

# Activity Guide for

## *The Dreidel That Wouldn't Spin: A Toyshop Tale of Hanukkah*

### **PART 1**

**Comprehension Questions:** Read the story and look at the illustrations to answer these questions:

1. What is a dreidel? What holiday are dreidels associated with?
2. Why did the shopkeeper like the dreidel when he first saw it?
3. Three families come into the toyshop in the story. What clues do the text and illustrations give you about how rich or poor each family might be?
4. What do the text and illustrations tell you about the personalities of the three children? What do the pictures inside the front and back covers tell you about the boy who eventually keeps the dreidel?
5. The toys in the shop have very expressive faces that show their feelings. What do the toys think about the girl and the first boy who buy the dreidel? How do they feel about the third child?
6. What does the shopkeeper think about the children who come into his shop? Why do his feelings about the last boy change?
7. Here are some words that can be used to describe the people in the story. Match each word to the person or persons you think best fits the description:

humble	spoiled	disrespectful	respectful	demanding
wealthy	poor	careful	reckless	mysterious
angry	confused	thankful	show-off	kind
wise	greedy	generous	upset	content

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Why did the dreidel not spin for the first two children? Why did it spin for the last one?
2. Why does each child want the dreidel? What do you think is its real value?
3. Do you think the children are similar to or different from their parents?
4. How does the shopkeeper change during the course of the book?

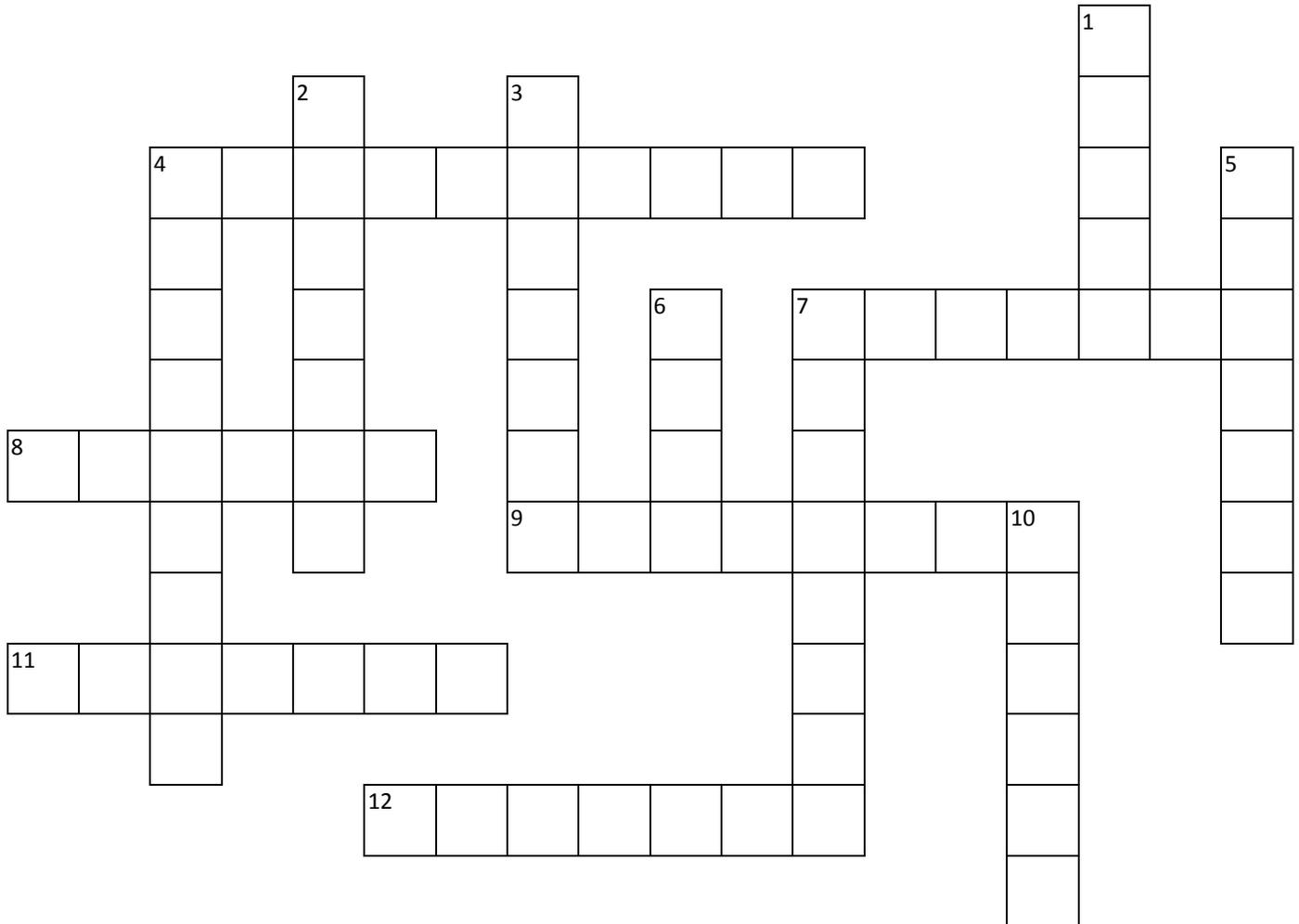
5. Of the three families in the story, which do you think is the most fortunate?
6. The book does not say where or when the story takes place. Where and when do you think the story happens?

**Challenge Questions:** Read the Author's Note at the back of the book to help answer these more challenging questions, some of which might require further research:

1. What is a miracle? What is the miracle associated with Hanukkah? What is the "small miracle" that happened in the story? What do you think caused the small miracle?
2. The last picture of the peddler shows him pulling a cart that has the letters אֵלִיהוּ (pronounced *Eliyahu*) which is the Hebrew name for Elijah the Prophet. What did the peddler say or do that might indicate he might be Elijah?
3. According to Jewish folklore, Elijah is often accompanied by a crow. Just for fun, look through the book to find pictures of the black bird.

## PART 2

**Crossword Puzzle Grid for**  
*The Dreidel That Wouldn't Spin: A Toyshop Tale Of Hanukkah*  
14 words



### ACROSS

- 4 Person who runs the toyshop
- 7 Man who sells the dreidel to the shopkeeper
- 8 Where the shopkeeper displays the dreidel
- 9 December holiday
- 11 A spinning top
- 12 These are lit each night of Hanukkah

### DOWN

- 1 The kind of miracle that happened here
- 2 Where the story takes place
- 3 Hanukkah candle holder
- 4 What the first father calls the shopkeeper
- 5 This occurs when the dreidel finally spins
- 6 What a dreidel does
- 7 What the first two families are carrying when they enter the toyshop
- 10 The dreidel's letters are in this language

**Crossword Answers for**

*The Dreidel That Wouldn't Spin: A Toyshop Tale Of Hanukkah*

14 words

