

The **Ultimate Guide** to **Teaching Kriah**

All Grade Levels • All Skills

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The Complete And Comprehensive Kriah Curriculum

The Ultimate Guide to Teaching Kriah

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Preface

The *Ultimate Teacher's Guide* is your comprehensive resource for mastering the methodology, strategies, and teaching techniques that make Kriah instruction effective. Created with one clear mission—to empower every teacher to help their students become accurate, confident, and fluent readers of Lashon HaKodesh—it provides practical tools and proven methods to support success in every classroom, whether you are teaching beginners just learning their first letters or advanced students refining complex reading skills.

Inside, you will find:

- **Core teaching methodologies** that apply across all grade levels and all seforim
- **Skill-building strategies** for accuracy and fluency in Lashon HaKodesh
- **Motivation techniques** to keep students engaged and eager to progress
- **Differentiation approaches** for supporting both advanced readers and struggling learners
- **Classroom management** tools to maintain focus and momentum
- **Assessment strategies** to identify and address skill gaps quickly
- **Practical, actionable steps** you can apply immediately in your classroom

This guide is **curriculum-agnostic**. The methods, structures, and progressions outlined here can be applied to **any** kriah program or set of materials. Examples are drawn from the Alephbeis curriculum, but the teaching techniques are universal—making them relevant to all teachers, in all schools, regardless of the specific seforim or workbooks used.

At the heart of this guide is the belief that the teacher is the most critical factor in a student's success. Strong methodology, clear pacing, and data-driven instruction will benefit both the strongest readers and those who struggle most. Each section is designed to be practical and actionable, giving you not just theory, but step-by-step guidance you can use in your classroom immediately.

Whether you are new to teaching kriah or an experienced mechanech/mechaneches looking to refine your approach, you will find here the tools to create engaging lessons, maintain consistent motivation, and address the needs of all learners. With dedication, structure, and the help of Hashem, every child can experience the joy and mastery of fluent reading.

Note about available guides

For detailed, Sefer-specific pacing, lesson breakdowns, and materials lists, use this guide alongside the *Sefer Guide*. The *Ultimate Teacher's Guide* gives you the **tools and strategies**, while the *Sefer Guide* gives you the **daily blueprint** for putting them into practice. Using both together ensures your students get the benefit of both expert methodology and precise instructional planning.

Ultimate Teacher's Guide	Sefer Guide
Purpose: Explains the how of teaching - core methodology, instructional strategies, and classroom techniques for effective kriaH instruction.	Purpose: Provides the what and when - daily pacing, lesson breakdowns, and materials for each specific sefer in the curriculum.
Scope: Curriculum-agnostic; methods apply to any kriaH program or set of seforim/workbooks.	Scope: Curriculum-specific; aligned directly to each Alephbeis Sefer and grade level.
Focus Areas: Methodology, motivation, differentiation, classroom management, assessment strategies, skill progressions, and practical teaching tips.	Focus Areas: Daily lesson plans, skill targets, page assignments, homework, assessment points, and references to the <i>Ultimate Teacher's Guide</i> for implementation.
When to Use: When planning overall teaching approach, addressing diverse learner needs, or refining instructional skills.	When to Use: During lesson delivery for exact pacing, assigned materials, and structured progression through the sefer.
Level of Detail: In-depth explanation of why and how teaching methods work; adaptable to any content.	Level of Detail: Precise, ready-to-use teaching schedule with specific pages, activities, and resources.
Key Benefit: Empowers teachers with the knowledge and strategies to deliver effective, engaging, and individualized instruction.	Key Benefit: Ensures lessons are paced correctly , all required materials are prepared, and no skill steps are missed .
Best Used With: <i>The Sefer Guide</i> , to apply methodology directly to the daily lesson structure.	Best Used With: <i>The Ultimate Teacher's Guide</i> , to teach each lesson with maximum effectiveness and adaptability.

