REED
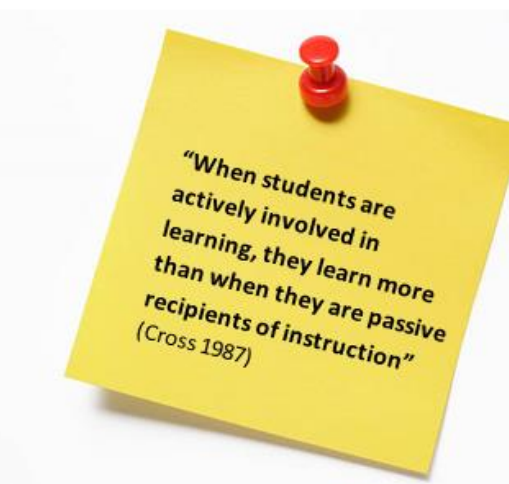
English Pedagogy: Junior High School
(And Beyond)

(Including preparation for the English Meitzav Exam- Grade 8)

"Students learn what they care about and remember what they understand" (Erikson 1984)

"When students are actively involved in learning, they learn more than when they are passive recipients of instruction" (Cross 1987)

October 1, 2017
י"א תשרי תשע"ח

Dear JHS Coordinator and Teachers!

The REED Team would like to introduce a unique Teacher's Handbook for
the Junior High School!!!

This handbook was created especially for you in order to "shake up" teaching methods in the Junior High School. The Ministry has put an emphasis on the JHS, both by creating positions for JHS Principals and by encouraging the trickle down of Meaningful Learning to those years as well. Instead of JHS being a mini-HS, we are working towards making these years unique and special on their own.

In REED, we have always put an emphasis on portfolio work, projects, literature and fun in the JHS classroom, and we are definitely continuing to do so now. In this handbook, we have put together some academic research, some methodology, some pedagogy, some technology and a whole lot of fun!

The focus is on active learning and student engagement. The more engaged and active your students, the more they will enjoy learning English and the more motivation they will have to learn and excel.

Your amazing counselors and I will be honored to help you implement these tools in your classrooms. Please be in touch with them, ask questions, try new activities in the classroom and give feedback, sit with your staffs and plan exciting programs and events.

In short, the more you enjoy your teaching, the more your students will enjoy learning English.

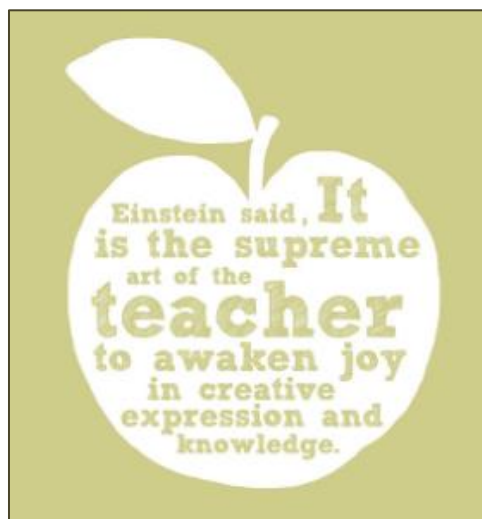Wishing you all the best,

Judie Segal
English Inspector
REED

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The Adolescent Brain

Between the ages of 12-21, hormones in the human brain are so active that their brain image map physically changes every 22 minutes.

FMRI studies show that the brain is growing, and just like physical education lessons are important to the student's body, mental education is super important in class. Active learning to ensure that students are exercising their adolescent brains is essential for making as many connections as possible between learned facts/rules/words etc.

Watch this abridged clip: **"The Teenage Brain Explained" (SciShow)**

Full clip: https://goo.gl/cXefkD

Abridged clip: https://goo.gl/hR4DFM)
(This version may be more acceptable to some audiences)

**So….this is the best time to make connections in the teenager's brain.
Think of it as a gym membership for adolescent brains.**
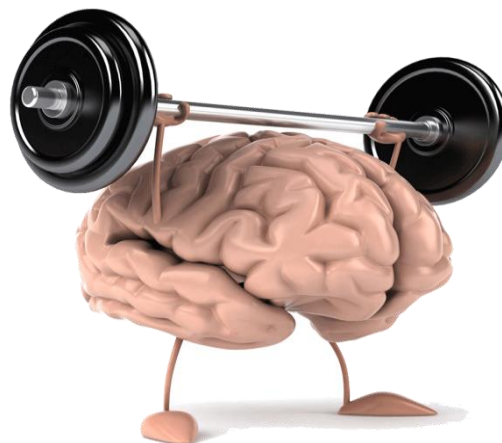
How do We Exercise the Brain?   <u>Active Learning!</u>

Some characteristics of active learning:

- Students are involved in more than just listening.
- Less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and much more on developing students' skills.
- Students are involved in higher-order thinking (analysis, synthesis and evaluation).
- Students are engaged in activities (e.g., reading, discussing, and writing).
- Activities are done socially (pairs, groups).
- Greater emphasis is placed on students' exploration of their own attitudes and values and the tasks are relevant to them.

(Bonwell, Charles C.; Eison, James A. TITLE Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom. 1991 ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Reports.)

5 active learning strategies you can use in your classroom!
**By Julia Thompson (you can see the rest of them here: https://goo.gl/aMmJ8)**

1. Brainstorm: Do this in pairs or groups because students stimulate each other's thought processes. Encouraging students to think out of the box and to delve into a topic using this technique often has unexpectedly positive results. If you have access to phones/computers, have students put their ideas on mentimeter.com or WhatsApp to share with you.
2. Read actively: when students have a passage, chapter, or other text to read, guide them through it with active learning strategies such as these:
   - A scrambled list of events to put in order.
   - A list of statements for students to agree or disagree with.
   - A list of people and places to match with information about them.
   - A cause-and-effect chart.
   - Give students a checklist of the key points to watch for so that they can check them off as they find them while reading.

3. Recap together: Have students sit in a circle. To play, one student begins a story, stops after a few sentences, and then points to another student, who continues the story. You can adapt this activity to teach vocabulary, order of events, facts, or other information.
4. Role Play: If your subject matter lends itself, have students role play in brief sketch
5. Reflect with lesson wrap-ups: Help students reflect on what they have learned, and how they learn best. Try some of these sentence starters.
   - Today I learned…
   - I was surprised when…
   - I am beginning to wonder…
   - I think I will…
   - I wish…
   - Now I understand
   - Class would be more interesting if…
   - I can be successful in this class if I…

What is the difference between teaching and active learning?

Research of teaching methodologies indicate that the type of instruction influences the levels of retention. The pyramid below shows the results of years of research in education. Reflect on your own lesson plans, note next to each section of the lesson whether or not your students are ACTIVE or PASSIVE, and think about different ways to make them more active.

