



# CHICKEN MAN

## TEACHER'S GUIDE

Book by Michelle Edwards  
Teacher's Guide by Barb Stein and Michelle Edwards

## The Story

*“Deep in Israel’s Jezreel Valley there once was a man known to his mother as Rody and to all the rest of Kibbutz Hanan as Chicken Man.”*

Chicken Man is happy working in the chicken coop. His positive attitude makes whatever kibbutz job he is doing look like so much fun that everyone else always wants Chicken Man’s job.

## Curriculum Tie-ins

Community/Neighbors/Occupations/Work/Positive Attitude

## Where in the World is Kibbutz Hanan?

Using a globe, locate Israel. Find the Jezreel Valley.

Explain that on Chicken Man’s kibbutz all the members rotate jobs. They all take turns working in places like the laundry, the chicken coop or the children’s houses. Share the kibbutz map (last page of the Teacher’s Guide, and the front of the book). Note the way the kibbutz is organized and where the work places are located. Read the Author’s Note for further information on kibbutz life.

## What’s a Baal-a-gan?

Did you know that Hebrew is the official language of Israel? Chicken Man works in the children’s house called the *Baal-a-gan*; Hebrew for a mess. The word *kibbutz* means a gathering or group, *Oy va voy* is an expression like *Oh My!*

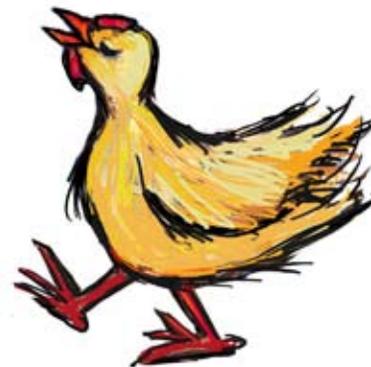
- Hebrew has a different alphabet and is read from right to left.

## Work Before Reading

Ask work questions. What chores or jobs do you do? Describe what tasks make up that job. Do you share or rotate your job with anyone? Do you wear certain clothes when you work? What do you do when you work



to make the time go fast? If you could do any job all day, what would it be? Is there a job you hate to do? Why?



## Character Counts During Reading

*Trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.*

Ask which characters in the story have these traits. Encourage the kids to explain why.

Make predictions with each of the characters: Bracha doesn't like the bakery. Why does she think the chicken coop will be more enjoyable? Why does everyone want Chicken Man's job?

## Put Yourself in the Story After Reading

Ask questions that help understand character. Would you like to work in the chicken coop? What would be your favorite job on Kibbutz Hanan? Do you know anyone like Chicken Man? Describe. How does this person make you feel about working? How do people who live in communities help each other? What people work in our community to help us every day?

Name the jobs in your school. Describe the tasks done. Do any of the workers make their job seem easy or fun?

## Every Picture Tells a Story

Examine how illustrations help us understand the story? The characters? Kibbutz Hanan? Chicken Man and the chickens? How do the illustrations show us details that are not in the story? Give examples.

## Make Lemonade

Sometimes people use expressions and idioms to describe a situation. Discuss how these might fit this story. *The grass is always greener on the other side of the road. When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.*

## Whistle While you Work

Sing work songs. Examples are: "Whistle While You Work" and "I've Been Working on the Railroad" (Find the words to this song at [kids.niehs.nih.gov/lyrics/whistle](http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/lyrics/whistle).)

Check out Jane Yolen's book of songs, *Apple for the Teacher: Thirty Songs For Singing While You Work*. Or use a CD like *Children's Songs From Around the World: Vol. 1* It has a section of work songs from different places around the world.

## Act Like a Chicken

Ask students to act like the kibbutz chickens: when they are happy, when they are sad and when they miss Chicken Man. Or act like a characters in the story telling why they don't like their job and why they want Chicken Man's job. Have the class guess the character's name. After each, have the audience whistle or hum softly the "Whistle While Your Work" song refrain.

