



BetterTogether™
in a box

SUKKOT 2021 RESOURCE

This resource includes three parts:

PART A: Programming for Better Together teen participants

PART B: Programming for senior partners

PART C: Additional Resources

Essential Question(s)

1. Why is the value of hospitality so important to us as Jews?
2. How does the Sukkot custom of *Ushpizin/Ushpizot* help us to better understand and put into practice the value of welcoming guests?
3. What can we learn about the “other” (teens/older adults) that will help to make our connection to one another more meaningful?

Student Learning Goals

1. To understand the Jewish relationship between the Sukkot custom of *Ushpizin/Ushpizot* and the value of welcoming guests/*hachnassat orchim* through the exploration of Jewish and contemporary texts and discussion
2. To learn about ageism and the stereotyping of older adults in our society and in their own lives
3. To translate the Jewish value of hospitality into direct work with older adults

Elder Learning Goals

1. To learn about the Sukkot custom of *Ushpizin/Ushpizot* and the Jewish value of welcoming guests/*hachnassat orchim*
2. To learn about ageism and the stereotyping of young people in our society and in their own lives
3. To translate the Jewish value of hospitality into direct work with teens

Optional Music Tie-In

*You can play this music as the teens are entering or as they are working.
You can discuss or just let it inspire!*

[Shakin' the Lulav](#)

Based on the song "Twist & Shout". Lyrics/Director/Editor - David Bar-Cohn

[You Were Strangers](#)

Lea Kalisch and Rabbi Tobias Divack Moss | HIAS

[Livin' In A Booth](#)

The Ein Prat Fountainheads

[Under the Sukkah](#)

Julie Silver



PART A: TEEN LEARNING PROGRAM

This teen program is designed to run 60 minutes (depending on options selected), synchronously, but remotely, via Zoom or other virtual platform. Throughout the resource, instructions for the facilitator are in *italics* and words to read directly to the participants are in plain text.

MATERIALS

- Stationary, envelopes and stamps for letter writing
- Copies of the Text source sheet (printed is preferred)
- Mad-Libs style letter template for teens & older adults
- Printed photo of self if desired
- Colored Markers
- Magazines (with photos for collage)
- Glue (Elmer's, rubber cement or glue stick)
- Paper pennants purchasing options
 - [Option #1](#) White paper triangles
 - [Option #2](#) Colored paper triangles
 - [Option #3](#) Manila tagboard rectangles
- String (for stringing banners)
- Hole punch



LESSON FRAMING

Sukkot is a week-long holiday celebrating the bounty of the autumn harvest. It is one of the *shalosh ha'regalim*, the three pilgrimage festivals. Sukkot is rich with customs and mitzvot – one of which is *hachnasat orchim*, welcoming guests. We welcome friends, family and the community into our sukkah and we visit others. We eat, sleep, study and spend seven days and nights in the company of neighbors and friends as we celebrate the holiday.

One of the most beautiful traditions of the Sukkot Festival is *Ushpizin* (Aramaic for “guests”), a Kabbalistic or mystical custom in which we invite our Biblical ancestors Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron and David to “join us” in our celebrations. Some communities also welcome the *Ushpizot*, seven Biblical women from the Babylonian Talmud. Still others identify contemporary men and women who exemplify the values of our tradition that they want to highlight at this time of year. Our mystical tradition (Kabbalah) teaches that each one of the *Ushpizin* – whether ancient or contemporary – is invited because they highlight for us an important Jewish value. This custom provides an opportunity for us to put into action one of the most important Jewish values – that of hospitality and welcoming the “other”.

Today as we explore the Jewish value of *hachnasat orchim* we will learn about our religious, spiritual and communal obligation to offer hospitality to those in need and to welcome guests into our homes and communities. (<https://reformjudaism.org/glossary/hachnasat-orchim>). Later in the session we will use this beautiful lens to examine the stereotypes we hold about older people in order to better understand how they may keep us from fully embracing our Jewish obligation to be welcoming.

