

Training Course

Using The Hickey Method
to teach
English as a Foreign Language
to
Students with Language Learning Issues

Hickey is a multi-sensory phonetic English teaching method,
developed by Kathleen Hickey, Great Britain,
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Part I: Background and Overview

The Four Language Skills

	<i>Written Symbols</i>	<i>Oral / Auditory - Speech</i>
<i>Input</i>	Reading	Listening Comprehension
<i>Output</i>	Writing	Speaking

Learners may have problems and/or strengths in any of these areas.

- To learn a language, it helps to practice *all* these skills, and they are all related.
- Discuss with the learner: there are lots of ways all around you, in your daily life, to practice English: read street and store signs, pick words you recognize out of books, watch English TV shows and movies, listen to English songs on the radio, find an email pen pal, surf the Internet, play computer games.
- Raise awareness of the many opportunities for practicing English by brainstorming with the learner.

Language processing issues:

- Directional issues (e.g. p, b, d, q are all the same shape, but positioned differently; English goes from left to right, opposite of Hebrew)
- Weak memory
- Retrieval difficulty
- Concentration/distraction (ADD or ADHD)
- Hearing (requires professional diagnosis)

- Difficulty differentiating between sounds (e.g. short vowel sounds), or identifying their place in the word (beginning, middle, end)
- Fine motor coordination (writing)
- Vision (requires professional diagnosis; learner may need enlargement or other special tools)
- Lack of self-confidence
- Lack of good study habits
- Inhibitions, fear of risk and failure, low self-esteem.

The Hickey method addresses all of these.

Benefits of the Hickey method:

- Learners learn to read and write English, expand their vocabularies and knowledge of basic grammar rules, understand and speak in English while discussing the material.
- Ensures success by progressing step-by-step and building a strong and stable foundation.
- Multi-sensory, so employs all the possible channels to the brain to reinforce learning.
- Learner practices good study/review habits, self-correction skills, and learns to notice and manage his or her own areas of difficulty that require attention.
- Predictable, secure learning environment and tutor relationship builds confidence of the learner.
- Every learner is different. This approach allows you to tailor the material, pace, and emphasis to the learner's needs and profile.

Relating to the Whole Person

Learners are people with needs, feelings, drives, interests and aspirations, as are we all. Learning is most effective when all these are taken into consideration.

Our goal is to help our students, along with developing English skills, to develop self-esteem and self-confidence, motivation, good study skills, trust, and pleasure in learning.

People learn and feel best when they are emotionally and physically comfortable. Be sensitive to their physical and emotional needs; channel these needs in ways that support learning.

- Hold lessons in a place where the student feels safe and can concentrate without distraction.
- Be reliable, trustworthy, friendly and predictable. Praise effort and good use of strategies, and not only achievement. Never mock or make fun of a student (laugh *with* them but not *at* them). Build a relationship of trust with the student. Help him or her to reflect on achievements and difficulties.
- When you can, make sure the student is not hungry or thirsty. Try to make sure that there is water available at the teaching site to avoid the need for trips to the water fountain.
 - If you are at home you can offer cookies or pretzels and "petel"; this is a little harder at school.
 - Offering a few flavors of syrup and a cookie presents a good opportunity for conversation. "Are you hungry? Would you like a cookie?" and "Are you thirsty? Would you like a drink?" "Yes, please." "Do you want apple, lemon or orange?" "Apple juice, please."
- You can present symbolic extrinsic rewards to students who enjoy them - stickers, candy, a smiley face and "Great work!" in colored pen on their work - whatever they value. As they mature, and take intrinsic pleasure in learning for its own sake, these rewards may recede in importance.
- Consider having a little celebration (a pizza party?) when the student achieves a milestone; say, after each page of the lesson list they check off each week, or at the end of the semester or year. (It can be a group celebration, if you are working in a setting with other pairs of tutors and learners - play English games, try to speak English at the party.)

Learning Styles - Multiple Intelligences

In recent years, there is growing awareness that people have different strengths that are reflected in different learning styles. People may be talented in interpersonal skills and intuition; abstract thinking; rhythm and music; dance, sports, and physical coordination; visual arts and creativity; rational, logical, technological thinking (computers, math); verbal language and expressive skills, etc.

There are many different channels to the brain, and as tutors of people with "learning differences" we have to find the right channels for each student, using alternative learning styles, if the traditional ones don't work.

Use media and sensory stimulation whenever possible - colors, cards, games with dice and pieces, bingo with buttons. Provide highlighter pens, sharpened pencils and erasers, colored markers with which to draw clue words, a ruler for drawing lines. The white board with erasable pens is a fantastic and fun way to practice writing.

For example, in teaching letter shapes, we can start with several straightforward methods - writing with a marker on the erasable white board, writing in the Machberet Chachama (which provides guidance for the three letter heights - grass, sky, and ground), and white clue word cards with pictures.

