

ייִדיש

אַן אַרײַנפֿיר:

לשון, ליטעראַטור, און קולטור

באַנד 1

שבע איטע צוקער

YIDDISH

AN INTRODUCTION
TO THE LANGUAGE,
LITERATURE, AND CULTURE

Volume I

Sheva Zucker

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צו מיין מאן
סענער,
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צו מינע
עלערן און לערערס
וואס האבן אריינגעפלאנצט
אין מיר א ליבע צו יידיש

און צו מיין טעכטער
בינה-אייזלע,
אין וואסערס מאיל, האט איר
יידיש וואס ווילטער לעבן

To my husband
Sandy,
my favorite Yiddish student

To my
Parents and Teachers
who instilled in me a love of Yiddish

and to my daughter
Benna Adele,
on whose lips, I hope,
Yiddish will continue to live

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Finally, **My Students** who made me think that the world is waiting for YIDDISH!

INTRODUCTION

At present, there is no dearth of Yiddish textbooks for college and adult education students. The question then is "Why another one?" I embarked on this project about seven years ago, not so much because I was dissatisfied with the existing materials, but rather because, after years of teaching Yiddish, I wanted to create something new.

The purpose of this book is twofold; first, I want to introduce students to the spoken language rather than textbookese. Each unit, therefore, contains a conversation on a common topic such as health, clothing, food, work, holidays, etc., and the basic vocabulary to discuss this topic. A good number of idiomatic expressions are included so that students will get the flavor of the spoken language. Second, I want to introduce students to literature at a very early stage. Therefore, most units contain folksongs and selections by authors such as Sholem Aleichem, I.L. Peretz, I.B. Singer, Kadye Molodowsky, and Aaron Zeitlin instead of the usual foreign language textbook stories peopled by pens and notebooks, dogs and cats, and other bland albeit irreproachable characters. Although I shortened and simplified some selections, I always tried to remain as faithful as possible to the original. These readings introduce students to the richness of Yiddish literature as well as to the varieties of Yiddish syntax. Their inclusion is based on their suitability to this course and does not present a judgment on the author's importance to Yiddish literature. Many fine writers could, unfortunately, not be represented.

The book is divided into two volumes and twenty units. Volume I contains Units 1-11. Volume II, Units 12-20. After Unit 7 each unit, except those dealing with Jewish holidays, is divided into two lessons. Lesson A (א) contains a conversation. Lesson B (ב) a literary, folkloristic, or historical selection on the same theme which utilizes the vocabulary of the conversation section and also introduces new vocabulary and grammar. Almost every unit contains appropriate proverbs and songs, explanations of grammar, and exercises. Some lessons contain supplementary reading selections and/or songs; any new vocabulary presented there will be reintroduced should it appear later. I hope that some students will read material not covered in class on their own. The holiday units (7, 13, and 16) are **Review** lessons. While they introduce some new vocabulary, they contain little or no new grammar and most of the exercises review grammar and vocabulary studied earlier. The last lesson of each volume, (Lessons 11B and 20B respectively), also includes Review Exercises.

This book is intended both for college and serious adult education classes. I cannot say how long it should take the “average” class to cover the material since there is no “average” class. I expect that college classes will cover each volume in one to two semesters depending on the frequency of meetings and the linguistic ability and background of the students. Adult education classes will probably require almost two years to do so.

A **Vocabulary** list gives the new words presented in each conversation, reading selection, and song. The vocabulary words have been designated **Active** or **Passive**. “Active” words are preceded by an asterisk and should be memorized when they first appear; they are used in subsequent lessons without additional explanation. “Passive” words are listed and defined again when they reappear. The **Glossary** at the back lists all the Yiddish words used in this text and indicates the lesson in which they first appear.

Most lessons have both **Written** and **Oral Exercises**. It is unlikely that any class will do all the exercises. Teachers and students should choose those that appear most beneficial and interesting to them. I hope classes will not skip over the **Oral Exercises**, particularly those that are designed to help learn word order. Only by hearing the language spoken can students develop a sense of Yiddish syntax.

The **Orthography** used in this textbook is Standard Yiddish Orthography. The gender of nouns is based on the norms given in Uriel Weinreich’s *Modern English-Yiddish Yiddish-English Dictionary* as well as on information supplied by native Yiddish speakers.

I have tried to present a systematic study of the Yiddish language which also captures the humor and pathos of Yiddish-speaking life. The Yiddish experience is the Borsht Belt and the Holocaust and a great many things in between. I hope I have conveyed something of the essence of that experience in a way that appeals to both young and old, secular and religious.

יִיִּשׁ: אַרײַנפֿיר

A final word to students: This book is only the first of a two part course of study. Volume II is written, and will, I hope, be published soon. For more information about it, write to the address below. I hope these books are only the beginning of your journey into the world of Yiddish. May we meet again in a class, at a function, or in other books. Until then:

Learn and Enjoy!!

לערנט זיך גוט און פֿאַס פֿאַס פֿאַס!!

Sheva (Charlotte) Zucker

שׂוּע זאָקער

For information, comments, or suggestions, write either to Workmen's Circle Education Dept., 45 East 33rd St. New York, New York 10016 or to Dr. Sheva Zucker, 1114 Iredell St., Durham, North Carolina 27705.

Errata

תיקון-טעות

The following is a short list of editorial and typographical errors which appear in this first edition. We apologize for their presence. The text will be fully emended in future editions.

1. p.3. Line 1. lc and lx switch columns
2. p.18. Vocabulary; line 10 should read: ניטא ... **there is/are not**
3. p.51. Vocabulary; under "Learn these words well." add:
that (conj.) ... az ... אז*
4. p.54. Vocabulary; add: **something; somewhat . . . epes . . . עפעס**
5. p.54. Idioms and Expressions; add:
So what's new? . . . Vos hert zikh epes? . . . **וואָס הערט זיך עפעס?** . . .
[epes is untranslatable here]
6. p.57. Plural of Nouns; after "Ending in ס or עס," add:
Most nouns ending in ע have plurals ending in ס.
7. p.77. **teeth** should be **tooth**
8. p.88. Vocabulary; add: **to begin . . . אָנהייבן** ; **begin . . . הייבן אָן**
9. p.109. Vocabulary; add: **mild(ly) . . . מילד**
10. p.112. Move bracket enclosing **ליד / לידער**, column 2, from the middle to the right to enclose all expressions ending with **געזונגען** in column 1.
11. p.124. Line 1, Yiddish column should read: **דאָס הייסט / הייסט עס**
12. p.128. Correct spelling of tune [nigndl(ekh)] is **דאָס ניגונדל(עך)**
13. p.129. Line 1. II. should read: Rewrite the sentences in exercise I in the past-tense negative (except numbers 10 & 12).
14. p.143. V 10. Change "two sisters" to "two brothers" and V 13. to:
My (The) father gave us (אונדז) this (the) piece [of] land.
15. p.151. Correct Yiddish spelling of shirt is: **דאָס העמד(ער)**
16. p.186. Vocabulary; add: **water . . . דאָס וואַסער(ן)**
17. p.187. Vocabulary; add: **exactly; just . . . פונקט**
and nobody, no one (pron.) . . . ניט
18. p.192. Line 4 of the mid-page paragraph: after the word "infinitive" add: "The word **אז** before the new clause is optional."
Then add the word **אז** in #3 after **ווייל** and #6 after **געוואָלט**.
19. p.199. In #6, replace **גן-עדן?** with **גן-עדן!**
20. p.200. In #45, **זינל** should be **זיין**.
21. p.256. Glossary; after **אַנדערש** (and before **זיך**) add:
to begin (אָנהייבן) (אָנגעהויבן) (6)

