**PROBLEM- What is one of the biggest problems facing the typical teacher?**

One of the problems all teachers face is that in a typical classroom setting there is never really a truly homogenous group. Some students are advanced, others have fallen through the cracks and some will have little to no background. Either way, it is a very flawed system. When put together in one class it doesn’t work.

**CLASSIC SOLUTION**

In most situations the solution is resolved with the implementation of a resource room (if the school can afford one) which usually provides a nominal amount of time. If there is no resource room than the teachers “modify”, often a code word for less responsibility and the end results are often not too efficacious. Another option is to teach down the middle, the result being that the really exceptional students are unchallenged and bored which can lead to behavioral and motivational issues. The weaker students due to their frustrations begin to exhibit all of the above and more. This is a very dismal situation but it is all too common in our school systems. What can be done to get a heterogeneous group of students to work independently, step by step, with limited frustration, and at their own pace? Over the years while teaching in TDS, I was required to teach multiple grades simultaneously and in the process I was able to develop a methodology and materials to achieve what I originally thought to be impossible.

**ONE FOR ALL CHUMASH SKILLS PROGRAM**

**GOAL**

The goal is to place the student on the road to independent learning regardless of natural abilities and background, which over time builds confidence and Jewish pride. The student’s success in the classroom is often a major ingredient to infusing the student with love of his/her heritage. Success breeds success both emotionally and intellectually.

**GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY**

The two main components of skills are grammar and vocabulary. They are first taught as independent categories and then come together.

**HOW IT’S DONE**

The curriculum involves a great deal of detail.

To begin with:

* Students are assessed for individual skills worked on in previous years.
* After assessments, I create individualized expectations for each student.
* From this point they will work at their own pace.

PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENTS:

A) To properly create an individualized plan that maximizes and expedites growth.

B) To discover gaps in students’ knowledge base with intent to help bridge them.

**Content:** Hebrew Grammar

**Skill**: Develop proficiency in grammar.

**Method of Instruction and Differentiated Learning**: Students work independently at their own pace using grammar workbooks with guidance of teacher. Pace and amount of time allocated for each student to work in the book is based on their proficiency in applying it to translating pesukim (more about that later). In other words, I can’t let them get ahead of themselves.

**Method of Assessment**: Graded on a daily basis to ensure daily assessment. Each book is tagged with a sticky note containing instructions for that particular day. I pay especial attention to how often specific errors are made in order to reinforce corrections. Each student is required to correct his/her own mistakes. A final test is administered at the end of each book. The students walk away with an expertise in all the Hebrew tenses, suffixes, prefixes as well as the different binyanim.

**Content:** Vocabulary

**Skill**: Develop proficiency in vocabulary.

**Method of Instruction and Differentiated Learning**: Students work independently at their own pace using workbooks. Flash cards are made for purpose of review. The cards have pictures for the more visual learners. Workbook includes crossword puzzles, word finds and matching exercises. I uploaded all the words on line in the form of different learning games. The student receives periodic cumulative tests to ensure long term knowledge. Little by little the student is able to translate more and more.

**Method of Assessment**: They are tested at end of each unit. They will get a cumulative test after every few units completed.

**Content:** Linear Chumash Translation Sheets

**Skill**: Developing fluency in translating Chumash by applying knowledge gained from vocabulary and grammar curriculums.

**Method of Instruction and Differentiated Learning**: Students are required to translate, as well as circle prefixes, suffixes and root words on their linear sheets. Each student is only responsible to identify the parts of speech that he/she has already learned in their grammar books. (This removes the frustration.) As he/she progresses the teacher keeps track and gives more responsibilities. Frustration is mitigated as students are only being asked to do what they are presently capable of.

I have created **two sets of colored coded linear sheets** for two different levels. The color code is matched to a grammar answer key.

Students are provided with all the vocabulary words pertinent to the parsha to assist in translation. I use **three different level dictionaries**, two which I created over the years. The less advanced students receive a tier one dictionary that includes every word of every verse presented in order. The second tier uses an actual dictionary that contains hundreds of words but is kid friendly. It is easier much easier to use than a standard Hebrew dictionary but much more challenging than the tier one dictionary. As they advance, students begin using the third tier dictionary, a standard adult Alkali dictionary. This methodology allows them to ease into dictionary use, gradually increasing their independence. Each dictionary requires a different level of knowledge and in itself aids the student in skill building. The first tier is for the student with little or no background. The second tier requires dictionary and shorashim skills. The third level is the final step towards independence.

**Method of Assessment**: I use copies of the linear sheets on a projector to review their work. Each student receives multiple turns to identify the different parts of speech. **Students are called upon only when the particular skill required to translate is something they have already studied or are currently working on**. This is done in order to alleviate embarrassment and to provide every student an opportunity to contribute successfully. This is a key component to the curriculum.

**Content: Mastery.** Putting it all together using mastery sheets.

**Skill**: Each student is required to illustrate mastery of the verses including the necessary grammar and vocabulary skills.

**Method of Assessment and Differentiated Learning:** Student translates verses to me directly from a copy of the actual Chumash. **Again, each student is only responsible to apply his/her particular set of grammar skills.** I track their fluency using a marking system on their mastery sheets. The regularity of testing is carefully monitored using spread sheets. Each week the student assigns himself/herself with a realistic goal (number of verses) to master. The goal can be increased or decreased as need be.

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While the curriculum involves a great deal of detail, the advantages are enormous:

* The student is neither too overwhelmed nor under-challenged.
* The student anxiety level is decreased.
* You can visibly monitor the increased levels of confidence and academic achievement step by step.
* The system is very methodical allowing learning gaps to be filled in.
* A well thought out individualized curriculum is the first step to successful classroom management.

I will attach samples of the materials assuming you software can read davkawriter.

Thank You,

Chaim Gourdji