle dedication
2. Light the Menorah
3. Chant the blessings
4. Share responses to the discussion questions
5. Read together some favorite storybooks

READING VILLAGE CANDLE DEDICATION

Read Before the Candle Lighting

The Maya communities in which reading Village works are among the poorest, least educated people in the western hemisphere. If you ask a child in these communities how many books he or she owns, they would likely say, "I have never owned a book of my own." This year we choose to celebrate Hanukkah by raising funds to help bring the joy of reading and books to children in Guatemala. On Hanukkah we celebrate our freedom and lives without oppressions. Because we can read, we have knowledge and that knowledge helps free us from oppression. Through our *tzedakah* we are helping children in Guatemala become free from the oppression of poverty and illiteracy.

Chant the traditional Hanukkah blessings and include this special blessing for Light Up Literacy

We dedicate the seventh Hanukkah candle to spreading the light of literacy in Guatemala and other parts of the world where children lack books and adults who can teach them to read. Just as the shamash brings light to the menorah and to our celebration, so we choose to be the shamash, bringing light into the lives of others.

I am a light to the world when on a day of gift giving, I remember children who do not have books in their homes.

I am a light to the world when I give of myself to others by participating in the Light Up Literacy campaign.

I am a light to the world when I celebrate my own freedom by helping others to gain theirs.

I am a light to the world when I share the joy of reading and books with others who have yet to experience this joy.

Blessed is the Eternal one who grants us freedom from the oppression of poverty and illiteracy.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Parents and children should take turns asking the questions below.

Questions for children

1. What do you like about reading?
2. What is your favorite book?
3. Share a memory that you have about a book and/or reading.
4. Imagine how your life would be different if you couldn't read?
5. How would your school be different if there were no books?
6. How would your life be different if your parents could not read?
7. List five activities you would not be able to do if you could not read?
8. How do you think the lives of the Maya people will change through our gift to Reading Village?

Questions for parents/adults

1. What was your favorite book when you were a child?
2. Did your parents read to you when you were a child?
3. What do you like about reading?
4. Share a memory that you have about a book and/or reading.
5. Imagine how your life would be different if you couldn't read.
6. List five activities you would not be able to do if you couldn't read.
7. Share a family ritual that you have that involves reading or books. Why do you do this? How did it get started?

Celebrate by reading your favorite stories together.