Grade 3 Biblical Hebrew

First edition · 5 units · 10 lessons · one quarter · Hebrew from the Leningrad Codex

FIRST EDITION

Course guide

Grade 3 Biblical Hebrew is a short course of 10 lessons (5 units of 2), one lesson a week for a quarter, with three sessions of 20–30 minutes a week.

The student reviews the letters and the four vowels from Grade 2, learns the rest of the vowel points (hireq, holem, qibbuts and shureq), puts them all in one chart, and learns the shewa, the quick or silent e.

Then the student reads Bible names and finds God's name inside them (Dani-el, Hanan-yah), and reads three whole verses: God called the light Day (Genesis 1:5), Let there be light (Genesis 1:3), and In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (Genesis 1:1).

> Every lesson has a short video, most under ten minutes, from Hebrew teaching channels approved for School Launch: Aleph with Beth (a free Christian Biblical Hebrew course with songs and easy Bible stories) and Daily Dose of Hebrew (two-minute verse readings by seminary professors), with a few single videos from Biblingo and BibleProject. The Daily Dose verse videos are made for adults; in the younger grades they are marked as the parent's video. Every lesson works without the video. Please preview every video yourself before you show it to your child. The videos were chosen by title and channel, and YouTube may show its own suggestions when a video ends, so stay nearby and stop the player when the lesson's part is done.

Start with Lesson 1.1 →

Who it is for

Written for students in grade 3 (about ages 8–9) who read independently. No earlier Hebrew is needed: the course reviews the letters and builds from there, though a student who has done earlier grades will feel at home. A parent or teacher reads along, joins the reading practice and checks the practice answers with the key. Nothing needs to be bought: every activity uses paper, index cards, pencil and household things.

How to use this course

1. **The weekly rhythm.** The quarter has 10 lessons, one a week, each with three sessions of 20–30 minutes. Session 1 is the warm-up, the teaching and the picture study (in the first lesson of each unit). Session 2 is the activity and the Hebrew notebook. Session 3 is the worked examples, the practice, the game and reading aloud: the student reads the week's Hebrew out loud to the family.
2. **Read it out loud every day.** Hebrew is learned by reading it aloud, a few minutes a day. Open every session by reading the alphabet, the vowel chart and the verses learned so far. Five minutes of cheerful reading beats an hour of silent staring.
3. **Story, then how Hebrew works, then doing.** The core ideas are written to be read aloud or read by the student. *The story* tells what happened; *How Hebrew works* explains the pattern; *Read it out loud* gives the sounds. After each paragraph, ask the student to tell it back.
4. **Flashcards.** Every lesson adds new letters, signs or words. Make a flashcard for each one: Hebrew on the front, the sounds and meaning on the back.
5. **The Hebrew notebook.** Use any notebook for the whole quarter: letter charts, vowel charts, copywork and translations. Write Hebrew from the right edge of the line. Date every page.
6. **Unit review and unit challenge.** Each unit ends with a short review (25 points), which may be done orally, and a unit challenge. Keep the challenge work in a folder.
7. **Right to left.** Hebrew is written and read from right to left, so a Hebrew book opens from what an English reader calls the back. Every Hebrew word in these lessons is set right to left; when the child writes, start at the right edge of the line.

8. **The word list.** The quarter teaches 40 letters, signs and words. Unit 1: מֶלֶךְ (melekh), בֵּן (ben), הַר (har), זֶרַע (zara‘), אִישׁ (ish), עִיר (ir), שִׁיר (shir), מִי (mi). Unit 2: אוֹר (or), חֹשֶׁךְ (choshekh), קוֹל (qol), טוֹב (tov), רוּת (Rut), רוּחַ (ruach), סוּס (sus), הוּא (hu). Unit 3: עַיִן (ayin), נִפְלָאוֹת (nifla’ot), תּוֹרָה (torah), יִשְׂרָאֵל (Yisra’el), שְׁמוּאֵל (Shemu’el), מִדְבָּר (midbar), זֶה (zeh). Unit 4: אֵל (El), דָּנִיֵּאל (Daniyyel), יִצְחָק (Yitschaq), אַבְרָהָם (Avraham), עֶרֶב (erev), בֹּקֶר (boqer), אֶחָד (echad), לַיְלָה (laylah), קָרָא (qara). Unit 5: וַיֹּאמֶר (vayyomer), יְהִי (yehi), אֱלֹהִים (Elohim), אוֹר (or), בְּרֵאשִׁית (bereshit), בָּרָא (bara), שָׁמַיִם (shamayim), אֶרֶץ (erets).
9. **Printables.** Each lesson has a one-page worksheet, and the answers are in a separate key for the parent. Each unit review also has a printable key.
10. **The Hebrew Bible.** Hebrew verses are quoted from the Westminster Leningrad Codex, the public-domain electronic text of the Leningrad Codex, the oldest complete manuscript of the Hebrew Old Testament, copied around A.D. 1008. It is the Hebrew text the King James translators’ Old Testament comes from (the Masoretic text), in its oldest complete copy. In the elementary grades the verses are shown with their vowel points but without the small cantillation marks (the musical accents), which would crowd a beginner’s page; Biblical Hebrew I shows them in full. Hebrew verse numbers sometimes differ from English ones; every verse here is chosen so that the numbers match. God’s own name, written with four letters (יהוה), is printed LORD in capitals in the King James; Jewish readers have long said Adonai (“Lord”) in its place, and this course does the same. The English verse is always the King James Version, quoted exactly.

Scope and sequence

UNIT 1 · WEEKS 1–2

Sowing and Reaping

A quick review of the 22 letters and the four vowels from Grade 2, then hireq, the ee vowel. Millet’s Sower strides across a field, and Psalm 126 promises: They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

1.1 Review: Letters and Four Vowels

1.2 Hireq, the Ee Vowel

UNIT 2 · WEEKS 3–4

Light and Return

Holem, the o vowel, and qibbuts and shureq, the u vowels. Psalm 27 begins: The LORD is my light; and Ruth tells Naomi, whither thou goest, I will go, in Nicolas Poussin’s harvest painting.

2.1 Holem, the O Vowel

2.2 Qibbuts and Shureq, the U Vowels

UNIT 3 · WEEKS 5–6

The Vowel Chart and the Shewa

All the vowels in one chart, long and short, and the shewa, the two dots that are either a quick e or silent. Johannes Reuchlin, who wrote the first Hebrew grammar for Christian students in 1506, holds his book.

3.1 The Vowel Chart

3.2 The Shewa

UNIT 4 · WEEKS 7–8

Names and Days

Reading Bible names, Avraham, Yitschaq, Daniyyel, Shemu’el, David, and then a whole verse: Genesis 1:5, God called the light Day. Doré engraves Daniel standing calm among the lions.

4.1 Reading Bible Names

4.2 Day and Night

UNIT 5 · WEEKS 9–10

In the Beginning

Reading God’s first words, Genesis 1:3, Let there be light, and the first verse of the Bible, Genesis 1:1, all the way through. Ivan Aivazovsky paints light breaking over the dark waters of the deep.

5.1 Let There Be Light

5.2 In the Beginning: Genesis 1:1

Weekly pacing calendar

WEEK	PLAN
1	• Session 1: Lesson 1.1 Review: Letters and Four Vowels: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 1.1 reading practice, video and activity (seed-packet syllables) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet *Three sessions a week of 20–30 minutes. On the other days, read the week’s Hebrew words and verse aloud for five minutes.*

WEEK	PLAN
2	• Session 1: Lesson 1.2 Hireq, the Ee Vowel: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 1.2 reading practice, video and activity (song sheet) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet • End of unit: Unit 1 review and unit challenge (five-vowel reading card)
3	• Session 1: Lesson 2.1 Holem, the O Vowel: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 2.1 reading practice, video and activity (light and dark card) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet
4	• Session 1: Lesson 2.2 Qibbuts and Shureq, the U Vowels: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 2.2 reading practice, video and activity (owl vowel cards) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet • End of unit: Unit 2 review and unit challenge (light and voice poster)
5	• Session 1: Lesson 3.1 The Vowel Chart: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 3.1 reading practice, video and activity (five-sound vowel fan) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet
6	• Session 1: Lesson 3.2 The Shewa: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 3.2 reading practice, video and activity (quick-or-quiet cards) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet • End of unit: Unit 3 review and unit challenge (my hebrew vowel chart)
7	• Session 1: Lesson 4.1 Reading Bible Names: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 4.1 reading practice, video and activity (hero name crowns) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet
8	• Session 1: Lesson 4.2 Day and Night: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 4.2 reading practice, video and activity (evening-and-morning wheel) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet • End of unit: Unit 4 review and unit challenge (name cards for the heroes)

WEEK	PLAN
9	• Session 1: Lesson 5.1 Let There Be Light: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 5.1 reading practice, video and activity (light-up verse) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet
10	• Session 1: Lesson 5.2 In the Beginning: Genesis 1:1: warm-up, core ideas, key terms and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 5.2 reading practice, video and activity (seven-word verse chain) • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, the game and the worksheet • End of unit: Unit 5 review and unit challenge (my genesis 1:1 scroll)

Materials

Hebrew notebook (any notebook)

One for the quarter: charts, copywork and translations.

