

MINUTES-AT-A-TIME HEBREW LETTERS

The many many ideas below are a great complement to those wishing to present a Hebrew-letter-a-day in a quick, kinesthetic way! The list is especially helpful when introducing Jewish Life Vocabulary Hebrew-letter-by-Hebrew-letter (“This week we are focusing on *Torah* and *today*, both brought to you by the letter *Tav!*”). In the spirit of food justice, edible items are not on our list.

Activities completed in 2-4 minutes can be rather ephemeral – here one instant and gone the next! You are encouraged to preserve student work, either on behalf of the entire class (consider posting a representative item or photo on a bulletin board or website) OR on behalf of individuals (consider creating personal albums or pages on a digital site). *Madrichim* can be very helpful with these!!

Have other ideas? Post them to the [#OnwardHebrew Facebook group](#) and we will update this idea list over time!

Want to share your class’ work? We’d ALL love to see what your students have created! Post a photo (no kid faces, please) and an explanation to the [#OnwardHebrew FB group](#). We will add photos to this page with your permission!!

A note regarding the embedded links, below: Some potentially unfamiliar items include a link to the product on Amazon; please feel free to check around for better pricing and other packaging options. We imagine an educational program purchasing a class set of many of these materials and trading them between groups of students each session – one week the first graders might have use of the wiki sticks to create the letter *Bet*, and the next week, the fifth graders might make the *Shin* from the same sticks.

Ready? Let’s get creative!

1. Make letter shapes out of ...

- a. Clay or play dough
- b. Pipe cleaners
- c. Their bodies (check out [Alef Bet Yoga](#), but “freeform” with multiple students is also an option)
- d. Puff paint
- e. Glitter glue

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- f. Sequins – either by
 - i. Having students lay out the sequins in the letter shape (i.e., not glued down)
 - ii. Squeezing white glue in the shape of the letter and have students place sequins on the glue
- g. A mini “[Lite Brite](#)”
- h. [Wiki sticks](#)

2. Write letters in the air with ...

- a. Hands
- b. Feet (can they do this without falling down?)

3. Trace/write letters on ...

- a. Sandpaper cut into letter shapes
- b. A tray of sand
- c. A sensory squishy bag (info and recipes are [here](#))
- d. Black scratch off [art paper](#)
- e. Round scratch off [circles](#)
- f. Small flat rocks
- g. Shaving cream (unscented)
- h. Fingerpaint
- i. [Water beads](#), not soaked in water (this is a substitute for rice). Place on tray.
- j. Personal [white boards](#) (option: laminate white sheets of paper, 1 per student)
- k. The sidewalk, with chalk

4. Offer materials on which to creatively create the letter of the day, for example ...

- a. Maker-space or loose parts materials
- b. Hebrew stamps and paper (search for Alef Bet Letter Stamp Set)
- c. Colored pen sets
- d. Calligraphy pens or felt markers
- e. Thick ribbon to weave in the letter shape on a chain link fence

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5. Consider any of the following ...

- a. Prior to class, draw a large and thick letter of the day. Lay it on the floor and have **students decorate** the inside. Cut out and post to a bulletin board.
- b. Cut multiple Hebrew letters from an Ellison machine's die cuts. Have **students decorate the shape with creative materials**.
- c. Use [washable window markers](#) to write Hebrew letters on a window, making sure that there are enough letters of the day for **each student to locate one and wipe it** off. [This definitely needs permission from your education director and/or maintenance staff prior to doing.]
- d. Print a page of Hebrew letters and cover each with a [round scratch off circle](#). Have **students scratch off the circle** to reveal the letter of the day.
- e. Photocopy different letters and put them around the room. Ask **students to "eye spy" and count the ones that match the letter** you are focusing on.
- f. If no one is sound-sensitive, print one letter per person small enough to put inside a balloon. Blow up the balloons. Have **students sit and pop the balloon** to find the letter of the day.
- g. In advance, make for each student a mystery letter card by writing the letter of the day on white paper with a white crayon (press hard). Give students one of the cards, watercolor paint, water and a paintbrush. Have them **wash over their card with the paint** to reveal the Hebrew letter.
- h. Have **students move**:
 - i. Use their bodies to create letter shapes (either individually or with small groups); check out [Alef Bet Yoga](#).
 - ii. Do a letter dance

i. **Have students sing/chant**

- i. The letter (“alef, alef, alef, *pause*, alef, alef”). Pairs of students could come up with their own chant for a letter.
- ii. The shape of the letter (“line down, move to the right, line down, move to the left, line down” for a *lamed*)

j. **Play a quick Kahoot game.**

- k. **Show a Shalom Sesame segment** of the letter (search on YouTube – here is an [example for Bet](#)). Note that there are [English language letter videos](#) (usually 15ish seconds) and ones for [Israelis in Hebrew](#) (often 2 minutes long using muppet voices not familiar to American audiences); choose carefully. Consider sending home a link to those who were absent on a given day.

- l. **[For older students] – Bring in Hebrew books** (e.g., ones they might recognize like the [Cat in the Hat](#)) and

- i. Option: have them work in pairs to find the letter of the day on one page
- ii. Option: give each student the same photocopied page of a Hebrew book and have them find/circle the letter of the day. How many can they find?

- m. **[For older students] – In advance, create a “fortune teller/wishmaker” for each student** (a great task for *madrichim*). Have students put numbers on the outside, a Hebrew word (in English) on each of the four sides of the next level, and the letter of the day in each of the slots under that. Have them practice playing in your program and then take them home to play with family. Yes, each winning answer will be the letter of the day!

- n. **Offer Hebrew newspapers and magazines** (ask someone to bring these back from an Israel trip). Ask students to find and cut out the letter of the day from headlines and titles and glue on colored paper.