



Chalav u'Dvash - Hebrew for Preschoolers

User's Guide

Everything You Need to Know to Succeed with *Chalav u'Dvash*

Program Principles and Tips for Use in the Classroom

Please read before using the kit!



Department for Jewish and Zionist Education

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Shalom,

It is our hope that this User's Guide will guide the teacher successfully in working with the *Chalav u'Dvash – Hebrew for Preschoolers* program.

The guide provides useful information about *Chalav u'Dvash* and is intended to help the teacher implement the program in the most effective manner.

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Hebrew and the Jewish Child in the Diaspora

From the moment of birth, the child is exposed to language in every area of life. The first language is initially used for communication purposes and is learned and enriched in the home and outside of it through conversation, stories and songs. During early childhood the child is immersed in the language and masters the four basic language skills: speaking, listening and later on with the transition from preschool to elementary school, reading and writing. **This is not how the Jewish child in the Diaspora learns Hebrew.**

Hebrew is not the child's first language. Because it is not usually used outside of the classroom it cannot be considered a second language. However, Hebrew is not entirely foreign to the preschool child attending a Jewish program and who is involved at various levels with the social framework of the Jewish community. Echoes of Hebrew are caught at the synagogue, in the language of prayer, in holiday-oriented activities and in Jewish lifecycle ceremonies. Therefore, it is not considered a foreign language.

The prevailing approach regards the Hebrew learned in the Diaspora as an **additional language** to the child's first and second languages and provides the broader context for the emergence of a Jewish identity. Generally speaking, Hebrew enjoys little social/cultural/intellectual support outside the framework of Jewish life in the home, school and synagogue. At the same time, knowledge of Hebrew provides an infrastructure for preserving the child's sense of cultural particularity and Jewish identity, within the larger multicultural and multilingual society.

The child's living environment (except where it intersects with the Jewish communal framework) does not usually provide structures that can support this additional language. Therefore any educational framework that teaches Hebrew has to plan for and supply a variety of mechanisms that support Hebrew and make the learning of the language enjoyable, meaningful and interesting for the child.

Language Development in Early Childhood

The way in which children think, and the way they acquire and develop their first language, are relevant to the acquisition of Hebrew in early childhood. Conversely, learning Hebrew can contribute to the development and improvement of linguistic, scholastic, cognitive and literacy skills in a child's first language. **There is a basic level of shared language skill.** Despite the directional, phonological, grammatical and syntactic differences between the languages, there is a degree of cognitive, scholastic and literacy transfer between them.

Chalav u'Dvash – Hebrew for Preschoolers is based on the natural processes that characterize language development in early childhood.

During early childhood, children undergo a rapid and dramatic process of linguistic and cognitive development. By age six, a child is generally capable of expressing herself in long, complex sentences and her expressive vocabulary has expanded from tens to thousands of words. The child's language is becoming more complex syntactically and in terms of meaning, pragmatics and pre-literacy skills. These processes take place simultaneously and depend on certain cognitive developments:

- the ability to plan
- the ability to recall and categorize
- the ability to engage in intentional learning
- the ability to develop more than one point of view
- the ability to understand abstract and complex concepts
- the ability to analyze and solve problems.

Vocabulary development (as part of the process of learning a first and an additional language) is based on the acquisition of two types of words:

A. Content words – nouns, verbs and adjectives. More nouns are learned than verbs and more verbs are learned than adjectives.

B. Function words – Words of grammatical significance which serve to connect content words, such as personal pronouns (I/you), impersonal pronouns (this/something), prepositions (to/in/with/of), conjunctions (and/now), articles, interrogatives (where/who/what), linguistic patterns such as “there is/isn't/I have,” etc.

Knowledge of these words and phrases is essential for sentence construction. Because of this, the content and function words included in *Chalav u'Dvash* are among the most useful and commonly employed in Hebrew.

The following components form the groundwork for the development of language skills: phonological awareness, linguistic literacy and knowledge of the alphabet. These elements are universal and common to the acquisition and learning of any language. The following tables relate to these components at various stages of the young child's language development.

The Three Areas of Language Development in Early Childhood		
<p>Phonological Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of the sound structure of words. • The ability to perform various tasks with parts of words: to divide the word into syllables, to compose a word out of separate sounds, to add a sound to a word or delete one from it, to reverse the order of the sounds of a word, to be aware of word length. 	<p>Linguistic Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with words and their forms, with grammar and with syntax. • Development of “a linguistic register” – the way in which the child uses language for diverse communication purposes. 	<p>Knowledge of the Alphabet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter identification by shape. • Letter naming. • Writing of the letters.

