



Afikoman Holder

Topic

Pesach

Grade Level(s)

All

Goals for the Lesson/Activity

Students will

- Be able to explain that the *afikoman* is the last thing that is eaten at the Seder
- Learn different *minhagim* (customs) surrounding the *afikoman*
- Create something personal to use at their own Seders

Materials needed

- 8 ½" x 14" paper
- Things to decorate with:
 - Rubber stamps
 - Markers
 - Crayons
 - Die-cuts
- Hole punch or spiral binding machine
- Ribbon
- Laminator or clear contact paper
- Velcro

Background for Teachers

On *Pesach*, we begin the Seder with three *matzot* on the table. As part of *Yachatz* (literally dividing), the fourth step in the Seder, we break the middle *matzah*. After breaking the middle *matzah*, we keep the smaller portion on the table between the two remaining full *matzot*. We take the bigger portion of the middle *matzah* and set it aside as the *afikoman*, which will be the last thing that we eat at the Seder.

What is the *afikoman* exactly? According to the Mishnah (Pesachim 10:8), we are, in fact, forbidden from adding on *afikoman* at the end of the meal. The reason for this prohibition is that *afikoman* was a Greek custom that involved going from



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house to house and partaking of people's festive meals. The Rabbis did not like this idea, particularly because each *Pesach* meal was meant to be for those who joined at the beginning. Also, one should have the *Pesach* offering as the final taste in one's mouth. However, once the *Beit Hamikdash* (Temple) was destroyed and the *Pesach* offering was not eaten at the meal, the *afikoman* took on a different role. The *afikoman* became the dessert at the end of the meal, the *matzah* replacing the *Pesach* offering as the food that remains in one's mouth at the end of the meal.

Because eating the *afikoman* does not come until the end of the meal, the Seder also includes many highlights to keep children interested. One of those highlights is the hiding of the *afikoman*. In many households, the Seder leader hides the *afikoman* from the children and rewards them when they find the *afikoman*. In many other households, the children try to secretly take the *afikoman* and hide it from the Seder leader, who then must pay a ransom to the children when the *afikoman* cannot be found. A third tradition finds the leader hiding the *afikoman* with the children finding it and then holding it for ransom. It is very important for the Seder leader to have the *afikoman* since the Seder cannot continue until the meal has ended with the *afikoman*.

Prepare in Advance

Hide an object in the classroom. This can be any object as long as it will not be too easy or not too difficult for students to find. You can also acquire a reward to offer to a student who finds the object.

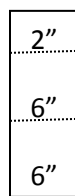
Description of Activities

1. Tell students that an object is missing and that class cannot continue until the object is found. If you are offering a reward for finding the object, you can decide when to reveal that there is a reward.
2. After the object is found, ask students if this activity reminds them anything at their *Pesach* Seder. Students should be able to identify finding the *afikoman*.



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3. Ask students why we hide the *afikoman*.
4. After taking a few suggestions, offer some background about the *afikoman*.
[See Background for Teachers for further information.]
5. Tell students that they will be making *afikoman* holders to use at their own Seders.
 - a. Fold the paper into 3 sections (A). Crease each fold.
 - b. Trim the top edges to look like an envelope flap (B).
 - c. Decorate the paper. Laminate.
 - d. Fold the bottom flap up to form the holder. Re-crease to make a crisp fold (C).
 - e. Place each side in the binding machine to cut holes, or use a hole punch.
 - f. Lace with ribbon.
 - g. Apply Velcro on the top flap.



(A)



(B)



(C)



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