These are average rates of learning retention (after a week) based on classroom practices:
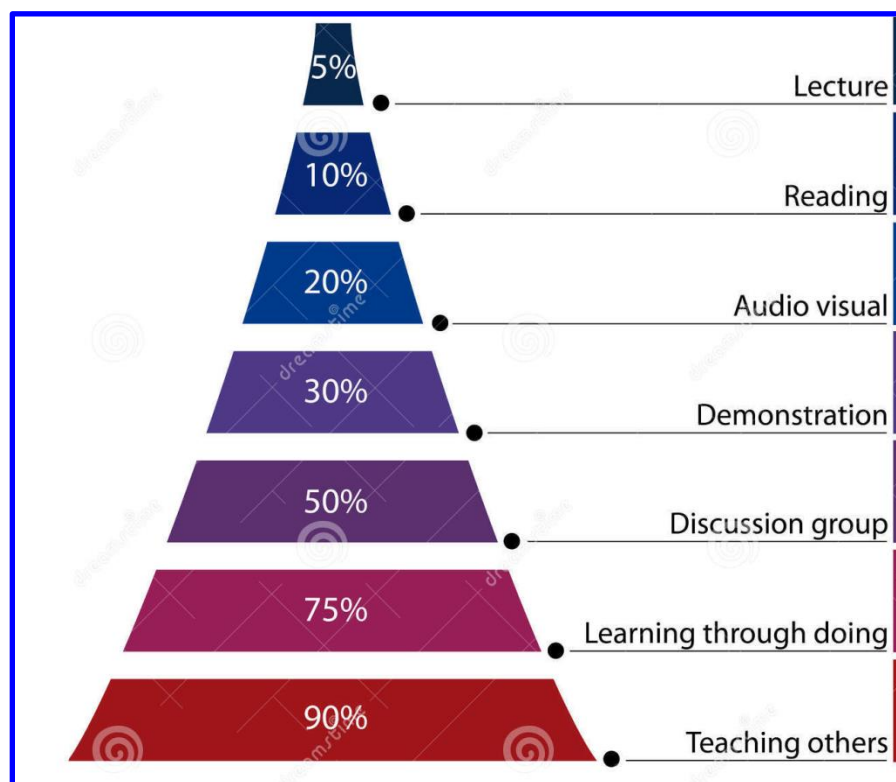
Think about some of your lessons. How much will your students actually remember? How could you change that?

Teachers' Concerns about Active Learning

If I spend time in class on active learning exercises, I'll never get through the syllabus.

You don't have to spend that much time on in-class work to have a significant impact with it. Simply ask questions occasionally and give the students a short time to come up either with solutions and answers, working individually or in small groups. Then collect answers from several randomly selected individuals or groups. One or two such exercises that take a total of 5-10 minutes can keep a class relatively attentive for an entire period.

If I don't lecture, I'll lose control of the class.

That is one way to look at it. Another is that several times during a class period your students may become heavily involved in working on or arguing about what you're trying to get them to learn, and it may take a few seconds (never longer once you get the hang of it) to bring their attention back to you. There are worse problems!

When I tried active learning in class, many of the students hated it.

Instructors who set out to try student-centered instruction in a class for the first time are often unpleasantly surprised by the fierce negativity of some responses. Many who don't anticipate such reactions get discouraged when they encounter them, give up, and go back to more comfortable but less effective methods.

Try to minimize resistance to any student-centered method. You can offer one or more of the following observations:

You've all had the experience of sitting through an entire class, believing that you understood it, and then later when you tried to do the homework you realized that you did not get it at all. By putting you to work in class, I'm giving you a jump-start on understanding the material and doing the homework efficiently.

Unless you are a Zen monk, you can't sit still and keep your mind focused on one thing for more than a few minutes. Doing something active from time to time during the lecture substantially increases the amount of information you actually get. It also cuts way down on boredom.

I teach a class containing students in minority populations that tend to be at risk academically. Does active, cooperative learning work in this kind of setting?

In fact, the most frequently cited cooperative learning success story comes from the minority education literature. They found that group work led to significant improvements in both academic achievement and attitudes toward instruction.

When using cooperative learning in classes that include at-risk students, they responded to group work with overwhelming approval, but many indicated that they tended to assume less active roles in-group discussions. The likelihood of these occurrences is reduced if group work is included in each lesson.

(Taken from: Felder, Richard M., Brent, Rebecca, Navigating the Bumpy Road to Student-Centered Instruction, *College Teaching, 44*, 43-47 (1996)): http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Papers/Resist.html

In order to combat these fears, plan your lessons with a staff member and take the plunge together!

Check out this Prezi for more explanations about active learning:
https://prezi.com/vgynp2n5sxt3/active-learning-debunking-the-myths/

Myths about Active Learning

"For an observer, staying out of a discussion is almost as hard as sitting through a lecture" (Eble 1976, p. 55)

Dispelling a teaching myth: Did you know?

Whole class discussions are NOT an active activity for the entire class. Only the 3-4 students who are participating and speaking are actively learning. The rest of the class is passively listening. Keep full class discussions to a bare minimum. Alternatively, have them discuss in small groups where everyone participates and report.
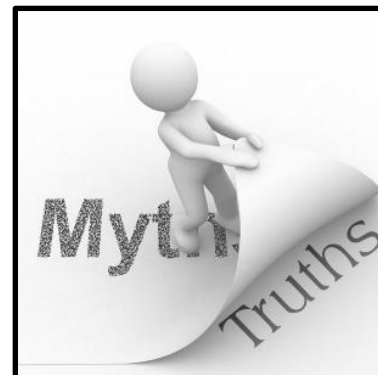
Recommended Active Learning lesson plan-
Break every 45-minute lesson into 6 distinct parts

Sample Lesson Plan (adjust accordingly for a double lesson)

Time	Activity	Student is Active or Passive
10 minutes	Reading for Pleasure (see national document)	Active
5 minutes	Activate your students Lesson Starter (see below) present brain teaser/clip related to the lesson	Active/Passive
10 minutes	Part A individual/ pair-work relating directly to the introduction	Active
5 minutes	Refocus	Active/Passive
10 minutes	Part B continuation of individual/pair-work or related activity to Part A	Active
5 minutes	Lesson Wrap-up: (see below) Fun wrap up task before leaving	Active

(Notice you are only speaking for 5 minutes during the entire lesson)

Lesson Starters

Connect to your students' world:

When you finish reading for pleasure, spend a few minutes to ease them into the lesson.
Chat with them (in English, of course!).
- What did you eat for breakfast?
- How many of you saw last night's episode of _____.
- Who went to sleep before 22:00 last night?
- Tell me something good about today.
- Tell me a joke.
- Who has a birthday today? Let's sing!
- Can anyone share a new movie/book idea with us?
- Give me 5 reasons why today is a great day.

Show interest in current events:
I can't believe what I saw on the news last night! (Assume they have seen/read the news. Let students who are updated, discuss. Keep it positive)

Get feedback on homework:
What did you think of the video I shared? Come write your response on the board.
(Alternatively, hand out sticky-notes for students to write on. Teacher will collect and read out.)
If students need more direction, write 5 sentences starters on the board, such as, "I was surprised when…" "It made me sad when…" I loved the part when…."
When students see that fun activities are built on last night's homework, they will be more likely to remember to do it next time.

