

Teacher's Guide To Mitkadem Ramah 1 and Ramah 2

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To my most important teachers: Jesse, Lena, and Talya
—CES

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Introduction to the *Mitkadem* Program

Parents choose to send their children to our synagogues for Jewish education. No matter what their attitude or expectations may be upon arrival, their registration demonstrates a commitment to Jewish education and living. Students themselves arrive at religious school with varying degrees of familiarity with Judaism, Jewish ideas, and Jewish life. The *Mitkadem* program is designed to provide opportunities for each student to learn, to develop skills and pride, and to feel a part of the larger Jewish community.

Given the realities of supplementary Jewish education (e.g., limited time, different levels of motivation and involvement with Jewish practice), we must carefully think out our goals and use our valuable time in support of their fulfillment.

Toward this end, the *Mitkadem* program concentrates on Hebrew for prayer and ritual. Throughout the years of this program we will repeatedly present and reinforce these **Enduring Understandings**:

1. Hebrew is an authentic language of Jewish prayer and ritual and is one element that binds the diverse Jewish people to one another.
2. Prayer and ritual are essential behaviors in living a Jewish life.
3. Hebrew is a living language, and therefore, it has evolved from ancient to medieval to modern times.
4. Hebrew is a powerful means of expressing Jewish uniqueness, binding Jews to God and to one another.
5. Many concepts and ideals of Judaism are best expressed in Hebrew, and translation can be inexact.
6. The prayer service has altered over time, in content, structure, and leadership, in order to address changed perspectives in the world.
7. Some knowledge of the structure of the Hebrew language can assist in our understanding of familiar prayers and blessings, even without the ability to translate proficiently.

The above Enduring Understandings elicit **Essential Questions** that will be addressed throughout the program:

1. Why is the Hebrew language special for the Jewish people?
2. What distinguishes Hebrew as a language of Jewish prayer?
3. How has Hebrew evolved to adapt to changes in Jewish culture?

4. How does the Hebrew language enable me to relate to God and the people of Israel?
5. How does knowledge of the Hebrew language help me to express my Jewish identity?
6. How do the Jewish people use Hebrew?
7. What benefit is there to me to learn any Hebrew?
8. What is the purpose and effect of a set order of prayer?
9. Can I learn what God wants of me from the study and practice of prayer/ceremony?
10. Do I have to believe in God to pray?
11. Do I have to pray in a certain way to do it “right”?
12. What method/custom/*minhag* of prayer touches me?
13. Is there a difference in using Hebrew or English in Jewish prayer and ceremony?
14. How important is the exactness of translation in a *siddur*?
15. What tools do I need to understand the Hebrew?

A Self-Paced Approach

The materials and activities of *Mitkadem* will operate in a traditional classroom with all students doing the same work simultaneously. The program, however, was conceived to allow for students to work each at their own pace. While this may pose challenges to teachers for whom this approach is new (see “Choosing How to Proceed,” pp. 14–16 and 21–22, for further explanation), these benefits can be achieved:

- Motivated and knowledgeable students can proceed quickly through the material. They will feel accomplished and understand that Jewish study can be challenging and stimulating.
- Students who have more difficulty with Hebrew and/or are absent frequently can pick up wherever they left off. They may not cover as much material as more proficient students, but they too will feel good about and grounded in what they do accomplish. They need not feel “left behind” or self-conscious when compared with their classmates.
- With all students occupied at their own level, behavior problems diminish.
- If a few students do fall behind or want to progress more quickly, they can do work at home with no disadvantage to those students who do not do work at home.
- Students cannot “fall through the cracks.” With constant monitoring of work, it is clear if a student is falling behind, doesn’t understand material, or is reading below grade level.

A Comprehensive Approach to Hebrew

In order to address these Essential Questions and develop Enduring Understandings, a synagogue Hebrew program must be more than classroom workbook activities! In successfully learning to decode Hebrew and to practice Jewish prayer and ritual, students must have opportunities to read, listen to, and pronounce Hebrew words. Therefore, a comprehensive school program should include *t’filah* (prayer), singing in Hebrew, and the use of blessings and Hebrew words in the classroom and synagogue venues. A comprehensive program will include the three following fundamental components.

1. Practice—as in Training

In our classrooms, Hebrew is an academic pursuit. Drilling reading and vocabulary, explaining the rudiments of grammar, and examining the Jewish concepts inherent in our *siddur* are key tasks for teachers. Classrooms are the place for explanation and “rehearsal” of Jewish ritual and prayer. The approach of the *Mitkadem* program suggests that students:

- Use the limited time effectively by being actively engaged with the material at hand as much as possible.
- Foster friendships and a feeling of belonging by being grouped according to grade level rather than proficiency level during study. Students should frequently find opportunities to work in pairs or small groups.
- Be challenged each at their own level. Allowance for different levels of competence in each classroom should be designed into an individuated program.

2. Practice—as in Observance

A comprehensive Hebrew program will develop a context for Jewish practice by presenting occasions for actual observance of ritual and prayer during and outside of school hours. Observance implies celebration at the actual time of the holiday and regular prayer as part of a weekly school program. The approach of the *Mitkadem* program suggests that students:

- Participate in weekly worship. Teaching happens in the classroom, while opportunities for actual prayer require services that, while age appropriate, are consistent with Jewish tradition. This means that on Sunday morning students participate in a weekday *Shacharit* service rather than a pseudo Shabbat service.
- Become familiar with prayers before they read them. A *Shacharit* service for second graders does not have to be pared down to two or three one-line prayers. Getting used to hearing the *V'ahavta* chanted will help children read the prayer once their skills have reached that level.
- Celebrate holidays and Shabbat, and observe daily rituals together. Schools should promote community ritual and holiday celebrations, attendance at Shabbat and holiday services, recitation of various blessings at appropriate times, and recognition of important life-cycle moments within a Jewish context.

3. Practice—as in Routine

Eventually, students must become independent of the school in order to make Jewish practice and living a real part of their lives. Students have to see and hear information and behavior outside of the classroom context for it to be viewed as valuable to everyday living. Parents and the home are essential to this endeavor. Our schools today must offer opportunities, not requirements, for parental involvement and education, homework, and application of material learned (e.g., participation in services and holiday ritual) outside of the classroom. Those not participating should not be penalized on the classroom level. The approach of the *Mitkadem* program suggests that:

- Students and parents be offered educational opportunities for home. Duplicate educational materials can be made available for purchase, so that parents can be informed and even learn together with the child. Optional homework can include reinforcement or enrichment activities.
- Parents be invited to help out in the classroom. With students working on their own, the more help the better! Knowledgeable parents will serve as wonderful role models.

- Parents can be learners in the same classroom (or home) with their children. *Mitkadem* self-paced activities can offer a context for intergenerational learning. Learning parents are also wonderful role models!
- Teachers should help create a context for the use of Hebrew and ritual outside of the classroom and synagogue. They should keep parents informed of students' skills and offer suggestions to incorporate them at home (e.g., reciting *HaMotzi* before dinner as a family, saying *Sh'ma* before going to sleep).
- Teachers can promote the use of key Hebrew words in everyday language (*tzedakah* instead of "charity"; *chag* instead of "holiday"). The vocabulary word list pp. 8–12 is a good place to start. The list can be sent home to parents.

Based on these three aspects of practice—training, observance, and routine—students will learn that Hebrew is part of a Judaism that involves lifelong learning, *avodah* (worship and ritual), and personal Jewish devotion.

Note on the Use of Transliteration in Ramot 1 and 2

We are aware of the controversy that surrounds the use of transliteration. A conscious attempt has been made to minimize the amount of transliteration used. Because *Mitkadem* is designed as a program in which students do a good deal of the learning on their own, rather than through the traditional frontal teaching method, some transliteration at the beginning of the program is necessary.

