



Hebrew Reading Challenge

Submitted by Hanalei Laner

Subject Area

This game can be used when working on Hebrew reading skills (beginning to advanced), practicing prayer reading skills, and when students are learning how to chant prayers.

Target Age Group(s)

Project can be used for any age group that is studying Hebrew or working on Hebrew Prayers.

Lesson Objective(s)

Students will have fun reinforcing reading (and chanting) skills. All students will be engaged and involved at all times.

The hardest thing about teaching Hebrew is that students need to read aloud, individually, in the class, so that the teacher can assess reading abilities. The problem with this is that while one student is reading out loud, the other students are bored. This is especially true if the student has reading problems and takes a while to read a word. This often leads to children misbehaving in class. I invented a game that has been quite successful in remedying this situation.



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Have the class pick two teams. Students decide the order of students' turns on their teams. Students each have a copy of the prayer or page of reading. All students must follow along during every turn on both teams. The first student from team Aleph has to read a word or phrase. Student is given one point if s/he knows which word (or phrase) is to be read or chanted, two points if s/he also reads correctly, and three points if s/he knows where to begin, reads correctly, and chants correctly (if it is a prayer the students are learning to chant). Student does not get a point for chanting correctly, unless s/he also reads correctly (but you could make your own rule about this). If the student on team Aleph doesn't know where to start, or makes a reading error, team Bet tries to read (or read and chant) the word (or phrase). This time the whole team gets to talk together to decide what they think the correct answer is. They pick one representative to answer the question. Representatives must rotate on successive tries at the other team's answers later in the game, so that it is not always the same student answering the questions. If team Bet gets it wrong, team Aleph gets a try as a whole team. The turn goes back and forth from whole team to whole team, until one team reads it correctly. Chanting the melody correctly, without pronouncing the words properly, does not earn points. As a team, the points are one point for correct reading, and two points for correct reading and chanting. No extra points for knowing where to read. Then the first student from team Bet gets a turn, and



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the game continues to follow the above rules. The game is played until the teacher decides it is over (ideally everyone has had the same number of turns). In addition to keeping track of points as a team, I sometimes have the students keep track of their individual points. At the end of the game, I make note of their individual points to help me assess their individual abilities. Students love this game because everyone can have fun. It also creates a camaraderie among the students.