



## PASSOVER 2021 RESOURCE

*This resource includes two parts:*

**Part A:** Programming for the Better Together™ teen participants

**Part B:** Programming to be run with (or provided to) the senior partners

### PART A: TEEN PROGRAM

*The teen program is designed to run ~60 minutes (depending on options selected), synchronously, but remotely, via Zoom or other virtual platform. If situations allow for in-person programming for your teens, the only potential modification will be sharing the documents on paper rather than via an online shared screen. Throughout the resource, instructions for the facilitator are in italics and words to read directly to the participants are in plain text.*

#### Materials For the Teen Programming

- Copies of the [Passover Text Study page](#) and the two song lyric pages: [Arba Achim](#) and [The Ballad of the Four Sons](#) for each participant (printed is preferred)
- Blank paper & a writing utensil
- Art materials—paper, colored pencils, crayons, markers, scissors, other collage materials (magazines, glue), etc.
- *If you are in person you will need a way to share the two or three songs in part 2 and to view the slide show in part 3.*
- **OPTIONAL:** Copies of one or both of articles (electronic or printed)
  - [Four Sons-Five Characters, Psychology Today](#)
  - [Alternative Haggadah: Four Daughters Worth Mentioning at Pesach, Haaretz](#)

## LESSON FRAMING:



Ugne T., Vilnius, Lithuania  
Global Beit Midrash—Four Children Art Contest

Passover is a holiday filled with stories and traditions. The *Haggadah*, our core text for Passover, centers around the retelling of the Passover Story—and the iconic image of Passover is a family sitting together at the Seder table. Sharing and teaching these stories is key to the holiday. One way we see this transmission reflected directly in the *Haggadah* itself is through the Four Sons (or Four Children).

Show this short video to start off the conversation around the Four Sons and the Passover Seder: [https://youtu.be/029\\_uuKYBI](https://youtu.be/029_uuKYBI)



## PART 1: THE FOUR SONS—THE CLASSIC TEXT (15 MIN)



Yaakov Agam (1928- ) Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 1993, Images copyright © Yaakov Agam.

Share the [text resource](#). The original text of the “four sons” raises some interesting questions, right off the bat. *Have four participants read the four sections of text. Ask:*

- What do you notice about the different children?
- Does the order matter?

- Do you think it needed to be ‘sons’ - could it have been daughters?  
Why do you think it was written this way?

*Some participants may have previously heard explanations for the four children. Encourage them to share.*

*Focus in on the answers given to the four children. At the bottom of the text sheet, there is space to jot down the different answers that are given.*

- How do the answers differ?
- Do you see a direct correlation between the questions and their answers? Could the answers have been swapped?
- If you take the four answers together, do you see repetition or do they build on each other?
- Would you change any of the responses?

*\* If you, or a participant, would like more reading about the core ideas behind the Four Sons, the attached article from [Psychology Today \(The Four Sons\)](#) introduces interesting questions and answers that expand on the questions above. If you have an older teen group you could share the article with the teens.*

## PART 2: A MUSICAL INTERLUDE ... (10-25 MIN)

Music can provide a powerful entry point into conversations. Here you will find two (very) different renditions of the story of the ‘Four Children.’

Naomi Shemer is often referred to as the “First Lady of Israeli Song and Poetry.” She is most famous for *Yerushalim Shel Zahav* (Jerusalem of Gold). Her song, *Arba Achim* (the Four Brothers) is a well known children’s song that imagines what might happen if the four sons stepped out of the *Haggadah* and met real people.



Naomi Shemer

*Hand out the supplemental documents: [Arba Achim](#) and [The Ballad of the Four Sons](#). Play the [recording of Naomi Shemer singing her song](#). Sing the Ballad of the Four Sons together as a group.*



**Optional**—For a modern teen take, the musical project Bible Raps produced a religious school retelling of the Passover Story. The first verse, ‘Daughters of Four’ presents a fresh look at the different characters—and what they might look like today. (*The video begins with this verse—you can stop showing it after about 40 seconds if you would like. The rest of the song retells the story of Moses.*) <https://youtu.be/9WvSeEOsus/>

**Music Activity (10-15 minutes):**

Divide the group into 2 (or 4, if you have a larger group) sections. Assign each to recreate or update one of the two songs. Prompts you can offer to get them started: Who would the four sons meet if they stepped out of the Haggadah today? Would they all seek wives? What employment might each take? Can the Ballad be rewritten to include four daughters? Or perhaps a mix of different children, with modern questions?

Be sure to allow time for each group to share with the other participants. You can record the songs to share with your seniors, if your teens are willing.



Asher Kalderon, The Four Sons (2006)

**PART 3: HOW DO WE SEE THE FOUR CHILDREN TODAY? (30-45 MIN)**

Possibly more than any other part of the *Haggadah*, the concept of the Four Sons has inspired a wealth of visual interpretations. Project [this slide show](#) that features a sampling of different renditions. (The slides are also attached as a PDF, in case you are unable to project.)

As you review these pictures, encourage the teens to reflect on some of the following questions:

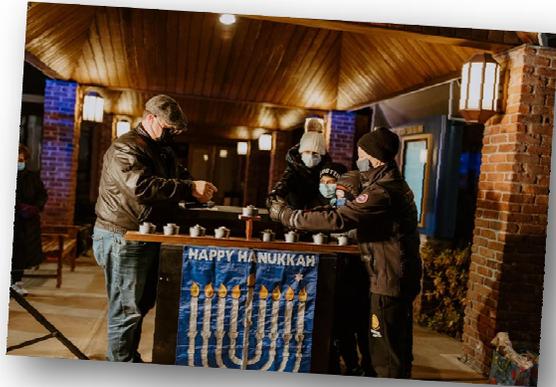
- What about this picture surprises you?
- What is different about this picture from the others?
- Would you redraw any one of these children?
- What message do you think the artist was trying to convey about the four children through this depiction?
- Do these four characters directly align with the four traditional sons? Which is which?

Photo Credit: Temple Beth Shalom

*(Additional picture-specific questions are in the “Speaker Notes” on the slides, if you want to facilitate a longer discussion.)*

*After you have reviewed all the pictures, ask—*

- These pictures, while some of them are relatively modern, are all pre-COVID, and many are pre-modern technology (the newest of these is from 2009). What would you change to adapt these renditions to life today?



As individuals\*, challenge the teens to create their own set of four children. Some ideas (but encourage them to think outside the box) to get the group started:

- Draw or sketch a modern rendition of the four children as you would imagine them today.
- Create a collage of modern ‘children’ found in magazines or online. What will you use to suggest which child is which character?
- The David Moss picture is designed to look like playing cards. Can you use that template to create new children?
- The Dan Reisinger picture appears to be made from torn construction paper. Can you recreate that? What colors would you use? What would they represent?
- “The Four Children as Four Books” gives the idea that these renditions don’t even need to be people. Can you reflect the ideas through another set of objects? Or emojis? Or memes?

*\*Each teen should create their own art as they’ll be sending it to their senior buddy.*

If created online, the Teen Coordinator should print out the pictures to be sent to the seniors. If created physically (on paper), be sure to take a clear picture of each art piece so that you can share them electronically.

If you have reluctant artists, encourage them to create a collage, combine graphics found online, or even use words to depict the four characters. Another option could be to ask a reluctant artist to read the attached article from Haaretz, [Four Daughters](#), which highlights four written-word artists from modern Israeli history. Ask them to do some online research into the four artists (each can be found with a quick search) and teach the rest of the group about the artists and their works.