Warm up & introductions (10 mins)

1. **Share:** Today's program will focus on the 8-day Jewish harvest festival of Sukkot and the special practice of *Ushpizin*. Ask participants whether anyone has heard of *Ushpizin*. If so – invite them to share a bit about what *Ushpizin* is. If no one offers to share, read the lesson framing above.
2. **Explain:** Today we have an opportunity to prepare for an in-person or virtual visit with some older adults.
3. **Ask:** What are some ways that a group of people gathering for a shared activity can be helped to feel more welcome at the start of an in-person program? How can this happen in a virtual program? (take a few quick answers from the group)
4. **Share:** Our first activity models one way that we can ensure that others feel “welcome” by making sure that everyone has a chance to speak and to feel that their voice matters in the room
5. **Do:** Ask each teen to share the following (30 seconds total each)
 - a. their name
 - b. the name of an older person who is/was important to them in their life
 - c. one way in which that older person made them feel welcome

Suggestion: Use the white board feature of Zoom to keep track of the list of ways participants have felt welcome. This list will be used later in the program.

Text study: Why do we value hospitality and the welcoming of guests? (20 mins)

1. **Share:** Why do we, in the Jewish community value hospitality so highly that we have a custom of inviting our ancestors to “join us” in our Sukkah for each night of the Sukkot holiday? What do the ancient voices of our tradition teach us about this value?

You'll be working now in small groups to read and discuss a Jewish text. These texts provide background about the Jewish value of welcoming guests and the special Sukkot practice of *Ushpizin* – inviting our ancestors to “visit” us in our Sukkah. Please choose one of the two readings on the [source sheet](#). Take turns reading it aloud and then answer the questions. You have 10 minutes to read and discuss these readings. When we return from small groups one person from each group will share one or two observations that your group made during your discussion.

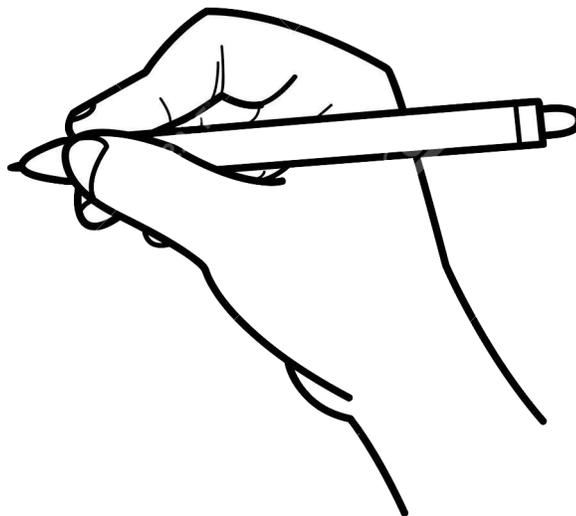
2. **Prepare:** place students into groups of 3 or 4. Assign them to breakout rooms to read and discuss texts.
3. **Do:** post the [Source Sheet](#) in the chat. Ask students to open it (remind them to open it prior to being placed in their breakout groups. Once in their breakout groups they may not be able to access the chat). Send students to breakout groups. Close breakout rooms after 10 minutes.
4. **Invite** someone from each group to share 2 or 3 “observations” or “learnings”. Highlight ideas that come up in multiple groups and feel free to add any insights that may have been missed by the students.

Welcoming the elderly (25 mins) - *This section will help prepare students to connect with their senior buddies.*

1. **Share:** Now that we have explored the custom of *Ushpizin* and the value of welcoming guests, we're going to take a few minutes to explore the stereotypes and assumptions that we (and the larger society in which we live) may have about older people. If we are to exercise the Jewish value of hospitality in the ways we have been discussing – we will need to understand what might stand in the way of our ability to be truly welcoming to others – especially our senior buddies.
2. **Brainstorm** a list of words that come to mind when you hear the words “senior citizen” or “elderly”. Use the white board function on zoom to write down all of the words that the students share. Don't comment on the words. Just write them down. If any students begin to comment on the words – remind them that this is a brainstorm and not yet a time for discussion.
3. Once the list is completed (3 mins) **show this video** from AARP: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lydNjrUs4NM> (4 mins)

*After the video, **repost** the list of words that the group had brainstormed.*

4. **Ask:** How does what you saw in this film affirm or challenge our list of words describing older people? Is there anything on our brainstorm list that you might like to revisit? Are there any changes you'd like to make to our list? What made you decide to make these changes? (5 mins)
5. **Write letters** to your senior buddies. Use the [Mad Libs](#) format provided or craft your own letter. Be sure to introduce yourself, share what you learned today about Sukkot, the Jewish value of welcoming guests and the custom of *Ushpizin*. Ask questions that, when answered will help you begin to get to know your senior buddies.



