

Jacob's Flocks

Genesis 30:25-43; 31:1-55

Level B | Lesson 5 | Teacher Overview



Laban said, “What shall I give you?” And Jacob said... “If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks: Let me pass through all your flock today, removing from there all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and these shall be my wages.

Genesis 30:31-32

For Teachers

This lesson has several activity options. You may wish to choose 2-3. Reading through all of the options will help you identify the activities that are best suited to your group's size, student mix, available supplies, and the time you have to prepare. You may also want to mix and match activities from other age levels.

Activity Options

1. Talk About It
2. Illustration: Jacob and His Flocks
3. Memory Verse
4. Game: Speckled & Spotted Flocks
5. Act It Out: Fleeing from Laban
6. Coloring Picture: Jacob Peeling the Rods

Talk About It

Reading: Genesis 30: 25-43; Genesis 31:1-55

Jacob wanted to leave Laban after Joseph was born but Laban asked him to stay and agreed to give him the speckled, spotted and streaked livestock as wages. Jacob became a wealthy man by placing rods in the drinking troughs in front of the strong animals. They gave birth to speckled, spotted and streaked babies, which belonged to Jacob. Laban's sons became upset. The Lord came to Jacob in a dream, telling him to go home. Jacob and his family left while Laban was away. Laban chased after Jacob and caught up with him. Laban and Jacob set up a boundary pillar as a witness between them.

Note: Several stories are included in this week's readings. Select discussion questions that talk about what you plan to focus on with the children.

1. What does it mean to be rich? (draw out the children's ideas of different kinds of riches: money, possessions, knowledge, truths from the Word, etc.)
2. Jacob became a rich man. What riches did Jacob have? (animals—sheep and goats) Jacob and his family were nomads. They lived in tents. Animals were very important because they provided food and clothing for Jacob's family.
3. How did Jacob get his animals? (Laban, his father-in-law, gave them to him as wages instead of money. They agreed that all of the speckled, spotted and streaked animals that were born would be Jacob's. All of the others would be Laban's)
4. Which animals were strongest—Jacob's streaked and spotted animals, or Laban's animals? (Jacob's—Jacob put special striped wooden rods in the troughs when the strongest animals came to drink, and the animals had speckled and spotted babies. Eventually all of the strong animals were Jacob's and the weak ones were Laban's)
5. What did the Lord tell Jacob to do in a dream? (to leave Laban and go home)
6. Have you ever tried to sneak away without someone noticing? What was it like?
7. Why did Jacob sneak away from Laban without telling Laban that he was going? (he was worried that Laban would stop him)
8. Who went with Jacob? (his wives and all of their children and animals)
9. What happened when Laban found out? (he went after Jacob)
10. Have you ever made a promise? What kinds of things do people usually promise? Jacob and Laban made a promise that they would stay away from each other.
11. What did Jacob build as a boundary between himself and Laban to help them remember their covenant? (a heap of stones; stones stand for true ideas)
12. What is a boundary? Why do we have boundaries? (draw out children's ideas of boundaries—sports (out of bounds), behaviors (no talking, e.g. library), personal space (keep your hands to yourself), fence around your property, etc.)
13. How did the pillar of stones protect them? (Laban and Jacob were not allowed to pass the heap and get near each other)



Memory Verse: Jacob's Flocks



Then the Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you.

Genesis 31:3

Memory Verse: Jacob's Flocks



Then the Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you.

Genesis 31:3

Cut in quarters and give one to each student to take home.

Memory Verse: Jacob's Flocks



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Genesis 31:3

Memory Verse: Jacob's Flocks



Then the Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you.

Genesis 31:3

Game: Speckled & Spotted Flocks

At a Glance:

Jacob and Laban made an agreement that all the speckled, spotted and streaked animals would belong to Jacob, while the plain ones would belong to Laban. In this card game for 2-4 players, participants sort out speckled and spotted animals from plain ones by matching three of a kind. Play several rounds. As players improve, the game moves faster.

