

TEACHING GUIDE

**THE NEW SIDUR PROGRAM
FOR HEBREW AND HERITAGE**

עִבְרִית חֲדָשָׁה
לְתוֹדְעֵת תּוֹפְלָה



**READING
READINESS**

BEHRMAN HOUSE

PURPOSE

Making friends with the letters of the Alef Bet is the first step in reading Hebrew. The *Reading Readiness Book* for the new *Hebrew & Heritage Siddur Program* provides the structure and materials you need to introduce children to the Hebrew alphabet. Using the text and the classroom techniques suggested in this guide, you can teach the name, the shape and the sound of each Hebrew letter while exposing children to a basic Hebrew noun vocabulary.

GRADE LEVEL

The *Reading Readiness Book* and the procedures and activities in this Guide are designed for children ages 6-8.

OBJECTIVES

- To introduce the names of the Hebrew letters
- To introduce the shapes of the letters
- To introduce the sounds letters make
- To develop visual recognition of letter symbols
- To develop visual and auditory discrimination
- To develop right to left eye movement
- To develop letter/sound associations
- To introduce a primary Hebrew noun vocabulary

CONTENTS

The *Readiness Book* contains three basic kinds of pages.
These repeat throughout the book.

Letter/Picture Pages

Printed form of each Hebrew letter
Noun words that begin with the letter
Pictures of the noun words
Outlined letter shapes

Writing Pages

Manuscript print form of letters to trace
Blank lines to practice the letter

Activity Pages

Circling or connecting letters that are the same
Finding the letter that is different

ORDER OF LETTER INTRODUCTION

The order of letter introduction in the *Readiness Book* is based on perceptual continuity. The same presentation order is followed in *The Primer* for the new *Hebrew & Heritage Siddur Program*.

<i>Text Page</i>	<i>Letter</i>
2	BET
5	TAV
8	SHIN
12	ALEF
15	HAY
18	VAV
22	DALET
25	NUN
29	CHET
33	KOOF
36	MEM
40	LAMED
44	AYIN
47	YUD
51	PAY
55	RESH
59	KAF
62	TSADEE
66	SAMECH
70	SIN
73	GIMMEL
77	TET
81	ZAYIN

NOUN PICTURE WORDS

The words illustrated in each lesson will help the children hear and remember the sound of the Hebrew letter being studied. The pictures provide Hebrew language readiness and offer the opportunity to teach a basic Hebrew noun vocabulary.

Two criteria were used in the selection of the images. Words were selected that could be clearly drawn so that they would not be mistaken for any other. Whenever possible, words that are key to the prayer experience were chosen.

<i>Letter</i>	<i>Key Word</i>	<i>Additional Pictures</i>
BET	house	doll, school, synagogue, banana
TAV	Torah	student, apple, baby, chicken
SHIN	shofar	table, sun, clock, Shabbat
ALEF	Aron Kodesh	etrog, lion, mother, father
HAY	mountain	havdalah, haggadah
VAV	rose	hook, curtain
DALET	fish	bear, door, flag, honey
NUN	candles	eternal light, shoe, snake

CHET	hallah	window, milk, cat, hanukkiah
KOOF	monkey	rainbow, block, seder plate
MEM	king	megillah, mezuzah, present, matzah
LAMED	lulav	clown, bread, heart, chalkboard
AYIN	tree	eye, cake, grapes, pencil
YUD	wine	girl, boy, hand
PAY	butterfly	elephant, bell, flowers, cow
RESH	train	gragger, wind, legs
KAF	kippah	crown, ball, chair, dog
TSADEE	bird	frog, crayons, tzedakah
SAMECH	sukkah	draydel, horse, basket, book
SIN	Simhat Torah	hair, dress
GIMMEL	camel	wheel, ice cream, carrot, cheese
TET	tallit	telephone, tractor, ring
ZAYIN	zebra	wolf, olive, beard

HOW TO USE THE LETTER/PICTURE PAGES

Letter Introduction

An important pedagogic principle to keep in mind when introducing the letters is that different people learn in different ways. Therefore, teach each letter in as many ways as possible so that you can reach every child in the class.

Here is a variety of procedures for introducing new letters:

Put the new letter on a flannelboard or magnetic board.

Pronounce the name and sound of the new letter.

Have students point to and pronounce the letter on the alef bet chart.

Display the flashcard.

Say: "This is a Hebrew letter. The name of the letter is ____." Introduce the sound of the letter. Carefully demonstrate how the sound is made. Have the children repeat the sound several times with you.

Ask the children to point to the Hebrew letter printed on the top of the page. Say the name of the letter again. (Remember: The name of the letter reinforces the sound the letter makes.) Have the children say the name of the letter and its sound several times.

Ask the children to trace the outline of the letter with their fingers as they repeat the sound of the letter. This procedure will help them to commit the shape and the sound to memory. Then have them connect the outlined letters and color them in with crayons or colored pencils.

Using the Pictures

Ask the children to look at the main picture and give them the Hebrew word for it. Emphasize the initial sound of the word. This picture and those that follow will help the children to hear and remember the sound of the Hebrew letter being studied. At the same time, they will have the opportunity to acquire a basic noun Hebrew vocabulary. Provide the Hebrew word for each picture several times. Make as many connections as you can between the printed letter at the top of the page, the letter at the beginning of each picture's label and the sound of the letter.

Play a guessing game: Tell the class that you are thinking of something that begins with the letter _____. Encourage them to ask questions before they guess the answer: "Is it something to eat...something to play with...a place to live?"

Have a "tasting party": Ask the children to close their eyes and guess, by taste, what letter name they are eating (MEM - matzah; BET - banana; TAV - apple; DALET - honey; CHET - hallah; LAMED - bread; AYIN - cake or grapes; GIMMEL - cheese; etc.).