LIST OF YIDDISH LETTERS AND SOUNDS

PRINTED LETTER	WRITTEN LETTER	YIDDISH NAME	TRANSLITERATION OF SOUND	ENGLISH EQUIVALENT
א	א	Shtumer Alef	Silent, therefore not shown	silent
א	א	Pasekh Alef	a	no exact equivalent, close to A in Ma .
אָ	אָ	Komets Alef	o	no exact equivalent, close to O in For
ב	ב	Beyz	b	B
בֿ	בֿ	Veyz	v	V
ג	ג	Giml	g	G
ד	ד	Daled	d	D
ה	ה	Hey	h	H
ו	ו	Vov	u	OO as in Hoof
װ	װ	Melupm Vov	u	OO [used when ו appears next to װ. The dot distinguishes ו from װ.]
װ	װ	Tsvey Vovn	v	V
װ	װ	Vov Yud	oy	OY
ז	ז	Zayin	z	Z
ח	ח	Khes	kh	KH as in Khanukah

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ט	6	Tes	t	T
י	'	Yud	i or y	EE or consonant Y
יְ	!	Khirek Yud	i	EE [used when stressed vowel precedes another vowel to show that יְ is in a different syllable.]
יי	''	Tsvey Yudn	ey	AY as in Day
יִי	''	Pasekh Tsvey Yudn	ay	Y as in Sky
כ	כ	Kof	k	K
כּ	כּ	Khof	kh	KH as in Bach
ך	ך	Lange[r] Khof	kh	KH as in Bach only at the end of a word.
ל	ל	Lamed	l	L
מ	מ	Mem	m	M
ם	פּ	Shlos-Mem	m	M, only at the end of a word.
נ	נ	Nun	n	N
ן	ן	Lange[r] Nun	n	N, only at the end of a word.
ס	ס	Samekh	s	S
ע	ע	Ayin	e	short E as in Bed
פ	פ	Pey	p	P

יידיש: אַלף-בית

פּ	פֿ	Fey	f	F
ף	פֿ	Lange[r] Fey	f	F, only at the end of a word.
צ	צ	Tsadek	ts	TS
ץ	ץ	Lange[r] Tsadek	ts	TS, only at the end of a word.
ק	ק	Kuf	k	K
ר	ר	Reysh	r	R
ש	ש	Shin	sh	SH
שׂ	שׂ	Sin	s	S
תּ	תּ	Tof	t	T
תּ	תּ	Sof	s	S
דּ	דּ	Daled Zayin	dz	DZ as in boards
זש	זש	Zayin Shin	zh	ZH as in Zhivago.
דזש	דזש	Daled Zayin Shin	dzh	J
טש	טש	Tes Shin	tsh	CH as in Charlie.

Here is a sample of Yiddish writing. Note the size of the letters in relation to one another.

אַלע גוטע קינדער באַרען זײַן אין דער הייז צו עסן.
 אַמאָר שרײַבן אַ זאַל אײַז ווערענער "שבת" און "חולד".

Yiddish has no capital letters, but in transliteration, we shall capitalize the first word of every sentence, the first word of every line of poetry, and proper nouns such as the names of people and places.

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS USED IN THIS BOOK

abbreviation	<i>abbr.</i>	impersonal	<i>impers.</i>
accusative	<i>acc.</i>	indefinite	<i>indef.</i>
adjective	<i>adj.</i>	indirect	<i>indir.</i>
adverb	<i>adv.</i>	infinitive	<i>inf.</i>
affectionate	<i>affec.</i>	informal	<i>infor.</i>
American	<i>Amer.</i>	interjection	<i>int.</i>
article	<i>art.</i>	intransitive	<i>intrans.</i>
auxiliary	<i>aux.</i>	ironic	<i>iro.</i>
comparative	<i>comp.</i>	literally	<i>lit.</i>
conditional	<i>cond.</i>	neuter	<i>neut.</i>
conjunction	<i>conj.</i>	nominative	<i>nom.</i>
definite	<i>def.</i>	noun	<i>n.</i>
diminutive	<i>dim.</i>	object	<i>obj.</i>
emphatic	<i>emph.</i>	participle	<i>part.</i>
especially	<i>esp.</i>	person	<i>pers.</i>
familiar	<i>fam.</i>	plural	<i>pl.</i>
feminine	<i>fem.</i>	poetic	<i>poet.</i>
figurative	<i>fig.</i>	pronoun	<i>pron.</i>
formal	<i>for.</i>	sarcastic	<i>sarc.</i>
hasidic	<i>has.</i>	singular	<i>sg.</i>
Hebrew	<i>Heb.</i>	something	<i>stg.</i>
humorous	<i>hum.</i>	subject	<i>subj.</i>
imperative	<i>imp.</i>	superlative	<i>super.</i>
		transitive	<i>trans.</i>
		verb	<i>v.</i>
		verb transitive	<i>v. t.</i>

inadmissible in the standard language °

of doubtful admissibility in the standard language °

diminutive ^Δ

iminutive □

UNIT 1

דאָס ערשטע קאַפּיטל¹

!pכ'fδ-pofe

INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO YIDDISH! This book is designed both for students who know the Yiddish alphabet and for those who do not. We will begin our study of the language by learning to read and write (or if your teacher prefers, with the *Conversation* שמועס on p. 4).

In each of the first five units you will learn the names of several letters and how to print, write, and pronounce them. You will also learn some words that may be formed from these letters. This book coordinates the *Reading* section with the *Conversation* as much as possible. By Unit 3, many of the words you learn in the *Reading* section appear in the *Conversation*.

If all the students in the class already know how to read, we suggest to the teacher that the class nevertheless go through the *Reading* section quickly to learn the *Vocabulary* words.

I. LETTERS

ENGLISH EQUIVALENT	YIDDISH NAME	WRITTEN FORM	PRINTED FORM
--------------------	--------------	--------------	--------------

Consonants

B	<i>Beyz</i>	ב	ב
D	<i>Daled</i>	ד	ד
T	<i>Tes</i>	ט	ט
R	<i>Reysh</i>	ר	ר

¹ The Yiddish word for unit is איינס דער *der eyns*. A קאַפּיטל *kapitl* is a chapter. We have used the word we feel is most appropriate in each language.

יידיש: דאָס ערשטע קאָפיטל

**יידיש-סטודענטן אויף דער ייווא-קאָלאָמביע יידיש-פּראָגראַם אויפֿן נאָמען אוריאל
וויינרניך לעבן ייווא-בנין, 1982.**



Yiddish students in the Uriel Weinreich Summer Program, Columbia University-YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in front of YIVO building, New York City, 1982.

**יידיש-סטודענטן אין זומער-יידיש-פּראָגראַם, בר-אילן אוניווערסיטעט, ישראל,
1988.**



Yiddish students in summer Yiddish program, Bar-Ilan University, Israel, 1988.