About Series Labels and Curricular Levels

Series

Our materials support a wide range of reading traditions. To keep everything clear and consistent, we use the following series labels throughout the guide:

- **A – Ashkenazi**
- **S – Sephardic**
- **C – Chassidish**
- **Universal - Ubiquitous**

Universal indicates that a skill or piece of information applies to all three series. All other cases will specify the appropriate series using A, S, or C.

Curricular Levels

“Curricular Level” refers to how each book aligns with the AlephBeis Curriculum. The levels progress from the most basic skills to the most advanced:

- **Purple** – Letters
- **Pink** –Letters and נקודות
- **Red** - Letters, נקודות, and basic reading skills
- **Orange** - All reading skills (including all שבא rules and all skilled endings)
- **Yellow** - Skill fluency
- **Lime** –Skill fluency and Rashi script
- **Green, Teal**- תנועה קטנה-תנועה גדולה, maintenance, and continued fluency development

Core kria skills are taught through the Lime level. The Green level introduces תנועה קטנה/gedola both to keep kria engaging with new skills and because students are capable of mastering these concepts. The Green and Teal levels are designed to help students maintain and strengthen both accuracy and fluency as they continue to grow as readers.

Why Maintenance Matters

Research shows that students typically reach **proficiency in kria**—the level at which adults read—around the **end of 5th grade**. Studies consistently demonstrate that without daily kria practice, both accuracy and fluency decline. Until students reach proficiency,

they remain at risk of losing previously mastered skills. Therefore, it is essential to incorporate daily kria practice into students' routines through 5th grade.

Schools often report that their 2nd graders read more accurately and fluently than their 5th graders, simply because younger students engage structured reading through 2nd grade. Although older students learn Chumash, Navi, Mishnayos, and other subjects daily, these texts do not provide enough decoding opportunities to maintain strong kria skills or to continue building fluency.

However, **just 10 minutes a day** of focused kria practice ensures that students:

- Maintain the skills they've already learned
- Continue progressing in fluency
- Reach grade-level expectations

Just ten minutes a day preserves and strengthens students' capacity to read Hebrew accurately and fluently, ensuring they develop the confidence and proficiency needed for sustained success in Limudei Kodesh.

Understanding Skill Acquisition at Different Grade Levels

When students learn a skill in Pre-K, Kindergarten, or 1st grade, the teaching process looks different at each level. The younger the student, the longer it typically takes to teach the same skill, and the more foundational support they need. This distinction is especially important when using the **Sefer Guide**, which outlines the expected pacing for each skill.

By 1st grade, however, this gap evens out. From that point forward, the amount of time needed to teach and practice a skill remains essentially the same—even for older students. This is because **older learners** who have not yet mastered foundational kria skills must **relearn** the material and **undo inaccurate habits** they may have developed over the years. **Relearning and correcting mistakes requires almost as much instructional time, guidance, and practice as teaching the skill to a 1st grader for the first time.** As a result, teachers should expect to spend a similar amount of time on each skill, regardless of the student's age.

Therefore, when teaching older students basic kria skills—such as letters and נקודות, syllabication, or שׁוּבָא rules—it's important to remember that those who are still in the learning phase (rather than the maintenance phase) will need almost as much teaching time as 1st graders. **Older students relearning foundational skills require both explicit instruction and choral reading practice at almost the same frequency and intensity as**

younger beginners. This structured repetition is essential for correcting entrenched errors and rebuilding accurate reading habits.

This process is often slow and layered. Many older students have been reading inaccurately for a year or more, and unlearning those habits takes time. As one 4th-grade student remarked, “My whole life I’ve been reading it wrong, and now I have to rewrite my brain to say it correctly.” Her experience is not unique—older learners can relearn, but they need consistency, patience, and abundant practice in order to do so successfully.

Grade Level Terminology

Throughout this guide, grade levels are referred to using standard terms commonly used across schools. Because different schools and educational systems may use alternative names for the same grade, the chart below clarifies the age, grade level, and the additional terms you may see used to describe each group.