But if these sensory channels are not sufficient, try having the student:

- Trace the letters in a tray of sand or salt.
- Shape the letters with clay, plastolina, or Das.
- Make the letters with his/her body, standing or lying on the ground.
- Draw imaginary letters with big sweeping movements in the air.
- Draw or cut out giant-sized letters using cardboard or construction paper.
- Cut the letters out of sandpaper and feel their shapes.
- Use magnetic letters that are three-dimensional.
- Look in the mirror when s/he says the letters. Place the hand on the throat to feel vibrations (g - m - z) or in front of the mouth to feel air expelled (ch - p - f - s).
- For learning vocabulary, bring objects to demonstrate the meanings of the words.
- Experiment with your own ideas according to the learner's needs.

Organization and Good Study Habits

Help students get organized and take their English learning seriously by:

- Provide (or have them acquire) a convenient way to carry and store materials - a loose-leaf notebook with dividers and a Velcro-closing pocket to hold cards, Machberet Chachama, and games.
 - Help the student to develop awareness of keeping materials together and bringing them to lessons so that they are available when needed.
 - Everything should have its place - section dividers to store completed word lists, stories for reading at home, games, etc.
- Give the learner an overview of what s/he learned and what is coming up.
 - Give the learner a personal copy of the list of lesson topics. Check off the material covered at the end of each lesson.
 - Give the learner the Long Vowel Choices table and mark off each one as it is covered.
- Guide learners to check and correct their own work, such as in correcting a mistake in a word on a word list - and then giving themselves credit for the word. (Learning to check and correct their work is a skill as important as getting the word right, or more so.)
- Help student to establish a routine schedule on which to review cards of the "reading pack" at home. (There is a weekly schedule form for this purpose, on which they can mark each occasion when they practiced.)
- Guide learners in building their awareness of their own learning needs, and empower them to make good decisions. Work with them to gradually take charge of the decision on how often they need to review their cards.
 - If their recall is automatic, they can space out their reviews. If not, they need to review more frequently - maybe twice a day, rather than once.
 - If some of the cards have become automatic and others not, separate them into piles and review the ones that still need work more often. Etc.

Cursive writing (כתב מחובר) - Why?

The Hickey method teaches and practices the use of cursive writing. It is not essential, but it is advised for students who would benefit from it.

- Writing cursive is rhythmic, calming, and free and has a beneficial effect on the brain and fine motor coordination. Writing words and letters in cursive with large, flowing movements on the white board is a very empowering activity!
- It improves illegible handwriting.
- Cursive assists in learning to form the letters correctly, since they are connected, using the proper strokes, from left to right, top to bottom.
 - When you connect the letter to the previous one it forces you to approach the letter from the correct spot, and end it at the right spot.
 - This helps to break previously learned bad habits (writing a "p" like a "פ," and other right-to-left habits carried over from Hebrew) and clarifies confusion (e.g. distinguishing b and d by their approach.)
- The flow of cursive encourages proper letter height and positioning, since the letters of a word are related more closely to each other via their physical connection.
- It emphasizes the identity of each word (joined together), and the spaces between words.
- It is useful to be able to read, as well as write, cursive.
- We use the style of lower-case cursive that is most similar to the printed forms of the letters.
 - For capital (upper-case) letters, we simply use the print forms.
 - Learners may ask about other styles of cursive and capital letters that they encounter. There are other legitimate letter styles. If the learner likes another form, s/he can choose which to use - handwriting is a personal prerogative.
 - THIS IS ONE THING THE LEARNER WILL BE ABLE TO SHOW OFF - A SKILL THAT "REGULAR" ENGLISH STUDENTS DON'T KNOW. They love it! For a change, the "remedial" student can teach his "regular" friends some secret knowledge.

Orthographic, Morphological Patterns and Spelling Rules (Pink Cards)

Many English words are spelled phonetically. For these words, if you know the sounds of the letters, you can pronounce the word - it is pronounced exactly as it is written, one sound after the other, in the order the letters appear.

With enough practice, learners will know the sounds of each letter, and when a word is entirely phonetic, can read it fluently and automatically.

Many other words follow **spelling rules**. These words are also predictable and explainable. The Hickey method teaches the learner basic spelling rules, one by one. (For the tutor's own edification, there is an optional set of advanced spelling rule cards - even advanced English speakers are often amazed to find out that there are actually systematic rules to help understand "random" English spelling.)

- Spelling rules assist the writer and reader in knowing when to adjust the phonetic spelling to certain conditions (e.g. at the end of one-syllable words, after one short vowel, we read and write:

-ff for the (f) sound, -ss for the (s) sound, -ll for the (l) sound,
and -ck for the (k) sound.)

- Sometimes there are alternate ways to pronounce a spelling (e.g. "ea" can sound like (ē) in peace, like (ā) in break, or like (ě) in bread).
- Sometimes there are alternate ways to spell the same sound. The Long Vowels Choices table systematically organizes the alternate spellings of long vowels, and we teach them one by one, from most common to least common.

