

“Love Your Neighbor”: An AJL Project to Combat Antisemitism

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Forwardsbooks: kids books that matter

The Association of Jewish Libraries (AJL) is using Jewish literature to combat the unprecedented rise in antisemitic incidents in the United States.¹ The campaign is based on evidence from children’s literature studies, showing that reading fiction builds empathy (for example, see Henderson and May 2005; Mar, Oatley, and Peterson 2009), and on the seminal concept of “window books,” a term coined by Sims Bishop (1990) in reference to children’s books that help one social group see how another group lives and better understand its experiences. AJL draws on selected window books to help others understand Judaism, in the hope that we can prevent today’s readers from becoming tomorrow’s haters (Rabinowitz 2019).

After the horrific act of antisemitic domestic terrorism at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA in October 2018 (see the *New York Times* report on the massacre: Robertson, Mele, and Tavernise 2018), AJL librarians curated four lists of recommended reading for youth of all backgrounds.² The “Love Your Neighbor” series are titled: Standing Up for Each Other (November 2018), Synagogues, Clergy & Jewish Ritual (November 2018), The American Jewish Experience (December 2018), and Let’s Be Friends (December 2018). The lists were made available in an easy-to-print format on the AJL website (AJL n.d.) and are reprinted below. The introduction to each list expresses the compilation rationale: “Books read in youth impact future outlooks, and it is our hope that meeting Jews on the page will inspire friendship when readers meet Jews in real life.”

Each of the initial four Love Your Neighbor list focuses on a different theme: Allyship between Jews and non-Jews; Jewish religious life for those curious about places like the Tree of Life synagogue; Jews as a part of the fabric of the United States; and interfaith friendship. The series was promoted on national media (Ingall 2018; *Jewish Journal* 2018; Gershowitz 2019) as a positive response to tragic news. The Hanukkah season of 2019 was particularly violent, and AJL responded with a fifth recommended reading list in the series. Introduced in January 2020, this Love Your Neighbor list focuses on Orthodox Jews, as they were targeted for much of the abuse. A sixth list, Love Your Neighbor: Passover, was published in March 2020 to address the connection between the springtime holidays of Passover and Easter. The six published reading lists recommend seventy-seven books; of them, 65 percent received recognition from AJL’s Sydney Taylor Book Award committee (winners, honors, and notable book awards). Additional

¹ See the Anti-Defamation League’s Tracker of Anti-Semitic Incidents page, at <https://www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resource-knowledge-base/adl-tracker-of-anti-semitic-incidents> (accessed March 18, 2020).

² We thank AJL members who assisted in this project: Emily Bergman, Barbara Bietz, Shoshana Flax, Elissa Gershowitz, Dina Herbert, Marjorie Ingall, Rachel Kamin, Susan Kusel, Rebecca Levitan, Chava Pinchuck, and Lisa Silverman.

Love Your Neighbor lists are in development as of this writing, as are companion lists of adult literature and multimedia compiled by members of AJL's Jewish Fiction Award committee.

These efforts to decry hatred directed at Jews, to educate our colleagues and the public about Judaism and Jewish culture, and to provide ways to stand in solidarity with the Jewish people, have been met with praise and thanks. The rise in antisemitism has become a call to action to AJL and its supporters. AJL and its members are heeding the call.

