

## DRAMA ACTIVITY - Students Write and Perform a Pesach Skit

by Judah S. Harris

Students will enjoy preparing and acting out a skit that imagines some of the Passover story - even with strong elements of humor present, as illustrated in the following brief comedic dialogue between a Hebrew and an Egyptian travel agent, titled *Traveling from Egypt*. The teachers can guide the class, most likely dividing them into smaller groups, in preparing something original (with minimal props, if any, to allow the script maximum attention).

In fact, prior to the students embarking on their creation, an age-appropriate discussion can be had about the place of humor when dealing with serious subjects - and the Exodus seems to be one that is most serious.



[Ivan Aivazovsky: Passage of the Jews through the Red Sea \(1891\)](#)

### **Traveling from Egypt**

Egyptian Travel Agent (c. 1300 BCE): You want to go where?

Hebrew: To Israel.

Egyptian Travel Agent: We don't handle those arrangements, but we have packages near the Sinai area for up to three days.

Hebrew: No, we would like something longer... and further.

Egyptian Travel Agent: I'll check. How many will be traveling?

Hebrew: My family has eight, but there are others going too.

Egyptian Travel Agent: A few families?

Hebrew: Many more than that.

Egyptian Travel Agent: Maybe I need to transfer you to our Group Charter department?  
When is your trip?

Hebrew: Immediately.

Egyptian Travel Agent: That's soon. I'd like to try to help you, but today has been a busy day — for some reason an unusual amount of calls.

Hebrew: Thank you. I know you'll be able to do it. And we'll be sure to use your agency again in the future — never.

Egyptian Travel Agent: Excuse me? What form of payment will you be using for your trip?

Hebrew: What do you own?

Egyptian Travel Agent: It's OK, we can arrange payment later. Let's first do the logistics. Any special food requirements?

Hebrew: We'll bring the bread. We'll also be having a big meal before we leave.

Egyptian Travel Agent: For the record, what are the names of the leaders of your group?

Hebrew: There's only one. His name is Moses.

Egyptian Travel Agent: Does he have any staff?

Hebrew: He has one staff.

Egyptian Travel Agent: One more question, so I can make the proper travel arrangements. Would you like to travel direct or indirect?

Hebrew: What would the difference be?

Egyptian Travel Agent: You're looking at 40 years.

The Pesach story, which we have studied many times and then some, comes with essential facts, and as we retell it on the Seder Night, we recount this information and explore what it means to us, how it defines us as a people, as members of the Jewish Nation.

Students, of different ages, can work with the level of knowledge that they have about the Pesach holiday and be guided by the instructor to infuse their skits with not only the facts but also the *meaning*. Their script - that they will present, act out for others - should contain their personal evaluation of the hard facts, a reflection on what it has to do with their lives and those of their peers (the travel agent conversation example here doesn't delve into that area much and was written solely with humor in mind).

Students may, on their own, grasp that it's hard to tackle the entire story of Pesach and the Exodus, and they will want to focus on an idea or a specific chapter or scene that they feel they can work with. Choosing that focus will be part of the activity - to hear different ideas from the group participants and then to agree between them on a direction. Educators should check in a couple of times during the preparation, to hear what the student groups are up to and offer advice or answer questions. The outcome is totally up to the students, but after presentation there can be some feedback from other students and the teachers who are facilitating.

#### *About Judah S. Harris*

Judah is a photographer, filmmaker, speaker, writer, and marketing consultant, including visual marketing campaigns and visual presentations. He has documented formal and informal educational programs in multiple countries and authored "The Educational Process Observed: What More Is There to See (and Who Should Be Seeing It?)" (read on Medium). He is based in Jerusalem and NYC.

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