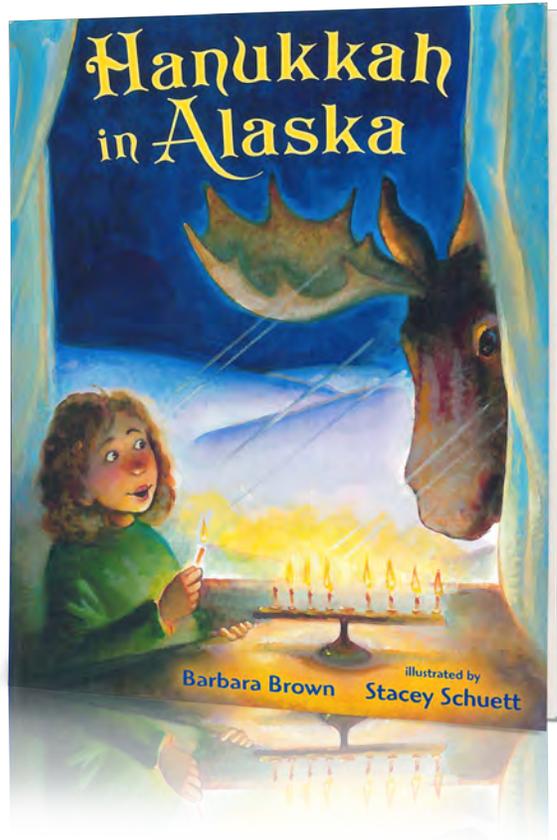


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# Storyline Online



## Hanukkah in Alaska:

Written by: Barbara Brown  
Illustrated by: Stacy Schuett

Watch online video of actor  
**Molly Ephraim**  
reading this story at  
[storylineonline.net](http://storylineonline.net)



## BOOK SUMMARY

During one dark, cold, snowy Alaska winter, a young Jewish girl finds a moose who will not leave her yard. As the Hanukkah holiday approaches, she grows more and more vexed with this giant animal who threatens her most precious play object, her blue swing. One night during Hanukkah, her father shows her the spectacular Northern Lights, and an idea comes to her on how to rid herself of the moose once and for all, proving that miracles can happen to anybody anywhere.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### ALASKA

- Ask students to share the images, ideas, and words they associate with Alaska. Make a word wall to display them.
- Explain Alaska's long hours of darkness in winter and ask students how they think it would feel to live in extended darkness. Have students share ways their day-to-day lives would need to change in order to adapt.
- Show students pictures of Alaska, noting the absence of roadways common in the Lower 48. Ask students how they think Alaskans get around and what they think of their modes of transportation. Students may make desk signs advertising a transportation business they would like to run if they lived in Alaska: helicopter, dog sled, snowmobile, big rig truck, canoe, etc.

<http://511.alaska.gov/alaska511/mappingcomponent/index>

- Ask students to hypothesize what they think people and animals do to survive in a consistently cold, snowy, and often dark environment.
- Make a comparison chart and have students share the ways Alaska differs from where they live: industry, housing, transportation, weather, food, geography.

*(environments with extreme weather, animals and people who've adapted to extreme environments, living in snow and cold, extended darkness)*

### WILD ANIMALS

- Talk about where we might see wild animals: habitats, times, environments, seasons, travel paths.
- Give each student two pictures: one domesticated animal, one wild. Have them explain how these animals are different, physically and socially.
- Make a chart with two columns: Should and Shouldn't. Have children name a wild animal and chart how we should and shouldn't behave around that animal.

- Talk about the physical features for specific animals when considered alongside their habits and habitats: water, above and below ground, aerial, nocturnal, seasonal. Have students talk about why they think these animals have these specific features. *(animal habitats and traits, safety techniques for specific animals, dangerous animals, wild animals vs. domesticated)*

## DARKNESS

- Talk about when we have darkness, both naturally and artificially.
- Make a circle chart and fill in what the students have to say about the seasons, light and darkness, and activities during those times.
- Discuss the night sky and the day sky: what makes them so different?
- Make a feelings charts for how darkness can make us feel and why.