There is some transliteration used for instructional purposes in Ramah 1, as the students have not yet learned to read Hebrew words. There is less transliteration used in Ramah 2. It appears only when necessary, for example to explain a concept, like *sofit* or *dageish*, for which the students will not yet have learned the necessary letters or vowels. You will notice that once students have learned the necessary letters or vowels, transliteration of those words is no longer used. Names of letters are written in transliteration only when absolutely necessary to introduce a new letter or explain a concept like the difference between a *mem* and a *mem sofit*. The names of the vowels, however, are given in transliteration throughout Ramah 2.

The subsequent Ramot in the series will assume that the students can read Hebrew, and every effort will be made to avoid the use of transliteration.

Ramah 1

Student Materials for Ramah 1

1. A self-check workbook
2. A *Hebrew Helpers Kit* packet of activities (also to be used in Ramah 2) which includes:
 - An *Alef-bet Chart* with names and sounds of the letters on the flap of the envelope.
 - Thirty-two *Alef-bet Letter Cards* that can be used as playing cards.
 - An *Alef Advancer*—a self-check device with three changeable strips. Students match letters with their names or sounds.

(The ten die-cut *Advancer Vowel Cards* and four “*What’s the Difference?*” *Puzzles* will be used in Ramah 2.)

Objectives for Ramah 1

Presented with a general overview of the Hebrew *alef-bet*, students will be able to:

1. Practice right to left directionality of Hebrew.
2. Independently examine and compare the forms of the Hebrew letters.
3. Write each letter of the *alef-bet* in block printing.
4. Find familiar Hebrew letters in words.
5. Decipher familiar Hebrew words without vowels.
6. Use a variety of Hebrew ritual vocabulary words.
7. Match *sofit* letters with their “partners.”
8. Group Hebrew letters by commonalities, such as letters that sound alike, look alike, have a *dageish*, or have similar components.
9. Explain the visual differences in letters that look alike but are different.
10. Identify Hebrew letters on ritual objects that they examine.
11. Decorate Jewish ritual objects with Hebrew lettering.

Hebrew Vocabulary Words

Below is a list of the vocabulary words used in the workbook for Ramah 1. The criteria used and issues addressed in choosing words on the list are as follows:

1. There are three vocabulary words for every letter. They should be familiar, previously heard words from a Jewish ritual context. It will be helpful for students to first read words that they already know.
2. As much as possible, teachers should consciously use these words with students before they begin Ramah 1. That means that teachers in kindergarten and above should have the list and use the words.
3. Once the words are introduced, teachers should strive to always say them in Hebrew and not use the English equivalent.
4. All the words are purposely written without vowels. Students will come to identify letters through whole Hebrew words that they already know. They will become comfortable with the right to left directionality before having to add the up and down direction of the vowels. Ramah 2 concentrates on vowels and phonetic decoding of syllables.

HEBREW VOCABULARY WORDS

RAMAH 1

(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE IN PROGRAM)

SHIN

Sabbath	<i>Shabbat</i>	שַׁבָּת
Shofar	<i>shofar</i>	שׁוֹפָר
Peace	<i>shalom</i>	שְׁלוֹמִים

BET

Pulpit	<i>bimah</i>	בִּימָה
Egg	<i>beitzah</i>	בֵּיצָה
Blessing	<i>b'rachah</i>	בְּרָכָה

LAMED

Lulav	<i>lulav</i>	לוּלָב
To life	<i>l'chayim</i>	לְחַיִּים
Bread	<i>lechem</i>	לֶחֶם

REISH

Rosh HaShanah	<i>Rosh HaShanah</i>	רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה
Spirit, wind	<i>ruach</i>	רוּחַ
Gragger	<i>raashan</i>	רַעְשָׁן

CHET

Holiday	<i>chag</i>	חַג
Challah	<i>challah</i>	חֲלָה
Chanukah	<i>Chanukah</i>	חֲנֻכָּה

MEM

Mezuzah	<i>mezuzah</i>	מְזוּזָה
King	<i>melech</i>	מֶלֶךְ
Lamp	<i>menorah</i>	מְנוֹרָה

NUN

Prophet	<i>navi</i>	נָבִיא
Miracle	<i>neis</i>	נֵס
Candle	<i>ner</i>	נֵר

SAMECH

Seder	<i>seder</i>	סֵדֶר
Sukkot	<i>Sukkot</i>	סֻכּוֹת
Book	<i>sefer</i>	סֵפֶר

ZAYIN

Remembrance	<i>zikaron</i>	זִכְרוֹן
Time	<i>z'man</i>	זְמַן
Bone	<i>z'roa</i>	זְרוֹעַ

KAF

Skullcap	<i>kippah</i>	כִּפָּה (כִּיפָה)
Karpas	<i>karpas</i>	כַּרְפָּס
Crown	<i>keter</i>	כִּתְרֵת

TAV

Torah	<i>Torah</i>	תּוֹרָה
Prayer	<i>t'filah</i>	תְּפִלָּה (תפילה)
T'kiah	<i>t'kiah</i>	תְּקִיעָה

KUF

Holy	<i>kadosh</i>	קָדוֹשׁ
Community	<i>k'hilah</i>	קְהִלָּה (קהילה)
Parchment	<i>k'laf</i>	קֶלֶף

YOD

Pointer, hand	<i>yad</i>	יָד
Jerusalem	<i>Y'rushalayim</i>	יְרוּשָׁלַיִם
Israel	<i>Yisrael</i>	יִשְׂרָאֵל

DALET

Speech	<i>dibur</i>	דְּבוּר (דיבור)
Enough for us	<i>dayeinu</i>	דַּיֵּינוּ
Path, way	<i>derech</i>	דֶּרֶךְ

TZADI

Tzedakah	<i>tzedakah</i>	צְדָקָה
Zion	<i>Tziyon</i>	צִיּוֹן
Fringes	<i>tzitzit</i>	צִיצִית

SIN

Joy	<i>simchah</i>	שִׂמְחָה
Language	<i>safah</i>	שָׂפָה
Sarah	<i>Sarah</i>	שָׂרָה

TET

Tu BiSh'vat	<i>Tu BiSh'vat</i>	ט"ו בְּשִׁבָּט
Good	<i>tov</i>	טוֹב
Prayer shawl	<i>tallit</i>	טְלִית

HEI

Separation; Ceremony ending Shabbat	<i>havdalah</i>	הַבְדָּלָה
Haggadah	<i>Haggadah</i>	הַגְדָּה
Blessing over bread	<i>HaMotzi</i>	הַמוֹצֵיא

VAV

And you should love	<i>Vahavta</i>	וְאַהַבְתָּ
Forever	<i>va'ed</i>	וְעַד
And commanded us	<i>Vtzivanu</i>	וְצִוָּנוּ

GIMEL

Great	<i>gadol</i>	גָּדוֹל
Mighty	<i>gibor</i>	גִּבּוֹר (גיבור)
Doer of good deeds	<i>gomeil</i>	גּוֹמֵל

PEI

Purim	<i>Purim</i>	פּוּרִים
Passover	<i>Pesach</i>	פֶּסַח
Fruit	<i>p'ri</i>	פְּרִי

ALEF

Light	<i>or</i>	אוֹר
Afikoman	<i>afikoman</i>	אַפִּיקוֹמָן
Citron	<i>etrog</i>	אֶתְרוֹג

AYIN

World, universe	<i>olam</i>	עוֹלָם
Nation, people	<i>am</i>	עַם
Tree	<i>eitz</i>	עֵץ

LETTERS THAT NEVER BEGIN A WORD

Using words that have been previously presented:

VET

<i>Havdalah</i>	הַבְדָּלָה
<i>Lulav</i>	לוּלָב
<i>Tov</i>	טוֹב
<i>Navi</i>	נָבִיא
<i>Vahavta</i>	וְאַהַבְתָּ