Characteristics of Language Development - Ages Three to Four

Phonological Awareness

- Familiar with phonologically-based language rhythm and wordplay.
- Able to distinguish and repeat common phrases in children's stories.
- Distinguishes rhymes and is able to come up with their own rhymes.
- Beginning to be able to break a word into its syllables.

Linguistic Literacy

- Implicit familiarity with the declension system (gender, number, time, grammatical person).
- Morphological errors ("mouses" instead of "mice").
- In Hebrew speakers: familiar with common examples of "*smichut*" (a grammatical construct state which connects two words together e.g. instead of "brush of the teeth – toothbrush, book for coloring – coloring book).
- Makes more extensive use of function words, constructs simple sentences using a variety of structures.
- Beginning to understand word order in sentences and linguistic register.

Knowledge of the Alphabet

- Distinguishes between different letters, numbers and shapes.
- Knows the names of the letters (without connecting them to a symbolic or graphic representation).
- Engages in pre-communicative writing.
- Identifies letters at random and incorporates them into drawing/play activities.

Characteristics of Language Development - Ages Four to Five

Phonological Awareness

- Repeats and identifies rhymes.
- Decomposes words into syllables.
- Combines syllables.
- Counts syllables.
- Aware of similarities and differences between open and closed syllables in words.

Linguistic Literacy

- Developing morphological awareness
- In Hebrew speakers flexible use of a variety of conjugations.
- Produces “creative” forms such as “magic man” rather than “magician.”
- Developing conversational skills – turn-taking, staying on topic, listening to the conversational partner, repair of communication breakdown, able to tell a short linear story.
- Beginning to become familiar with participles such as written/ironed.
- Topics of conversation are less dependent on the immediate environment.
- Children in this age group enjoy symbolic games, role-playing, orchestration, etc.

Knowledge of the Alphabet

- Names several letters.
- Can write several letters.
- Identifies environmental print in the preschool, such as the names of the children (visuographic reading).

Characteristics of Language Development - Ages Five to Six

Phonological Awareness	Linguistic Literacy	Knowledge of the Alphabet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing awareness of consonant segments (consonant + vowel*) • Developing awareness of similarities and differences between the consonant segments at the beginnings and ends of words. • Beginnings of phonemic awareness. <p>*Consonant – a speech sound that is formed by mechanisms of the mouth area (consonant – phonetics), for example (in English): /g/ and /k/ are produced via the throat, while /b/ and /p/ are made by the lips.</p> <p>In Hebrew there are cases in which one letter represents two different consonants: <i>peh</i> and <i>feh</i>, <i>shin</i> and <i>sin</i>, <i>kaf</i> and <i>khaf</i>, <i>bet</i> and <i>vet</i>.</p> <p>*Vowel (Hebrew) – <i>kamatz</i>, <i>patah</i>, <i>hirik</i>, <i>sagol</i>, etc.</p> <p>In Hebrew there are 13 vowels, which taken together account for the vowel points or <i>nikud</i> used in the language.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing awareness of the characteristic structures of written language • In Hebrew speakers: developing awareness of the root structure and the ability to produce new words from existing roots, even words that do not actually exist. For example: <i>takan</i> – one who fixes (<i>metaken</i>). • *Familiarity with different kinds of nouns: those denoting occupations (librarian, painter), those denoting traits (loyal, stubborn) those denoting devices (screwdriver, cassette) • In Hebrew speakers: succeeds in changing the first component in a construct state, for example: • <i>Uga</i> (cake) – <i>ugat tapuhim</i> (apple cake). (This kind of change is characteristic of Hebrew but difficult for those studying the language and is not addressed in <i>Chalav u'Dvash</i>). • Begins to use complex structures such as conditional words. • Able to tell a story in the right order based on a series of pictures, as well as brief personal narratives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can name and write most of the letters in the alphabet • Can identify many names in the preschool (phonetic reading) • Awareness of the principle behind the alphabet • Engages in partial phonetic writing • Can attempt to decipher new words

About the Program

What is Included in the Kit

The *Chalav u'Dvash – Hebrew for Preschoolers* program materials include:

- Bentzi the Hebrew speaking turtle puppet from Israel
- A User's Guide and five Teacher's Guides that provide detailed instructions for every lesson and activity suggested
- Two CDs with original music and rhythmic activities
- Story books that accompany the material in each Guide (provided in two sizes)
- Illustrated cards used for a variety of games and practice of the Hebrew taught in the Guides (provided in two sizes)
- Additional materials including four interactive posters, dominos, flash cards and family member cards
- Graphics CD and one set of color print-outs of all the illustrations used in the program.