Index cards and a box, bag or ring to keep them

For the flashcard deck that grows every lesson.

Pencil, colored pencils and a fine-tip marker

For letter charts, vowel charts and lettering.

Scissors, glue, tape and some poster board or taped printer paper

For the unit challenges.

Grading

Grades come mostly from the daily work: reading aloud, the flashcard reviews, the notebook and the practice, because a language is learned by steady, honest repetition. A student who reads Hebrew out loud faithfully, keeps a neat notebook and corrects his or her own practice earns full credit.

PART	%
Reading aloud and flashcards	30
Hebrew notebook (dated pages, charts, copywork)	25

PART	%
Practice (corrected with the answer key)	**15**
Unit reviews	**15**
Unit challenges	**15**

Scale: A 90–100, B 80–89, C 70–79, D 60–69. Below 60: repeat the reading drills and practice with help.

- A reading answer is right when every consonant and vowel is sounded; small differences of accent are fine.
- Unit reviews may be done orally for a student who writes slowly; the parent writes down the answers.
- Hebrew handwriting is graded on clear letter shapes written right to left, not on beauty.

A NOTE TO PARENTS

You do not need to know Hebrew to teach this course. Every letter, vowel and word has its sounds written out, and every answer is in the answer key. Learn alongside your child, quiz each other with the flashcards, and let your child catch your mistakes.

Please preview every video yourself before you show it to your child. The videos were chosen by title and channel, and YouTube may show its own suggestions when a video ends, so stay nearby and stop the player when the lesson's part is done.

Why Biblical Hebrew? Because it is the language of most of the Old Testament, the Scriptures Jesus read and quoted. A student who can read even a little Hebrew sees with his or her own eyes the words behind the English Bible: In the beginning God created, and The LORD is my shepherd.

This is a course in the Hebrew of the Bible, not in modern politics. The stories are the stories of Scripture and of the faithful scribes, scholars and translators who copied and handed down the Hebrew text, told cheerfully and honestly.

UNIT 1

Sowing and Reaping

Lesson 1.1 reviews the letters, the dagesh, and patach, qamets, segol and tsere, with Jean-François Millet's The Sower and Psalm 126:5.

Lesson 1.2 teaches hireq ִ (ee) and the words אִישׁ (man), עִיר (city), שִׁיר (song) and מִי (who?).

PREREQUISITES

- Grade 2 Biblical Hebrew (letters, dagesh, ah and eh vowels), or a few weeks of review first.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can read letters with patach, qamets, segol, tsere and hireq.
- ☐ I can read אִישׁ, עִיר, שִׁיר and מִי.
- ☐ I can read the b/v, k/kh and p/f pairs from the dagesh.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

1.1	**Review: Letters and Four Vowels**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes
1.2	**Hireq, the Ee Vowel**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes

Unit 1 review

The student reads aloud or writes. The test is worth 20 points.

1. **5 pts**

   Read: בַּ בָּ בָּ בֶּ בִּ

2. **5 pts**

   Read and translate: אִישׁ עִיר

3. **5 pts**

   Read and translate: שִׁיר מִי

4. 5 pts

Name the five vowels you know and their sounds.

ANSWER KEY

1. ba, ba, be, bey, bee.
2. eesh (man), eer (city).
3. sheer (song), mee (who?).
4. Patach and qamets ah; segol eh; tsere ey; hireq ee.

Printable answer key (PDF, for the parent)

UNIT CHALLENGE: FIVE-VOWEL READING CARD

Make a card with five rows, one for each vowel: patach, qamets, segol, tsere, hireq. In each row write the vowel under five different letters and read the row aloud. At the bottom copy one word for each vowel and translate it.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Reading	The student reads all 25 syllables.
Writing	The vowels are written in the right place.
Meaning	Five words are translated correctly.
Care	The vowels are read and written under the right letters.

UNIT 1 · SOWING AND REAPING · LESSON 1.1 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

1.1 Review: Letters and Four Vowels

OBJECTIVES

- Read all 22 letters and the dagesh pairs.
- Read patach, qamets, segol and tsere under any letter.
- Read Psalm 126:5 word by word with help.

> **Warm-up.** Grab a handful of dried beans and pretend to sow seed across the floor, the way farmers did before machines. In Bible times farmers sowed by hand, and harvest came months later.

WATCH

Hebrew - Aleph-Bet Hebrew Alphabet Song - Free Biblical Hebrew

Aleph with Beth · 2:12

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFkuW-tQsog

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the review; sing the alef-bet once quickly, then watch the verse video and follow the Hebrew.

Note: Aleph with Beth's Aleph-Bet song (2:12): the 22 letters sung in order, each letter on screen.

BACKUP VIDEO

Psalm 126:5

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:25

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCu0gKXIxDQ

Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Psalm 126:5 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

KEY TERMS

בָ בַ patach and qamets

Says ah. Example: דָּג dag (fish).

בֶ segol

Says eh. Example: מֶלֶךְ melekh (king).

בֵ tsere

Says ey. Example: בֵּן ben (son).

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

מֶלֶךְ *melekh* **MEH-lekh** noun king	בֵּן *ben* **BAYN** noun son
הַר *har* **HAHR** noun mountain	זָרַע *zara‘* **zah-RAH** verb he sowed

CORE IDEAS

The story. When God brought His people home from captivity in Babylon, they sang Psalm 126: They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. Sowing seed is hard work, and the harvest is slow to come. But God brings joy in the end. Learning to read Hebrew is a little like sowing: one letter and one vowel at a time, and then the joy of reading God’s word.

Review. The letters: א ב ג ד ה ו ז ח ט י כ ל מ נ ס ע פ צ ק ר ש ת. The dot pairs: בּ ב b v, כּ כ k kh, פּ פ p f, שׁ שׂ sh s. The vowels: בַ בָ ah, בֶ בָֽ eh, בֵ ey.

Read it. בָּ דָ גָ bah dah gah; מֶ לֶ meh leh; שֵׁ בֵ shey bey; הַר דָּג מֶלֶךְ בֵּן har, dag, melekh, ben.

PICTURE STUDY



The Sower, Jean-François Millet, 1850 · Oil on canvas · Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain

Millet grew up on a farm in Normandy and painted the hard work of country people with great respect. The Sower reminded many people of Jesus' parable of the sower, whose seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11).

Look closely

- What is the sower doing with his right hand?
- Find the bag of seed.
- Find the man ploughing in the distance.
- What time of day is it?

Talk about it

1. Why does the sower walk so boldly?
2. How is reading God's word like sowing seed?

ACTIVITY

Seed-packet syllables

Make seed packets labeled with Hebrew syllables.

You will need

- Small envelopes or folded paper
- Dried beans
- A marker

Steps

1. Write one syllable on each packet: בַ, בָ, בֵ, דָ, מָ, לָ, שָׁ, נַ.
2. Put a few beans in each.
3. Read each packet before you “sow” its beans into a pot.

Tips

- Read the letter, then the vowel under it.

Check your work

☐ I read all eight packets.

☐ I know which vowels say ah, eh and ey.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Write the four vowels under the letter bet and read them: בַ בָ בֵ בִ.

> **From history.** Psalm 126 is one of the fifteen “Songs of Degrees” (Psalms 120–134), probably sung by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: מֶלֶךְ

▼ **Show solution**

1. mem + segol = meh.
2. lamed + segol = leh.
3. end-kaf = kh.

Answer: MEH-lekh (king).

Example 2. Read: בְּרִנָּה

▼ **Show solution**

1. The first beat is a quick be-.
2. resh + hireq = ree; nun with dagesh + qamets = nah; he is silent.

Answer: be-reen-NAH (with joy). Hireq is the new vowel in Lesson 1.2.

PRACTICE

1. Easy Read: דְּ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   dah.

2. Easy Read: לֶ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   leh.

3. Easy Read: שֵׁ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   shey.

4. Medium Read: בֵּן הַר

▼ **Show answer**

ben, har.

5. Medium Read and translate: דָּג

▼ **Show answer**

dag, fish.

