

Hebrew Spin It *Spin It!*

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SUMMARY:	A series of very brief activities tied to learning short famous Hebrew phrases or sentences - <i>Submitted by Erica Goldman</i>
TOPIC(S):	Hebrew
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will learn three or four famous Hebrew words or phrases and will experience an active, physical method of learning a language
AUDIENCE:	Any
TIMING:	20 minutes
APPENDICES:	Spin It Hebrew-handout.docx
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Small hearts (can be cut out of paper, or 3-D plastic hearts, whatever) – 1 per participant Enough building blocks or Legos for three or more towers to be built
SET-UP DETAILS:	The hearts should be hidden around the room before participants enter, at least some of them hidden *in* things, like in between cushions in a couch, or in bags or boxes in the room, etc. Building blocks or Legos should be distributed in small piles – each pile should have enough to build a tower and there should be at least three piles.

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

Gather participants in a standing circle and explain that in this session, we are very quickly going to learn some famous Hebrew phrases or sentences by moving around and learning by doing. Each activity will be fast-paced – they'll go do something, come back to the circle, go do something again, etc.

1. Pay Attention

Tell participants that small hearts have been hidden around the room and they have to find them. Once everyone has found a heart, tell them the way to say "Pay Attention" to a group of people in Hebrew is שימו לב pronounced "seem-u lev". It literally translates to "put your heart into it". Have everyone repeat the phrase over and over in Hebrew, out loud, while they put their hearts into a new hiding place in the room. Have them gather in a circle and then tell them to go find a different heart, not the one they hid. Ask if they paid attention to where others were putting their hearts. Tell them: pay attention, שימו לב and have them say the words many times while they are retrieving new hearts.

2. Say a little, but do a lot

Ask participants to go to one of the small clumps of Legos or building blocks around the room and start building a tower. Go to each and “shush” them, insisting they are quiet while they build. After just a minute, have them come back to the circle and teach them the phrase from Pirkei Avot (“Ethics of our Fathers”, a compilation of the ethical teachings and maxims of Rabbis from the Mishna period): Say a little but do a lot, אמור מעט ועשה הרבה, pronounced “eh-mor me’at v’aseh harbeh”. Have them repeat it numerous times and in a whisper. Tell them to make noise and run to their towers and break them down quickly and noisily! Come back to the circle, say the sentence quietly, run back and build their towers again, until everyone is comfortable with the sentence.

3. All Israel is responsible for each other

Have participants make a circle next to people they are comfortable being in physical contact with (so if there are people who do not touch the opposite sex, have them move to a spot in the circle next to the appropriate people). Tell everyone to face counter-clockwise, take a step to the left so they are very close together, put their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them, and on the count of three, to sit down. This is a trust circle sit – everyone should be sitting on the lap of the person behind them and it will only balance if everyone is in. It may take several tries to get it solid. Teach them the phrase from the Talmud that means “All Israel is responsible for each other”: כל ישראל ערבים זה לזה pronounced “kol yisrael arevim zeh la’zeh” and go around the circle having each person say it – as they say it, have them put both arms straight up in the air until everyone’s arms are up and have them say the phrase together.

4. If you will it, it is no dream.

If there is still time, teach them the phrase from Theodore Herzl “If you will it, it is no dream” אם תרצו אין זו אגדה pronounced “im tirtzu, ain zo agadah” and ask them to imagine a physical activity they could use to demonstrate and teach it. If it seems hard to come up with one, tell them: If you will it, it is no dream!!

**The handout is available for anyone wishing to take one to reinforce and remember the phrases they learned.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

Obviously there are many other famous or interesting Hebrew phrases and sentences that could be learned by pairing them with a short physical activity – go nuts!!