

Counting on Shabbat

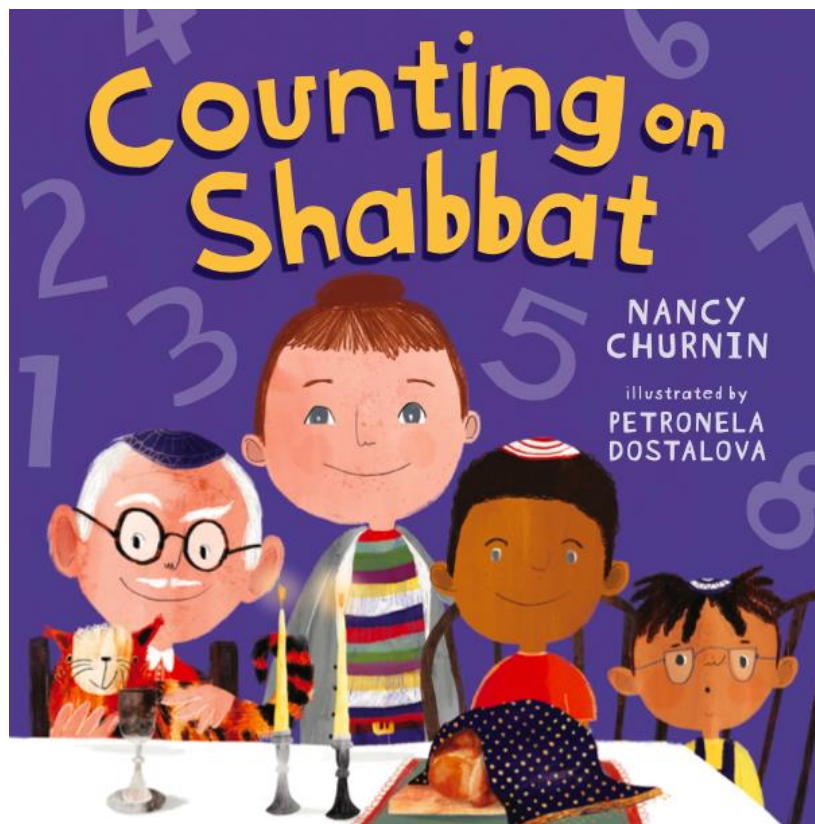
An Activity Guide

created by Marcie Colleen

based upon the book

written by Nancy Churnin and illustrated by Petronela Dostalova

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How to Use This Guide: This activity guide for *Counting on Shabbat* is designed for parents and caretakers of infants, toddlers, preschool, and kindergarten children. It is assumed that the parents and caretakers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own children.

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Shalom, friends!

Like a board book, shalom is a big word that holds a lot of meaning: **Hello, Goodbye, and Peace.**

Too many people, elderly or infirm, are alone on holidays and, indeed, every day. As I observed my mother, a retired teacher, light up every time great grandchildren came to visit with kisses and chaos, I wanted to find a way to thank them and encourage little ones everywhere to realize the joy they bring with the simple gift of their presence.

Shabbat is a weekly Jewish celebration, where we light candles, eat challah, and drink wine or grape juice on Friday nights to welcome a day of rest that lasts through Saturday night. In **Counting on Shabbat**, we see an elderly man alone on this special day with “One table draped in white.” Each page offers an opportunity to count, continuing with “Two candles set to light” and “Three braids in challah bread.”

The story turns with “Five knocking at the door,” when a diverse family of five show up to bring food and cheer. By the time we get to “Ten smiles. Shabbat is here!” I hope that we are not only counting objects, but kindness and how it brings light into our lives, much as the light from Shabbat candles do.

I hope you’ll be inspired by this guide to use this book to build connections between the youngest children in your community and those who may be isolated because of age or other challenges. Children often feel powerless. My dream is that the quiet message of **Counting on Shabbat** will empower them to know what a happy difference they can make. It is amazing, truly, how much of a difference we all can make simply by showing up. I am thankful to adults that give our children opportunities to put kindness in action. You are doing tikkun olam – healing the world – and ensuring that work – the most important any of us will ever do -- will continue to the next generation.

I hope this book will give Jewish children pride in our weekly celebration of love and light, open a window to this happy holiday for non-Jewish children, and spark fresh ideas of how we can all build bridges of love among all ages, faiths, and communities.

Shalom! Hello! Goodbye! Peace!



photo credit Kim Leeson

With love and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Churnin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nancy Churnin, Author

Infant (0-1 Year)

Infants love to hear your voice, and it's never too early to begin reading together! At this stage, a book is less about the story and more about the tone of your voice, the rhythm of your speech and the visual stimulation of the pictures.

What Do We See?

Point to the illustrations on each page as you read, naming the objects and colors.

For example:

<u>People</u>	<u>Shapes</u>	<u>Colors</u>	<u>Objects</u>
Kid	Circle	Yellow	Table
Man	Square	Blue	Spoon
Woman	Triangle	Orange	Cat
	Rectangle	Green	Food
		Red	Chair

Counting On Shabbat Songs

Sing a song based on *Counting on Shabbat* to the tune of "Are You Sleeping?"

Where is (child's name)?
Where is (child's name)?
Here I am (child sings)
Here I am (child sings).

We're so glad to see you,
We're so glad to see you,
shabbat shalom.

Clap along to this chant to the rhythm of Pat-a-Cake.

Pat-a-pat,
pat-a-pat
get a pan.
Make the challah bread
fast as you can.

Roll it,
Braid it,
Brush it—one, two, three.

Then put it in the oven for Shabbat with
me!

Where is it?

Hold up the book on the first page and ask, "Where's the man?"

