



**THE ELECTRONIC EDUCATOR-**  
**A weekly update of information for you and your school!**  
**A service of the NJ Region USCJ Dept. of Education**  
**Michelle Rich, Director of Education and Youth Activities**  
**Nita Polay Levin, Field Worker**  
**Lisa Harris Glass, Executive Director**

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## Are you ready for Tu Bishvat?

In the need for seder ideas?? We have plenty!!

Need activities? We have lots!!

We have a pamphlet to send you!!

Just get in ask and we will provide!

Here's one of my favorite activities:

Hand out a list of quotes from TaNaCH about trees and Jewish attitudes about trees. (*If you don't have one, we do!*). Go through them and have a brief discussion with the kids. Come up with a summary of the Jewish attitude towards trees.

Then, show the movie or read the book, *The Lorax*, by Dr. Seuss. This main character, the Lorax, is very sensitive to trees and speaks up for them. Have the kids take notes while they are watching/listening to it that show how the Lorax's attitude is similar to Judaism's. Discuss afterwards.

Here's another favorite of mine:

Have a discussion about how animals rely on trees. Make a list on the board. Then, play this version of "Musical Chairs:" Set chairs back to back, ala Musical Chairs, one less than the number of students. Play music, sing a Tu Bishvat song, whistle, etc., and when it stops ALL children must sit down on a chair, even if two are sharing a chair. Then take one away and repeat. Keep doing this until there are few chairs, but all of the kids are on them, sharing. Be sure to stop before the activity gets rowdy! Then, have another discussion about how this game is similar to the situation of animals that rely on tree. Discuss what we humans can do to help the situation (afterall, Judaism is a religion of ACTION)

Feel free to contact me for more ideas!

Nita Polay Levin,  
Educational Field Worker  
NJ Region USCJ  
(732) 738 – 4301  
[Levin@USCJ.org](mailto:Levin@USCJ.org)

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## NO JEWISH CHILD LEFT ASIDE

**Within the week or so, you will be receiving our brochure about this timely new program we are offering, free of charge, to religious school principals and educational directors. In 3 two-hour workshops, held centrally at our regional office, participants will learn how to identify and accommodate students with special needs, how to effectively communicate with their parents, and how to modify activities for them. We encourage you to sign up! Certification with the NJ State Dept. of Education will be awarded at the end of the program, as well as a wealth of written materials you will be able to incorporate into your school. Brunch will be served.**

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Dear Friends,

I strongly endorse *Facing History and Ourselves* as an approach to Holocaust studies. If you and your teacher can participate in this online seminar, I urge you to do it. See below.

B'shalom,  
Serene

This coming spring, <<http://www.facinghistory.org/campus/reslib>>Facing History and Ourselves is offering our 8-week facilitated online seminar, "Holocaust and Human Behavior." This seminar is specifically designed for educators working in Jewish settings. Seminar date:

<<http://www.facinghistory.org/Campus/Events.nsf/HTMLInstitutesSeminars/292C090343CA92AE85257384006B2832?Opendocument>>February 21, 2008 to April 16, 2008

Information and application:

<<http://www.facinghistory.org/campus/reslib.nsf/PublicOnlineLearningByDate?OpenForm>><http://www.facinghistory.org/OnlineSeminar>

The seminar -- which includes a conference call with a survivor of the Holocaust -- has proven to be a powerful learning experience for hundreds of middle and high school educators around the world.

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### TRANSFORM YOUR CLASSROOM!

Renew your commitment to growing and learning; bring content, methodology, and a powerful approach to examining the Holocaust, into your classroom that will engage and transform your students; enjoy the flexible professional development opportunity afforded by taking an online seminar.