Optional Activity: *Ushpizin* Banners

Explain: Today we're going to make a decorative Sukkot banner for our elder partners based on the beautiful custom of *Ushpizin*! These will help our senior buddies get to know us better.

1. **Share** sample *Ushpizin* Banner [here](#) and [here](#).
2. **Create** one banner piece about yourself. Include a photo, drawing or collage on one side that looks like you. On the other side share two things about yourself that your senior buddy does not yet know.
3. **Create** 2 – 3 more banner pieces that introduce your senior buddy to people you would like to honor as part of the Sukkot custom of *Ushpizin*. They should be people who are important to you such as grandparents, parents, siblings, teachers or friends.
 - On one side of each banner piece put a picture (hand drawn, collage from magazine pictures, photos, etc) of an *Ushpizin* guest you'd like to welcome.
 - On other side share who the person is, their relationship to you and why you have chosen them as one of your *Ushpizin/Ushpizot* guests.
4. **Explain:** These decorative banners will be shared with the senior partners as part of the **Buddy Box** below. The banners may hang in a communal Sukkah. They may also hang in a community dining room, game room or bedroom/private apartment. This activity gives us a chance to introduce ourselves to our older adult partners while providing them with some colorful and fun Sukkot decorations!
5. Once the pictures are complete – **string them together** to form a banner that can be hung. Place in the **Buddy Box** and send.



Wrap Up (5 -10 min)

Reflection is key to learning! See the Introduction to Reflection & Journaling for tips and ideas to set up your group's reflection practice.

"3 – 2 – 1" Reflection

1. What are **3** things that you learned today about older people that you didn't know or hadn't thought about before?
2. What are **2** things that Judaism values about welcoming others?
3. What is **1** thing you are looking forward to in working with your senior buddy?

ACTIVITY: SUKKOT | USHPIZIN | WHO & HOW DO WE WELCOME OTHERS?

Goal

These activities encourage teens and seniors to get to know one another as they learn more about what makes each person feel welcome in a new environment and continue to build one-on-one relationships. All activity options are based on the holiday of Sukkot and the ritual of *Ushpizin*.

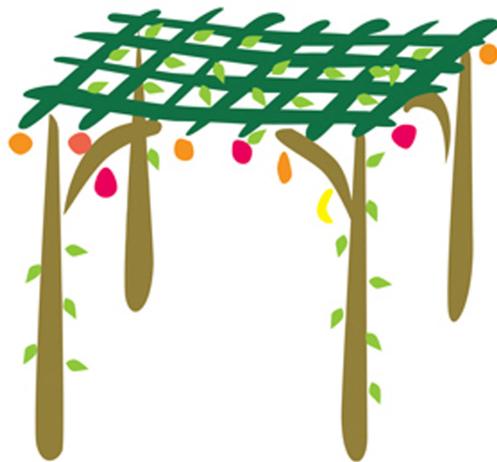
Letter Writing in Advance

Provide these letter-writing prompts then gather letters from students to their senior buddies.

1. **About YOU:** Have you ever spent time in a Sukkah? Do you participate in the custom of inviting *Ushpizin* into your Sukkah? If not, share what you've learned with your fellow teens about this custom.
2. **Share:** who is someone from your past, who has impacted your life in positive ways, who you might like to invite as an *Ushpizin/Ushpizot* this year? Why?
3. **Share:** a time when you felt particularly welcome in a new environment. What was it that helped you to feel so welcome?
4. **Ask** two questions that your senior partner can answer in a return letter. What is something you'd like to know about your senior buddy?
5. **Tell your senior buddy** how excited you are to continue getting to know them

Actions

- Educators will buy stationery, envelopes, and stamps, calculating for each planned activity. Educators will distribute these to students, along with the names and addresses of their senior buddies.
Approximate Educator Time Commitment: 1 hour
- Students will write letters on stationery, and mail them directly to the seniors. Students will include a smaller envelope (self-addressed and stamped) with blank stationery for the senior's return letter.
Approximate Student Time Commitment: 30 minutes
- Seniors will write return letters on stationery and mail to students.
Approximate Senior Time Commitment: 30 minutes



Activity Options

Non-electronic Activity: “Welcoming others/Ushpizin” Mad Lib

Ask teens to complete the Mad Lib provided. Include a blank copy of the Mad Lib for senior. See RESOURCES.

