

Bedikat Chametz – Searching for Chametz (Leaved Bread)

Framing this unit

How has the tradition of bedikat chametz (searching for chametz) been performed around the world and during different times and what can it mean for us today? In this unit we will be learning about the mitzvah of bedikat chametz, searching for chametz, before Pesach. We will see where the concept comes from, how the rules have developed, and how the search has been done in different parts of the world at different times in history. We will also discuss what chametz can symbolise in our own lives.

Group Activity

In *hevruta* pairs or small groups, study the source sheet [Getting Rid of the Chametz](#).

In pairs or small groups, students read a printed [worksheet](#) and copies of the [resources](#).

Discussion Questions

Review what was learned in the small groups and answer questions about the deeper meaning of chametz.

- What did you learn from analyzing the postcards and reading the excerpt from Tilda Galpert's oral history?
- What is the difference between chametz and matza in their dimensions and texture?
- Chametz and matza can be seen as symbols of different kinds of personalities according to their physical differences. Give examples of these different kinds of personalities.
- According to this symbolism, which kind of personality do you think is better: the chametz or the matza?
- Can you think of a symbolic reason for searching for chametz and getting rid of it?
- How can we get rid of our own personal chametz?

Creative Activity

Choose one of the following activities:

- Draw an illustration of your family doing *bedikat chametz*.
- Draw a picture of Tilda Galpert's family doing *bedikat chametz*.
- Create a poster with instructions on how to do *bedikat chametz*.

Plan a short sketch showing *chametz* and *matza* personalities and ways to get rid of the *chametz* personalities.

Primary sources in this lesson

- [Searching for Chametz, Frankfurt](#)
- [Searching for Chametz, Amsterdam](#)
- [Rats Spread Diseases](#)
- [Resources](#) - on a PDF file with translations