Learners must learn the rules well, and practice applying rules to particular words.

BUT there are many "exception" words that are not written the way they sound. These words simply have to be memorized. We write them on yellow cards for this purpose.

- "Exception words" may contain silent letters or letters that are simply pronounced differently from their usual sounds. (We write the silent letter with a dotted line through it - e.g. "half - [·] to show that it is not pronounced.)
- For example, "of" sounds like (ǔv); "bus" would be written as "buss" if it followed the spelling rule above.

Why are there exception words? (Yellow Cards)

Learners will ask you this, so it's good to mull the issue over and have some thoughts ready to discuss.

Even given all the predictable, hypothetical, and explainable rules, English is not entirely consistent. Some of the exceptions may be caused by reasons we can identify and explain.

- English has words from many sources, and a long history. Why is "light" spelled with the -igh spelling of the (ī) sound, and not with -i-magic-e? It comes from the guttural German "licht" - probably at first the -gh was pronounced, though today it is silent.
- Sometimes we have homonyms (words that sound the same but are spelled differently). The separate spellings help to differentiate between meanings, e.g. "hair" and "hare," "hear" and "here," "their," "there," and "they're."

But sometimes we don't know the reason for an exception, and simply have to memorize these words; hence the yellow sight-reading cards.

You can be very sympathetic with your learners on this point. It's one of the things that is hard about English. Hebrew is much more phonetic. But there is no avoiding it-

אין מה לעשות, ככה זה באנגלית.

On the other hand, English is a very rich language, with many ways to express whatever you want to say. There are more unique English words than there are Hebrew words. (Just compare the sizes of the English-Hebrew and Hebrew-English dictionaries.) That's the compensation!

Now that we have covered background, theory, and reasons for the elements of a Hickey lesson,

Following is the
Lesson structure for the standard Hickey lesson

Lesson plan for _____

Date: _____

Lesson No. _____

<u>Goal:</u>	<u>Materials:</u>
<p>1. Reading card pack- review reading: (Learner says the sound and the clue word for each white card letter, reads words on yellow cards, recites rules from pink cards.)</p>	<p>Learner's Card Pack (white, pink & yellow cards).</p>
<p>2. Blue cards- review writing: (Tutor says the sound; learner repeats the sound, says the name of the letter, and writes the letter(s). Write all the spellings that have been learned for the sound.)</p>	<p>Tutor's blue cards for this learner, pencil, eraser, ruler and מחברת חכמה</p>
<p>3. Teach new material: (Make new white card and blue card, sometimes also pink or yellow cards. Practice writing new letter and words on white board, in notebook.)</p>	<p>Blank white card, blue card, pink and/or yellow cards. Black and red thin markers. White board, eraser, and erasable marker. Lists of words up to this lesson and most common words. Notebook (machberet chachama).</p>
<p>4. Read Story: (Learner reads story out loud to you. You correct and explain. Use: Who? What? When?/Where? Why?/How? cards to review story.</p>	<p>Story page, Wh question cards.</p>
<p>5. Word list: You say words, learner writes on list – at least 6 words. Learner uncovers answer list, reads aloud, checks words and corrects mistakes.</p>	<p>Word list sheet for lesson. Strip to cover answer list, tape, pencil, eraser. Sticker for reward when completed.</p>
<p>6. Summary: Check off what you did from learner's personal list.</p>	<p>Learner's summary list of topics covered.</p>
<p>7. Game with new letter: Play a game.</p>	<p>Game materials.</p>

Points for next lesson:

Teaching and Reviewing Material: Types of Cards

We use several types of cards, size 8 cm high by 5.5 cm wide, 160-gram card stock, coded by color. (Card stock available at Graphos Print in Jerusalem.) Each card has a different purpose.

The "Reading Pack" (for the student to practice at home, with the goal of automatizing retrieval, and review aloud in the lesson) consists of:

- **White cards:** Enable the learner to see a letter and be able to automatically retrieve and produce the sound(s) it makes. These cards have the letter on the front (small and capital) and, on the back, a clue word for each sound, chosen and illustrated by the student.
- **Pink cards:** Summarize spelling and grammar rules that assist in decoding and reading comprehension. The front has the name of the rule, the back a brief statement of the rule and examples.
- **Yellow cards:** Sight words, to be practiced frequently to increase reading fluency. These include two categories:
 - "Exception" words (those that are not spelled the way they sound, or do not follow the spelling rules - i.e. friend (silent e) or half (silent l)).
 - Common words that will be encountered frequently enough in reading that it is worthwhile to recognize them on sight.

If the student also notes the definitions of the words, these same cards can make these words a familiar part of the learner's vocabulary.