Although the kit comes with many teaching aids, we encourage both the teachers and children to create their own materials.

The Goals of the Program

Chalav u'Dvash – Hebrew for Preschoolers was designed for children in the Diaspora, aged three to six, who are engaging with Hebrew for the first time and seeks to:

- Impart a basic knowledge of spoken Hebrew that will also provide a foundation for future study of the language.
- Develop children's ability to communicate in Hebrew; by providing them with a variety of opportunities and incentives to use the linguistic patterns and vocabulary acquired in the program.
- Connect Hebrew to everyday social situations related to the children's experiences in the home, at school, in encounters with friends and holiday celebrations.
- Make Hebrew a source of pleasure for the children and involve the entire family in the learning experience.

The Structure of the Program

- The program includes five Teacher's Guides that provide materials for Hebrew instruction over a period of two to three years. Each Teacher's Guide is divided into thirty to thirty-five study units.
- Each study unit is based on a brief instructional segment, practice activities using the new word or linguistic pattern and an integrated exercise that includes a review of material from previous units.
- The study units are all structured in a way that encourages the use of music and movement, interactive games and individual language use.

Please note:

The program draws a clear distinction between **Hebrew instruction and Jewish studies**. The program emphasizes spoken communicative **language**. Therefore it does not focus on Judaic content but on common linguistic patterns and language use. We recommend that children be taught about festival-related mitzvot and customs (as well as any other Judaic content) in their first language, in which they will be able to understand and express themselves at the level of their cognitive, emotional and verbal development. Within the framework of *Chalav u'Dvash*, festival vocabulary and expressions are incorporated so that Hebrew sessions will not be disconnected from the larger topic of study.

Methodological and Linguistic Principles

The Child in the Center

At all stages of the program's design and production, it was the child on whom we focused. Throughout, we sought ways to make the study of Hebrew enjoyable, interactive and developmentally appropriate. *Chalav u'Dvash* is informed by what we know about children and what we know about language.

Progress with *Chalav u'Dvash* is dependent on four factors: age, learning ability, previous knowledge of Hebrew and the amount of time devoted to the program. Three year olds and five year olds will all start with the first unit of the first Teacher's Guide, but the rate of progress will differ from one group to another.

The emphasis in each study unit is on **speaking** and **active learning** – individually, in pairs and as a group.

The study units are organized in a manner that:

- Encourages the children to **speak** at least twice as much as the teacher does during the Hebrew session
- Focuses on **experiencing** and **using** Hebrew in a variety of activities suited to young children, such as movement and music, sorting and classifying, group games and games that incorporate various objects and teaching aids
- Fosters the **development of speaking and conversational skills** through questioning and answering, brief discussions and dialogues, dramatizations, recitations, poems
- Encourages **family involvement** – success in learning Hebrew will increase proportionately to the degree that the family is involved; the aim is to create a broader environment that supports Hebrew learning. We have therefore included in the study units suggestions for family-oriented activities and encounters.

Hebrew in Hebrew

The challenge faced by the teacher teaching Hebrew in the Diaspora is to make Hebrew a meaningful part of the child's world. In a situation in which the child's environment does not support the use of Hebrew, the preschool teacher has to create an additional channel of meaningful communication – a Hebrew channel. A fitting analogy is cable television. If you don't subscribe to a particular channel, you won't be able to use it! The teacher needs to create

the Hebrew channel and activate it, providing the child with an opportunity to choose and use it. We believe that this Hebrew channel can best be developed through Hebrew sessions that are conducted **only in Hebrew**.

The "Hebrew in Hebrew – *Ivrit b' Ivrit*" approach is recommended because:

- Children's attentive ability in Hebrew is inferior to their attentive ability in their first language. The ear is naturally "attuned" to the first language. If the session is conducted in a mixture of Hebrew and the child's first language ("Hebrish"), the children may not make the effort that listening in Hebrew requires.
- Hebrew may not be perceived by the children as a language of communication if it is not actually used for communication between the teacher and the children and among the children themselves.
- If the Hebrew sessions are conducted in both languages, Hebrew may come to be viewed by the children as a collection of individual words rather than as an organic whole.
- Hebrew in Hebrew instruction creates a basis for the development of thinking processes in Hebrew in the future.