CHAF

<i>B'rachah</i>	בְּרָכָה
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FEI

<i>Shofar</i>	שׁוֹפָר
<i>Sefer</i>	סֵפֶר
<i>Tefilah</i>	תְּפִלָּה
<i>Afikoman</i>	אַפִּיקוֹמָן

SOFIYOT

Letters that only appear at the end of a word, matched with their “partner” letters. Using words that have been previously presented:

CHAF SOFIT

<i>Melech</i>	מֶלֶךְ
<i>Derech</i>	דֶּרֶךְ

NUN SOFIT

<i>Afikoman</i>	אַפִּיקוֹמָן
<i>Tziyon</i>	צִיּוֹן
<i>Z'man</i>	זְמַן
<i>Zikaron</i>	זִכְרוֹן
<i>Raashan</i>	רֵאשִׁון

TZADI SOFIT

<i>Eitz</i>	עֵץ
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MEM SOFIT

<i>Shalom</i>	שָׁלוֹם
<i>L'chayim</i>	לְחַיִּים
<i>Y'rushalayim</i>	יְרוּשָׁלַיִם
<i>Purim</i>	פּוּרִים
<i>Olam</i>	עוֹלָם
<i>Am</i>	עַם

FEI SOFIT

<i>K'laf</i>	קָלָף
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HEBREW VOCABULARY WORDS

RAMAH 1

(IN ORDER OF HEBREW ALEF-BET)

ALEF

Light	or	אור
Afikoman	<i>afikoman</i>	אֶפִיקוֹמָן
Citron	<i>etrog</i>	אֶתְרוֹג

BET

Pulpit	<i>bimah</i>	בֵּימָה
Egg	<i>beitzah</i>	בֵּיצָה
Blessing	<i>b'rachah</i>	בְּרָכָה

GIMEL

Great	<i>gadol</i>	גָּדוֹל
Mighty	<i>gibor</i>	גִּבּוֹר (גיבור)
Doer of good deeds	<i>gomeil</i>	גּוֹמֵל

DALET

Speech	<i>dibur</i>	דִּבּוּר (דיבור)
Enough for us	<i>dayeinu</i>	דַּיֵּינוּ
Path, way	<i>derech</i>	דֶּרֶךְ

HEI

Separation	<i>havdalah</i>	הַבְדָּלָה
Haggadah	<i>Haggadah</i>	הַגָּדָה
Blessing over bread	<i>HaMotzi</i>	הַמּוֹצֵא

VAV

And you should love	<i>Vahavta</i>	וְאַהֲבַתָּה
Forever	<i>va'ed</i>	וָעֵד
And commanded us	<i>Vtzivanu</i>	וְצִוָּנוּ

ZAYIN

Remembrance	<i>zikaron</i>	זִכְרוֹן
Time	<i>zman</i>	זְמַן
Bone	<i>z'roa</i>	זְרוּעַ

CHET

Holiday	<i>chag</i>	חַג
Challah	<i>challah</i>	חָלָה
Chanukah	<i>Chanukah</i>	חֲנֻכָּה

TET

Tu BiSh'vat	<i>Tu BiSh'vat</i>	ט"ו בִּשְׁבָט
Good	<i>tov</i>	טוֹב
Prayer shawl	<i>tallit</i>	טָלִית

YOD

Pointer, hand	<i>yad</i>	יָד
Jerusalem	<i>Y'rushalayim</i>	יְרוּשָׁלַיִם
Israel	<i>Yisrael</i>	יִשְׂרָאֵל

KAF

Skullcap	<i>kipah</i>	כִּפָּה (כיפה)
Karpas	<i>karpas</i>	כַּרְפָּס
Crown	<i>keter</i>	כֹּתֶרֶת

LAMED

Lulav	<i>lulav</i>	לוּלָב
To life	<i>l'chayim</i>	לְחַיִּים
Bread	<i>lechem</i>	לֶחֶם

MEM

Mezuzah	<i>mezuzah</i>	מְזוּזָה
King	<i>melech</i>	מֶלֶךְ
Lamp	<i>menorah</i>	מְנוֹרָה

NUN

Prophet	<i>navi</i>	נָבִיא
Miracle	<i>neis</i>	נֵס
Candle	<i>ner</i>	נֵר

SAMECH

Seder	<i>seder</i>	סֵדֶר
Sukkot	<i>Sukkot</i>	סֻכּוֹת
Book	<i>sefer</i>	סֵפֶר

AYIN

World, universe	<i>olam</i>	עוֹלָם
Nation, people	<i>am</i>	עַם
Tree	<i>eitz</i>	עֵץ

PEI

Purim	<i>Purim</i>	פּוּרִים
Passover	<i>Pesach</i>	פֶּסַח
Fruit	<i>p'ri</i>	פְּרִי

TZADI

Tzedakah	<i>tzedakah</i>	צְדָקָה
Zion	<i>Tziyon</i>	צִיּוֹן
Fringes	<i>tzitzit</i>	צִיצִית

KUF

Holy	<i>kadosh</i>	קָדוֹשׁ
Community	<i>k'hilah</i>	קְהִילָה (קהילה)
Parchment	<i>k'laf</i>	קֶלֶף

REISH

Rosh HaShanah	<i>Rosh HaShanah</i>	רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה
Spirit, wind	<i>ruach</i>	רוּחַ
Gragger	<i>raashan</i>	רַעְשָׁן

SHIN

Sabbath	<i>Shabbat</i>	שַׁבָּת
Shofar	<i>shofar</i>	שׁוֹפָר
Peace	<i>shalom</i>	שָׁלוֹם

SIN

Joy	<i>simchah</i>	שִׂמְחָה
Language	<i>safah</i>	שָׂפָה
Sarah	<i>Sarah</i>	שָׂרָה

TAV

Torah	<i>Torah</i>	תּוֹרָה
Prayer	<i>t'filah</i>	תְּפִלָּה (תפילה)
T'kiah	<i>t'kiah</i>	תְּקִיעָה

Lesson 1

Opening

Ask students what they know about Hebrew. Why is Hebrew important to the Jewish people? Answers can include the following:

- *It is the everyday language of our homeland, Israel.*
- *We pray in Hebrew.*
- *Hebrew has been our language for thousands of years.*
- *Jewish people everywhere learn and use Hebrew.*
- *It is our “special,” holy language.*
- *The Torah is written in Hebrew.*

Tell students that this year they will learn about Hebrew letters and get ready for reading.

1. Pass out the *Hebrew Helper Kits*, which include:
 - *Alef-bet Letter Cards*
 - *Alef Advancer* (item with changeable strips for matching)
 - “What’s the Difference?” Puzzles
 - *Alef-bet Chart*
2. Instruct students to open the *Alef-bet Letter Cards* and the *Alef-bet Chart*. Each student should pair up with a partner.
3. Direct students to look through their *Alef-bet Letter Cards* and choose a letter that they “like.” Ask students to explain to their partner why they chose that letter. Then have them match the letters cards that they chose with the same letter on the *Alef-bet Chart* to see what it is called and what sound it has. They can repeat this process with letters about which they are curious, letters they have seen before, or letters they think they already know.
4. Direct students to choose two letters that look alike. Ask them to examine them and explain to their partner how the letters are similar and different. Have them find them on the chart to find out the sounds and names of each.
5. Ask students to say Hebrew words that they already know. These can include their own Hebrew names, names of others (e.g., Moshe, Avraham, Esther), rituals and ritual objects (e.g., *siddur*, *Torah*, *Haggadah*, *seder*, *Kiddush*), and holidays (e.g., *Rosh HaShanah*, *Purim*, *Sukkot*). Using flashcards, show students the letter that the word begins with. Then have them find the same letter either on their *Alef-bet Chart* or in their *Alef-bet Letter Cards*.
6. Have students take out their *Alef Advancer*. (To set it up, match the color on the strip to match the color of the arrow where it should be inserted. The right side of the *Alef Advancer* has a lavender arrow. The strips for that side have a lavender bottom that says “Insert.” For Ramah 1, the strip for the right side has the letters in *alef-bet* order. The left side of the *Alef Advancer* displays a green arrow, which matches the green bottom of its inserts. For Ramah 1, the strips for the left side have either the names of the letters or the sounds of the letters in random order.) Explain how the *Alef Advancer* works, and give students a moment to play with it, matching some letters. They will know that they made a correct match when the letters showing through the circles on the back are the same.