6. Hard Say Psalm 126:5 in English.

▼ **Show answer**

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Forgetting the dagesh: בּ b, ב v.
- Mixing segol (three dots) and tsere (two dots).

> **Make it a game · Vowel bingo.** Make a 3×3 bingo card of syllables (בַּ בֶּ בֵּ דָּ דֶּ דֵּ מַ מֶּ מֵ). The parent calls out sounds; cover the matching syllable. Three in a row wins.

> **Scripture.** “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.” (Psalm 126:5, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> הַזֹּרְעִים בְּדִמְעָה בְּרִנָּה יִקְצֹרוּ׃
>
> Four Hebrew words: hazzor‘im (they that sow), bedim‘ah (in tears), berinnah (in joy), yiqtsoru (shall reap). Read the vowels you know in each.

1.2 Hireq, the Ee Vowel

OBJECTIVES

- Find hireq ִ and say ee.
- Read hireq with and without a yod after it.

- Read אִישׁ, עִיר, שִׁיר, מִי.

> **Warm-up.** Smile as wide as you can and say "eeee!" That big smile is the sound of today's vowel. It is just one tiny dot under a letter.

WATCH

Easy Story 4 - Avram, Beth, & the Two Jars - אַבְרָם וּבֵת וּשְׁנֵי הַכַּדִּים

Aleph with Beth · 2:21

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t88kj5O1Gnc

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the reading practice; raise your hand every time you hear an ee sound.

Note: Aleph with Beth's easy story about Avram, Beth and two jars, in simple Hebrew with pictures; listen for mi? (who?).

BACKUP VIDEO

Psalm 119:10

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:29

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZwDMrB5WRk

Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Psalm 119:10 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

KEY TERMS

בִ hireq

Says ee: one dot under the letter.

Example: מִי mi (who?).

hireq yod

Hireq followed by yod, יִ: still ee; the yod is silent and just helps show the vowel.

אִישׁ ish (EESH)

Man.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

אִישׁ

ish

EESH

noun

man

עִיר

ir

EER

noun

city

שִׁיר

shir

SHEER

noun

song

מִי

mi

MEE

question word

who?

CORE IDEAS

The story. David wrote: With my whole heart have I sought thee. In Hebrew that verse is full of the ee sound: בְּכָל־לִבִּי, bekhol-libbi, with all my heart. To seek God with all your heart means to love Him more than anything else.

How Hebrew sounds. Hireq is one dot under a letter: בִּ bee, מִ mee. Often a yod follows it: מִי mee. That yod is silent; it just helps show the ee. Words: אִישׁ EESH (man), עִיר EER (city), שִׁיר SHEER (song), לִי LEE (to me).

Careful. One dot under the letter is hireq. Two dots side by side is tsere (ey). Three dots is segol (eh).

ACTIVITY

Song sheet

Make a song sheet with the hireq word שִׁיר.

You will need

- Paper
- Markers

Steps

1. Write שִׁיר (song) as a title.
2. Below, write five hireq words: אִישׁ, עִיר, מִי, לִי, לִבִּי.
3. Read them to the tune of a song you know, one word per beat.

Tips

- Hireq is one dot; check it is under the right letter.

Check your work

☐ My song sheet has six hireq words.

☐ I can read them all.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Write hireq under five letters and read them. Copy אִישׁ, עִיר, שִׁיר with their meanings.

> **From history.** The tiny dot of hireq is one of the smallest marks in the Hebrew Bible. Scribes had to keep their pens sharp so that it would not blur into tsere.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: עִיר

▼ **Show solution**

1. Ayin is quiet + hireq = ee.
2. yod is silent; resh = r.

Answer: EER (city).

Example 2. Read: לִבִּי

▼ **Show solution**

1. lamed + hireq = lee.
2. bet with dagesh + hireq yod = bee.

Answer: leeb-BEE (my heart).

PRACTICE

1. Easy Read: בִּ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   bee.

2. Easy Read: מִי

   ▼ **Show answer**

   mee (who?).

3. Easy How many dots does hireq have?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   One, under the letter.

4. Medium Read and translate: אִישׁ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   eesh, man.

5. Medium Read and translate: שִׁיר

▼ **Show answer**

sheer, song.

6. Hard Read: בִּ בֵּ בֶּ

▼ **Show answer**

bee, bey, beh.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading the yod after hireq as y. It is silent.
- Mixing hireq (one dot) and tsere (two dots).

> **Make it a game · Smile when you see it.** The parent writes syllables with different vowels. Smile big and say ee for every hireq; frown for every other vowel and read it.

> **Scripture.** “With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.” (Psalm 119:10, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> בְּכָל־לִבִּי דְרַשְׁתִּיךָ אַל־תַּשְׁגֵּנִי
>
> Find bekhol-libbi, with my whole heart, the first word joined by a maqqef. The second part, libbi, has two hireqs.

UNIT 2

Light and Return

Lesson 2.1 teaches holem (a dot over the letter, or on top of a vav: וֹ) in אוֹר (light), יוֹם (day), קוֹל (voice) and Psalm 27:1.

Lesson 2.2 teaches qibbuts֩ and shureq וּ (oo) in רוּת (Ruth), רוּחַ (spirit) and סוּס, with Ruth 1:16 and Poussin’s Summer.

PREREQUISITES

- Unit 1: five vowels.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can read holem and holem vav as o.
- ☐ I can read qibbuts and shureq as oo.
- ☐ I can tell vav as a letter (v) from vav as a vowel (o or oo).

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

2.1	**Holem, the O Vowel**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes
2.2	**Qibbuts and Shureq, the U Vowels**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes

Unit 2 review

The student reads aloud or writes. The test is worth 20 points.

1. **5 pts**

   Read: בֹ בוֹ בֻ בוּ

2. **5 pts**

   Read and translate: אוֹר יוֹם קוֹל

3. **5 pts**

   Read and translate: רוּחַ סוּס

4. **5 pts**

   Is the vav a letter or a vowel? וָ וֹ וּ

ANSWER KEY

1. bo, bo, boo, boo.
2. or (light), yom (day), qol (voice).
3. ruach (spirit, wind), sus (horse).
4. In וֹ both are letters (v); ו is holem (o); וּ is shureq (oo).

Printable answer key (PDF, for the parent)

UNIT CHALLENGE: LIGHT AND VOICE POSTER

Make a poster with two columns: o words (אוֹר, יוֹם, קוֹל, טוֹב, שָׁלוֹם) and oo words (רוּת, רוּחַ, סוּס, הוּא). Illustrate each word and read the poster aloud.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Reading	The student reads all nine words.
Writing	The holem and shureq marks are written correctly.
Meaning	Each word is translated.
Care	The vowels are read and written under the right letters.

UNIT 2 · LIGHT AND RETURN · LESSON 2.1 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

2.1 Holem, the O Vowel

OBJECTIVES

- Find holem ֹ and holem vav ו and say o.
- Read אוֹר, יוֹם, קוֹל, טוֹב.
- Read Psalm 27:1's first words.

Warm-up. Make a big round O with your mouth and with your arms over your head. Today's vowel says oh, and it sits up high, like your arms.

WATCH

Easy Story 16 - אַיֵּה הַכֶּסֶף - Where Is the Silver?

Aleph with Beth · 2:53

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcDWyOoYs-4

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the reading practice; make an O with your arms each time you hear oh.

Note: Aleph with Beth's easy story "Where is the silver?" in simple Hebrew with pictures; listen for o words like kol and lo.

BACKUP VIDEO

Psalm 119:105

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:46

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nn1rt1A0F1Y

Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Psalm 119:105 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

KEY TERMS

בֹ holem

Says o: a dot over the top left of the letter. Example: חֹשֶׁךְ choshekh (darkness).

וֹ holem vav

Says o: a vav with a dot on top. Example: אוֹר or (light).

אוֹרִי ori (oh-REE)

My light.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

אוֹר

or

OHR

noun

light

חֹשֶׁךְ

choshekh

KHOH-shekh

noun

darkness

קוֹל

qol

KOHL

noun

voice

טוֹב

tov

TOHV

adjective

good

CORE IDEAS

The story. David had many enemies, but he was not afraid. He sang: The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? In Hebrew, my light is אוֹרִי, ori. When it is dark, a light shows you the way; God is that light for His people.

How Hebrew sounds. Holem is a dot at the top left of a letter: בֹ boh. Often it sits on a vav: וֹ. Then the vav is not v at all; it is just the o vowel. Words: אוֹר OHR (light), יוֹם YOHM (day), קוֹל KOHL (voice), טוֹב TOHV (good), חֹשֶׁךְ KHOH-shekh (darkness).

Careful. A dot on top of a vav is holem: oh. A dot on top of shin is the shin dot. In שָׁלוֹם you see both.