This stimulating online seminar will introduce teachers to *Facing History and Ourselves'* content and methodology. **The seminar ...** \*teaches about the Holocaust in a way that allows students to draw connections between history and the moral choices that they confront in their own lives \*presents to students a full picture of the richness of Jewish life and culture in Eastern Europe prior to the Holocaust \*includes discussions of Jewish identity and the legacy of the Holocaust for today's Jewish community \*incorporates Jewish texts into the teaching of history

**Teachers who participate in this online seminar ...** \*Explore engaging content while learning new methods and strategies for the classroom \*Gain access to Facing History's online educator resources \*Can receive graduate credits

**Information and application:**

<<http://www.facinghistory.org/Campus/Events.nsf/HTMLInstitutesSeminars/292C090343CA92AE85257384006B2832?Opendocument>><http://www.facinghistory.org/OnlineSeminar>

**Questions?** Contact Beth Healey at  
<[http://mailcenter3.comcast.net/wm/toolbar/beth\\_healey@facing.org](http://mailcenter3.comcast.net/wm/toolbar/beth_healey@facing.org)>[beth\\_healey@facing.org](mailto:beth_healey@facing.org).

Beth Healey  
Admin Assistant for Program Technology  
Facing History and Ourselves  
Brookline, MA  
617-735-1643  
[beth\\_healey@facing.org](mailto:beth_healey@facing.org)

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## TORAH AURAH PRODUCTIONS BULLETIN BOARD

### »Save money on art supplies.

Did you know that Torah Aura is an authorized Crayola reseller?

Recently, a number of congregational schools told us that they were spending an inordinate amount of their budget on school supplies: markers, crayons, clay, construction paper, and the like.

We know that school budgets are crunched, and we want schools to be able to spend money on the stuff that really counts, like paying teachers well, training them well, and equipping them with quality curricular materials.

So we got in touch with the folks at [Crayola](#), and we struck a deal. Now, we can offer Jewish schools really good -- and we mean **really** good -- prices on [Crayola](#) products.

Need [pounds and pounds of clay](#) for your students to make their own golems? We got it. Want to give each teacher their own [class set of crayons](#) and some [really good whiteboard markers](#)? We got those, too. We have [fabric markers](#) for decorating tallitot and wimples, [glass markers](#) for turning your windows into teach-able space, and [sidewalk chalk](#) for turning your concrete into billboards for your programs. In consultation with our favorite Jewish art expert, esteemed educator [Laurie Bellet](#), we carry the best products from [Crayola](#) designed to make your school a more colorful and artistic place.

### In This Issue:

- »[Welcome to the Torah Aura Productions Bulletin Board](#)
- »[Let Me Count the Ways — Tefillah: 5 Things to Consider](#)
- »[Jewish Art Enhances Lifecycle Curriculum](#)

### »Welcome to the Torah Aura Productions Bulletin Board

Welcome to this year's sixth issue of the [TAPBB](#): The Torah Aura Productions Bulletin Board.

This week's edition features [tips about tefillah from Carol Oseran Starin](#) (and with a little help from her friends).

But there's more!

Ever wanted to make a wimple? Ever wondered what a wimple was? Has anyone ever called you a wimple? Ever wondered how Wimpie ate all those hamburgers without getting a heart attack?

Joel had a long day, but he had fun hanging out at our Biennial booth and showing off his newest book, [Teaching Jewishly](#). Joel had fun teaching on Shabbat afternoon, too.

Speaking of conferences, have you seen the new [CAJE 33 Wiki](#)? If you're coming to the CAJE conference this year (and, well, of course you're coming!) and you want to be part of the planning process, the [CAJE 33 Wiki](#) is the place to be. [Click over](#) and get involved in the discussion.

And don't forget, [Crayola products are still on sale! 25% off until January 1.](#)

Enjoy the [TAPBB](#), and give a holler if you've got questions, concerns, or comments.

### »Let Me Count the Ways — Tefillah: 5 Things to Consider

by [Carol Oseran Starin](#)

*When I was a Sunday School kid, we had weekly 'worship services' in the sanctuary. The challenge for me was to figure out how far back I could sit so that I could talk about fool around without getting caught.*

*When I was an 18-year old teacher the challenge was to figure out which two kids to sit between.*

*Older and wiser. Tefillah provides so many opportunities. And, as [Ira Wise](#) points out, there are important things to consider. Within Ira's five points, I have interspersed ideas from other members of our Let Me Count the Was Advisory Group.*

and artistic place.

And here's the best part: We offer unthinkable low prices, the lowest [Crayola](#) will let us sell for. On top of that, when you add [Crayola](#) products to your regular Torah Aura book order, our school quantity discount applies. That means that if you order over \$100 from us (be it Torah Aura products or [Crayola](#) products) you get a 5% discount on your whole order. Order more than \$400, and your discount jumps to 7%, and top \$1000, and we give you 9% off of everything.