## Read More

Other books with connections:

Cronin, Doreen. *Click, Clack Moo! Cows that Type* (**animals that strike for better conditions**)

Kimmel, Elizabeth Cody. *The Top Job* (**a Dad with an exciting job**)

Marshall, James. *Fox on the Job* (**fox tries different jobs**)

Morris, Ann. *Work* (**nonfiction book of different ways people work**)

Rylant, Cynthia. *Mr. Griggs' Work* (**love of job**)

Yolen, Jane. *Raising Yoder's Barn* (**working in community**)

## Visit Web Sites with Connections

What Do They Do? — [www.whatdotheydo.com](http://www.whatdotheydo.com)

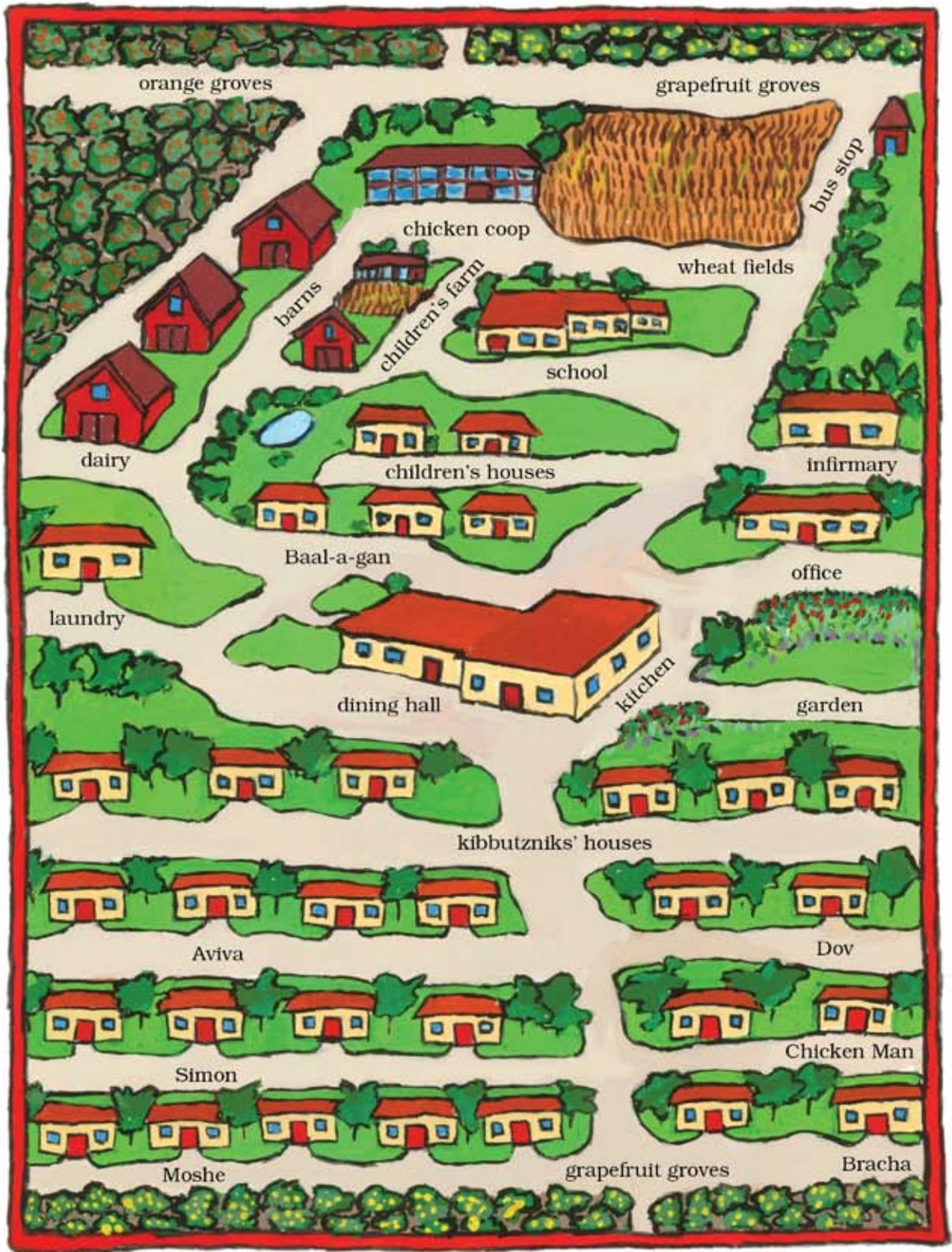
Chicken Man guide for using work as theme — [www.carohurst.com/subjects/work.html](http://www.carohurst.com/subjects/work.html)

## What's that Gold Thing on the Cover of *Chicken Man*?

It's the National Jewish Book Award medal. *Chicken Man* won the award in 1992.

## Meet the Author/Illustrator

Michelle Edwards has written and illustrated many books for kids including *Stinky Stern Forever*. She lives with her family in Iowa City, Iowa. *Chicken Man* is based on her experiences as a volunteer on Kibbutz Mizra. For more information about Michelle and her books, visit [www.michelledwards.com](http://www.michelledwards.com).



Kibbutz Hanan