



# Until the Blueberries Grow

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**{ How do we know when it's time to make a change? }**

## HANDS ON!

### Make Blueberry Refrigerator Jam

In this story, Zayde and Ben make grape jelly together. They eat their blueberries fresh, but blueberries also make a delicious refrigerator jam, which doesn't require canning. Why not make a small batch to share with a grandparent or older friend?

#### Ingredients

1 pint fresh blueberries  
¼ cup sugar

Wash your berries carefully, making sure to remove any stems.

Place the berries in a nonreactive saucepan. Add the sugar, then mash them together with a potato masher or a fork.

Cook the mixture on the stovetop over medium heat, stirring occasionally. When the mixture begins to simmer, start stirring more often so that it doesn't burn and stick to the pan. Continue to stir and cook, around 20 minutes, until the mixture is thick and jammy.

While still hot, pour the jam into a heat-safe glass jar (this is a grown-up's job), then let cool. The jam will keep in the fridge for about two weeks. Write a card for your grandparent or friend, listing all the things you like to do together in summer, fall, winter, and spring, and give it to them with some homemade jam!

### All in Good Time

"For everything there is a season" [Ecclesiastes 3:1] is among the most famous biblical passages. This story approaches that idea in two ways, both cyclical and chronological. As Ben and Zayde (Yiddish for "grandpa") circle through the holidays of the Jewish year, they appreciate the distinct seasons – the abundance of the harvest, the miracle of light during the darkest days, and the liberation and rebirth that comes with spring. We also watch as Ben and Zayde both come to terms with the chronological seasons of a human life, each in their own way. To learn more, visit [pjlibrary.org/untilblueberriesgrow](http://pjlibrary.org/untilblueberriesgrow).

### Ages and Stages

Change is inevitable, but that doesn't mean it's easy. It helps to be open to all the new things that growing up – and growing older – can bring. According to *Pirkei Avot* (Ethics of the Ancestors, an ancient collection of rabbinic sayings), different stages of life each have their own positive qualities. Age 5, for example, is the age of study – a perfect time to start kindergarten – and age 20 is the age of pursuit. We reach the age of wisdom at 40 (finally!), and according to the sages, 80 is the age of strength. We don't know how old Zayde is, but with his resilience, flexibility, and perspective, he is strong indeed.

### A Beautiful Mitzvah

For Ben, the mitzvah ("commandment" or good deed) of honoring the elderly comes easily. In Judaism, this involves more than showing respect; the Hebrew term for this mitzvah, *v'hadarta pnei zaken*, includes the word *hadar*, Hebrew for "adding beauty." Ben certainly adds beauty to Zayde's life. But another part of honoring others means supporting them when they need help. Ben does this not only by helping him move, but also by helping make his new apartment feel homey. Zayde, in turn, fulfills the grandparent's mitzvah of *l'dor vador* (Hebrew for "from generation to generation"), passing down customs and traditions to those who will carry them into the future.

## TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

**IN** this story, Zayde is growing older. Can you find hints in the illustrations that Ben and his baby sister are growing older, too? What else in the book changes as the story unfolds?

**WHAT** are Ben and Zayde's favorite ways to celebrate holidays? What are your favorite ways?

**WHEN** have you made a big change? How did people close to you help you make that change?