The "Spelling Pack" (for practice in recognizing a sound, naming the ways to spell it, and encoding it into a written symbol) consists of:

- **Blue cards:** The tutor keeps these in the learner's folder. They provide a record of the student's clue words for each sound that has been learned so far. Each sound has its own card; more words (spellings) of the sound are added to the relevant cards as the learner progresses. Example: the long a sound (ā) can be spelled: a, -a_e (a-magic e), ay, ai, ea, etc.
 - In each lesson, the tutor dictates the sound from each card to the learner, who repeats the sound, states the spelling (those that s/he has learned so far) and writes the spelling of the sound in the machberet chachama.
 - If, *chas v'chalila*, the learner loses his pack of reading cards, the blue cards will allow their reconstruction.

Reading Activity (Story)

In each lesson we read a brief story, generally in the form of squares containing text and illustrations, which is composed only of the letters and sounds that the learner has already covered. The stories should have an introductory beginning with identifiable character(s), a conflict to be resolved, and a resolution - all of this in a few short sentences.

The story is illustrated to convey the meaning of the text.

- The learner reads it through, decoding the written symbols. You can assist by giving sound hints and restating words that have been mispronounced.
- Since everything in the story should already have been learned, you can remind the learner of the various sounds and rules to apply in figuring out how to read each word.
 - "It's like the (י) in your word igloo" "זֶה כְּמוֹ () בְּמִילָה שֶׁלִּי ()"
 - "Is this a closed syllable, or open? זְאֵת הַבְּרָה סְאוּרָה אִו פְּתוּחָה?"
"So, therefore, what kind of vowel is it?"
"לָכֵן אֹת הַנִּיקוּד אַרוּכָה אִו קְצֵרָה?"
- To model reading fluency, after the learner has laboriously read through a sentence, you can repeat the sentence with expression and fluency.
- Ask questions, after each square of the story, to help the learner figure out the meaning of what s/he has read.
 - "What's this guy's name - אֵיךְ קוֹרְאִים לוֹ?"
 - "What does that mean - מָה זֶה אֹמֵר?"
 - It is not necessary to do a literal word-by-word translation; anyway, that is not the way language works. Just try to make the meaning of the text accessible to the learner as you work your way through the story.
- The best thing about this reading activity is that the reader is bound to achieve some measure of success! They have actually learned to read an English text and understand it. Given that they have so far read the letters mostly from the cards, this is like a magic next step. Give lots of praise for effort as well as achievement.

Scaffolding Reading Comprehension: The "WH" question cards

Who? What? When?/Where? Why?/How?

Reading comprehension: These four cards ask the learner the basic questions that always need to be answered after reading a passage (in our case, after reading the one-page story).

They guide the reader in reviewing the text and summarizing the content in a structured way.

If the reader didn't understand or has forgotten something in the text, s/he can go back to scan for the answers.

Listening comprehension and producing speech: By asking the questions in English, and encouraging the learner to answer in English (at first partially, quoting key words directly from the story; later adding connector words), the learner gradually builds up listening comprehension and speaking skills - the ability to string together English words to communicate meaning.

• Procedure for using question cards:

- You can turn this activity into a game by shuffling the cards and holding them up with their backs to the learner for them to pick and answer, one by one.
- Or you can go through them in a set order, from the most concrete answers to those most open to interpretation - Who, When/Where, What, then Why/How.
- Sometimes the answer is "we don't know - it doesn't tell us" since not every answer is always supplied in every text, e.g., "Do we know when and where this story happened?" (Make a "who knows?" face and shrug your shoulders.) "No, we don't know! The story doesn't tell us."
- You can speculate together about possible hints in the story. This shows the student how to look more carefully, reading in possible, meaning, when you don't find the answer the first time through.
- Even discussing the possible hints and concluding that we can't always answer every question is a valuable activity.

Word Lists for Writing Practice – Writing activity

The twelve-word lists that follow the story in each lesson are in a standard format that enables the learner to practice several skills in one activity. These include being able to identify and discern the sounds of a spoken word and encode it in writing, cursive handwriting, vocabulary acquisition, self-monitoring, -checking, and -praising.

- **Choice of words:** The words on the list should reinforce the new material (spellings, i.e. letters or letter combinations, and rules) that have been introduced in the current lesson, plus review material learned in recent lessons. It is a good idea for the word list to include words from the story the learner has just read. In fact, it is helpful to use some of the words to give a preview of the story vocabulary in advance, during the “teach new material” activity of the lesson, when you are giving examples of words that use the new spelling for the learner to practice writing on the white board and in the Machberet Chachama.
- **Format of the word list:** The list contains twelve words. The first column contains an illustration of the word, usually a picture; the second column, the word written in cursive; the third column is blank.
- **Are you giving the learner his/her own copy of the word list to write on and to keep?** If you have access to a photocopy machine, you can do this, in which case learners keep their work, together with the illustrations, almost like an illustrated glossary for the story. The collection of completed word lists becomes an ever-growing record of their work with you that is a concrete, justifiable source of pride.
 - If you don't have a photocopy machine, you can place the word list into a plastic pocket and have the learner write in erasable marker on the plastic surface. Or, you can tape a strip with numbered spaces for twelve words over column 2 and have the learner write on the strip and keep only the strip itself afterward.
- **Procedure for completing the word list:**
 - Before giving the list to the learner, cover the second column (the words themselves) with a strip of paper.
 - Ideally, the learner would be able to look at each picture, identify what it is, recall how to pronounce the word in English, say it, and write it correctly! This might actually happen for English speakers, occasionally. Sometimes the learner triumphantly recognizes the picture and produces the spoken word. (Sometimes the tutor has to peek beneath the strip to figure out the word the picture is attempting to illustrate.)