Lesson Wrap-ups

Recap lesson:
Tell me two things you learned today.
Share with your neighbor:

        What was hardest for you today?
        Share 2 sentences using the vocabulary you learned today.
        What can you take away from the lesson today?

Give last-minute practice:
As students exit classroom, stand at the door, and ask each student to give a sentence using a new vocabulary word.
Ask students to recall new words: "Give me a word that means…" Each student who answers correctly can leave.

Play an exit game:
Games need to be quick and inclusive of all students. Ideally, they require little to no preparation. They encourage flexibility with language, and leave the students with a smile.
- Give me a sentence of at least 5 words that begins with (A /G/N etc.)
- *Simon Says*.
- *Heads Up*: Write vocabulary words on a card. Place the card in a headband on one participant's forehead, without him seeing. Classmates give clues about the word until he guesses.
- *Word Train Relay Race*: Line up students in 2 teams. Write a word on the board. Start the timer. Students approach board in turn, and write a word that starts with the last letter of that word. Continue until the time is up. More words win. Winning team exits first.
- *Line up According To*: 2 teams of students line up alphabetically around the edge of the classroom. Line up according to birth months, first names, family names etc.
- Visit a [Riddle Website](#) or a Trivia Website.

Junior High School can be much more thrilling than elementary or high school.
However, we need to make it active and exciting!

Participate in regional REED initiatives:

- Spelling Bee
- Book Trailer Contests
- English Days
- Reed Challenges for very strong students in regular classes

Instead of just "teaching English through unseens and grammar books",
spice up your lessons with:

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video clips and online games	beach ball activities	card games – Go Fish!
board games	hangman and other fun	pair dialogue with WhatsApp
projects	pair-work or group work	TED talks
presentations	peer quizzes	writing prompts and Post-It's
speaking circles	writing stations with student choice	mystery boxes
treasure hunts	debating hot teen issues	silly writing prompts

Reading for Pleasure

The only way to learn to read is by reading.
The reader learns language in context,
through a book of his or her own choosing.

- Take students to the library to choose books.
- Have them recommend books to classmates through Book Talks.
- Invite students to make a bulletin board, with book reviews.
- Be a role model by reading a book while your class reads. Take attendance at the end of the reading time, while everyone finds a stopping place.

If you have not yet discovered the magic in a room full of students engrossed in their books, give it a try. A new document, **"Reading for Pleasure: A Practical Guide"**, is being published this year. It provides many useful tips.

Take photos of your students reading everywhere; make up a bulletin board in school or rolling PPT to be projected on the school video screen.
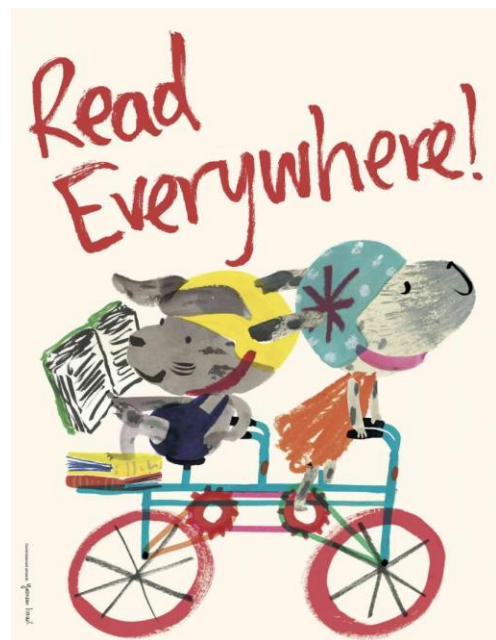
Speaking Circles and Presentations

**When practicing speaking English in class, remember to keep the mood light and fun. Even speaking in their native language is stressful for students, and even more so in L2. Activities conducted in small groups are more likely to generate participation. Here are some tried and true ideas that are sure to bring lots of laughs along with solid speaking practice.**

Speaking Circles: Bring English out of the classroom, into the common areas. Before a recess or lunchtime, Place small tables in the lobby of school, or in the grass outside. Provide table-clothes, snacks and drinks. In the center of each table, place cards with high-interest, controversial statements. The only rule is that students sit at the table and discuss the topic in English. Possible topics include:

- Cellphones should be banned from school.
- Students should be required to wear uniforms
- School should start at 10:00 am
- Kids shouldn't be allowed to work legally until age 17
- Snakes should never be kept as pets

Survey of the Week: Make a survey, and have students ask the adults in the school to complete the survey. Class shares results. Students present their findings to the school at the end of the week.

Concentric Circles: Create a slideshow to display in the front of the room, with speaking topics for the day. Divide students into groups of 8-10. Place groups of chairs in concentric circles, with chairs facing each other, as shown in the illustration. Show the first speaking topic, and have students share their opinions about the topic. Then the outer circle moves one chair to the right, and students discuss the next topic. In this way, each student in the circle speaks to each other.
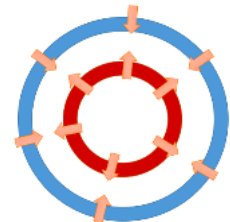
Book Talks: This works well in concentric circles also. Students prepare a 1-minute presentation about a book they recommend, and share it in the circle. By the end of the activity, each student has shared a favorite book with 7 classmates, and has heard about 7 other books they may want to read.

Let the Puppet do the Talking: Literature or Current Events: Invite students to make sock puppets or paper bags that represents characters from literature you are reading, or from current events. One student asks the puppet questions about the topic of discussion. The student has the puppet answer, in character.

Heads Up

Place a headband on one student's head. Place a word written on a card in the headband, so that the class can see, but the students has not seen it. Class gives clues until the student guesses the word. Repeat. See this link for variations https://goo.gl/i3xDF7

Projects and English Days

Projects

Projects do not have to be 10 page written research projects but can be a way of assessing whether pupils have absorbed the material. Most textbooks have nice ideas at the end - you can adapt them.

Have each pair of students write about a class theme (vote on the umbrella topic) and make a board displaying their work.

For example:

Earth Day
- Learn together about Earth Day
- Make up a rap song or poem
- Advertise Earth Day - poster, skit, TV jingle
- Film an original T.V news report about the new Israel Earth Day

Explore more project ideas here: goo.gl/77B0cu

Ideas for English Days

There are many types of English Days: Choose a theme or adventure, and start planning early in the year. Here are some ideas. Contact your English Counselor, who may be able to help you develop your idea.

- Chocolate Day
- Australia Day
- Jerusalem Day
- Scavenger Hunt
- Poetry Slam Day
- Escape Room
- Pirate Day
- The Amazing Race
- Our School's Got Talent

We all have students in our JHS classes who are exceptionally strong English students - either because they have English from home or are just really proficient language learners. Most times, they complete their work early and sit bored in class until the bell rings.

REED JHS Challenges offer these students an engaging way to learn and share English on their own level. REED JHS Challenges will provide these students with 2 challenges each month. The challenges are based around either significant or silly days of the year.