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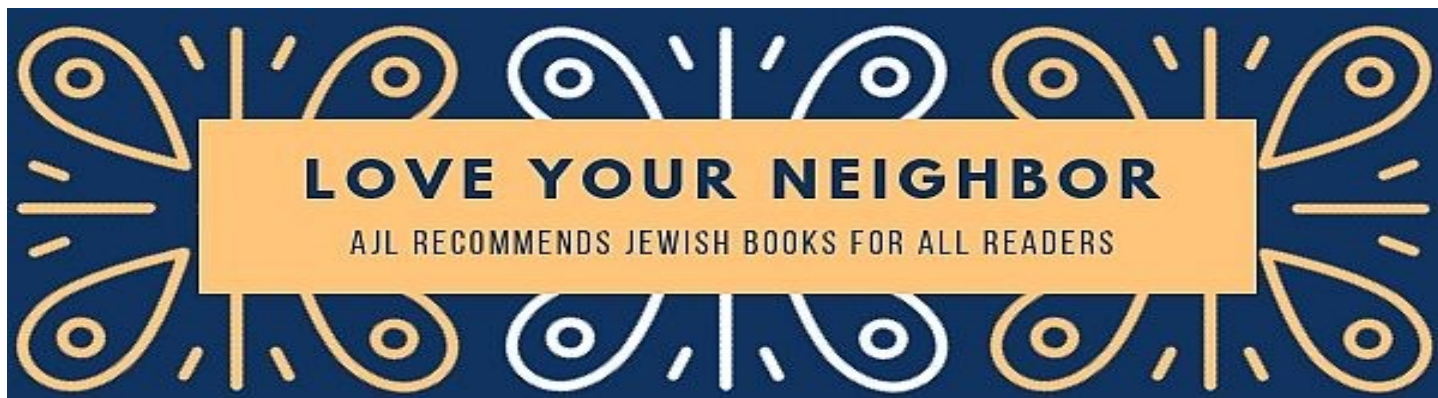
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In response to the tragedy at the synagogue in Pittsburgh and to rising anti-Semitism in the United States, the Association of Jewish Libraries offers this series of book lists for young readers. Books read in youth impact future outlooks, and it is our hope that meeting Jews on the page will inspire friendship when readers meet Jews in real life. This is the first in a series of book lists intended to provide children and their families with a greater understanding of the Jewish religion and its people.

This first list features stories of Jews and non-Jews standing up for each other, working out differences, and confronting prejudice. Look for these titles in libraries, bookstores, and online.

Book List #1: Standing Up For Each Other

PICTURE BOOKS

[**The Golden Rule**](#) by Ilene Cooper, ages 4-8

This book is a gentle reminder of a timeless rule for parent and child: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. A boy and his grandfather discuss the rule's universality and how to put it into practice.

[**Hannah's Way**](#) by Linda Glaser, ages 4-8

After Papa loses his job during the Depression, Hannah's family moves to rural Minnesota, where she is the only Jewish child in her class. When her teacher tries to arrange carpools for a Saturday class picnic, Hannah is upset. Her Jewish family is observant, and she knows she cannot ride on the Sabbath. What will she do? A lovely story of friendship and community.

[**Emma's Poem: The Voice of the Statue of Liberty**](#)

by Linda Glaser, ages 4-8

In 1883, Jewish Emma Lazarus, deeply moved by an influx of immigrants from eastern Europe, wrote a sonnet that gave a voice to the Statue of Liberty. The statue, thanks to Emma's poem, came to define us as a nation that welcomes immigrants. A true story.

[**Never Say a Mean Word Again: A Tale from Medieval Spain**](#) by Jacqueline Jules, ages 4-8

Inspired by a powerful legend of conflict resolution, *Never Say a Mean Word Again* is the compelling story of a boy who is given permission to punish an enemy. A surprising twist shows how an enemy can become a friend.

[**As Good As Anybody: Martin Luther King Jr. and Abraham Joshua Heschel's Amazing March Toward Freedom**](#) by Richard Michelson, ages 6-9

Here is the story of two icons for social justice, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr and Abraham Joshua Heschel, how they formed a remarkable friendship and turned their personal experiences of discrimination into a message of love and equality for all.

[**The Whispering Town**](#) by Jennifer Elvgren, ages 7-11

The dramatic story of neighbors in a small Danish fishing village who, during the Holocaust, shelter a Jewish family waiting to be ferried to safety in Sweden. Worried about their safety, friends devise a clever and unusual plan for their safe passage to the harbor. Based on a true story.

