

CELEBRATIONS

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Hanukkah

Teacher's notes

Age: Adults

Level: Intermediate–Upper-intermediate (B1–B2)

Time: 60–90 minutes

Activity: In this lesson, students will:

1. read, discuss and discover facts about Hanukkah/Chanukah
2. deduce which words are missing from a traditional song
3. read and learn about portmanteau words

Language focus: vocabulary related to Hanukkah, portmanteau words

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student

NOTE ABOUT SPELLING: In Hebrew, Chanukah/Hanukkah is pronounced with the guttural-sounding letter chet. The letter 'h' or the 'ch' sound is the closest English equivalent. So, some people spell and pronounce it 'Chanukah' and others 'Hanukkah'.

Hanukkah dates:

2018: December 2–10

2019: December 22–30

2020: December 10–18

2021: November 28–December 6

Procedure

1. Warmer

Students match the images to the short descriptions to ensure they understand the content of the following tasks and texts.

Key: a2, b1, c5, d4, e3

2. Find the information

In pairs, students read the text and find the information to answer the questions.

Key:

1. Over 2,000 years ago in a temple in Jerusalem.
2. The Seleucids (Syrian-Greeks).
3. Judah.

4. Although there was only enough holy oil to light the candle for one day, it lasted for eight days.

5. (Holy purified) olive oil.

3. Key words

Students go back over the text to find the key words and write them next to the definitions. They should try to notice how the words are used in context. Please note that the definitions are in the order that the words appear in the text. Also, when the words are verbs, the meaning of the infinitive definition is given.

Key:

1. miracle
2. rule
3. force
4. defeat
5. reclaim
6. recite
7. synagogue
8. foil

4. Hanukkah song

Based on the information they have already read, students decide which verbs are missing from this traditional Hanukkah song. There are many versions of the song online so students could listen to a couple and check their answers.

Here, for example, is the song in Yiddish and English and then Hebrew with images of menorahs, latkas, dreidel etc: www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxH0xF84h_0

A more upbeat version is this one from Canadian rock band the Barenaked Ladies (who sing the theme to the well-known US TV series *The Big Bang Theory*): www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLqG3BqMC8E

Key:

1. light
2. dance
3. play
4. eat
5. burning
6. remind

5. Portmanteau words

Students read about Christmukkah. Then in a. they should think of other (common) portmanteau words that they already know in English, e.g. *brunch*, *smog*, *motel*, *labradoodle*, etc (lists of these words can easily be found online). Then in b. they decide which words have been combined to make these

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five relatively new portmanteau words before they check their answers and the words' meanings by skimming or reading the blog entry at: www.macmillandictionaryblog.com/your-favourite-portmanteau-words

Key:

Bankster = *banker* + *gangster*. A person who works for a bank who is seen as dishonest.

Floordrobe = *floor* + *wardrobe*. Clothing that has been left on the floor of a room instead of being put away.

Tofurkey = *tofu* + *turkey*. A US vegetarian turkey replacement, usually made from tofu.

Spanglish = *Spanish* + *English*. A combination language that uses words and idioms from both Spanish and English.

Glamping = *glamour* + *camping*. A form of luxurious camping, staying in a spacious tent with a bed and other items of furniture.

6. Discussion

Students discuss the most likely reasons for the merging of the two holidays, Christmas and Hanukkah; e.g. both fall around the same time of year, both bring family members together, we may not have time in our modern lives to celebrate two separate holidays, etc.

Then they think about which other holidays they would like to merge and which names they could give them. These can be as inventive as they like, e.g. *Zoe's birthday plus Halloween = Zo-bir-ween*.