

Handout 10-C

## Traditional Customs of HANUKKAH

Another name for Hanukkah is “Festival of Lights.” This name comes from the lighting of an eight-branch candleholder called a *hanukiyah*. On each day of Hanukkah, the family lights a new candle, until all eight are lit on the last night. The candles are tall enough to burn for at least thirty minutes. While the candles are burning, family members are to refrain from work. No mourning or fasting is allowed during the eight days of Hanukkah. Most families exchange gifts during the eight days.

### Hanukkah Game

A favorite game of children to play on Hanukkah is dreidel. Here is how to play the game. Each player starts with an equal number of coins, nuts, raisins, or candies. Each player puts one of these into the middle, or kitty. One person at a time spins the dreidel. The dreidel is like a four-sided die with Hebrew letters instead of numbers.



(nun) means the player does nothing.



(gimmel) means the player gets everything in the kitty.



(hay) means the player takes half the kitty (or half plus one if there is an odd number in the kitty)



(shin) means the player must add something to the kitty.

When nothing is left in the middle, everyone must add something. When a player is out of coins, nuts, raisins, or candies, he or she is out of the game. When one person has won everything from the other players, the game is over.

### Hanukkah Menu

The Hanukkah menu often includes foods fried in oil (as a reminder of the miracle of the oil). Among the Hanukkah foods are potato latkes (a kind of pancake) and doughnuts. Here is a sample Hanukkah menu:

- Butternut Squash Soup
- Israeli Salad (cucumbers, tomatoes, scallion, green peppers)
- Pan-Glazed Apples with Old-Fashioned Potato Latkes or Cauliflower Pancakes
- Broiled Ginger Salmon
- Jelly Doughnuts
- Ice Cream with Chocolate Sauce
- Rosettes (a flaky pastry)
- Fresh Fruit: Mandarin oranges

## **Hanukkah Activities**

1. Find out when Hanukkah will be celebrated this year. When does it begin? When does it end?
2. Interview a Jewish friend about how he or she celebrates Hanukkah.