CHAPTER BOOKS

Vive La Paris by Esme Raji Codell, ages 9-12

Paris has come for piano lessons, not chopped-liver sandwiches or French lessons or free advice. But when old Mrs. Rosen, who is Jewish, gives her a little bit more than she can handle, it might be just what Paris needs to understand the bully in her brother's life...and the bullies of the world.

Refugee by Alan Gratz, ages 9-13

A Jewish boy in 1930's Nazi Germany, a Cuban girl in 1994, a Syrian boy in 2015 - all three go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. This action-packed novel tackles topics both timely and timeless: courage, survival, and the quest for home.

The Inquisitor's Tale, Or, The Three Magical Children and Their Holy Dog by Adam Gidwitz, ages 9-15

France, 1242. Three children: a Christian peasant girl, a Moorish boy raised as a monk, and a Jewish boy. On the run to escape prejudice and persecution and save precious and holy texts from being burned, their quest drives them forward to a final showdown.

The Hired Girl by Laura Amy Schlitz, ages 10-14

Readers should know that this compelling book has engendered controversy. The quality of storytelling was recognized with many awards, yet it has been criticized for reinforcing stereotypes of Native Americans. Please take advantage of this [teachable moment](#) when introducing the book to young readers.

Lauren Yanofsky Hates the Holocaust

by Leanne Lieberman, ages 13-18

Jewish teen Lauren is sick of Holocaust memorials. But when she sees some of her friends--including cute boy Jesse--playing Nazi war games, she is faced with a terrible choice: betray her friends or betray her heritage.

Tropical Secrets: Holocaust Refugees in Cuba

by Margarita Engle, ages 12 to adult

Daniel has escaped Nazi Germany with nothing but a desperate dream that he might one day find his parents again. But that golden land called New York has turned away the ship full of refugees, and Daniel finds himself in Cuba. The young refugee befriends a local girl with some painful secrets of her own. Yet even in Cuba, the Nazi darkness is never far away.



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List #2 features stories that take place in synagogues, that feature rabbis and other clergy, and that demonstrate a selection of Jewish rituals. Look for these titles in libraries, bookstores, and online.

Book List #2: Synagogues, Clergy & Jewish Ritual

PICTURE BOOKS

[The Bedtime Sh'ma](#) by Sarah Gershman, ages 3-6

This beautifully illustrated adaptation of a traditional good night blessing is a wonderful introduction to one of the oldest and most fundamental of Jewish prayers.

[Bubbe's Belated Bat Mitzvah](#) by Isabel Pinson, ages 4-8

When Naomi convinces her 95-year-old great-grandmother that it's not too late to participate in Jewish communal ritual by becoming a Bat Mitzvah, all the cousins pitch in to help Bubbe study with the rabbi and celebrate her big day at the synagogue. Based on a true story.

[Drop by Drop](#) by Jacqueline Jules, ages 5-8

Second-century sage Rabbi Akiva learned to read at the age of 40 with the encouragement of his wife, and went on to become a great scholar. This is an inspirational tale of perseverance and loyalty.

[In God's Hands](#) by Lawrence Kushner & Gary Schmidt, ages 5-8

The rich man's hands bake the bread and place them in the synagogue, and the poor man's hands receive the bread. But it's God's hands that created the connection between them. Based on a traditional folk tale.

[New Year at the Pier](#) by April Wayland, ages 5-8

Izzy's favorite part of Rosh Hashanah is Tashlich, a joyous ceremony in which people apologize for the mistakes they made in the previous year and thus clean the slate as the new year begins. The rabbi and cantor accompany their congregation outdoors to symbolically toss their sins into the water.

[How It's Made: Torah Scroll](#) by Allison Ofanansky, ages 6-9

More than 100 full-color photographs and interviews give a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at scribes, artists, and craftspeople who work with parchment and gallnut ink to hand-create Torah scrolls, Judaism's holiest text. The newest book in the series is [How It's Made: Hanukkah Menorah](#).

