



TUMFORD THE TERRIBLE
Author: Nancy Tillman
Illustrator: Nancy Tillman

**Jewish Values: Be Sorry—*T'shuvah* תְּשׁוּבָה
Forgive—*S'lichah* סְלִיחָה**

Enduring Understandings

- Although we all make mistakes, we have the responsibility to try to make things better and ask for forgiveness.
- When others say, “I’m sorry” and try to make things better, we should try to show forgiveness.

Book Summary

Tumford isn't really a terrible cat, but he has a way of finding mischief of one kind or another—tracking dirt into the house, knocking over breakable things, and disrupting fancy parties. But even though he feels bad, Tumford has trouble saying “I’m sorry.”

***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.)

We are taught from a very early age to say “I’m sorry” when we do something wrong. Similarly, many people are taught from a very early age to say “I forgive you” to someone who has wronged us and asked for our pardon. This very simple calculus of penitence is at the foundation of some of our earliest lessons. However well intentioned this value is taught, in its simple form, it is also lacking. True repentance, *t’shuvah*, comes not merely in apologizing for what one has done, but in resolving never to do likewise again. True forgiveness, *s’lichah*, comes not in accepting another’s remorse for a past hurt or wrong, but in knowing we will never be wronged by that person in such a way again. This lesson is encapsulated in the Jewish tradition.

“If one says, ‘I will sin and repent, I will sin and repent,’ such a person will not be given the opportunity to repent. Similarly, if one says, ‘I will sin and Yom Kippur will bring atonement,’ for such a person, Yom Kippur will not bring atonement.” -*Yoma* 85b

“R. Adda ben Ahaba said, ‘One who has sinned and confesses, but does not repent is like a person holding a dead reptile in his hand. Although he may immerse himself in all the waters of the world, his immersion will not cleanse him. However, if he throws it away, then as soon as he immerses himself in a *Mikveh*, his immersion becomes effective.’” -*Ta’anit* 16a

“Friends, it is NOT said of the people of Ninevah, ‘G-d saw their sackcloth and fasting,’ but rather, ‘G-d saw their works that they turned from their evil ways’ (Jonah 3:10). As the prophets said, ‘Rend your hearts, not your garments’ (Joel 2:13).” -*Mishna Ta’anit* 2:1

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Is it difficult to forgive? Why or why not?
2. How do you rebuild trust with a person that has erred against you?
3. How do you rebuild trust with someone whom you have erred against?
4. How would you incorporate this value within the classroom?



Jewish Every Day Incorporate Jewish Values

Create a space for students to sit together to work out differences, forgive, or repent, a place to communicate with one another or take positive actions (for example, craft an “I’m sorry” card). Encourage students to practice using “I-statements” to resolve conflicts. Use this format for “I-Statements”: I feel (*state emotion*) when (*state action*), so please (*make a request*). For example, “I feel *sad* when *you don’t share*, so please *let me play with you*.”



Materials and Resources

MATERIALS

- Copy of *Tumford the Terrible*
- Reading the Story: happy / unhappy Popsicle sticks
- After the Story: materials for making a “Good Choices versus Bad Choices Chart,” including poster paper or chart paper and blank cat paw cutouts

TECHNOLOGY

- “Shalom Sesame: Rosh Hashanah”: Rosh Hashanah Hannah sings about hearing the *shofar*, saying sorry, and the New Year: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxgfddo1a18>
- “Tomato Says Sorry”: Tomato is disrupting the lives of other vegetables and fruits in the garden, but he doesn’t want to say sorry: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_MSE1ipwmU



Sharing the Story

INTRODUCING THE STORY

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

Explain that there are certain important words that we say at certain times. Talk about these words by asking the following questions:

- What do we say when we ask for something? (please)
- What do we say when we bump into someone? (Excuse me.)
- What do we say when we are given something? (Thank you.)
- What do we say when someone says thank you to us? (You're welcome.)

Show students the cover of *Tumford the Terrible*. Read the title and ask, “Why would someone be called terrible?” Ask them to predict what kinds of things Tumford might do that might be considered “terrible.” Explain that as we read the book, we’ll discover how he got his name and remind them to listen carefully to find out some other important words.

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 **be sorry—s’lichah** and **forgive—t’shuvah**.*

Give each student a Popsicle stick and attach a paper plate to the Popsicle stick with one side showing a smiley, happy face and the other side showing a frowning, “uh-oh” face. Encourage students to raise their “uh-oh” faces when Tumford does something wrong. When students hold up the “uh-oh” faces ask, “What important words do you think Tumford should say?”

AFTER THE STORY

The story *Tumford the Terrible* highlights the Jewish values to be sorry—*t’shuvah* and forgive—*s’lichah*. Involve students in creating a “Good Choices versus Bad Choices Chart.” Talk with students about some of the good choices and bad choices that Tumford made. Let students know that Tumford was mischievous and that he did not mean to break the tea dishes or spill fish on the queen; these were accidents or mistakes. Sometimes we get excited and are not careful. But it’s important that we do the right thing and say “I’m sorry,” and try to do the right thing to make it better.

