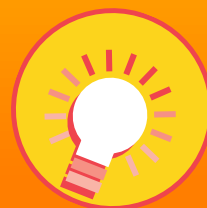


Comprehension Workbook 1

Jewish Tales

(Folk Tales)



Find out about the meaning of stories and articles

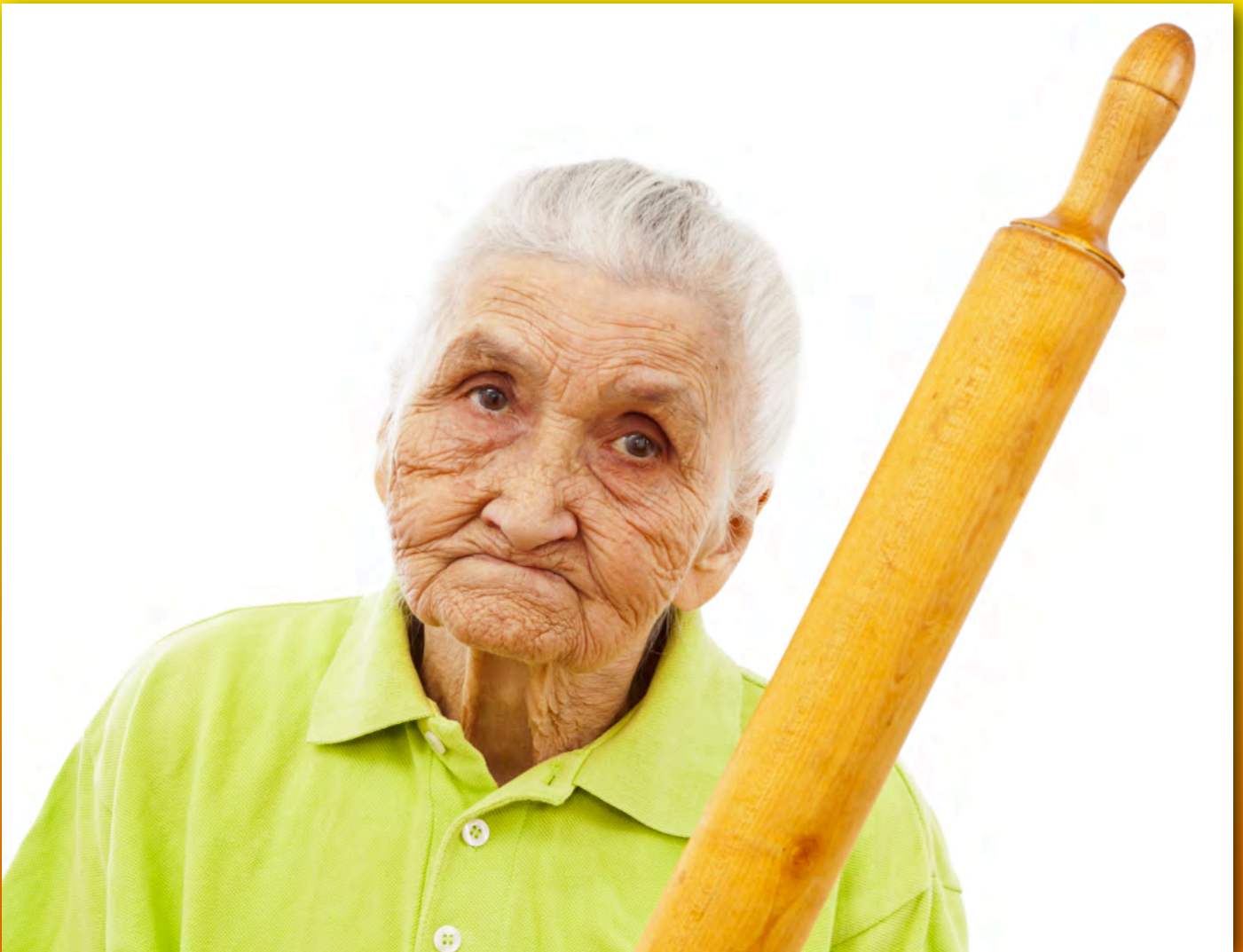
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Comprehension Workbook 1

Jewish Tales

(Folk Tales)



Find out about the meaning of stories and articles

understand • key words • summarise • sequencing • AF2-3 • AF4-5 • AF6-7 • discuss • create

Jewish faith

Matches the requirements of the Literacy Strategy and designed to integrate with the study of world religions. (This material is independent of any specific text book and can be used alongside any publisher's books including our Jewish Faith, Synagogue, Jewish art and writing and Jewish holy days books.)