Actions

1. Educators will email Mad Libs to students
Approximate Educator Time Commitment: 5 minutes
2. Students will print Mad Libs and fill out the ‘student section’. Students will mail their filled out ‘student section’ and the blank ‘senior section’ along with their letters.
Approximate Student Time Commitment: 20 minutes
3. Seniors will read the students’ Mad Libs and fill out the ‘senior section’ Mad Libs. Seniors will send it back to their student buddies along with their letters.
Approximate Senior Time Commitment: 20 minutes



Electronic – Asynchronous: Making Teen Videos

Actions

- Students will film themselves talking directly to their senior buddy as they:
 - Describe how (if at all) they celebrate Sukkot
 - Explain what the custom of Ushpizin is about
 - Share (on camera) the Ushpizin banner that they made for their senior buddy
 - Introduce the people they’ve chosen to “honor” in their Ushpizin/Ushpizot banner and why these people are important to them
 - Remember to look directly into the camera and speak slowly and clearly so they can be understood.*Approximate Student Time Commitment: 45 minutes*
- Educators will collect all video content. If using E-cards, educators will upload each student’s video to an e-card and deliver E-cards to the residents in a safe manner. If sending videos digitally, electronically send videos to seniors.
Approximate Educator Time Commitment: 1 hour
- Seniors will watch the student videos and write a return letter to their teen partner that explains:
 - a. How, if at all, they celebrate Sukkot
 - b. Who they would choose to welcome/honor if they were welcoming “Ushpizin” guests
 - c. One new thing about themselves that their partner does not yet know.*Approximate Senior Time Commitment: 30 minutes*

Synchronous Virtual Activity: Crafting a new blessing/statement of welcome

Student and senior buddies will work together via zoom (or other platform) to create a new blessing/welcome statement for welcoming one another to an intergenerational gathering based on the blessing recited for *Ushpizin*. They will craft two statements: one for the youngers to share when welcoming the elders, and one for elders to share when welcoming the youngers.

Activity

Explain: Today we are going to write a new statement of welcome based on the traditional blessing that is recited in the Sukkah as part of the *Ushpizin* ritual. This statement of welcome will serve as the introduction for our future intergenerational gatherings – whether in person or electronically.

Ask: What do you think is important to include in a welcome statement? What can you say that will make one another feel welcome?

Read : this traditional blessing of welcome that is recited in the Sukkah during *Ushpizin*. This reading includes the blessings for the first two nights of Sukkot.

תיבּו תיבּו אוּשְפִיזִין עֵילָאִין, תיבּו תיבּו אוּשְפִיזִין קַדִישִין, תיבּו תיבּו
אוּשְפִיזִין דְמַהִימְנוּתָא, זְכָאָה חוֹלְקִיהוּן דְיִשְרָאֵל דְכַתִּיב כִּי חֵלֶק ה' עִמּוּ יַעֲקֹב
חֶבְלֵי נַחֲלָתוֹ
Sit, sit, [you] lofty guests; sit, sit [you] holy guests; sit, sit
[you] guests of faith . . .

אַזְמִין לְסַעוּדָתִי אוּשְפִיזִין עֵילָאִין אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק יַעֲקֹב מֹשֶׁה אַהֲרֹן יוֹסֵף וְדָוִד
I am inviting the lofty guests, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses,
Aaron, Joseph and David.

ביום הראשון אומר *On the first day, one says:*

בְּמַטֵּי מִינְהּ אַבְרָהָם אוּשְפִיזִי עֵילָאִי דִיתְבִי עִמִּי וְעִמָּךְ כֹּל אוּשְפִיזֵי עֵילָאִי
יִצְחָק יַעֲקֹב מֹשֶׁה אַהֲרֹן יוֹסֵף וְדָוִד
If you please, Abraham, my lofty guest, may all of the exalted
guests – Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph and David – sit
with me and you.

ביום השני אומר *On the second day, one says:*

בְּמַטֵּי מִינְהּ יִצְחָק אוּשְפִיזִי עֵילָאִי דִיתְבִי עִמִּי וְעִמָּךְ כֹּל אוּשְפִיזֵי עֵילָאִי
אַבְרָהָם יַעֲקֹב מֹשֶׁה אַהֲרֹן יוֹסֵף וְדָוִד
If you please, Isaac, my lofty guest, let all of the exalted
guests – Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph and David –
sit with me and with you.