Each challenge includes:
- a research component
- a creative task
- a presentation

Students can work individually or in pairs. These challenges offer opportunities for them to present their work to the rest of the class (or even other classes), affording everyone engaging, student-led experiences in English.

These challenges are NOT designed as regular lesson plans or projects. They ARE designed for several students at most, in any specific JHS class.

All of the challenges can be found in a special site. Each month, the challenges will be opened for you to peruse before you send your students off to work. If you are interested in offering this program to some of your students, go to the site by visiting this link: https://goo.gl/nNx9ri

If you decide to send your students to the site to be "REED-Challenged", please fill out this short Form of Intent: https://goo.gl/QBFcp8 . This will enable us to send you updates and other help during the year.

We will be posting photos and videos of your students' work on the REED site so please share with us!!!

REED Challenge Accepted!

The Meitzav Exam

Active learning should be present in each lesson. That does not change because your school is taking the Meitzav Exam. Just the opposite – it is the way to improve their English and enjoy learning! When students are happy and successful, they learn more! The purpose of the Meitzav Exam is to help us reflect on our classroom practices, our students' satisfaction with English lessons and their level of English, compared to other classes around the country.

Up until this year, REED has not put much emphasis on the Meitzav. We believe it is time to use this tool to improve our teaching and improve our students' learning.

The Meitzav Exam offers both the school and the Ministry of Education a peek into what our students really know and what they like and don't like in English. This section will help you use the Meitzav Exam as a tool for reflection, learning and as a window into your students' attitudes towards English in your school.

Understanding the Meitzav

Basic Structure of Exam

- ○ 2 Listening Tasks
- ○ 3 Reading Comprehension Tasks
- ○ 1 Writing Task
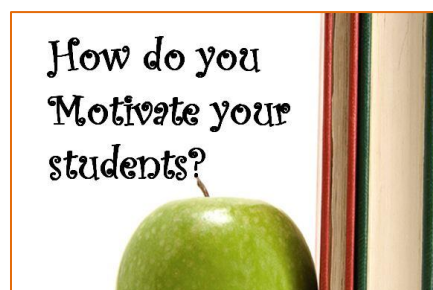
Preparing for the Exam

Motivating students to do their best is not easy. Although the Meitzav exam grade is not included in the students' report cards, they should understand that proper preparation and serious intent on the day of the exam can show maturity and is linked to school loyalty. Their "doing their best" shows the school and the Ministry of Education, what is working well, and what needs to be improved. Here are some suggestions to provide motivation in a positive manner:

- ● Provide success-oriented activities that motivate students to learn more.
- ● Run a spelling bee or vocabulary competitions in the year-level.
- ● Give students a grade on their efforts in preparing for the exam day.
- ● Bring treats for the students: pens/balloons/sweets… anything to make the day a celebration.
- ● Show this short film, which illustrates how any barrier can be breached.
     https://goo.gl/iJCgOc

Go Crazy with Vocabulary!

Tips for Vocabulary Acquisition
(Based on *A practical guide for Teaching Vocabulary* by Penny Ur et al.)

Vocabulary must be the focus of your teaching as you prepare your students for the Meitzav Exam. Dictionaries are not allowed for any student on this exam.

Before getting started:
Familiarize yourself with the Foundation and Intermediate Word Bands in the 2015 English curriculum: goo.gl/YCW7Um
(See Appendix 1 in this document, for Bands one and two of lexis in the English Curriculum)

Keep the following principles in mind:
1. Vocabulary *must* be actively taught
2. Lexical chunks *must* be actively taught
3. A student needs to review a word at least 10 times in order to acquire it.
4. Clarify meanings of words, using L1, mimes, pictures, explanations and examples.
5. Vocabulary should be taught in context, and as single items, using brief phrases.

Use a vocabulary-profiling website to assess vocabulary used in past Meitzav exams. For example, see the Vocabkitchen website: https://goo.gl/LRr7A9

Step 1: Download a previous Meitzav exam as a word document from the link in Useful Resources below.
Step 2: Copy and paste a reading passage into the box provided on your vocabulary profiler.
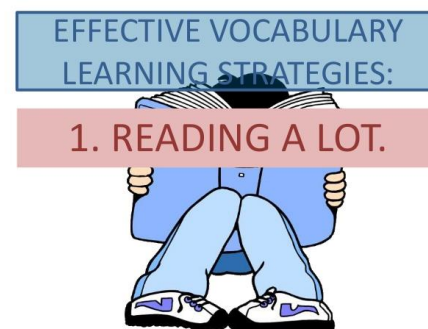Step 3: Click the Search button below the text box.
Step 4: Choose CEFR Table tab at the top of the next text box.

You will now see a list of all the words in the text, divided into levels of frequency and difficulty. This will help you determine which words should be already known, and which words should be taught formally.

(Appendix 1 contains information about Bands One and Two of the English Curriculum.)

Strategies for Teaching Vocabulary

Starting With a Pre-teaching Activity
Here are two ideas:

- Write a topic on the board: for example, "*making a movie*". Elicit related words from students, as you create a word web on the board.
  Talk about the topic, and add target vocabulary words, in different colors, to the web.
- Put a picture on the board that relates to the topic. Encourage students to talk about the picture, as you list key words on the board. Then you add more words to the list, defining and giving examples.

Practicing the Vocabulary:
Here are a few ideas:
- Copy the target words.
- Write the target words in sentences.
- Create dialogues to perform, using the target words.
- Categorize the words into word families and types of words.
- Teach vocabulary used in questions and instructions, for example:
  - According to
  - Complete the sentence
  - Explain your answer
  - Copy circle
  - What kind of… etc.
- Have students make a vocabulary booklet where they collect new words learned in class, and at home.
- Master spelling for tricky words.
- Have students create flashcards and games using target words.
- Review target words learned frequently.
- Play vocabulary games such as Bingo, Pictionary, Odd One Out and Sentence Race.
- See the following resources for more ideas and instructions.

  A Practical Guide for Teaching Vocabulary by Penny Ur et al.) https://goo.gl/Nh3jhZ
  60 Second Games: https://goo.gl/yvjSmg
  Gaming in English: https://goo.gl/2Y1wgZ

Testing the Vocabulary:
Testing is important to show both the teacher and the student that the vocabulary has been acquired, and can be used actively. Do not just ask students to translate the words. You can:
Use multiple choice, gap fill, cloze, matching, sentence completion, open writing activities, word web, and word association tasks to allow students to show their mastery. Quizlet and Spelling City, among many other websites, create interactive vocabulary quizzes.

(See Appendix 2 for more tips!)

Listen up about Listening!

Preparing for the Listening Activity

The Table of Specifications lists 13 possible text types for the listening element of the exam; therefore, it is essential that you expose your students to a broad variety of listening experiences in class. This should be done on a weekly basis throughout the year.