Be sure to leave time to share with each other.



## PASSOVER 2021 RESOURCE

### PART B: SENIOR ACTIVITY

*Because each community and senior center may have different COVID-19 related restrictions at different times, a range of options has been provided which meet different needs. For each option we have drafted a template cover letter that program facilitators should include in their package to individual seniors (option 1) or to a senior site coordinator (option 2).*

#### Four Children of Passover Letters

All of these options assume that the teens will write a personalized letter to their senior buddy. These letters are integral to the relationship building between the seniors and teens.

Teens may choose use the [Teen Four Children of Passover Mad Lib](#) which includes reflecting on Passover and describing their Four Children art creations (created in [Part 3 of the Teen Programming](#)), which should be included in the packages to the seniors.



*Photo credit: Cheder Chabad*

## ACTIVITY OPTIONS

### A—Non-electronic Activity: The Four Children of Passover “Mad Lib”

If you are sending materials to the seniors individually, be sure to include a pre-stamped and addressed return envelope as well as the small cover note ([version A-1](#)) included in the resources document.

If you are sending this to a program director, you should be sure to include a larger return envelope and cover note ([version A-2](#)) along with your materials.

#### Actions

- **Students** will write a personalized letter to their senior buddy.  
*Approximate Student Time Commitment: 15 minutes*
- **Educators** will collect the teen letters and Four Children art projects (created in [Part 3 of the Teen program](#)) and transfer them to the seniors, along with copies of the [Four Children Mad Lib](#).  
*Approximate Educator Time Commitment: 5 minutes*
- **Seniors** will read the students’ letters and fill out the [Four Children Mad Lib](#). They will return this in the provided envelope.  
*Approximate Senior Time Commitment: 20 minutes*

(Pre-pandemic) Photo credit:  
Congregation Shir Shalom



Photo Credit: Hannah Senesh Community Day School



## B—Electronic Asynchronous

### Artistic Presentation

After completing [Step 3 of the Teen Programming](#), the teens will have created a visual representation of the four children of the Passover Haggadah. There are two components to share this with their seniors:

- Each teen should create a 1 minute video to go along with his/her image. They should describe how they came to chose the style, materials used, etc.
- Based on their own work, each teen should ask their senior to add to the work in some way. This could be adding another “child,” filling in some background or additional details, etc.

If the teens did the [musical activity \(part 2\)](#), they could present the seniors with their favorite musical adaptation.

If you are sending materials to the seniors individually, be sure to include a pre-stamped and addressed return envelope as well as the small cover note ([version B-1](#)) included in the resources document.

If you are sending this to a program director, you should be sure to include a larger return envelope and cover note ([version B-2](#)) along with your materials.

### Actions

- **Students** will create their art videos and edit them to a 1 minute summary. They will craft an invitation to add to their artwork. They will also write a personalized letter to their senior buddy. They will upload or otherwise transfer the recordings and letters to the educator.

*Approximate Student Time Commitment: 60 minutes*

- **Educators** will support the teens in creating their videos. After receiving the materials from the teens, Educators will transfer the videos, art pieces, and letters to the seniors, along with copies of the [Four Children Mad Lib](#).

*Approximate Educator Time Commitment: 30 minutes*

- **Seniors** will watch the teen videos and add to the teen artwork. They will also write back to the teens via the [Four Children Mad Lib](#). They will return these in the provided envelope.

*Approximate Senior Time Commitment: 60 minutes*

## C—Synchronous Virtual Activity: Learning & Creating Together

After completing [Step 3 of the Teen Programming](#), the teens will have created a visual representation of the four children of the Passover Haggadah. Each teen should prepare an explanation to go along with his/her image. They should describe how they came to choose the style, materials used, etc. These will be shared live, during the synchronous session.

In advance of the joint session, have the teens work in small groups (each group should include four teens) to select one of the art pieces from [the slide show](#) to use as a group template. Each group should make a copy of the slide with their template and create a new slide show. Make four copies of the slide, zooming in on one character for each slide. In preparation for the senior session, the teens should make a few notes about the overall style, theme, and what attributes of the artwork they find interesting. They should also pre-assign one of the characters to each senior/teen partnership.

Encourage the teens to invite Passover reflections from their seniors during the conversations. They may want to have a few questions in mind before they start. They could ask:

- What's a Passover memory that you are particularly fond of?
- What is your favorite Passover food?
- How did you understand the four children when you were growing up? Is that different from how you understand them now?



*Photo Credit: Hebrew Wizards*

During the synchronous session, the teens should:

- Share what they learned in their studies
- Share how they created their own artwork
- Work on a shared screen (or project their screen and get input from their seniors) to create a new image of their character.

Optional—groups could also create a short script to act out the characters interacting with each other.

At the end, put together each set of characters to reveal a new version of the four children of Passover.

If you are sending materials to the seniors individually, be sure to include a pre-stamped and addressed return envelope as well as the small cover note ([version C-1](#)) included in the resources document.

If you are sending this to a program director, you should be sure to include a

larger return envelope and cover note ([version C-2](#)) along with your materials.

### **Actions**

- **Students** will work together with the Educator to complete the preparation tasks outlined above. They will also write a personalized letter to their senior buddy.  
*Approximate Student Time Commitment: 90 minutes (including the 30 minute program)*
- **Educators** will support the teens in completing the preparation steps. Educators will also coordinate closely with the Senior Center to determine the seniors' level of involvement and participation. Additionally, the Educator will collect the teen letters and transfer them to the seniors, along with copies of the [Four Children Mad Lib](#). The Educator will also join the synchronous learning session and help keep the program on track.  
*Approximate Educator Time Commitment: 120 minutes (including the 30 minute program)*
- **Seniors** will participate in the synchronous learning session. They will read the teen letters and reply by filling out the [Four Children Mad Lib](#). They will return these in the provided envelope.  
*Approximate Senior Time Commitment: 45 minutes (including the 30 minute program)*



*Photo Credit:  
Robert M. Beren  
Hebrew Academy*

## D—Buddy Box: *Four Sides to Passover*

Create a box of Passover warmth and joy for your senior. These boxes center around a personalized gift box and a special herb planter. Add in the teen's personalized letter and artwork for a set of four warm Passover wishes.

### Side 1: Personalized gift/candy boxes

You will need to order: [2" square clear boxes](#), [clear sticker paper](#). To fill the boxes, talk with the senior coordinator about the appropriateness of filling the boxes with [Kosher for Passover individually-wrapped candies](#). One fun alternative would be these [10 Plagues Finger Puppets](#)—which will definitely bring humor to their *sedarim*.

On the clear sticker paper, print out personalized messages to each senior, including your organization's name / logo, the seniors' names, and wishes from their teen partners. [Here are some phrases you could use](#).

### Side 2: Herb planters

[This page has a collection of plant gifts](#). A herb is recommended, to make the connection to spring and to Passover.



### Side 3: Four Children Art & Explanation

After completing [Step 3 of the Teen Programming](#), the teens will have created a visual representation of the four children of the Passover Haggadah.

Each teen should create a 1 minute video to go along with his/her image. They should describe how they came to chose the style, materials used, etc.

### Side 4: Personalized letter to the seniors

*(These boxes are about \$12-16 per senior. The cost adjusts based on the box, filling, and planter selections.)*

If you are sending the boxes directly to the seniors individually, be sure to include a pre-stamped and addressed return envelope as well as the small cover note ([version D-1](#)) included in the resources document.

