



Fun Resources for
Teaching Rosh Hashanah

5 KEY FACTS ABOUT ROSH HASHANAH

-  **1** Rosh Hashanah (ראש השנה) is celebrated on the 1st-2nd Tishrei both inside and outside the Land of Israel. While the Torah (Vayikra 23:24-25 & Bemidbar 29:1) says that Rosh Hashanah only lasts one day, the observance of Rosh Hashanah for two days both in Israel as well as the diaspora was an enactment of the early prophets and due to the fact that Rosh Hashanah falls at the start of the Hebrew month. Given that it took time to confirm and declare the new moon, the prophets ordained that Rosh Hashanah last two days to avoid communities accidentally observing the wrong day for Rosh Hashanah.
-  **2** The term ראש השנה literally means 'the head/start of the year' which reflects how this date is the beginning of the year as regards the calculation of the years, the shmitta cycle, the yovel cycle, for planting trees and for produce (see Rosh Hashanah 1:1). In addition to Rosh Hashanah marking the start of these cycles, our Sages teach that Rosh Hashanah marks the day in which mankind was created (Talmud Bavli, Rosh Hashanah 11a).
-  **3** Another name for Rosh Hashanah is יום הדין which literally means 'day of judgment'. This is because our Sages teach that on this day, all our actions from the previous year are judged, and all our sustenance for the coming year is decided (see Talmud Bavli, Rosh Hashanah 8a). Given this, a key focus of the prayers recited on Rosh Hashanah focus on repentance.
-  **4** The Torah refers to Rosh Hashanah by two further names. One is יום תרועה (see Bemidbar 29:1) which literally means 'the day of blowing', and the other is זכרון תרועה (see Vayikra 23:24) which literally means 'a remembrance of blowing'. These names have been understood as referring to the duty to blow the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah. Given the difference between יום תרועה and זכרון תרועה, the Sages explained that when Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat, we do not blow the shofar but instead, 'remember the blowing of the Shofar' (see Talmud Bavli, Rosh Hashanah 29b). However, on days when the shofar is blown, the custom is to hear 100 sounds of the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah. While the Torah does not offer a reason why we should blow the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah, numerous thinkers such as Rambam have suggested that the reason for this mitzvah is as a way to inspire us to stir us to repent on Rosh Hashanah (see Rambam, Hilchot Teshuvah 3:4).
-  **5** Because Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of the year as well as the day in which we are judged, there are numerous customs that reflect the positive hopes we have for the year and the desire to rid ourselves of our previous sins. Regarding the former, it is customary to eat sweet and symbolic foods on the night of Rosh Hashanah such as apple and honey, dates and pomegranates. Additionally, it is customary to wear white clothes on Rosh Hashanah to symbolize purity of sin. Finally, it is the custom on Rosh Hashanah to visit a river or spring and metaphorically throw away our sins.

Refer to our Sefaria source sheet [here](#) for all the above references.



5 GREAT ACTIVITY IDEAS TO TEACH ABOUT ROSH HASHANAH

The following ideas can be applied using **Jigzi**, the educational platform created by Ji. In Jigzi, you can **create** an interactive game, called a JIG, which can then be shared to play with your family. You will need to be logged in to create a JIG. All textboxes have a connection to **Sefaria**, so you are easily able to import the texts and prayers. We have also prepared a source sheet in Sefaria [here](#).

1 Arranging the Symbolic Foods

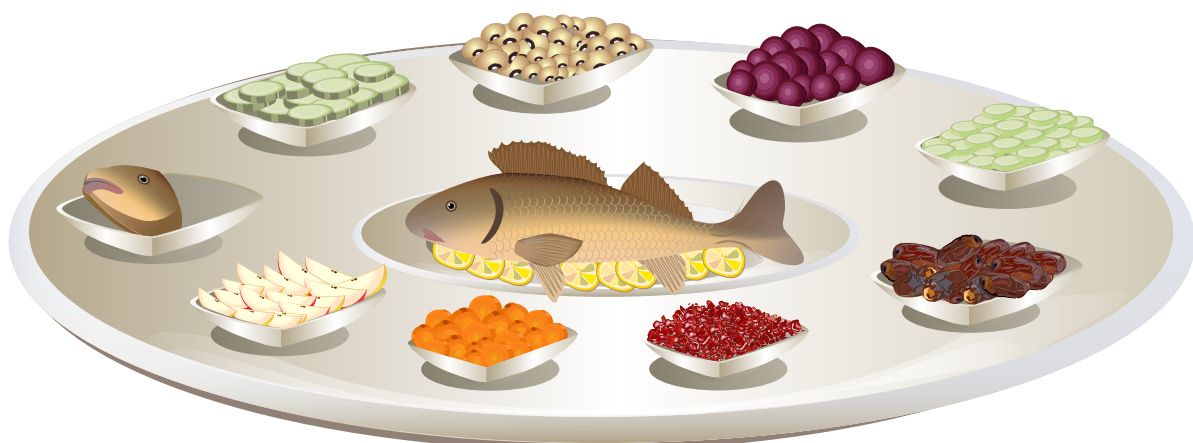
PREPARATION: Review the symbolic foods eaten on the night of Rosh Hashanah.