- Utilize the class textbook and related on-line resources provided by the book publishers.
- Provide plentiful practice from old Meitzav Exams (at least 8 times). Recordings of the listening passages are available on the Rama Meitzav site. https://goo.gl/y5ZnY This is particularly important because the Meitzav listening tasks are not always similar to the textbook tasks.
- Create student-driven speaking and listening activities that encourage fluency. Here are a few suggestions.
    - Send your students a recording via WhatsApp, and ask them to respond.
    - Ask students to listen to weather reports, YouTube videos and other short clips. Provide short Meitzav-style questions for a post-watching activity.
    - Play songs in class, and have students answer questions about the songs. Let the students suggest songs, and provide the questions for their classmates.
    - Make an account on https://lyricstraining.com/. Students improve and practice listening skills with great music videos. They fill in the gaps to the lyrics as they listen and sing Karaoke to their favorites. If you register as a teacher, you can choose the words to delete, and tailor the language practice to your needs.

Teaching Skills for Listening Tasks:

Coach students to:

- Highlight key words.
- Translate the title.
- Translate the questions of both listening tasks *before* the listening section begins.
- *Just* listen the first time, jotting down information in Hebrew or English on the side.
- Answer the questions after the second broadcast.
- Write an answer for each question even if they are not sure of the answer. Don't leave anything blank.

(See Appendix 2 for more tips!)

Read more about Reading!

Before Reading:

Take a moment and have your students reflect on their reading practices. This will provide a platform for discussion and learning stronger reading practices. (You can translate it for weaker students.)

Are you an Active Reader When Reading and Answering Questions?

Do you start at the very beginning and read all the way through?	yes	no
Do you look over the whole text - noticing title, pictures, italicized words, starred words that are translated in a word bank, capital letters in the middle of sentences, numbers, etc?	yes	no
Do you look up words you don't know in the dictionary, and write the translation on your page?	yes	no
Do you only translate difficult chunks of language?	yes	no
Do you use your own knowledge about the subject to help you understand and predict the content of the passage?	yes	no
Do you sometimes stop reading and think about what you have read?	yes	no
Do you ask yourself questions when you aren't sure if you understand something?	yes	no
Do you try to predict what may come next?	yes	no
Do you look up difficult words in the questions?	yes	no
After answering, do you reread the question to make sure your answer matches the question (topic/tense/syntax)?	yes	no
Is your answer based on the text? Can you underline the information in the text that gave you your answer?	yes	no

With your students, review their answers, and ask them to make a chart for your classroom, that contains "Active Reader Reminders" for your classroom wall.

Reading Comprehension Tips

Make sure your students know that the Meitzav contains varied types of questions, including:

- *Wh* questions
- *Yes/no* questions
- Multiple choice
- Fill-in questions
- (No complete the sentence questions)
- Main idea questions
- Fact/Opinion questions
- Referral questions: (What does this refer to)

Guide students to read various types of articles. In order to fully understand them, they should recognize different article structures. Here are a few:

- Cause/Effect
- Question/Answer
- Informative
- Persuasive

(See Appendix 2 below for an excellent list of reading tips.)
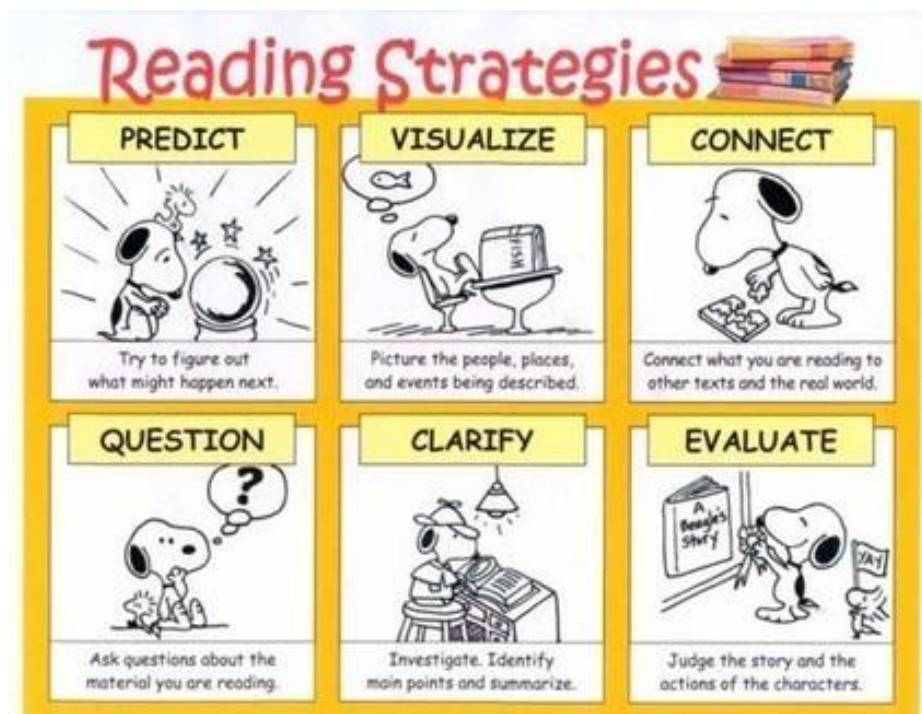
Writing about Writing!

Build students' confidence in writing by instilling strong writing habits. Here are some methods that your young writers should use.

Before Writing:
- Understand the assignment. Underline main phrases. Highlight useful vocabulary that you may want to re-use. Remember: If it is free, take it.
- Brainstorm. Create an idea map or outline, in any language, to see what you might say on the topic.
- Collect useful vocabulary. Create a word map. Copy words from the assignment or text that you might want to use.
- Organize your idea map, ordering your thoughts. Cross out ideas that you don't know how to talk about in English.

During Writing:
Just start writing! If you slow down, refer back to your outline or idea map to get started again. Give examples to develop your idea.
Remind students to use sentence patterns used in class:

Practice basic sentence structure with fill-ins that can be used with many composition topics:
- I went to _____ this summer.
- I visited the _____there.
- I traveled with my _____.
- I saw _____.
- I enjoy _____.
- I like it because _____.
- When I go I (feel/do) _____.
- I go _____every _____.

Scaffolding using a graphic as below helps some students master sentence or grammatical structures:

The [adjective] [noun] is [verb] [adverb]
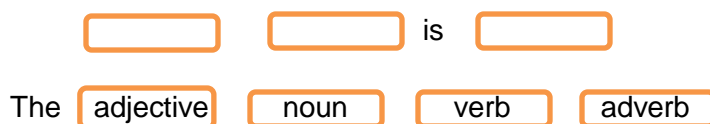
If your students do not have a dictionary, then be their dictionary - write words on the board so that other pupils can use them too.

Try playing soft music while students are writing - it may help them concentrate.
(See Appendix 2 for more tips!)

The Hamburger Method of Teaching Writing

Name: _____

Hamburger Writing

Ketchup and Mayonnaise are the connecting words !!!

Main Idea: **introduces the topic** - e.g. There are many reasons why sleeping is a great hobby.

Detail #1: can be facts, supporting sentences or examples

Detail #2: can be facts, supporting sentences or examples

Detail #3: can be facts, supporting sentences or examples

Closing Sentence: **finishes off the paragraph** - e.g. .. In conclusion/ to sum up sleeping gets me through another day!

