

■ CLASSROOM TECHNIQUES FOR READING DRILL

We know that students must practice. There is no substitute for reading drill. The only way to produce fluent readers is to have them read and read, and then read some more. Too often we simply begin at the first row and have the kids read line by line, going around the room. Those in the back of the class have no need to follow along. They know it will be quite some time before their turns come. And our students vary in ability. Slower readers can make it difficult to keep the pace of the classroom lively. What can we do?

Here are some techniques for making reading practice more interesting and varied in *your* classroom. Don't feel obligated to use a suggestion that does not suit your teaching style. Different people teach in different ways. And *do* repeat an activity or method that worked especially well for you.

- Have students work in pairs reading lines to each other. Match a stronger reader with a weaker reader. Listen as they practice; correct errors that you hear.
- Let the student roll a die. Whichever number comes up is the line the student must read.
- Have the students try singing the sounds to the tune of a simple song such as Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, Doe a Deer, etc.
- Have students take turns reading two words at a time with the class responding in unison.
- Draw a tic-tac-toe grid on the chalkboard. Divide the class into two teams. To place an X or an O on the board, the students must correctly read a line in the book.
- Have a child read until you clap your hands. At that time, the next student reads. Determine the number of words according to the student's ability and reading fluency, keeping the pace lively. *

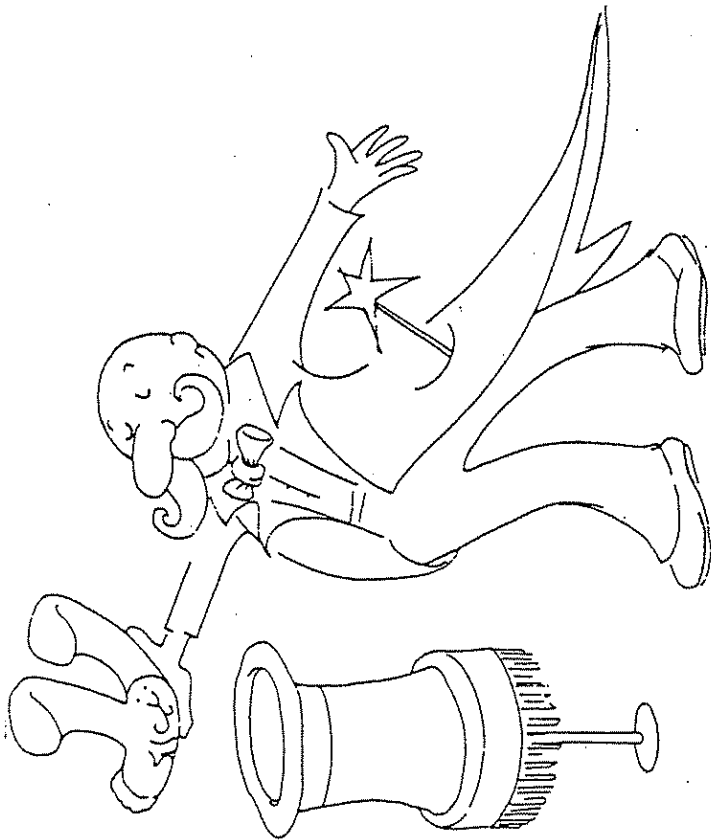
Split the class in two teams. Each student on team Alef reads a word in the prayer (only work on three lines at a time) in turn until the portion is completed. Team Alef has now established a time. The opposing team (Team Bet) attempts to better that time by reading the same selection in the same manner. Then, the teams reverse, each team trying to beat the other's time. If there is a mistake when reading, the teacher says, "No," and the team members may call out the word to help him/her along.

Read the prayer in a whisper, like a lion, like a "southerner," etc.

"If you are wearing red, read line one. If you are wearing blue, read line two."

One child becomes a coach and sits in coach's box with a prayer. A child commences reading one line and the next child follows in turn (do not call the children by name because it impedes speed and rhythm). The one who reads incorrectly becomes the coach, loses his/her seat and sits in the coach's box. First coach returns to his/her seat. New coach remains until he/she coaches or corrects an error in reading, and goes back to his/her seat, while the one who made the mistake goes into the coach's box. If the coach reads incorrectly, the teacher selects an easy word or line for the coach to read correctly, and the coach returns to his/her seat as a full participant.

OVER



- Have the first row of students read the first line in unison. Have the second row read the second line, and so on until all the lines have been read.
- Seat the class in a circle. Going around the circle, have each child read a word.
- Use a stopwatch to time reading. Students enjoy competing against their own best time.
- Allow each student the opportunity to read one line of their choice. Have them identify the line number before reading.
- Have one student read a line and then call out another line number for the next student to read, or call out the name of the next reader.

- Have the students read down the page by columns instead of across the page by lines (works well with Rhythm Reading exercises).
- Have four students work together to correct each other as members of the group take turns reading complete lines.
- Call out a specific word, such as "line 3, fourth word" and have a child read that word. Have that child call out the next one, or continue to call them out yourself with emphasis on words or letters that need extra attention.
- Change the line sequence by first reading all the odd-numbered lines followed by the even-numbered lines.
- Keep students on their toes by calling on the same child more than once.
- Have students read three words at a time. The first student reads three words. The second student overlaps by reading three words beginning with the second word. The third student begins with the third word, and so on. Another variation is to have each student begin with the previous student's last word.
- Have Student A read the "word parts" (e.g. מִן תָּן יָד יָד) and Student B read the whole word (מִן תָּן יָד). Or you read the word parts and the class reads the whole word.
- Encourage students to concentrate by having them follow the reading with their fingers.
- Have one student read aloud all the Hebrew sounds on a line, omitting one. Another student reads the Hebrew sound that was skipped.
- Record students as they each read a page. Two or three weeks later have the students, in the same order, read the same pages on a second tape. Play back both and compare.