ACTIVITY

Light and dark card

Make a card that turns from darkness to light.

You will need

- Black paper and yellow paper
- Glue
- A white crayon

Steps

1. Glue black and yellow halves together.
2. On the black half write חֹשֶׁךְ (darkness); on the yellow half write אוֹר (light).
3. Below, write יוֹם and קוֹל.
4. Read each word; circle every holem.

Tips

- Put the holem dot at the top left of the letter, or on the vav.

Check your work

☐ My card has four holem words.

☐ I can read them all.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy חֹשֶׁךְ, טוֹב, קוֹל, יוֹם, אוֹר and circle each holem.

> **From history.** In the oldest Hebrew writing, vav and yod were already used to help show vowels. The dots were added much later.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: קוֹל

▼ **Show solution**

1. qof = k.
2. vav with a dot on top = oh.
3. lamed = l.

Answer: KOHL (voice).

Example 2. Read: חֹשֶׁךְ

▼ **Show solution**

1. chet + holem = khoh.
2. shin + segol = sheh; end-kaf = kh.

Answer: KHOH-shekh (darkness).

PRACTICE

1. Easy Read: בֹּ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   boh.

2. Easy Read: לוֹ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   loh.

3. Easy Read and translate: יוֹם

   ▼ **Show answer**

   yom, day.

4. Medium Read and translate: אוֹר

   ▼ **Show answer**

   or, light.

5. Medium Is the vav in אוֹר a letter or a vowel?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   A vowel (holem): oh.

6. Hard Say Psalm 27:1's first line in English.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading וֹ as voh. With the dot on top it is just oh.
- Missing a holem that sits on the corner of the next letter. Look at the top left of each letter.

> **Make it a game · Flashlight reading.** In a dark room, shine a flashlight on one word at a time on the wall chart: אוֹר, יוֹם, קוֹל, טוֹב, חֹשֶׁךְ. Read it before the light moves on.

> **Scripture.** "A Psalm of David. The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> לְדָוִד יְהוָה אוֹרִי וְיִשְׁעִי
>
> Find ori, my light, the third word. Its vav has a holem dot: oh.

2.2 Qibbuts and Shureq, the U Vowels

OBJECTIVES

- Find qibbuts ֻ and shureq וּ and say oo.

- Tell shureq וּ from vav with dagesh.
- Read הוּא, סוּס, רוּחַ, רוּת.

> **Warm-up.** Pucker your lips like an owl and hoot: oooo! Today's two vowels both say oo. One is three slanting dots; the other is a vav with a dot in its middle.

WATCH

Easy Story 6 - Moses in the Land of Midian - מֹשֶׁה בְּאֶרֶץ מִדְיָן

Aleph with Beth · 2:15

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4deMzVZzN4E

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the reading practice; hoot like an owl when you hear oo.

Note: Aleph with Beth's easy story of Moses in the land of Midian, in simple Hebrew with pictures.

BACKUP VIDEO

Easy Story 17 - Naomi & Ruth - נָעֳמִי וְרוּת

Aleph with Beth · 3:56

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkHjpIaH0vM

Aleph with Beth's easy story of Naomi and Ruth; listen for Ruth's name, רוּת.

KEY TERMS

בֻּ qibbuts

Says oo: three slanting dots under the letter. Example: כֻּלָּם kullam (all of them).

וּ shureq

Says oo: a vav with a dot in its middle. Example: רוּת Rut (Ruth).

רוּחַ ruach (ROO-akh)

Spirit, wind, breath.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

רוּת

Rut

ROOT

name

Ruth

רוּחַ

ruach

ROO-akh

noun

spirit; wind; breath

סוּס

sus

SOOS

noun

horse

הוּא

hu

HOO

pronoun

he

CORE IDEAS

The story. When Naomi's husband and sons died in Moab, she decided to go home to Bethlehem. Her daughter-in-law Ruth would not leave her: Intreat me not to leave thee... thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Ruth trusted the God of Israel, and she became the great-grandmother of King David. Her name, רוּת, has the oo vowel.

How Hebrew sounds. Qibbuts is three dots slanting down under a letter: בֻּ boo. Shureq is a vav with a dot in its middle, וּ, and it also says oo: סוּס SOOS. Words: רוּת ROOT (Ruth), רוּחַ ROO-akh (spirit), הוּא HOO (he).

Careful. In רוּחַ, the patach under the final chet is read before it: ROO-akh, not ROO-khah. This is called a furtive patach; you will meet it again in Grade 4.

PICTURE STUDY



Summer (Ruth and Boaz), Nicolas Poussin, 1660–1664 · Oil on canvas · Musée du Louvre, Paris

Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain

Poussin was a French painter who worked in Rome. At the end of his life he painted the four seasons as four Bible stories; summer is Ruth gleaning in the field of Boaz.

Look closely

- Find Ruth kneeling. What is she holding?
- Find Boaz in the golden cloak.
- What are the horses doing at the right?
- Find the town on the hill.

Talk about it

1. Why might Poussin choose Ruth's story for summer?
2. How did Ruth show faithfulness?

ACTIVITY

Owl vowel cards

Make two owl cards, one for each oo vowel.

You will need

- Two cards
- Markers

Steps

1. Draw an owl on each card.
2. On one owl's belly write qibbuts under three letters: בֻ, כֻ, לֻ.
3. On the other write shureq words: רוּת, סוּס, הוּא.
4. Hoot oo and read each.

Tips

- Shureq's dot is in the middle of the vav, not on top.

Check your work

- ☐ My owls show both oo vowels.
- ☐ I can read every word.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy רוּת, רוּחַ, סוּס, הוּא, כֻּלָּם and circle the oo vowels.

> **From history.** Ruth is one of only two books of the Bible named after a woman (the other is Esther), and Ruth is named in the family line of Jesus in Matthew 1:5.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: סוּס

▼ **Show solution**

1. samekh = s.
2. vav with a middle dot = oo.
3. samekh = s.

Answer: SOOS (horse).

Example 2. Is this holem or shureq? וֹ

▼ **Show solution**

1. Where is the dot: on top, or in the middle?
2. In the middle.

Answer: Shureq: oo.

PRACTICE

1. Easy Read: בֻּ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   boo.

2. Easy Read: רוּת

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Root (Ruth).

3. Easy What does ruach mean?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Spirit, wind, breath.

4. Medium Read: הוּא

   ▼ **Show answer**

   hoo (he).

5. Medium Read: לוֹ לוּ

▼ **Show answer**

loh, loo.

6. Hard Say Ruth 1:16's last part in English.

▼ **Show answer**

Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Mixing וֹ (o, dot on top) and וּ (oo, dot in the middle).
- Reading רוּת as roo-khah. The patach under a final chet is read first: ROO-akh.

> **Make it a game · O or oo?.** The parent points to a word on the chart. Make a round O with your arms for holem words and hoot like an owl for oo words, then read the word.

> **Scripture.** "And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:" (Ruth 1:16, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> וַתֹּאמֶר רוּת אַל־תִּפְגְּעִי־בִי
>
> Find Rut, Ruth, the second word: resh, shureq, tav.

UNIT 3

The Vowel Chart and the Shewa

Lesson 3.1 puts every vowel in one chart (a, e, i, o, u) and practices reading them all in Psalm 119:18: Open thou mine eyes.

Lesson 3.2 teaches the shewa ְ: a quick e at the start of a syllable, silent at the end, with Psalm 118:24: This is the day which the LORD hath made.

PREREQUISITES

- Units 1–2: all the main vowels.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can read all the vowels from the chart.
- ☐ I can read a vocal shewa as a quick e.
- ☐ I can tell when a shewa is silent.
- ☐ I can read three-syllable words slowly.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

3.1	**The Vowel Chart**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes
3.2	**The Shewa**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes

Unit 3 review

The student reads aloud or writes. The test is worth 20 points.

1. **5 pts**
   Write the vowels for a, e, i, o, u under the letter bet.

2. **5 pts**
   Read: בְּ לְ מְ

3. **5 pts**
   Read: יִשְׂ־רָ־אֵל as one word: יִשְׂרָאֵל

4. **5 pts**
   When is a shewa said, and when is it silent?

ANSWER KEY

1. a: בַ בַ; e: בֶ בֶ; i: בִ; o: בֹ בוֹ; u: בֻ בוּ.
2. beh, leh, meh (quick).
3. yis-rah-AYL (Israel); the shewa under sin is silent.
4. Said (quick e) at the start of a word or syllable; silent at the end of a syllable.