יידיש: דאָס ערשטע קאַפּיטל

Vowels

Has no exact English equivalent; it is close to the A in Ma , but shorter	<i>Pasekh Alef</i>	אַ	אֵ
Has no exact English equivalent; it is close to O in For	<i>Komets Alef</i>	אָ	אֹ
Like OO in Book	<i>Vou</i>	וּ	וֹ
Like E in Pen	<i>Ayin</i>	ע	עֵ

II. VOCABULARY

MEANING	PRONUNCIATION	WRITTEN FORM	PRINTED FORM
a	a	אַ	א .1
he	er	ער	ער .2
the (masc.) ²	der	דער	דער .3
the father, Dad	der tate	דער טאַטע	דער טאַטע .4
he begs, prays, requests	er bet	ער בעט	ער בעט .5
work (n.)	arbet	אַרבעט	אַרבעט .6
he works	er arbet	ער אַרבעט	ער אַרבעט .7
grandmother	bobe	באָבע	באָבע .8
he does	er tut	ער טוט	ער טוט .9
he rests	er rut	ער רוט	ער רוט .10
he speaks	er redt	ער רעדט	ער רעדט .11
you (sg. fam.)	du	דו	דו .12
here	do	דאָ	דאָ .13

² If an abbreviation is unclear to you, see the list of abbreviations at the beginning of book, p. xviii.

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there	dort	דאָרט	14. דאָרט
but	ober	אָבער	15. אָבער
or	oder	אָדער	16. אָדער

III. READING PRACTICE³

1. אַ באַבע בעט. 2. אַ טאָטע בעט. 3. דער טאָטע אַרבעט.
4. דער טאָטע רוט. 5. אַ באַבע רוט. 6. דער זאָטע טאָט אַרבעט.
7. ער אַרבעט דאָרט. 8. זאָרט אַרבעט דער זאָטע. 9. ער רעדט.
10. אַ האַרע רעדט. 11. דער טאָטע רעדט? 12. דער טאָטע אַרבעט דאָ אָבער ער רוט דאָרט.

IV. CONVERSATION

שמועס

Because some of you may already know how to read Yiddish, the next few *Conversations* appear in both Yiddish letters and transliteration. Try covering up the transliteration when reading the Yiddish.

Those of you who do not yet know how to read – don't panic! You are not expected to be able to read the *Conversations* in Yiddish until they appear only in Yiddish with no transliteration. As some of the letters should be familiar to you from the *Reading* sections, we suggest you try to recognize those words and letters you already know. These same principles apply wherever Yiddish and transliteration are offered.

Sholem-Aleykhem!

Motl: *Sholem-aleykhem.*

Fraynd Goldshteyn: *Aleykem-shōlem.*

Motl: *Vi heyst ir?*

Goldshteyn: *Ikh heys Berl*

שלום-עליכם!

1. מאָטל: שלום-עליכם.

2. פֿרײַנד גאָלדשטײַן: עליכם-שלום.

3. מאָטל: ווי הייסט איר?

4. גאָלדשטײַן: איך הייס בערל

³ Note: In the reading section, and also in the grammar, conversation, and exercises, the words are presented either in printed or in written form. This will help students get used to reading the handwriting of someone other than their teachers.

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5. גאַלדשטיין. ווי הייסטו?⁴
Goldshteyn, vi heystu?
6. מאָטל: איך הייס מאָטל זינגער.
Motl: Ikh heys Motl Zinger.
7. גאַלדשטיין: און ווי הייסט
Goldshteyn: Un vi heyst
8. דער טאַטע, מאָטל?
der tate, Motl?
9. מאָטל: ער הייסט מיכל זינגער.
Motl: Er heyst Mikhel Zinger
10. גאַלדשטיין: אוי, מיכל זינגער,
Goldshteyn: Oy, Mikhel Zinger,
11. איך קען אַ מיכל זינגער,
Ikh ken a Mikhel Zinger,
12. ער וווינט דאָ אויף דער ערשטער גאַס,
er vohnt do af der Ershter Gas,
13. אָבער ער אַרבעט נישט דאָרט.
ober er arbet nit dort.
14. וווּ וווינט איר?
Vu vohnt ir?
15. מאָטל: מיר וווינען אויף דער
Motl: Mir vohnen af der
16. ערשטער גאַס.
Ershter Gas.
17. גאַלדשטיין: אַ קליינע וועלט!
Goldshteyn: A kleyne velt!
18. זײַ געזונט,⁵ מאָטל. אַ גרוס
Zay gezunt, Motl. A grus
19. אין דער היים!
in der heym!
20. מאָטל: זײַט געזונט!
Motl: Zayt gezunt!

שפּריכווערטער Proverbs

1. אַ מענטש טראַכט און גאָט לאַכט.
Man proposes, God disposes.
(Lit. "A person thinks and God laughs.")
2. אַ קליינע וועלט!
(A) small world!
3. אַ וועלט מיט וועלטלעך!
A world with small worlds!

⁴ Note: Yiddish has both a familiar and a formal form in the second person. *Du* אַוּ is you singular and informal. *Ir* איר is both you singular formal and you plural, both formal and informal. The imperative changes as well. *Zay gezunt* זײַ געזונט is informal and *Zayt gezunt* זײַט געזונט is formal and/or plural. In this dialogue Motl is a young boy so Goldshteyn addresses him informally, while Motl addresses the stranger and grown-up Goldshteyn formally.

⁵ Note: In Yiddish the stress usually falls on the penultimate syllable. When it does not, we will indicate where the stress falls by an accent mark as in *gezunt* געזונט. We will also indicate the stress in all words derived from the Hebrew-Aramaic component, no matter where it falls, as in *sholem-aleykhem* שלום-עליכם. We will also use it in other places that may be confusing. e.g., *der student -di studentn*. The accent is given in this book as an aid to correct reading. It is never actually written in Yiddish.

VOCABULARY ⁶

<i>af/oyf/uf</i> (has several correct pronunciations)	אויף	on
<i>du</i>	דו	you (sg. infor.)
<i>er</i>	ער	he
<i>ersht(er)</i>	ערשט(ער)	first
<i>(der)</i> ⁷ <i>Fraynd (fraynd)</i>	דער פֿרײַנד (פֿרײַנד)	friend; Mr.
<i>di gas(n)</i> ⁸	די גאַס(ן)	street
<i>(der) got</i>	דער גאָט	God
<i>der grus(n)</i>	דער גרוס(ן)	regards, greeting
<i>di heym(en)</i>	די היים(ען)	home
<i>heysn</i>	הייסן	to be called (as in "My name is...")
<i>ikh</i>	איך	I
<i>in</i>	אין	in, at
<i>ir</i>	איר	you (pl.; sg. for.)
<i>kenen</i>	קענען	can, to be able; to be acquainted with
<i>kleyen</i>	קליין	small, little
<i>der mentsh(n)</i>	דער מענטש(ן)	person
<i>mir</i>	מיר	we
<i>nit/nisht</i>	ניט/נישט	not
<i>sholem-aleykhem</i>	שלום-עליכם	hello
<i>trakhtn</i>	טראַכטן	to think
<i>un</i>	און	and
<i>di velt(n)</i>	די וועלט(ן)	world

⁶ Until you know all the Yiddish letters, the vocabulary will be arranged alphabetically, according to the English transliteration of the Yiddish word. Naturally, in the case of nouns preceded by articles, look to the first letter of the noun and not of the article for alphabetic placement.