*(when and where darkness occurs, seasons and changing length of daylight hours, the night sky vs. the day sky, darkness and feelings)*

## HOLIDAYS

- Talk about holidays: what are they, why we have them, do we all celebrate the same ones, when they happen, what we wear, eat, and do on these holidays.
- Discuss the differences between religious, civic, and personal holidays.
- Have students list all the holidays they know and write them on slips of paper. Post a large calendar and have students place them in the month or season they occur.
- Have students talk about their most and least favorite holiday and why that is.
- Have students name the most common symbols for holidays they know.

*(types of holidays, ritual, holidays that move with the calendar)*

## COLOR AND LIGHT

- Talk about where we see color, both in nature (including in us) and artificially. Talk about color changes (ex: flowers that fade and die) and colors that stay the same (ex: eyes).
- Show students the color wheel and ask them to name all the colors. Talk about how each color makes them feel and why they think that is.
- Talk about soft/watery and intense/saturated colors and what our impressions of them are, what words we would use to describe them, where we see them.
- Talk about why the colors of the rainbow or spectrum are in the order they are.
- Talk about black and white and whether or not they are colors.

*(where do we see a lot of color, how do colors make us feel, soft/watery colors vs. intense/saturated colors, colors of the rainbow)*

## ACTIVITIES

- In the story, the family experiences the Northern Lights. Set up progressive science stations where students learn how Auroras are made. Using paint, fabric, colored tissue paper, cotton batting, and crayon, have students make a 3-D Aurora Borealis ceiling that is hung over their classroom. Assign roles to students and have them write a short informative play that tells all about Auroras. Invite parents or other classes to watch their play under the Northern Lights. Roles may include the sun, moon, stars, the solar wind (coronal mass ejection), the earth's protective field, ions, and the poles. Encourage students to move, sound, and dress like their scientific element. At the end of the play, turn out the lights and have students without narration roles use flashlights and fans to animate the Aurora Borealis on the ceiling. Afterward, play a video showing the real Aurora Borealis and let the students and audience dance. (You may also record the performance and hold a movie screening, serving sno-balls or popsicles as treats.)

[http://www.kidsastronomy.com/Aurora\\_article.php](http://www.kidsastronomy.com/Aurora_article.php)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVsONlc3OUY>

*(earth science: Aurorae creation, light phenomena, Earth's sky, ions and particles; art: reproducing natural phenomena, color patterns, creating a backdrop; theater arts: making an informative play, portraying inanimate objects and natural occurrences, using light to create movement; dance: interpreting nature)*

- One of the traditions the family in the book observes is lighting the Menorah. Have children make a star, web, or tree organizer for one tradition their family observes. Students may include feelings about the tradition, people who attend it, when the tradition is observed, and any details that personalize it. Then, using heavy paper and a stapler and ribbon, make a vest, apron, or cape for each child. Have students decorate the item using pictures, words, actual items, etc., that document their tradition. They may bring these items from home or create them in the classroom. Have a Traditions Parade through the school then have students give an oral report using their item of clothing as their report notes. You may display the clothing in a traditions corner in your room or hang them from the ceiling.

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/graphicorganizers/star/>

*(art: making clothing, using symbols to convey facts; language arts: pre-writing, organizing details; social studies: documenting tradition, preserving family history, nonverbal communication)*

- The illustrations in *Hanukkah in Alaska* are strikingly color-saturated. Have students use colored markers to cover large pieces of heavy white paper with thick, solid colors. Next have them cover the paper with black crayon. Students may use toothpicks or wood skewers to etch lightly a picture into the black crayon, revealing the rainbow of color underneath. Students could also employ geometric shapes, repeating patterns,

or monotone colors when creating the colored underlayer. You may also direct them to replicate an Alaskan animal, aspect of the story, or a holiday symbol for the etching. Display the color wheel if you like and discuss hues, tints, shades, tones, and opposite and complementary colors.

<http://www.kinderart.com/drawing/cetching.shtml>

<http://www.color-wheel-artist.com/hue.html>

*(arts: color progression, patterns and shapes, multilayered art, etching, replication, the color wheel; geometry: shapes; math: repeating patterns)*

- Hanukkah is an important event for the characters in Barbara Brown’s story. Divide students equally into five groups. Working with your librarian, create Holiday stations with magazines, books, audio files, and websites so each group learns about one of five major religious holidays that occur in December: Christmas, Eid al-Fitr (not always but often in December), Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Yule. Have each group create a large diorama detailing their holiday. Post a written report describing what is taking place in the diorama. Students may host a progressive dinner party where each group brings clothing, food, and music appropriate to their diorama and narrates the scene for visitors who move from one holiday diorama to the next.