Supplies Needed for Every 2-4 Students:

- 3 copies of each of the four pages with animals and rods on them printed on heavy paper *with jumbled animals printed on the reverse side* (you can also print multiple copies of the jumbled sheet and paste it to the animals pages, back-to-back)
- game instructions
- *optional*: rubber band or bag to hold cards together for taking home

Teacher Preparation:

- Cut the animal pages into quarters to create the cards.
- Read through game instructions.

Directions:

1. Divide students into groups of 2-4 and give each group a set of cards and an instruction sheet. (Note: Each group will need an open space in which to play the game which involves spreading the cards out and fast-paced reaching for cards.)
2. Read over the instructions as a group.
3. Have each group set up their game and begin to play. Help with rules as needed.
4. The game can be replayed several times as players catch on and become quicker.



Speckled and Spotted Flocks Card Game

This fast card game gets better the more you play. Once everyone catches on it can go faster. Make sure you have plenty of space for playing!

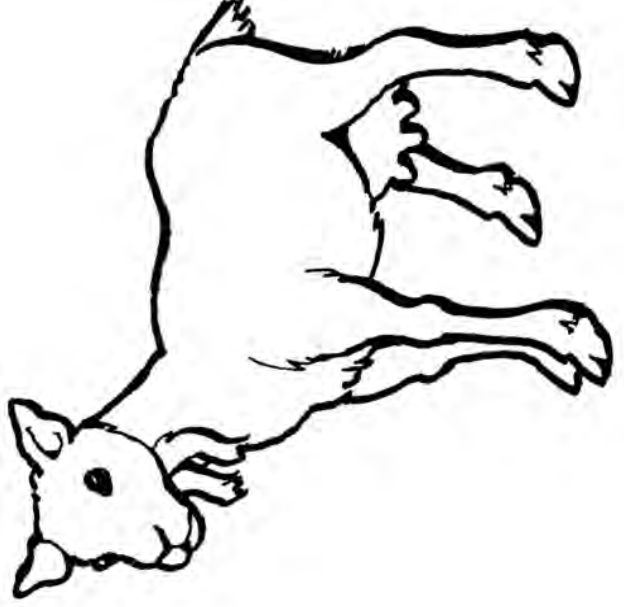
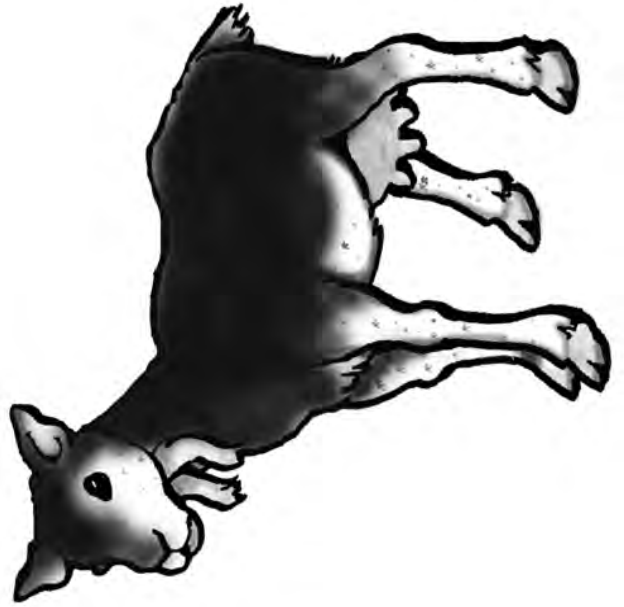
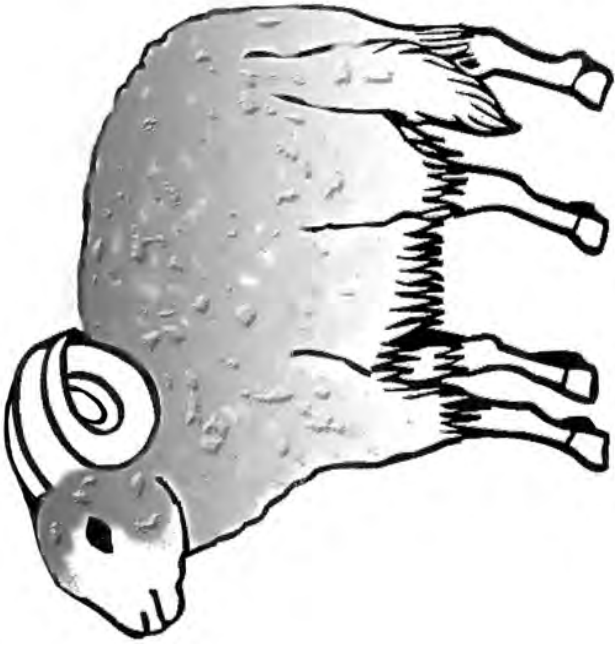
Object: The object of the game is to collect the most cards by quickly grabbing them anytime you see 3 of a kind.