Point to the picture of the man. "There's the man."

Then, cover the picture with a small blanket or burp cloth. Ask, "Where's the man?"

Uncover the picture and say, "There's the man"

Interchange with other words for the other items featured, including:

candles	challah	kittens
kids	cups	matzah balls
kugel	pictures	smiles

Toddler (1-2 Years)

Many toddlers are ready to take a more active role in story time. They can repeat words, count along with you, and begin to identify shapes and colors.

I Spy

As you read, ask, "Where is the...?" Your toddler can respond by pointing to the correct illustration.

<u>People</u>	<u>Shapes</u>	<u>Colors</u>	<u>Objects</u>
Kid	Circle	Yellow	Table
Man	Square	Blue	Spoon
Woman	Triangle	Orange	Cat
	Rectangle	Green	Food
		Red	Chair

Practice more shape and color recognition. Say, "I spy something _____" The blank can be filled with any color or shape on the page. The child can then guess what you spy.

Counting Through the Book

Read through the book, counting as you go.

"How many candles do you see?"

"Let's count the kittens."

"Can you count the people?"

"Count the people that are smiling."

It's All Shalom

After you read a page in *Counting on Shabbat* recite the following text and your child can perform the action.

<u>Text</u>	<u>Action</u>
Hello	<i>Wave in greeting</i>
Goodbye	<i>Wrap their arms in a hug around their body</i>
Peace	<i>Place both hands on their chest and bow their heads</i>
That's shalom!	<i>Smile big</i>

Preschool/Kindergarten (3-5 Years)

Reading Comprehension

Ask questions throughout the exploration of the book. Encourage your preschooler to help.

- “Look at the pretty table and the candles. The man lit the candles. The candles glow and make light. Can you think of other things that make light?”
- “The man is feeding his cats. What do you think the cats eat? Do you have any pets? What are some other ways people care for their pets?”
- “Everyone showed up to spend shabbat with the man. How do you think that makes him feel? Why do you think they want to spend shabbat together?”

Better Together

Handmade gifts can brighten up anyone's day. Think of some gift ideas for those who might need a little cheering up. For example, a basket with a snuggly blanket, some books, and puzzle games can be perfect for seniors in nursing homes. Or, make handmade treats, decorations for their homes, or knitted scarves or blankets.

A Picture Walk

After reading *Counting on Shabbat*, encourage children to re-read the book using the pictures as clues.

Look at the cover and assist your child in describing what they see in the picture. For example, “in this picture, I see someone making soup.”

Now, open to the first page of the book and help your child describe what they see on this page.

Encourage speaking in full sentences and giving as many details as possible. Continue in this manner, through the rest of the book.

Before turning each page, discuss how love and kindness are shown in each illustration.

Where Are You?

Look closely at the “10 smiles. Shabbat is here” page of the book.

Point to the various people in the illustration and ask your child to explain why they are smiling and how they are making a difference just by being there.

Ask your child where they would place themselves in this spread and why?

Then, using craft supplies such as markers, crayons, cotton balls, yarn, glitter, etc. your child can create their own illustration inspired by this page.

Act It Out

Counting on Shabbat can become an interactive play with a few simple props or by encouraging the children to use their imagination. As you read through the book, designate someone -- either the teacher, an adult, or a child -- to be the person at the table. Then call on a child or children to bring each prop to the table on each page.

If you want to use props, assemble or have the children help create:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ONE white tablecloth: | This can be an actual white tablecloth or a big roll of white paper. You may want to have two or more children come to spread this out. |
| TWO candlesticks: | Two thick white candles stuck in two lumps of clay or anything that would hold up the candles would work fine. You may want two children to volunteer to each put a candlestick on the table. |
| THREE braids in the challah: | Three stuffed pieces of nylon hose tied at each end would work; so would three thick pieces of yarn. One to three children can come to the table to braid the challah. |
| FOUR sets of kitten headbands: | If you don't have kitten headbands, you can tape paper kitten ears to headbands, or you can paint kitten whiskers on four children, or you can just have them pretend to act like kittens. Call on four children to stay near the table with the "adult" at the table. Ask them to pose and meow like kittens! |
| FIVE knocking on the door: | Have the group "knock" on the floor five times in unison and have five children join the "adult" and the "four kittens" at the table. |
| SIX kiddush cups: | Six cups of any type, including paper or plastic cups will work. Feel free to decorate them and make them fancy. Call on six children to bring one cup each. |
| SEVEN matzoh balls and bowls: | Balls of any size will work here. For extra fun, one of the seven balls can be a beach ball to bat around the room before putting it in the final bowl! Call on six children to bring the six matzoh balls and a seventh to retrieve and bring the big beach ball! |
| EIGHT kugels and eight plates: | You can use eight squares of anything for the kugels, including sponges -- wherever your imagination leads you. Call on eight children to bring one kugel each to put on one plate each. |
| NINE pictures bringing cheer: | This is the most important element. Have the children get ready for the play by creating pictures of cheer for seniors in your |

community. Tie them up in nine batches if there are more than nine children participating.

TEN smiles:

With permission, take a picture of the 10 smiling faces -- the adult, the four kittens and the family of five. Afterwards, ask all the kids who made pictures of cheer to come to the table and hold up their drawings for another picture.

Counting On Kindness

We hope that *Counting on Shabbat* will encourage kids to remember our seniors or those who are alone and to be kind to them. The book lends itself to creating notes of cheer that can be delivered to senior or other adult facilities. But any acts of kindness -- visiting, singing, sending food, or goodies are all to be celebrated. With permission, please send photos of your children's acts of kindness to those who are elderly or alone and we will post them on the COUNTING ON KINDNESS page on nancychurnin.com