



A Barefoot
Discussion
Guide

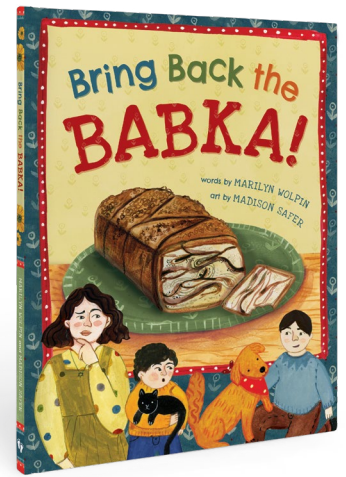
Bring Back the Babka! Reader's Guide

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | For ages 4-8

Tip for Grown-Up Reader: Read the endnotes of the book aloud (except for the recipe) to help children understand new vocabulary before you begin the discussion.

1. Take a look at the cover of the book. What do you think the book is about?
2. What did Sammy and Sol search for?
3. Sammy and Sol's family is having Rabbi Sally* over for dinner. Has your family ever had someone special come over for dinner?
4. On page 16, what do you think Sol is thinking about the gefilte fish? Is there a food in your household you're not so sure about eating? What do you think Mazel is thinking about the gefilte fish?
5. What is Mazel doing on the last page of the story (p.27)?
6. What do you think happened to the babka?
7. Do you have any pets? What are their names? Have they ever done mischievous things?
8. Have you ever had any of the foods in the book? Which of them would you like to try?
9. The family in this book was getting ready for Shabbat. What holidays does your family or community celebrate?
10. Do you have any special dishes for special occasions in your family?
11. When Sammy and Sol come home with lots of goodies from the neighbors, mama wonders what they can do to help their helpful friends. What did they wind up doing to thank them?
12. Has anyone ever done anything nice for you? What did you do to thank them?

*In this story the rabbi is a woman named Sally. She is named after the first woman to become a rabbi in the United States, Sally Jane Priesand. You can read about Sally Priesand in *Sally Opened Doors* by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso (who is also a rabbi) from Apples & Honey Press, 2022.



Bring Back the Babka!
Written by Marilyn Wolpin
Illustrated by Madison Safer



Illustration © Madison Safer
from *Bring Back the Babka!*



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LESSONS FROM THE STORY | For ages 6+

1. Do you agree with Rachel that “good things take time?” Have you ever needed to wait for something good?
2. Do you agree with Gabby that “you must protect what’s precious”? What is special to you that you’d like to protect?
3. Do you agree with Faye that “two things are better than one”? Why or why not?

FOR FURTHER READING

You may wish to read other books about foods from other cultures. Here are a few recommended by Marilyn Wolpin, the author of *Bring Back the Babka!*:

FICTION:

The Babka Sisters by Lesléa Newman, illus. Tika and Tata Bobokhidze (Kar-Ben Publishing, 2023).

The Perfect Sushi by Emily Satako Seo, illus. Mique Moriuchi (Barefoot Books, 2023).

Dumpling Day by Meera Sririam, illus. Ines de Antunand (Barefoot Books, 2023).

Dinner on Domingos by Alexandra Katona, illus. Claudia Navarro (Barefoot Books, 2023).

I Hate Borsh written and illus. by Yevgenia Nayburg (Eerdman’s Books for Young Readers, 2022).

Tofu Takes Time by Helen H. Wu, illus. Julie Jarena (Beaming Books, 2022).

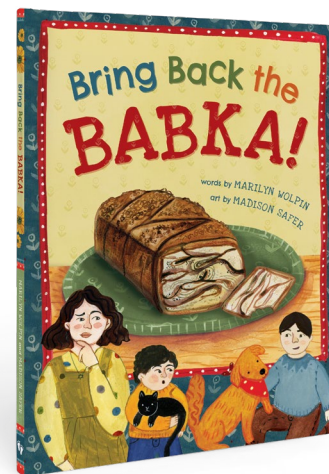
Soul Food Sunday by Winsome Bingham, illus. C. G. Esperanza (Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2021).

NONFICTION:

Dumpling Dreams: How Joyce Chen Brought the Dumpling from Beijing to Cambridge by Carrie Clickard, illus. Katy Wu (Simon & Schuster, 2017).

Try It: How Frieda Caplan Changed the Way We Eat by Mara Rockliff, illus. Gisella Potter (Beach Lane Books, 2021).

Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story by Kevin Noble Mallard, illus. Juana Martinez-Neal (Roaring Brook Press, 2019).



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***Bring Back the Babka!* Writer's Workshop**

PLAYING WITH WORDS AND LANGUAGE | For ages 7+

In *Bring Back the Babka!*, author Marilyn Wolpin uses many different writing techniques to keep the story fun and interesting. You can try using the following strategies in your own writing too!

ALLITERATION

Alliteration is when many words in the same sentence begin with the same letter or sound.