- Divide chart paper into two columns, “Good Choices” and “Bad Choices.”
- Create cutouts of cat paws that the students can trace or have students draw their own pictures of cat paws.
- Involve the class in a brainstorming session and ask, “Can you think of some examples of good choices you have made?” Place students’ responses (in words or pictures) on the cat paws and post on the chart.



Sharing the Story

continued

- Ask, “Can you think of some bad choices?” Place these on cat paws (in words or pictures) and post on the chart. Have students brainstorm what could be done differently the next time to avoid the same mistakes.
- Over time, add other “good and bad choices” to the chart, as you deem appropriate, encouraging students to make good choices and avoid bad ones.
- Discuss how Tumford felt after he said, “I’m sorry.” Ask students to think of a time they did something wrong. How did they feel when they said, “I’m sorry” (and meant it)?

View the YouTube video “Tomato Says Sorry”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_MSE1ipwmU&list=PLtZ59vn6nOc1qmCRkUz4WGto01Ofss0vL&index=3.

Discuss the following questions:

- How did Tomato feel when he said, “I’m sorry”?
- How did the other vegetables and fruits feel when he apologized?
- Did they forgive Tomato?
- Is it enough just to say “I’m sorry” when we do something wrong? (Remind students that it is important to think about what we can do differently next time, what other choices we can make.)

As *Rosh Hashanah* marks the beginning of a ten-day period on the Jewish calendar that focuses on repentance, or to be sorry—*t’shuvah*, it is a perfect time to introduce Tumford to the class, along with the Sesame Street video “Shalom Sesame: Rosh Hashanah”: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxgfddo1a18>. In an upbeat musical number, Rosh Hashanah Hannah sings about hearing the *shofar* and saying sorry, and reminds us that Rosh Hashanah is the perfect time to “reflect on the things to correct.”



Explore, Discover, and More

Extension and Reinforcement Activities

“I’M SORRY” CARDS

ART, LITERACY

Have students create, decorate, and deliver “I’m Sorry” cards when they hurt someone’s feelings or do something wrong. This will especially help students who may not be able to verbally communicate their desire to apologize.

ROLE-PLAY WITH TUMFORD PUPPETS

DRAMATIC PLAY, PROBLEM SOLVING

Students can create and decorate their own Tumford paper-bag puppets and take turns role-playing one of Tumford’s mischievous acts. The “audience” can suggest what could be done to make things better. In a similar fashion, students can role-play various scenarios involving “good choices” and “bad choices.”

“OOPS, I MADE A MISTAKE”

TECHNOLOGY, DISCUSSION

Play “Oops, I Made a Mistake,” an animated singing video of what to do when a person makes a mistake: http://www.mightybook.com/MightyBook_free/books/oops/oops.html. After students have viewed the video, talk about some of the things the characters did when they made a mistake (lie about it, sit and cry, run and hide, etc.). Discuss better ways to handle mistakes. Explain that everyone makes mistakes, but it is important to learn from them, say “I’m sorry,” and ask for forgiveness.

FORGIVENESS

ART

Take students outside to a sidewalk or other paved area. Give each student a piece of sidewalk chalk and ask them to draw a picture on the sidewalk of an instance when they made a poor choice. When students have finished, have them explain the situation and indicate what they would do differently next time. Then explain that when we say, “I’m sorry,” and the person we’ve hurt forgives us, it washes away our wrongdoings, just as the rain or hose spray will wash away the chalk. Demonstrate this using a hose or pail of water.

HELPING HEALING

ART

Get a large piece of styrofoam and have students take turns pushing pegs into it. Then take turns removing the pegs, one by one. What is left behind? The pegs are gone, but the holes remain. Explain that this is what happens sometimes when we hurt one another. We can remove the hurt, but sometimes the wound is still there. Have the students paint hearts or otherwise decorate the styrofoam to help “heal” the marred surface.



Music

(Access all songs at www.jewishlearningmatters.com/music.)

**“Uh-Oh” by “Miss” Emily Aronoff Teck
Track # 8 from *Good Choices, Volume 1***

INSPIRATION TEXT

“But repentance, prayer, and charity temper judgment’s severe decree.” -High Holiday Liturgy

“UH-OH” ACTIVITY

Make an “Uh-Oh” list in your classroom and then brainstorm ways that students could help fix the problem and demonstrate that they feel sorry for each item on the list. Add to the list and reference it when mistakes are made so that students not only learn to say sorry but also find a way to improve the situation. For example:

If you ...	you should ...
make a mess	clean it up.
eat too many cookies	tell the truth.
knock over a tower	be more careful and help put it back together.
(continue with your ideas...)	