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Unit 1: Jewish folk tales

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Jewish folk tales

The Rabbi Hillel once taught that the main idea of Judaism is to love your neighbour as yourself. This Jewish folk tale teaches this lesson. This story takes place many centuries ago in Jerusalem. At this time, washing the family clothes took many hours of hard work. The families in the story live in houses around a small common courtyard.

One day, after six hours of back-breaking labour washing clothes, a Jewish woman hung her laundry out to dry in the sun, on clotheslines that were stretched across the whole length of the courtyard. That afternoon, one of the women's neighbours came into the common courtyard on her way home. This neighbour was in a bad mood because of something that had happened in the market. When she saw the clotheslines with all the laundry hanging from them she got angry because she thought the clothes were in her way. Instead of stooping to go under the wet clothes, this woman grabbed the clothesline and pulled it down. The clean laundry fell with a thud into the dirt of the unpaved courtyard.



The woman whose laundry it was heard the sound, rushed out to see what had happened, and was stunned. She started to become angry, and wanted to go and yell at the woman who had cut the line, but then she remembered the teachings in the Torah, to be understanding. She thought, "If I yell at her, she will just yell back at me and then we will both be angry." Instead, she quietly picked up the fallen laundry, washed off the dirt, tied the cut clotheslines back together, and hung the laundry up in the large public courtyard.

When her husband came home that night, after saying evening prayers in the synagogue, the woman wanted to tell him what had happened. But she again remembered the teachings in the Torah not to gossip or say bad things about others. Later that night, the woman who had cut the clothesline became ashamed of her bad behaviour. She went to her neighbour's house and asked her forgiveness. The first woman forgave her and when the second woman found out that the woman had not told anyone about her bad behaviour she said, "May God help me learn to control myself—as you did—whenever I too am tested!"



Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write a sentence in which you found the word 'forgiveness'.

b From that sentence, write what you think 'forgiveness' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'forgiveness'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'forgiveness'.

e When would you show 'forgiveness' to someone.



Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: angry	furious

3

Summarising

(the gist of the story)

To summarise means to rewrite the story in a shorter version using as many of our key words from Task 2 as needed.

1 Write a heading for your summary.

2 Now write the main idea in one sentence.
e.g. "This story tells us..."

3 Now add some detail to the main idea by writing more sentences after it.

**Finally,
can you rewrite your
summary to make it better?**

- 1. Look out for errors such as using the same word too often – use alternatives.**
- 2. Make sure you have summarised the author's purpose in your OWN words.**
- 3. Make sure your summary is in a logical order.**
- 4. Is your summary informative AND interesting to others?**

**There is
nothing wrong
with rewriting; even
the best authors
rewrite their
work.**

123
4

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.



The clean laundry fell with a thud into the dirt of the unpaved courtyard.

She went to her neighbour's house and asked her forgiveness.

That afternoon, one of the women's neighbours came into the common courtyard on her way home.

... a Jewish woman hung her laundry out to dry in the sun...

Later that night, the woman who had cut the clothesline became ashamed of her bad behaviour.

But she again remembered the teachings in the Torah not to gossip or say bad things about others.



Get to the facts

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the facts of the story.



Write a sentence to answer each of these questions:

- (a) How long did the first woman spend washing her laundry?
- (b) Why did the neighbour get angry when she saw the clothes?
- (c) What happened to the clean laundry after the line was cut?
- (d) Why didn't the first woman go and yell at the woman who had cut the line?
- (e) Why did the second woman apologise for cutting the line?



Whys and wherefores

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the meanings in the story and how it was written.

1 Why was the neighbour angry at the laundry?

2 From where did the first woman get advice about being understanding and forgiving?

3 Why was the second woman ashamed of her behaviour?

4 What does the Torah say about gossip?



Opinions matter

Answer these questions to give your views and to develop the story.



1 How would you feel if someone pulled down your clean laundry?

2 Do you think it is harder to be angry or harder to forgive someone for harming you?

3 Do you think the neighbour would have apologised if the woman had gone over and yelled at her?

4 Do you agree that it is important to always try to be understanding?

5 Are there times when it might be better to get angry and yell than to quietly repair damage someone else has done?





Talking it through

It often helps if a group of people get together and discuss a problem.



Discussion topic: Apologising

Discuss whether the first woman was right to wait for the second woman to apologise for cutting the laundry line.



Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.



An argument

You have worked hard to complete a school project about the pyramids. You even built a model of the pyramids at Giza. As you are bringing it to school, a friend comes by and knocks it out of your hands. You don't know it, but this friend had a fight with his parents just before he left for school and is in a bad mood. (Now continue the story of describing what you do next...)

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