⁷ Most common nouns are preceded by a definite article. It may be *Der* דער for a masculine noun, *Di* די for a feminine noun, or *Dos* דאָס for a neuter noun. This is explained in Unit 2, p. 20. Memorize each noun with its appropriate article.

⁸ The plural of nouns or plural endings will be given in parentheses next to the noun. The plural article for all Yiddish nouns is always *Di* די.

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<i>dos velt(ekh)</i>	דאָס וועלטל(עך)	world (<i>dim.</i>)
<i>vi</i>	ווי	how
<i>voynen</i>	וויינען	to live (as in to dwell)
<i>vu</i>	וון	where
<i>zi</i>	זי	she

Idioms and Expressions

<i>A grus in der heym</i>	אַ גרוס אין דער היים	Regards [to the folks] at home
<i>Aleykhem-shōlem</i>	עליכם-שָׁלוֹם	→ see <i>Sholem-Aleykhem</i>
<i>In der heym</i>	אין דער היים	at home
<i>Sholem-aleykhem,</i>	שלום-עליכם,	Hello, and the response
<i>Aleykhem-shōlem</i>	עליכם-שָׁלוֹם	to "Hello"
<i>Vi heyst ir?</i>	ווי הייסט איר?	What's your name? (<i>Lit.</i> "How are you called?")
<i>Zay gezunt!</i>	זײַ געזונט!	Good-bye (<i>Lit.</i> "Be well") (<i>sg. fam.</i>)
<i>Zayt gezunt!</i>	זײַט געזונט!	Good-bye (<i>pl. or sg. for.</i>)

V.

GRAMMAR

I. The Present Tense

The present tense of verbs in Yiddish is quite simple. In English we can say "I talk, I do talk, I am talking." In Yiddish, this is all rendered as *ikh red* איך רעד.

The first person singular is formed by dropping the "n" ן or "en" ען from the infinitive. Thus *redn* רעדן: *ikh red* איך רעד, *heysn* הייסן: *ikh heys* איך הייס, *trakhtn* טראַכטן: *ikh trakht* איך טראַכט, *voynen* וויינען: *ikh voyn* איך וויי. This form is the base of the verb. The endings for the other persons: *du* דו you (*sg. & fam.*), *er* ער he, *zi* זי she, *mir* מיר we, *ir* איר you (*pl. & sg. for.*), *zey* זיי they, are formed by adding the appropriate endings to the base. Study the verbs on the next page. The endings are in a different font.

The infinitive⁹ of Yiddish verbs always ends in "n" ן as in *redn* רעדן to talk,

⁹ The infinitive is the verb form that names the action. As in English, it may or may not be preceded by "to." For example, (to) sing, (to) dance, (to) hear.

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heysn ען ¹⁰ to be called, *trakhtn* טראַכטן to think, or in “en” as in *voynen* וווינען to live (dwell).

The infinitive of a verb ends in *en* ען if the base of the verb ends in:

N ן	as in <i>voynen</i> וווינען to live and <i>kenen</i> קענען to know,
NG נג	as in <i>zingen</i> זינגען to sing – see the song on page 10,
NK נק	as in <i>trinken</i> טרינקען to drink,
M ם	as in <i>kumen</i> קומען to come,
or a vowel	as in <i>ruen</i> רוען to rest.

Don't worry about this rule too much. We will refer to it later in Unit 6 when you can apply it to more verbs. In the meantime, trust your pronunciation instincts and you'll probably get it right. It's much easier to say *voynen* וווינען than *voynnn*.

The singular familiar *du* is used with friends, peers, family members, children, animals, and generally with people younger than yourself. Interestingly, Jews also address God as *du*. *Ir* איר is the only form of the second person plural regardless of your relationship to the people in the group. It is also used as the second person singular with older people, strangers, people of a higher status or in a position of power over you such as teachers or employers. In formal settings, both people, regardless of status, would generally use *איר* when speaking to each other. Thus, the employer and the employee, the professor and the student would address each other as *איר*. A hasidic rebbe, however, addresses his *hasid* as *du*. Sometimes the application of these rules is subjective and may vary with dialect.

Redn רעדן

<i>Mir redn</i>	מיר רעדן	<i>Ikh red</i>	איך רעד
<i>Ir redt</i>	איר רעדט	<i>Du redst</i>	דו רעדסט
<i>Zey redn</i>	זיי רעדן	<i>Er redt, Zi redt</i>	ער רעדט, זי רעדט

Voynen וווינען

<i>Mir voynen</i>	מיר וווינען	<i>Ikh voyn</i>	איך ווין
<i>Ir voyn't</i>	איר וווינט	<i>Du voynst</i>	דו וווינסט
<i>Zey voynen</i>	זיי וווינען	<i>Er voyn't, Zi voyn't</i>	ער וווינט, זי וווינט

¹⁰ Note the slight irregularity in the conjugation of verbs whose infinitive ends in *en* ען. The first and third person plural also end in *en* ען.

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הייסן Heysn

<i>Mir heysn</i>	מיר הייסן	<i>Ikh heys</i>	איך הייס
<i>Ir heyst</i>	איר הייסט	<i>Du heyst</i>	דו הייסט
<i>Zey heysn</i>	זיי הייסן	<i>Er heyst, Zi heyst</i>	ער הייסט, זי הייסט

אַרבעטן Arbeytn

<i>Mir arbeytn</i>	מיר אַרבעטן	<i>Ikh arbet</i>	איך אַרבעט
<i>Ir arbet</i>	איר אַרבעט	<i>Du arbetst</i>	דו אַרבעסט
<i>Zey arbeytn</i>	זיי אַרבעטן	<i>Er arbet, Zi arbet</i>	ער אַרבעט, זי אַרבעט

Now that you've studied these conjugations, you've probably noticed that the third person singular *er, zi, es, (it)* ער, זי, עס is conjugated the same as the second person plural in most cases. For example: *er redt* ער רעדט and *ir redt* איר רעדט.

The first person plural *mir* מיר and the third person plural *zey* זיי are always conjugated the same way. For example: *mir redn* מיר רעדן and *zey redn* זיי רעדן. First and third person plural are almost always the same as the infinitive.

Sample Sentences:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>Ikh ken Yiddish.</i> | איך קען יידיש. | I know Yiddish. |
| 2. <i>Du redst Yiddish.</i> | דו רעדסט יידיש. | You do speak Yiddish. |
| 3. <i>Er heyst Hershl Zinger.</i> | ער הייסט הערשל זינגער. | His name is Hershl Zinger. |

¹¹ Note the slight irregularity in the second person singular of the verb *heysn* הייסן and other verbs in which the base ends in *s* ס. It is *du heyst* דו הייסט and not *du heys-st* דו הייס-סט, and is therefore the same as the third person singular *er* or *zi heyst* ער, זי הייסט. We do not add an *s* to the base because two *s*'s would be too hard to pronounce.

¹² Note the slight irregularity in the third person singular and second person plural of the verb *arbeytn* אַרבעטן and other verbs whose base ends in *t* ט such as *trakhtn* טראַכטן and *בעטן*. It is *er, zi, es* ער, זי, עס and not *er, zi, es-t* ער, זי, עס-ט, making this form the same as the first person singular. Again, this is done, because two *t*'s (try saying *ער טראַכט-ט*) would be too hard to pronounce.