LYRICS

Uh-oh, uh-oh, I made a mess
Uh-oh, uh-oh, I must confess
I knocked something over, wasn’t looking where I played
It was an accident but I know what I must say

CHORUS

I’m sorry, I’m sorry
I’ll try not to do that again
Will you forgive me, please forgive me
I really hope you’ll still be my friend



Music

continued

Uh-oh, uh-oh, I said words not true
Uh-oh, uh-oh, I know what I must do
Get honest and tell the truth, I feel badly about lying
I might mess up again, I know, but I will keep trying

CHORUS

Uh-oh, uh-oh, my friend is starting to cry
Uh-oh, uh-oh, I think I know why
I knocked over her tower, she worked so hard to make it
It was not on purpose but not nice of me to break it

CHORUS

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.



Evidence of Learning

Involve students in a story retell. (See Appendix.) Using pictures from the book, children's illustrations, or felt pieces, help them organize their thoughts and story events in sequential order. As they retell the story, ask what they would have done if they were Tumford.

Observe students' behavior in terms of repentance and forgiveness. For example, when a child wrongs another child, does the child take steps to make amends, say sorry and mean it, or otherwise seek forgiveness? And is the wronged child able to grant forgiveness?

Observe the way the Good Choices versus Bad Choices chart grows. Are students making better choices? Are they learning from those choices that weren't so good?



Home and Community Connections

Encourage families to learn more about the values and reinforce the concepts with their children through video and song by visiting www.jewishlearningmatters.com.

TASHLICH TALK

Send home an extra-large coffee filter and washable markers with each student. Ask families to participate in an honest discussion about mistakes and forgiveness. (See sample take-home note, with instructions, attached).

Encourage families to attend *Tashlich* on Rosh Hashanah.

Share many of the book titles in the Literature Connections section with parents. A discussion of the plot and characters with which children can relate will help parents address the values to be sorry—*t'shuvah* and forgive—*s'lichah* and help build empathy in children.

MODEL "SORRY" BEHAVIOR

Be role models. It is important that children recognize we all make mistakes and learn from them, as well as respond appropriately to those who ask for our forgiveness. As parents, model repentance and forgiveness. It allows children to see the importance and effects of both.



Literature Connections

Title	Author(s) and Illustrator(s)	Summary
<i>I Did It, I'm Sorry</i>	Caralyn Buehner Mark Buehner	Through funny, multiple-choice questions to solve specific dilemmas, this book teaches young children basic moral values. (Note: Some situations are more sophisticated than others, so select carefully.)
<i>How to Lose All Your Friends</i>	Nancy Carlson	This book is full of wrongdoings and humorously depicts situations in which children commonly do things that hurt others. It is a book about friendship, but the scenarios can be used to discuss wrongdoings and what can be done to show that you feel sorry for those actions.
<i>I'm Sorry</i>	Sam McBratney Jennifer Eachus	Two best friends find out that "I'm sorry" can be the hardest words to say, even to those you love.
<i>Goldie Is Mad</i>	Margie Palatini	Goldie is mad that her baby brother, Nicholas, drooled all over her favorite doll and she yells at him. She "hates" her brother. However, while sitting in time-out, Goldie ponders life without her brother and realizes she would miss his baby smell and his wonderful hugs. Goldie decides to forgive her brother and to say she's sorry for yelling at him.
<i>Beautiful Oops</i>	Barney Saltzberg	This book presents a life lesson that all parents want their children to learn: It's okay to make a mistake. In fact, hooray for mistakes! A mistake is an adventure in creativity, a portal of discovery.
<i>The Hardest Word: A Yom Kippur Story</i>	Jacqueline Jules Katherine Janus Kahn	The Ziz, a clumsy but good-hearted bird of folklore, is always making mistakes. When he accidentally destroys a vegetable garden, he flies to Mount Sinai to ask G-d for advice.



Literature Connections

continued

Title	Author(s) and Illustrator(s)	Summary
<i>Words Are Not for Hurting</i>	Elizabeth Verdick Marieka Heinlen	Words contain much power and can be harmful and hurtful. Children learn how to use positive words to express negative emotions such as frustration and anger. The book's activities and discussion starters teach children to apologize sincerely.



Thematic Connections

Feelings / emotions
Friendship
Self-esteem
Rosh Hashana
Yom Kippur
Conflict resolution

LESSON CONTRIBUTORS

Deborah Zucker Fried and Stephanie Levitz Englander
Bnai Torah Congregation, Boca Raton, Florida



Tumford the Terrible

Parent Letter

SAMPLE LETTER

Tashlich Talk

Dear Classroom Families,

As you may know we have been reading the book *Tumford the Terrible* by Nancy Tillman in class this week.

As an extension of our unit on forgiveness/repentance, we are sending home a family activity with your child. Enclosed please find a large coffee filter and washable marker(s).

Please engage your family in a discussion about who makes mistakes. Use the enclosed marker(s) to write down these mistakes on the coffee filter. Once each family member has had a chance to put down his/her mistakes, take the coffee filter to a bucket of water, sink or bath tub. Place the coffee filter in the water and watch as the mistakes wash away.

Use this time to discuss forgiveness, starting anew and the concept of a clean slate.

Thank you,