

# Simchat Torah

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**Concepts:** Celebration of the Torah; we finish reading the Torah and then roll it back to start again; we read first story in the Torah – Creation.

**Symbols/Customs:** Hakafa (dancing with the Torah)

**Props:** flags and laminated Torahs; stuffed Torahs; small Consecration Torah; creation felt-board prop

## Tips for Teaching This Unit:

1. With 4's – 1<sup>st</sup> graders, wish everyone 'Chag Sameach.' Review **Chag Sameach** and sign language from Rosh Hashanah. Teach **Chag Sameach** (Baydush), which reinforces the meaning of the Hebrew and reviews the holidays thus far.

### Chag Sameach

by Lisa Baydush ([prop](#)) ([audio](#))

#### Chorus:

Chag Sameach, Chag Sameach, Happy Holiday! (repeat)

Can you name the holidays? I'll give you some clues!  
Let's start with apples dipped in honey... Rosh Hashanah, good for you!

Here's another holiday, and here's another clue:  
We say, 'I'm sorry' to our friends on... Yom Kippur, I'm proud of you! (chorus)

Can you name the holiday when we build a sukkah?... (Sukkot!)  
And when we roll the Torah back?... That's right, that's called Simchat Torah!

How about the holiday with the Maccabees?...  
Chanukah, you guys are smart! And how about when we plant trees?... (Tu B'shvat!) (chorus)

The next one's kinda silly and we shake the groggers 'round... (Purim!)  
Then we have a seder... Pesach is my favorite one!

Israel's Independence Day is... Yom Ha'atzmaut,  
And every week we light the candles... (Shabbat!)... of course, that one I knew you knew!  
(chorus)

2. Simchat Torah is the last day of Sukkot. Review Sukkot songs, then introduce the Torah. Show my home-made Torah with pictures inside, and see if students recognize any of the stories, such as Noah and Moses at the Burning Bush. Explain that the Torah contains stories of the Jewish people, and that we love the Torah – offer the stuffed Torahs so everyone can give the Torah a hug.
3. Explain that our custom on this holiday is to march around the sanctuary seven times with the Torah. Give out flags and Torahs, bells and shakers and parade around singing **March Along With Me on Simchat Torah** ([audio](#)). Zip in other movements. Age appropriate for 2's and 3's.

## **March Along With Me (on Simchat Torah)**

by Lisa Baydush

Come march, march, march, march with the Torah,  
March, march, march along with me!  
Come march, march, march, march with the Torah,  
Wave your flags and sing with me! (repeat)

Chag Sameach, Chag Sameach!  
Happy holiday!  
Chag Sameach, Chag Sameach!  
Simchat Torah's here today...!

Come dance...

4. Two wonderful movement songs are **Hakafa** and **Torah So Sweet**. Both are zipper songs – Zip in other fun movements, such as dancing, jumping, etc. Age appropriate for 4's and older.

### **Hakafa**

by Ellen Allard

Chorus:

Ha-ka-fa— we go around and around and around and around and  
Ha-ka-fa— we go around and around and around. (repeat)

We're marching with the Torah we love, love, love, love, love;  
We're marching with the Torah given by God above;  
Yes, God is up and down and in and out and all around... (chorus)

### **Torah So Sweet**

by Ellen Allard

Chorus:

Torah torah, torah torah,  
Torah torah so sweet (mwah!)  
Torah torah, torah torah,  
makes me want to get up on my feet and....

Dance and dance and dance all day lo-o-ong  
And sing my song, I'm gonna sing my Torah song.

5. Explain that we finish reading the Torah on Simchat Torah and then roll it back to the very beginning and start to read it all over again, just like we do with favorite books! Invite them to roll their arms *backwards* for **We Roll the Torah**. All of my students have been incredibly delighted with this easy song. Make it silly by saying, 'Again? Okay!' after they say 'again,' and sing it faster each time.

### **We Roll the Torah**

to the tune of Bibidibabidiboo

We roll the Torah over and over and over and over again;  
We read and we read and we read and we read...  
And then we be-gi-in again (AGAIN!) (go faster)

6. Two more songs about rolling the Torah back are: **Round and Round on Simchat Torah**, (freeze when the music stops!), and **Roll it Back**. Age appropriate for all preschoolers.

### **Round and Round on Simchat Torah**

by Ellen Allard

Round and round and round on Simchat Torah! (freeze!)  
We go round and round and round  
and round and round,  
with the Torah we go round. (repeat)

We celebrate our love for Torah (ahhh!)  
We sing and dance and make a joyful noise (lalala!)  
We march around for seven hakafot, (get ready!)  
All the grownups, all the girls and boys, and...

### **Roll it Back**

by Marc Rossio

Chorus:

Roll it back, roll it back, roll the Torah back, we made it to the end;  
Roll it back, roll it back, roll the Torah back, let's start it all again! (repeat)

This holiday's Simchat Torah, for our most important scroll,  
So grab the Torah by the handles as we start to roll, roll, roll... (chorus)

7. Explain to 4's and older, that the Torah is described as our tree of life, and teach Tree of Life with hand motions and clapping.

### **Tree of Life**

by Richard Silverman

Shalom, shalom (clap 4x) (4x)

It is a tree of life to them that hold fast to it,  
and all its supporters are (clap) happy (repeat)

8. On Simchat Torah, we roll the Torah back to the very beginning and begin to read it all over again! The first story in the Torah is when God created the world. And the second story is Noah! See my **Creation** and **Noah** music units!