[What You Will See Inside a Synagogue](#) by Rabbi

Lawrence A. Hoffman & Dr. Ron Wolfson, ages 6-10

Full-page photos and informative descriptions explain what happens in a synagogue, the ritual objects used, and the roles played by clergy. This comprehensive primer makes understanding Judaism easy.

[Regina Persisted](#) by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, ages 8-12

In 1935, after years of hard work and struggle, Regina Jonas became the first woman ever ordained as a rabbi. Her story inspires us to pursue our dreams and to persist even in the face of great challenges.

CHAPTER BOOKS

[Wise and Not So Wise: Ten Tales from the Rabbis](#)

by Phillis Gershator, ages 7-11

These folktales use the teachings of ancient rabbinic sages to answer questions and teach moral lessons, using humor, wonder, and magic.

[All Three Stooges](#) by Erica S. Perl, ages 10-13

Middle schooler Noah deals with the suicide of a beloved adult, the estrangement of his best friend, and his upcoming bar mitzvah all at the same time. A kindly rabbi and supportive Hebrew School help him learn to cope in a genuine and even humorous way.

[Confessions of a Closet Catholic](#) by Sarah Darer Littman, ages 10-13

Justine's family gives her confusing messages about how to be Jewish, so she sets out on an exploration of Catholicism, Judaism, and the meaning of religion. When Bubbe (Grandma) has a stroke Justine worries that God is punishing her for breaking the rules, but frank discussions with a priest and a rabbi, as well as with Bubbe, finally set her on the road to finding her Jewish spiritual self.

[Tough Questions Jews Ask](#) by Rabbi Ed Feinstein, ages 11+

With insight and wisdom—and without pretending to have all the answers—Rabbi Feinstein encourages young people to make sense of the Jewish tradition by wrestling with what we don't understand. He respectfully and humorously tackles questions like "Why does God let bad things happen?" and "What is the meaning of life?"

[Playing with Matches](#) by Suri Rosen, ages 12-18

In this hip and funny Orthodox Jewish story, 16-year-old Raina accidentally gets swept into the secret role of matchmaker in her close-knit Toronto community. Readers will be vastly entertained while learning a lot about Jewish marriage traditions.

[Strange Relations](#) by Sonia Levitin, ages 12-18

Teenage Marne visits her uncle, a Chasidic rabbi. His Orthodox practices are foreign to Marne, who was raised in a more liberal Jewish tradition. As she settles into her new-found family's daily routine, she begins to think about spirituality, identity, and finding a place in the world in a way she never has before.



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List #3 features books about Jewish life in the United States of America, from the earliest days to the present time. Look for these titles in libraries, bookstores, and online.

Book List #3: The American Jewish Experience

PICTURE BOOKS

[Hanukkah at Valley Forge](#) by Stephen Krensky, ages 5-10
A soldier tells George Washington the miraculous story of how a ragtag army of Jewish soldiers defeated a much larger force of powerful Greeks, a providing just the kind of inspiration the General needs. Based on a true story.

[The Legend of Freedom Hill](#)

by Linda Jacobs Altman, ages 6-9

During the California Gold Rush Rosabel, an African-American Christian girl, and Sophie, a white Jewish girl, team up and search for gold to buy Rosabel's mother her freedom from a slave catcher.

[The Yankee at the Seder](#) by Elka Weber, ages 7-10

A Jewish Yankee soldier joins a Southern family's Passover meal, showing how common values can overcome even the most divisive differences. Gathered around the seder table, the group discusses what it means to be free--a subject as relevant today as it was during the War between the States and during the Exodus. Based on a true story.

[Brave Girl: Clara and the Shirtwaist Makers' Strike of 1909](#) by Michelle Markel, ages 5-9

Clara Lemlich, a young Jewish immigrant, led the largest strike of women workers in U.S. history to protest mistreatment and terrible working conditions.

[God Bless America: The Story of an Immigrant Named Irving Berlin](#) by Adah Nuchi, ages 4-9

This is the true tale of how a Jewish former refugee gave America one of its most celebrated patriotic songs.