Often, you prompt the learner to try to recall the word, and you often end up pronouncing it clearly, sound by sound. You can repeat

it. The learner listens to you "dictate" the word and tries to recall the right letters and spelling rules to write the word correctly.

- Sometimes they might go back to the story to hunt for the word, and copy it. (This develops the skill of scanning, referring back to a text, and copying, so it's not bad, though it circumvents the skill of knowing how to write a word from how it sounds. Use your judgment and adjust your strictness about letting them "copy" words from the story.)
- Try to give the learner every opportunity to hear the word, listen carefully, and write it appropriately but don't correct errors in spelling or prevent the learner from making mistakes. You might want to do a little prompting about what rules apply if you see that the learner is lost - something like, "What did we learn today?" or "Do you remember what we learned last time about this sound?"
- You may not have time to finish the whole list; do a minimum of six words if you possibly can. You can skip around if some of the words seem more important than others.
- After the learner finishes writing, remove or have them remove the strip covering the "answers." (If they wrote on the strip, place it beside the answer list and line up the words.)
- The learner goes down the list, reads the words from the list and reads his/her own word, (one by one), compares, notices and corrects any errors, and gives her/himself a check mark for every word as a "correct answer." If there was an error, elicit an explanation from the learner as to the reason for the error and the reason for the correction in a neutral way - the goal is to learn from the mistake, and end up with improved understanding the applicable guidelines. But every answer ends up as "correct."
- When the learner finishes the self-check and self-reward, praise the effort and top of the list with a sticker or a happy face and "Great job!" or "Good work!" If the learner is keeping the word list, make sure it has punched holes and goes into the binder in the Word List section.

Games

Games are an important part of the Hickey method. We try to play a game at the end of every lesson, even if we have to cut other activities short (such as writing only 6 of the 12 words on the word list) to leave time for the game.

Games are a great way to practice the material learned in the lessons, and kids love them. Try to let the learner win, if possible.

Offer the learner the game to take home until the next lesson. They can play with parents, friends, or siblings. S/he should know that you expect to get it back. If it is kept in the pocket with the practice cards, it usually comes back promptly. (Just to be sure - never give out your only copy of a game!)

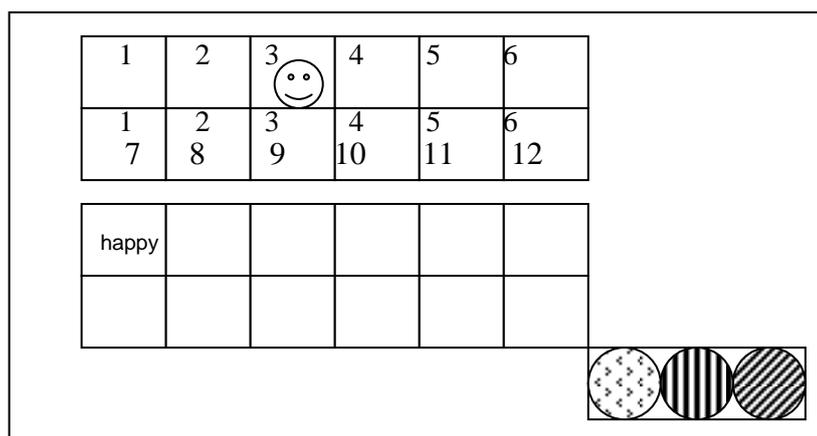
Maximize the game's English practice opportunities:

- Let the learner do all the reading in the game, for both of your turns.
- Count in English when you have to move on a board.
- If there is time, prepare the game with the learner: s/he can write the words on the bingo board or on the Happy Families cards.
- Freely allot bonus points for demonstration of comprehension or any other skill you want to encourage!

Game ideas:

- Pair-matching games: Make sets of two cards that match (a word and a matching picture, or a word and its definition in Hebrew, or a verb in its present tense form and the matching past tense form.) To make it easier, put the English on one color paper, picture or Hebrew on another.
 - The simplest and fastest way to play is to lay all the cards out, face-up, on the table and to look for matches. Process of elimination will leave the hardest ones for last, increasing the chance of a correct guess (a good skill to learn for test-taking.)
 - Concentration, or *משחק הליכרון* - This takes longer but is more "game-like." Lay the cards facedown on the table and turn over any two to search for matching pairs, saying the words or naming the pictures as they appear. If you don't turn up a pair, turn both back over. Try not to have too good a memory, and to turn over cards that have not yet been seen, to encourage your "opponent."

