



## *CHRYSANTHEMUM*

Written and Illustrated by: Kevin Henkes

**Jewish Value:** Show Respect—*Kavod* כבוד

**Additional Value:** Use Nice Words—*Lashon Hara* לשון הרע

### **Enduring Understandings**

- Treat one another with respect and kindness.
- Each of us is unique and should be appreciated for that which makes us special.
- Words matter; speak kindly.

### **Book Summary**

She was a perfect baby, and she had a perfect name, Chrysanthemum. When she was old enough to appreciate it, Chrysanthemum loved her name. And then she started school. Students made fun of her name and Chrysanthemum wilted. Life at school didn't improve. In fact, it got worse. But when the students were introduced to their music teacher, Mrs. Delphinium Twinkle, things changed and Chrysanthemum blossomed.

**Be Inspired:** Consider the ideas included as starting points, as you and your students explore, discover, and live the values. Be sure to elicit and encourage student and parent participation, consistently reinforcing the values being addressed. Allow lessons to authentically develop and change based on engagement and interests.



## For the Educator Jewish Thought, Text, and Traditions

(For more information on Jewish values, visit [www.jewishlearningmatters.com](http://www.jewishlearningmatters.com).)

Rabbi Hillel said, “That which is hateful to you, do not do to others” (Shabbat 31a). The value to show respect is one of the key elements to the Jewish worldview. It is part and parcel of almost everything that Judaism teaches, from how one is to approach G-d to how one should act with one’s parents and family members. G-d is respected as the creator of the Universe, just as parents are respected as the creator of children. The idea or value of respect extends beyond one’s own family to include others as well. The benefit of respecting others is not found in what might be gained by showing such respect alone, but also in adherence to the value in and of itself. To live a life respecting others means to realize that everyone is unique, and everyone should be valued as such. This is the essential element of the *Golden Rule*.

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. How can you increase the amount of respect that is present in your personal and professional lives?
2. What is the difference between gaining respect from others and gaining respect from yourself?
3. How can we best show respect to young children, in a way that makes them feel respected?
4. How can you exemplify respect on a regular basis and incorporate this value in the classroom?



## Jewish Every Day Incorporate Jewish Values

Teach students the Hebrew phrase *kol hakavod*, which means “all the respect.” It is a Hebrew phrase used in congregational life whenever someone has acted with honor, and to express respect for what he or she is doing. Whenever a student does something respectful or demonstrates that he or she is being thoughtful, say, “*Kol hakavod!*” Encourage students to use the phrase as well.



## Materials and Resources

### **MATERIALS**

- Copy of *Chrysanthemum*
- Introducing the Story: several blooming chrysanthemum plants, books, catalogs, or pictures showing many kinds of flowers
- After the Story: cut-outs of paper hearts—one per child, paper links for *Kavod* Chain

### **TECHNOLOGY**

- Read-aloud of the book on YouTube:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxMlxbgYvLI>
- Author website with additional resources: <http://www.kevinhenkes.com/>



# Sharing the Story

## INTRODUCING THE STORY

*For strategies for teaching vocabulary, see Appendix, Vocabulary Strategies.*

Explain to students that you will be sharing a story with them today to help explore the Jewish value *kavod*, which means “respect.” Discuss what they know about the idea already and then supplement their understanding by sharing this video in which Elmo explains the word: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FY4qNs4onYQ>.

Share the cover and read the title. Ask, “What do you think the title *Chrysanthemum* refers to?” Explain that the story is about a little girl with a very unusual name and that she’s named for a flower—the chrysanthemum!

- Bring in some real chrysanthemums. Let the students touch them, smell them, make pictures of them, wear them in their hair, gently play with them, etc.
- Show the students pictures of different flowers and teach their names. Find pictures online, bring in a gardening coffee-table book, and add gardening catalogs to your classroom library.

## READING THE STORY

*Read the story aloud, stopping when appropriate to explore illustrations, address comments, clarify, predict, and guide students’ understanding of the story and the values to **show respect—kavod** and **use nice words—lashon hara**.*

Discuss the following questions:

- When you read the line “Her parents named her Chrysanthemum,” stop and ask, “Why do you think they chose that name? What does it mean?”
- Pause right before Chrysanthemum starts school and ask, “How does Chrysanthemum feel about her name?” Pause again after the students tease her and ask, “How does she feel about her name now?”
- At the end of the book, discuss the question, “How does Chrysanthemum feel now? What happened to make her feel this way?”
- Ask, “Do you think that the children showed Chrysanthemum respect?”
- Compare the picture of Chrysanthemum on the first day of school with the picture of Chrysanthemum when she goes home after the first day of school. Ask, “What clues tell you how she is feeling? What caused her to change so quickly?”