7. Let students take turns holding up letter cards. Say the name and/or sound of the letter, and instruct all students to match up the same letter on the *Alef Advancer*. This can be done several times.
8. Direct each student to choose one letter to learn for the day. They should find it in their *Alef-bet Letter Cards*, on their *Alef Advancer*, and on the *Alef-bet Chart*. Have students finish by holding up their chosen letter card and announcing to the class the name and sound of the letter.

Lesson 2

Opening

Pass out *siddurim* (one per child or per pair). Have students find the front of the book and open it. They should discover that the *siddur* opens from right to left. Ask the students how this book is different from the English books they are used to. Answers can include the following:

- *It opens from right to left.*
 - *It has Hebrew and English.*
 - *It is used at special times (services, holidays).*
1. Explain that just as the *siddur* opens from right to left, all Hebrew words are written from right to left. Write the word “Shabbat” in English on the board. Have students read it out loud. Tell them you will write the same word in Hebrew. Write the letters *shin*, *bet*, *tav* (no vowels) in block printing, and ask students to describe what was different about this writing. (*Hebrew letters, right-to-left direction.*)
 2. Pretend that a wall is an open book. Have groups of children stand in front of the wall and walk from left to right and from right to left (from the perspective of those watching). Seated students should call out whether they are moving in English or Hebrew reading direction. Everyone should have a turn to physically move from right to left.
 3. Put aside the *siddurim*, and pass out the students’ workbooks. Ask students how they think this book will open. (Right to left, of course!) Instruct them to find the front. There is a space for students’ names in English and in Hebrew. You can either write in their Hebrew names for them (beforehand) or tell them that by the time they finish the workbook, they will be able to write their own Hebrew names. Notice how the flaps on each side of the pages function. It is best, of course, if students keep the answers covered until they have answered the question. However, learning can happen even if they “peek” at the answers, so allow students to play with the book, have fun, and discover how they enjoy using the book.
 4. The first activities in the workbook have students using letter cards and workbooks to:
 - Practice right-to-left direction.
 - Find and order the letters for the word *Shabbat* in Hebrew (without vowels).
 They can do these on their own or as a class with teacher’s direction.
 5. Finish by having students open the *siddur* to a certain page. In teams or pairs they can count as many of the letters *shin*, *bet*, and *tav* as they can find.

Choosing How to Proceed for the Subsequent Ramah 1 Lessons

Once the workbook, *Alef-bet Letter Cards*, and *Alef Advancer* have been introduced, students should be able to work independently with any of these materials. The teacher (along with the school's curriculum supervisor or principal) has the following choices as to how to proceed with the program:

- **Prepare teacher-directed lessons introducing new material to the class as a whole.** Teachers determine the pace of progression through the workbook. In addition to the workbook, a variety of activities using the manipulatives in the *Hebrew Helpers Kit* should be presented during each class session. Some of them can be “required,” and others can be available to those who have finished the assigned work. Methods for implementing this approach are as follows:
 1. **Teacher reviews previously taught letters and introduces new material to the class.** (This is done through use of manipulatives, board work, review of workbook, and so on.) Teacher assigns activities for the day using the workbook and manipulatives. Some activities will require children to work alone and some in groups.
 2. **Teacher reviews previously taught letters and introduces new material to the class.** Workbook pages for the day are assigned. A variety of activities to be done at the completion of the workbook pages are available.
- **Prepare daily lessons allowing students to progress at their own pace and choice through a variety of activities.** A consistent classroom format is necessary in order for students to be able to work each at their own pace. It is also important for all students to have some individual time with the teacher each week. Arrangements that facilitate ease of classroom management and student comfort are as follows:
 1. **Activity centers:** Students rotate in small groups from one center to another for determined periods of time. Center activities can include individual progression in the workbook, game centers using the manipulatives (and other prepared materials) for partner or group playing, arts and crafts for learning reinforcement, and small group time with the teacher.
 2. **Combined individual and group activities:** Part of the class session can be used for individual workbook learning followed or preceded by group games, arts and crafts, and manipulative work, led by the teacher. Students can be grouped by level so that the activity reinforces their learning. For instance, a more advanced group playing Concentration with the *Alef-bet Letter Cards* might use fifteen different letters to play the game, whereas another group may use only ten cards.
 3. **Choice of activities for the day:** Teacher gives students a list of activities for the day (listed on the board, in a handout, or around the room as centers). All can be totally at the discretion of the student, or some can be required while others are optional. This classroom would look similar to the activity center classroom (see 1, above), but rotation to the centers is not regulated.

With each of these self-paced options, activities do not have to change with each class session. If enough activities are devised and available, a student cannot possibly complete them all in one class period. This eases preparation time for each class session.

- **Develop a blend of both approaches.** A teacher's personal style will determine which approach works best in a particular classroom. Some ways of blending self-paced with teacher-directed activities are as follows:
 1. **Teacher leads a lesson followed by a choice of activities.** Each class session begins with a teacher-directed introduction of new material and/or review of previously learned material. This is followed by time for students to learn on their own in the workbook and through other activities.

2. **Class is divided into “reading groups.”** Teacher divides the class into groups by achievement level. Each group has a different set of pages to work on for the day and the follow-up activities are altered appropriately for each group. (The risk to this approach is that students will get stuck in one group or another. Provisions for students moving in and out of different groups must be part of the setup.)

A variety of manipulative, reinforcement, arts and crafts, and movement activities can be found on pages 22–29.

Completing Ramah 1

Depending on how you have chosen to work with *Mitkadem: Ramah 1*, students will have either finished the workbook at the same pace (supplemented by other activities for those finishing their work first) or continued each at their own pace, resulting in students finishing at different times. If students do finish at different times, you can choose to have them:

- Begin Ramah 2.
- Continue doing enrichment activities described in this guide.
- Do more writing practice, since writing activities in the workbook are limited. Writing will reinforce learning.
- Assist other students who are not working as quickly.

Creating Ritual Objects

To mark the completion of Ramah 1, students can create ritual objects using Hebrew letters as decorations. These projects can also be done throughout the program. All of the projects listed below use vocabulary words in Ramah 1.

1. Make Shabbat ritual objects:
 - A challah cover can say שַׁבָּת, *Shabbat*; חֲלָה, *challah*; יוֹם טוֹב, *Yom Tov*; or הַמּוֹצֵי, *HaMotzi*.
 - A Kiddush cup can say קִדּוּשׁ, *Kiddush*; לְחַיִּים, *l'chayim*; or חַג, *chag*.
 - A spice box can say הַבְדֵּלָה, *Havdalah*.
2. Create holiday objects:
 - A matzah cover or plate can say מַצָּה, *matzah*, or פֶּסַח, *Pesach*.
 - An afikoman cover can say אַפִּיקוֹמָן, *afikoman*.
 - A seder plate will include the words בֵּיצָה, *beitzah*; זְרוּעַ, *z'roa*; כַּרְפָּס, *karpas*; פֶּסַח, *Pesach*; and סֵדֶר, *seder*.
 - A plate for apples and honey can say רֹשׁ הַשָּׁנָה, *Rosh HaShanah*.
 - A hanging for a sukkah can say סוּכּוֹת, *Sukkot*, and it can also contain the words אֶתְרוֹג, *etrog*, and לוּלָב, *lulav*.
 - A *chanukiyah* can say חֲנוּכָּה, *Chanukah*; גִּדּוֹל נֵס, *neis gadol*; יִשְׂרָאֵל, *Yisrael*; יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, *Y'rushalayim*; or צִיּוֹן, *Tziyon*.
 - A gragger can say רָעָשׁ, *raashan*, or פּוּרִים, *Purim*.
3. Decorate a flowerpot with the words טוֹ בִּשְׁׁוֹת, *Tu BiSh'vat*, or עֵץ, *eitz* (depending upon what is planted in it!).