Super Teacher Worksheets – www.superteacherworksheets.com

You can download a blank template for classroom use from Google Images: Hamburger Writing

After Writing: Rubrics and Constructive Assessment

- Peer check - ask your students to check each other before handing in.
- Write the checklist on the board and tell pupils to check the list before handing in:
  - ➢ capital letters
  - ➢ full stops /periods
  - ➢ tenses
  - ➢ subject-verb agreement
  - ➢ paragraphs

Calvin and Hobbes!
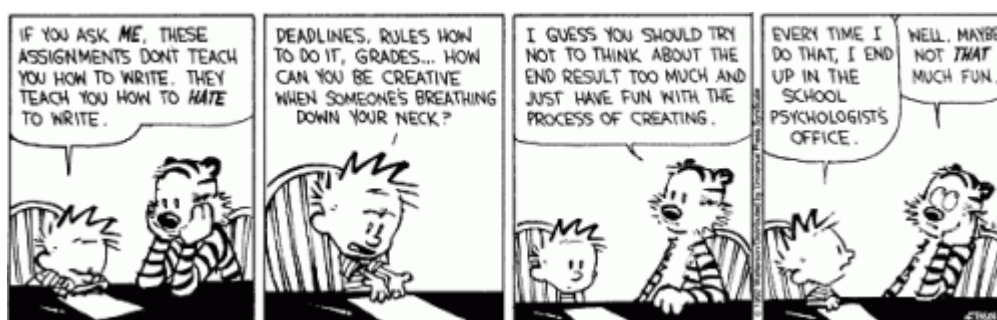
1. **When checking a writing assignment do not use red pen to mark mistakes. Use a <mark>yellow highlighter</mark> or a purple/green pen for choosing what students should correct and re-write.**
2. **Try not to notice every mistake or your pupils will lose the confidence to write.**
3. **Focus on one or two aspects for marking (eg. V2 and capital letters). Only color those errors. Leave the rest alone.**
4. **If a pupil misspells the same word more than once, write it clearly at the bottom of the page.**

- **Use the pupils' mistakes to make up vocabulary and spelling words that they should know. Choose 5-10 high frequency words to highlight. *Leave the rest for another time!***
- **Be positive with your comments. Success breeds success. Visit <u>this site</u> for some more guidelines: <u>https://goo.gl/N42q6H</u>**

Examples of Writing Assessment from Past Meitzav Exams

Look for the following when grading a Meitzav writing task

Communicative Ability	Is the information relevant and expansive?
Vocabulary	Is the vocabulary appropriate for the task and grade-level?
Accuracy	Is the sentence structure correct? Did the student use complex sentences?
Mechanics	Are spelling, capital letters, commas and periods used correctly?
Length	Is the length acceptable? (70-80 words)

You can make up your own rubric but make sure the pupils know ahead of time what you want.
(See Appendix 3 for Meitzav Writing rubrics)

Example #1:

> The object that I wouldn't want to live without is clock. I choose it because this is a object I use him all day and he help me all the time. we use it in all the computer, the cars, and the phone. We don't think of this but we can't to live without the clock. If we not use clicks we don't now what the part of the day now and we can't to now what the date.
>
> (79 words)

Criteria	Possible Values	Value Given	Reasoning
Communicative Ability (CA)	0-6	4	The information is relevant but limited and the message is mostly clear and organized. E.g. *"If we not use clicks we don't now what the part of the day now and we can't to now what the date."*
Vocabulary (VO)	0-3	2	The use of verbs: *think, live, use;* and words: *clock, computer, cars, date, phone* are appropriate to the topic.
Accuracy (AC)	0-9	5	Most sentence structure is partially correct. E.g. *"We can't to live without the clock."* There are errors in attempted complex sentences. E.g. *"I choose is because this is a object I use him all day and he help me all the time."*
Length (LE)	0-2	2	Wrote enough words.

Example #2:

> Hello, My name is Adi
>
> The about an object that you wouldn't want to live without: Glaxy. I did you choose it popolare. telephon, camera, Internet…
> Couild you use instead of it: food and many to eat: cola, whater, meat, chips, fish, Saled, family, siste, brauther, Mather, fader, baby, grand Mader, grand fader…
> Cold you piknik
>
> (56 words)

Criteria	Possible Values	Value Given	Reasoning
Communicative Ability (CA)	0-6	1	Most information is not relevant to the object chosen to write about. E.g. "…mather, fader, siste…" The message is difficult to follow, e.g. "Could you use insted of it: food…"
Vocabulary (VO)	0-3	1	The vocabulary is limited in its relevance to the subject chosen. The vocabulary is mostly given as a list, e.g. "…chips, fish, saled, family…"
Accuracy (AC)	0-9	1	There is only one correct sentence: "Hello, my name is Adi". The other sentences are incorrect. E.g. "I did you choose it popolare". Subject-verb agreement, tenses, pronouns, articles and prepositions are missing. The text consists mostly of a list of words.
Length (LE)	0-2	0	Wrote only 56 words.

It is important to use these rubrics to help you figure out what each student needs to work on in order to improve his/her writing.

Not every student needs the same tasks to improve their writing.

Use **writing stations** (where students choose which tasks to do) in class to improve students' skills – have them do what they need individually instead of everyone doing the same task. You can learn more about writing stations at this link: (https://goo.gl/rjezSM)

(Thanks to Arona Gvaryahu)

Logistics for the External Meitzav Exam

Here is a calendar to help you organize yourselves logistically for the exam.

Coordinator To-Do List for External Meitzav exam

November	December	January	Beginning of February	Day of Exam - March
Create a list of pupils who need the reading room		Send in form to RAMA listing reading room pupils (this form can be updated up until 4 weeks before the exam)	Create a list of pupils who will be tested according to their homeroom class. (The same list will be on the classroom doors on the day of the exam)	Have a teacher on standby for students who need individual attention and who will direct students out of the area when they have completed the exam.
Discuss with the school advisor - pupils who need the reading room		Arrange a date for the mock exam. It should be around the middle of February.	Create a list of the pupils who will be tested in the reading room. (Think about which pupils should not be together)	Make sure each classroom is clean, has the necessary number of chairs and tables and a working disc player.
Meet with principal/pedagogical advisor to inform them about what preparations are being made for the exam			Arrange teachers for the reading room. They should be the same teachers who will be reading in that room during the External exam.	Make sure that your teachers know when they are proctoring in the reading rooms (teachers are not allowed to be near their students otherwise...)
			Make sure you have disc players (working!) for each room, including the reading room.	Put up pupils' name lists on the classroom doors.
			Decide what to do with the pupils who finish the exam early. (Work pages / leave the area / read books)	

The Reading Room (on the day of the exam)

The Reading Room is one of the most challenging parts of running the Meitzav exam.

Remember that teachers can recommend that any pupil be in the Reading Room if it will help him/her. It does not depend on having a formal evaluation.