If you are sending this to a program director, you should be sure to include a larger return envelope and cover note ([version D-2](#)) along with your materials.

## Actions

- **Students** will personalize a box for their senior buddy. They will package it with candy or other small items. They will create a video reflecting on their artwork. They will also write a personalized letter to their senior buddy.

*Approximate Student Time Commitment: 45 minutes*

- **Educators** will order the boxes, sticker paper, filling (candy or puppets), and the planters. Educators will print out stickers. They will transfer the box supplies to the teens for preparation. Educators will also collect the boxes from the teens, package the Buddy Boxes (with the gift boxes, planters, art work, and the [Four Children Mad Lib](#)) for each senior and deliver them.

*Approximate Educator Time Commitment: 2 hours*

- **Seniors** will receive the buddy boxes. They will read the teen letters and reply by filling out the [Four Children Mad Lib](#). They will return these in the provided envelope.

*Approximate Senior Time Commitment: 15 minutes*



*Photo credit: The Silver Academy*

# PASSOVER RESOURCE 2021

One of the best-known features of the Passover seder is the idea of the four sons (or children). The four sons each ask a different question about Passover - and each get a different answer. The four sons are understood and explained in many different ways in different Hagaddot (Passover texts). We start here with the traditional text: (Translation from Sefaria.org)



חכם מה הוא אומר? מה העדות והחקים והמשפטים אשר צוה ה' אלהינו אתכם. ואף אתה אמור לו כהלכות הפסח: אין מפטירין אחר הפסח אפיקומן:

What does the wise [son] say? 'What are these testimonies, statutes and judgments that the Lord our God commanded you?' (Deuteronomy 6:20)

And accordingly you will say to him, as per the laws of the Pesach sacrifice, "We may not eat an afikoman [a dessert or other foods eaten after the meal] after [we are finished eating] the Pesach sacrifice (Mishnah Pesachim 10:8)."

רשע מה הוא אומר? מה העבודה הזאת לכם. לכם – ולא לו. ולפי שהוציא את עצמו מן הכלל כפר בעקר. ואף אתה הקהה את שניו ואמור לו: "בעבור זה עשה ה' לי בצאתי ממצרים". לי ולא-לו. אלו הנה שם, לא הנה נגאל:

What does the evil [son] say? 'What is this worship to you?' (Exodus 12:26) "To you' and not 'to him.' And since he excluded himself from the collective, he denied a principle [of the Jewish faith].

And accordingly, you will blunt his teeth and say to him, "'For the sake of this, did the Lord do [this] for me in my going out of Egypt' (Exodus 13:8)." 'For me' and not 'for him.' If he had been there, he would not have been saved.

תם מה הוא אומר? מה זאת? ואמרת אליו "בחזק יד הוציאנו ה' ממצרים מבית עבדים".

What does the innocent [son] say? 'What is this?' (Exodus 13:14)"

And you will say to him, "With the strength of [His] hand did the Lord take us out from Egypt, from the house of slaves' (Exodus 13:14)."

ושאינו יודע לשאול – את פתח לו, שנאמר, והגדת לבנך ביום ההוא לאמר, בעבור זה עשה ה' לי בצאתי ממצרים.

And [regarding] the one who doesn't know to ask, you will open [the conversation] for him. As it is stated (Exodus 13:8), "And you will speak to your son on that day saying, for the sake of this, did the Lord do [this] for me in my going out of Egypt."

Use this space to jot down the different responses given to each child:

	Wise	Innocent
	Wicked	Silent

# Passover: Four Sons - Five Characters

*Faith and doubt need each other.*

[Mark Banschick M.D.](#) Posted Apr 03, 2012

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-intelligent-divorce/201204/passover-four-sons-five-characters>



You show up at a Seder not knowing why you need to come year after year. You read the same text, the Haggadah, each time, dying to get to the meal.

But wait. What's with these four sons who are also at a table, like some parallel universe? Look closely. A great lesson is being taught. And, it's great theater.

## The Four Sons:

The *Haggadah* tells of four sons: first, the wise son—the *Chacham*, then the evil/rebellious son—the *Rasha*, followed by the simple son—the *Tam*, and finally, the son who doesn't know to ask.

The scene of these four sons plays a pivotal role in the *seder*. We are moved by what they ask and by who they are. Given what I know about family dynamics, three details have struck me throughout the years, and by looking more closely at that which piqued my interest, I learned a good lesson for the soul.

- The first of these curious details is that the *Rasha* is at the table in the first place. After all, he's rude and contentious, to say the least. Why be generous to someone who makes things difficult for you?
- The second surprise is that, given his oppositional disposition, the *Rasha* is second in line, after the *Chacham*, to ask a question. Why the place of honor?
- And third, I am struck by the realization that there are actually five characters in this script—not just four. And, the fifth character is probably the most important one.

Let's take a look at the first two points, both of which deal directly with the *Rasha*.

The *Rasha* is translated in various ways, but the evil, or bad, son is fairly accurate. Other translations have him as the wayward son or the rebellious son. So, why should the *Rasha* be second in line to the *Chacham*—the wise son—to ask a question? After all, it's not as if there's a shortage of characters. The simple son and the son who doesn't know how to ask both follow. Why the place of honor?

To answer this question, I return to theater—here calling upon Sophocles, the ancient Greek playwright.

## The Riddle of the Sphinx:

Sophocles tells us about the riddle of the Sphinx. "What creature wakes up on four legs, walks through the afternoon on two, and settles down in the evening on three?" The answer is man himself.

We are born crawling on "four legs." We get up and walk through most of our lives on two, and towards the end, we hobble on a cane, making three. The riddle's answer speaks to the nature of the human condition—it's our collective life story, so to speak.

The tale of the four sons mirrors Sophocles' riddle, but this time teaching us not about man's physical journey, *but rather his spiritual one*. Sure, we can look at the four sons individually, each one having a different approach to God. But, from a theatrical perspective, we can also view them as a unit. In this light, they represent four interrelated phases of spiritual development that are intrinsic to our humanity.

## **A Psychology of Spiritual Development:**

The son who doesn't know to ask is the person who is ignorant of the Divine role in saving the Israelites from slavery. Asking a question about spiritual matters is beyond him. This person may be an infant, a child, or an individual who knows little of religious life—or an adult who has given up caring.

The simple son—the Tam—is the committed, but simple Jew. He asks his father what needs to be done and his father tells him just as it is. From a developmental point of view, this is a sincere, but simple [spirituality](#): “Tell me what God wants, and I will comply.” The simple son represents the spirituality of a young person or an adult individual who tends toward a dependent posture in relation to authority. The Tam may be a “good” boy, but is he free? I think not.

The *Chacham*, the wise son—we will get to the *Rasha*—represents an advanced stage of spiritual development. In this stage, the Tam develops into a man—or woman—who has struggled with faith, has perhaps rejected or confronted part or all of his or her relationship to God, and has returned to *freely* embrace the tradition from a more mature point of view. The *Chacham* says, “I want to know what is required of me, in detail, because it’s of personal importance, and I already know why I should be doing this.” His heart is whole in acceptance of the Almighty, but in a more mature way than the simple son, the Tam. He thinks, “I have been around the block and have asked many questions. I feel secure in my wish to embrace my God and His ways.”