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4. Zi zingst a lid. זי זינגט אַ ליד. She is singing a song.
 5. Mir arbeyt in der heyms. מיר אַרבעטן אין דער היים. We work at home.
 6. Ir voynt af der ערשטער גאָס. You live on First Street.
 7. Zey trakhtn un lakhn. זיי טראַכטן און לאַכן.¹³ They think and laugh.

VI. A SONG:

AZ DER REBE ZINGT

Folksong

- 1) Az der rebe zingt, (2)
 Zingen ale khsidim. (2)
 Bim bom bim bim bom,
 Bim bom bim bim bom,
 Zingen ale khsidim.

- 2) Az der rebe tantst, (2)
 Tantsn ale khsidim. (2)
 Ay day hop hop hop,
 Ay day hop hop hop,
 Tantsn ale khsidim.

- 3) Un az der rebe shloft, (2)
 Shlofn ale khsidim. (2)
 UUU
 UUU
 Shlofn ale khsidim.

אַ ליד:

אַז דער רבי זינגט

פֿאָלקסליד

- (1) אַז דער רבי זינגט, (2)
 זינגען אלע חסידים. (2)
 בים באָם בים בים באָם,
 בים באָם בים בים באָם,
 זינגען אלע חסידים.

- (2) אַז דער רבי טאַנצט, (2)
 אַז דער רבי טאַנצט. (2)
 איין צוויי דאָס דאָס דאָס,
 איין צוויי דאָס דאָס דאָס,
 אַז דער רבי טאַנצט.

- (3) און אַז דער רבי שלאָפֿט, (2)
 שלאָפֿן אלע חסידים. (2)
 אוו ווו
 אוו ווו
 שלאָפֿן אלע חסידים.

Can you make up more verses with other Yiddish verbs you know?

¹³ The verbs *zingen* זינגען and *lakhn* לאַכן appear in the song "Az der rebe zingt"

"אַז דער רבי זינגט" on this page.

יידיש: דאָס ערשטע קאַפיטל

VOCABULARY

ale	אַלע	all
az	אַז	when
der khōsid (khsīdim)	דער חסיד (חסידים)	hasid, follower of a hasidic rebbe
lakhn	לאַכן	to laugh
dos lid (lider)	דאָס ליד (ער)	song
der rēbe(s)	דער רבי(ס)	rabbi of the hasidim
shlofn	שלאָפֿן	to sleep
tantsn	טאַנצן	to dance
zingen	זינגען	to sing

Allegretto

Az der re - be tants, un az der re - be tants,

Tan - tsn a - le kha - si - dim si - dim Un

az der re - be tants, — Un az der re - be tants tan-tsn a - le kha -

si - dim, Un tan - tsn a - le kha - si - dim.

פֿערל פֿון יידישן ליד: 115 יידישע פֿאָלקס-, אַרבעטער-, קונסט- און טעאַטער-לידער, פֿון חנה און יוסף מלאָטעק, אַרבעטער-רינג בילדונגס-אַפּטייל, ניו-יאָרק, 1989.
Pearls of Yiddish Song: Favorite Folk, Art and Theatre Songs, compiled by Eleanor Gordon Mlotek and Joseph Mlotek, Education Dept. Workmen's Circle, New York, 1989.

EXERCISES

If you already know the alphabet, write the answers in Yiddish. Everyone should be able to write some of the words in Yiddish. Write those words that you have not yet learned to write in Yiddish in transliteration.

I. Conjugate *lakhn* לאַכן (to laugh), *heysn* הייסן (to be called), and *tantsn* טאַנצן (to dance).

II. Translate into Yiddish:

1. I sing.
2. You (*fam.*) dance.
3. We live at home.
4. Her name is Gitl. (She is called Gitl.)¹⁴
5. Your (*fam.*) name is Berl.
6. They live in New York.
7. You (*pl.*) live here.
8. I know Yiddish.
9. She works there.
10. You (*pl.*) dance at home (in the home).
11. (The) father rests.

ORAL PRACTICE

III. Substitute the highlighted words with those in parentheses. Make any necessary changes. Be sure to match the numbers correctly:

For example: - **Ikh'** heys Berl. **Der tate'** heyst Khayim.

A) (Du, ' Ikh')

B) (Er, ' Fraynd Gold')

Answer:

A) Du heyst Berl. Ikh heys Khayim.

B) Er heyst Berl. Fraynd Gold heyst Khayim.

1. -Vu voynt **Ir** ?
2. -Voynt **di bobe** ' af der Ershter Gas?
- **Mir** ' voynen af der Ershter Gas.
- **Di bobe** ' voynt af der Ershter Gas.
- A) (Du, ' Ikh')
- A) (Du, ' Ikh')
- B) (Di khsidim, ' Zey')
- B) (Zey, ' Zey')

¹⁴ Parentheses () in a translation exercise indicate that you *should* translate the word or words in parentheses even though this is not the way the sentence would be rendered in English.

UNIT 2

דאס צווייטע קאפיטל

און אים קאלאס

I. LETTERS

ENGLISH EQUIVALENT	YIDDISH NAME	WRITTEN FORM	PRINTED FORM
--------------------	--------------	--------------	--------------

Vowels & Diphthongs

Like English **Y**. It may be a vowel with a long **E** sound as in *Baby*, or a short **I** as in *In*, depending on the dialect. It may be a consonant like **Y** in *Yellow*.

Yud

ײ

יי

Like **Ey** as in *Grey*

Tsvey Yudn

ײַ

ייַ

At the beginning of a word, the vowel ײ and the diphthong יי are preceded by a silent א as in אײבער over, אײדל gentle, אין in, אײגן own (adj.), אײדע before, אײן one. A diphthong is two vowels that make one sound.

Consonants

H

Hey

ה

ה

L

Lamed

ל

ל

N only at the beginning and in the middle of a word

Nun

נ

נ

N only at the end of a word

Langer Nun

ן

ן

S

Samekh

ס

ס

Z

Zayn

ז or ז

ז

II. VOCABULARY

Practice these letters in the words listed below. In these early lessons where the alphabet is introduced there are many words for you to practice. The teacher may want to divide students into groups or have the students practice some of the reading at home.

MEANING	PRONUNCIATION	WRITTEN FORM	PRINTED FORM
to have, he has	<i>hobn, er hot</i>	האַבן, ער האָט	1. האָבן, ער האָט
to hear, you (pl.)	<i>hern, ir hert</i>	הערן, איר הערט	2. הערן, איר הערט
hear			
the song(s)	<i>dos lid,</i> <i>di llder</i>	דאָס ליד, די לידער	3. דאָס ליד, די לידער
to love/like	<i>lib hobn</i>	ליב האָבן	4. ליב האָבן
you (sg.) love/like	<i>du host lib</i>	דו האָסט ליב	5. דו האָסט ליב
yes	<i>yo</i>	יאָ	6. יאָ
the student(s)	<i>der student,</i> <i>di studentn</i>	דער סטודענט, די סטודענטן	7. דער סטודענט, די סטודענטן
the teacher(s)	<i>der lerer,</i> <i>di lerers</i>	דער לערער, די לערערס	8. דער לערער, די לערערס
the teacher(s) (fem.)	<i>di lerern,</i> <i>di lererns</i>	די לערערין, די לערערנס	9. די לערערין, די לערערנס
to teach, the	<i>lernen, der</i>	לערנען, דער	10. לערנען, דער
teacher teaches	<i>lerer lernt</i>	לערער לערנט	לערער לערנט
to eat, you (sg.) eat	<i>esn, du est</i>	עסן, דו עסט	11. עסן, דו עסט
it	<i>es</i>	עס	12. עס
there is	<i>es iz do</i>	עס איז דאָ	13. עס איז דאָ
before (conj.)	<i>eyder</i>	איידער	14. איידער
one (num. adj.) ¹	<i>eyn</i>	אין	15. אין
in	<i>in</i>	אין	16. אין

¹ For further information on numerical adjectives see Lesson 9A, p. 153 and Lesson 15A in Vol. II.