- Create a new JIG (Jewish Interactive Game) by clicking the **Create your own** button [here](#).
- Choose a **Drag & Drop** activity (from the activity suggestions perhaps choose 'Set a Table' or 'Build a Scene').
- Selecting backgrounds (**Design**) or images (**Content**), design a screen

that has a table or two, or perhaps different blocks or platforms where you can arrange various items.

- In the **Content** tab, search for an image of an empty Rosh Hashanah plate, as well as all the symbolic foods, which can be arranged in a separate area to the plate.
- Once your scene is complete, move to the **Interaction** tab, where you can select each symbolic food to be dragged. Audio can be added to each of these items (second tab in Interaction). Trace the areas on the Rosh Hashanah plate where each item will correctly go. Lastly, place each item in its correct traced area.
- Choose your **Settings**, and once complete, your game is ready.
- Publish and share with your family!



2 Tashlich

PREPARATION: Review the Tashlich custom, emphasizing that Tashlich is symbolic and that we need not throw anything into the water.

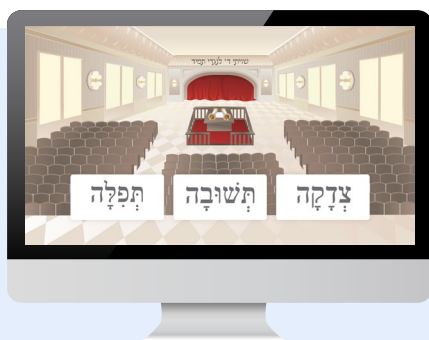


- Create a new JIG.
- Choose a **Listen & Learn** activity (from the activity suggestions perhaps choose 'Talking Pictures').

- In the **Design** tab, search for and select a background which will include a river or other pool of water.
- Under **Content**, place various characters by the water.
- In the **Interaction** tab, trace each character, and either add a label or a sound recording, where each character mentions what they would like to throw away for Tashlich.
- Design a new activity to follow, with written or recorded instructions, prompting the child to think about what they would like to symbolically throw away for Tashlich.

3 Teshuvah, Tefillah, and Tzedakah

PREPARATION: Explain that according to our Rabbis, the three things we can do to ensure we have good year ahead are Teshuvah (repenting and saying sorry for things we have done wrong), Tefillah (praying to God and asking for forgiveness), and Tzedakah (giving charity and helping those in need).



- Create a new JIG.
- Choose an **Answer This** 'Scene' activity.
- Using the **Design** and **Content** tabs, design a scene depicting an act of Tefillah (prayer). Bring in the three word stickers or type in the following words: תשובה, תפילה, צדקה

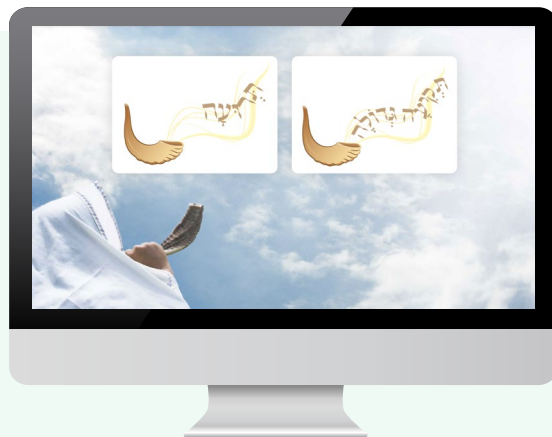
- In the **Interaction** tab, add a written or recorded **Question**, asking the user to select the correct word describing the scene. Trace the correct word in the **Answer** tab.
- Repeat with a scene of Teshuvah (repentance) and Tzedakah (charity).