Age	Grade Level	Also referred to as:
4 (Turning 5)	Pre-K	Pre-K 4, PK4, K1, Pre-Kindergarten, Gan Chova, Gan, Kindergarten
5 (Turning 6)	Kindergarten	K, K5, Gan Chova, K2
6 (Turning 7)	1st Grade	Grade 1
7 (Turning 8)	2nd Grade	Grade 2
9 (Turning 10)	3rd Grade	Grade 3
10 (Turning 11)	4th Grade	Grade 4
11 (Turning 12)	5th Grade	Grade 5

Book 1

Fundamentals of Teaching

Introduction

Three Phases of Kriah

To become an accurate, confident, and fluent reader, a student must master all three key phases of Kriah:

1. Skill comprehension
2. Skill application
3. Fluent reading

To help students become accurate, confident, and fluent readers, kriah instruction must include all three essential teaching phases. Each stage has a specific focus and purpose, and it is the teachers' responsibility to guide students from initial understanding to fluent, automatic reading.

Phase 1: Skill Comprehension

Skill comprehension is explicitly taught through the **6-Step Frontal Lesson**. The teacher introduces the rule clearly, demonstrates how it works, and teaches a helpful hint to support retention. Structured discussion, targeted questioning, and visual supports ensure that students understand what the rule is and why it works.

Example: The teacher explains that a שׁבא at the end of a word is נח (resting). The teacher models examples such as בָּרַךְ and אֶתְּ, identifying the final שׁבא as resting. To reinforce the concept, the teacher teaches the chant: “שקט שקט, שׁבא נח sound is said, at the end of the word, the שׁבא is in bed.” Contrasting examples, such as בְּרִיאָה, are introduced to clarify when a שׁבא is not at the end of a word. Students analyze additional words and explain their reasoning aloud, ensuring deep conceptual understanding before moving on.

Phase 2: Skill Application

Skill application provides students with opportunities to apply the newly learned rule in carefully selected texts. Teachers support this phase by offering guided practice, correcting errors in real time, and helping students connect the rule to live reading.

Example: During reading, a student comes across the words מִן and מִן and correctly reads the final שָׁב as נָח-resting. This demonstrates they can **apply** the rule when **reading** the **text**.

Phase 3: Fluency (Automaticity)

Before understanding **why** fluency is critical, it is essential to clarify **what fluency is and how it develops**.

In kriah, fluency refers primarily to **automaticity**—the ability to read a letter, נקודה, syllable, or word **quickly and effortlessly**, without conscious decoding or hesitation. While fluency technically includes three components—

- **Accuracy** (reading correctly)
- **Rate** (reading at an appropriate speed)
- **Prosody** (expression and phrasing)

—The most critical element at foundational stages is **automatic recognition**.

Fluency does not develop through explanation alone. It emerges only through **repeated, consistent reading practice**. There are no shortcuts. There are no tricks. The process is simple and unavoidable: **Read. Read. And read some more.**

Example: A student initially hesitates when reading words with a שָׁב at the end, such as מִן, מִן, or מִן. With repeated exposure and guided practice, the student stops pausing or questioning the pattern. The correct response becomes automatic, freeing cognitive space for comprehension and more advanced skills.

Fluency and Accuracy Must Be Built Together — Not Sequentially

A common and deeply ingrained **misconception** in kriah instruction is the belief that **fluency** develops **only after all skills have been taught**. In reality, this approach undermines student success. **Accuracy and fluency must be developed simultaneously from the very beginning of instruction**. Fluency is not a final stage or an optional add-on; it is an essential component of mastery at every grade level.

When teachers move students forward based on accuracy alone, learning becomes fragile. Students may appear successful in the moment, but without fluency, their skills do not hold. As new material is introduced and cognitive demands increase, these students begin to slow down, guess, or make errors in skills they once read correctly. This is not regression—it is a predictable breakdown caused by insufficient automaticity.

