



My experience at Hatikva's School



Name: **Villellas M**

Country of residence: **Spain**

Although I am not Jewish, I feel that this community has been a fundamental part of my personal development. Growing up surrounded by Jewish friends, traditions, and values has shaped the way I understand respect, diversity, and friendship.

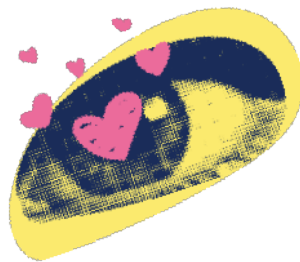


I am 15 years old, I am Catalan and I live in Barcelona. I am not Jewish, but a large part of my life has been connected to the Jewish community: I have spent fourteen years studying at the Hatikva School, where my mother also works as a teacher. Since I was a child, I have grown up surrounded by Jewish friends, teachers and families, and that coexistence has deeply influenced the way I am and how I understand the world.



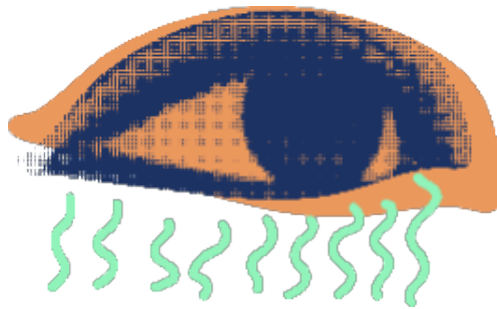
The relationship I have with the Jewish community is very close. My friends, whom I consider an essential part of my life, have been by my side for many years. We have grown up sharing classes, school trips, journeys, and truly special moments. I have always felt included and warmly welcomed, despite not practicing the same religion. Thanks to them, I have learned values such as unity, respect, and the importance of family and community spirit.

At school we celebrate numerous Jewish holidays: Purim, Pesach, Shavuot, Hanukkah, Rosh Hashanah, among others. I enjoy taking part in them because they are part of my most cherished childhood and teenage memories. Purim is especially fun because of the costumes and its festive atmosphere, while during Pesach we learn more about Jewish history and traditions. However, among all these commemorations, there is one that has deeply marked me: the remembrance and study of the Shoah. Every year at school, we dedicate a solemn time to remember the victims of the Holocaust, listen to testimonies, and reflect on the danger of hatred and indifference. That experience has left a lasting impression on me and has made me value even more the importance of memory and human dignity. All these experiences have allowed me to gain a deep understanding of this culture and to appreciate the importance of preserving traditions and historical memory.

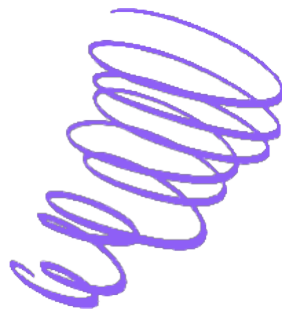


In addition, living for so many years with Jewish classmates has taught me to have a more open mindset and to value cultural and religious diversity. I have understood that, even when people have different customs or beliefs, it is possible to build a coexistence based on respect, friendship, and affection. I believe that growing up in such a diverse environment has helped me mature and better understand the world around me.

I am now going through a decisive stage of my life, as I am gradually becoming an adult and beginning to reflect on my future. Although I am not Jewish, I feel that this community has been a fundamental part of my personal development. Many of the friendships and experiences I have today will stay with me forever. I am convinced that everything I have experienced at school will remain with me throughout the years and will shape the way I relate to others.



The current situation in Israel has also affected me, especially because many of my friends have a very deep connection with that country. Seeing how worried they are about what is happening there makes me feel close to the conflict and helps me understand how important Israel is to them. In difficult times, I have tried to support my loved ones and understand their emotions, just as they have always supported me.



In conclusion, although I do not share the Jewish religion, growing up surrounded by this community has been a life-changing experience. It has given me the opportunity to learn about another culture, build incredible friendships, and absorb values I will never forget. I believe this journey has enriched me as a person and taught me the importance of respect, coexistence, and friendship between people of different cultures and beliefs.