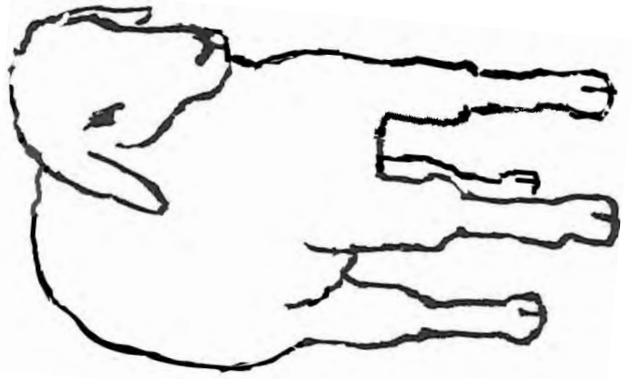
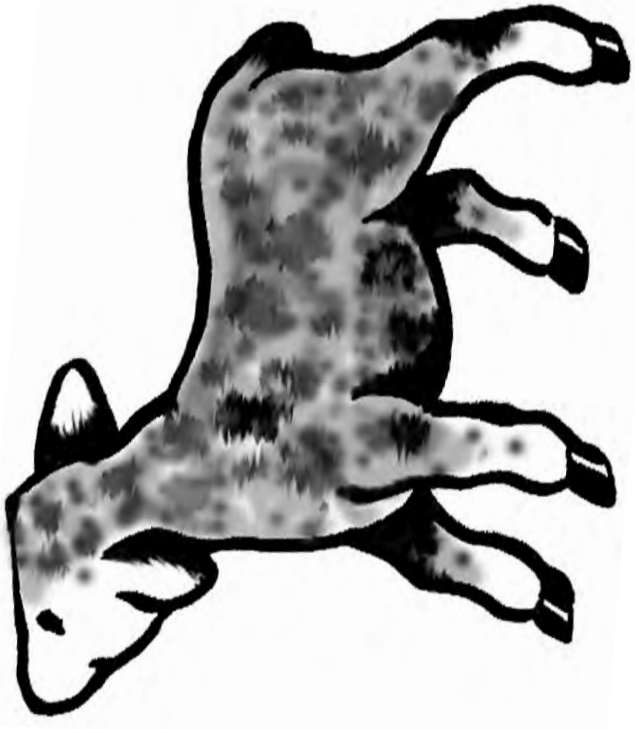
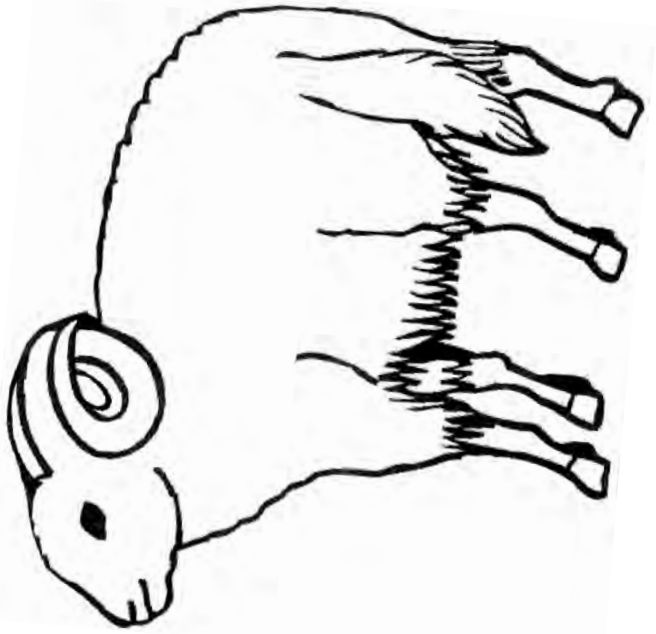
Setup: Shuffle the deck without looking. Scatter the cards face down in the center of the playing area within reach of all players. Cards should overlap.