[Boys of Steel: The Creators of Superman](#)

by Marc Tyler Nobleman, ages 8-12

Cleveland Jewish teens Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster created the all-American character of Superman for comic books during the Depression. This picture book biography mixes comic panels with fascinating facts.

[Big Sam: A Rosh Hashanah Tall Tale](#)

by Eric A. Kimmel, ages 4-8

A new Jewish folk hero, Big Sam, joins the likes of Paul Bunyan for a tall tale that incorporates the American landscape into a story of fixing your mistakes and protecting the environment.

[Fascinating: The Life of Leonard Nimoy](#)

by Richard Michelson, ages 7-10

A moving biography of the late Leonard Nimoy, the Jewish actor who played the iconic Mr. Spock on *Star Trek*, whose story exemplifies the American experience and the power of pursuing your dreams.

[A Poem for Peter](#) by Andrea Davis Pinkney, ages 7-10
In lovely verse, Pinkney dives into the life and work of Jewish author Ezra Jack Keats, focusing on his classic picture book *The Snowy Day* and his creation of the African-American main character, Peter.

[I Dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Makes Her Mark](#) by Debbie Levy, ages 4-10
Jewish Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's life story is told through the lens of her many famous dissents, or disagreements.

CHAPTER BOOKS

[All-of-a-Kind Family](#) by Sydney Taylor, ages 8-12
This first book in a classic series lovingly depicts a turn of the century Jewish family on the Lower East Side, experiencing universal American institutions like the public library, the Fourth of July, and Coney Island alongside their unique religious practices.

[Viva, Rose!](#) by Susan Krawitz, ages 8-14
Rose and her family are Russian Jewish immigrants living in El Paso, TX, in the early 1900s. Rose's brother Abraham runs away to join Pancho Villa's army, and her sisterly rescue attempt goes awry in this exciting novel based on the author's family history.

[Dreidels on the Brain](#) by Joel Ben Izzy, ages 10-14
In 1971, Joel, a dorky 12-year-old Jewish Californian, aspires to be a magician. His tumultuous Hanukkah is the worst and best of times in this heartwarming story.

[This Is Just a Test](#) by Shang & Rosenberg, ages 9-13
It's 1983, and David's got worries: his impending bar mitzvah, his constantly competing Chinese and Jewish grandmothers, the cute girl who makes him nervous, and his popular new friend, who dislikes David's longtime best friend—plus, it's the height of the Cold War, and nuclear annihilation could hit at any second.

[When Hurricane Katrina Hit Home](#) by Gail Langer Karwoski, 8-12 years
Jewish Chazz and African-American Lyric share courage and compassion as they help each other make it through the chaos in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina.

[Queen of Likes](#) by Hillary Homzie, ages 9-13
Jewish 7th grader Karma is a social media celebrity until her parents confiscate her phone. She struggles to learn how to live unplugged in this timely and funny novel.



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This fourth list features stories of Jews and non-Jews enjoying each other's company, sharing food, skills, support, and friendship. Look for these titles in libraries, bookstores, and online.

Book List #4: Let's Be Friends

PICTURE BOOKS

[Chik Chak Shabbat](#) by Mara Rockliff, ages 4-8
Jewish Goldie is too sick to make Shabbat cholent or Sabbath stew, so her multicultural neighbors pitch in and save the day. Recipe included.

[A Hat for Mrs. Goldman: A Story About Knitting and Love](#) by Michelle Edwards, ages 4-8
Mrs. Goldman (Jewish) is so busy knitting for everyone in the neighborhood that she neglects herself. Little Sophia (Latina and non-Jewish) learns to knit just so she can keep her friend's head warm. Knitting pattern included.

[A Moon for Moe and Mo](#) by Jane Breskin Zalben, ages 4-8
Moses Feldman (Jewish) lives at one end of Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn, while Mohammed Hassan (Muslim) lives at the other. One day they meet at the market while shopping with their mothers. A friendship is born, and the boys bring their families together to share rugelach and date cookies in the park as they make a wish for peace.