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you (pl. & sg. for.)	ir	איר	17. איר
the potato(es)	di bulbe,	די בולבע	18. די בולבע,
	di bulbcs	די בולבעס	די בולבעס
she	zi	זי	19. זי
they	zey	זיי	20. זיי
the grandfather(s)	der zeyde,	דער זיידע	21. דער זיידע,
	di zeydes	די זיידעס	די זיידעס
he is, she is	er iz, zi iz	ער איז, זי איז	22. ער איז, זי איז
no	neyn	ניין	23. ניין
the hand(s)	di hant, di hent	די הענט	24. די הענט, די הענט
to see, you (pl.) see	zen, ir zet	זען, איר זעט	25. זען, איר זעט
an (indef. article)	an	אן	26. אן
before a vowel)			
work; a job(s)	an arbet,	אן אַרבעט	27. אן אַרבעט,
	arbetn	אַרבעטן	אַרבעטן
the work; the job(s)	di arbet,	די אַרבעט	28. די אַרבעט,
	di arbetn	די אַרבעטן	די אַרבעטן

III. READING PRACTICE

1. ער רעדט. 2. דער סטודענט האט אן אַרבעט. 3. די סטודענטן האבן אַרבעט. 4. דער לערער האט ליב דאָס ליד. 5. זי לערעט פאָרן ליה זי לערעט. 6. דער לערער האט ליב די סטודענטן. 7. די באָבע עסט די בולבעס. 8. זי לערעט עסן זי בולבעס. 9. דער לערער עסט.
10. דער לערער עסט אירער ער אַרבעט. 11. עס איז דאָ איין לערער. 12. עס איז דאָ איין סטודענט. 13. רוט דער זיידע? יא, דער זיידע רוט. 14. דו הערסט די לידער. 15. זי האט אַ בולבע אין דער האַנט.
16. זי פאָרן בולבעס אין זי הענט. 17. דער טאַטע הייסט בערל. ער אַרבעט דאָרט. 18. דער זיידע אַרבעט דאָ אָבער ער עסט דאָרט.

IV. MORE PRACTICE

Many people confuse the *Daled* (ד) and the *Reysh* (ר). Here is some more practice.

Words with ד:

דא דאס די דאס ליד די זיידעס דער סטודענט

Words with ר:

ער אָבער ער רוט איר הערט דער לערער די לערערין

These words have both letters:

רעדן דו רעדסט די לידער איידער

V. A CONVERSATION IN CLASS

א שמועס אין קלאס

1. **Perl:** Gut-mōrgn. 1. פערל: גוט-מאָרגן.
2. **Motl:** Gut-yōr. 2. מאָטל: גוט-יאָר.
3. **Perl:** Vos hert zikh, Motl? 3. פערל: וואָס הערט זיך, מאָטל?
4. **Motl:** Es iz nitō kin naves. 4. מאָטל: עס איז ניטאָ קיין נײַעס.
5. **Vozhe hert zikh bay dir?** 5. וואָס זשע הערט זיך בײַ דיר?
6. **Perl:** Vos zol zikh hern? 6. פערל: וואָס זאָל זיך הערן?
7. **Es iz nitō kin naves.** 7. עס איז ניטאָ קיין נײַעס.
8. **Motl:** Hostu dayn Yidish bukh? 8. מאָטל: האָסטו דײַן ייִדיש בוך?
9. **Perl:** Nu, voden? 9. פערל: נו, וואָדען?
10. **Motl:** Un dayn heft un 10. מאָטל: און דײַן העפֿט און
11. **dayn feder?** 11. דײַן פֿעדער?
12. **Perl:** Yo. 12. פערל: יאָ.
13. **Motl:** A blayer hostu? 13. מאָטל: אַ בלײַער האָסטו?
14. **Perl:** Ikh hob nor eyn blayer, 14. פערל: איך האָב נאָר איין בלײַער,
15. **ober ikh darf tsvey. Zaŷ** 15. אָבער איך דאַרף צוויי, זײַ
16. **azoy^(b) gut un gib mir a blayer** 16. אַזױ^(b) גוט און גיב מיר אַ בלײַער
17. **eyder der lerer kumt.** 17. איידער דער לערער קומט.
18. **Motl:** Es iz do a blayer afn 18. מאָטל: עס איז דאָ אַ בלײַער אויפֿן
19. **tish.** 19. טיש.

20. **Perk** Take? פערל: טאַקע?
21. **Motl** Yo, na. מאָטל: יאָ, נאָ.
22. **Perk** A sheynem dank. פערל: אַ שיינעם דאַנק.
23. **Motl** Nit² far vos. מאָטל: ניטאָ פאַר וואָס.
24. **Perk** Itst ken ikh lèyenen. פערל: איצט קען איך לייענען.
25. un shraybn. Itst ken און שרײַבן. איצט קען.
26. ikh arbeyt. איך אַרבעטן.

Proverb שפּריכוואָרט

A Jewish thief steals only books. אַ ייִדישער גַנבֿ גַנבֿט נאָר בִּיכער.
(A Yidisher gānev gānvet nor bikher.)

VOCABULARY

* afn = af dem ²	אויפֿן = אויף דעם	on the
* bay	בײַ	with; at, by
* der blayer(s)	דער בלייער(ס)	pencil
* dos bukh (bikher)	דאָס בוך (ביכער)	book
* darfn	דאַרפֿן	to need, to have to
dayn	דיין	your (sg. & Infor.)
dir	דיר	you (sg. Infor. indir. obj.)
* eyen	אײַן	one (adj.)
* di feder(s)	די פֿעדער(ס)	pen
* der gānev (ganovim)	דער גַנבֿ(ים)	thief
gānven / gānvenen	גַנבֿען/גַנבֿענען	to steal
* gebn	געבן	to give
* gut-morgn	גוט-מאָרגן	good morning; hello
* gut-yor	גוט-יאָר	reply to any greeting
		beginning with gut
* di heft(n)	די העפֿט(ן)	notebook

² An asterisk (*) beside a word indicates that it is part of the active vocabulary. You should memorize it now. Other words are not part of the active vocabulary, but they may be used in the exercises of that lesson. Should they recur in another lesson, they will be listed again in the vocabulary.

All the words in Units 1 and 2 thus far are part of the active vocabulary although they were not starred. They are listed in the glossary at the back as part of the active vocabulary.