We think that's an unbeatable deal.

Hold your horses! It gets even better.

Stock up on [Crayola](#) products before January 1, and you'll get an **additional 25% off**. You read that right. From now until the first of the year, all [Crayola](#) products are **25% off**.

As always, you can place your order by calling (800) 689-0793, emailing [orders@torahaura.com](mailto:orders@torahaura.com), or heading right to the website, [www.torahaura.com](http://www.torahaura.com).

[Order online right now and save 25%! >](#)

*interspersed ideas from other members of our Let Me Count the Was Advisory Group.*

[To read Carol's tefillah tips, click and read on. >](#)

### »Jewish Art Enhances Lifecycle Curriculum

by [Laurie Bellet](#)

*The other day, I uncovered our family baby carriage, polished the chrome, and folded the blankets neatly within. I am going to be a Bubbe! This baby will sleep in the same pram as did her Daddy. She will be wrapped in the same blankets, lovingly crafted by her Great-Grandmother. Honoring our past, brings us love in the present.*

*I was surrounded by precious memories when I received a copy of Torah Aura's new lifecycle book [The Circle of Jewish Life](#). I opened it directly to the part about baby naming, since that is where my family*

*A teacher holds a wimple, a hand-made gift from her students.*

*currently places itself on the circle. Yet, no matter what stage of life a family is at, this book brings into focus our history, our rituals and the connection we have, to one another, through our life cycle moments.*

*I am always pleased, and a little perplexed, when I receive requests for learning activities to compliment life cycle curricula. Pleased, because the content area is so very rich, perplexed, for the very same reason. There are, in fact, so many experiences we can offer our students, to honor each stage of the life of a Jewish family.*

*This year, our school community is fortunate to have many babies, newborn, or expected shortly. When their teacher is pregnant, students rush to me, eager to make the wimple. Traditionally, in pre-Shoah Eastern Europe, fabric from the clothing that swaddled an infant at his brit-milah, was made into a wimple: a Torah binder. The wimple next wrapped the Torah at the child's consecration and at his Bar Mitzvah, and was included in the fabric to make the wedding chuppah. Almost extinguished during the Shoah, the tradition of the wimple has been revived in contemporary Jewish culture. Now, we make wimples for both boys and girls. Sometimes the wimple is still made from the swaddling cloth. More commonly now, the baby is swaddled in the wimple itself.*

*My favorite way to make a community wimple is to begin...*

[To keep reading, click. >](#)

## Preschool corner

*Welcome back - I hope you each had a fabulous winter break! Time to start thinking about trees! While this shiur doesn't actually mention Tu B'Shevat, it is certainly written with Tu B'Shevat, January 22, in mind. As always, I love feedback!*

*Happy New Year,  
Max*

*Maxine Handelman  
Consultant for Early Childhood Education  
United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
847-641-9963  
Fax: 773-929-4387  
[www.uscj.org](http://www.uscj.org)*

*I'd stop eating chocolate but I'm no quitter.*

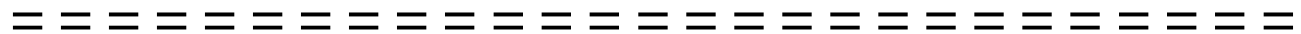


“True, the trees went to a noble cause,” Solomon concluded. “Yet, it’s also true that because of me the forest is gone; therefore, it is upon me to bring it back.”