However, remember that pupils who go into the Reading Room must practice this way of testing beforehand.

There are two ways to run the Reading Room:

1. Up to 25 pupils sit in one room. One teacher reads the exam out to everyone and the other 4 teachers walk around the class reading to individual pupils as needed.
2. 5 pupils and 1 teacher sit around a table. The teachers simultaneously read the exam to the pupils at their table.

Here are some tips to make it run as smoothly as possible.

- If you choose the second method, you will need a large classroom.
- Choose the teachers who are reading, VERY CAREFULLY. Their English must be very clear.
- Be careful about seating for the pupils - choose who should sit where, after consulting with the school guidance counselor about those pupils who have ADHD.
- Make sure that the same teacher/s who read/s in the Mock exam read/s in the actual Meitzav Exam.
- Keep calm and keep your pupils calm.

Do Your Students Like English?

There is a section on the Meitzav Exam where the students are asked about their attitudes towards English. Across the board in REED, while content scores are near or above average, the feedback on student appreciation of English is concerning.

The questions include:

- I like to read books in English.
- I like writing stories in English.
- Learning English is important.
- I enjoy learning English.
- I feel I can succeed in English.

Except for *English is important*, for some reason our students don't like to read, write and don't enjoy learning English at all. (We are 20% lower than the national average on all other questions.)

Survey

1. Have your students (on all levels and in all classes) create attitude surveys in English and walk around school/class gathering answers.
2. Have them create charts that present those attitudes.
3. In groups have them write up a presentation of their findings and explan how English class can be improved (in their opinion).

Sit with your staff (and your counselor) and try and take your students' responses into account when continuing to plan the year and the years to come. Do not take this as personal criticism, but be open and listen. You can learn a lot about what your students want and need by listening. Brainstorm ideas for new lessons and projects which will make learning (and teaching) more enjoyable.

Encourage your students to answer the questions seriously and responsibly on the day of the Meitzav test so that we can truly know what they are thinking.
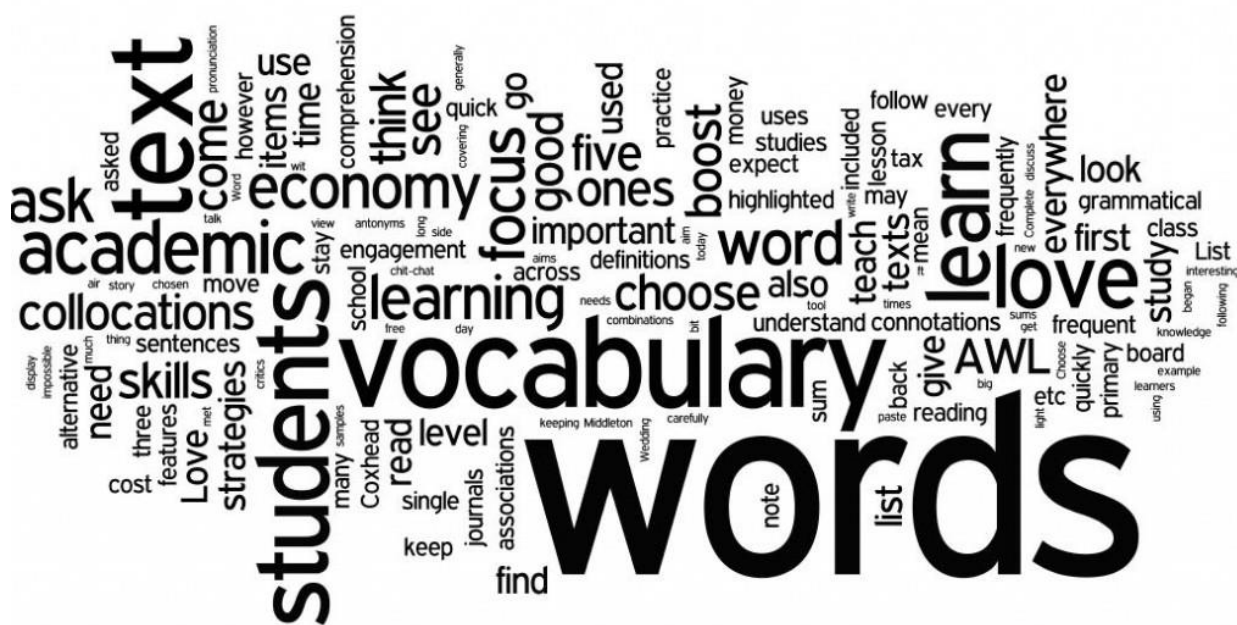
Appendix 1

The Department of English Studies in the Ministry of Education published the latest English Curriculum, in 2015, which contains bands of vocabulary items that students should master in order to proceed successfully. The vocabulary in the Meitzav exam for 8th grade is aligned with bands I and II.

Band I consists of about 675 words, and is on page 39 of the English Curriculum.

Band II consists of about 800 words, and is on page 52 of the English Curriculum.

Here is the link to the Curriculum: https://goo.gl/DZYxoL or visit the English Inspectorate's "Stay up-to-date" page, where you will find the curriculum listed on the left-hand menu.

Appendix 2

Thank you to everyone who contributed these tips over the years.

TIPS for Listening Tasks

I: Pupils have difficulty understanding the speech and answering the questions.

- Teachers should devote more class time to speaking and listening activities in the classroom.

- Teachers should provide opportunities for pupils to practice listening skills by using a variety of oral texts of different lengths, levels of difficulty and a variety of text types.

- Teachers should use the CD that accompanies the coursebook instead of reading out the texts. This will allow the pupils to be exposed to different accents and different paces of reading. It will also familiarize the pupils to the specific nature of recorded speech.

- Teachers should have the pupils listen to the audio recordings from Meitzav, which can be accessed at: https://goo.gl/y5ZnY

- Teachers should make sure their pupils are familiar with the variety of question types e.g. multiple choice, true/false, fill-in, matching, filling in table and provide opportunities for pupils to practice them.

- Teachers need to teach listening just like they teach reading i.e. including pre- while- and post-listening activities.

- Teachers need to teach connectors that signal organization e.g. first, second, third, finally, therefore, as a result of.

II: Pupils have difficulty understanding the text and answering the questions

- Teachers should teach their pupils the strategies they can use for answering questions for Accessing Information from Spoken Texts. Pupils need to:
    1. Read the instructions before the first listening.
    2. Predict what the passage is about. Read the questions before hearing the text. Mark the important words. Go through the questions and predict what the passage is about. What kind of information is being asked for? This helps pupils to focus better while they are listening.
    3. Start answering the questions during the second listening of the text.
    4. Check their answers after the second listening of the text.

- Teachers should explain to their pupils that the tone of voice of the speaker sometimes gives information about the speaker's feelings. Teachers need to provide activities for pupils to practice this by asking pupils to identify the tone of voice of the speaker(s).
- When pupils are listening to a dialogue, teachers should provide practice in identifying what information is given by each speaker.
- Teachers should break up the listening text into smaller parts so that pupils can get used to listening and then finding the answer.
- For weaker pupils, teachers should start with very short texts and ask one question. Then teachers can advance to longer texts.
- Teachers can read part of a text while having the students listen for the answer to one question. Stop when they raise their hands to indicate that they have heard the answer. If they don't hear it, stop and start again, emphasizing the answer.