Chalav u'Dvash – Hebrew for Preschoolers incorporates Hebrew on two levels:

- **The Hebrew of the linguistic patterns and vocabulary** - This is the Hebrew that is being taught in a systematic, gradual and spiral fashion and in which **the children are the main speakers**. This material comprises the Teacher's Guides.
- **The Hebrew of classroom management** – This is the Hebrew that is not formally taught and **which is spoken mainly by the teacher**. The Hebrew of class management includes expressions, vocabulary and phrases that are heard continuously in the classroom. These words are learned through ongoing activity, context and habit and are supported by the teacher's movements, demonstrations and examples. This kind of Hebrew includes phrases, expressions and instructions such as: *well done, quiet, everybody sit down, come here, now it is your turn, pass me* etc.

Occasionally, some of the classroom management language appears in the Teacher's Guide as material that is being formally taught. In such cases the children can use the language that is already familiar to them in new contexts. For example: it may be assumed that the expression "*Be teavon - good appetite*" has been part of the preschool routine from the first days of school. When this expression appears in the

Teacher's Guide, the children are already familiar with it from snack time and can expand their use of it to other contexts, in conjunction with the various phrases and vocabulary that they have already learned.

Hebrew Language Learning Environment

Speech alone does not guarantee that a child is learning Hebrew. A learning environment that supports the child as he explores and takes risks in Hebrew makes a critical difference. The Hebrew language learning environment can be divided into three categories: **linguistic, physical and social-cultural.**

A. **A rich linguistic environment** in which children talk, sing and play in Hebrew:

- Encourages the children and provides them with varied opportunities to use the Hebrew that they have acquired and to apply it in their everyday lives at school, in their communication with each other and with the adults present in the classroom.
- Incorporates pre-literacy (reading and writing) skills.

Chalav u'Dvash focuses on communicative Hebrew, on the spoken language and does not teach reading and writing. Nevertheless, it provides a foundation for Hebrew reading and writing skills, through:

- Games that emphasize left-right directionality
- Systematic exposure of the children to the written Hebrew word, through use of the illustrated cards and flashcards that come with the program
- The incorporation of texts and activities that focus on understanding what is read and heard
- Games, songs and recitations that focus on the phonology (sounds) and morphology (forms) of Hebrew.

B. **A physical environment that emphasizes visibility:**

The physical environment of a preschool classroom should reflect the learning that takes place there. An effort should be made to incorporate the Hebrew material studied into the preschool space. This can be achieved through:

- A Hebrew display area prominently located in the classroom, to display the material taught and the products of the children's learning, with photographic and written documentation of the activities
- A listening area with audio equipment, so that the children can engage in independent activity based on the program's songs and stories

- A music area in which the children can recite, sing, play and orchestrate the program's recitations and songs
 - A didactic games area to promote Hebrew speaking skills
 - A Hebrew library composed of the program books and books that the children and their families produce during the course of the program
 - A socio-dramatic activity area in which the children can engage in dramatic activity in Hebrew
 - An arts area in which the children can use and express their newly-acquired Hebrew via the plastic arts
- C. **A social-cultural environment** in which the learning process acquires deeper significance through involvement of the extended school community. This can be done through:
- Special activities in Hebrew, such as: performances in Hebrew, exhibitions of the children's creative work in the Hebrew program, a preschool newspaper in Hebrew, etc. These activities may involve additional populations in the community, such as parents, grandparents, special needs populations and the preschool staff.
 - Encounters with Hebrew speakers in the preschool community. These individuals may sing songs, tell stories and play with the children in Hebrew. It is important that the children be exposed to people other than the teacher who speak Hebrew with a different accent, intonation and timbre.
 - Inclusion of parents in the learning experience through:
 - A weekly or biweekly letter that tells the parents what the children have been learning
 - Mention of *Chalav u'Dvash* material in the weekly newsletters sent home to the parents
 - “Open house” *Chalav u'Dvash* sessions in which interested parents may participate
 - A *Chalav u'Dvash* parents group where parents can learn what their children are learning
 - Workshops for parents on creating games in Hebrew for use at home
 - An ongoing display in the Hebrew area or at the entrance to the preschool of photographs of the children during *Chalav u'Dvash* sessions. The display can

also include “Hebrew Gems” - interesting and entertaining items related to the children’s Hebrew language experiences

- Videos of the children as they sing and engage in dramatic and creative activity in Hebrew
- Sending Bentzi to the home of a different child each weekend. Bentzi brings his journal with him and the entire family writes in the journal about their Shabbat experiences with Bentzi
- Recordings of the parents singing, reciting and telling stories to the children, based on *Chalav u'Dvash* material.