- Bingo
 - The board can include 3, 4, or 5 squares in each direction and a "wild square" in the center. Each player's board contains the same words in a different arrangement.
 - Pick cards out of a bag to match to the words on the board - match English words to themselves, to pictures, or to Hebrew definitions
- Lotto - the board contains words or pictures. Each player's board contains some different ones. Pick cards out of a bag - whoever fills their board first wins.
- Go Fish, also called Happy Families or "רביצות"
 - Ask for the cards and answer in English: "Do you have *pin* from the *p* family?" "Yes, here it is." or "No, I don't. Go fish."
 - When the learner gets a full set, lay it down on the table and read and define all the words.
- "Sargel M'shulav" matching games.
 - The game sheet has one set of numbered words or pictures and a second set, without numbers, on top of which the clear tray is placed. The learner places each number into the tray at the spot that shows the word or picture that matches the related numbered word or picture.
 - The learner can self-check the answer when finished by sliding the cover into the tray, turning it over, and comparing the completed colored shapes on the back with the solution on the game page.



- Board games with a path or track. You can advance by:
 - Rolling a dice
 - Picking word cards and counting the letters in the word
 - Picking cards with instructions

- Lotto - the board contains words or pictures. Each player's board contains a different set. Pick cards out of a bag - the first player to fill his board wins.

Creating Materials for a Hickey Lesson: Story, Word List, Game

Guidelines for Writing a Story

The Hickey approach does everything possible to work step by step and to ensure the learner success in the activities. In other words, we try to ask of the learner to perform only tasks that s/he has already learned to do, which practice material that has already been taught. We include in each set of materials only words containing letters and letter combinations that have already been learned and exception words that have been given on a yellow card. (If you absolutely must use a word before learning its letters, draw a little picture-gram to take the place of the word - but try to limit this to a minimum. e.g. for "on" before learning "o".)

- Writing a story requires being familiar with the lesson order and knowing which words cannot yet be included in a story.
 - Example: We may have learned the letter "a" and the letter "r" separately, but we don't include words with "ar" until we have learned the "ar" combination. (The letter "r" changes the sounds of all vowels, so we teach vowel + r combinations in separate lessons.)
- The easiest way to know which words can be included in a story is to use the words on the word list up to and including that lesson.
- Try to use the most useful and common words available to you (including the exception words that have been learned). (If the learner is an English speaker, you can include more sophisticated or obscure words - see the words in parentheses on the word list.)
- The story should have identifiable characters and a plot with a beginning setting the scene, a buildup describing a problem or conflict, and a resolution. If possible, build in the answers to all the WH questions: Who, Where/When, What, Why/How. Humor is great.
- After writing the story and checking the text (have someone else double-check for you and give you feedback), lay out the text into the squares in a Word document (a table with frames provides good squares). Text should be typed for clarity.
- Illustrations can be inserted with drawings, cartoons, clip art, etc. They should help the reader understand the vocabulary and text of the story - the characters, the setting, the action, and the resolution.
- Every page (story, word list, game) should be labeled at the top with the Hickey lesson number and the letters the lesson covers (e.g. Lesson 1: i, t, p, n, s.) Also label the story with your name.

- If you can, "test drive" your story with a learner and ask for feedback. Adjust the story accordingly.

Creating a Word List

- The list should be a companion piece to the story. It can use mostly words and pictures from the story, but can also review words from previous lessons, with the focus being on those from the most recent lessons. (In any case, the material is cumulative, so new words on the word list, of necessity, contain letters from previous lessons.)
- Pictures or illustrations of the words should ideally allow the reader to identify the word, at least in Hebrew.
 - This is not as easy as it sounds! (How would you illustrate words such as "entire" or "kept"?)
 - Sometimes you might need to add a label in Hebrew to make the illustration clearer, but try to minimize this.
 - Bottom line: if neither the learner nor tutor can identify the word, from the picture, the tutor will be able to peek at the hidden word and pronounce and explain or translate it for the learner.
- The word list contains 12 words. For each word, there is a column for a picture, a column for the word, written in cursive, and a blank column the width of the words for the learner to fill in. The learner also needs space to check off the word after it has been completed, checked, and corrected. (This, too, can be done in a Word table on the computer.)
- Label the word list with the lesson number, lesson subject, and your name.

Creating a Game to go with the Story and Word list

The game can use the same words and pictures as the story and word list, and can include additional words.

- When choosing words to include in the game, remember that there are benefits to reusing the words and pictures that are already familiar from the previous two activities - they are like old friends!
- There are also benefits to including a wider set of words that practice the material introduced in the lesson, and that review material from previous lessons.
- The game should be challenging enough, but not too challenging. The main goal for the game is to provide one more way for the learner to use what s/he has just learned while having fun (i.e. provide another reinforcing opportunity for painless practice). Sneaky, aren't we?

