

Easter Cookies in Bethlehem

A Guide for Teachers and Parents



Written by Haifa Khoury

Illustrated by Jinan Jiha

THEMES

Community

Cultural Traditions

SUB-THEMES

Interfaith Friendship

Neighborliness

Celebrating Festivals

Celebrating Diversity

Story Discussion Guide

- Recognize that festivals are celebrated around the world in a similar mould or differently, often shaped by local customs and ingredients.
- Reflect on how kindness can bridge cultural and religious differences.
- Learn about the tradition of Maamoul and its cultural significance during Easter.
- Understand that community support is a universal value found in every culture

Lesson plan

Students explore the cultural and emotional meaning of festivals, and interfaith friendship through storytelling, group discussion, and activities.

Learning Outcome

Before Reading:

- What do you know about Easter? What foods or traditions do people follow for this festival?
- Have you ever helped someone celebrate a festival different from yours?

During Reading :

- How does Mrs. Mary feel when she can't bake her Easter cookies?
- Why does Mama Hala decide to help?
- What does baking Maamoul together symbolize?

After Reading-

- What do you think is the most important part of celebrating festivals—food, people, or tradition?
- Can you think of a time when kindness made a celebration more special?

Activities:

- Maamoul Cookie Art– Draw or mold your own Maamoul cookies using play-dough or clay and decorate them with traditional patterns.
- Festival Food Around the World– Create a chart showing traditional festival foods from different countries and compare ingredients.
- Kindness Chain– Write and link paper notes describing one kind thing to do during a festival for someone in your community.

Expected Outcomes

- Children will develop an appreciation for Indigenous traditions and art and understand how science and storytelling can intersect.
- Express empathy and gratitude for their own culture and traditions as well as an appreciation for others.

Applicable SDGs

- SDG 4 – Quality Education
- SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities
- SDG 16 – Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

SDG Explanation

- SDG 4 – Quality Education: Introduces children to global traditions, encouraging appreciation of diverse celebrations and values.
- SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities: Celebrates inclusion and equality by showing support across religious and cultural lines.

- SDG 16 – Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions: Models peaceful coexistence, community support, and mutual respect among diverse neighbors.

ABOUT ZAMASAMA

Zamasama is a nonprofit platform that brings together stories from around the world to help children discover that beneath our differences—of culture, language, or belief—we share the same hopes, joys, and dreams. Today's children are tomorrow's citizens, and the responsibility of building a more peaceful, tolerant, and empathetic world lies with them. That's why it's vital to instill these values early—through stories that help them rise above the biases they inherit, and see diversity as a strength that unites us all.