4 The Sounds of the Shofar

PREPARATION: Explain to the students that there are four sounds blown on a shofar: Tekiah (a long single note), Shevarim (a note broken into three parts), Teruah (nine short shofar blasts), and Tekiah Gedolah (a very long blast that raises in volume).

- Create a new JIG.
- Choose a **Listen & Learn** activity (from the activity suggestions perhaps choose 'Talking Pictures')
- Make a screen or several, that depict the 4 different shofar sounds.
- Add an **Interaction** where you record, or upload the actual sound for each image, so that when each image is tapped, the child will hear its shofar sound.
- You could expand this lesson with an **Answer This** 'Multiple Choice' activity.
- Create a scene with an image of a shofar and the 4 shofar sound names (Tekiah, Shevarim, Teruah, Tekiah Gedolah) in English or Hebrew.



- Add a question that includes a recording of one of the shofar sounds, then trace the correct word. This can be repeated with multiple questions until each sound is recorded and the answer is identified. Choose your settings and add instructions for the lesson.

5 Rosh Hashanah Cards

PREPARATION: Think about the message you want to share to a friend or family member as part of a Rosh Hashanah greeting card.



- Create a new JIG.
- Choose a **Talking Poster** activity (from the activity suggestions, perhaps choose 'Printables').
- Using the **Design** and **Content** tabs, design a Rosh Hashanah greeting card.
- Using the **Text** tab, type a Rosh Hashanah greeting.
- Under the **Settings** tab, record or sing the message.
- Publish the JIG and send it to your friends and family.

Rosh Hashanah JIGs

To visit our large selection of Rosh Hashanah games click [here](#).



Rosh Hashana Trivia

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[Rosh Hashana Trivia Quiz](#)

Ideal for a classroom or family competition!

What do you know about Rosh Hashana? Test yourself about the customs, simanim (symbolic foods), shofar sounds, tashlich, and other trivia! Can you beat your friends?



123 Rosh Hashana

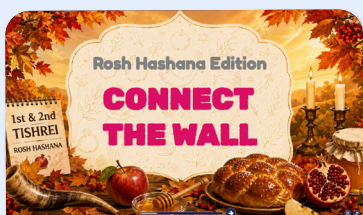
 Pre-K-Elem

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[123 Rosh Hashana](#)

Aimed at very young children.

"123 Rosh Hashana" is a Jewish children's e-book presented to you by PJ Library and Jewish Interactive.



Connect The Wall
Rosh Hashana Edition

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[Connect the Wall – Rosh Hashana Edition](#)

For elementary and middle school.

Test your Rosh Hashana knowledge by finding the connections in this interactive challenge game. Build the Rosh Hashana walls by dragging in the bricks and completing the groups. Score points for working out the correct groups. Drop points for incorrect answers. See how well you can do!

Rosh Hashanah Blogs

Take a look at the blogs that we have relating to Rosh Hashanah. They are filled with inspiration and meaning and will leave you uplifted and wanting more!

Click [here](#) to read!



J-STEM Resources for Rosh Hashanah



Activity: Shofar Programming: It's a blast!

Description: Create a ScratchJr. program that demonstrates the three shofar blast sounds

Recommended age: Kindergarten-2nd grade

Technology: Scratch Jr (app)

Curriculum Links

Coding: Students will learn how to:

- Create a simple computer program
- Break up programming task into parts that are inter-dependent or recursive
- Use control structures to specify the flow of execution
- Understand how control is passed through message blocks

Jewish Studies: Students will learn that on Rosh Hashanah, Jews all over the world blow the shofar. There are three different types of shofar blasts: *tekiah*, *t'ruah* and *sh'varim* (Four if you count the big one, *tekiah gedolah*!)

Activity: Happy Birthday to the World

Description: Code a Rosh Hashanah birthday card for the world, using Scratch Jr.

Recommended age: Kindergarten-2nd grade

Technology: Scratch Jr (app)

Curriculum Links

Coding: Students will learn how to make a program with multiple scenes in Scratch Jr

Jewish Studies:

Students will learn how Rosh Hashanah is considered the birthday of the world





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The Jigzi platform is the most advanced platform for Jewish education and includes 5 main areas:

- **Content**
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- **Community**

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