-from *Solomon and the Trees* by Matt Biers-Ariel, UAHC Press, 2001

**Questions for discussion:**

1. Think about a time when you planted a tree, helped clear away debris from a play area, created a bird sanctuary, or had a similar experience, and tell your colleagues about it. Describe your feelings upon approaching the task and upon finishing the job.
2. In recent years, and in recent months, areas of our country, including Southern California, have suffered great fires, which have affected trees and other wildlife. Yet a strange thing often happens after a fire. Trees begin to regenerate. In Southern California, some kinds of chaparral (a general term that applies to various types of brushland) have leaves that are coated with flammable resins, seeds that require intense heat for germination, and roots that are specially adapted to enable the plant to grow in areas that were recently burned. Furthermore, when the chaparral is burned many of the nutrients that have been locked up in it are released and recycled back into the soil. The Douglas fir, found in areas of the northwest, regenerates readily on sites that have been prepared by fire. In fact, nearly all the natural Douglas fir stands in the United States grew on ground that had burned. Common trees and shrubs often are able to sprout from surviving plant parts after a fire. This is a very hopeful response to tragedy. What lessons can we learn from the trees?
3. Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria, a Talmudic sage of the first century CE, said: “Any time our wisdom exceeds our good deeds, to what are we likened? To a tree whose branches are numerous but whose roots are few; then the wind comes and uproots it and turns it upside down. ...But when our good deeds exceed our wisdom, to what are we likened? To a tree whose branches are few but whose roots are numerous; even if all the winds of the world were to come and blow against it, they could not budge it from its place...” What are some actions young children can take to make positive changes in their world? How can young children become part of the regeneration process? In *Solomon and the Trees*, the forest is cut down to build the Temple in Jerusalem. Solomon makes sure that he is not only part of the problem but also part of the solution by planting new trees to regenerate the forest. Where are areas of your community that could benefit by becoming greener? How can your children be part of this process?



Happy 2008, Everyone!

Those of you who are veterans to this list will recognize my eagerness to get you information about professional development opportunities. Now is the time that one of the most prestigious professional development programs is recruiting for 2008-09 academic year. Please note that the Senior Educators program will be taught in Hebrew. (I know .... this is very limiting :-)

Hope you have had the chance to rest up a bit and are ready to go full speed ahead.  
B'shalom,  
Serene

The Senior Educators Program, Melton Centre for Jewish Education, Hebrew University  
The Senior Educators Program offers a select group of Jewish educators from all over the world a unique opportunity for professional development and personal enrichment. This 10 month in-service training program, conducted in Hebrew, takes place at the Melton Centre for Jewish Education at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Interviews have begun for the 2008-2009 Senior Educators Program at the Melton Centre for Jewish Education, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Only a few places

left for North Americans. See more about the program and download application forms at <http://sep.huji.ac.il> \_  
For more information call toll free (to Israel) to: 1-866-655-4808 and speak to Mandy Huglin, Program Coordinator  
Alternatively, call (within the U.S.) to (281) 460-3960 and speak to Jonathan Fass, North American Recruitment Coordinator

Serene Victor  
USCJ National Consultant for Synagogue Education

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**Dear Colleagues,**

**I know that procrastination is operative when it comes to signing up for conferences. But I want to urge you to finally do it ... the Chicago conference, January 27-30 will be a very positive experience for you, so make the decision to come and send in your registration.**

**<http://www.jewisheduca> The theme this year ... vision ... is really important and the speakers are excellent. And equally important is the opportunity to network with other Conservative Jewish educators from around the country.**

**Looking forward to seeing you there ... let me know if you are coming!**

**B'shalom,  
Serene**

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Hi Friends,

Yesterday I received my email from the Israel Bookshop that included a selection of Tu Bishvat resources: books for adults and childrens, seders, and crafts (scroll down for the craft ideas). Below is the list that I received, including Risa Krohn's "special". You might want to subscribe to her email on your own because I don't generally forward it to you.

Hope to see you at the JEA convention on January 27!  
Serene

Dear Subscribers,

I am pleased to share with you a selection of new Jewish educational resources that have been published within the past few months.

As Tu Bishvat is fast approaching (January 22nd),included, as well, is a listing of Tu Bishvat resources for all ages,in English and in Hebrew.

TU BISHVAT SPECIAL:

ON ALL ORDERS OVER \$100 FROM ITEMS LISTED BELOW WE ARE OFFERING FREE SHIPPING WITHIN THE USA

PLEASE REFER TO CODE TB-5768 WHEN EMAILING, FAXING OR CALLING IN YOUR ORDER

Please feel free to forward this e-newsletter to your colleagues.