4. Other projects using the vocabulary words from Ramah 1 include the following:

- Covers for books that are used throughout the year could say סִדּוּר, *siddur*; הַגָּדָה, *Haggadah*; and תּוֹרָה, *Torah*.
- A model of a sanctuary could include signs that say סִדּוּר, *siddur*; בִּימָה, *bimah*; זִכְרוֹן, *zikaron*; טַלִּית, *tallit*; צִיצִית, *tzitzit*; יָד, *yad*; תּוֹרָה, *Torah*; קֶלֶף, *k'laf*; כֵּתֶר, *keter*; מְזוּזָה, *mezuzah*; מְנוֹרָה, *menorah*; קְהֵלָה, *k'hilah*; תְּפִלָּה, *t'filah*; and כִּפָּה, *kippah*.
- A tzedakah box could say צְדָקָה, *tzedakah*, or צִיּוֹן, *Tziyon*.
- A model shofar could say שׁוֹפָר, *shofar*, or תְּקִיעָה, *t'kiah*.
- Wall plaques could say שְׁלוֹמִים, *shalom*; שִׂמְחָה, *simchah*; בְּרָכָה, *b'rachah*; or לְחַיִּים, *l'chayim*.

Using Students' Hebrew Names

A nice way to complete Ramah 1 is for students to celebrate their Hebrew names. They should be able to identify and write the letters in their names. Projects can include the following:

1. Have students learn how their names were chosen. Were they named after someone? Why that person? If not, how was that name chosen?
2. Have students find out the meaning of their Hebrew names. Does the name have a biblical origin? Have them find out about historic bearers of that name.
3. Have students create art projects using their names. These can include:
 - Name plaques to hang on their bedroom door or walls.
 - Ritual objects that are personalized.
 - A wimpel—a long piece of cloth that is decorated with the phrase “[Name of child], son/daughter of . . . , may he/she grow to a life of Torah, marriage, and good deeds.” The Hebrew phrase is

For a girl:

(Hebrew names of parents) בַּת (Hebrew name)

תִּגְדֹּל לְתוֹרָה לְחֶפֶז וּלְמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים.

For a boy:

(Hebrew names of parents) בֶּן (Hebrew name)

יִגְדֹּל לְתוֹרָה לְחֶפֶז וּלְמַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים.

Traditionally the wimpel was made from the swaddling cloth that the baby was wrapped in for his *b'rit milah*. The cloth was cut and decorated and became a Torah binder to be used at important life-cycle events, such as bar mitzvah and the *aufbruch* before the wedding. Today, wimpels are made for both boys and girls. They can be as simple as a piece of muslin decorated with fabric markers or as fancy as Torah binders made of velvet, embroidered, and finished with ribbon. It is up to the artist.

The students' wimpels can be displayed, and then saved for use during their b'nai mitzvah services later.

Family Activities

Invite parents to a “culmination” party. Activities can include those listed above done as a family.

Ramah 2

Student Materials for Ramah 2

1. A workbook, which includes:
 - Reading exercises to do with a teacher, aid, or mentor.
 - Self-check activities.
2. A *Hebrew Helpers Kit* packet of activities (the same one used in Ramah 1), which includes:
 - An *Alef-bet Chart* with names and sounds of the letters and vowels on the flap of the envelope.
 - Thirty-two *Alef-bet Letter Cards* that can be used both as playing cards and to construct syllables and words.
 - Ten die-cut *Advancer Vowel Cards* to use with the *Alef-bet Letter Cards* to construct syllables and words.
 - An *Alef Advancer*—a self-check device with changeable strips. Students match consonants and vowels with their names or sounds.
 - Four “*What’s the Difference?*” *Puzzles* to reinforce letter recognition.

Objectives for Ramah 2

Students will be able to:

1. Recall the sound and name of each consonant and vowel of the Hebrew *alef-bet*.
2. Decode one- to three-syllable sound combinations and words.
3. Read familiar Hebrew words used in ritual and prayer.
4. Match *sofit* (final) letters with their partners and correctly choose when to use each.
5. Discriminate between the *dageish* in letters whose sound it changes and in those whose sound it does not change.
6. Differentiate letters that look alike but sound different, sound the same but look different, change sound due to a *dageish*, and have other similar components.
7. Use a list of “Reading Rules” to aid in decoding difficult or unusual sound combinations, such as:
 - When ך and ם are silent.
 - How to determine when ך ך ך are consonants or vowels.
 - Identifying the “double-duty dot” on װ and ױ.

- Determining dots and symbols that do not influence the sound, such as a *dageish kal* (a dot inside a letter that does not influence sound), a *meteg* (accent mark), and *chataf* vowels.
 - Reading ׳ןןן and ״ .
 - Reading ן when it is the final syllable.
8. Write words in block printing.
 9. Decode syllables in different fonts.
 10. Independently complete written work and check their own answers.

Introducing Ramah 2

The opening of the Ramah 2 workbook assumes that students have completed Ramah 1 of the *Mitkadem* program. While this is the recommended approach, the book is designed so that students who have no previous experience with Hebrew or who used a different pre-primer will be able to use it as well.

From the first pages, *Mitkadem* Ramah 2 builds words with which students should already be familiar. This follows the natural approach of language acquisition theory, suggesting that children will more easily learn to decode if they are presented with words that they recognize. This allows the student to “read” from the beginning, feeling capable and perceiving connections between what they are learning and what they already know.

With this idea in mind, the order that letters are presented in Ramah 2 is based on:

1. Words that can be constructed from the consonants and vowels presented in the chapter. For example, the first word is *Shofar*, something that students should actually see at the beginning of the school year.
2. Spacing out the introduction of letters that look similar and therefore are easily confused, such as *hei/tav* and *ayin/tzadi*.
3. Timing of the introduction of different elements of Hebrew reading such as silent letters, how a *dageish* does or does not change the sound of a letter, and connecting “families” of letters (*bet/vet*, letters with *sofit* partners, etc.) so as not to present too much at once to the students.

With regard to the “Read with a Teacher” sections, most of the reading practice is comprised of nonsense syllables. There are also real words mixed in sometimes that students may recognize. This is done so that students will have plenty of practice decoding the vowels and syllables that have been presented. Once a sufficient number of consonants and vowels have been introduced, actual words can be built and are clearly marked in the section.

The Use of Hebrew Vowels and the *Dageish* in Ramah 2

You may notice in the early lessons of Ramah 2 that certain words are lacking a *chataf* vowel or a *dageish*. This is not a typo, but rather a deliberate choice to not use those concepts before they have been properly introduced and explained. Both concepts are introduced in the course of Ramah 2, and by the end of the book both are used as needed. They will of course continue to be used accurately in the subsequent Ramot.

If the Class Has Completed Ramah 1

Option 1: If the class is beginning Ramah 2 as a group

Introduction Lesson 1

1. On the board, write a few of the familiar vocabulary words from Ramah 1 **without vowels**, such as:

תורה סדר כפה חנכה שבת

Ask students to:

- Give the name or sound of any letters that they recognize.
- “Read” the words they recognize.