We also recommend that the teacher creates a special ritual with the children for the Hebrew sessions, in order to distinguish them from other preschool activities. The ritual or routine can include:

- Special effects – a hat or badge, or a special rug used only for *Chalav u'Dvash*
- An opening and closing song (from the program) or created by the teacher
- An opening greeting and farewell closing from Bentzi

Linguistic Patterns

There are various schools of thought that influence how language instruction programs are designed. These schools of thought differ with regard to the amount and centrality of the vocabulary that is presented and in terms of the linguistic features that they seek to impart. One approach is to teach languages via **content/theme** and **context/situations**. In programs of this type, vocabulary is the main component. Typical study units may include: At the Market/Bank/Zoo/Synagogue/During Chanukah, etc. Every study unit presents the vocabulary that is relevant to the particular context. This is a useful method, but its disadvantage is that the material learned is often forgotten once the study unit has been completed, since there is little repetition or continued use of it.

Another approach focuses on **grammar and the linguistic components of the language**. Typical study units may include (in Hebrew): conjugation of verbs, gender, meter etc. The program is structured and systematic, but is not focused on communication.

The third approach which has become the predominant one during the last decade is **integrative**, combining vocabulary **and** linguistic components. *Chalav u'Dvash – Hebrew for Preschoolers* aligns itself with this school of thought. Hebrew is a living language that renews

itself constantly. The Academy of Hebrew Language in Jerusalem is continually coining new Hebrew words. Therefore, the language contains many more words than linguistic patterns. In the integrative approach, linguistic patterns constitute the foundation on which the content – the vocabulary – is "poured". The content and situation related words are combined with linguistic patterns. The pattern is fixed while the content and vocabulary may change in accordance with the population being taught and according to the teacher's judgment.

Linguistic patterns form the foundation for language use. *Chalav u'Dvash* does not focus on a particular lexicon or situation (a holiday or season of the year), but rather on linguistic patterns that can be used at all times and in all situations. In this way, **any vocabulary may be incorporated into the program without compromising the program's basic principles.**

Linguistic Progression

As mentioned at the beginning of the User's Guide, first language acquisition is primarily oral. The child builds linguistic skills over time through everyday use (in different contexts) of the acquired vocabulary and linguistic patterns, and continual exposure to the four skills of language use (speaking, listening, reading and writing). This is the most natural form of learning. The Diaspora child is not exposed to Hebrew in this way and therefore cannot acquire the language in the same manner. In order to make the process of learning Hebrew easier for the child, it is important to expose him to Hebrew in a systematic, structured manner in a supportive educational environment.

The term "**linguistic progression**" (sometimes referred to as linguistic grading or scaling) refers to a systematic and controlled form of language instruction. It addresses the various components of the language separately and in all language forms (verbs, adjectives, nouns and prepositions) progresses from familiar to unfamiliar, simple to complex, from common to rare, from male to female and from singular to plural. The selection of particular language patterns and vocabulary in *Chalav u'Dvash* is based on the principles of linguistic progression as well as the children's existing language skills and meta-linguistic thinking in their first language.

The logic of progression in language learning is similar to the logic that underlies progression in the teaching of mathematics or the study of musical notation. **The learning of the basics in a sequenced, structured and systematic way is what makes virtuosity possible later on.** To draw a comparison with mathematics – pupils gradually learn the names of the numbers, then they learn to count and only then do they master the four arithmetical

operations. This knowledge constitutes the foundation for an understanding of more complex mathematical functions later on. In music, knowledge of the notes and scales is the foundation for future composition and performance skills.

Progressive learning in *Chalav u'Dvash* takes place in the following ways:

- Inclusion of vocabulary familiar to the children from their first language creates a sense of basic knowledge and confidence in Hebrew. The study units at the beginning of the program include words that are pronounced similarly or identically in Hebrew and other languages, for example chocolate and *shokolad* or telephone which is exactly the same in Hebrew. This enables the child to speak Hebrew from the very first sessions.
- Exclusive use of the present tense: the use of present tense enables immediate communication, which is the program's basic goal. In addition, the child's mental world focuses mainly on the present, and at this age children are still in the process of acquiring grammatical past and future tense forms in their first language.
- A distinction between the teaching of vocabulary and linguistic patterns. Each new linguistic pattern or word is taught separately and then incorporated into the child's pre-existing linguistic knowledge base.
- A focus on frequently used words and linguistic patterns. The content words that are included in the program are among those used most frequently by Hebrew-speakers generally, and by young children in particular. For example:
 - **Nouns:** members of the family, names of objects and places from the world of the child.
 - **Verbs:** familiar and common activities of several kinds: continuous activities (sits/eats/cries), brief activities whose outcomes are clear (comes, gets up), activities that represent desires or intentions (likes, wants).
 - **Adjectives:** those describing qualities and situations that are relevant to young children such as size, color and number.
- Nouns are taught first in masculine form and then in feminine form.
- Singular forms are taught before plural forms.
- Irregular grammatical structures are not included
- Prepositions are learned first in their basic form and only later in combinations and declensions.