[The Sundown Kid: A Southwestern Shabbat](#)
by Barbara Bietz, ages 4-8
A Jewish family is lonely in their new home on the Western frontier until they invite the non-Jewish sheriff, blacksmith, and storekeeper's families to come over and share a delicious dinner of chicken soup.

[Across the Alley](#) by Richard Michelson, ages 5-8
Abe (white Jewish) and Willie (African-American non-Jewish) are best friends at night, when they lean out of their bedroom windows to talk, play catch, and share music. When their secret comes out, their families proudly support both boys, despite mid-century social prejudices.

[The Trees of the Dancing Goats](#) by Patricia Polacco, ages 5-8
A Jewish family discovers that their Christian neighbors have scarlet fever and can't prepare for Christmas. They cheer their friends with surprise trees, decorated with the wooden animals Grampa had carved for Hanukkah presents. See also Polacco's tales of Jewish/Gentile friendship in *Mrs. Katz and Tush* and *Tikvah Means Hope*.

CHAPTER BOOKS

Paper Chains by Elaine Vickers, ages 8-12

Jewish Ana’s family is adjusting to life without dad while her best friend Katie, who’s Christian, deals with health issues and curiosity about her birth parents. An endearing story of the power and comfort of friendship.

Sweep: The Story of a Girl and Her Monster

by Jonathan Auxier, ages 9-14

Warm-hearted historical fantasy brings us a non-Jewish chimney sweeping girl in Victorian London and her golem, a magical giant from Jewish folklore created to protect the underdog... and to be her friend.

Armstrong & Charlie by Steven B. Frank, ages 10-14

1970s school desegregation brings together a white Jewish and an African-American non-Jewish boy, who despite their initial distrust end up as true friends. A heartfelt and funny book.

Lucky Broken Girl by Ruth Behar, Ages 10+

Cuban-Jewish immigrant Ruthie is adjusting to life in the US when she ends up in a body cast after a car crash. Bedridden, she relies on connections with Belgian, Indian, and Mexican friends and teachers, and her newfound love of art. Based on the author’s experiences.



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Ready for more Jewish books? Visit these websites!

SydneyTaylorBookAwards.org—The best Jewish children’s books of the year, preschool through teens

TabletMag.com/tag/childrens-books—Jewish children’s book news and reviews from Tablet Magazine

BookofLifePodcast.com—Interviews with authors, illustrators, and publishers of Jewish books for kids and adults

JewishBookCouncil.org/books/reading-lists—The Jewish Book Council’s adult and children’s reading lists

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This is the fifth in a series of book lists intended to provide children and their families with a greater understanding of the Jewish religion and its people. This fifth list features stories depicting Orthodox Jews. Because some Orthodox Jews have a distinctive manner of dress, they are often easy targets for antisemitism.

All of the books on the Love Your Neighbor lists provide a window into the many versions of Judaism, while at the same time mirroring the universal values we all share. The picture books below, designed for the specific needs of Orthodox Jewish communities, assume familiarity with customs and vocabulary. Be sure to seek out the glossaries that often appear in these titles. Look for these books in public and synagogue libraries, bookstores and Judaica shops, and online, and find the entire Love Your Neighbor series of book lists at JewishLibraries.org/Love_Your_Neighbor.

Book List #5: Orthodox Jews

PICTURE BOOKS

[Around the Shabbos Table](#) by Seryl Berman, ages 4-8
Tova Leiba's positive attitude is infectious, and she helps her siblings see the good in every situation during Sabbath dinner.

[I Keep Kosher](#) by Tami G. Raubvogel, ages 4-8
A young girl narrates a rhyming story about the rules of keeping kosher, eating according to rules laid out in the Torah (Genesis through Deuteronomy). Extensive back-matter explains more and gives context.