Printable answer key (PDF, for the parent)

UNIT CHALLENGE: MY HEBREW VOWEL CHART

Make a large chart with five rows (a, e, i, o, u). In each row write every vowel mark for that sound under the letter bet, with its name. Add a sixth row for shewa: quick e and silent. Use it to read Psalm 118:24 aloud.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Reading	The student reads every row.
Writing	All vowel marks are written correctly.
Meaning	The student explains the two kinds of shewa.
Care	The vowels are read and written under the right letters.

UNIT 3 · THE VOWEL CHART AND THE SHEWA · LESSON 3.1 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

3.1 The Vowel Chart

OBJECTIVES

- Group all the vowels by sound: a, e, i, o, u.
- Read any letter with any vowel.
- Read the words of Psalm 119:18.

Warm-up. How many vowels does English have? A, E, I, O, U. Hebrew has the same five sounds, but more marks to write them, because some are long and some are short.

WATCH

Easy Story 5 - הַטַּבָּח אֲשֶׁר אֵין לוֹ מֶלַח - The Cook Who Had No Salt

Aleph with Beth · 3:25

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q5Sxt2L0A3w

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the chart work; follow the verse video with your finger under the Hebrew.

Note: Aleph with Beth's easy story "The Cook Who Had No Salt," in simple Hebrew with pictures.

BACKUP VIDEO

Psalm 119:18

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:45

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLOJ0pK2eLM

Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Psalm 119:18 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

KEY TERMS

long vowel

A vowel held a little longer: qamets, tsere, hireq yod, holem, shureq.

short vowel

A quicker vowel: patach, segol, hireq, qibbuts.

vowel letter

A vav or yod that only helps show a vowel: יִ, וּ, וֹ.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

עַיִן

ayin

AH-yeen

noun

eye

נִפְלָאוֹת

nifla'ot

nif-lah-OHT

noun (plural)

wondrous things

תּוֹרָה

torah

toh-RAH

noun

law, teaching

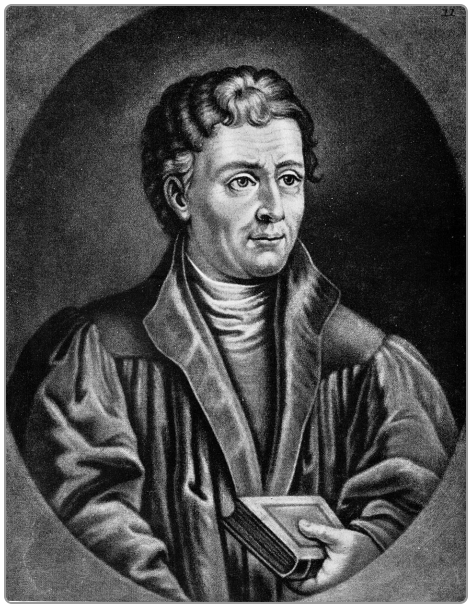
CORE IDEAS

The story. About five hundred years ago, a German scholar named Johannes Reuchlin wanted Christians to read the Old Testament in Hebrew. There were almost no books to learn from, so he wrote one: The Rudiments of Hebrew (1506), with a chart of the letters and vowels like the one you are making. Many of the Reformers learned their Hebrew from it.

The chart. a: בַ patach, בָ qamets. e: בֶ segol, בֵ tsere. i: בִ hireq, בִי hireq yod. o: בֹ holem, בוֹ holem vav. u: בֻ qibbuts, בוּ shureq.

Read it. Psalm 119:18 asks God: Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. Before you read the Bible, you can pray that prayer too.

PICTURE STUDY



Johannes Reuchlin, Unknown engraver, after a 16th-century likeness · Engraving · Public-domain print

Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain

Johannes Reuchlin (1455–1522) was a German lawyer and scholar of Latin, Greek and Hebrew. His Hebrew grammar opened the Old Testament in Hebrew to Christian students. His great-nephew, Philip Melanchthon, became Martin Luther's close helper.

Look closely

- What is Reuchlin holding?
- What is he wearing?
- Describe his face: is he stern, kind, thoughtful?

Talk about it

1. Why would a Christian scholar want to read the Old Testament in Hebrew?
2. What book would you hold in your portrait?

ACTIVITY

Five-sound vowel fan

Make a fan of vowel cards grouped by sound.

You will need

- Five strips of card
- A brass fastener

Steps

1. Label the strips a, e, i, o, u.
2. On each, write every vowel for that sound under bet, with its name.
3. Fasten the strips at one end to make a fan.
4. Open the fan to a sound and read the strip.

Tips

- Put the long and short vowels for each sound side by side.

Check your work

- ☐ My fan has all the vowels.
- ☐ I can read every strip.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the vowel chart and read it across and down.

> **From history.** Reuchlin also defended Jewish books when some wanted them burned, arguing that Christians needed them to understand Hebrew. The long argument made him famous across Europe.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: גַּל־עֵינַי

▼ **Show solution**

1. gimel + patach = gal; maqqef joins the words.
2. ayin + tsere yod = ey; nun + patach yod = nai.

Answer: gal-ey-NAI (open my eyes).

Example 2. Which sound do בְּ and בּוֹ share?

▼ **Show solution**

1. Both have a dot on top.

Answer: o.

PRACTICE

1. Easy Read: לָ לֶ לִ לֹ לֻ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   lah, leh, lee, loh, loo.

2. Easy Which two vowels say ah?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Patach and qamets.

3. Easy Which two say oo?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Qibbuts and shureq.

4. Medium Read: מָ מֶ מִי מוֹ מוּ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   mah, mey, mee, moh, moo.

5. **Medium** Name a vowel written with a vav.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Holem vav (וֹ) or shureq (וּ).

6. **Hard** Say Psalm 119:18 in English.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Forgetting that qamets and patach both say a.
- Reading vowel letters (י, ו, ה) as consonants.

> **Make it a game · Vowel dice.** Make a die with a, e, i, o, u and ? (any) on its sides. Roll it and read a letter card with a vowel of that sound. The ? side lets you choose.

> **Scripture.** “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” (Psalm 119:18, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> גַּל־עֵינַי וְאַבִּיטָה נִפְלָאוֹת
>
> Read gal-ʻeynai, open my eyes, then veʼabbitah, that I may behold. Find the a, e, i and o vowels.

UNIT 3 · THE VOWEL CHART AND THE SHEWA · LESSON 3.2 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

3.2 The Shewa

OBJECTIVES

- Find shewa ְ under a letter.
- Read a vocal shewa as a quick e.
- Tell when a shewa is silent.

> **Warm-up.** Say the word “banana” quickly. Do you hear how the first a almost disappears: b’NA-na? Hebrew has a mark for that quick, half-said sound.

WATCH

Hebrew Worship - Psalm 118:26 תְּהִלָּה - Barukh haba - Biblical Hebrew

Aleph with Beth · 2:21

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gzSkXGbRPlI

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the reading practice; listen for the quick sound in barukh habba beshem.

Note: Aleph with Beth sings Psalm 118:26 in Hebrew: Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD.

BACKUP VIDEO

Hebrew - Aleph-Bet Hebrew Alphabet Song - Free Biblical Hebrew

Aleph with Beth · 2:12

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eFkuW-tQsog

Aleph with Beth’s Aleph-Bet song (2:12): the 22 letters sung in order, each letter on screen.

KEY TERMS

בְּ shewa

Says a very quick e at the start of a syllable, or nothing at the end of one. Example: בְּרֵאשִׁית bereshit.

silent shewa

A shewa that closes a syllable and is not said: יִשְׂרָאֵל yis-ra-el.

vocal shewa

A shewa that is said, quickly: under the first letter of a word, or after another shewa.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

יִשְׂרָאֵל

Yisra'el

yis-rah-AYL

name

Israel

שְׁמוּאֵל

Shemu'el

sh'moo-AYL

name

Samuel

מִדְבָּר

midbar

mid-BAHR

noun

wilderness

זֶה

zeh

ZEH

pronoun

this

CORE IDEAS

The story. Psalm 118 says: This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. The crowds sang words from this psalm, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

How Hebrew sounds. Shewa is two dots one above the other under a letter. At the beginning of a word it is a quick e: בְּ b', so בְּרֵאשִׁית is b'ray-SHEET. At the end of a syllable, after a short vowel, it is silent: יִשְׂרָאֵל is yis-rah-AYL, and the shewa under sin is not said.

A rule of thumb. First letter of the word: say it. After a short vowel: silent. Two shewas in a row: the first is silent, the second is said. Words: וְנִשְׂמְחָה ve-nis-me-KHAH, and we will be glad.

ACTIVITY

Quick-or-quiet cards

Sort shewa words into “quick” and “quiet.”