- Look at the title of this book: *Bring Back the Babka!* What letter or sound is repeated?
- As you reread the book, look for more instances of alliteration with the letter b and other letters, such as d, l, m, p, s, sh, t and w. Are they fun to say?
- Can you make up an example or two of alliteration?

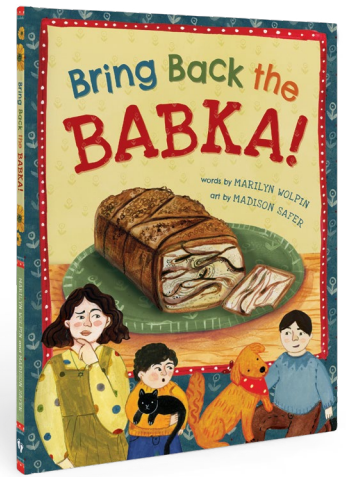
LONG AND SHORT SENTENCES

Another way to make reading interesting is to use sentences of varying length. Some should be short and some should be long.

- Can you find examples of long and short sentences in the book?
- Repeated Phrases: Sometimes one line is repeated in a story for emphasis or to help you remember an important fact.
 - What line did you hear more than one time in this story?

DIALOGUE

- Dialogue (characters talking to one another) in a story can tell you things about the speaker and can give you more information about the story.
- How was dialog used in this story to convey more information?
- How was dialog used in this story to help you learn more about the speaker?



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***Bring Back the Babka!* Culture Guide**

LEARN ABOUT LANGUAGES OF JEWISH PEOPLE | For ages 7+

Bring Back the Babka! is a story about Jewish foods and customs. Jewish people live all over the world. Depending on where they lived, different languages were developed. Were any of the words new to you? Some of the words come from Yiddish. Others come from Hebrew.

Questions to Activate Prior Knowledge:

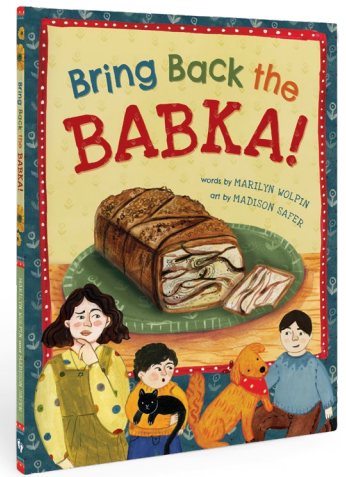
1. Do you speak a language other than English?
2. Does anyone in your family speak a language other than English?

LANGUAGES OF JEWISH PEOPLE

Yiddish is a language developed by the Jewish people when they lived in Eastern Europe. It is part German, part Polish, part Russian, part French, and part Hebrew. It is written using the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The Jewish people who speak Yiddish are Ashkenazi Jews. Many beautiful songs and books have been written in Yiddish. Yiddish is still spoken today.

Examples of Yiddish in *Bring Back the Babka!*

- Mama says “Oy vey!” when she can’t find her just-baked babka. “Oy vey,” is the Yiddish way of saying “Oh, no!” What do you say when something bad happens?
- The dog in the book is named Mazel. Mazel is the Yiddish word for luck. Do you think Mazel is lucky?
- Babka is a Yiddish word that may have come from the Polish word for grandmother (“babcia”) or the Yiddish word for grandmother (“bubbe”).
- Gefilte is a Yiddish word. It means stuffed. Gefilte fish isn’t really “stuffed” fish, though it may have started out that way.



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Hebrew is the language used to write the original five books of the bible. It used to be considered a holy language, but now it is the official language of Israel. Many books and songs have been created using this language.

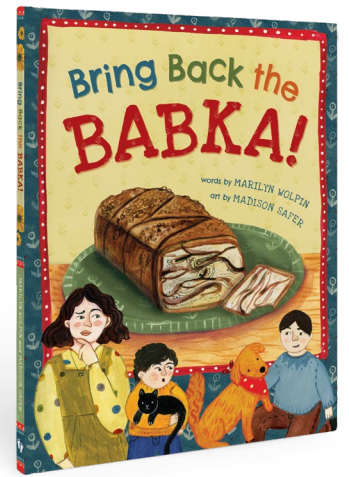
Example of Hebrew in *Bring Back the Babka!*

- When the rabbi arrives, she says, “Shabbat Shalom,” to mama. Shalom is the Hebrew word for peace, hello and goodbye. Here the rabbi is wishing her host a peaceful Sabbath.

Ladino is part Hebrew, part Spanish. This language was developed by Jewish people who lived in Spain and Portugal. The Jewish people of Spanish origin, like Gabby in this book, are known as Sephardic. There are many lovely Sephardic songs and sayings.

Other Languages

Many Jewish people stayed in Israel and the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia. Those Jewish people are called Mizrahi, which is the Hebrew word for Eastern. They may speak many languages, such as Russian, Juhuri or Bukharian.



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