

Name: _____



Holiday Traditions

by Kelly Hashway



Josh stared out the car window at the colorful lights on Aiden's house. He could hear Christmas music blaring inside.

"I don't know if I should go to the party," Josh said.

"Why not?" his dad asked. "Aiden's your best friend."

"But it's a *Christmas* party and I'm Jewish. It'll be weird."

"Just because we celebrate Hanukkah doesn't mean you shouldn't learn about Christmas," his dad said. "Maybe you can even teach your friends a few things about our holiday, too."

Josh squeezed the dreidel in his hand. The dreidel game was his favorite, but he doubted any of his friends would want to play it. Josh stuck the dreidel in his pocket as he stepped out of the car.

"I'll pick you up at eight," his dad said.

"Just don't be late, okay?" Josh said, with a shaky voice.

His father waved goodbye and Josh walked up to the door. Aiden and the rest of his friends were walking outside.

"Oh good, you're here!" Aiden said. "We were just going caroling."

"Caroling? You mean you're going to knock on people's doors and sing Christmas songs?" Josh asked.

"Yeah," Aiden said. "My family does it every year. It's tradition."

Josh hid in the back of the group and pretended to sing along. He knew some of the songs, but he didn't feel right singing them. After caroling everyone headed back to Aiden's house to make Christmas cookies and trim the tree.

After an hour or so, everyone sat around the living room looking bored.

"What should we do now?" Tim asked.

"Yeah, this party is getting a little boring," Amy said.

Aiden shifted uncomfortably. "Um..."

Josh could tell Aiden had run out of ideas. Josh looked down at the dreidel making a lump in his pocket. "I have a game we could play," he said.

"Great!" Aiden said. "What is it?"

Josh held up the dreidel.

"Ooh, is that a dreidel?" Amy asked. "I've played that game. It's really fun!"

"You know the dreidel game?" Josh asked.

"Yeah, my cousin is Jewish," Amy said. "My family always spends Hanukkah at her house and then she comes to our house for Christmas. It's fun celebrating both holidays."

Josh thought about caroling, making cookies, and decorating the tree with his friends. "I guess you're right," he said.

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1. Why didn't Josh want to go to Aiden's Christmas party?

2. Why did Josh's father encourage his son to go to the party?

3. Which did *not* happen in this story?

- a. Aiden and his friends went from door to door and sang Christmas songs.
- b. Aiden and his friends cut down a Christmas tree and brought it in the house.
- c. Aiden and his friends played the dreidel game.
- d. Aiden and his friends put decorations on the tree.

4. What type of story is this?

- a. realistic fiction
- b. non-fiction
- c. science fiction
- d. historical fiction

5. Which sentence best describes the kids at the party?

- a. They are accepting of each others' holiday traditions.
- b. They do not know about any holidays besides Christmas.
- c. They all celebrate Hanukkah with their families.
- d. They never have fun at Christmas parties.

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Holiday Traditions

Vocabulary Activity



Part 1: Reread "Holiday Traditions" by Kelly Hashway.

As you read highlight the following vocabulary words in the article.

blaring

Christmas

Hanukkah

dreidel

caroling

tradition

doubted

trim

Part 2: Match each vocabulary word on the left with its definition on the right.

_____ 1. blaring

a. singing songs

_____ 2. Christmas

b. didn't believe

_____ 3. Hanukkah

c. playing loudly

_____ 4. dreidel

d. winter holiday celebrated by Jewish people

_____ 5. caroling

e. winter holiday celebrated by Christian people

_____ 6. tradition

f. to decorate

_____ 7. doubted

g. four-sided top used to play Hanukkah games

_____ 8. trim

h. handing down of beliefs from one generation to the next

ANSWER KEY



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1. Why didn't Josh want to go to Aiden's Christmas party?
It was a Christmas party and he was Jewish. Since his family doesn't celebrate Christmas, he didn't know if it would be right for him to go.
2. Why did Josh's father encourage his son to go to the party?
He thought that it would be a chance for Josh to learn more about Christmas.
3. Which did *not* happen in this story? **b**
 - a. Aiden and his friends went from door to door and sang Christmas songs.
 - b. **Aiden and his friends cut down a Christmas tree and brought it in the house.**
 - c. Aiden and his friends played the dreidel game.
 - d. Aiden and his friends put decorations on the tree.
4. What type of story is this? **a**
 - a. **realistic fiction**
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5. Which sentence best describes the kids at the party? **a**
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| f 8. trim | h. handing down of beliefs from one generation to the next |