Building language skills according to the principles of linguistic progression requires:

- **Adherence to the order of the study units in the Teacher's Guides.**
- **Introduction of songs/recitations/stories only after the children have learned the vocabulary and linguistic patterns found in it. The recitations, songs and stories were written to correspond with the children's level of Hebrew knowledge at the time the material is introduced.**

Please note:

If the children already know the words or linguistic patterns in a particular study unit, there is no need to formally teach them. However, it is a good idea to engage in several practice activities before going on to the next unit.

Spiral Instruction

Children learn to use language through repeated encounters with the same pattern in different contexts. Each study unit builds on those that precede it and includes the previously learned vocabulary and patterns, as a foundation for new material. In this way, each study unit lays the groundwork for those that come after it and ensures constant practice of what has been learned. This gives the children confidence and fosters their ability to create new sentences and language combinations.

Israel Education

The Hebrew language can serve as a living bridge connecting the children to Israel. The program includes a variety of activities and teaching aids which, in addition to their role in Hebrew language instruction, serve as a window to the landscapes and children of Israel for the young child in the Diaspora. In this way we begin to build the child's relationship with Israel and lay the foundations for a lifelong engagement with Israel – land, people and story.

The Use of Music in Teaching Hebrew as an Additional Language

In order for learning to take place, children need the opportunity to practice what they have learned in a meaningful context. Music provides this opportunity. Children enjoy singing and listening to music and do so willingly. They repeat songs and recitations of their own accord until they know them by heart. Beyond the fact that children love to recite and sing, certain biological aspects of the relationship between language and music are of interest.

Language development and musical development occur in the same area of the brain and the brain perceives their syntax in a similar manner. Stephen Krashen has written about a phenomenon he calls "din". It's something like getting a song stuck in your head. Din is an "involuntary mental rehearsal" which people sometimes experience after exposure to input in an additional language. When a person learning a foreign language experiences this phenomenon, in which a song in the language being studied "plays" in their heads all the time, they are actually undergoing a kind of subconscious linguistic drilling that has both emotional impact and practical consequences.

Music, poetry and recitation afford children an additional, unconscious, means of language practice, both in terms of listening and speech production. Many studies have pointed to the usefulness of song as an aid in fostering correct pronunciation, rhythm, intonation and intuition in languages being studied, as well as in resolving speech and communication problems in the first language. Through music children increase their self-confidence in the language; they begin to feel more "at home" in it and, over time, a transition takes place from involuntary mental repetition to voluntary learning.

In addition, the use of music provides instructional flexibility. The same song can be used for different purposes: to improve listening skills and pronunciation, to practice using new vocabulary, to provide an example of a grammatical or syntactical structure, to practice reading and writing and to foster sensitivity to the cultural aspect of the language.

The musical component of *Chalav u'Dvash – Hebrew for Preschoolers* is compatible with the linguistic, social and cultural goals of the program and is an integral part of the methodology. The songs and recitations take advantage of the rapidly-growing phonological awareness that characterizes preschool-aged children and emphasize the phonological elements of the language.

The use of songs and recitations:

- Creates a change of the pace of instruction.
- Represents a dynamic alternative to routine teaching methods.
- Raises children's level of motivation and interest in linguistic and cultural content, whatever their current level of Hebrew might be.
- Strengthens conversational skills by providing an enjoyable means of practicing pronunciation, vocabulary and brief social-cultural interactions in Hebrew.
- Aids comprehension of complex grammatical structures through the creation of meaningful contexts.
- Represents an approach that values cultural diversity. Through the music in the program the children are exposed to Jewish and Israeli culture.

The program includes two types of songs:

1. Original songs (lyrics and music) written especially for the program. Each song culminates the learning of a certain amount of language.
2. Songs and rhythmic recitations that were written to provide practice with the vocabulary and linguistic patterns being studied. The poems and recitations have been set to popular tunes. Many of these tunes are part of the Israeli children's culture and serve to build the connection to Israel.