Brainstorm: messages that you would want to hear at the start of an intergenerational gathering that would make you feel welcome. Begin by sharing the statements that the teens drafted in advance. Then invite the seniors to brainstorm their own statements of welcome.

Choose: the statements that you want to include in your final statement of welcome from all of those that have been brainstormed by conducting a vote. Each person gets three votes. The 6 – 8 statements that receive the most votes will become the final welcome statement. (Choose 3 – 4 statements to be read by “olders” welcoming “youngers” and 3 statements to be read by “youngers” welcoming “olders.”)

If working one-on-one there is no need to vote. Simply use the student’s statements as the welcome statement for the “youngers” and the senior buddy’s statements as the welcome statement for the “olders.”

Write the final welcome statements and share them on screen. Have “olders” read to “youngers” and then “youngers” read to “olders.”

Actions

- Educators will facilitate the scheduling of online video meetings between students and seniors. It is recommended that all senior and teen participants join a single video conference as a community in order to work together. If this is not possible then senior and teen buddy partners can meet one on one in individual video conferences.
- *Approximate Educator Time Commitment: 1 hour*
- Educator will send a .pdf of the traditional *Ushpizin* blessing to students and ask them to review it in advance of their meeting with their senior buddy.
- *Approximate Educator Time Commitment: 15 minutes*



BUDDY BOX

“Get to know you” *Ushpizin*/Sukkah Decoration Banner

Activity

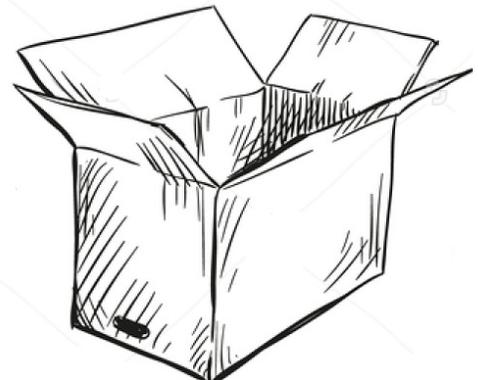
- Place student-created *Ushpizin* Banner in the box with a post-it-note explaining that it can be hung in a Sukkah, in a community dining room or in a private home to help celebrate the holiday of Sukkot.
- Include the “Welcoming others/*Ushpizin*” MadLib Letters completed by the students
- Include a blank “Welcoming others/*Ushpizin*” MadLib Letters template for seniors with a request that the seniors complete and return them to the students.
- Include blank banner pieces and additional string for the senior buddy to create their own banner. Purchase the banner pieces [here](#).
- Purchase additional hanging decorations for Sukkot [here](#) and include in the box.

Actions

- Educators will email Mad Libs to students with instructions for printing and completing
- Educators will collect Mad Libs and *Ushpizin* banners from students
- Educators will purchase additional hanging decorations and include in the Buddy Boxes.
- Educators will compile all Buddy Boxes for each senior and deliver them.
Approximate Educator Time Commitment: 2 hours

- Students will complete 2 – 4 *Ushpizin* banner pieces (see above), string them and provide to Educator for inclusion in the Buddy Box.
- Students will print Mad Libs, fill out the ‘student section’, and create self-addressed and stamped envelopes for seniors to write back and mail
Approximate Student Time Commitment: 1.5 hours

- Seniors will receive Buddy Boxes, read the students’ Mad Libs and the *Ushpizin* banner provided by their student partner. They will hang the banner.
- Seniors will fill out the ‘senior section’ of the Mad Libs and write about themselves in the pre-addressed letter to mail back to their buddy.
Approximate Senior Time Commitment: 45 minutes



ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY: For any groups of older adults who have the opportunity to gather together in person prior to interacting with the teens

An in-person gathering is recommended where possible to help ground the older adults and prepare them for a more productive and satisfying connection with their teen buddies.

Warm up & introductions (10 mins)

- **Share:** Today's program will focus on the 8-day Jewish harvest festival of Sukkot and the special practice of *Ushpizin*. We also have an opportunity to prepare for a virtual visit with some young people
- **Ask** whether anyone has heard of *Ushpizin*. If so – invite them to share a bit about what *Ushpizin* is. If no one offers to share, read the lesson framing from the teen activity above.
- **Share:** One way that we can ensure that others feel “welcome” is by making sure that everyone has a chance to speak and to feel that their voice matters in the room
 - Go around the room and ask each adult to share (30 seconds each):
 - their name
 - the name of a person who is or was important to them
 - one way in which that person made them feel welcome
 - write down the list of ways that they were made to feel welcome
- **Ask:** What are some ways that a group of people gathering for a shared activity can be helped to feel more welcome at the start of an in-person program? How can this happen in a virtual program?