Tell students that they are ready to move on to the next level of Hebrew reading. When they complete Ramah 2, they will be ready to read out of a real *siddur* (prayer book).

2. Pass out both the Ramah 2 workbooks and the *Hebrew Helpers Kits*. Let them know that the book will begin with a “warm-up” review.
 - Read the Introduction together.
 - Have students open the items in the *Hebrew Helpers Kits* and do the activities under “On Your Own.” Pairing or grouping students is preferred. Students may need reminding as to how to use the manipulatives. Refer to Ramah 1, Lesson 1, #6 on page 13 for directions in setting up the *Alef Advancer*. (The only items they **will not** use at this point are the die-cut *Advancer Vowel Cards*.)

Introduction Lesson 2

1. Pass out *siddurim* (prayer books). Have students turn to the same page and examine a Hebrew section. You can:
 - Ask students which direction we follow to read Hebrew. (Make note if the book opens from right to left, also.)
 - Call out a letter (or hold up a letter card) and have students point to that letter in the book. Move through the room checking each student’s answers. Students can take turns calling out letters. Have them discuss what helps them tell letters apart.
2. Explain that in the *siddur* text there are many new dots, dashes, and other marks unfamiliar to students.
 - Invite chosen students to come to the board and write them.
 - Explain that all of these new symbols will help students learn to read Hebrew words.
3. Have students open their workbooks to page 2 and read and complete the section “Consonants and Vowels” together.

Skip to “Choosing How to Proceed” on pages 21–22 in this Teacher’s Guide.

Option 2: Recommended if students are moving at their own pace, completing Ramah 1 and beginning Ramah 2 at different times

1. If students are moving straight from Ramah 1 to Ramah 2 without a lapse of time, they should be able to just pick it up and keep going.

2. If students are beginning Ramah 2 after a summer or extended break, they may need help setting up the manipulatives in the *Hebrew Helpers Kit*. The first “On Your Own” activity under the Introduction will allow them to review independently. It is best if students work in pairs or small groups at their level.

If the Class Used a Different or No Pre-primer

Ramah 2 assumes that students are skilled at using the manipulatives in the *Hebrew Helpers Kit*. Even if they are familiar with the Hebrew letters, these classes should begin with the introductory lessons for Ramah 1. See pages 13–14 in this Teacher’s Guide. You can then proceed by either:

Option 1: If students have already been introduced to the Hebrew alphabet

Proceed with the Ramah 2 book from the beginning.

Option 2: If students have no experience with the Hebrew alphabet:

1. Extend the time that they have to work with the *Alef Advancer*, *Alef-bet Chart*, and *Alef-bet Letter Cards*.
2. Skip the first “On Your Own” activity under the Introduction. Begin the book with the heading called “Consonants and Vowels.”

Choosing How to Proceed

Once students have been introduced to the self-check system of the “On Your Own” activities and are comfortable using the manipulatives, they should be able to work independently with these materials. The teacher (along with the school’s curriculum supervisor or principal) has choices similar to those in Ramah 1 as to how to proceed with the program.

- **Prepare teacher-directed lessons moving the class along as a whole.** Teachers determine the pace of progression through the workbook. In addition to reading together and book work, a variety of activities using the manipulatives should be presented during each class session. Some of them can be “required” and others can be available to those who have finished the assigned work. Methods for implementing this approach are as follows:

1. **Teacher reviews previous lesson and leads students through a new lesson, which they complete together.** Teacher supplements the book with a variety of activities for the day. Some activities might require children to work alone and some in groups. “Read with a Teacher” can be done either:

- As a class group.
- With all students reading simultaneously in pairs, with the teacher rotating among students
- In small reading groups with the teacher. Once the new information has been introduced and activity assignments made, groups rotate on a schedule between book work, supplementary activities, and reading in a group with the teacher.

Whichever method is chosen, **the teacher (or assistant) must sign off in the designated space that the student has read.** This is one way to make certain that each child is heard and progressing.

2. **Teacher reviews previous lesson and introduces new material to the class.** Workbook pages for the day are assigned. A variety of activities are made available to be done only when the student completes the assigned workbook pages. “Read with a Teacher” can be done:

- As a class group.
- With all students reading simultaneously in pairs, with the teacher rotating among students
- In small reading groups with the teacher while the rest of the class continues with their assigned work.

Again, whichever method is chosen, **the teacher (or assistant) must sign off in the designated space that the student has read.** This is one way to make certain that each child is heard and progressing.

A variety of reinforcement activities can be found on pages 22–29.

Completing Ramah 2

When students have completed Ramah 2, they will be reading whole words. Whether they do this as a class, in small groups, or as individuals, it is appropriate to mark the occasion. Some ways to do that are:

1. Present the student with a certificate of accomplishment.
2. Give the student a button saying, “I Can Read Hebrew!”
3. Have a party with cookies made with Alef-bet cookie cutters.
4. Say the *Shehecheyanu* to mark the moment.

In fact, all of these choices could be blended to create a lovely class ritual. Invite parents! Invite the grade below, so that they can look forward to what is coming for them in the following year.

Reinforcement Activities for Ramah 1 and Ramah 2

Whatever the classroom methodology chosen, similar reinforcement activities can be used for both Ramah 1 and Ramah 2.

Arts and Crafts

1. **Clay.** The favorite, reusable medium. A product that works like clay, but creates permanent papier-mâché objects is *Celluclay*, available at arts and crafts suppliers.
 - **Ramah 1:** Form letters, words, and vocabulary word objects out of clay.
 - **Ramah 2:** Form syllables and words. Work with clay to illustrate the differences between letters that look similar (א, ת, ח, כ, ב, פ, etc.).
2. **Pipe Cleaners.** This is a great medium for creating two- and three-dimensional figures.
 - **Ramah 1:** Form letters that are copied from the *Alef-bet Letter Cards*. Teachers can also supply pictures of familiar vocabulary words. Students form the first letter of the word.
 - **Ramah 2:** Pipe cleaners are particularly useful for showing how four of the five *sofit* (final) letters are created by straightening out the bottom line of the partner letter.
3. **Sand.** Colorful, fine sand can be purchased from arts and crafts suppliers.
 - **Ramah 1 and 2:** Pour some on a plate or piece of wax paper, and students can use their fingers to draw letters and objects. Pour the sand back in the bottle for future use.

4. **Stencils.** Cut out letters in poster board or purchase plastic stencils.
 - **Ramah 1:** Use for tracing, painting, filling with clay, or coiling with yarn.
 - **Ramah 2:** Students “write” words or label pictures of the vocabulary words using stencils.
5. **Ritual Objects.** Many of our ritual objects are decorated with Hebrew letters.
 - **Ramah 1 and 2:** Students can view and create *Kiddush* cups, challah covers, *siddur* covers, spice boxes, Passover plates, matzah and *afikoman* covers, graggers, and on and on and on. The letters of the Hebrew words should be an important part of the decoration. (Remember: vowels are not necessary.)
 - **Ramah 2:** Students can add whole words, including vowels, to objects such as Simchat Torah flags, M’gillot for Purim, Ten Commandments for Shavuot, etc.
6. **Name Plates.** Use students’ Hebrew names for learning letters.
 - **Ramah 1 and 2:** Projects can include making door plaques for their rooms, name stickers for books, pictures featuring their names decorated by symbols exhibiting their interests, and certificates recognizing classroom accomplishments.
7. **Personal Books.** Students create their own books. This can be an ongoing project, adding to it as they progress through the program. It can also be a culminating project at the end of the workbook. Pages can be decorated with different media.
 - **Ramah 1:** Students can make letter books, adding letter pages as they learn them. Each letter page can include illustrations of objects beginning with the highlighted letter. At the end of the project, students put the pages in alphabetical order before the final binding.
 - **Ramah 2:** Students can make word books using the vocabulary words from Ramah 1. Introduce each page as they learn the corresponding first letter. At the end of the project, students put the pages in alphabetical order before the final binding.

