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Resources for Teachers and Students



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Author Bio

Sherri Mandell is the author of several books including *The Elephant in the Sukkah*, and the National Jewish Book Award winner *The Blessing of a Broken Heart*. She has been a contributor to USA Today, The Times of Israel, Hadassah Magazine, and the Jerusalem Post. She lives in Israel.

Illustrator Bio

Robert Dunn lives in South Lanarkshire, Scotland, with his wife and family. He studied illustration at The Glasgow College of Building & Printing. He is a magazine illustrator, painter, caricaturist, and book illustrator.

Summary of Book

Daniel likes to do things backwards and upside down. He walks on his hands, walks backwards, and eats cereal for dinner. His teacher reminds him that when he visits the Prime Minister's office, he must be on his best behavior. But when something unexpected happens, can Daniel resist his urge to do a headstand? Based on a true story about David Ben Gurion, the Israeli Prime Minister who was famous for standing on his head.

Lesson Objectives

- Understanding the role of the Prime Minister of Israel
- Introducing the Israeli government and the basics of how it works
- Developing students' leadership skills

Activity 1: What does it take to be a leader?

1. Before reading the story, discuss the following:
 - a. Have you ever met a person in government (mayor, governor, president, etc.)?
 - b. What qualities do you think it takes to be a leader?
2. Read the story and have students pay attention to how Daniel behaves. Once you're done reading, ask the following questions:
 - Are you like Daniel or not like Daniel? In what way?
 - What is one thing you liked about the story? Didn't like?
 - Would you say Daniel has what it takes to be a leader? Why or why not?

Activity 2:

Read the following paragraph to your students:

The Israeli prime minister is the head of the Israeli government and is elected (chosen) by the Knesset. The Knesset is the branch of the Israeli government that makes up the parliament (kind of like congress for us). Candidates for the Prime Minister come from the Knesset. The prime minister is elected in a secret vote after 45 days of campaigning (campaigning is when you go around telling people why you want to be Prime Minister and what you hope to get done) and the person with the most votes wins.

The Prime Minister represents the people of the State of Israel. Just like the president for us, the Prime Minister is in charge of creating rules, talking to other countries, and making decisions for the people living in Israel, with the help and guidance of the Knesset.

Active participation check:

1. What is the Knesset?
2. How is the Prime Minister elected?
3. What does the Prime Minister do?

Game to play: Who wants to be a Prime Minister?

Now that we know what a Prime Minister is and have talked about what it takes to be a leader, let's play a game. We are going to pretend to be a Knesset and vote in a Prime Minister. Then, the Prime Minister is going to work with the Knesset to agree on some new rules. *Remember, the Prime Minister needs the Knesset to agree on their decision for it to happen.*

Zoom instructions

1. Using the raise hand button, have students raise hand to indicate that they would like to be Prime Minister.
2. Each student must campaign for 20-30 seconds on why they should be elected based on their leadership skills (give them a couple of minutes to create their campaign speeches)
3. Have everyone cast their vote for Prime Minister by privately messaging you their choice. Count up the votes and announce the winner.
4. Once the Prime Minister is elected, have students present their ideas on any or all of the following topics to the Prime Minister:
 - a. Video cameras on or off during class during Zoom sessions and why?
 - b. Microphones on or off when another person is talking?
 - c. Name changes on zoom? For or against?
5. Allow time for the Prime Minister to discuss with Knesset. Prime Minister then makes decision.
6. Repeat with another student as Prime Minister (if there's time)

In-person instructions

1. Have students raise hand to indicate they would like to be Prime Minister
2. Each student must campaign for 20-30 seconds each on why they should be elected based on their leadership skills (give them a couple of minutes to create their campaign speeches)
3. Have candidates come up to front of class, in a line with their back turned away from the rest of class.
4. Place a hand over the head of each candidate. Have students raise their hand to "cast their vote" for Prime Minister.

5. Once the Prime Minister is elected, have students present their ideas on any or all of the following topics to the Prime Minister:
 - a. Sitting on tables during class time
 - b. Shoes on or off during class
 - c. When break time should be
6. Allow time for the Prime Minister to discuss with Knesset. Prime Minister then makes decision.
7. Repeat with another student as Prime Minister (if there's time)

Post-game discussion:

1. What did we like/dislike about this process?
2. What are our thoughts on the rules the Prime Minister decided on?
3. *For the Prime Minister* – what was it like to have to make the final decision?