You will need

- Index cards
- Two boxes or bowls labeled quick and quiet

Steps

1. Write these on cards: בְּרֵאשִׁית, לְךָ, יִשְׂרָאֵל, מִדְבָּר, שִׁמְואֵל, וְנִשְׁמְחָה.
2. Read each and decide whether the first shewa is said (quick) or silent (quiet).
3. Put it in the right bowl and explain why.

Tips

- Look at what comes before the shewa: nothing (start of word) or a short vowel.

Check your work

☐ I sorted all six words.

☐ I can explain each one.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy בְּרֵאשִׁית and יִשְׂרָאֵל, marking each shewa “said” or “silent.”

> **From history.** The name shewa probably means “nothing” or “emptiness,” because the sound is so slight. English borrowed the word: in English grammar, the weak vowel sound in “about” is called a schwa.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: שְׁמוּאֵל

▼ **Show solution**

1. The shewa under shin is at the start of the word: said, sh’.
2. mem + shureq = moo; alef + tsere = ey; lamed = l.

Answer: sh’moo-AYL (Samuel).

Example 2. Read: מִדְבָּר

▼ **Show solution**

1. mem + hireq = mid; the shewa under dalet follows a short vowel: silent.
2. bet with dagesh + qamets = bah; resh = r.

Answer: mid-BAHR (wilderness).

PRACTICE

1. Easy Read: בְּ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   b’ (a quick beh).

2. Easy What does a shewa look like?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Two dots one above the other under a letter.

3. Easy Read: לְךָ

   ▼ **Show answer**

   leh-KHAH.

4. Medium Is the shewa said or silent in יִשְׂרָאֵל?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Silent (it follows the short vowel hireq).

5. Medium Read: בְּרֵאשִׁית

▼ **Show answer**

b’ray-SHEET.

6. Hard Say Psalm 118:24 in English.

▼ **Show answer**

This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Saying a full e for a vocal shewa. It is very quick.
- Reading every shewa aloud. After a short vowel it is silent.

> **Make it a game · Quick or quiet?.** The parent points to a shewa in a word on the board. Say “quick!” and read it if it is said; put a finger to your lips if it is silent.

> **Scripture.** “This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalm 118:24, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> זֶה־הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה נָגִילָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה בוֹ
>
> Read zeh-hayyom, this is the day, and find the shewa in venismechah, we will be glad: one silent, one said.

UNIT 4

Names and Days

Lesson 4.1 reads Bible names, with Daniel 1:6 (Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah) and Doré’s Daniel in the Lions’ Den. Many names contain God’s name: Dani-el, God is my judge.

Lesson 4.2 reads Genesis 1:5 word by word: day and night, evening and morning, the first day.

PREREQUISITES

- Units 1–3: all vowels and the shewa.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can read Bible names and find -el or -yah in them.
- ☐ I can read Genesis 1:5 slowly with its vowels.
- ☐ I know יוֹם, לַיְלָה, עֶרֶב, בֹּקֶר and אֶחָד.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

4.1	**Reading Bible Names**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes
4.2	**Day and Night**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes

Unit 4 review

The student reads aloud or writes. The test is worth 20 points.

1. **5 pts**
   Read: אַבְרָהָם דָּוִד מֹשֶׁה
2. **5 pts**
   Read and find God's name: דָּנִיֵּאל
3. **5 pts**
   Read and translate: עֶרֶב בֹּקֶר
4. **5 pts**
   Read and translate: יוֹם אֶחָד

ANSWER KEY

1. av-rah-HAHM, dah-VEED, moh-SHEH.
2. dah-nee-YAYL; -el (God): God is my judge.
3. EH-rev (evening), BOH-ker (morning).
4. yom eh-KHAHD: one day (the first day).

Printable answer key (PDF, for the parent)

UNIT CHALLENGE: NAME CARDS FOR THE HEROES

Make six hero cards (Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Samuel, David, Daniel). On each write the Hebrew name, its sound, and one sentence about the hero. Read them aloud and explain any names that contain God's name.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Reading	The student reads all six names.
Writing	The names are copied correctly with vowels.
Meaning	The student explains -el and -yah.
Care	The vowels are read and written under the right letters.

UNIT 4 · NAMES AND DAYS · LESSON 4.1 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

4.1 Reading Bible Names

OBJECTIVES

- Read Bible names syllable by syllable.
- Find God's name, -el or -yah, inside names.
- Read the names in Daniel 1:6.

Warm-up. Do you know what your name means? Many Bible names have meanings, and many contain a name of God. Today you will read the names of Bible heroes in Hebrew.

WATCH

Easy Story 35 - Samuel Anointed David - שְׁמוּאֵל מָשַׁח אֶת־דָּוִד

Aleph with Beth · 2:07

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SzsPMBAuv0s

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after the reading practice; raise your hand at every name you recognize.

Note: Aleph with Beth's easy story of Samuel anointing David, in simple Hebrew with pictures; listen for the names.

BACKUP VIDEO

Daniel 1:6

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:43

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1v_Kn2bm5xw

Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Daniel 1:6 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

KEY TERMS

אֵל El (AYL)

God. Many names end with -el.

-yah, -yahu

A short form of God's name at the end of a name, as in חֲנַנְיָה Hananiah.

דָּנִיֵּאל Daniyyel (dah-nee-YAYL)

Daniel: God is my judge.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

אֵל

El

AYL

noun

God

דָּנִיֵּאל

Daniyyel

dah-nee-YAYL

name

Daniel

יִצְחָק

Yitschaq

yits-KHAHK

name

Isaac

אַבְרָהָם

Avraham

av-rah-HAHM

name

Abraham

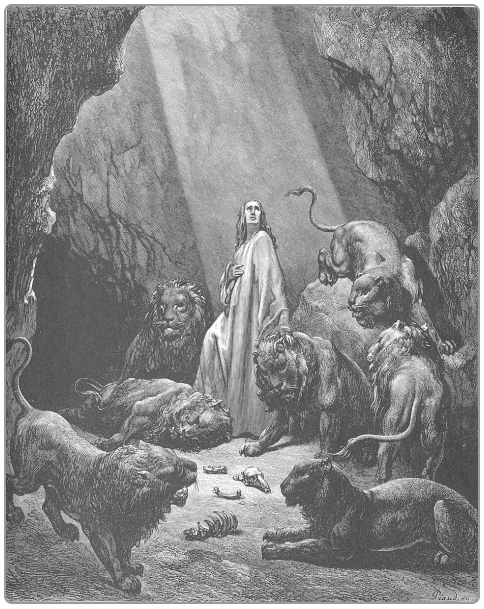
CORE IDEAS

The story. When Daniel and his friends were taken to Babylon as young men, the king's officer gave them new Babylonian names. But their Hebrew names told the truth about them: Daniel, God is my judge; Hananiah, the LORD is gracious; Mishael, who is like God?; Azariah, the LORD has helped. Even in a foreign land, they stayed faithful to God, and God shut the lions' mouths for Daniel.

Reading names. Read syllable by syllable: אַבְרָהָם av-rah-HAHM; יִצְחָק yits-KHAHK; מֹשֶׁה moh-SHEH; שְׁמוּאֵל sh'moo-AYL; דָּנִיֵּאל dah-nee-YAYL. Names usually lean on the last syllable.

God in the names. אֵל (El) means God: Shemu-el, Dani-el, Yisra-el. -yah is a short form of the LORD's name: Hanan-yah, Azar-yah. Hallelu-yah means praise the LORD.

PICTURE STUDY



Daniel in the Lions' Den, Gustave Doré, 1866 · Wood engraving · From the Doré Bible

Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain

Doré shows Daniel completely calm, looking up toward God, while the lions around him do nothing. Daniel told the king: My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths (Daniel 6:22).

Look closely

- Where is the light coming from?
- Count the lions.
- How is Daniel standing?
- Find the bones on the floor.

Talk about it

1. Why is Daniel not afraid?
2. What does Daniel's name tell us about his faith?

ACTIVITY

Hero name crowns

Make paper crowns for Bible heroes with their Hebrew names.

You will need

- Paper strips
- Markers
- Tape

Steps

1. Write a Hebrew name on each strip: דָּנִיֵּאל, דָּוִד, מֹשֶׁה, שְׁמוּאֵל.
2. Under it, write its sound and meaning.
3. Tape into crowns and wear them for a Bible-hero play.

Tips

- Read each name syllable by syllable before you write it.

Check your work

☐ My crowns have four Hebrew names.

☐ I can read and explain them.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy the names in Daniel 1:6 and circle -el and -yah.

> **From history.** English Bible names come to us through Greek and Latin: Yitschaq became Isaac, Moshe became Moses, and Yehoshua became Joshua, and in Greek, Jesus.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: יִצְחָק

▼ **Show solution**

1. yod + hireq = yi; tsade + silent shewa = ts: yits.
2. chet + qamets = khah; qof = k.