Movement

1. **Body Letters.** Students use their bodies to simulate the shape of Hebrew letters. This is fun in groups or with partners, too!
 - **Ramah 1:** Students form letters. See the variety of body parts that can create each shape!
 - **Ramah 2:** Groups of students make words together.
2. **Charades.** This is a great game for teamwork and getting children moving.
 - **Ramah 1 and 2:** Students pick a letter card and have to pretend to be an object that begins with that letter (examples: *mem* = *matzah*, *kuf* = *kiddush* cup, *yod* = *yad*). Students or groups get points for guessing the object and also the letter that it begins with.
 - **Ramah 2:** Same as above except that students pick word (not letter) cards that they have to read and then be. A variation would be to develop a list of words that all of the players hold. They have to read them and guess which one the player is acting out.
3. **Room Rush.** Great for a rainy day.
 - **Ramah 1:** Post letter cards around the room. Students (or representatives of teams) have to run to the correct letter card when the teacher (or another student) calls the name or sound of a letter. This can be played like a musical chairs game, so that there is gradual diminishment of players. The first team to the site could also receive points, so that all players remain in the game. A variation would be to call out a word that begins with one of the posted letters.

- **Ramah 2:** Same as above, but use words. As students get better at reading, have all the words begin with the same letter. Change the words more often.
4. **Catch and Call.** Use a small, **soft** ball for this game. With students sitting either at their desks or in a circle, they take turns throwing a ball to each other. Only the person holding the ball may speak.
- **Ramah 1:** This game can take two forms:
 - **Teacher Directed:** The teacher asks the questions, and the students throw the ball to each other, in random order. Whoever is holding the ball must answer the most recent question. Examples of how this method can be used:
 - a. Teacher points to letters on a hanging chart or holds up individual letter flashcards. The student with the ball must say the name or sound of the letter.
 - b. Teacher holds up word flashcards. The student with the ball says the name of the first letter in the word.
 - **Student Directed:** Students pass the ball independent of the teacher, unless errors require teacher intervention. This game can move quickly, if everyone is engaged. Examples of how this method can be used:
 - a. Hang letter cards around students' necks or, using large stickers, post letters on students' chests. (Each student has a different letter.) The player with the ball calls out the name or sound of a letter and throws the ball to the person wearing that letter. After they get used to the letters they are wearing, switch them.
 - b. In the same manner as above, post students' Hebrew names on them. When holding the ball, a student says his own Hebrew name first. Then he calls out the first letter of the name of the student to whom he then throws the ball. The catcher recites his Hebrew name, calls out a new letter, and throws the ball to someone whose name begins with that letter.
 - c. Students recite the *Alef-bet* in order, randomly throwing the ball around the circle. Each person says one letter and then throws the ball. (They really have to pay attention for this one!)
 - **Ramah 2:** Play the same way as Ramah 1, but use sound combinations or familiar words. A variation could be playing with a theme—for instance, upcoming holiday words or words from a particular prayer or blessing.

Manipulative Play

The advantage of using the manipulatives is that each child is **active and interacting with** the material throughout the session. Even when the teacher is directing the activity and the class is working together, each student is thinking and working with the letters in Ramah 1 and letters and vowels in Ramah 2 throughout, rather than observing other students working. Teachers can also automatically see which students are grasping the information and which students are struggling. The *Alef-bet Letter Cards* and *Alef Advancer* are designed to allow game playing between students, as well.

Using the Alef Advancer

This self-checking device can be used alone, in small groups, or with teacher direction. When students make the correct match on the front, the letters or numbers on the back should be the same. That is how they know they have the correct match.

Loading the Advancer

Colors on the strips match the color of the arrow where it should be inserted. The right side of the *Alef Advancer* has a lavender arrow. The strips for that side have a lavender bottom labeled “Insert.”

NOTE: Strips for *both Ramah 1 and Ramah 2* come in the same *Hebrew Helpers Kit*. The vowel strips should be *saved for Ramah 2*. Teachers may want to remove these entirely from the packet until the student begins Ramah 2.

- **Ramah 1:** The strip for the right side has the Hebrew letters in alphabetical order. The left side of the *Alef Advancer* displays a green arrow, which matches the green bottom of its inserts. For Ramah 1 the strips for the left side have either the names of the letters or the sounds of the letters in mixed up order.
- **Ramah 2:** The same letter strips are useful. In addition there are two more strips. The one for the right side has the letter *alef* paired with the ten vowels being taught. The strip for the left has both the sounds of the vowels and the names of the vowels. There are two matches on the left (sound and name of vowel) for each *alef*/vowel combination on the right.

Teacher-Directed Activities for Ramot 1 and 2

Each student uses the *Alef Advancer* to make matches. The teacher can:

1. Call out letters and vowels (sounds or names) for students to find and match on the *Alef Advancer*.
2. Hold up a letter card for students to match on the *Alef Advancer*.
3. Write a letter or sound on the board for students to match on the *Alef Advancer*.
4. Have students take turns choosing the letters or vowels to match using any of the three options above.

Independent Activities

Since the device is self-checking, students can run any of the activities listed above on their own. Even letters and vowels that have not yet been introduced in the workbook can be part of the “play,” since correct answers will always be evident.

Using the Alef-Bet Letter Cards and Die-Cut Advancer Vowel Cards

Teacher-Directed Activities

With students holding their own “deck” of letter and vowel cards (or a smaller deck of selected cards based on what the students have already learned), the teacher can:

- **Ramah 1—Use *Alef-bet Letter Cards* only**
 1. Call out the name or sound of a letter and have the students find that card. They can hold up the card for the teacher to see or set it aside. The teacher walks around the room to check each student’s choice.
 2. Have students take turns calling out names or sounds of letters for the same activity.
 3. Have students search for letters in a *siddur*. Students sit with prayer books open to any page. The teacher holds up a letter card. After identifying the letter or its sound, students search the page of the *siddur* for one of those letters and put their finger on the found letter. The teacher surveys the room for correct matches.

4. Use various ritual objects in the class. Students use their letter cards to spell out a word they see on a ritual object (e.g., *Shabbat*, *Kiddush*, *Shaddai*, *matzah*)

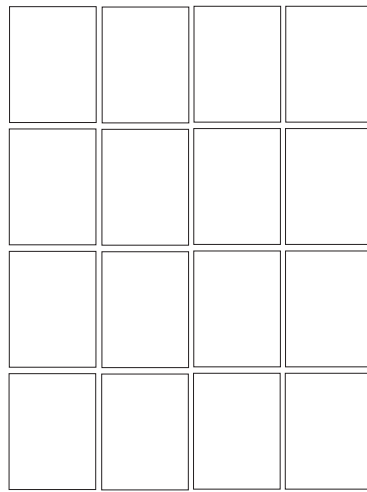
• **Ramah 2—Use *Alef-bet Letter Cards* and die-cut *Advancer Vowel Cards***

1. The same activities listed under Ramah 1 will be beneficial to review and drill letters. Add the vowel cards to those being used.
2. The die-cut *Advancer Vowel Cards* fit over any of the *Alef-bet Letter Cards* to create a syllable. The teacher should have students pick out a limited number of familiar letter and vowel cards. The teacher calls out the sounds of syllables and has students “build” the syllables using the available cards. The teacher walks around the room to check each student’s choice.
3. Students can build words from the letters and vowel cards, as long as more than one of the same vowel or letter isn’t necessary.
4. Students can create sound combinations for each other to build. They can also write them out when they have successfully replicated the sound or word.