## **The Spiritual Journey:**

The path from the Tam to the *Chacham*—from a simple to a more mature faith—passes through the *Rasha*. *The Rasha is a form of differentiation*. He is the son—the character in the play—who differentiates from the path of sincere faith by saying, in essence, “I’m not part of this—I require myself to assess whether this is for me or not.” Differentiation is a well-known process in human development, common in teens, but important for adults as well. *It’s the edge that helps us to mature*. In spiritual development, differentiation is a critical component to a faith embraced freely—and not just by habit or necessity.

Think about it. It’s powerfully useful to say “no” before embracing a mature “yes.”

So, each of the sons is a character that speaks to the dynamics of faith in all its vitality. The *Rasha* keeps us honest, just as the Tam and the son who doesn’t know to ask, have their roles at some point in our lives (when you don’t care or you just go along because that’s what you’re supposed to do).

## **Which Son Do You Identify With Today?**

Step back and now take a look at yourself. Note that as you engage your own faith, there are times that you’re the simple son; then you are touched by the *Rasha*, followed by periods of time as a *Chacham*, only to fall off into the son who forgets to ask or doesn’t even think it’s important, only to find spirituality again. You can be pretty observant and just be going through the motions—or feel close to your source.

Faith is fluid and all of us move on this spectrum. Viva the religious life well lived!

Now, there’s a fifth character in our drama.

## **Character Number Five:**

It’s the father—the voice of the narrator as depicted by the *Haggadah*.

When dealing with the *Rasha*, someone at the Seder table is instructed to speak in the voice of the father. And like theater, it’s carefully scripted. The father—now in our voice—scolds his *Rasha*, letting it be known that *had he been in Egypt, he would not have been saved*.

The father of the *Haggadah* is firm and sets limits. He says, in essence, “Don’t go too far with these self-important ideas because they’ll sink you.” Yet, the *Rasha* is not escorted out of the house, excused from the table, or written out of the text. He may need to be corrected but he also needs to be there.

The power of this story lies not only in what the father says but in how he acts. By encouraging questions that may not always yield the “right” answers, and by having everyone return to his table year after year, the father—our fifth character—holds the text, and indeed, the whole story, together.

The fifth character, the father, shows the value of the *Rasha* by giving him a hierarchical honor. The *Chacham* is most honored because he represents the ideal. But, the *Rasha* comes second, followed by his less impressive brothers. Here the narrator *tells by showing and not by his words*—a time-honored literary device. The *Rasha* is important, perhaps respected, perhaps feared...and he carries power.

Yet, the narrator also makes it clear that the *Rasha*'s path is ultimately dangerous. Differentiation serves its function in the dynamics of a religious soul, but left to himself—the *Rasha*'s lost. *He needs his family and they need him*. He hears of their faith, even as he doubts—and they hear of his doubts in the midst of their faith. It's no accident that the *Rasha* comes after the more mature *Chacham*, *both threatening the wise son's mastery and fueling it at the same time*.

Faith, after all, is not static. It can die if you try to force it.

### **Your Personal Haggadah:**

The *Haggadah* speaks to us personally. Their family is our family. So, we too need the *Rasha* in the text as much and we need him in ourselves, in order to embrace God as free men and women in this world—and not as uncritical children.

It's brilliant.

Every Passover, the Jewish People are asked to freely accept the Torah and thank the Almighty for what He has generously done for us. As free men and women, we must ask questions that keep our faith fresh and alive. Among its many gifts, this is a truth given to us, clearly and precisely, by the *Haggadah*; one of the greatest pieces of theater that has ever been written.

#### About the Author

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[Mark Banschick, M.D., is a psychiatrist and the author of \*The Intelligent Divorce\* book series.](#)

## The Four Brothers

Words and Music by Naomi Shemer

On a wonderful clear day  
Out of the Haggadah came  
The wise and the innocent, the wicked  
And the one who didn't know how to ask.

And when the four brothers  
Began to travel the byways,  
Immediately from everywhere came  
Greetings and flowers.

The wise met the wise girl  
The innocent loved the innocent girl  
And the wicked for a wife  
Caught himself a wicked girl.

And the one who didn't know how to ask  
Found the most beautiful girl,  
He took her hand in his  
And came back with her to the Haggadah.

Where did the byways lead?  
Where are the four brothers?  
My friend, in our song  
You mustn't ask too much ...



## ארבעה אחים

מילים ולחן: נעמי שמר

ביום בהיר ונהדר  
יצאו מתוך ההגדה  
חכם ותם רשע גדול  
וזה שלא ידע לשאול

וכשארבעת האחים  
יצאו לנוע בדרכים  
מיד מכל ארבע רוחות  
פרחים הגיעו וברכות

פגש חכם בחכמה  
אהב התם את התמימה  
והרשע בתור אישה  
תפס מרשעת איומה

וזה שלא ידע לשאול  
לקח את היפה מכל  
שילב ידו בתוך ידה  
וחזר איתה להגדה

לאן הובילו הדרכים?  
היכן ארבעת האחים?  
בשיר שלנו ידידי  
אסור לשאול יותר מדי...



# The Ballad of the Four Sons

For the Passover Seder

*(Sung to the tune of Clementine)*

© Ben Aronin, first published in his community haggadah, 1954, used with permission

**S**aid the father to the children  
"At the Seder you will dine,  
You will eat your fill of matzoh,  
You will drink four cups of wine."

**N**ow this father had no daughters,  
But his sons they numbered four,  
One was wise, and one was wicked,  
One was simple and a bore.

**A**nd the fourth was sweet and winsome,  
He was young and he was small,  
While his brothers asked the questions,  
He could scarcely speak at all.

**S**aid the wise one to his father  
"Would you please explain the laws.  
Of the customs of the Seder  
Will you please explain the cause?"

**A**nd the father proudly answered  
"As our fathers ate in speed,  
Ate the Pascal lamb 'ere midnight,  
And from slavery were freed"

**S**o we follow their example,  
And 'ere midnight must complete,  
All the Seder, and we should not  
After twelve remain to eat."

**T**hen did sneer the son so wicked,  
"What does all this mean to you?"  
And the father's voice was bitter  
As his grief and anger grew.

**I**f yourself you don't consider,  
As a son of Israel  
Then for you this has no meaning,  
You could be a slave as well!"

**T**hen the simple son said softly,  
"What is this?" and quietly  
The good father told his offspring  
"We were freed from slavery."

**B**ut the youngest son was silent,  
For he could not speak at all,  
His bright eyes were bright with wonder  
As his father told him all.

**N**ow, dear people, heed the lesson  
And remember evermore,  
What the father told his children  
Told his sons who numbered four!



from the April 1998 - Passover Edition Edition of the Jewish Magazine



## Passover 2021 Resource

*As you review these pictures, encourage the teens to reflect on some of the following questions:*

- What about this picture surprises you?
- What is different about this picture from the others?
- Would you redraw any one of these children?
- What message do you think the artist was trying to convey about the four children through this depiction?
- Do these four characters directly align with the four traditional sons? Which is which?

*After you have reviewed all the pictures, ask—*

- These pictures, while some of them are relatively modern, are all pre-COVID, and many are pre-modern technology (the newest of these is from 2009). What would you change to adapt these renditions to life today?