Research and classroom data consistently show that students who are accurate but not fluent are significantly more vulnerable to summer learning loss. Skills that require conscious effort fade quickly without constant practice, while automatic skills remain stable. Fluency protects learning. What is automatic endures.

Grade-Level Fluency Is Non-Negotiable

Fluency expectations must always be **developmentally appropriate**, but they are never optional. Fluency for a four-year-old learning letters will look very different from fluency for a first-grade students. However, at every stage, students must achieve **fluency at their current level** before teachers introduce new skills.

Advancing students who are not yet fluent—even if they are accurate—creates a shaky foundation. Each new layer of learning increases cognitive load, and without automaticity in earlier skills, accuracy inevitably collapses. Teachers must ensure that students are mastering fluency at each grade level before moving on.

Instructional Implications for Teachers

- Accuracy and fluency must always be **targeted together**, not taught in separate phases.
- Teachers must not move on to new skills until students demonstrate **both accuracy and fluency** at the current level.
- Students who are accurate but not fluent are more likely to:
 - o Break down when new skills are added
 - o Guess to compensate for slow processing
 - o Experience greater summer learning loss

By intentionally building fluency alongside accuracy—at every stage and at every grade level—teachers lay the foundation for reading that is stable, confident, efficient, and enduring. This is how students become independent readers whose skills hold up over time and continue to grow.

Four Components of Kriah

There are four crucial components of kriah: teacher, materials, methodology, and assessments.

Having worked with dozens of teachers and reviewed thousands of assessments, we can confidently say: the **teacher** is the **most critical factor** in the learning process.

Teacher

Teacher's Role

The teacher holds both the **responsibility** and the **power** to shape students into accurate, confident, and fluent readers.

The teacher assumes the paramount role in the success of any program. **No program**—no matter how well-designed—**can succeed without** a **strong**, dedicated **teacher** at its core. While high-quality **materials**, a structured **methodology**, and thorough **assessments** provide essential support, they are **not enough** on their own.

Even the most exceptional sefer, the most systematic approach, and the most comprehensive assessments cannot replace the role of the teacher. It is the teacher who brings the program to life and leads students on their path to reading success.

Understanding the Value: Academically

First, the **teacher** has to **understand** the **value** in kriah before beginning to teach it.

Kriah is THE most important skill that a student will learn in school. Kriah affects every single Hebrew subject that the student will use for the rest of their schooling. It's the foundational skill that everything else is built upon.

If a student doesn't read accurately, they can get lost at the start of the lesson.

Example 1: Consider the scenario where a teacher instructs, "Please open to פסוק נ." A student who struggles with letter recognition will face difficulty in locating the correct page in the text. While the student is still trying to identify the letters (נ and פ), it's

likely that their classmates have already turned to the right page, putting the student at an immediate disadvantage and a step behind everyone else.

Example 2: Let's explore how difficulties in mastering the אותיות will impact students' grasp of shorashim, leading to misinterpretations of word meanings and significant misunderstandings. For instance, if a student is familiar with the sounds but not the names of the letters כ and נ, they will most likely confuse:

→ ברך (bless) with ברח (flee)

→ מלח (salt) with מלך (king)

Understanding the Value: Emotionally

When a student falls behind in kriah, the **effects** extend far **beyond academics**. Struggling to read can lead to frustration, embarrassment, and a deep sense of inadequacy, that impacts a child's self-esteem and emotional well-being. We've heard firsthand from both children and adults who shared how painful it was to sit in a classroom unable to keep up, feeling "less than" their peers. **The inability to read fluently doesn't just affect learning—it shapes how a child sees themselves, their value, and their potential.** It can profoundly impact their emotional development, self-worth, and long-term confidence. Addressing reading challenges early is critical not only for academic growth, but for nurturing the emotional health and resilience of every child.

Motivating the Teacher

In order for kriah instruction to be successful, it is essential for teachers to first cultivate their own excitement about teaching it. **The level of enthusiasm exhibited by teachers directly influences the students' own enthusiasm for reading.** So, let's ignite your passion for teaching kriah!