<http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Diorama>

*(religion: winter holidays, traditions, religious differences; history: dioramas, communicating facts through visuals; social studies: holiday food, clothing, and music, progressive dinners; theater arts: role play)*

- This story takes place in a very snowy place. Review science terms such as atoms, temperature, water, vapor, ice, and snow then show the short video about how snowflakes form. Using a small Styrofoam ball as their dust particle, have each student build a snowflake using glue, colored gel sheets, waxed paper, aluminum foil, pipe cleaners, toothpicks, cotton balls, Q-tips, and glitter. Have them document their snowflake formation step-by-step in a book. You may take pictures of the forming snowflakes or have students illustrate the book by hand. To add drama and art to this assignment, students may have the snowflake narrate the story of its creation in the book. Display the snowflake chart for guidance and hang the finished flakes in the window. Children will also like to “grow” their own snowflake using the recipe below. The next day, have students compare and contrast the snowflakes using a two-column chart.

<http://news.discovery.com/earth/videos/how-snowflakes-form-video.htm>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbxUEE2L8zo>

<http://www.its.caltech.edu/~atomic/snowcrystals/photos2/photos2.htm>

<http://www.stevespanglerscience.com/lab/experiments/magic-crystal-snowflake>

*(earth sciences: weather, snow, the water cycle, temperature, artificial snow; art: models, replication; geometry: shape names, sides, arms; social studies: steps in a process, charting characteristics; language arts: compare and contrast vocabulary, animating inanimate objects)*

- Post a large map of Alaska on the wall and delineate its four zones: Far North, Interior, South Central, and Southeast. Break students into four groups and have them chart the information provided to show the geographic features, weather, elevations, and population data as well as the major cities in the region. Post the charts and break students into teams. Using a spinner, have students answer questions based on the data posted. Keep score and reward the winning team. Let students illustrate the paper map, adding flora, fauna, and aquatic life with magazine pictures, drawings, and various papers. For expanded geography work, students may use the compare and contrast method for Alaska and the Lower 48 or countries on the same latitude.

<http://www.alaskatravel.com/resources/alaska-weather.html>

<http://wheeldecide.com/#wrapper2>

<http://traveltips.usatoday.com/plants-animals-alaska-62915.html>

*(geography: mapping data, reading maps; language arts: vocabulary; social studies: specific regions; earth science: animals and plants of specific regions)*

- Create a board game! Children can make question cards using specific moments from the book. Why do moose kick things? (They get surprised); How many hours of daylight does Alaska have in winter? (five); What should you do when it's very cold outside? (wear multiple layers of clothing); Name one tradition of Hanukkah. (lighting the menorah); etc. Break into small groups and have each group make a board game decorated with images from the book, symbols of Alaska, and blocks of color. The board should include "move ahead" (ex: got moose to leave the yard), "go back" (ex: feel asleep in class because it was dark outside), and "special bonus" blocks (ex: snow day, no school!). Students may be as creative as they like, making circular, snaking-, helix-, or other-shaped paths on the board. Using a die and game pieces, one person draws a question card from the pile and the person whose turn it is gives the correct answer from the book in order to move forward. When they are finished playing their version, have the groups switch until all children have played all versions.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-7lvAnDCDE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRiRw1RhHGA>

*(music: creating emotion with music; math: numbers, shapes; language arts: poetic style, using words to convey mood, pre-writing, finding inspiration)*

- Alaska is home to some of the world's largest and most beloved mammals. Make a Bingo board with names or pictures of the animals and plants found in Alaska. Five columns across and five down. Call out a characteristic of each animal or plant in order to cover that spot. Bingo!

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=animals.listmammals>

*(science: mammals, physical attributes of various mammals, regional wildlife; language arts: recalling facts, competition)*

- Throughout much of this story, the snow creates moods and dictates activities. Show students these two radically different short films featuring snow. Brainstorm pre-writing words and phrases in two columns, one for each video. Have students write a poem inspired by the one of videos. Remind students that a poem is a short story and has a beginning, middle, and end. You may introduce formalize poetic style if you like: Haiku, rhyming couplets, free verse, limerick, or concrete poetry (written in the shape of an object). Afterward, you may play a guessing game wherein the author reads the poem and classmates guess which video inspired it.