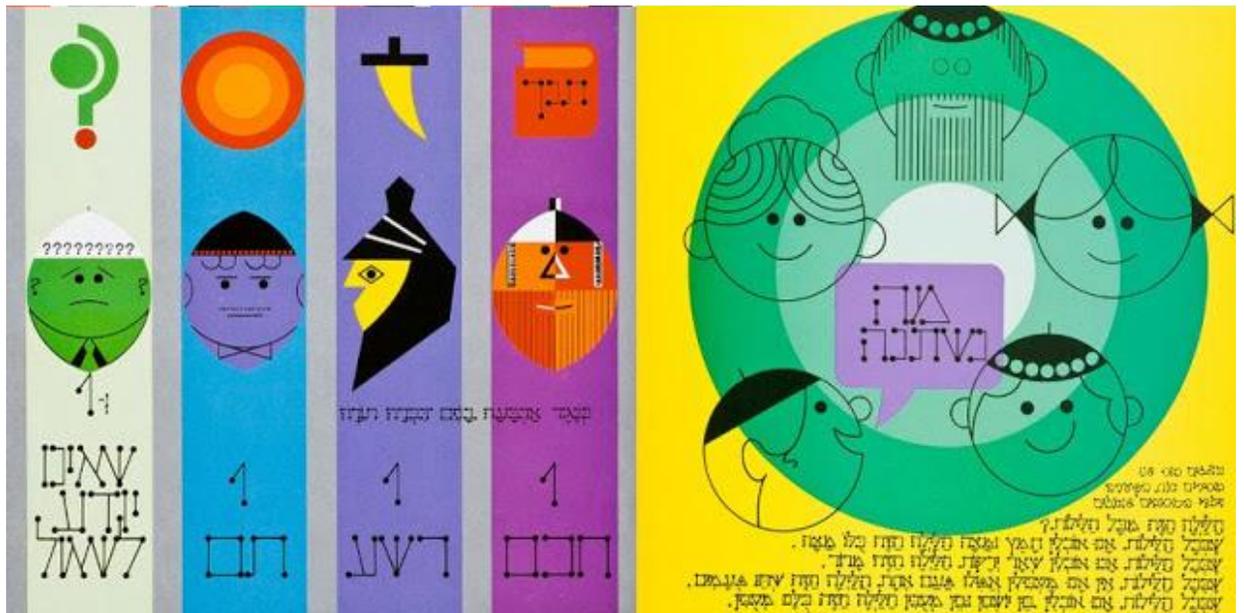
**The Four Sons, Arthur Szyk**  
1934, Łódź, Poland. Szyk.org / Wikimedia



Additional picture-specific questions you can choose to add:

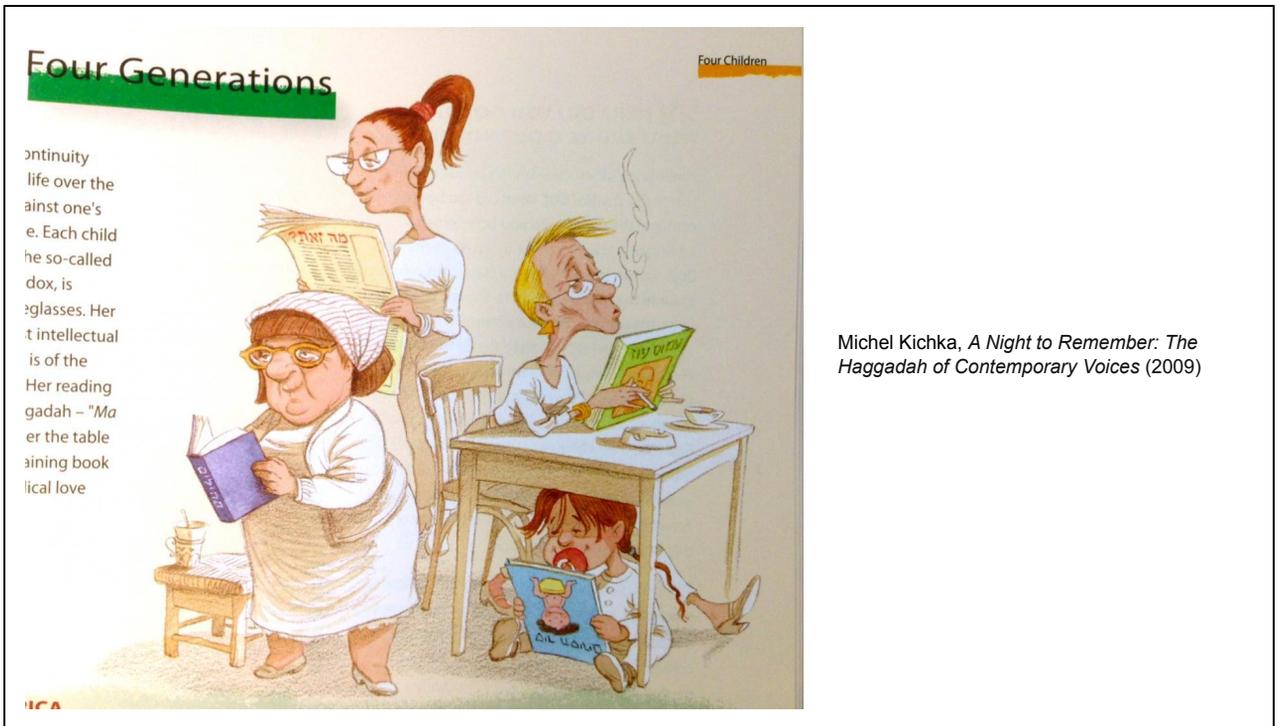
- If you had to guess at an occupation for each of these characters, what do you think each would do?
- Which one(s) have overtly Jewish clothes/ritual items, etc. What point do you think the artist might be making with that?
- What can you interpret from the different body types of the characters?

Yaakov Agam (1928- ) Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 1993, Images copyright © Yaakov Agam



Additional picture-specific questions you can choose to add:

- The four characters depicted on the left represent the four children. What do you notice about each face's coloring?
- What do the symbols above each face represent? Why do you think each symbol was chosen? What else could have been used?
- The Four Children image is next to the Four Questions image - which also features faces. What differences do you see between the two sets of faces? What meaning could you interpret from that?



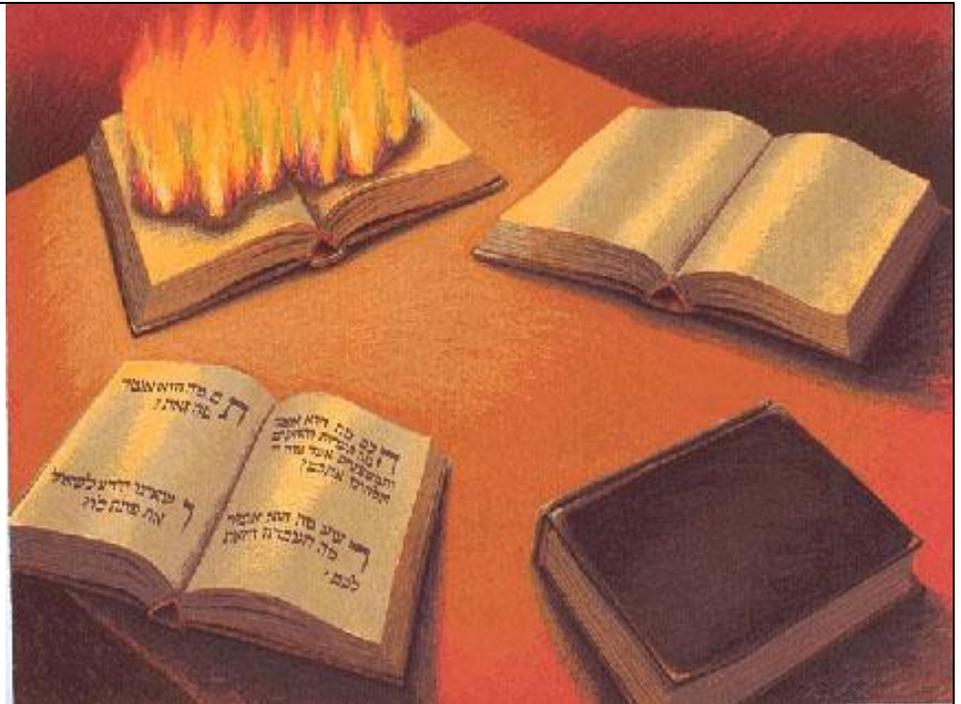
Michel Kichka, *A Night to Remember: The Haggadah of Contemporary Voices* (2009)

Additional picture-specific questions you can choose to add:

This Hagaddah takes the four children in a very different direction - seeing them as four generations or points in a lifecycle.

