

THE Newsfeed

There's always plenty going on at PJ Library. Here's a quick roundup of the latest news and events.

BY PJ LIBRARY STAFF

How to Repurpose PJ Library Books

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A NEW HOME for those beloved PJ Library books your kids have outgrown?

There are many ways you can repurpose gently used books and give them new life. If books are in good condition, donate them to a local Jewish organization, such as a synagogue, preschool, day school, or Jewish community center. Family service organizations in your area may also have need of donated books. You can drop books off at a public library for its used-book sale or arrange a pop-up PJ Library corner in the children's section (both great ways for other families raising Jewish children to discover PJ Library and for everyone to learn more about Jewish culture).

Want to get active? Take a stroll around your neighborhood (or a friend's) and have your children deposit their books in a Little Free Library bookcase. Want to make it a social event? Host a book swap in your community where kids can exchange titles or "shop" for new ones.

If books are too worn-out to be donated,



Kids can create collages or holiday table centerpieces from books too worn to donate.

PHOTO BY
JAMIE LEFKOWITZ

consider an upcycling project. Kids can create a variety of crafts from old book pages with a few common art supplies, such as scissors, paint, glue, Popsicle sticks, and crayons. Think collages, origami, or paper flowers, to name a few.

"One of the most common things I hear from PJ Library families is the excitement of receiving and reading each month's book. But the other thing I commonly hear is the question of what to do with books they have outgrown," says Jamie

Lefkowitz, a PJ Library parent connector in the Rivertowns area of New York.

Last year, Lefkowitz hosted a book swap followed by a crafting day to upcycle the leftover books. At Woodlands Community Temple in White Plains, New York, some 19 children created colorful paper flowers for holiday-table centerpieces.

"The book upcycling project gave new purpose to those books that did not find a new home," Lefkowitz says. "They used these books to create something unique and meaningful that would be a reminder during their holiday gatherings of their creativity and Jewish identity."

—By Rachel Zaimont

The Great Passover Seder Giveaway



In February and March, PJ Library hosted the Great Passover Seder Giveaway. All PJ Library subscribers were entered to win and could earn additional chances to win by following PJ Library on Instagram and sharing the giveaway with others. And the prize? A Passover seder! Grand-prize winners would receive a package featuring a range of goodies to help families host an unforgettable seder.

Featuring a Jewish cookbook, aprons, kids' matzah-print pajamas, and, of course, Passover-themed books and a set of the PJ Library Family Haggadah, the giveaway wowed our three lucky winners. "I want to offer my deepest gratitude for this amazing gift," wrote Juan G. of Miami, Florida. "My family was so excited to see all the wonderful items for our Passover seder."

—By Craig Rossein



PJ Library Podcasts Are Taking Off

PJ Library’s award-winning podcast network, PJ Library Presents, is reaching more listeners than ever – and gaining recognition. *Afternoons with Mimi* has recently become a Webby Awards honoree! This podcast for young children has a storytime premise, featuring PJ Library books, Jewish folktales, and original stories. *Mimi* and *Beyond the Bookcase*, a fantasy-adventure series for older children following two friends in a magical land, had their most popular month yet this past March with more than 50,000 downloads. That’s over 50,000 times these Jewish stories were experienced, enjoyed, and shared in one month alone. The two shows have racked up more than 330,000 listens altogether. Production is now underway on season three of both shows.

Want to listen? PJ Library podcasts are now available free of charge on the Yoto Player; the Kids Listen app; and Apple, Spotify, and many other podcast platforms. You can also listen at pjlibrary.org/podcast.

—By Alli Thresher

Introducing PJ Library Books in Braille

PJ Library is partnering with the JBI Library (formerly the Jewish Braille Institute) to offer PJ Library books in braille, large print, and audio formats for blind and visually impaired children and family members, enabling more families to read together.

The pilot program features four picture books: *The Peddler and the Baker*, *Hanukkah at Monica’s*, *Until the Blueberries Grow*, and *Jeremy’s Dreidel*. Each book has a braille transparency overlaying each page of text. In addition, JBI has produced PJ Library’s Passover Haggadah, *In Every Generation: A PJ Library Family Haggadah*, in braille, large print, and audio formats.

“We are excited that this partnership makes cross-generational reading together possible through different accessibility options,” says Livia Thompson, JBI’s president. “It will make possible the inclusion of visually impaired and print-disabled children in the PJ Library program and also provide a means for visually impaired parents and grandparents to read to their sighted children and grandchildren.”

“Our work with JBI is extremely important in helping us fulfill our mission to provide Jewish stories to all Jewish families,” adds Simon Klarfeld, PJ Library’s director of content. “No story is more central to the Jewish narrative than the story of the Exodus from Egypt and the freedom it enabled, so our collaboration on the Haggadah is especially meaningful.”

Interested in ordering a book in braille? Email aarfe@jbilibrary.org.

—By PJ Library Staff

PJ Library International Directors Conference



PHOTO BY ANGELA SCOWEN

What does it take to deliver PJ Library books to children in more than 35 countries? Great stories in seven languages, a worldwide distribution network, committed donors, global partners, and incredible leaders around the world. In March, directors of PJ Library programs across the globe came together for the first time in three years in New York City. The

PJ Library International Directors Conference facilitated three days of learning and collaboration focused on Jewish peoplehood and deepening PJ Library’s impact in their home countries. Hailing from São Paulo, London, Johannesburg, Hong Kong, and other locales, attendees brought energy and passion for PJ Library that transcends borders and time zones. “It was invigorating to come together with my colleagues from countries around the world, discussing book selection and family priorities in each of our regions,” says Lauren Hamburger, regional director of PJ Library Europe and Africa. “We’re already counting down until our next meeting.”

—By Rachel Kozupsky