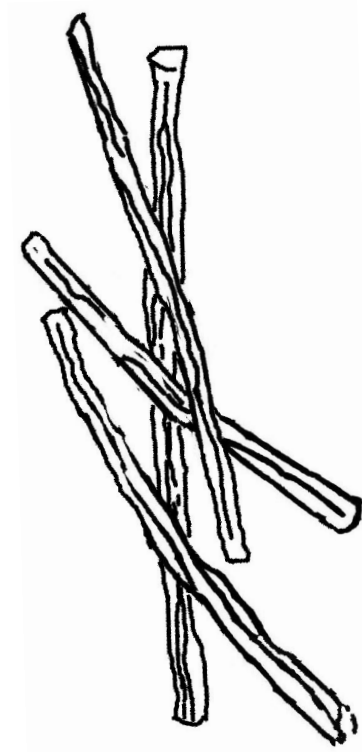
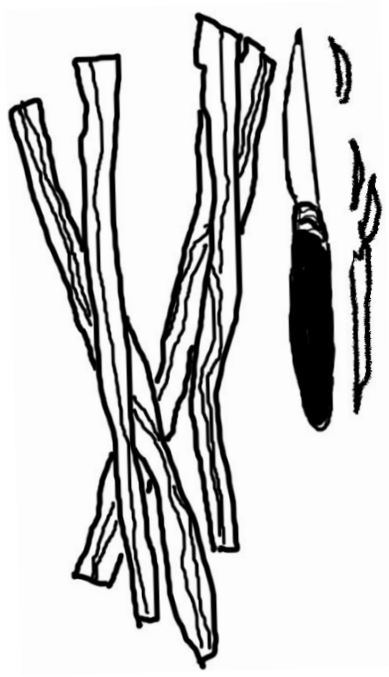
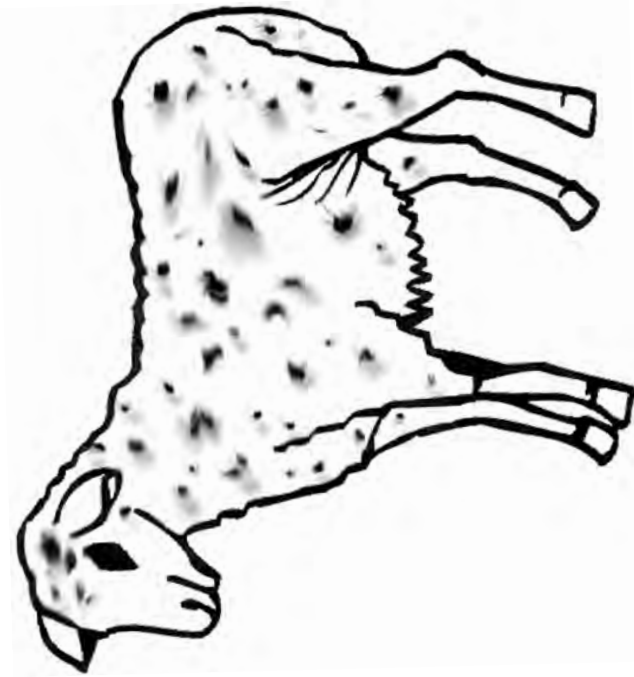
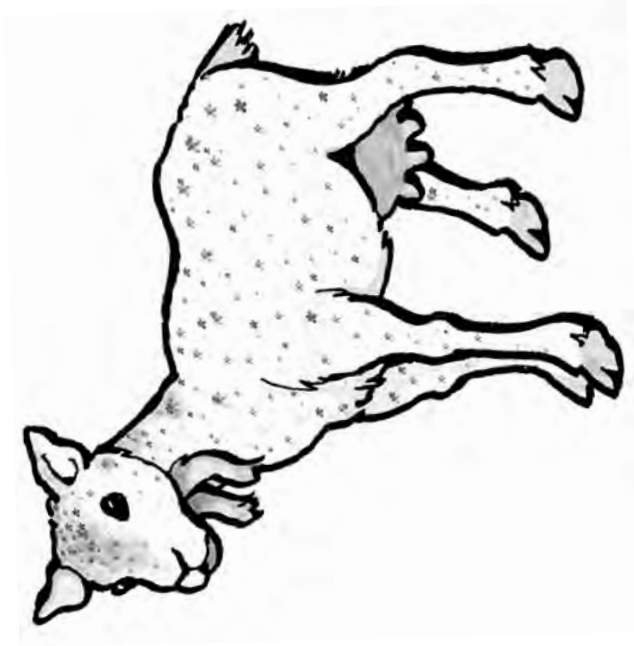
Order of Play: Start with the player with the most pockets in their clothing (or the youngest) and move clockwise.