CREATIVE REPETITION

The teacher reads one word at a time. Going around the room, each student rereads one word at a time so that student A says the first word, student B the second word, etc.

The teacher reads one word at a time and the class as a whole repeats each individual word.

Divide the class into two groups. Each group reads every other line.

Fill in the missing words: The teacher reads a prayer and stops after every few words to let the class or individual students fill in the missing words.

Put prayer words on 3 X 5 cards. Each child has between one and four cards in front of them. The teacher reads the prayer, word by word. As soon as the teacher says a word of the prayer, the child with that card stands up and repeats the word after the teacher.

Keep a deck of cards handy. When there's time for a quick drill, hand out the cards. Call on a student to read the line that corresponds with the playing card. Face cards are wild cards - students read a line of their choice.

Roll a dice to determine which line a student should read.

GUESS THE LINE

Skill: Hebrew reading and pronunciation

Material Needed:

- A Hebrew text

Game Outline:

1. Have players open their texts to a designated page. If the lines on the page are not numbered, have the players pencil in numbers next to each text line.
2. Choose a line of text and write the number of that line on a slip of paper, saying, "I'm thinking of a line. Guess which one it is."
3. A player should then volunteer to guess the line number by reading that line aloud. (Do not acknowledge that the guess is correct or incorrect until the player has completely and accurately read aloud the line of Hebrew text.)
4. If the line chosen is incorrect, have another player volunteer to guess and read a line. If the line chosen is correct, the player has won and should then choose a line of text for the rest of the class to guess and read. That player then assumes the role of leader. Players taking the role of leader should then help correct reading mistakes.

FIND THE WORD

Skill: Fluent Hebrew reading

Material Needed:

- A Hebrew text (e.g., a siddur, a story, or a vocalized newspaper)

Game Outline:

1. Have the players read a given text to become familiar with its content.
2. Read aloud a word for them to locate.
3. Have the person who locates the word read the word preceding it, the chosen word itself, and the word following it, or have the person read the entire line.
4. Have the person who has correctly located the word and read the text select and read aloud another word for the next player.

VARIATIONS

Skill: Overall comprehension

Ask the players a question and have them validate their responses using a resource presented to the group.

Skill: Prayer search

Name a prayer and have the players locate it by page number in either a siddur or machzor.

Skill: Vocabulary comprehension

Provide the translation of a line in a Hebrew text and have the players locate and read it.

DO'S AND DON'TS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

1. Do work on short meaningful units.
"Let's learn these 3 words."
"Let's concentrate on your 8's."
"What were the 2 words on this page that slowed you down?"
2. Do work for short concentrated periods.
"Let's see how much you can get done in the next 5 minutes."
"Let's see how many you can learn before recess."
3. Do review something a student learned when you previously worked with him.
"Let's see if you remembered your 8's."
"Let's check the words you learned last time and then move on."
4. Do practice something new in many different contexts.
"What two numbers will make 5? What other two numbers will make 5? What other two numbers, etc.?"
"Use 'courageous' in a sentence that will help us know what it means. Can you think of another sentence? Use it in a still different sentence."
5. Do have a student practice something new several times while you are there.
"Now that you know that word. I will come back to see if you remember is in a few minutes."
"Tell me your new word before you go out for recess."
"Remember the word you told me just before recess, what was it? Good, I'll ask you again just before I leave."
1. Don't work on a long unrelated series.
"Let's work on all 10 of these words."
"Let's work on the 100 multiplication facts."
"Let's work on all the new words in this story."
2. Don't drag out practice periods.
"Let's see how much you can learn by tomorrow."
"I'll be here all morning to help you with your math."
3. Don't skip an opportunity to review previously learned material.
"You learned your 8's last week, let's move on to your 9's."
"You learned 5 new words yesterday, let's try 5 new words."
4. Don't practice something new only once.
"What two numbers make 5?
What two numbers make 6?
What two numbers make 7?"
"Use 'courageous' in a sentence. Use 'novel' in a sentence. Use 'mystery' in a sentence."
5. Don't have a student learn something new and then not check to see that he remembers it.
"You learned a new word, be sure you remember it."
"Now that you've finished, we won't work on that anymore."

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| <p>6. Do give a student knowledge of results. "I'll nod my head each time you get it right. If I don't nod, you need to think again."
 "As soon as you finish the first row, I'll check it and let you know how you've done."
 "I'll go over your paper at noon so you can see how much you've learned."</p> | <p>6. Don't leave a student wondering how he did.
 "A check on your paper means I've seen it."
 "I'll return these papers after vacation."
 "Just keep on practicing, it will be good for you."</p> |
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Examples of the Hunter Approach

In the article by Hunter above a number of terms and techniques are introduced. These approaches to skill work can often be seen in the *alef* curriculum. As a guide to more effective use of the Hunter techniques, you may find some of the following examples taken from the Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur unit useful.

Hunter talks about three basic techniques—*modeling*, *monitoring*, and *meaning*. Among the many examples of *modeling* found throughout the curriculum, you might consider Lesson Two, Activity 8, in which the teacher says the *berakha* before the class repeats it.

Monitoring is demonstrated in the same Activity, as the children repeat what the teacher has just modeled. The exercise with the circles at the end of Lesson Two, Activity 6, is another example of *monitoring*.

Meaning can be seen in the third suggestion given in Lesson One, Activity 3, concerning the appearance of the moon at the time of various Jewish holidays. The graph of birthdays in Lesson One, Activity 5, is another example of the *meaning* technique.