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* hostu?	האסטו?	Do you have?
* Itst	איצט	now
kin	קיין	any, not any
* kumen	קומען	to come
* ley(e)nen	לייענען	to read
* mir	מיר	me (<i>indir. obj.</i>)
* na	נא	here (<i>in giving</i>)
* dl naves (pl.)	די נייעס	news
* nit	ניט	not
* nitō	ניטא	there is/are
* nor	נאר	only
* nu	נו	well; come on
* oyfn → afn		
* shraybn	שרייבן	to write
* take	טאקע	really; oh?
* der tish(n)	דער טיש(ן)	table
* tsuey	צוויי	two
vodeñ	וואדען	What else?
* Yidish	יידיש	Jewish; Yiddish
* yo	יא	yes
* zhe	זשע	so, then
* zoln	זאלן	should

Idioms

* A sheynem dank	א שיינעם דאנק	Thank you very much
Es iz nitō kin naves.	עס איז ניטא קיין נייעס.	There is nothing new.
* Nitō far vos	ניטא פאר וואס	You're welcome (<i>Lit.</i> "There's not for what")
* Vos (zhe) hert zikh?	וואס (זשע) הערט זיך?	(So) What's new, (So) What's happening?
Vos zol zikh hern?	וואס זאל זיך הערן?	Response to "Vos hert zikh?" What should be happening?
* Zay(t) azoy gut	זיי(ט) אזוי גוט	Please (<i>Lit.</i> "Be so good")

VI.

GRAMMAR

I. The Irregular Verbs זײַן and האָבן

The verb **האָבן** (to have) is slightly irregular. Learn the conjugation:

<i>mir</i>	מיר	האָבן	<i>ikh</i>	איך	האָב
<i>ir</i>	איר	האָט	<i>du</i>	דו	האָסט
<i>zey</i>	זיי	האָבן	<i>er</i>	ער	האָט
			<i>zi</i>	זי	האָט

The verb **זײַן** (to be) is also irregular. Learn the conjugation. Both of these auxiliary verbs are very important because they are used to form the past tense.

<i>mir zaynen/zenen</i>	מיר	זײַנען/זענען*	<i>ikh</i>	איך	בין
<i>ir zayt/zent</i>	איר	זײַט/זענט	<i>du</i>	דו	ביסט
<i>zey zaynen/zenen</i>	זיי	זײַנען/זענען	<i>er</i>	ער	איז
			<i>zi</i>	זי	איז

* Both **זײַנען** (*zaynen*) and **זענען** (*zenen*) are correct.

II. Article and Gender

In Yiddish, a noun may belong to one of three genders. It may be either *masculine*, *feminine*, or *neuter*. It may also be used in one of several ways; as a subject, direct object, indirect object, etc.

The definite article (the) will change depending on how the corresponding noun is used in the sentence. Most nouns, however, do not change. (See Lesson 11A for the few exceptions.) It may help you to understand these changes in Yiddish if you realize that English pronouns change in similar ways. For example, when the first person singular is used as a subject, it is *I* as in "I am a woman." When the first person singular is used as a direct or indirect object, it is *me* as in "He sees *me*."

Yiddish has definite and indefinite articles. The indefinite article is **אַ** (*a*) or **אַן** (*an*) and corresponds to the English indefinite articles "*a*" or "*an*." In Yiddish, just as in English, **אַ** is used in front of a consonant and **אַן** is used in front of a vowel.

The definite article "*the*" may be either **דער** *der*, **די** *di*, **דאס** *dos* or **דעם** *dem* depending on whether it refers to a word that is masculine, feminine, neuter, singular or plural, subject, object, or indirect object. For now, let us concentrate

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on "the" as a subject. The subject case is also called the **nominative case**. In the following examples, the **highlighted** words are in the **nominative case**.

The father works.	1. דער טאטע אַרבעט.
He has a grandmother.	2. ער האָט אַ באַבע.
She sees the students.	3. די סטודענטן זעט זי.
The grandfather works here.	4. דאָ אַרבעט דער ווידע.

The definite article "the" for **masculine** nouns in the nominative case is **דער**. **Masculine** nouns include all those nouns that are clearly masculine such as **דער זיידע**, **דער טאטע**, **דער קינד**, and some inanimate objects such as **דער טיש** (*tish*) and **דער בלייזער** (*blayer*).

"The" for **feminine** nouns in the nominative case is **די**. **Feminine** nouns include all those nouns that are clearly feminine such as **די לערערין**, **די מאמע**, **די האנט** and some inanimate objects such as **די בולבע**.

"The" for **neuter** nouns in the nominative case is **דאָס**. Neuter nouns may be both animate objects such as **דאָס קינד** (*dos kind*- the child) or inanimate objects such as **דאָס ליד** and **דאָס בוך**.

As you can see, inanimate objects may be **masculine**, **feminine**, or **neuter** as in **דער טיש** (*der tish*), **די העפּט** (*di heft*), and **דאָס בוך** (*dos bukh*). There are some rules for determining gender, but at this point they would confuse rather than help you. In many cases, however, there is no logical reason why a noun is **masculine**, **feminine**, or **neuter**. Each word must be memorized with its article.

"The" for **plural** nouns is always **די** regardless of gender or case.
For example: **די טאטעס**, **די באַבעס**, **די הענט**, **די לידער**.

III. Idiomatic Expression עס איז דאָ

Note the idiomatic expression **עס איז דאָ** which means "There is" as in the sentences:

עס איז דאָ אַ לערערין.
עס איז דאָ אַ לערער.

The word **דאָ** should never be translated by its literal meaning "here" in the phrase **עס איז דאָ**. If you want to say, "There is a table here" you must repeat the word **דאָ** and say **עס איז דאָ דאָ אַ טיש** or **עס איז דאָ אַ טיש דאָ**.

VII. A SONG:

AFN PRĪPETSHIK

Mark Warshausky

1) *Afn pripetshik brent a fayer!*

Un in shtub iz heys,

Un der rèbe lernt

Kleyne kīnderlekh

Dem ālefbeyz.

}²

2) *Zogt zhe, kinderlekh,*

Gedenkt zhe, tāyere,

Vos ir lernt do.

Zokt zhe nōkh a mol

Un take nōkh a mol

Kōmets-ālef – o.

}²

אויפֿן פֿריפעטשיק

מאַרק וואַרשאַווסקי

(1) אויפֿן פֿריפעטשיק ברענט אַ פֿײַערל

און אין שטוב איז הייס,

און דער רבי לערנט

2 { קליינע קינדערלעך

דעם אַלף-בייט.

(2) זאָגט זשע, קינדערלעך,

געדענקט זשע, טײַערע,

וואָס איר לערנט דאָ.

זאָגט זשע נאָך אַ מאָל

2 { און טאַקע נאָך אַ מאָל

קאָמץ-אַלף-אָ.

VOCABULARY

der ālefbeyz

דער אַלף-בייט

alphabet

brenen

ברענען

to burn

• *dem*

דעם

the (masc. dir. & indir.

obj.; neut. Indir. obj.)

• *dos fayerl(ekh):*

דאָס פֿײַערל(עך):

fire (dim.)

dos/der fayer(n)

דאָס/דער פֿײַער(ן)

• *gedenken*

געדענקען

to remember

heys

הייס

hot

• *di kinderlekh*

די קינדערלעך:

children (dim.)

dos kind(er)

דאָס קינד(ער)

der/di kōmets-ālef

דער/די קאָמץ-אַלף

the letter אַ

• *lernen*

לערנען

to learn

• *nōkh a mol*

נאָך אַ מאָל

again

der prīpetshik(es)

דער פֿריפעטשיק(עס)

old-fashioned stove and

fireplace

• *zogn*

זאָגן

to say, to tell

יידיש: דאס צווייטע קאפיטל

Moderate tempo

Oy - fn pri - pe - tshik brent a fay - e - rl,

Un in shtub iz heys. Un der re - be le - rnt

kley - ne kin - der - lekh Dem a - lef - beyz;

Dem a - lef - beyz. Zet zhe, kin - der - lekh, ge -

denkt zhe, tay - e - re, Vos ir le - rnt do,

Zogt zhe nokh a mol un ta - ka nokh a mol:

Ko - mets - a - lef: ol Ko - mets - a - lef: ol

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 Mir trogn a gezang: Favorite Yiddish Songs of Our Generation, Eleanor Gordon Mlotek, Copyright 1977 by the Workmen's Circle Education Department, N.Y., N.Y.