Many of the items featured here may be viewed on our website:  
<[http://rs6.net/tn.jsp?e=0017hjHHWYO-EJDKiB8G\\_kwl0pWql\\_gsT5NqSDY3Xx-PXRvVxOCTzHQUWRS78vpAtYeddyVGQomYR-8y-ZeNYm30RJSZBllvshCkqRymsTCEJwDSndjkoLiVA==](http://rs6.net/tn.jsp?e=0017hjHHWYO-EJDKiB8G_kwl0pWql_gsT5NqSDY3Xx-PXRvVxOCTzHQUWRS78vpAtYeddyVGQomYR-8y-ZeNYm30RJSZBllvshCkqRymsTCEJwDSndjkoLiVA==>)>[www.israelbookshop.com](http://www.israelbookshop.com)

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone: 1-800-323-7723 or by email: <mailto:risa@israelbookshop.com>risa@israelbookshop.com ,if you need assistance.

Bivracha,

Risa

**Tu Bishvat Resources:**

*Celebrating the Jewish Year : The Winter Holidays*

by Paul Steinberg (JPS) \$22 less 20%

"Bursting with primary sources, prayers, rituals and stories, Celebrating the Jewish Year includes contributions from some of the greatest Jewish thinkers in history, as well as original essays by acclaimed writers of today."

*Flowers and Trees of the Holy Land*

(Palphot)

Colorful photos and detailed information on the flowers and trees of Israel.\$18 less 10%

*Kids' Catalog of Animals and the Earth* by Chaya M. Burstein (JPS) \$16.95 less 20%

(... all the information , eco-activities and ideas you'll need to make a difference in the earth's future.

Written from a Jewish

perspective...teaches us how to be partners with God in caring for our world."

*Listen to the Trees: Jews and the Earth* by Molly Cone

"Using Torah texts and traditional Jewish stories as a basis, this book for intermediate grades presents an exploration of ecology and the interconnectedness of all life on earth. "Includes stories, cartoons and full-color illustrations. \$12.95 less 10% Teacher's Guide: \$10

*A Person Is Like A Tree: A Sourcebook for Tu Bishvat* by Yitzhak Buxbaum (Jason Aronson) \$28.95 less 10%

*Seder Tu Bishvat: The Festival of Trees* by Adam Fisher (CCAR) \$15.95 less 20%

*Spirit in Nature: Teaching Judaism and Ecology on the Trail* by Matt Biers-Ariel, Deborah Newbrun and Michal Fox Smart (Behrman House) \$11.95 less 10%

*Torah of the Earth: Exploring 4,000 Years of Ecology in Jewish Thought* edited by Arthur Waskow (Jewish Lights Publishing)

Volume I: Biblical/Rabbinic Volume II: Zionism/Eco-Judaism Each volume \$14.95 less 20%

*Way into Judaism and the Environment* by Jeremy Bernstein (Jewish Lights) "Explores the ways in which Judaism contributes to contemporary social-environmental issues." \$24.99 less 20%

***Whole School Holiday Curriculum: Tu B'Shvat*** (Torah Aura)

Each Whole-School Holiday lesson contains 12 student folders and a teacher's guide

- |                                 |         |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Celebrations                 | \$10.95 |
| 2. The Four High Holidays       | \$10.95 |
| 3. Honi the Circle Maker        | \$10.95 |
| 4. Tree Blessings               | \$10.95 |
| 5. Tu B'Shvat and Israeli Food  | \$12.95 |
| 6. Tu B'Shvat Seder             | \$12.95 |
| 7. A Day in the Life of a Verse | \$10.95 |

*The Teen Guide to Global Action: How to Connect with Others to Create Social Change* by Barbara A. Lewis (Free Spirit Publishing) \$12.95

" Features hundreds of local and global actions in: human rights; hunger and homelessness; health and safety; education; environment and conservation; youth representation; peace and friendship

*Trees, Earth and Torah: A Tu B'Shvat Anthology* edited by Ari Elon, Naomi Hyman and Arthur Waskow (JPS) \$23.95 less 20%

" This anthology draws upon biblical, rabbinical, medieval, and modern sources- from art, music, recipes, and crafts, as well as fiction, poetry and essays - about the significance and historical development of Tu B'Shvat..."

### **DVDs:**

**Eliezer V'HaGezer** \$24.95 less 10%

Based on the classic Israeli children's book

Other stories included on the DVD:

HaEfroach Shehalach Lichapes Acheret;

HaMitriya HaGedola Shel Abba; Maaseh B'Kovah

### **Grandpa's Tree**

A Jewish American student comes to Israel to locate his grandfather's tree, planted a half century earlier in a Jewish National Fund grove. In the course of his search, we learn about contemporary Israel, its emphasis on land reclamation and afforestation, and about Tu B'Shevat, Arbor Day. Directed by Telma Steklov. Starring Jonathan Miller.