TIPS for Reading Comprehension Tasks

- Teachers need to put an emphasis on teaching/learning vocabulary including lexical chunks. Lexical items should be taught explicitly, recycled and used in different contexts.
- Teachers should provide pupils with many opportunities for reading a wide variety of texts independently. Use a wide variety of texts of different lengths, difficulty and text types. Texts should contain at least 95% familiar vocabulary.

Understanding Different Types of Texts

Narrative Texts
- tell stories
- follow a familiar story structure
- include short stories, folktales, tall tales, myths, fables, legends, autobiographies, biographies, fantasies, historical fiction, mysteries, science fiction, plays

Expository Texts
- explain information or tell about topics
- provide a framework for comprehension of content-area textbooks
- include informational books, content-area textbooks, newspapers, magazines, brochures, catalogues

Kentucky Reading First Summer Institute 2004, Comprehension

- Teachers should have their pupils practice the difference between wh- and yes/no questions and how to identify them e.g. a *who* question requires a name, *when* can require a time or a date.
- Teachers need to help pupils understand the use of reference words to support understanding. e.g. it, this, that these, those.
- Teachers should explain the glossing of words i.e. what the symbol * next to a word means.
- Teachers need to teach pupils to use the key words from the text correctly. They should have the pupils highlight the key words in the question and in the text.
- Pupils need to read the entire paragraph where the key words appear in order to find the correct answer.

TIPS for Writing Tasks

- Teachers need to provide opportunities for pupils to write sentences/paragraphs in every lesson. This should include a variety of written tasks differing in context, purpose, audience and text type that are meaningful for the pupils. It is recommended to use the Bank of Performance-based tasks that can be accessed at: https://goo.gl/LCW6je

- Teachers can ask their pupils to write only the opening sentence on a topic using key words that appear in a question.

- Both guided/structured and free writing should be encouraged.

- Teachers should give pupils tips how to check their writing e.g. capital letters at the beginning, period at the end of the sentence.

- Teachers need to tell their pupils need to make sure that the information is relevant to the topic, the message is clear and organized and the vocabulary is varied and appropriate.

- Teachers need to put emphasis on simple sentence structure and compound sentences, including subject-verb agreement, tense, pronouns, articles, prepositions, spelling, punctuation and capitalization.

- Teachers should share the rubrics from the Meitzav Exam with their pupils enabling pupils to understand how their work is evaluated.

- Teachers need to tell pupils to read the instructions in Hebrew carefully and pay attention to what tense is being used.

(Expanded version available on English Inspectorate Site)

Appendix 3: Meitzav Writing Rubrics

(From the Rama site)

מדינת ישראל

המזכירות הפדגוגית   משרד החינוך   ראמ"ה
                                      הרשות הארצית
                                      למדידה והערכה בחינוך

SCORING KEY FOR THE ENGLISH TEST – 8th Grade, Version B
Meitzav, 2016

Communicative Ability	
• All information is relevant to the topic • Message is clear and easy to follow	6
	5
• Information is relevant to the topic, but limited • Message is mostly clear and organized	4
	3
• Information is limited and / or mostly irrelevant to the topic • Message is difficult to follow	2
	1
• Does not write in English • Only copies instructions	0

Vocabulary	
• Vocabulary is varied and appropriate	3
• Vocabulary is appropriate	2
• Vocabulary is limited	1
• Writes isolated words • Only copies instructions	0

SCORING KEY FOR THE ENGLISH TEST – 8th Grade, Version B
Meitzav, 2016

Accuracy	
• Correct simple sentence structure (subject, verb, and correct word order) • Mostly correct use of compound or more complex sentences, if attempted • Mostly correct subject–verb agreement, tense, pronouns, articles and prepositions • Mostly correct spelling, punctuation and capitalization	9
	7–8
• Partially correct simple sentence structure (subject, verb, and correct word order) • Errors in complex sentences, if attempted • Some errors of subject–verb agreement, tense, pronouns, articles and prepositions • Occasional errors in spelling, punctuation and capitalization	6
	4–5
• Mostly incorrect simple sentence structure (subject, verb, and correct word order) • Many errors of subject–verb agreement, tense, pronouns, articles and prepositions • Many errors in spelling, punctuation and capitalization	3
	1–2
• Not enough language to assess accuracy • Does not write in English • Writes isolated words • Only copies instructions	0

Length	
• Writes at least 70 words	2
• Writes between 60–69 words	1
• Writes 59 words or less • Only copies instructions	0

Just for fun…

Try this quiz in one of your classes as a Lesson Starter or lesson Wrap-up!

Great Brainteaser Quiz #3!

1. Do they have a 4th of July in England?

Reveal Answer

Yes, they have a 4th of July, but they don't celebrate that day!

2. How many birthdays does the average man have?

Reveal Answer

One birthday -- the day he was born; but he celebrates it yearly.

3. Some months have 31 days; how many have 28?

Reveal Answer

All of them (12) have AT LEAST 28 days.

4. Why can't a man living in the USA be buried in Canada?

Reveal Answer

Because he isn't dead if he's LIVING in the U.S.

FUN RESOURCES!

Rory's Story Cubes are one of our favorite classroom items. The game synthesizes speaking, listening and writing, depending on you choose to use them.

Simply take all nine cubes and give them a shake.

Roll them.   Then, starting with 'Once upon a time...' select the icon that catches your eye first.

The objective is to tell a story that link together all nine images.   And remember - there is no wrong answer!

Have fun!

Boggle Online can be played at the end of class. It develops spelling dexterity and familiarity with letters.

Pictionary Online is like charades, but with drawing pictures. Your team guesses what you are drawing. Use this word generator, or use vocabulary words that need reviewing

Kahoot   A game-based learning platform. Build your own game, or search the database for one someone has already built.

More Resources

Making a Difference; an inspirational Short Film to Get Students Motivated
Meitzav Exams
Meitzav Table of Specifications
Ministry of Education Portal
Guidelines for Students with Special Needs
Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab
Quizlet: Vocabulary for Meitzav English/Arabic
Quizlet: Vocabulary for Meitzav English/Hebrew
The Ultimate Guide to Using Audio books in your Classroom
Learn English Through Story: graded readers on YouTube
Nancie Atwell: The Reading Zone
British Council Magazine – blogs on various topic written by the language assistants - No exercises, but an option to comment
ISRAEL21c English-language online news magazine about 21st century Israel.

And never forget …

Qualities Not Measured by Most Tests   DyslexicKids.n

Persistence
Curiosity
Enthusiasm
COURAGE
Leadership
Creativity
Civic-Minded
Resourcefulness
Self-Discipline
Sense of Wonder

Big-Picture Thinking
Compassion
Reliability
Motivation
Humor
Empathy
Sense of Beauty
Humility
Resilience