Teaching kriah takes a lot—it demands time, energy, creativity, and a good dose of resourcefulness. But when teachers realize that they're partnering with Hashem in this holy work, the effort takes on a whole new meaning. Every word of tefillah recited and every word of Torah learned is credited to the teacher who taught the child to read. Just imagine the amount of eternal reward you're earning from one child alone. Now picture the entire class. Now picture all of your students! It's mind-boggling how much reward a teacher accumulates. And when you do business with Hashem, you're always going to come out ahead—the reward far outweighs the effort you put in.

Once teachers see how foundational kriah is to everything else in Hebrew learning, their excitement grows. **They understand that they're not just teaching reading—they're**

laying the groundwork for all future Torah learning. That awareness naturally fuels their passion and deepens their commitment.

Motivating the Student

There are **four** essential **types** of **motivation**—**educational, data-driven, tangible, and spiritual**—and **students need all four to stay truly engaged in their reading.** Educational motivation comes from meaningful, well-presented learning that naturally excites students. Data-driven motivation helps students see their progress and take ownership of their growth. Tangible motivation uses rewards to reinforce effort, while spiritual motivation connects kriah to a higher purpose, giving students pride and a sense of mission.

When students' fluency is not improving as it should, **99% of the time the root cause is lack of motivation.** If students aren't motivated, they don't read—and if they don't read, there is simply no way for fluency to increase.

Educationally

Students naturally love to learn.

Students have an innate love for learning, and the material itself serves as a powerful motivator regardless of the grade level, provided it's presented effectively. The key difference lies in the language and approach used. Whether it's teaching kindergartners their letters or older students advanced $\kappa\omega\pi$ skills, **children are inherently enthusiastic about learning.**

In a 4-year-old classroom, it might sound like this: "Today, we read and tracked a whole line of the letter κ —what a challenge! You used your eyes, fingers, and mouth all at the same time and did an amazing job! Tomorrow, we're going to try tracking two lines. Do you think you'll be able to do it? It won't be easy, but I think you're ready!"

In a Kindergarten classroom, the approach might involve excitement and encouragement: "Today, we're learning the letter $_$! How many letters have we learned so far? Let's count together... $_$... $_$... and so on. Amazing! We've already reached the 13th letter - that's remarkable! How many more until we complete the letters? Let's find out!"

A 3rd grade classroom might sound like this: "Now that you've mastered print and script, you're ready to start learning how to read Rashi! Before you know it, you'll be reading Rashi with confidence!"

Data

Data is a powerful motivator for students of all ages and skill levels.

When students can see their own measurable progress, it builds confidence, encourages effort, and reinforces a growth mindset.

When **students see** real **data** and are **invited** into the **process** of improvement, they begin to **take ownership** of their learning—and that’s when **real growth** happens.

This approach is analytical and goal-oriented: “Based on our assessment data, we’ve observed that the class averages 85% accuracy and 75% fluency in letter recognition. You’re all bright students, and there’s no reason to settle for anything less than excellence. The good news is, we have the tools to improve. So, let’s strategize and work together to elevate our accuracy and fluency levels. Here’s our plan...”

Tangibly

Motivation Systems for Kriah: Age-Appropriate Strategies

It is essential to have a dedicated **motivational system** used **exclusively** for **kriah**. Whether you’re working with younger or older students, the system should be clearly structured, exciting, and consistent.

4-Year-Olds & Kindergarten:

For 4-year-olds and Kindergarten students, stickers can be highly motivating—especially early in the year. Use a variety of engaging options such as smelly stickers, shiny stickers, or fun stamps to keep things exciting. During the first couple months of kriah, it’s fine to place stickers directly into the sefer, as initially this can be very motivating. When stickers in the sefer are no longer motivating, transition to a sticker chart for longer-term motivation.

1st & 2nd Grade: Begin with Sticker Charts

For 1st and 2nd graders, we recommend starting with a sticker chart on the very first day of kriah. At this age, placing stickers in the sefer is no longer motivating enough.