## Sharing the Story

continued

### AFTER THE STORY

Involve students in the “Crumpled Heart” activity.

- Reread the story (or have students listen to the story being read on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxMlxbgYvLI>).
- Give each student a paper cut-out of a heart. As they listen to the story, ask students to crumple or fold the heart each time Chrysanthemum’s feelings are hurt by something mean the students say or do. At the end of the reading, have students unfold their hearts. Talk about how the paper hearts look. Explain that each time someone says something mean and hurts another’s feelings, it hurts his or her heart, meaning it makes that person feel sad.

Create a class *Kavod* Chain. Students earn paper links each time they show respect—*kavod* in the classroom. Write the specific behavior on the link and read it aloud to reinforce *kavod* before adding each link to the class chain. Explain to students that they earn respect when they show respect and tell them “*Kol hakavod!*” Set goals such as thirty links each month.



# Explore, Discover, and More

## Extension and Reinforcement Activities

### EDIBLE LETTERS

### WRITING, COOKING

Use letter-shaped cookie cutters and play dough so students can create the letters of their names. Use prepackaged cookie dough and cookie cutters to help students make personalized cookies. Letters can also be constructed from healthier foods, such as fruits, veggies, etc.

### EVERY CHILD IS A MASTERPIECE

### ART

Involve students in making collage nameplates. Supply a variety of materials (stickers, pom-poms, macaroni, cut straws, etc.) so that each collage ends up looking unique.

- Have either the teacher or student write the student's full name (English and possibly Hebrew) and age on the edge of the artwork.
- Display the artwork in a place of honor with the title "Every Child Is a Masterpiece."
- Invite school administrators, faculty, staff, students from other classes, parents, etc., to visit the classroom so students can proudly share their nameplates.

### A SACK FULL OF FEATHERS

### STORYTELLING

Read *A Sack Full of Feathers*, by Debby Waldman and illustrated by Cindy Revell, or share the story "The Gossiper" (attached) to help address the value to use nice words—*lashon harah*. As a follow-up activity, take a feather pillow outside, cut it open, and shake out the feathers. Ask students to try to gather all the feathers, but call students together before they can possibly collect them all. Discuss the lesson of the story: Mean words, like blowing feathers, go out into the world and cannot be taken back. Relate this back to *Chrysanthemum*. Even though the other children stopped teasing Chrysanthemum, did that make everything okay? What else do the children need to do?

### MEET KEVIN HENKES

### TECHNOLOGY, AUTHOR UNIT

Introduce students to the author. Visit his website and share other stories he has written: <http://www.kevinhenkes.com>.

### HEBREW NAME GAME

### HEBREW, LITERACY

Use a name dictionary to learn about one new Hebrew name every day. Begin with using the names of students in class, but also learn about new, interesting names. Address students by their Hebrew names, either on a daily basis or on special occasions (for example, during Shabbat).



## Music

(Access all songs at [www.jewishlearningmatters.com/music](http://www.jewishlearningmatters.com/music).)

**“Kol Hakavod” by “Miss” Emily Aronoff Teck**  
**Track # 12 from Good Choices, Volume 2**

### **“KOL HAKAVOD” ACTIVITY**

Teach students that “*kol hakavod*” is a Hebrew phrase that praises a job well done, literally translating to “all the respect.”

Look for opportunities to use the phrase by finding people who have done something well. Go on a “field trip” around the school. Encourage administrators, teachers, and students for a job well done by telling them “*Kol hakavod!*”

Use this tune whenever a student has done a good job and has earned respect. Once the song is familiar to the students, ask students to help you sing. If you use the song often enough, simply start singing and many students will naturally join in!

### **LYRICS**

*Kol hakavod!*  
*Kol hakavod!*  
You’ve earned respect  
You’ve done a real good thing  
You’ve earned respect  
It makes me wanna sing  
*Kol hakavod!*  
*Kol hakavod!*

### **ADDITIONAL MUSIC CONNECTIONS**

To access additional Jewish and secular songs from a variety of traditional and contemporary artists that reinforce and teach these values, visit [www.jewishlearningmatters.com/music](http://www.jewishlearningmatters.com/music).