Answer: yits-KHAHK (Isaac).

Example 2. Find God's name in מִישָׁאֵל.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Look at the end.

Answer: -el (God): Mishael, who is like God?

PRACTICE

1. Easy Read: דָּוִד

   ▼ **Show answer**

   dah-VEED (David).

2. Easy Read: מֹשֶׁה

   ▼ **Show answer**

   moh-SHEH (Moses).

3. Easy What does El mean?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   God.

4. Medium Read: אַבְרָהָם

   ▼ **Show answer**

   av-rah-HAHM.

5. Medium What does Daniel mean?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   God is my judge.

6. Hard Read: חֲנַנְיָה

   ▼ **Show answer**

   kha-nan-YAH (Hananiah).

COMMON MISTAKES

- Stressing the first syllable as in English (DAN-iel). Hebrew leans on the last: dah-nee-YAYL.
- Reading the silent shewa in יִצְחָק.

> **Make it a game · Who am I?.** The parent reads a Hebrew name card silently and gives a clue (“I fought a giant”). Guess the hero, then read the card.

> **Scripture.** “Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:” (Daniel 1:6, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> דָּנִיֵּאל חֲנַנְיָה מִישָׁאֵל וַעֲזַרְיָה
>
> Find the four names at the end: Daniyyel, Chananyah, Misha’el, ‘Azaryah. Two end in -el and two in -yah.

4.2 Day and Night

OBJECTIVES

- Read Genesis 1:5 word by word.
- Know יוֹם, לַיְלָה, עֶרֶב, בֹּקֶר, אֶחָד.
- Explain “the evening and the morning.”

> **Warm-up.** When does a day begin: in the morning, at midnight, or in the evening? In the Bible, the day begins at evening: And the evening and the morning were the first day.

WATCH

Genesis 1:5

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:07

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLYb3LnZB4I

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after you have read the verse once yourself; then watch and read along.

Note: Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Genesis 1:5 in Hebrew and explains it; follow the Hebrew word by word.

BACKUP VIDEO

Easy Story 27 - The man and his wife in Eden - הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ בְּגַן־עֵדֶן

Aleph with Beth · 3:20

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Gt_jL41vzQ

Aleph with Beth's easy story of the man and his wife in the garden of Eden, in simple Hebrew with pictures.

KEY TERMS

עֶרֶב erev (EH-rev)

Evening.

בֹּקֶר boqer (BOH-ker)

Morning.

אֶחָד echad (eh-KHAHD)

One.

וַיִּקְרָא vayyiqra (vai-yik-RAH)

And he called.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

עֶרֶב

erev

EH-rev

noun

evening

בֹּקֶר

boqer

BOH-ker

noun

morning

אֶחָד

echad

eh-KHAHD

number

one

לַיְלָה

laylah

LAI-lah

noun

night

קָרָא

qara

kah-RAH

verb

he called

CORE IDEAS

The story. On the first day, God made light and divided it from the darkness. Then He named them: God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. To name something is to rule over it: God rules over day and night.

Word by word. וַיִּקְרָא and he called; אֱלֹהִים God; לָאוֹר to the light; יוֹם Day; וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ and to the darkness; קָרָא he called; לָיְלָה Night; וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב and there was evening; וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר and there was morning; יוֹם אֶחָד day one.

Notice. The Hebrew says day one, יוֹם אֶחָד, and the King James says the first day.

The word אֱלֹהִים (Elohim, God) has a new vowel under its alef, a hatef segol, a quick e; you will meet it in Grade 4.

ACTIVITY

Evening-and-morning wheel

Make a wheel that turns from evening to morning.

You will need

- Two paper plates
- A brass fastener
- Crayons

Steps

1. Color half of one plate dark (evening) and half bright (morning).
2. Write עֶרֶב on the dark half and בֹּקֶר on the bright half.
3. Cut a window in the top plate and write יוֹם אֶחָד above it.
4. Turn the wheel and read the verse's last words.

Tips

- Copy the vowels carefully.

Check your work

☐ My wheel has עֶרֶב, בֹּקֶר and יוֹם אֶחָד.

☐ I can read them.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Genesis 1:5 in Hebrew, one word per line, with the English beside each.

> **From history.** Because the Bible counts the day from evening, the Sabbath in Israel began at sunset on Friday. Many families still begin special days at sundown.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב

▼ **Show solution**

1. va + yhi (silent shewa under yod): vai-HEE.
2. Maqqef joins it to EH-rev.

Answer: vai-hee-EH-rev: and there was evening.

Example 2. Read: לָיְלָה

▼ **Show solution**

1. lamed + qamets + yod = lai.
2. lamed + qamets + silent he = lah.

Answer: LAI-lah (night).

PRACTICE

1. Easy Read and translate: יוֹם

   ▼ **Show answer**

   yom, day.

2. Easy Read and translate: לַיְלָה

   ▼ **Show answer**

   laylah, night.

3. Easy Read and translate: אֶחָד

   ▼ **Show answer**

   echad, one.

4. Medium Read and translate: עֶרֶב בֹּקֶר

   ▼ **Show answer**

   erev, evening; boqer, morning.

5. Medium In the Bible, when does a day begin?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   At evening.

6. Hard Say Genesis 1:5 in English.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading the yod in לַיְלָה as y + ee. Patach + yod = ai: LAI-lah.
- Forgetting the quick e of the shewa in וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ.

> **Make it a game · Evening, morning.** The parent says erev or boqer. For erev, lie down and close your eyes; for boqer, jump up and stretch. Then read the matching card.

> **Scripture.** "And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." (Genesis 1:5, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לָאוֹר יוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לָיְלָה וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד׃
>
> Read the whole verse slowly. Find yom (Day), laylah (Night), erev (evening), boqer (morning) and echad (one).

UNIT 5

In the Beginning

Lesson 5.1 reads Genesis 1:3 word by word: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי־אוֹר, with Aivazovsky's Chaos (The Creation).

Lesson 5.2 reads Genesis 1:1, all seven words, and the year ends with reading it aloud to the family.

PREREQUISITES

- Units 1–4: all vowels, shewa, names and Genesis 1:5.

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can read Genesis 1:3 aloud.
- ☐ I can read Genesis 1:1 aloud and tell what each word means.
- ☐ I know בָּרָא, אֱלֹהִים, שָׁמַיִם and אֶרֶץ.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

5.1	**Let There Be Light**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes
5.2	**In the Beginning: Genesis 1:1**	3 sessions of 20–30 minutes

Unit 5 review

The student reads aloud or writes. The test is worth 20 points.

1. **5 pts**
   Read Genesis 1:3 aloud in Hebrew.
2. **5 pts**
   Read Genesis 1:1 aloud in Hebrew.
3. **5 pts**
   Translate: בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים
4. **5 pts**
   Translate: הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ

ANSWER KEY

1. vai-YOH-mer e-loh-HEEM ye-HEE OHR vai-hee-OHR.
2. b'ray-SHEET bah-RAH e-loh-HEEM ayt ha-shah-MAH-yeem ve-AYT hah-AH-rets.
3. God created.
4. the heavens and the earth.

Printable answer key (PDF, for the parent)

UNIT CHALLENGE: MY GENESIS 1:1 SCROLL

Copy Genesis 1:1 in Hebrew on a long strip of paper in your neatest writing, roll it on two pencils like a scroll, and read it aloud to your family. Then read the English from the King James Version and explain each Hebrew word.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Reading	The student reads the verse aloud smoothly.
Writing	The Hebrew is copied neatly and correctly.
Meaning	Each word is explained.
Care	The vowels are read and written under the right letters.

UNIT 5 · IN THE BEGINNING · LESSON 5.1 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

5.1 Let There Be Light

OBJECTIVES

- Read Genesis 1:3 aloud.
- Know יְהִי (let there be) and וַיְהִי (and there was).
- Explain that God created by His word.

Warm-up. Stand in a dark room and say, "Let there be light!" Then flip the switch. You needed a switch, but God needed only His word.

WATCH

Genesis 1:3

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:06

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VsWZMeD5wA

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after you have read the verse; watch and repeat each word after the reader.

Note: Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Genesis 1:3 in Hebrew and explains it; read along.

BACKUP VIDEO

Genesis 1:4

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:04

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2dAINJcfHcY

Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Genesis 1:4 in Hebrew and explains it; this one is for the parent.

KEY TERMS

וַיֹּאמֶר vayyomer (vai-YOH-mer)

And he said.

יְהִי yehi (ye-HEE)

Let there be.