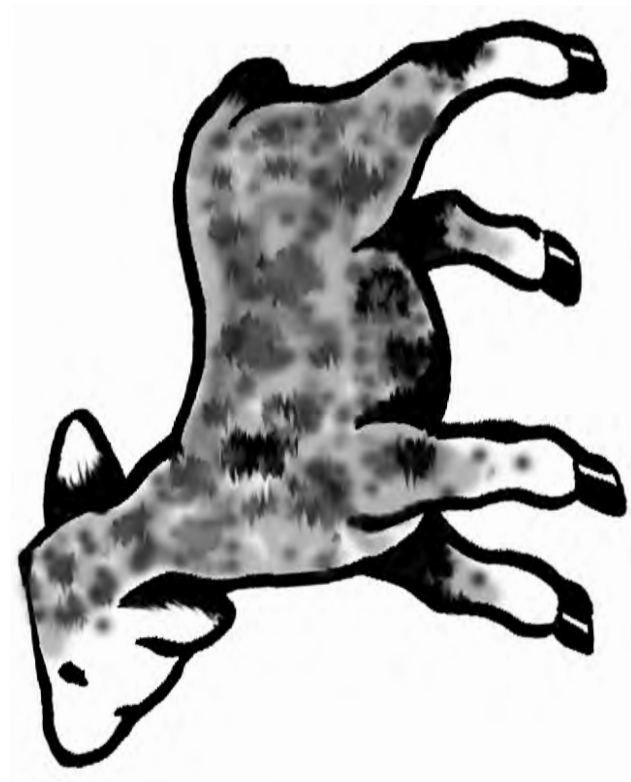
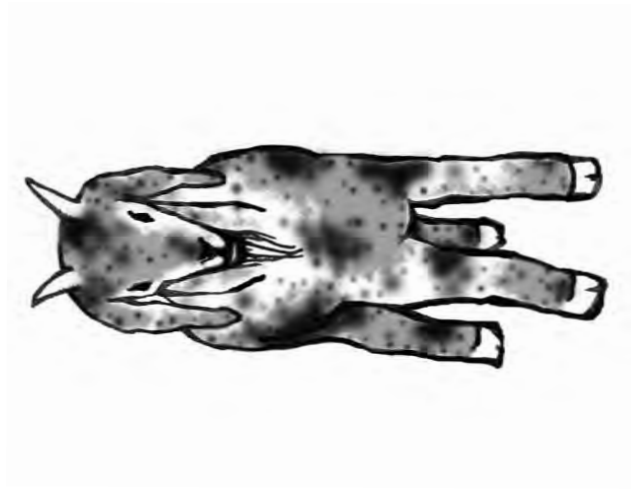
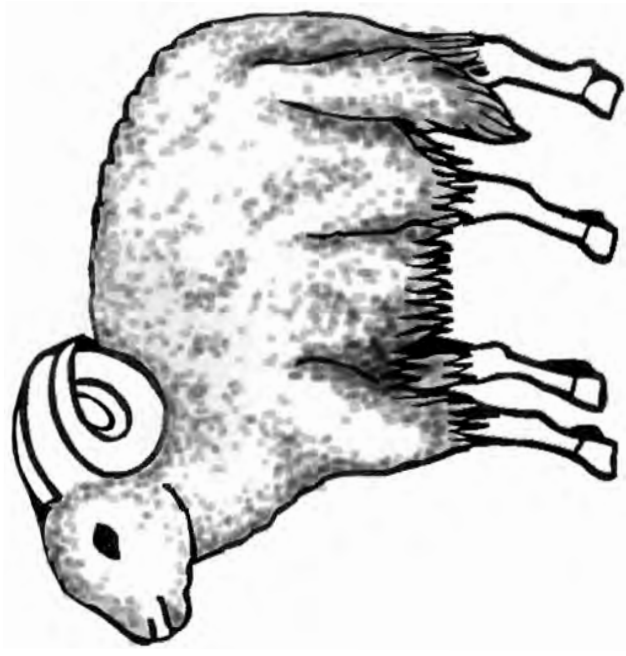
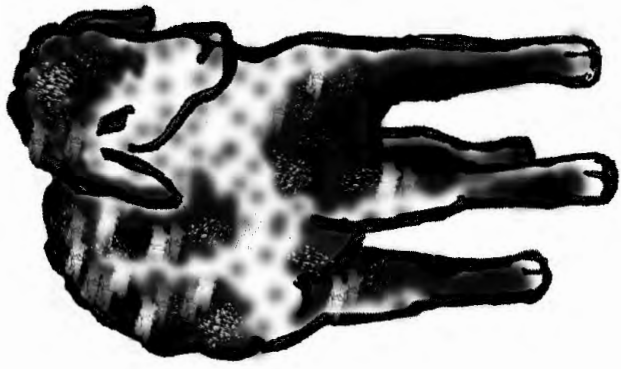
How to Play:

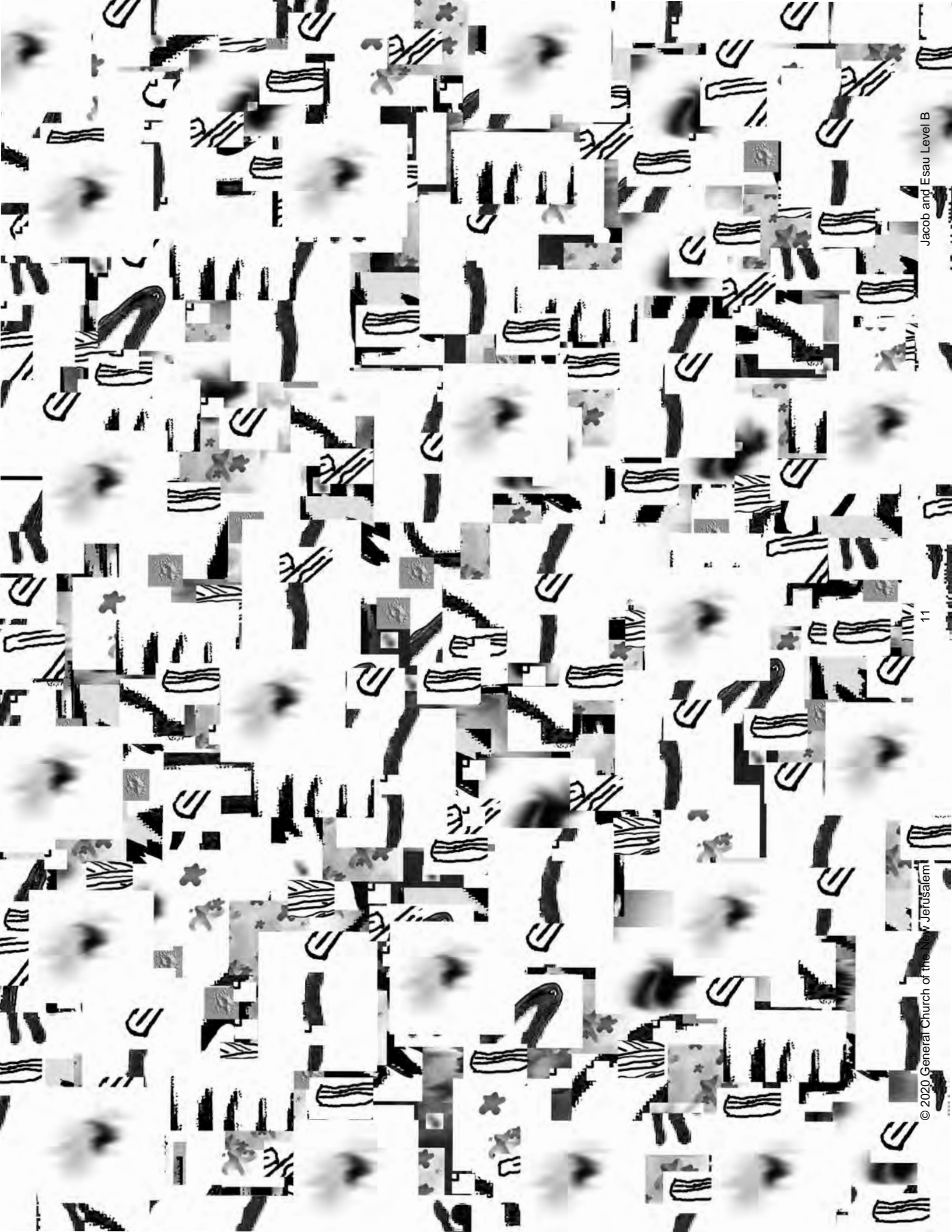
1. The player whose turn it is flips one card face up on top of the pile of cards.
2. Everyone looks to see if there are 3 of a kind showing (which won't happen for several turns at least). To be fair, players should flip over cards away from them so that everyone sees them at the same time.
3. If there are no matches, the card is left face up on the pile and the next player turns up another card. This continues around the group until a 3-of-a-kind match shows up.
4. As soon as anyone spots 3 identical sheep or goats or lambs or rods, he or she seizes as many of the three matching cards as possible! Different players may end up with one or more of the 3 of a kind cards.
5. If two players both seize a card at the same time, the first one to shout "Spot!" three times in a row wins the card.
6. Seized cards are collected (face down) in a pile in front of each player.
7. Optional "False Alarm" rule: If a player seizes a card when there are not three of a kind or seizes the wrong card, he or she loses one previously-seized card. This card is put aside, out of play.
8. The game ends when all of the cards have been turned face up. All players then count their seized cards. Whoever has the most cards wins the game.











