



MULTI-SENSORY ALEPH BET

Submitted by Janine Starr

Project Title: Multi-sensory Aleph Bet

Subject Area: The shapes and sounds of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet

Target Age Group(s): 2nd grade

Lesson Objective(s):

Students will integrate the shape and sound of each letter deeply to support future fluency in Hebrew reading.

This is a program that I designed and implemented for a class of second graders in the JCRB Beit Sefer Chadash, 2002-2003, under the directorship of Rabbi Nadya Gross.

Each week of school we studied one or two letters and its (their) sound(s) in a variety of ways. *THE BEST ORDER IN WHICH TO TEACH THE LETTERS IS THAT FOLLOWED BY THE TEXT BOOK SAM THE DETECTIVE published by KTAV.*



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LEVEL I

First, we studied the letter visually. I held up a poster board with the outline of the letter drawn large, the gamatria number, and a Hebrew word written in English letters that began with the letter, and that summarized it's essence (i.e., for bet, I used the word Bayit, meaning house, because bet looks like a house, and it's spiritual meaning, or "essence" is also "house".) The children used their fingers to trace a large letter shape in the air, using the poster for guidance.

LEVEL II

Next, I added the auditory level. I told a story to teach the essence of the letter, and help the children remember the "essence" and special word that went along with the letter. Afterwards, I beat a letter rhythm that the children came to know, and chanted the letter's sound, name, and special word repetitively, inviting the children to join in by chanting and clapping themselves. (i.e. b,bb.b...b,bb.b...b...bet...bayit) It is helpful to have a drum for this section.

LEVEL III

The third level of teaching was kinesthetic. This came first with the children clapping out the letter rhythm as they chanted, and then by going out to the JCC parking lot and "walking" a large outline of the letter that I had drawn with



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sidewalk chalk. One child at a time walked the letter outline like a tightrope, while the other chanted the letter sound and clapped to the drumbeat.

LEVEL IV

The fourth and last level was filling in the outline on the posterboard for the letter as an all class art project. This was done differently for each letter – paint, chalk, marker, collage with paper, fabric, buttons, macaroni, etc. As each poster was finished, it was hung in its designated place in the aleph bet around the classroom walls as a reminder and a decoration. At the end of the year I took all of the poster board size letters and made a large alef bet book with them.

LIST OF ALEF BET INFORMATION

Alef.....#1.....Ei (G-d), Echad (One)

Separation and connection between upper and lower worlds

Bet.....#2.....Bayit (House)

G-d's and man's dwelling place in this world



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Gimel.....#3.....Gimul (Giving)

Rich man running after poor man to give to him

Dalet.....#4.....Delet (Door)

Openness, humility toward G-d and people

Hey.....#5.....Hineni (Here I am, fully present)

Relationship with G-d and people

Vav.....#6.....V' (And)

Connection

Zayin.....#7.....Zacher (remember)

Where we came from

Chet.....#8.....Chazak (strong)

Touching, but not touching, the power of foundation

Tet.....#9.....Tov (good)

Pregnancy, the hidden good



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Yod.....#10.....Yad (hand, finger)

The point that includes infinity, our way of acting in the world

Kaf.....#20.....Kaf (palm of the hand)

Potential, the Hamsa

Lamed.....#30.....Lev (heart)

Power to direct and control animal instincts

Mem.....#40.....Mayim (water)

Fountain of wisdom, G-d flowing through us

Nun.....#50.....Nefesh (soul)

Receiving vessel

Samech.....#60.....Sod (secret)

The closed circle representing the circle of life, which is a mystery

Ayin.....#70.....Ayin (eye)

G-d sees what we need and provides it



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Pey.....#80.....Peh (mouth)

The path of wisdom from the heart to the mouth

Tzadee.....#90.....Aytz (tree)

“It is a tree of life to all who hold fast to it”

Koof.....#100.....Kadosh (holy)

The line is gathering up the sparks (the holy inside the every day), the curve represents separation and holiness

Raysh.....#200.....Rachamim (compassion)

G-d shelters us yet leaves us open to experience the world

Shin.....#300.....Shalom (peace, wholeness)

Stable and full, like a three legged stool

Tav.....#400.....Torah

We are surrounded by God with the earth underneath us