Welcoming guests (30 mins)

- **Share:** In preparation for our activity with the teens please answer this question:
 - What words come to mind when you hear the word “teenagers”? (*Write down the responses*)
 - Read back the answers.
- **Share:** Now we'll hear from some teens directly.
- **Watch** one of these videos:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oX1522KpkOs> (2:11)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s73bsUBg5s8> (7:43)
- **Share:** Now that you've heard from some teens – let's revisit the list of words that you created. Is there anything you might like to change on this list?
- *After reviewing the list and making changes* **ask:** What made you decide to make these changes?

Optional synchronous intergenerational activity:

This reading is recommended for use in any synchronous intergenerational program to deepen the conversation and the learning between the two generations.

Take turns reading aloud – then answer the discussion questions at the end of the reading.

Excerpted from: Wisdom Isn't What You Think It Is: It's more about listening than talking.

By David Brooks The New York Times, April 15, 2021

When I think of the wise people in my own life, they are like that. It's not the life-altering words of wisdom that drop from their lips, it's the way they receive others. Too often the public depictions of wisdom involve remote, elderly sages who you approach with trepidation — and who give the perfect life-altering advice — Yoda, Dumbledore, Solomon. When a group of influential academics sought to define wisdom, they focused on how much knowledge a wise person had accumulated. Wisdom, they wrote, was “an expert knowledge system concerning the fundamental pragmatics of life.”

But when wisdom has shown up in my life, it's been less a body of knowledge and more a way of interacting, less the dropping of secret information, more a way of relating that helped me stumble to my own realizations.

Wisdom is different from knowledge. Montaigne pointed out you can be knowledgeable with another person's knowledge, but you can't be wise with another person's wisdom. Wisdom has an embodied moral element; out of your own moments of suffering comes a compassionate regard for the frailty of others.

Wise people don't tell us what to do, they start by witnessing our story. They take the anecdotes, rationalizations and episodes we tell, and see us in a noble struggle. They see our narratives both from the inside, as we experience them, and from the outside, as we can't. They see the ways we're navigating the dialectics of life — intimacy versus independence, control versus uncertainty — and understand that our current self is just where we are right now, part of a long continuum of growth.

People only change after they've felt understood. The really good confidants — the people we go to for wisdom — are more like story editors than sages. They take in your story, accept it, but prod you to reconsider it so you can change your relationship to your past and future. They ask you to clarify what it is you really want, or what baggage you left out of your clean tale. They ask you to probe for the deep problem that underlies the convenient surface problem you've come to them with.

It is this skillful, patient process of walking people to their own conclusions that feels like wisdom.

Questions for Discussion:

1. What does the writer mean when he says “the people we go to for wisdom are more like story editors than sages”? Do you agree?
2. What does this Op-Ed piece tell us about the connection between honoring guests and wisdom?
3. Who do YOU turn to for wisdom in your life? What is it about them that makes you trust them?

Better Together™
Welcoming Sukkot Ushpizin/Ushpizot Guests

For students: Fill out this Mad Libs form to tell your buddy about the how you celebrate Sukkot and who you'd like to welcome as an Ushpizin guest this year.

Hi _____!
(your buddy's name) It's your buddy, _____
(your name)

I want to tell you a little bit more about me, and get to know a little more about you too.

One of my favorite things about autumn is: _____

because: _____.

One thing I'll miss about summer is: _____.

I learned about the Jewish value of welcoming guests on Sukkot.

It made me realize how much I miss _____.
(someone you no longer get to see often or ever)

They are/were important to me because:

I am looking forward to learning about who *you* would like to welcome for *Ushpizin* this year!

Thanks for writing back! I wish you a very Happy Sukkot and look forward to a time when we can be together in person.

Warmly,

(print your name)

Better Together™
Welcoming Sukkot Ushpizin/Ushpizot Guests

For seniors: *Your buddy has shared with you what they learned about the Jewish value of welcoming guests and the beautiful Sukkot tradition of Ushpizin. Now they would love to learn about how you make guests welcome in your home and in your life. If you could welcome anyone from your past (living or passed) to come back for a visit – who would you invite? Why? What is it about these particular people that makes you wish to see them again?*

When you are done filling this out, please mail it back to your buddy in the self-addressed envelope provided.