Assessment

When you start working with a new learner, you need to find out about his or her strengths and areas of challenge. This will help you to individualize your lessons to the learner's needs. It also gives you a baseline against which you can measure progress.

If the learner has a formal "ivchun" (assessment report) by a professional tester, and the learner's parents agree, you may be able to read the relevant sections, or review the results with the professionals already working with the child. (Note: These reports are highly confidential and require the strictest respect for privacy.)

Following are some assessment exercises that you can perform with the child to get an idea of where they are:

Miscue Analysis: This is a technique to assess reading.

- You need two copies of a text at the class level of the learner (one photocopy on which you will write, and one from which the learner will read).
- Ask the reader to read you the passage. Each time the reader makes a reading mistake or has trouble reading a given word, note the mispronunciation (use phonetic notation) on your copy, above the word that was misread. For example, if the reader is supposed to read, "take" and pronounces it "tack," "tacky," or "cat" instead, write "cat," "tacky" or "tack" above the word "take" on your copy of the text.
- Time the reading of the passage and note how long it took the reader to get through the reading itself.
- When the reader finishes the entire passage, ask some basic comprehension questions about what has just been read (Who was this about? What happened? Where and when did it take place? etc.), and record the reader's answers. (This will give you insight into the learner's reading comprehension.)
- Analyzing the mistakes: Later, analyze the reading errors and try to identify any patterns. Does the reading mistake change the meaning? The purpose is to identify the letters and combinations of letters that the reader does not know how to properly decode, and what you need to emphasize in your teaching.

Determining the position of a given sound in a word (B,M,E): This is a technique to assess the learner's aural (hearing) channel and ability to distinguish sounds within words.

- You need a numbered list of words (12) that all contain the same sound at some spot in each word, either at the beginning, middle, or end. Give the learner a strip of paper numbered 1-12, containing the letters " B M E" in each line. Explain that these signify "Beginning Middle End" for each word.
- Read the words from your list. For each word, say the number and make sure the learner is noting the answer for the right word, then read the word, pronouncing it clearly. You can repeat the word, if necessary. The learner should listen to each word,

then circle B if the sound is at the beginning of the word, M if it's in the middle, and E if it's at the end.

- Later, compare the learner's answer to your answer key.

Alphabet: These two tasks test the learner's knowledge of the names and sounds of the letters.

- Although our emphasis will not be on writing the alphabet in alphabetical order, and we will not learn the letters in this order, it is one task that the world uses as a standard measure of English knowledge.

Ask the learner to write the alphabet, both capital and small letters together, in alphabetical order (on a blank lined sheet of paper).

- After this task, put away the learner's list. Now give the learner a prepared list of the alphabet letters (not in alphabetical order) and ask the learner to name them. Note the responses on your own copy of the prepared list.
- Ask what sounds the letters make, and note these responses as well.
- Later, compare the learner's responses to the correct answers and note discrepancies.

Letter Direction: This task checks the learner's ability to identify and distinguish the direction of a letter:

- Prepare a sheet containing a line for each letter. Place the letter to locate at the beginning of each line and, on the rest of the same line, lots of different letters, some the same as the first letter and some different (but with some similar characteristics, except for direction.)
- Prepare an answer key with the right answers circled in color.
- Ask the learner to circle all the other examples on the line of the first letter in the line.
- Give the learner the answer key and a different color pen, and ask him/her to check and correct the first answers.
- Evaluate a) whether the learner initially circled the correct answers, and what type of mistakes they made b) how well they were able to check and correct their work, and what types of mistakes they made.

Sound and word dictation: To assess the "auditory intake to encoding in written symbols" channel, and optionally, vocabulary:

- Prepare 1) a list of sounds, such as those you would dictate from the blue cards (including sounds that can be spelled in multiple ways), and 2) a list of common English words containing a broad range of sounds and spellings. Give the learner a blank sheet of paper.

- Dictate the sounds, one by one. Ask the learner to write all the ways s/he knows to spell each sound.
- Dictate the words to the learner, one by one, and ask him or her to write down each word. (To test vocabulary knowledge, ask the learner to write the definition of the word beside it, in Hebrew.)
- Later, compare the learner's responses to the correct spellings (and definitions) and note discrepancies.

Writing and speaking – for more advanced learners: If you think the learner is able to do so, ask him or her to "chat" (answering your questions) and/or write a paragraph on a subject involving simple vocabulary (my family, class, school, vacation, etc.). Note your impressions of conversational or speaking ability (passive and active); assess paragraph for spelling, vocabulary, and grammar.

Collecting, Storing, and Carrying your Hickey Teaching Materials

You need to organize several groups of materials.