1. <https://vimeo.com/57695231>

2. <https://vimeo.com/116002328>

*(music: creating emotion with music; language arts: poetic style, using words to convey mood, pre-writing, finding inspiration)*

- Alaskans live many months with very little daylight, unlike other residents of the US. With large rectangular boxes create dark and light stations by cutting two holes on the front of the box: one for light source, one for observation. Set up the interior of each box to show various aspects of light: color, reflection, light travel, light bending, and light waves. For color reflection use bananas or oranges; for light travel use cards with holes for the light to pass through or be blocked; for light bending use a mirror or curved prism; and for light waves use a prism. Have students make rainbow name tags identifying them as Light Scientists and fill out information sheets that help them organize their findings. The next day, have children come dressed in a color or aspect they learned about and tell the class their properties: a translucent object, an orange, a prism, how fast or slow their wave lengths travel, whether they reflect all, some, or no light, etc. As a treat, you may hang faceted crystals, turn out the lights, and use a flashlight and fan to make rainbows, having children dance under them. You may refer to this video to see expanded ideas on the boxes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbPGvZDNoY0>

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/science-lesson-on-light>

*(science: properties of light travel, light waves, light absorption and reflection, rainbows; art: becoming an inanimate object; language arts: light vocabulary)*

- The snow in Alaska is highly reflective, sending back all colors in the spectrum. Brainstorm vocabulary words and terms for light reflection and absorption. Hand out notebooks and flashlights (make sure the batteries are good and the light beam is strong!) and walk your campus. Take students to preset objects and using their flashlights, have them determine which reflect light the most, which the least, and what color each object absorbed. Students will chart their results in a notebook, then translate it to picture diagrams. Cover sticks from trees with glitter and make a mobile with the diagrams. For added sparkle, hang crystals, pieces of reflective paper, or small mirrors among the diagrams. For increased reflectivity, paint the backs of the diagrams with glow-in-the-dark paint or glue aluminum foil to them.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CAIkmo0hK0k>

*(science: light reflection and absorption, measuring reflectivity, comparing object nature; art: mobiles; language arts: light vocabulary, note taking)*

- The delicious latke is featured in the story. Read the simple list of ingredients, writing the words on the board: potatoes, onions, eggs, flour, oil, salt, and pepper. Have students talk about the ingredients: how do they grow, which parts do we eat or not eat, what is our favorite way to eat them. Also discuss the ways in which we cook food: boiled, baked, fried, microwaved, or uncooked. Make a wall chart for the various ways to prepare food and have students put their names under the method they think will make the best-tasting latke. Bring in a burner, pot, pan, toaster oven, microwave, and mixing bowl. Have the ingredients pre-grated and measured and have students mix the latke batter (you may use five different bowls for the five different methods). Break students into food scientist groups, one for each method, and make one latke at a time, using the various methods. Have the student food scientists describe on the wall chart what happened to their latke and rate its appeal. After your experiment, have students make hanging Stars of David using popsicle sticks, paint, and glitter while you fry latkes. Serve with applesauce and sour cream. For expanded learning, study the life cycle of potatoes, onions, and wheat, as well as how salt, pepper, and oil are produced.

*(science: prediction, reaction of food to heat, how appearance affects perception, cooking methods, charting results, the life cycles of tubers, bulbs, seeds, grains, and salts; social science: personal preferences, cultural traditions, cooking methods; art: religious symbols; language arts: descriptive words)*

## RESOURCES

### ALASKA

*Once Upon Alaska: A Kid's Photo Book* by Mark Kelley and Nick Jans

*The Toughest Race on Earth: Iditarod.* On-Demand or DVD

*Denali Park, interactive DVD game:* <http://www.woodbowl.com/denaliparkchildrensgame.aspx>

*Indie Alaska*, Alaska Public Television short film series: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fRRqHKICiKI>

*Alaska Bingo, Geography edition:* <http://www.amazon.com/Alaska-Bingo-Geography-Carole-Marsh/dp/0635002345>

Gold rush video game: <http://online.brothergames.com/flash-games/gold-rush.html>

*Off to the Klondike! Search For Gold*, video: <http://watchknowlearn.org/Video.aspx?>