[We Can Find a Way](#) by Dina Rosenfeld, ages 3-8
The kids are determined to find a way to include everyone at grandma's birthday party, finding creative solutions to mobility issues, sensory problems, and food allergies. A sweet story about inclusion.

[Sara Finds a Mitzva](#) by Rebeka Simhaee, ages 4-8
Sara fulfills the mitzva (commandment) of returning lost things, turning detective to track down the child who misplaced her little toy duck.

[Dear Tree](#) by Doba Rivka Weber, ages 3-8
A young boy thanks a tree for its beauty, its fruit, its shade, and wishes it long life and many offspring in celebration of the Jewish holiday Tu B'Shvat, the New Year of the Trees.

[The Bravest Fireman](#) by Leah Zytman, ages 3-8
Ari imagines becoming a fireman when he grows up, because the Torah says "Saving one life is like saving the world."

CHAPTER BOOKS

[Hereville: How Mirka Got Her Sword](#) by Barry

Deutsch, ages 8-14

The tagline “Yet another Troll-Fighting 11-Year-Old Orthodox Jewish Girl” lets readers know that they are in for quirky humor in the first volume of this graphic novel fantasy trilogy that mixes a respectful depiction of Orthodox life with zany magical hijinks. Sequels include [How Mirka Met a Meteorite](#) and [How Mirka Caught a Fish](#).

[The Illustrated Pirkei Avot: A Graphic Novel of Jewish Ethics](#) by Jessica Tamar Deutsch, ages 10 and up

Pirkei Avot, “Ethics of the Fathers,” is a time-honored collection of wise words from ancient rabbis, but this version brings modern flair and whimsy to its serious subject matter.

[Strange Relations](#) by Sonia Levitin, ages 14 and up

Secular Jewish teen Marne spends a summer in Hawaii with her Orthodox aunt and uncle, where she grows to respect their different lifestyle and their way of seeing the world.

[It’s a Whole Spiel: Love, Latkes, and Other Jewish Stories](#), edited by Katherine Locke & Laura Silverman, ages 13 and up

This anthology of 14 stories by Jewish authors about Jewish teens offers a wide variety of religious affiliation and observance. Check out *Good Shabbos* by Goldy Moldavsky, *Two Truths and an Oy* by Dahlia Adler, and *Find the River* by Matthue Roth for Orthodox characters.

[Playing with Matches](#) by Suri Rosen, Ages 13-16

Orthodox teen Raina secretly goes into the matchmaking business to try to help her older sister find a man in this madcap, rollicking adventure.

[Never Mind the Goldbergs](#) by Matthue Roth, ages 14 and up

17-year-old Orthodox punk Hava lands a role on a TV sitcom about a Jewish family, in which her catchphrase is “Oy vey, dude!” A lively story of a girl’s struggle to adapt to both the religious and secular cultures that surround her.



THE “LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR” SERIES

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The Association of Jewish Libraries, established in 1966, is the leading authority on Judaic librarianship. AJL promotes Jewish literacy through enhancement of libraries and library resources and through leadership for the profession and practitioners of Judaica librarianship. The Association fosters access to information, learning, teaching and research relating to Jews, Judaism, the Jewish experience and Israel. AJL is an affiliate of the American Theological Library Association, the Association for Jewish Studies, and the American Library Association.

Learn more at www.jewishlibraries.org.

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In response to rising antisemitism in the United States, the Association of Jewish Libraries offers the Love Your Neighbor series of book lists for all young readers. Books read in youth impact future outlooks, and it is our hope that meeting Jews on the page will inspire friendship when readers meet Jews in real life.

This is the sixth in a series of book lists intended to provide children and their families with a greater understanding of the Jewish religion and its people. This sixth list features books about the eight-day springtime festival of Passover, a major Jewish holiday that is one of the most widely celebrated of the year.

Passover and the Christian holiday of Easter, both springtime holidays, are connected. The historical setting of Easter is Jerusalem at Passover, and some think the Last Supper was a Passover seder meal. Yet, as the website [My Jewish Learning](#) explains in their article “Passover and Easter,” the holidays are quite different. The website tells us “Passover summons Jews collectively into the world to repair it; Easter proffers a way out of a world beyond repair.”