Independent Activities for Ramah 1 and 2

1. **Card Games.** To play these games, students will have to combine their *Alef-bet Letter Cards*, making decks of playing cards. In order to facilitate learning and make the game less overwhelming, teachers can limit the “playing decks” to certain letters. For instance, toward the beginning of the year, teachers can have students find only the first ten letters of the *alef-bet* that they have learned to that point. Toward the end of Ramah 1, teachers can choose a playing deck that groups letters by theme, such as look-alike letters (e.g., *hei*, *tav*, *chet*; *shin*, *sin*; *bet*, *kaf*, *chaf*, *vet*; *dalet*, *reish*).
- **Go Fish/Diyug**—*four players; minimum of ten letters to play.* Four players combine decks, so that there will be four copies of each letter (e.g., ten letter cards = forty-card deck; twelve letter cards = forty-eight-card deck). After shuffling cards together, each player is dealt six cards. The remaining deck is placed in the center. The goal is to match up all four of one letter in order to remove it from your hand. The object of the game is to collect the most four-card sets. The game is over when there are no more cards in play. Players count the number of matches they each collected, and the winner is the one with the most. The order of play is as follows:
 - a. Player to the right of the dealer begins. This is player 1. Player 1 wants to find a match for any letter in his or her hand, by asking any other player in the group if that player has one. (*Do you have a bet?*) **Players should be encouraged to use the *Alef-bet Chart* or any other resource that the teacher supplies for finding letter names and/or sounds.**
 - b. If the “asked” player (player 2) has one or more of the requested letter, that player must hand all of them over to player 1.
 - c. Player 1 gets to continue asking any player in the circle, as long as player 1 continues collecting cards from other players. Player 1 may ask anyone in the circle each time for any letter in his or her hand.
 - d. If the “asked” player does not have the requested card, the player answers, “*Diyug*” (fishing). Player 1 then takes a card from the center deck, and play passes to the one who said “*Diyug*.”

- e. Any time that a four-card match is made (by requesting cards from another player or by choosing a card from the deck) then the match set is removed from the player's hand and set aside. If this happens when a player takes a card from the deck, then the player gets to take another card, but the turn still passes to the next player.
 - f. Play continues around the circle until all four-card sets have been matched.
 - g. Players count up their matches, and the one with the most sets is the winner.
 - h. Students must then redistribute the letter cards so that each player gets back one card of each letter.
- **Concentration/Hitrakzut**—*two or more players; minimum of eight letters to play* (sixteen cards to play). Two players combine decks, so that there are two copies of each letter. Letters are shuffled and placed face down, spread out in a grid. An eight-letter grid would look like this:



The object of the game is to collect the most two-card matches.

- a. The player turns over two cards.
- b. If the cards match, the player removes them from the playing grid and keeps them. That player gets to take another turn.
- c. If the two cards do not match, the player turns them back over in the same spots, and play passes to the next player.
- d. This continues until all of the matches have been made. Players count up their matches to determine the winner.
- e. **Variations** to this game can be added to enhance its educational value:
 - Players have to say the name or sound of the letter with each card that they turn over. (They may or may not be able to use their letter chart for help.)
 - When a match is made, the player has to say the name or sound of the letter before taking the letter.
 - When a match is made, the player has to say a vocabulary word that begins with this letter.

- **Spoons/Kapiyot**—*four players or more; minimum of fifteen letters to play.* Students do not have to know the letters in the deck. Their task will be to match letters by how they look; they will not have to announce the name or sound of the letters. Players mix their cards so that there will be four of each letter. With four players, seven cards should be dealt to each player. Five players should get six cards each, and six players get five cards each. The object is to stay in the game by getting one of the spoons at the end of each play. One player takes the first spoon when all of his or her cards have been matched in four-card sets. Other players each grab the spoons as soon as they notice that one has been taken. The last player to notice will not get a spoon, and that player will be “out.” Play is conducted as follows:

- Spoons (or another item easy to pick up, like small stones, large coins, or bottle caps) are set in the middle of the circle. There should be one less spoon than there are players (e.g., four players = three spoons).
 - Each player is dealt five to seven cards (see above for number).
 - The remaining stack of cards is placed in front of the dealer.
 - The dealer draws a card from the deck and decides whether or not to keep it, by deciding whether or not he or she has a prospect of creating a four-card set with it. (Is there at least one matching card in his or her hand?)
 - The dealer must pass a card to the player to the right. The dealer can either pass the card drawn or keep that card and choose one from his or her hand to pass.
 - The second player receives the passed card. The player may keep it and pass a card from his or her hand or pass it. **Each time a player receives a card from the left, the player must pass one to the right.**
 - The dealer continues drawing new cards and passing cards, so that after a moment everyone in the circle is continually receiving and passing cards.
 - Players want to create four-card sets. When a set is made, it is removed from the hand and placed in front of the player.
 - When all of a player’s cards have been put aside in sets and the player has no more cards in hand, then he or she takes a spoon from the center.
 - As soon as one spoon is taken, any player can grab a spoon. The one who doesn’t get one is out of play, and the next hand is dealt.
 - A new deal begins a new play.
 - The group of players diminishes with each play, until only one person is left the winner.
2. **Find the Letters.** The backs of the letter cards contain “hidden letters” in the design patterns. There are three patterns, each with a distinct color scheme, and each containing different letters. The letters in each “suite” are as follows:

Suite One (designated by design)

<i>Shin</i>	<i>Zayin</i>	<i>Kuf</i>
<i>Tzadi</i>	<i>Sin</i>	<i>Alef</i>
<i>Ayin</i>	<i>Tzadi sofit</i>	<i>Fei Sofit</i>

Suite Two (designated by design)

<i>Bet</i>	<i>Mem</i>	<i>Samech</i>
<i>Kaf</i>	<i>Tet</i>	<i>Gimel</i>
<i>Pei</i>	<i>Vet</i>	<i>CHaf</i>
<i>Fei</i>	<i>Mem sofit</i>	

Suite Three (designated by design)

<i>Lamed</i>	<i>Reish</i>	<i>CHet</i>
<i>Nun</i>	<i>Tav</i>	<i>Yod</i>
<i>Dalet</i>	<i>Hei</i>	<i>Vav</i>
<i>CHaf sofit</i>	<i>Nun sofit</i>	

Various ways that these patterns can be used to help students identify letters are as follows:

- **Find the Letter on Its Back.** Each letter is hidden in the pattern on its reverse side. As students learn a new letter, they can hunt for it on the back of the same card.
- **How Many Can You Find?** Have students hunt for all the letters on one card pattern. Teachers can supply the letters that are in each pattern, or students can be challenged to see how many they can find.
- **Where Can It Be Found?** Students remove three cards, one of each of the three reverse-side patterns. The teacher calls out a letter or writes a letter on the board. Students must identify on which card back the letter is found. (This can also be done at a learning center. A written list of letters can be available. Students must write the color of the reverse-side pattern on which each letter is found.)
- **Who's First?** Students can compete in finding letters first. In small groups, one student can call out a letter or sound of a letter. Other players search the reverse side of the card being used to find the letter. The first one to find it gets a point.

Onwards

As we said at the beginning of this teacher's guide, *Mitkadem* is designed to enrich students' knowledge, skills, and pride in being part of the Jewish community. A strong foundation of Hebrew knowledge allows for this enrichment. Of course, learning Hebrew is not a simple or easy thing to do. Yet, as the year progresses and your own familiarity with *Mitkadem* grows, you will be able to fashion creative solutions to your students' challenges in learning Hebrew. Remember to have fun with *Mitkadem*, playing games, using the Hebrew manipulatives, and filling your classroom with the sights and sounds of Hebrew. Using *Mitkadem* will definitely advance your students' Hebrew knowledge, and will open the door for a life-long understanding and love for *Ivrit! B'hatzlacha* on your Hebrew journey!