Play a "hearing game": Have the children guess what letter they are hearing by providing appropriate sound effects (DALET - door closing; CHET - cat's meow; PAY - bell ringing; RESH - gragger twirling; KAF - dog barking; TSADEE - bird chirping; etc.).

HOW TO USE THE WRITING PAGES

The two writing lines in each lesson provide print writing readiness. Printing (manuscript writing) is used because this most closely resembles the printed letters students encounter in books. Reading is, therefore, reinforced through manuscript writing. As students learn to identify a letter and to associate it with a sound, they also learn to form it. Each time a letter is formed, sensory reinforcement takes place.

First, have the children trace the stick letters with their fingers, as they say the letter's name and sound. Then the letters can be traced with a pencil. Finally, the children can print the letter themselves on the lines provided.

For variety, see if students can form the stick letters using popsicle sticks. Or, for a special treat, provide small stick pretzels for "letter making." After the children correctly form letters with pretzel sticks, they can eat them!

HOW TO USE THE EXERCISES

Several exercises are included to practice each new letter. Be sure to explain the directions to students and discuss the purpose of each activity. The example in each exercise shows the students what to do. You may work together with the group on one or two items, but then allow each child to finish the exercise independently. Check to see that children are working on the activity from right to left.

Review the completed exercise together. Give lots of praise for a job well done. If there are errors, give encouragement by saying things like: "Let's look at this one together. Does this letter look like this one? Does this letter look different from the rest? In what way?" etc.

SPECIAL LETTERS

Three Hebrew letters require special attention. There is no sound in English to parallel the sound of the letters CHET and CHAF. The sound is therefore difficult for children to make. In English, the sound of the letter TSADEE is a blend that never appears at the beginning of a word. Be sure to give your pupils extra practice with these letters.

ADDITIONAL TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

When you are ready to introduce the complete Hebrew alphabet in alef bet order, you will find pages 91-94 particularly useful. Each Hebrew letter is presented with its key word picture.

If you wish to introduce additional Hebrew words, see the last two pages in the book. The Hebrew numbers one through ten are shown on page 95 and the Hebrew words for colors are found on page 96. Children enjoy learning the colors and numbers at this readiness level.

TEACHING AIDS

The Chalkboard

Use the chalkboard to introduce new letters, to demonstrate how to print the letters and to demonstrate similarities and differences between letters.

The simplest way to create more interest in what you are writing on the board is to occasionally change the color of the chalk. Pastel and vibrant colored chalk are readily available and fun to use.

Vary the size of your letters. A single letter can fill the entire board. To enhance the quality of the letters you write, use the side of a one-inch piece of chalk to create wide and narrow lines. Horizontal strokes create wide lines; vertical strokes create narrow ones.

Draw a picture on the chalkboard to illustrate the lesson. (The less polished you are as an artist, the more the class will love your drawings.)

Before the children arrive, print letters on the board. Cover them with large pieces of paper taped to the board. Unveil the letters at appropriate times during the lesson.

Writing on the chalkboard is exciting to a child. Students who chafe at practicing writing letters with a pencil at their seats, will generally be delighted to do so with chalk on the board. Children can also practice letters on the chalkboard using a paintbrush dipped in water. The letters will soon "fade" away.

The Alef Bet Chart

Consider the display of more than one alef bet chart in the classroom. These charts clearly convey the message that Hebrew letters are what the class is all about and it is more likely that children will become familiar with the letters when they are surrounded with the alef bet.

Here are procedures to use with an alef bet chart:

Point to individual letters on the chart. Go around the room, each child in turn pronouncing the "saying sound" of the letter. Never let an error in pronunciation slip by. Gently correct the mispronunciation and have the child repeat the sound correctly.

For variation, have the entire class read a letter together, but do limit this technique so that you will know that each child is pronouncing correctly.

Say the sound of a Hebrew letter and ask a student to point to the letter or letters that have that "saying sound."

Say the name of a Hebrew letter and ask a student to point to the correct letter.

Select two students. One says the sound of the letter and the other points to the letter that has that sound.

Select a student to point to as many letters as he wishes, each time saying the sound the letter makes.

Alef Bet Flashcards

Here are suggested procedures to use with alef bet letter flashcards:

Hold up a letter card. Children say the name and pronounce the saying sound.

Display several letter cards. Take one away. Children guess which letter is missing.

Match letters with the same sound.

Distribute cards to students. Each holds up the card matching the name or sound as it is announced.

Match letters with the same sound.

The Flannelboard

Flannelboards can be purchased or constructed by simply covering a large piece of cardboard with cotton flannel. Special flannelboard letters are made by glueing a small piece of flannel or sandpaper to the back of existing flashcards. Flashcards can be cut out of rough textured construction paper. These will not require a special backing.

Here are some techniques to try:

Use the flannelboard to introduce new letters.

Use the flannelboard to review. Set up the board with letters that require drill. Point to each in turn as children call out the sounds.

Arrange several letters on the board. Call out a sound or the name of a letter and have a volunteer come up and point to it.

The flannelboard is well suited for sorting activities, especially with letters that may be confused (RESH-DALET; HAY-CHET; TSADEE-AYIN, etc). Students might be asked to place every RESH on one side and every DALET on the other side. Or the task might be to separate silent letters or final letters, and so on.

A PERSONAL NOTE

We hope that the materials in *The Readiness Book* for the new *Hebrew & Heritage Siddur Program* and the suggestions in this Guide will encourage the use of your personal teaching techniques. We have made the materials as motivational and interesting as we could. We not only want to encourage children to learn, but to make it more interesting and enjoyable for you to teach -- to use your own special skills and personality in the classroom.

We are eager to hear about your experiences with these reading readiness materials. Please let us hear from you.

B'hatslachah!

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