- Use full-page sticker charts with enough space to earn up to five stickers per day, while still taking about two months to complete.
- This structure makes the **system sustainable**—you’re **not constantly giving out prizes**—and ensures the **prizes** are **exciting** and highly motivating.
- The extended timeline also makes **reward** days feel **more special** and gives students something **meaningful** to work toward.

- Be explicit that **stickers** and rewards are based on **ongoing effort**, not just a **one-time** achievement.
- Place stickers on **students' hands instead of inside the sefer**.
 - o This allows you to easily **keep track** of how many stickers each student earned, even **after** they **turn** the **page**.
 - o It also gives you the option to **remove** a **sticker** if a student becomes **disengaged** or **disrupts** the kriah session.

3rd–5th Grade: Punch Cards & Raffle Tickets

By third grade and up, stickers are generally no longer effective or age-appropriate. For older students, consider alternative motivators such as:

- **Individual systems:** punch cards (e.g., 20 punches = a prize)
- **Classwide systems:** raffle tickets earned for meeting kriah expectations, with weekly prize drawings.

Rewards Can be Earned or Lost

Establish from the outset that stickers, punches, and raffle tickets can be **both earned and lost based** on ongoing behavior and participation. This keeps students attentive, motivated, and engaged throughout the entire session.

Regardless of the method used, the most important factor is clarity. Students should fully understand:

- What the reward is
- Exactly how to earn it
- What actions or behaviors could cause them to lose it

Rewards should be framed as something that can be **earned** or **lost** based on effort and behavior. This principle applies across **all grade levels**. Without clear expectations and consistent follow-through, some students will disengage—especially after earning an initial reward. A well-defined, transparent system keeps motivation high and helps maintain focus, participation, and consistent effort throughout the kriah session.

Spiritually

Students at **every grade** level are easily **inspired** by **spirituality**.

When we teach and remind them that each letter and נקודה creates a מלאך and every letter and נקודה is a brick on the בית המקדש, it becomes incredibly motivating.

For older students, explaining that, in addition to gaining knowledge and becoming a better reader, every letter and נקודה brings more קדושה into the world is a concept that they appreciate, and they are proud to be contributing to the קדושה in the world!

Keeping Students Motivated is an Ongoing Process!

It requires constant attention to ensure their enthusiasm doesn't fade.

You might need to vary rewards, revisit their academic goals, share assessment data, or use the spiritual motivators.

Motivation is contagious. When students are engaged, the classroom buzzes with positive energy. Reading becomes invigorating. When students **aren't motivated**, Kriah **becomes painful**. Kriah practice becomes tedious and dreaded.

However, by staying attuned to your students' needs and maintaining your own teaching passion, you can keep them motivated and excited to learn.

Building Confidence

Creating a safe and inclusive learning environment is paramount to ensure student participation.

This mindset must be part of the class culture **throughout the day**—it can't begin only during kriah. When students are used to a supportive, growth-oriented environment in all areas of learning, they are more likely to engage fully and take healthy risks during kriah as well.

Teachers must foster a **culture** where **mistakes** are not only accepted, but **valued** as an **important part of the learning process**. When students feel emotionally safe, they become more willing to try, grow, and persevere.

Correcting errors is a delicate process. The goal is to help students learn from their mistakes while preserving their self-esteem and motivation. Striking this balance is key to building both competence and confidence.

To cultivate this kind of atmosphere, teachers can implement three core strategies:

1. Normalize mistakes as a natural and expected part of learning.
2. Offer supportive, confidence-boosting feedback during error correction.
3. Emphasize that everyone has unique strengths and areas for growth.

Teach Students That Making Mistakes Is Normal

Teachers should explicitly communicate to students that making mistakes is perfectly fine and emphasize that perfection is only attributed to Hashem. By being honest and openly acknowledging their own errors, teachers demonstrate the genuineness of their words, fostering an environment where making mistakes is seen as an opportunity for growth. It can be helpful to have a comeback line to use when correction is needed, such as “It’s okay to make mistakes” or “We learn from our mistakes.”