- Which character do you think represents each of the traditional characters?
- What do you think is the relationship between each of these characters?
- Do you think it was intentional that these are all women? (assuming the baby is female)
- What is each character doing / holding / wearing? Why?

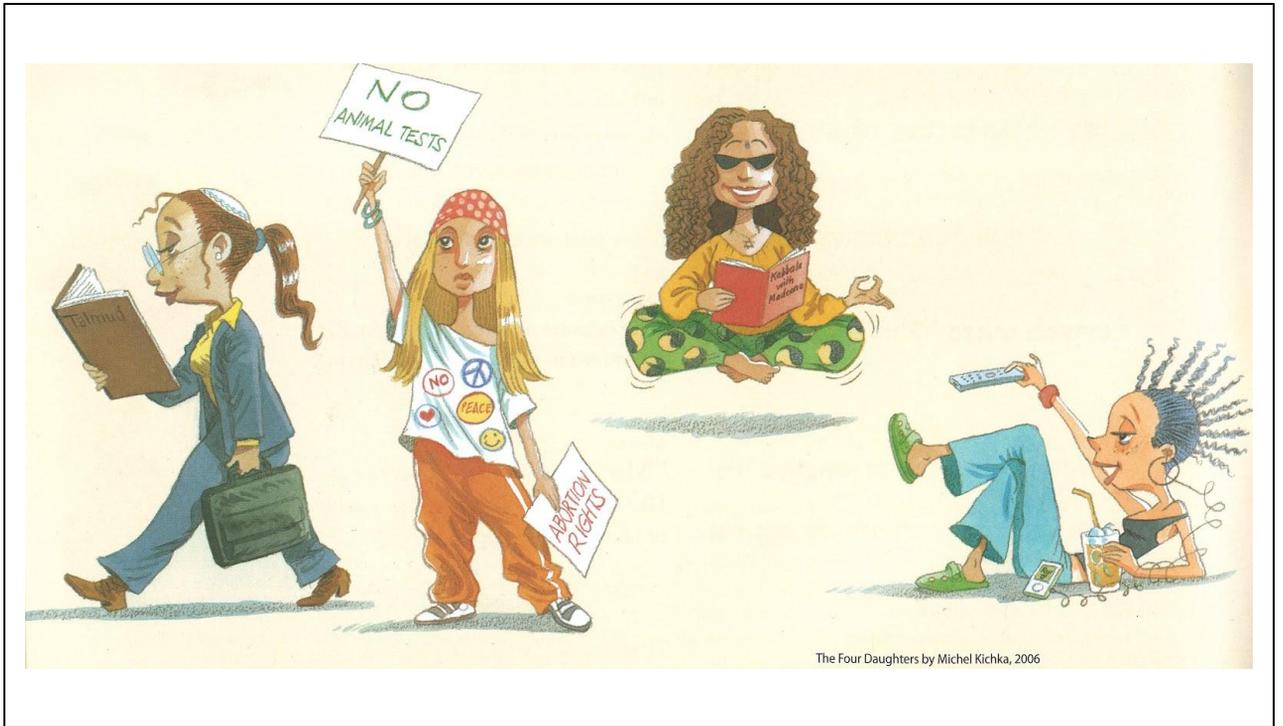
**The Four Children as Four Books**, David Wander  
*The Hagaddah in Memory of the Holocaust*, 1988



Additional picture-specific questions you can choose to add:

This Hagaddah also takes the four children in a very different direction - representing them through four books.

- Which book do you think represents each of the traditional characters? Why?
  - Can you make the case for a different set of associations?
- Why is a book on fire?
- This Hagaddah is called "The Hagaddah in Memory of the Holocaust" - does that impact how you understand this picture?
- If it were drawn today, perhaps these would be websites - which pages would you use for each character?



Additional picture-specific questions you can choose to add:

- Which character do you think represents each of the traditional characters?
- Do these four characters seem to be interacting with each other? Is that different from the traditional presentation?
- What do they have in common?

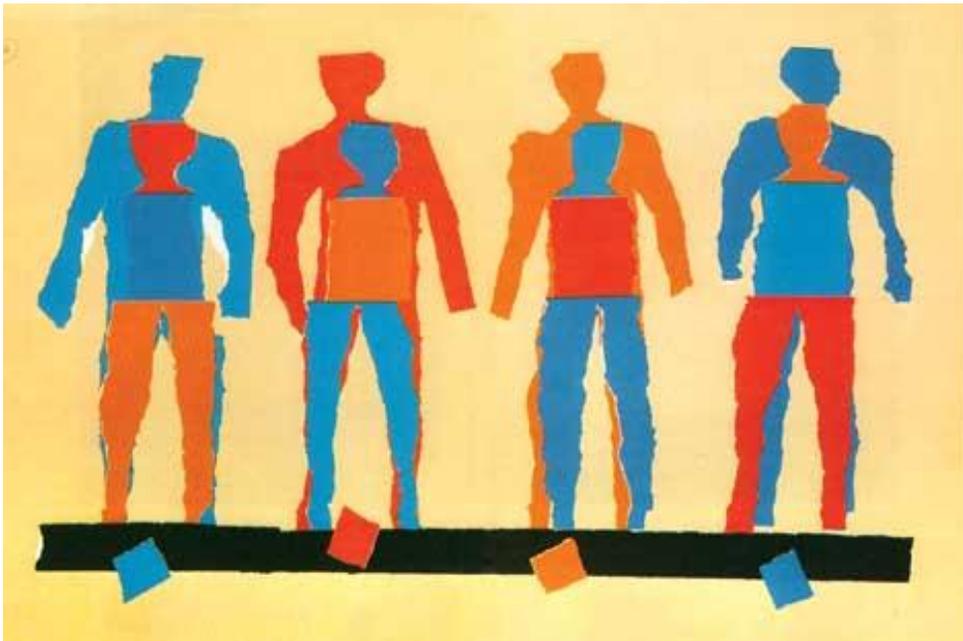


Image copyright 2009 by David Moss, courtesy of Bet Alpha Editions, Berkeley.

Additional picture-specific questions you can choose to add:

- The artist stated that he drew these to look like playing cards. Why do you think he might have done that?
- The colors suggest a pairing between wise and simple (blues) and wicked and doesn't know how to ask (reds). Does that make sense to you? Is there a different pairing you would suggest?