COGNATES

It may comfort you to notice how similar Yiddish is to English. A word that is similar in two languages is called a "cognate." Where the cognate is not synonymous with the literal translation of the word, the cognate is given in parentheses.

Compare these words:

brenen	ברענען	to burn
der/dos fayer	דער/דאָס פֿײַער	fire
heys	הייס	hot
lernen	לערנען	to learn
der âlef beyz	דער אַלף-בייט	alphabet
di arbet	די אַרבעט	work (arbiter)
der student	דער סטודענט	student
di hant	די האַנט	hand
trakhtn	טראַכטן	to think (tract)
shlofn	שלאָפֿן	to sleep
tantsn	טאַנצן	to dance
zingen	זינגען	to sing
ale	אַלע	all

Note the ב-V alternation. English frequently uses V where Yiddish uses ב. Knowing this may help you figure out the meaning of a number of Yiddish words with ב, such as:

hobn	האַבן	to have
gebn	געבן	to give
iber	איבער	over
libe	ליבע	love

EXERCISES

I. Fill in the correct form of the verb האָבן:

- די באַבע _____ ליב דאָס ליד. 2. זיי _____ אַרבעט.
- איר _____ אַ גרוס. 4. מיר (mir) _____ אַ לערערין.
- ו _____ אַ ליד. 6. זיי _____ צוויי (tsvey) זידעס.
- איך (ikh) _____ דאָרט אַרבעט. 8. ער _____ ליב די וועלט (velt).
- איר _____ בולבעס? 10. דער סטודענט _____ אַ לערער.

II. Fill in the correct form of the verb זײַן (zayn):

1. עס _____ דאָ אַ שטוב (shtub). 2. דו _____ דאָ.
3. דער סטודענט _____ דאָ. 4. זי _____ אַ באַנע.
5. דו _____ בערעלע האָרן.
6. Mir _____ in der heym. 7. Ir _____ af der Ershter Gas.
8. Ikh _____ a lerem. 9. Zey _____ itst in shtub.

III. Choose the correct form of the verb:

1. Mir (geyt, geyen) itst af der gas.
2. Du (voyn, voynst) af der gas.
3. Er (voynt, voynen) in der heym.
4. Ikh (voyn, voynt) in der heym.
5. Zey (zingen, zingt) a lid.
6. Der zeyde (shlofst, shloft) itst.
7. Ikh (trakht, trakhtn) nokh a mol.
8. Ir (lermt, lernst) dem (the) alefbeyz nokh a mol.
9. Du (host, hob) a blayer, a heft, un a feder.
10. Es (iz, zay) do a bukh un a feder afn tish.
11. Fraynd Goldberg, (zay, zayt) azoy gut, git mir di bikher.
12. Vos (herst, hert) zikh? Es (iz, zay) nitso kin naves.
13. Ikh (gedenken, gedenk) dos lid.
14. Di khstdim (lermt, lermen) in shtub.
15. Mir (leyen, leynen) un (shrayben, shraybn) Yiddish.
16. דו (אַרבעטסט, אַרבעט) איידער דו (עסט, עסט).
17. ער (זעט, זע) די לערערין. 18. מיר (mir) (האַבן, האָסט) אַ ליד.
19. זיי (עסן, עס) די בולבעס. 20. זי (האַבן, האָט) עס אין דער האַנט.

IV. Fill in the correct form of the article using דאָס or דער, די:

In sentences where the noun is not in the nominative case, assume that the article is the same as it is for the nominative.

1. ד _____ באַנע עסט בולבעס. 2. ד _____ סטודענט האָט אַ גרוס.
3. ד _____ ווידע לערנט די קליינע קינדערלעך (kleyne kinderlekh).
4. ער הערט ד _____ ליד. 5. זיי עסן ד _____ בולבעס.
6. ד _____ לערערין זינגט. 7. ד _____ טאַטע הייסט בערל.

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8. ד _____ ווידעס רוען אין דער היים (heym).
 9. ד _____ לערער רעדט. 10. ד _____ בוך (bukh) איז דאָרט.
 11. ד _____ לערערין הייסט ביילע.

V. Translate into Yiddish: (Write either in Yiddish or in transliteration.)

1. What's new? 2. [There is]³ nothing new.
3. I have only one pencil and two books. 4. There is a pen on the (דעם) table.
5. Really? 6. We remember the (דעם) alphabet.
7. Please say "good morning" again. 8. The children have to (need) think.
9. There is a fire in [the] house. 10. The students read and write now.

VI. Choose the correct word from the list at the bottom of the exercise and fill in the blanks:

1. Vos _____ zikh? 2. Du _____ dos lid.
3. Es iz _____ a fayerl in shtub. 4. Ikh hob eyn bukh ober ikh _____ tsvey.
5. A sheynem _____. 6. Mir _____ redn Yidish.
7. Zey _____ a grus fun Berlen. 8. Nito _____.

dank hert far vos hobn herst darf do darfn

ORAL PRACTICE

VII. Substitute the highlighted words with those in parentheses. Make any necessary changes. Be sure to match the numbers correctly:

1. - Vos lernen **zey**?¹
 - **Zey**¹ darfn gedenken dem alefbeyz.
 a) (mir¹) b) (di kinder¹)
2. - Hot **der lerer**¹ lib di **studentn**?²
 - Yo, **ale lerers**¹ hobn lib di **studentn**?²
 a) (di bobes¹, di kinderlekh²) b) (der rebe,¹ di khsidim²)

³ In order to make a good idiomatic Yiddish sentence, omit the words in square brackets [] and translate the words in parentheses ().

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3. - Vos hostu?

- Ikh hob a **bukh**¹ un tsvey **feders**.²

a) (**heft**,¹ **bikher**²)

b) (**shtub**,¹ **tishn**²)

4. - דו' עסט בולבעס?

- יא, איך עס בולבעס. איך² האָב ליב בולבעס.

(א) (ער, ¹ ער²)

(ב) (זיי, ¹ זיי²)

VIII. Complete the dialogue:

1. - Vos hert zikh?

- Vos zol zikh hern? Ikh.....

2. - Hostu lib tsu tantsn?

- Nu, voden? Ale hobn lib tsu tantsn.

- Ikh hob lib tsu tantsn ober.....

3. - Du kenst dos lid "Afn pripetshik"?

- Yo, ikh ken dos lid un hob lib dos lid. Es.....

IX. Conversation Topics

1. You are choosing a roommate (מיטוויינער mitvoyner). Have a conversation in which you each find out as much as you possibly can about each other.

2. You have just met a relative from another country who speaks only Yiddish. Introduce yourselves and get acquainted.

3. There is a new student in the class. Explain to him or her what you do in the class and what s/he needs to bring to class.