

FESTIVALS & CELEBRATIONS · GRADES 3–5

Passover (Pesach)

The festival of freedom

Quick facts

What	A Jewish festival celebrating freedom — remembering when the ancient Israelites left slavery in Egypt.
When	March or April — based on the Hebrew calendar.
How long	7 or 8 days, depending on the tradition.
Greeting	'Chag Sameach' or 'Happy Pesach'.

The story

More than 3,000 years ago, Jewish people were enslaved in Egypt. According to tradition, Moses was sent by God to free them. After many warnings, the Israelites left Egypt in such a hurry that they had no time to let their bread rise — so they ate flat, unleavened bread (matzah). Passover remembers this escape to freedom.

The seder plate

<p>Matzah</p> <p>Flat unleavened bread — eaten throughout Passover. No bread or cake with yeast is eaten for the whole festival.</p>	<p>Bitter herbs (maror)</p> <p>Often horseradish — to remember the bitterness of slavery.</p>
<p>Charoset</p> <p>Sweet paste of fruit and nuts — represents the mortar used by enslaved Jews to build.</p>	<p>Egg</p> <p>A roasted egg — symbol of new life and the cycle of seasons.</p>



<p>Karpas (greens)</p> <p>Parsley dipped in saltwater — representing tears.</p>	<p>Shank bone</p> <p>Symbolic of the lamb's blood marked on doorposts in the original story.</p>
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