



In response to rising antisemitism in the United States, the Association of Jewish Libraries offers the Love Your Neighbor series of book lists for all young readers. Books read in youth impact future outlooks, and it is our hope that meeting Jews on the page will inspire friendship when readers meet Jews in real life.

This is the fifth in a series of book lists intended to provide children and their families with a greater understanding of the Jewish religion and its people. This fifth list features stories depicting Orthodox Jews. Because some Orthodox Jews have a distinctive manner of dress, they are often easy targets for antisemitism.

All of the books on the Love Your Neighbor lists provide a window into the many versions of Judaism, while at the same time mirroring the universal values we all share. The picture books below, designed for the specific needs of Orthodox Jewish communities, assume familiarity with customs and vocabulary. Be sure to seek out the glossaries that often appear in these titles. Look for these books in public and synagogue libraries, bookstores and Judaica shops, and online, and find the entire Love Your Neighbor series of book lists at [JewishLibraries.org/Love\\_Your\\_Neighbor](http://JewishLibraries.org/Love_Your_Neighbor).

## Book List #5: Orthodox Jews

### PICTURE BOOKS

**[Around the Shabbos Table](#)** by Seryl Berman, ages 4-8  
Tova Leiba's positive attitude is infectious, and she helps her siblings see the good in every situation during Sabbath dinner.

**[I Keep Kosher](#)** by Tami G. Raubvogel, ages 4-8  
A young girl narrates a rhyming story about the rules of keeping kosher, eating according to rules laid out in the Torah (Genesis through Deuteronomy). Extensive back-matter explains more and gives context.

**[We Can Find a Way](#)** by Dina Rosenfeld, ages 3-8  
The kids are determined to find a way to include everyone at grandma's birthday party, finding creative solutions to mobility issues, sensory problems, and food allergies. A sweet story about inclusion.

**[Sara Finds a Mitzva](#)** by Rebeka Simhaee, ages 4-8  
Sara fulfills the mitzva (commandment) of returning lost things, turning detective to track down the child who misplaced her little toy duck.

**[Dear Tree](#)** by Doba Rivka Weber, ages 3-8  
A young boy thanks a tree for its beauty, its fruit, its shade, and wishes it long life and many offspring in celebration of the Jewish holiday Tu B'Shvat, the New Year of the Trees.

**[The Bravest Fireman](#)** by Leah Zytman, ages 3-8  
Ari imagines becoming a fireman when he grows up, because the Torah says "Saving one life is like saving the world."

## CHAPTER BOOKS

**[Hereville: How Mirka Got Her Sword](#)** by Barry Deutsch, ages 8-14

The tagline “Yet another Troll-Fighting 11-Year-Old Orthodox Jewish Girl” lets readers know that they are in for quirky humor in the first volume of this graphic novel fantasy trilogy that mixes a respectful depiction of Orthodox life with zany magical hijinks. Sequels include **[How Mirka Met a Meteorite](#)** and **[How Mirka Caught a Fish](#)**.

**[The Illustrated Pirkei Avot: A Graphic Novel of Jewish Ethics](#)** by Jessica Tamar Deutsch, ages 10 and up  
Pirkei Avot, “Ethics of the Fathers,” is a time-honored collection of wise words from ancient rabbis, but this version brings modern flair and whimsy to its serious subject matter.

**[Strange Relations](#)** by Sonia Levitin, ages 14 and up  
Secular Jewish teen Marne spends a summer in Hawaii with her Orthodox aunt and uncle, where she grows to respect their different lifestyle and their way of seeing the world.

**[It’s a Whole Spiel: Love, Latkes, and Other Jewish Stories](#)**, edited by Katherine Locke & Laura Silverman, ages 13 and up  
This anthology of 14 stories by Jewish authors about Jewish teens offers a wide variety of religious affiliation and observance. Check out *Good Shabbos* by Goldy Moldavsky, *Two Truths and an Oy* by Dahlia Adler, and *Find the River* by Matthue Roth for Orthodox characters.

**[Playing with Matches](#)** by Suri Rosen, Ages 13-16  
Orthodox teen Raina secretly goes into the matchmaking business to try to help her older sister find a man in this madcap, rollicking adventure.

**[Never Mind the Goldbergs](#)** by Matthue Roth, ages 14 and up  
17-year-old Orthodox punk Hava lands a role on a TV sitcom about a Jewish family, in which her catchphrase is “Oy vey, dude!” A lively story of a girl’s struggle to adapt to both the religious and secular cultures that surround her.



### THE “LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR” SERIES

The Love Your Neighbor series of book lists was created by the Association of Jewish Libraries to grow readers’ understanding of the Jewish religion and its people.

The Association of Jewish Libraries, established in 1966, is the leading authority on Judaic librarianship. AJL promotes Jewish literacy through enhancement of libraries and library resources and through leadership for the profession and practitioners of Judaica librarianship. The Association fosters access to information, learning, teaching and research relating to Jews, Judaism, the Jewish experience and Israel. AJL is an affiliate of the American Theological Library Association, the Association for Jewish Studies, and the American Library Association.

Learn more at [www.jewishlibraries.org](http://www.jewishlibraries.org).

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