We have put together a collection of songs and rhythmic games that we believe will motivate children to learn in an enjoyable way. The rest is up to the teacher! Music and movement should be incorporated into every Hebrew session.

Please note:

Songs written for Israeli preschool children contain Hebrew linguistic patterns and vocabulary that, though commonly-used, are not suited to the Diaspora child's level of Hebrew. An example of this is Naomi Shemer's song, *B'Rosh HaShana*. It is a lovely song, but its beautiful lyrics are complex and are not appropriate for children who are taking their first steps in Hebrew. Songs of this kind can be played as part of the Hebrew and Israeli atmosphere in the classroom, but should not be included in *Chalav u'Dvash* sessions.

We recommend that every song taught in the *Chalav u'Dvash* be played in the classroom and incorporated into the children's larger musical repertoire. A similar approach is recommended for the use of the stories.

Guidelines for the Use of *Chalav u'Dvash* Songs and Rhythmic Recitations

There are two music CDs included in the kit. The first includes the original music and the order of the songs is the order of their appearance in the program. The second includes the practice songs. These are also ordered according to their appearance in the program. It is important to note that as the program unfolds, the use of selections from **one or the other** will be called for rather than all of the songs from the first collection and then from the second.

In the early stages of the program, the children may find the recordings difficult to follow. The teacher's voice and relationship with the children play an important role in teaching the songs. Therefore we recommend that the **teacher** use the recordings to learn the songs so that **she** can teach the children the words and melody. Once the children have learned the song, they will be able to listen to it and sing along with the recording. In general, it may be easier for the children to sing to the instrumental playback rather than the recorded song.

It is possible to burn additional CDs and order the music to correspond with teaching or create compilations that include fewer songs. After a song has been taught, the teacher may want to record the children singing and gradually develop a class song collection which can be available to the children in the listening area.

For the musical component of the program to be the most effective it is important to keep a few things in mind. The most trivial but perhaps most important is that all equipment be in good working order! The teacher must understand that learning a song in a different language is not easy, takes time and may cause anxiety. Pre listening activities are crucial to the successful teaching/learning of a song. **Multiple repetitions** of the words and phrases of the song (without the melody), movement and rhythm games (to the melody without the lyrics) help the children become familiar with the song and makes it easier for them to match the words to the melody.

Songs are often stories set to music. They have a context. Setting the learning of a song into a real context helps children learn the song and gives the song meaning beyond the

recitation of a collection of words. For example, when teaching a practice song involving food related language, the teacher might want to create a picnic or a Shabbat table which needs to be set as a pre listening activity. In this way, the language in the song is first used in a relevant and authentic manner. Successfully learning a song requires hearing it and singing it more than once. Plan in advance to play the song several times in the course of the session.

While listening and singing children should be active. They need to understand the activity instructions and see a demonstration. It should never be assumed that because the children sang the song once they know it.

Once the children know a song, the learning can be extended in many meaningful ways, individually, in pairs or in small groups. This can include adding a verse to the song, creating a game or song sheet using the words and graphic representations of the song or dramatizing the song. Employing techniques and strategies that require the children to process the linguistic aspects of the song in a different way through oral games (listening comprehension) is another way of extending the children's learning. This can be done through games that require the completion of sentences from the song, asking and answering questions based on the song etc. The teacher can also provide supplementary information or design activities that broaden the child's knowledge of the linguistic and cultural aspects of the song in relation to the child's personal experience.

Teacher Choice within the Program

Chalav u'Dvash - Hebrew for Preschoolers introduces a new approach to Hebrew language acquisition. Using the program can be compared to cooking or baking. The beginning cook follows the recipes exactly to ensure a successful outcome. As time goes by and comfort and competence are achieved, the cook can add her own spices and improvements, provided, of course, that she doesn't change the basic ingredients! To achieve the goals of *Chalav u'Dvash*, it is important to follow the directions as written. At the same time, there is plenty of room for individual spice through:

- **Choice of activities:** The first two activities of each unit of study (the brief instructional segment and first practice activity) should be taught as they appear in the Teacher's Guide. In every unit there are a number of suggestions for practice activities and the teacher may choose those most suited to the children in her class.
- **"Borrowing" activities:** Each study unit provides new ideas for games. In this way the teacher acquires a collection of close to a thousand different types of play activities. Many of the activities can be used **again and again** over the course of the program both for the children's enjoyment and in order to practice new vocabulary and linguistic patterns. It is the teacher who determines which of the many games is most appropriate at a given time.
- **Expanding on suggested activities:** *Chalav u'Dvash* could not include all the possible activities for engaging the children with Hebrew. The teacher can and should add her own ideas for practice and extended learning activities. Similarly, we encourage teachers to create their own stories and practice songs using the material we have provided as a model.