**Dan Reisinger: Four Aspects in Each of Us**  
(Israel, © 1982 Rabbinical Assembly of America)



Additional picture-specific questions you can choose to add:

- Which character do you think represents each of the traditional characters?
- Each character has a smaller person in front of them (or perhaps on their clothes?) - what does that suggest?
- What do you notice about the colors used?
- What material do you think this was made out of? Why might the artist have picked that material / process?

# Alternative Haggadah: Four Daughters Worth Mentioning at Pesach

*These four were artists who sought freedom and refused to accept the place tradition accorded them.*

Rachel Elior

Published on 07.04.2009

<https://www.haaretz.com/1.5034126>

Instead of writing about four sons, I'd like to write about four daughters. They are not divided into the traditional categories - they are, rather, silenced, forgotten and excluded. The Book of the Generations of Adam (Genesis 5) describes the world's 10 male forebears, from Adam to Noah; but not one word is devoted to their mates, the world's mothers. The Haggadah, too, speaks of four sons without mentioning the daughters. And these are not the only examples: Jewish memory usually focuses on the history of men, while female experience is doomed to oblivion.

As a historian of silenced memories and of voices excluded from the canon, I wonder whom I should commemorate. Should it be Eve, who saw seven open heavens and the vision of a chariot: "And she gazed steadfastly into heaven, and beheld a chariot of light, borne by four bright eagles ... and angels going before the chariot" ("The First Book of Adam and Eve," Ch. 33). Or maybe it should be Emzera, Noah's wife, daughter of Barechel, whose name is not mentioned in Genesis, but appears only in the Book of Jubilees (4:33)? Or maybe her great-grandmother, Edna, daughter of Danel, wife of Hanoch son of Yered, Methuselah's mother, named in Jubilees 4:20, or Hanoch's mother, Beraka, daughter of Retsuiel (Jubilees 4:16) - the mothers of the family of man, who took part in the transition from nature to culture?

Or perhaps it should be the echoing voices of Job's daughters - Yemima, Ketziah and Keren-Happuch - whose father disinherited them but gave them "three-stringed girdles about the appearance of which no man can speak; For they were not earthly work, but celestial sparks of light flashed through them like the rays of the sun" ("The Testament of Job," translated by M. R. James, Cambridge University Press, 1897). It is said that when Yemima put on the girdle, she "sang angelic hymns in the voice of angels, and she chanted forth the angelic praise of God and the songs that she eulogized, the wind has written on her dress," and when Ketziah put it on, "her mouth assumed the dialect of the heavenly rulers and she sang the praise of the work of the High Place and if any one wishes to know the work of the heavens he may take an insight into the hymns of Ketziah."



Dvora Baron

Or should I celebrate the memory of four 20th-century female authors, who undid the generations during which women were relegated to silence and obscurity and illuminated unknown corners of men and women's physical and emotional lives? First I might mention **Dvora Baron** (1887-1956), who wrote wonderful stories and was the first to show that a woman could write literature in Hebrew, although no woman before her had done so, from the end of the biblical period to the early 20th century. When she began to write, she shed light on previously unseen aspects of Jewish family life in the Russian townships and described moments of human torment and grace as they had never been described before.

The second is the mystically oriented poet **Yocheved Bat-Miriam** (1901-1980), whose enigmatic language captured both the visible and the hidden world and whose poems contained prayers about the eyes of the spirit opening in the depths of the material world. Bat-Miriam wrote the lines that inspired my study of mystical thought regarding the unity of opposites: "And greater than visible is the invisible, and more wonderful than 'being' is the secret of infinite nothingness on high, command me, Lord, and I will see / what lies beyond the border of the eye." Her poetry fell silent after her son, Zuzik, died in the 1948 war, leaving her inconsolable.



At the far right - Yocheved Bat-Miriam in 1938

The third is **Dahlia Ravikovitch** (1936-2005), who sang wonderfully from a woman's perspective of happiness in the depths of pain in the poem "Hemda," which appeared in the 1959 collection "The Love of an Orange." She dared to speak of the affront and pain felt by a girl, an outsider, who comes to live on a kibbutz, thereby shattering the idealized, unreal image of kibbutz childhood, in her 1976 book "Death in the Family."



Dahlia Ravikovitch

Ravikovitch wrote penetratingly of women's unheard-of plight in her chilling poem "Hovering at a Low Altitude," challenging society for remaining silent about the anguish of raped and murdered women. Her far-reaching, probing, critical gaze and the depth of her compassionate, iconoclastic humanity found expression in her poems about the pain of Arab mothers who lost their children in the first Lebanon war: "This is the history of the child / who was killed in his mother's belly / in the month of January 1988 / for reasons of national security" ("A Mother is Walking," from the translation by Rachel Tzvia Back, published in the collection "With an Iron Pen"). In her writing about the fate of war casualties and the victims of human society, she expressed human empathy beyond all accepted boundaries.

Fourth I will mention **Amalia Kahana-Carmon**, who brought forth a new voice and a unique viewpoint while at the same time creating an unprecedented language in her 1966 book "Under One Roof." Thus, for example, in her story "Naima Sasson Writes Poems," written from a double perspective, of a child and of a grown up, she created a new language and paved the way for gender-focused criticism long ahead of its time.

The "four sisters" I have commemorated here were artists who sought freedom and knowledge and refused to accept the place tradition accorded them. All four broke through male-decreed conceptions of knowledge, truth, equality and justice as these relate to women's place in society, and they did so while making audible the silenced female voice that had been excluded from written memory.



Amalia Kahana-Carmon

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Prof. Rachel Elior teaches Jewish philosophy and mysticism at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

*Photographs are from the Institute for the Translation of Hebrew Literature.*

# Better Together™

## THE FOUR CHILDREN OF PASSOVER - MAD LIB

For teens: You can use this template to write a letter to your senior buddy.



Hi \_\_\_\_\_! Happy Passover!  
(your buddy's name)

As a group, we have been learning about the four \_\_\_\_\_ in  
(Sons? Children? People?)

the Passover *Haggadah*. I \_\_\_\_\_ understand the four  
(have always or do now)

\_\_\_\_\_ in the *Haggadah* to be \_\_\_\_\_  
(Sons? Children? People?) (a metaphor, a literal retelling)

that teaches \_\_\_\_\_  
(something you learn from the four children)

My artistic version of the four \_\_\_\_\_ included \_\_\_\_\_  
(Sons? Children? People?)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(describe your artistic work)

This year, at Passover, I am looking forward to \_\_\_\_\_  
(what are you looking forward to?)

\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_  
(what are you looking forward to?) (why?)

As we head into Passover, my wish for you is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(a wish for your senior buddy)

May you have a \_\_\_\_\_-filled Passover,  
(a wish for your senior buddy)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(your name)

# THE FOUR CHILDREN OF PASSOVER - MAD LIB

For seniors: Your buddy has shared with you how they relate to the four children of Passover. They would love to hear your take on the story and how you understand the story's relevance today. When you are done filling this out, put it into the addressed envelope that it came with and mail it back to your buddy.



BetterTogether  
in a box

Hi \_\_\_\_\_! It's great to hear from you!  
(your buddy's name)

The four \_\_\_\_\_ in the Passover *Haggadah* \_\_\_\_\_ a key  
(Sons? Children? People?) (are or are not)

part of my Passover memories. I \_\_\_\_\_ understand the four  
(have always or do now)

\_\_\_\_\_ in the *Haggadah* to be \_\_\_\_\_  
(Sons? Children? People?) (a metaphor, a literal retelling)

that teaches \_\_\_\_\_.  
(something you learn from the four children)

This year, at Passover, I am looking forward to \_\_\_\_\_  
(what are you looking forward to?)