24 minutes #29.95 less 10%

### **Something From Nothing**

Based on the charming Jewish folktale by Phoebe Gilman. It's recycling message provides a link to Tu Bishvat.\$17.95 less 10%

### **Tu Bishvat Crafts:**

Tu B'Shvat Flower Pot (Benny's)

"Paint your own flower pot. Sturdy thick plastic container with 3 different inlay patterns. Decorate with markers, paint, markers, glitter glue and stickers"\$1.95 each or \$19.95/package of 12

Tu B'Shvat Flower Pot (Zerach)

The project involves coloring and folding it to create a cardboard flower pot. \$12.50/36 units

Tu B'Shvat Sponges (Benny's) Sponge painting activity. \$11.95

Tu Bishvat Stickers/Foam Shapes/Stencils (Benny's)

Shkedia (almond tree) \$2.95/pkg. of 200

Shkedia foam shapes \$4.95/8 sets

Citrus Fruit \$2.95/pkg. of 200

Gardening \$2.95/pkg. of 200

Shivat HaMinim (Seven Species) \$8.50/18 sets of 8

Shivat HaMinim foam shapes \$4.95/10 sets

7 HaMinim stencils \$4.95/package of 7

### **Tu Bishvat Posters:**

Colorful poster in Hebrew and English of symbols, customs and activities associated with Tu Bishvat. Laminated (Benny's) \$9.95

Tu B'Shvat Cutout Poster (Benny's) \$9.95

Tu B'Shvat Poster Set Includes 9 pictures 12.5 in. x 8.5 in. \$14.95/set

Tu Bishvat 3 Children Planting Bulletin Board Set (Benny's) \$22.95

Trees, Fruit and Vegetables Classification Kit Includes velcro board and 59 flashcards. (Benny's) \$19.95

Four Seasons Trees (Carson-Dellosa) \$9.99 Bulletin board display

Big-Tree/ Kid- Drawn (Carson-Dellosa) \$11.99 Bulletin board display

Shivat HaMinim Poster Set Includes 7 pictures 13 in. x 9.5 in \$14.95

Trees: 36 Bulletin Board Accents (Carson-Dellosa) \$3.99

### **Tu Bishvat CD:**

Shirei Tu Bishvat \$9.95

### **Children's Books: English**

Behold the Trees by Sue Alexander (Arthur Levine Books) \$16.95 less 20%

Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss (HarperTrophy) \$6.99 less 20%

Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein (HarperCollins) \$18.99 less 20% HC

God's World by Sylvia Rouss ((Pitspopany) \$9.95 less 20%

Grandpa and Me on Tu B'Shevat by Marji E. Gold-Yukson (Kar-Ben) \$6.95 less 20% SC

Lag Ba'Omer and Tu Bishvat with Bina, Benny and Chaggai Hayonah (Artsroll Children's Holiday Series) \$9.99 less 10%

Littlest Tree by Sylvia Rouss (Pitspopany) \$16.95 less 20% HC/ \$9.95 less 20% SC

Mayer Aaron Levi and His Lemon Tree by Tami Lehman-Wilzig (Gefen) \$12.95 less 10%

Noah's Wife: The Story of Naamah by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso (Jewish Lights) \$16.95 less 20% HC  
" The story may be the starting point of a conversation about our responsibility for caring for the earth."

Sammy Spider's First Tu B'Shevat by Sylvia A. Rouss (Kar-Ben) \$7.95 less 20% SC

Seder for Tu B'Shevat by Harlene Winnick Appelbaum and Jane Sherwin Shapiro (Kar-Ben) \$3.95 less 20% SC

Solomon and the Trees by Matt Biers-Ariel (URJ Press) \$13.95 less 20%

Tiny Seed by Eric Carle (Aladdin) \$7.99 less 20%

Tree in Nice by Janice May Udry (Harper) \$6.99 less 20%

Israel Book Shop Inc. | 410 Harvard Street | Brookline | MA | 02446

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