

**Minnesota Storytime
Reading Guide**

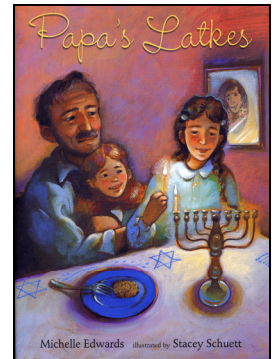
Title: *Papa's Latkes*

Author: Michelle Edwards

Illustrator: Stacey Schuett

Publisher and Copyright Date: Candlewick Press, 2004

Connection to Minnesota: Minnesota author



Summary: This is a story about a family's first Chanukah (the Jewish Festival of Lights) since Mama died. Papa tries to make everyone cheerful, but they all miss Mama. The family finds special ways to remember Mama and make Chanukah a happy time.

Suggested ages: 4-6, 7-10

Tips for Reading:

- Show the illustrations to children as you read, pointing out key features (e.g. menorah, etc.).
- Use different voices for the different characters and moods in the story.
- After reading the story the first time, go back and discuss vocabulary that might be new to the children, such as Chanukah, menorah, latkes, matzo meal, dreidel, Star of David, and shammes. If possible, bring items in to show the children.

Questions before reading:

- What are some special times your family celebrates?
- What are some of the special foods you eat at those celebrations? What is your favorite?
- Do you like to help make the food? What do you do to help?
- Do any of you celebrate Chanukah? What do you know about Chanukah celebrations?

To Introduce this story say: This is a story about a family's first Chanukah celebration after their mama died. Let's see how they celebrate this holiday.

Questions After Reading:

- What are some of the special things (traditions) Selma's family did every year to celebrate Chanukah?
- Why did Selma cry when she tried to eat Papa's latkes?
- Papa said "Can't be stingy with oil on Chanukah." Why is oil an important part of Chanukah?
- When the latkes were cooking "the air was rich with that Chanukah smell." Is there a certain cooking smell that makes you remember a special occasion or holiday?
- What do you know about Chanukah celebrations that you didn't know before?

RELATED ACTIVITIES

- Art:**
- Draw a picture of your favorite part of a family celebration (like a food, object, tradition, song or prayer).
 - Make a cardboard dreidel.
- Culture:**
- Invite a guest to class to talk about how he/she celebrates Chanukah.
 - Light a candle in a classroom menorah to mark each day of Chanukah (with guidance from a member of the Jewish community).
- History:**
- Research the history and meaning of Chanukah.
- Language:**
- Learn about the Yiddish language. What are some Yiddish words that have become part of the English language?
- Music:**
- Listen to Chanukah music collections in class, such as *Candles Long Ago* by Sharon, Lois, & Bram (1994), *Chanukah Favorites*, Robert Schultz, Ed. (1999), and *Chanukah at Home* (1988).
 - Listen to recorded klezmer music in class. Talk about its history and origins. What gives it a unique sound? What kinds of feelings does it create when you listen to it?
- Writing:**
- Write about one of your favorite family traditions, and add some descriptive words so the reader can hear, smell, taste, or feel the events you wrote about.
 - Write a letter to someone you miss. Explain why you miss them. Describe something you will do to remember them.
- Suggestions for English Language Learners:**
- Talk about a special celebration in your culture, community, family, or religion.
 - Choose a word related to the celebration and add it to a classroom vocabulary list (e.g. Ramadan). Write it in both your own language and English, if you wish.
 - What do you miss about your homeland or the place you lived before? What do you like about where you live now?
- Related Books:**
- ***The Borrowed Hanukkah Latkes*** by Linda Glaser, illustrated by Nancy Cote (Albert Whitman, 2001)
 - ***Celebrations*** by Barnabas and Anabel Kindersley (DK Publishing, 1997)
 - ***Cinco de Mayo*** by Aurora Colon Garcia (Heinemann Library, 2003)
 - ***Juneteenth: A Day to Celebrate Freedom from Slavery*** by Angela Leeper (Enslow, 2003)
 - ***The Menorah Story*** by Mark Podwal (Greenwillow, 1998)
 - ***Mrs. Greenberg's Messy Hanukkah*** by Linda Glaser, illustrated by Nancy Cote (Albert Whitman, 2004)
 - ***Pearl's Eight Days of Chanukah*** by Jane Breskin Zalben (Simon & Schuster, 1998)
 - ***Too Many Tamales*** by Gary Soto, illustrated by Ed Martinez (Putnam, 1993).