Everyone Has Different Gifts

Students should be reminded that everyone possesses their own unique strengths and weaknesses. Some may excel in certain areas while others may struggle—and that is completely natural. For students who struggle in kriah, it is especially important to intentionally point out and celebrate their natural gifts in other areas throughout the day. This might include acknowledging a student’s artistic talent, complimenting their creativity during a project, or celebrating how phenomenal they are in sports and how everyone wants them on their team. When these **strengths** are **highlighted** authentically and at **relevant** moments, students begin to **see themselves as capable and valued**, even if kriah is challenging for them.

By reinforcing that every child has areas of both challenge and excellence, teachers help students understand that differences are normal and should be celebrated. By implementing these steps, teachers can foster a classroom culture where students feel safe, supported, and encouraged to learn from their mistakes—ultimately enhancing their engagement, confidence, and overall growth.

Build Students Up During Error Correction

When addressing errors, take the time—especially **during one-on-one reading**—to **first acknowledge** and reinforce what the **student got right**. For example, if the student correctly identified the letter when reading a letter/נקודה combination, highlight that the letter was read correctly before addressing the נקודה that needs improvement. This intentional positive focus helps maintain the student’s confidence and makes error correction feel supportive rather than discouraging.

During **whole-class reading**, you **do not** need to emphasize this process as heavily, since you’ve set a class culture that everyone has different strengths and that making mistakes is normal. However, in one-on-one settings, where the spotlight feels more intense, taking these extra moments is essential. By starting with positive feedback, teachers

can preserve the student's self-esteem and create a constructive, motivating learning experience.

Materials

To maximize the effectiveness of any program that you are using, it is important to diligently follow the teacher's guide.

This helps guarantee that no critical skills are missed and that instruction is delivered in a structured, effective way.

Additionally, adhering to the teacher's guide will help you maintain an appropriate teaching pace, striking the balance between not going too fast or too slow for optimal student comprehension and learning.

Assessments

When?

- **Informal assessments** should take place **daily**. Every student should have the chance to read aloud as the "leader," giving the teacher a valuable opportunity to observe and assess each student's progress informally on a daily basis.
- **Formal, norm-based summative assessments** should be given at the end of each unit, once students are expected to have mastered the material. Examples include assessments given after completing the unit on letters, נקודות, blending, שבא rules, and skilled endings. It is important to follow the timing and assessment guidelines outlined in the **teacher's guide**. Staying aligned with the instructional plan helps ensure consistent implementation and accurate tracking of student growth.

The Role of Motivation in Accurate Testing

Your assessment will only be accurate if the student is properly motivated. When students aren't motivated, they may rush through the text or stop paying close attention. This leads to errors that don't truly reflect what they know. Think of it like handwriting: if a student writes sloppily, you can't always tell what they meant. In the same way, if a student reads sloppily, you're left guessing what skills they actually have. Proper

motivation helps prevent “sloppy reading,” ensuring the results reflect real ability and knowledge.

Data-Driven Instruction

Most importantly, make sure your instruction is data-driven. If students have **not** yet **mastered** either **accuracy** or **fluency**, take the time to revisit and **reinforce** those areas **before moving on**. Filling these gaps is essential to building a strong foundation for continued learning.

Methodology

Who Are You Responsible For?

As an educator, your responsibility is to **every** student—but **especially** to the one who **struggles the most**.

True **success** isn’t measured by how far your strongest students advance, but by how well you support and **strengthen** the **weakest** link in the learning chain.

It’s important to remember that **kriah consists of a finite number of skills**. There’s no need to rush strong students through the material. On the contrary, by moving at a thorough, systematic pace, you’re giving those students a priceless gift: the chance to build true **fluency** in what they already know. While their peers are still acquiring new skills, the strong students are building fluency. That fluency will serve them far more than quickly skimming through additional content.