The relationship between the two holidays hasn’t always been congenial. For centuries, an ancient conspiracy theory called “[the blood libel](#)” —a bizarre accusation of ritual murder—was used as a pretext for deadly attacks on Jewish communities during the Passover season. Today, relations have greatly improved, and non-Jewish friends are welcome at many Passover seders.

We present to you these Passover titles, available in libraries, bookstores, and online.

The entire Love Your Neighbor series of book lists can be found at [JewishLibraries.org/Love Your Neighbor](https://www.jewishlibraries.org/love-your-neighbor).

Book List #6: Passover

PICTURE BOOKS

[The Story of Passover](#) by David A. Adler (ages 5-10)
Passover commemorates the Jews’ escape from slavery in the land of Egypt. The complex Biblical story of Moses and the Exodus is laid out in simple terms in this lovely picture book.

[The Best Four Questions](#) by Rachelle Burk (ages 3-8)
The youngest child at the seder always asks four traditional questions about what makes Passover unique. It’s a technique meant to keep the whole family engaged. In this humorous tale, Marcy makes up her own questions and learns a lot more than she expected to.

[Celebrate Passover with Matzah, Maror, and Memories](#) by Deborah Heiligman (ages 5-9)
Gorgeous National Geographic photos show Jews around the world celebrating Passover. Extensive back matter includes further information, recipes, map and a glossary.

[The Mouse in the Matzah Factory](#) by Francine Medoff (ages 3-8)
From wheatfield to box, every stage of the creation of matzah, Passover’s ritual bread, is watched by a curious mouse.

[Sammy Spider’s First Haggadah](#) by Sylvia Rouss (ages 3-8)
“Haggadah” means “order” - it’s a step by step guidebook to a seder, meant to be used at the table during the festive meal. This haggadah is aimed at younger kids, and will keep them engaged with brightly colored collage art and interactive text.

[More Than Enough](#) by April Halprin Wayland (ages 3-8)
The traditional Passover song “Dayenu” means “it would have been enough for us.” This gentle story demonstrates mindfulness and gratitude during the holiday. A glossary and author’s note round out the book.

[Miriam at the River](#) by Jane Yolen (ages 4-8)
At Passover we retell the biblical story of Moses, including his babyhood rescue by his sister Miriam the prophet. This lovely volume focuses on Miriam’s experience.

CHAPTER BOOKS

[Let My Children Cook!](#) By Tamar Ansh (ages 8+)
Over 80 easy Passover recipes that kids can cook with help or on their own, accompanied by humorous illustrations and bonus craft activities.

[Wonders and Miracles: A Passover Companion](#) by Eric A. Kimmel (ages 6+)
A gorgeous compilation of history, stories, songs, poetry, and seder customs, illustrated with art spanning 3000 years.

[Passover Around the World](#) by Tami Lehman-Wilzig (ages 7-11)
A comprehensive tour of Passover customs from across the globe, accompanied by stories, recipes, maps, and fun facts.

[Penina Levine Is a Hard-Boiled Egg](#) by Rebecca O’Connell (ages 9-12)
In this middle grade novel, Jewish Penina’s public school class is assigned an Easter Bunny project, but she stands up for her beliefs and schools her teachers on diversity.

[Welcome to the Seder: A Passover Haggadah for Everyone](#) by Rabbi Kerry M. Olitzky (ages 12+)
This Haggadah, with its lively art and its universal message on the value of freedom, is welcoming, inclusive, and easy to understand, for first timers and old timers alike.

[Puppet](#) by Eva Wiseman (ages 12+)
The blood libel is an ancient lie that Jews ritually murder Christian children and use their blood to make matzah, used as a pretext for violence against Jews. This dark story is a fictionalized account of the last blood libel trial in Europe in 1883. Not easy reading, but an important story.



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