Fun Facts Alaska Wildlife Wood jigsaw puzzle by MasterPieces: [http://www.amazon.com/MasterPieces-Puzzle%C2%A0Company-Wildlife-48-Piece-Elovarra/dp/B000PCIJ6U/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1447793238&sr=8-1&keywords=Fun+Facts+Alaska+Wildlife+Wood+Jigsaw+Puzzle](http://www.amazon.com/MasterPieces-Puzzle%C2%A0Company-Wildlife-48-Piece-Elovarra/dp/B000PCIJ6U/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1447793238&sr=8-1&keywords=Fun+Facts+Alaska+Wildlife+Wood+Jigsaw+Puzzle)

*Color Me!*, Alaskan animal coloring book with facts: <https://www.etsy.com/listing/199832506/>

### HANUKKAH

*Maccabee! The Story of Hanukkah* by Tilda Balsley

*The Everything Kids' Hanukkah Puzzle & Activity Book* by Beth L. Blair and Jennifer A. Ericsson

*The Runaway Latkes* by Leslie Kimmelman

*Hanukkah Sweets and Treats (Holiday Cooking for Kids!)* by Ronne Randall

Funnukkah Hanukkah Doll and Illustrated Book, girl or boy

*The Magic Dreidels: A Hanukkah Story* by Eric Kimmel

*Hanukkah At Valley Forge* by Stephen Krensky

*Hanukkah Moon* by Deborah Da Costa

## LIGHT

*Thomas Edison for Kids* by Jacob Smith

Aurora Borealis poster: [http://www.amazon.com/NATURE-POSTER-AURORA-BOREALIS-northern/dp/B00BGTAVFS/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1436894302&sr=8-1&keywords=Aurora+Borealis+poster](http://www.amazon.com/NATURE-POSTER-AURORA-BOREALIS-northern/dp/B00BGTAVFS/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1436894302&sr=8-1&keywords=Aurora+Borealis+poster)

*Under Alaska's Midnight Sun* (PAWS IV) by Deb Vanasse

*Lights, Mirrors, and Lenses: A Ladybird junior science book* by Frank Edward Newing

Hanging crystal rainbow maker: [www.theparagon.com/product/crystal-rainbow-maker/](http://www.theparagon.com/product/crystal-rainbow-maker/)

ScienceWiz/Light Experiment Kit: [http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=%09ScienceWiz%2FLight+Experiment+Kit&rh=i%3Aaps%2Ck%3A%09ScienceWiz%2FLight+Experiment+Kit](http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=%09ScienceWiz%2FLight+Experiment+Kit&rh=i%3Aaps%2Ck%3A%09ScienceWiz%2FLight+Experiment+Kit)

## SNOW

Insta-Snow: <http://www.amazon.com/Be-Amazing-Insta-Snow-Makes-Gallons/dp/B000FA6APE>

Snowboarding video game: <http://www.freeonlinegames.name>

*Why Does It Snow?* by Chris Arvetis and Carole Palmer

*When It Snows* by Richard Collinridge

*Snow Facts & Fun* by Ms. A B Mac

*Snow Babies/Polar Bears: Spy on the Ice*, DVD

## INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF ALASKA

"Never Alone," video game of Native Folklore: <http://neveralonegame.com/game/> (click "Buy Now")

*Alaskan Children Paper Doll Cut-out Book* (#20209) by Arctic Circle Enterprise

*Alaska's First People* by Judy Ferguson

*Totem Tale* (PAWS IV) by Deb Vanasse

Make your own totem pole: <http://mrnussbaum.com/inttotem/> and <http://mrnussbaum.com/totem1/Totem.swf>

Native Alaskan Dancer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMS2xWVw5Lw>

Traditional Native Alaskan housing: [https://www.trails.com/how\\_6976\\_build-own-teepee.html](https://www.trails.com/how_6976_build-own-teepee.html)

(link to traditional housing book series at bottom of page)

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

[Barbarabrown.alaskawriters.com](http://Barbarabrown.alaskawriters.com)

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

[Staceyschuett.com](http://Staceyschuett.com)

## ABOUT THE READER

[http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1454378/?ref\\_=fn\\_al\\_nm\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1454378/?ref_=fn_al_nm_1)

## ABOUT STORYLINE ONLINE

The SAG Foundation's children's literacy website Storyline Online streams imaginatively produced videos featuring celebrated actors to help inspire a love of reading.

Storyline Online receives millions of views every month in hundreds of countries.

Visit Storyline Online at [storylineonline.net](http://storylineonline.net)

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