While strong students may eventually learn to read regardless of the quality of instruction, it is the **average and weaker students** who **rely** on a **skilled**, intentional **teacher** to guide them. By delivering a strong **frontal lesson** and keeping your **choral reading engaging and consistent**, you create an environment where every student, including those with learning challenges, can benefit and make progress.

That said, it’s important to recognize **that some students may still require additional intervention** beyond what the classroom can provide. But even for those students, your solid, structured instruction gives them critical exposure, reinforcement, and support that will strengthen whatever intervention they receive.

By prioritizing the needs of all learners and committing to a strong, steady pace, you foster a classroom where every child—regardless of level—has the opportunity to succeed and grow.

Key Takeaways

- Kriah mastery requires **three phases**: skill comprehension, skill application, and fluent (automatic) reading.
- Fluency means automaticity—reading accurately, quickly, and effortlessly without conscious decoding.
- Fluency develops only through **repeated, consistent reading practice**; there are no shortcuts.
- **Accuracy and fluency must be built together**, not sequentially.
- Moving on with accuracy but without fluency creates fragile learning, guessing, and breakdowns as skills increase.
- **Grade-level fluency is non-negotiable**—fluency looks different by age, but it is required at every stage.
- Students who are accurate but not fluent are **more vulnerable to summer learning loss**.
- Teachers are the most critical factor in student success; strong instruction, motivation, and data-driven decisions matter.
- Motivation is essential—**students who aren't motivated don't read, and fluency cannot grow without reading**.
- Instruction should always be **data-driven**, prioritizing accuracy first and building fluency before moving on.

6-Step Frontal Lesson

Preparing for the 6-Step Frontal Lesson

Before beginning the frontal lesson, make sure students are fully prepared:

- **Have all kriaiah materials ready and accessible** on their desks. (seforim, pencils, markers etc)
- **Ensure students' seforim are closed.** They should not be following along in their own sefer, but instead focusing on the teacher and the material projected on the board. This simple step reduces distractions and sets the tone for focused learning.
- **Project the material to be taught or reviewed on the board.** Clearly displayed content helps students follow along, stay engaged, and better understand the lesson.

Taking these steps creates a focused, organized learning environment that helps students remain attentive, prepared, and actively involved in the lesson.

Why Follow the 6-Step Method When Teaching?

When kriaiah begins with the **6-step frontal method**, lessons become more **focused, efficient, and effective**. This approach ensures that students master the **first stage of learning: comprehension**—a critical foundation that later supports **application and fluency**.

The **6-step lesson** lays the groundwork for meaningful learning by guaranteeing that students have the **background knowledge, understanding, and skills needed** to actively and **accurately** participate in **choral reading**. It helps them grasp not only the content but also the purpose and proper techniques of reading.

While this structured introduction may feel like a **bonus** for **stronger students**, it enables **average students** to **acquire skills more quickly** and with greater ease. For **weaker students**, it serves as a crucial support system, **reinforcing comprehension** and **helping them stay on pace with the class**.

How to Implement the 6-Step Method

Follow these 6 steps to ensure that you are providing all students with the opportunity to learn and master every skill

1. Introduce the skill
2. Explain the relevant rule
3. Show the application of the rule
4. Provide additional examples
5. Review and discuss the rule
6. Assess for mastery

Step 1: Introduce the Skill

Begin the lesson by getting your students curious and clearly introducing the skill you'll be working on.

How?

Example Skill: Finding the right page

Teacher: I can't wait to give you your very own sefer! But before we do, we need to make sure you know how to use it. The first thing I'm going to teach you is how to find the right page. Why do you think it's important to find the right page quickly? Yes - you are right! We want to spend our time learning and not spending our time looking for the right page! etc...

Why?

Clarity and Focus:

By informing students of the specific skill being taught, teachers set clear expectations and objectives for the lesson.

Students know what to expect and can direct their attention to the learning objective.