Act It Out: Fleeing from Laban

At a Glance:

Students will act out the story of Jacob leaving Laban, Laban following him, and their eventual agreement to separate. Depending on the group, children can act the story while the teacher reads or read and act it at the same time.



Supplies Needed:

- play script for each reader
- cleared area for students to act out the script
- *optional*: props such as pillows to represent the stones that were gathered into a heap, stuffed animals to represent the flocks and herds that Jacob took with him, etc.
- *optional*: simple costumes such as bathrobes or large t-shirts

Teacher Preparation:

- Read through the script so you are familiar with it.
- Decide if you will assign roles or ask for volunteers.
- Collect any costumes or props you wish to use.

Directions:

1. Review the characters in the story and assign roles or ask for volunteers.
2. Read and act out the story.

Speaking Parts:

Narrator
Jacob
Laban
Laban's Sons (one or more)
Rachel
Leah

Optional Non-Speaking Parts:

Children of Jacob
Servants of Jacob
Servants of Laban

Fleeing from Laban Script

Laban and his sons stand on one side of the stage with Jacob nearby.

Narrator: Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons.

Sons: Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this wealth.

Laban scowls at Jacob. Jacob notices and then walks to the other side of the stage. He looks up to hear the Lord speak to him.

Narrator: And Jacob saw the countenance of Laban, and indeed it was not favorable toward him as before. Then the Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you." So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field.

Rachel and Leah walk on stage and stand next to Jacob.

Jacob: I see your father's countenance, that it is not favorable toward me as before; but the God of my father has been with me. And you know that with all my might I have served your father. Yet your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but God did not allow him to hurt me.... Then the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, "I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family."

Rachel & Leah: Is there still any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? Are we not considered strangers by him? For all these riches which God has taken from our father are really ours and our children's; now then, whatever God has said to you, do it.

Jacob, Rachel, Leah and any servants walk off-stage.

Narrator: Then Jacob rose and set his sons and his wives on camels. And he carried away all his livestock and all his possessions which he had gained. And Jacob stole away, unknown to Laban the Syrian, in that he did not tell him that he intended to flee. He arose and crossed the river, and headed toward the mountains of Gilead.

One of the sons pulls on Laban's sleeve and gestures off-stage. Laban and his sons and servants walk across the stage. The sons and servants leave, but Laban pauses and looks up, listening to the Lord.

Narrator: And Laban was told on the third day that Jacob had fled. Then he took his brethren with him and pursued him for seven days' journey, and he overtook him in the mountains of Gilead. But God had come to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said to him, "Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad." So Laban overtook Jacob.

Jacob and his group enter and stand on one side of the stage. Laban and his group enter and come up to them.

Laban: What have you done, that you have stolen away unknown to me, and carried away my daughters like captives taken with the sword? Why did you flee away secretly and not tell me? It is in my power to do you harm, but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, “Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.”

Jacob: What is my trespass? What is my sin, that you have so hotly pursued me? I have been in your house twenty years; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked you last night.

Laban: These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and this flock is my flock; all that you see is mine. But what can I do this day to these my daughters or to their children whom they have borne? Now therefore, come, let us make a covenant, you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me.”

Jacob kneels and pretends to set up a pillar.

Narrator: So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar.

Jacob: Gather stones.

Everyone pretends to bring stones to Jacob and heap them up near the pillar. Jacob stands up.

Narrator: And they took stones and made a heap.

Laban: This heap is a witness between you and me this day. May the Lord watch between you and me when we are absent one from another. This heap is a witness, and this pillar is a witness, that I will not pass beyond this heap to you, and you will not pass beyond this heap and this pillar to me, for harm. The God of Abraham, the God of Nahor, and the God of their father judge between us.

Jacob raises his arms and looks up to the sky. Then he beckons everyone to come sit in a circle around the heap. They all pretend to eat.

Narrator: And Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac. Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread. And they ate bread and stayed all night on the mountain.

Everyone stands up. Laban pretends to kiss Rachel and Leah and puts his hand on their heads. Then he walks off stage, followed by his sons and servants.

Narrator: And early in the morning Laban arose, and kissed his sons and daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned to his place.