Hi _____!
(your buddy's name) It was so lovely to hear from you. Thank you!

I have / have not (*circle one*) had the experience of building and spending time in a Sukkah.
My favorite thing about autumn and/or the holiday of Sukkot is:

One way that I enjoy being welcomed by others is:

One way that I enjoy making guests feel welcome is:

I learned to do this from _____
(name of person & who they are to you – parent, child, sibling, friend)

Who taught me: _____
(why was learning to be welcoming important?)

I like doing this because:

Before hearing from you I had / had not (*circle one*) thought of the value of welcoming others as a Jewish value. Now that I've had a chance to think about this, I realize that:

If I could invite *anyone* from my past (living or not) to visit with me during Sukkot I would invite:

(name the person and explain who they are to you)

I'd like to include this person as an *Ushpizin* this year because:

Thanks again for being in touch! I wish you a very Happy Sukkot and look forward to a time when we can be together in person.

Warmly,

(print your name)

נפרוש עלינו סוכת שלום

אלים אמן לסעדתו בשם כל ישראל אושפיזין עלאין ואושפיזתא עלאתא: בכח מצוה זו ימשך לרחל אמינו מאנא
 תא עלאתא קדישתא למיתב בצלא דמה'מנותא עלאה בצלא דקדשא בריך הוא: תבו תבו אושפיזין עלאין
 לשים יחוד קדישא בריך הוא ושכינתא לחדא שם יי ביה ביה
 עולא אושפיזין עלאין קדישין עולא אבהן עלאין קדישין עולא אבה
 עולא ממקום לאה אמינו אור המקור רחוק שבירושלם:
 תבו תבו אושפיזתא קדישתא תבו בצלא דכוונותא עלאה בצלא דקדשא

יצחק
שרה

אהרן
דבורה

יעקב
רבקה

יוסף
תמר

דן
רחל

אברהם
סarah

משה
מרים



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READING 1: Excerpted from Melissa Crespy

<https://www.jtsa.edu/the-mitzvah-of-welcoming-guests>

The Mitzvah of Receiving Guests

This text can be found in the Talmud ([Shabbat 127a](#)). It is a discussion of what kinds of "work" may be performed in order to properly receive a guest. Please read aloud and then answer the questions that follow.

"Rabbi Yohanan said: "Receiving guests is as great as rising early to attend the study hall . . ." And Rav Dimi from Nehardea said: "Receiving guests is even greater than rising early to attend the study hall . . ." Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: Receiving guests is greater than greeting the Divine Presence, for it is written ([Genesis 18:3](#)): "And [Abraham] said, 'My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your eyes, please do not pass away from Your servant.'"

Questions for discussion:

1. Why might receiving guests be considered greater than greeting the Divine Presence?
2. If from studying we gain a greater understanding and learnedness, what do we gain from welcoming guests?

READING 2: Excerpted from Sefaria Education

<https://www.sefaria.org/sheets/262834.7?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en>

The SUKKAH [provides an opportunity to find] a sense of security and tranquility, even as we sit in a rickety hut, exposed to the elements. In this somewhat vulnerable place, we invite the ushpizin, or guests, to join us. Why? And why invite those who can join in spirit only?

The text below comes from a collection of Rabbi Isaac Luria's Kabbalistic thought, and provides insight into why we might invite guests that we know won't show up. Please read the text aloud and then answer the questions.

[פרי עץ חיים, שער חג הסוכות ד'י"א](#)

ויהיו עניים מאוכלי שולחנו, כי חלק האושפיזין צריך לתת לעניים, כי זה תאוות צדיקים, שעניים יאכלו חלקן...

[Pri Etz Chaim, Gate of Sukkot 4:11](#)

May the poor be among those who eat at your table, because the portion for the *ushpizin* must be given to the poor. For this is the desire of the righteous, that the poor will eat their portion...

By imagining ourselves surrounded by our Biblical ancestors, we ensure that we will have enough food to feed to the poor. As we invite each of these famous personalities in to the Sukkah, we mentally designate a space and some food. When these guests fail to physically manifest, we suddenly realize that we have extra to share with those in need. [Maimonides](#) says that the joy we feel when we sit in our Sukkah is meant to be the happiness that emerges from a sense of accomplished hospitality; on Sukkot, we come out of our homes and can see those around us who are suffering and need our help.