\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.  
(what are you looking forward to?) (why?)

As we head into Passover, my wish for you is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(a wish for your teen buddy)

May you have a \_\_\_\_\_-filled Passover,  
(a wish for your teen buddy)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(your name)

# Better Together™ – Passover 2021

## Senior Activities – Cover Notes

*For all letters, highlighted text alerts you to multiple choices to select from and/or areas to personalize.*

### A–Non-electronic activity

#### Version A-1 (if sending to the seniors individually)

Dear Senior,

Enclosed you will find a letter from your Better Together™ buddy. The teens have been exploring the parable of the four children (or sons) in the Passover Haggadah. Each teen created a new artistic depiction of the four children, as they imagine them. Their letter will tell you a bit more about what they are doing and why.

You will also find enclosed a “Mad Lib” style letter to reply. Your teen buddy would love to hear about your memories of Passover and how you understand the four children parable.

Please use the enclosed envelope to mail your response **directly to your buddy / to our center and we will deliver it to the teens.**

Sincerely,

**Your Name, Title**

**Contact Information**

#### Version A-2 (if sending to a program coordinator)

Dear **Program Coordinator**,

Enclosed you will find letters from the teen Better Together™ buddies. The teens have been exploring the parable of the four children (or sons) in the Passover Haggadah. Each teen created a new artistic depiction of the four children, as they imagine them. Their letter will tell the seniors a bit more about what they are doing and why.

You will also find enclosed a “Mad Lib” style letter to reply. The teens would love to hear about the seniors’ memories of Passover and how they understand the four children parable.

Please use the enclosed envelope to mail your response **directly to your buddy / to our center and we will deliver it to the teens.**

Sincerely,

**Your Name, Title**

**Contact Information**

## B–Electronic Asynchronous

### Version B-1 (if sending to the seniors individually)

Dear Senior,

The teens have been exploring the parable of the four children (or sons) in the Passover Haggadah. Each teen created a new artistic depiction of the four children, as they imagine them. They have also created a video explaining their artwork. **Check your email for that video link.** The teens would love to see the four children through your eyes as well. You can start from scratch, or we have included a second version of each teen’s artwork with parts removed so that you can personalize the images to their own understandings.

You will also find enclosed a “Mad Lib” style letter to reply. Your teen buddy would love to hear about your memories of Passover and how you understand the four children parable.

Please use the enclosed envelope to mail your response **directly to your buddy / to our center and we will distribute it to the teens.**

Sincerely,

**Your Name, Title**

**Contact Information**

### Version B-2 (if sending to a program coordinator)

Dear **Program Coordinator,**

The teens have been exploring the parable of the four children (or sons) in the Passover Haggadah. Each teen created a new artistic depiction of the four children, as they imagine them. Their videos will tell the seniors a bit more about what they are doing and why. Please **check your email for that video link.** The teens would love to see the four children through the seniors’ eyes as well. They can start from scratch, or we have included a second version of each teen’s artwork with parts removed so that the seniors can personalize the images to their own understandings.

You will also find enclosed a “Mad Lib” style letter for the seniors to use in their reply. The teens would love to hear about the role that acts of kindness have played in their lives.

Please use the enclosed envelope to mail the responses to our center and we will distribute them to the teens.

Sincerely,

**Your Name, Title**

**Contact Information**

## C–Synchronous Virtual Activity: Learning & Creating Together

### Version C-1 (if sending to the seniors individually)

Dear Senior,

The teens have been exploring the parable of the four children (or sons) in the Passover Haggadah. Each teen created a new artistic depiction of the four children, as they imagine them. We are excited to be meeting you online at **Day, Time**. The teens will be explaining their artwork and would love to see the four children through your eyes as well. You can start from scratch, or we have included a second version of each teen’s artwork with parts removed so that you can personalize the images to your own understandings.

You will also find enclosed a “Mad Lib” style letter to reply. Your teen buddy would love to hear about your memories of Passover and how you understand the four children parable.

Please use the enclosed envelope to mail your response **directly to your buddy / to our center and we will distribute it to the teens.**

Sincerely,

**Your Name, Title**

**Contact Information**

### Version C-2 (if sending to a program coordinator)

Dear **Program Coordinator**,

Enclosed you will find letters from the teen Better Together™ buddies. The teens have been exploring the parable of the four children (or sons) in the Passover Haggadah. Each teen created a new artistic depiction of the four children, as they imagine them. We are excited to be meeting your seniors online at **Day, Time**. The teens will be explaining their artwork and would love to see the four children through your eyes as well. You can start from scratch, or we have included a second version of each teen’s artwork with parts removed so that the seniors can personalize the images to their own understandings.

You will also find enclosed a set of “Mad Lib” style letters for the seniors. The teens would love to hear about the seniors’ memories of Passover and their understanding of the four children parable.

Please use the enclosed envelope to mail the responses to our center and we will distribute them to the teens.

Sincerely,

**Your Name, Title**

**Contact Information**

## D—Buddy Box: *Four Sides to Passover*

### Version D-1 (if sending to the seniors individually)

Dear Senior,

Enclosed you will find the “*Four Sides to Passover*” Buddy Box materials prepared by your teen Better Together™ buddy. The teens have been exploring the parable of the four children (or sons) in the Passover Haggadah.

For your Buddy Box, we have enclosed the following four components:

- A personalized gift/candy box filled with a special Passover surprise
- An herb planter
- A visual rendition of the four children, created by your teen – and an accompanying video of the teen explaining their work. Please check your email for that video link.
- A personalized letter by your teen, explaining their understanding of the parable.

You will also find enclosed a “Mad Lib” style letter to reply. Your teen buddy would love to hear about your memories of Passover and how you understand the four children parable.

Please use the enclosed envelope to mail your response directly to your buddy / to our center and we will distribute it to the teens.

Sincerely,

Your Name, Title  
Contact Information

### Version D-2 (if sending to a program coordinator)

Dear Program Coordinator,

The teens have been exploring the parable of the four children (or sons) in the Passover Haggadah. Each teen created a new artistic depiction of the four children, as they imagine them. In honor of the four children, we are happy to send you a four-part Buddy box.

For each senior’s Buddy Box, we have enclosed the following components:

- A personalized gift/candy box filled with a special Passover surprise
- An herb planter
- A visual rendition of the four children, created by their teen – and an accompanying video of the teen explaining their work. Please check your email for that video link.
- A personalized letter, explaining their understanding of the parable.

You will also find enclosed a set of “Mad Lib” style letters for the seniors. The teens would love to hear about the seniors’ memories of Passover and their understanding of the four children parable.

Please use the enclosed envelope to mail the responses to our center and we will distribute them to the teens.

Sincerely,

Your Name, Title  
Contact Information

*Happy Passover!*

פסח שמח!

*Passover Sameach!*

חג שמח!

*Hag Kasher v'Sameach!*

חג כּאִשֶׁר וְשִׂמְחָה!



*Happy Passover!*

פסח שמח!

*Passover Sameach!*

חג שמח!

*Hag Kasher v'Sameach!*

חג כּאִשֶׁר וְשִׂמְחָה!



*Happy Passover!*

פסח שמח!

*Passover Sameach!*

חג שמח!

*Hag Kasher v'Sameach!*

חג כּאִשֶׁר וְשִׂמְחָה!

