

The Mighty Maccabees | Lesson Plan

How do stories of bravery and faith from the past inspire us to stand up for our beliefs today?

Students will gain an understanding of the historical context of the Maccabean Revolt and the origins of Hanukkah, appreciating the blend of historical facts and storytelling in the story of *Otto's Tales: The Mighty Maccabees*.

Learning Objectives:

- Summarize the key events of the Maccabean Revolt and explain the significance of Hanukkah.
- Analyze the characteristics of historical fiction in the story and how it helps convey historical events.
- Discuss the themes of religious freedom, faith, and bravery as presented in the story.
- Recognize the sequence of events in the story.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Menorah:** A special candlestick used in Jewish worship, especially significant during Hanukkah.
- **Antiochus:** The Greek king who ruled Judea and sought to suppress Jewish traditions.
- **Maccabees:** The group of Jewish rebels who fought against Antiochus and restored the Temple.
- **Miracle:** An extraordinary event that is attributed to divine intervention.
- **Hanukkah:** A Jewish festival celebrating the rededication of the Temple and the miracle of the menorah oil lasting eight days.

Educational Standards: CCRA.RL.2, CCRA.RL.3, CCRA.RL.7, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2

Academic Subject Areas: Life Lessons, Israel, Judeo-Christian Values

What You'll Need

- Video: *Otto's Tales: The Mighty Maccabees* (Click [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Otto's Tales: The Mighty Maccabees* (Click [Here](#))
- Paper plates and art supplies

Lesson Plan (45 mins.)

Warm-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Begin by greeting the students with "Shalom, young scholars!" Explain that in the Jewish culture "Shalom" is commonly used as a greeting or farewell and translates to "peace" in English.



2. Ask students if they have heard of Hanukkah before. Briefly explain that Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday celebrated to commemorate the victory of the Maccabees and the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem.
3. Tell students that they are about to embark on a journey through the tale of Hanukkah, where a group known as the Maccabees stood tall against adversity, fighting for their freedom and the right to practice their faith.

Watch and Complete: (25 mins.)

1. Show the video *Otto's Tales: The Mighty Maccabees* to the students.
2. Pause at various points to ask comprehension questions, such as:
 - Who were the Maccabees?
 - What happened in the story?
 - What miracle occurred during Hanukkah?
3. Discuss the significance of the Hanukkah miracle and the importance of perseverance in the face of challenges.
4. Give each student a paper plate and art supplies. Tell them they will use the plate to create a Maccabees shield.
5. Ask students to decorate their shields with symbols and images related to Hanukkah and the story of the Maccabees. These could include the Star of David, candles, or scenes from *Otto's Tales: The Mighty Maccabees*.
6. Encourage students to share their Maccabees shield with the class.

Wrap-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Hand out the story sequencing worksheet and guide the students to correctly order the events from the story.
2. Go over the completed sequencing worksheets as a class and discuss any discrepancies. Reinforce the correct sequence of events and the significance of each step in the story.
3. Summarize the importance of learning history through stories and how it can make historical events more relatable and memorable.
4. Call to Action and Motivational Thought: Instruct students to think about a time when they stood up for something they believed in, just like the Maccabees did. Then, instruct them to share their story with a family member or friend and discuss how their bravery and faith can inspire others to stand up for what they believe in as well. Remember, courage and belief in what is right can make a difference, just as it did for the Maccabees.

Don't have time for the complete lesson? Quick Activity (15-20 mins.)

After watching the video, distribute the story sequencing worksheet *Otto's Tales: The Mighty Maccabees* and allow students to complete it individually.