Questions for Discussion:

1. The last year was a vulnerable time, when even the walls of our homes didn't seem to protect us. How might the Sukkah - by definition, a space of vulnerability - challenge us to think about the characteristics we need most to cope in these kinds of moments?
2. What is it about being hospitable that is supposed to give us joy? Do you feel this kind of joy when you connect with your senior buddy? What does that feel like?
3. What can we do within our own spheres of influence to make sure we are setting aside resources for those who need extra support?

SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMMING

In this document we have focused more on the PROCESS of bringing together two generations than on the development of a specific PRODUCT. Best practice indicates that there is greater value in the former than in the latter as described in this excerpt from *Tried and True: A Guide to Successful Intergenerational Activities at Shared Site Programs* a guidebook for intergenerational activities published by Generations United, a non-profit organization that has served for more than 30 years as a leader for generational strategies in the U.S.

PROCESS V. PRODUCT

Although we use the term “activity” throughout this lesson plan, you should focus on the *process* of bringing young and old people together. Activity-focused programming can lead to an overemphasis on creation of an end-product or reaching some endpoint. Alternately, a focus on the opportunity in the process of working together supports positive interactions of young and old participants, regardless of whether the game is completed or the art project finished.

Similarly, if an activity evolves into an entirely different form, facilitators should work with the “emergent” ideas of the [young people] and older adults. For example, facilitators may have plans for intergenerational participants to trace each other’s hands and then decorate the hand tracing with paint and glitter; however, the participants may decide it is more fun to paint each other’s hands and then stamp them on the paper. So long as the participants are safe and mutually enjoying the modified activity, the facilitator’s support of the emergent idea further benefits the children’s and elders’ sense of initiative and creativity. In order to create an environment that supports the goal of positive intergenerational interaction, staff collaboration, pre-planned modifications, and openness to variation should characterize all activities.

(from *Tried and True: A Guide to Successful Intergenerational Activities at Shared Site Programs*.)

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/pushbullet-uploads/ujzNDwQrsR2-lwTZVh9XzpO2KpViVzhCua55IiDV0Dyg/tried%20and%20true.pdf>

READINGS

- Looking for more intergenerational activities? Find an online intergenerational activity guide [here](#).
- Looking for more information about the practice of *Ushpizot* – the inclusion of honoring female guests as part of the custom of *Ushpizin*? Learn more here:
 - from neohasid.org
 - <https://opensiddur.org/prayers/lunisolar/pilgrimage/sukkot/ushpizin-and-ushpizata-inviting-the-avot-and-imahot-into-your-sukkah/>
 - from Women’s League for Conservative Judaism
 - <http://www.wlcj.org/resources/resources-for-members-and-friends/seasonal-materials/ushpizot/>
 - from the Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance
 - <https://www.jofa.org/2020-ushpizot>
 - https://32af60ac-a8fb-4e0c-95ee-2013cf629807.filesusr.com/ugd/44883f_Od2ef4fdcd6d4fa2ab3ea74351ad3b75.pdf

ALTERNATIVE "USHPIZIN" GUESTS:

According to the tradition of **Medieval Italian kabbalist Menachem Azariah of Fano**, the ushpizot are:

- Sarah
- Miriam
- Deborah
- Abigail
- Hannah
- Huldah
- Esther

Other traditions include biblical figures such as:

- Rebecca
- Leah
- Racheal
- Dinah
- Tamar
- Ruth

In Chabad tradition, an additional set of corresponding "**chasic**" ushpizin enter the sukkah:

- Baal Shem Tov
- Maggid of Mezeritch
- Rabbi DovBer
- Alter Rebbe
- Mitteler Rebbe (Rabbi DovBer)
- Tzemach Tzedek (Rabbi Menachem Mendel)
- Rebbe Maharash (Rabbi Shmuel Schneersohn)
- Rebbe Rashab (Rabbi Sholom Dovber Schneersohn)

Likewise, others include a list of historically **significant Jewish women** such as:

- Gracia de Nasi
- Emma Lazarus
- Hannah Szenesh

Sources:

<http://www.geni.com/projects/Sukkoth-The-Holy-Shepherds-Ushpizin/8193>

<http://www.ou.org/chagim/sukkot/ushpizin.htm>

<http://www.aish.com/h/su/dits/48965711.html>

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www.sukkahworld.com

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