וַיְהִי vayhi (vai-HEE)

And there was.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

וַיֹּאמֶר

vayyomer

vai-YOH-mer

verb

and he said

יְהִי

yehi

ye-HEE

verb

let there be

אֱלֹהִים

Elohim

e-loh-HEEM

noun

God

אוֹר

or

OHR

noun

light

CORE IDEAS

The story. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. Then God spoke, and the very first thing He made was light. The Bible says God created everything by His word. John's Gospel begins the same way: In the beginning was the Word… All things were made by him.

Word by word. וַיֹּאמֶר and he said; אֱלֹהִים God; יְהִי let there be; אוֹר light; וַיְהִי־אוֹר and there was light. Five words, and light filled the world.

Notice. God said יְהִי, let there be, and the verse answers וַיְהִי, and there was. What God commands happens exactly as He says.

PICTURE STUDY



Chaos (The Creation), Ivan Aivazovsky, 1841 · Oil on canvas · Mekhitarist Museum, San Lazzaro, Venice

Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain

Aivazovsky was a Russian painter of Armenian family who painted the sea thousands of times. Here he painted the moment before creation was ordered: darkness on the face of the deep, and light breaking through. Pope Gregory XVI admired it so much that he gave Aivazovsky a gold medal.

Look closely

- Where is the brightest light?
- Find the path of light on the water.
- What shape is the dark cloud?
- Is the sea calm or stormy?

Talk about it

1. How does this painting show Genesis 1:2–3?
2. Why did the painter leave out the land?

ACTIVITY

Light-up verse

Make a verse card that shines.

You will need

- Black card stock
- A white or yellow gel pen
- A small flashlight (optional)

Steps

1. Copy Genesis 1:3 in Hebrew across the black card with the gel pen.
2. Under each word write its English meaning.
3. In a dark room, shine a light on the card and read it aloud.

Tips

- Copy the maqqef in וַיְהִי־אוֹר.

Check your work

- ☐ My card has all five words.
- ☐ I can read the verse aloud.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Genesis 1:3 in Hebrew and English.

> **From history.** The Latin translation of yehi or is fiat lux, “let there be light,” which is still the motto of many schools and universities.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: וַיֹּאמֶר

▼ **Show solution**

1. vav + patach = va; yod with dagesh + holem = yoh: vai-YOH.
2. mem + segol = meh; resh = r.

Answer: vai-YOH-mer (and he said).

Example 2. Read: אֱלֹהִים

▼ **Show solution**

1. alef with hatef segol = a quick e.
2. lamed + holem = loh; he + hireq yod = hee; end-mem = m.

Answer: e-loh-HEEM (God).

PRACTICE

1. Easy Read and translate: אוֹר

   ▼ **Show answer**

   or, light.

2. Easy Read and translate: יְהִי

   ▼ **Show answer**

   yehi, let there be.

3. Easy Read: אֱלֹהִים

   ▼ **Show answer**

   e-loh-HEEM.

4. Medium Read and translate: וַיְהִי־אוֹר

   ▼ **Show answer**

   vai-hee-OHR: and there was light.

5. Medium What did God make first?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Light.

6. Hard Read the whole verse aloud.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   vai-YOH-mer e-loh-HEEM ye-HEE OHR vai-hee-OHR.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading the dagesh in וַיֹּאמֶר as two y's. It doubles the yod: vai-YOH-mer.
- Saying yehi and vayhi the same. Vayhi adds va-: and.

> **Make it a game · Lights on, lights off.** The parent reads one word of Genesis 1:3. If you can read the next word, flip the light on; if not, it stays off. Get to the end with the lights on.

> **Scripture.** "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." (Genesis 1:3, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר וַיְהִי־אוֹר׃
>
> Read all five Hebrew words: vayyomer Elohim yehi or vayhi-or.

UNIT 5 · IN THE BEGINNING · LESSON 5.2 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 20–30 MINUTES

5.2 In the Beginning: Genesis 1:1

OBJECTIVES

- Read Genesis 1:1 aloud in Hebrew.
- Tell what each of its seven words means.
- Know בָּרָא, שָׁמַיִם and אֶרֶץ.

> **Warm-up.** How many words are in Genesis 1:1 in English? Count them: In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Ten. In Hebrew there are only seven. Today you read all seven.

WATCH

Genesis 1:1

Daily Dose of Hebrew · 2:10

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jVmA5J_0d6A

> **WHEN TO WATCH**
> after you have read the verse yourself twice; then watch and read along.

Note: Daily Dose of Hebrew: a seminary professor reads Genesis 1:1 and explains it; read along with him.

BACKUP VIDEO

Easy Story 3 - The Creation Story

Aleph with Beth · 4:50

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wjVzrsHOgUM

Aleph with Beth's easy Creation story in simple Hebrew with pictures.

KEY TERMS

בְּרֵאשִׁית bereshit (b'ray-SHEET)

In the beginning.

בָּרָא bara (bah-RAH)

He created. In the Bible, only God is ever the subject of this verb.

אֵת et (AYT)

A little word with no English translation that points to the object of the verb.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Hebrew reads from right to left. Capitals show the stressed syllable, usually the last one. kh is the throaty ch of Bach; a is ah, e is eh, ee is the i of machine, o is oh, oo is the oo of food, and uh is the quick sound of the shewa.

בְּרֵאשִׁית

bereshit

b'ray-SHEET

phrase

in the beginning

בָּרָא

bara

bah-RAH

verb

he created

שָׁמַיִם

shamayim

shah-MAH-yeem

noun

heavens, sky

אֶרֶץ

erets

EH-rets

noun

earth, land

CORE IDEAS

The story. The Bible begins with God. Before anything else existed, God was there, and He created the heavens and the earth out of nothing. The Hebrew verb bara, created, is used in the Bible only for what God does. People make things; only God creates.

Word by word. בְּרֵאשִׁית in the beginning; בָּרָא created; אֱלֹהִים God; אֵת (object marker); הַשָּׁמַיִם the heavens; וְאֵת and (object marker); הָאָרֶץ the earth.

Notice. Hebrew often puts the verb before its subject: bara Elohim, created God. And הַ at the front of a word means the: הַשָּׁמַיִם the heavens, הָאָרֶץ the earth. You will study it in Grade 5.

ACTIVITY

Seven-word verse chain

Make a paper chain of the seven words of Genesis 1:1.

You will need

- Seven strips of paper
- Glue or tape
- Markers

Steps

1. Write one Hebrew word of Genesis 1:1 on each strip, with its English meaning on the back.
2. Link the strips into a chain in order, starting with בְּרֵאשִׁית.
3. Hang the chain from right to left and read it.

Tips

- Check every vowel against the Bible text.

Check your work

- ☐ My chain has all seven words in order.
- ☐ I can read the verse aloud.

HEBREW NOTEBOOK

1. Copy Genesis 1:1 in your neatest writing, with the meaning of each word underneath.

> **From history.** In Hebrew, the book of Genesis is called Bereshit, after its first word. The other books of Moses are also named by their first important words.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Read: בְּרֵאשִׁית

▼ **Show solution**

1. bet with dagesh + vocal shewa = b’.
2. resh + tsere + silent alef = ray; shin + hireq yod = shee; tav = t.

Answer: b’ray-SHEET.

Example 2. Read: הָאָרֶץ

▼ **Show solution**

1. he + qamets = hah (the).
2. alef + qamets = ah; resh + segol = reh; end-tsade = ts.

Answer: hah-AH-rets (the earth).

PRACTICE

1. Easy Read and translate: בָּרָא

   ▼ **Show answer**

   bara, he created.

2. Easy Read and translate: הַשָּׁמַיִם

   ▼ **Show answer**

   hashamayim, the heavens.

3. Easy How many Hebrew words are in Genesis 1:1?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   Seven.

4. Medium What does הַ mean at the front of a word?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   The.

5. Medium Who is the only subject of the verb bara in the Bible?

   ▼ **Show answer**

   God.

6. Hard Read Genesis 1:1 aloud.

   ▼ **Show answer**

   b’ray-SHEET bah-RAH e-loh-HEEM ayt ha-shah-MAH-yeem ve-AYT hah-AH-rets.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Reading the alef in בְּרֵאשִׁית. After tsere it is silent.
- Translating אֵת as a word. It only marks the object.

> **Make it a game · Seven-word race.** Shuffle seven word cards of Genesis 1:1. Put them in order from right to left as fast as you can, then read the verse. Try to beat your time.

> **Scripture.** “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1, KJV)
>
> Hebrew (Westminster Leningrad Codex, vowel points shown, cantillation marks left out):
>
> בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ׃
>
> Read all seven words. You can now read the first verse of the Bible in the language Moses wrote it in.