Incorporating Words and Expressions Not Included in the Program

Throughout this guide we have stressed the importance of adhering to the program in the order presented in the Teacher's Guides. However, there may be times when the teacher wants to teach a content word (noun/adjective/verb) that is not in the program, or to teach a word at an earlier point than recommended.

The metaphor of a bus route can be helpful. The Teacher's Guide is like a bus traveling along a regular route that stops at 35 stations. These stations are the study units which make up the program. As mentioned earlier, the units are not time or theme dependent and are taught consecutively. At each stop the bus lets off passengers, who go for a brief excursion in the particular area where the station is located.

The passengers come back from each excursion with a souvenir: an object, picture or memory of an experience. Sometimes, the passengers will spend more time at a particular station and collect "souvenirs" that are not explicitly mentioned in the Teacher's Guides. Such is the case with holiday vocabulary or vocabulary related to a specific topic. When the excursion is over they return to the bus and continue on their way. **In the *Chalav u'Dvash* program, the children are passengers on the journey towards Hebrew literacy and collect new linguistic patterns, words and phrases at each station.**

These words may be introduced at any one of the stations at the teacher's discretion, provided that they are compatible with what has already been learned or is currently being introduced. For example, around Chanukah time the children in a specific class will have reached Unit 18 which teaches "I eat" (masculine and feminine). They have also learned "I say" and all of the personal pronouns. At this "station" the teacher can introduce Chanukah vocabulary which can be used in sentences such as: "I eat latkes" or, "Dad says Chag Sameah" or "I eat a latke and say yummy, yummy." The same approach is used for content related words. Generally these words will be nouns and on occasion, verbs.

At every station the teacher can stop, teach a word or expression and then go on. In many cases the word or expression will accompany her for the remainder of her journey. In some instances the words will be used only in a point-specific way, in reference to one particular topic or holiday. Words that are added at one station become part of the children's everyday conversational repertoire in the preschool, even after the holiday or season in question has passed.

This approach makes it possible, even with a limited vocabulary, to play, present and dramatize with the children and to present words relevant to the holiday (or theme). **Our objective is to tailor the vocabulary to the children's level of Hebrew, not the other way around!**

Should the teacher decide to teach a word or phrase **earlier** than recommended in the program, a few rules should be followed:

- A noun may be introduced earlier than recommended, but the order of the linguistic patterns should not be changed.
- The teacher can add an additional unit consisting of content-word vocabulary. It is important to teach and practice each of the words **separately** and to incorporate what the children have already learned up to that point in the program into the practice activities.
- The plural form of any nouns should be taught only after Unit 17 of the first Teacher's Guide.
- New nouns taught up to this point should be introduced in singular form only, (masculine and then feminine).
- No irregular plural forms should be introduced.
- The plural form of any verbs should be introduced after Unit 9 of the second Teacher's Guide. Up to this point new verbs should be taught only in singular form (masculine and then feminine).
- The plural form of any adjectives should be introduced only after Unit 15 of Teacher's Guide 3.

Recommended Teaching Aids that are Not Included in the Kit

Equipment:

- CD player
- Baskets of various sizes
- Surprise box
- Magic wand
- Colorful handkerchiefs, napkins or colored streamers
- Brown and blue paper, plastic or cloth, for various games related to the topics earth and sky
- Hula-hoops
- Musical instruments: drumsticks, tambourines, bells, triangles.

Recommended music for movement activity:

- Classical music (in particular nature themes - seasons of the year, plants and animals)
- Local popular music (of the child's home country)
- Music that imitates sounds of nature (rain, animal calls)

Game accessories:

- Story dice
- Color/number dice
- Game board divided into squares, to be used for various sorting games.

Pictures:

- Pictures of objects and figures from newspapers, magazines, postcards or photographs
- Art work related to the topics being studied
- Pictures of words heard frequently in Hebrew and other languages

Guidance and Support

Ongoing, regular guidance and support will be provided to **every** teacher who uses the *Chalav u'Dvash – Hebrew for Preschoolers* program. We will also be offering new ideas, enrichment materials, help and support through e- mail, telephone and fax, web and video conferences and the teacher's Internet site.

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Good Luck!