## Evidence of Learning

Watch as the classroom *Kavod* Chain grows. As with a portfolio, allow students to periodically share their favorite link from their *Kavod* Chains. (This will help to reinforce the value throughout the year.)



## Home and Community Connections

*Encourage families to learn more about the values and reinforce the concepts with their children visiting [www.jewishlearningmatters.com](http://www.jewishlearningmatters.com).*

### SEEK RESPECT

Make toilet-paper tube binoculars. Decorate them and label them “respect seekers.” Take them home and use them to watch for acts or words that show respect—*kavod* in the house and around the neighborhood. This includes the students’ own acts and words or those of others.

Remind parents that they are a daily role model for their children and that they can help their children learn how to behave with respect. Ask parents to help their children watch for examples of respectful and disrespectful words and deeds on TV, in movies, and in books. They may choose to use their “respect seeker” binoculars to help them do this.

### WHAT’S IN A NAME?

Ask parents to discuss with their child the meaning of their child’s name, why they chose it, if they’re named after someone, what part of the world their name comes from, their Hebrew name, etc. Ask them to complete the form “What’s in a Name?” (see attached) and return it to the class teacher.





## Literature Connections

Title	Author(s) and Illustrators(s)	Summary
<i>The First Gift*</i>	A.S. Gadot Marie Lafrance	A Jewish boy tells about the first gift he ever got—his name.
<i>One</i>	Kathryn Otoshi	Colors and numbers learn to respect each other's differences and stand up for each other when someone acts mean.
<i>Do Unto Otters: A Book About Manners</i>	Laurie Keller	A funny and helpful book about how to treat others nicely so they'll be nice to you too.
<i>Where the Wild Things Are</i>	Maurice Sendak	Max is sent to his room when he is disrespectful to his mother. He goes off on a faraway adventure, but he ultimately discovers the very best place is home, where he is loved best of all!
<i>The Crayon Box that Talked</i>	Shane DeRolf Michael Letzig	The crayons in the crayon box can't get along until a small girl brings them home and begins using them to draw beautiful pictures. Ultimately, each color recognizes how special and important each is in contributing to the "whole picture."

\*PJ Library Book



## Thematic Connections

Showing respect  
Planting and caring for flowers—especially chrysanthemums  
Family trees  
Derivation of names  
Author unit: Kevin Henkes

### **LESSON CONTRIBUTORS**

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## “The Gossiper”

A woman repeated a story (gossip) about a neighbor. Within a few days everyone in the community knew the story. The person she talked about heard what had been said about her and she was very sad. Later, the woman who had spread the story learned that it was not true. She was very sorry and went to a wise rabbi and asked what she could do to repair the damage.

After giving this some thought, the rabbi said to her, “Go home, get one of your feather pillows, and bring it back to me.” Surprised by the rabbi’s response, the woman followed his advice and went home to get a feather pillow and brought it to the rabbi.

“Now,” said the rabbi, “open the pillow and pull out all the feathers.” Confused, the woman did what she was told to do.

After a few minutes, the rabbi said, “Now, I want you to find every one of the feathers and put them back into the pillow.”

“That’s impossible,” said the woman, almost in tears. “The window is open and the wind has scattered them all over the room and blown many feathers outside. I can’t possibly find them all.”

“Yes,” said the rabbi. “And that is what happens when you gossip or tell a story about someone else. Once you talk about someone, the words fly from one person’s mouth to another, just like these feathers flew in the wind. Once you say them, you can never take them back.”

### **VALUE**

Use Nice Words—*Lashon Hara*

### **MESSAGE**

It doesn’t take much to speak a rumor, and once you do, you can never completely undo the wrong.

### **FOLLOW-UP QUESTION**

What else do you think the rabbi might have told the woman who spread the story to do to try to make things right (for example, apologize to the person she talked about and apologize to all the people who, in turn, spread the story)?



## What's in a Name?

We named our child

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We selected this name because

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His/her Hebrew name is

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We selected this name because

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Using magazines or photographs, work with your child to create a collage, mobile, or other artistic rendering to reflect the significance of his/her name. The art piece can be made using any shape (for example, a favorite toy, a favorite animal, etc.). Enhance by adding elements that reference other family member names as well. Don't forget to include a picture of your child, your child's English and Hebrew names, and their meanings.