Materials for each learner: *Each Hickey learner needs to bring to each lesson:*

- His/her ring binder (medium-size), equipped with
 - The checklist of letters that have already been learned and those that are coming up.
 - Dividers (labeled "Stories; Word Lists; Games; Rules" and other appropriate topics as needed).
 - A small amount of lined, punched paper (from a "dafdefet")
 - A plastic pocket with Velcro closing, to be carried inside the binder.
 - The growing collection of completed sheets from Hickey lessons, stored in the appropriate divider's section. The student can return stories after several weeks of keeping them to practice at home, if desired. (Save some trees and photocopying by reusing them with other students.)
- In the plastic pocket the learner will keep:
 - His/her growing Reading Pack of white, pink, and yellow cards, for practice at home and review at the beginning of each lesson.
 - An English "machberet chachama" (lined to distinguish the three letter heights) to write the list of sounds dictated in each lesson and for writing practice of new letters and words.
 - Any game you sent home for play after the previous lesson.
 - The "weekly practice" checklist, if you want the learner to keep track of when s/he practiced during the week.

You will keep for each individual learner, and bring to each lesson:

- A cardboard folder (with an elastic closing and sides to keep small items from falling out) labeled with the learner's name.
- Your growing collection of blue cards for this learner (recording the clue words for the spellings of the sounds the learner has already covered.)
- A page where you record the date and subject (lesson number and letter) of each meeting with the learner. At the end of each lesson, record your comments on the lesson, what difficulties the learner is having, and things you need to prepare or bring for the following lesson.
- The current lesson's materials: lesson plan, story, word list with the strip taped over the answer column, and game; any extra rule sheets, reading exercise sheets (e.g. "Open and Closed Syllables") or other activities for the current lesson. Pink, white, yellow and blue cards you have prepared in advance for the lesson. Any special lesson or game equipment ("sargel m'shulav," bingo buttons, objects to demonstrate vocabulary, container of sand for learning the shapes of letters using more sensory input, etc.)
- Prepare as much in advance as possible (for example, you can tape the strip onto the word list) to save time during the lesson. Lessons in school are very short (a 45 minute lesson usually has only about 35 minutes of real teaching time) so the less delay in handling and searching for materials during the lesson, the better.

Your Teaching Bag: Equipment to bring to every lesson:

A word of advice: Don't take your only copy of anything to the lesson. It may get lost. Consider the possibility that you may even lose your entire teaching bag! So try to make sure everything in it is replaceable (keep a copy of all Hickey materials in your binder at home).

Some of the equipment may be available at the school in which you are volunteering, but you need to make sure you will have timely access to it. The equipment you need for each lesson is:

- For your reference, the *master list of Hickey lessons* and the *available words list* (containing the words you can use in each lesson for writing practice).
- Learner's folder, containing this learner and lesson's individual materials.
- Erasable white board
- Markers for the white board
- Eraser for the white board
- Blank pink, yellow, white and blue cards.
- Thin markers for making cards (black, red, and several colors for pictures of clue words on white cards.)
- Spare rubber bands.
- Several sharpened pencils with erasers. (For learners who need help with correct grip, triangular pencils or a slide-on pencil-grip guide are helpful.)
- Pencil eraser and sharpener.
- Scissor and hole punch
- Cellophane tape (for taping strip over word list).
- Strip to tape over word list.
- Game pieces (dice, "soldiers")
- You might want to keep all the above small items in a pencil case, cookie tin, or other container that can stand open on the table for easy access.

Your collection of Hickey lesson materials at home:

Keep your Hickey materials in a large ring binder containing:

- Background materials on the Hickey method, for future reference.
- A master copy of each basic document or template (lesson list, Hickey word list by lesson, letter checklist, practice checklist, etc.)
- One plastic pocket labeled with each lesson number and its subject (e.g. Lesson 2, a). Keep in each pocket all materials related to that lesson: lesson plan, story, word list, game; and any extra reading, rule or activity sheets.

Part II: Print the following documents from this website to provide the basic tools to assess a learner and plan your lessons:

1. Assessment of Basic English Skills
2. Planning a Lesson:
 - Lesson Plan form
 - Hickey Method – Lesson Order
 - Hickey Method & 500 most common English Words: Word Lists
 - 500 Most Common English Words, Sorted by Hickey Lesson
 - Pink Rule Cards (in English and the language your learner speaks: Hebrew, Arabic, or Spanish)
 - WH Question Cards
3. Documents for Each Student
 - Letter Checklist for Student
 - Long Vowel Choices
 - Daily Home Practice: Check-off Sheet for Student
4. Individual Lesson Materials
 - Teaching New Material: Lesson 1a
 - Teaching New Material: Lesson 1b
 - Teaching New Material: Lesson 2
 - Teaching New Material: Lesson 3
 - Teaching New Material: Lesson 4
 - Teaching New Material: Lesson 5
 - Select and choose one lesson (story, word list and game) for every Hickey lesson you teach from the Individual Lesson Materials pages.

Good luck and happy teaching!