**HEBREW THROUGH MOVEMENT COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE**

**November 11, 2014**

**Introductions**

**Definition: Community of Practice** (CoP)

**Current focus** *(from the summer ad hoc meeting)*

How do we develop HTM scripts/lessons that uncover the meaning of prayers/blessings/rituals for our students?

*There was a discussion about the meaning of “uncovering.” Other words we brainstormed include “connect” (which pulls on an emotion) and the more simple idea of “translate,” but in a nuanced way.*

**Exploring** – With the goal of working to define the kind of teacher we were looking for, we watched the Pesah video of Marcia teaching vocabulary from the Four Questions: <http://www.hebrewthroughmovement.org/pesah.html> (the full version, not abridged). Working in three groups, we looked at what we saw from the teacher, from the students and the content-focus.

**Discussing the video -**

From the TEACHER we saw:

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| * She was positive, smiling * She spoke clearly, enunciated * She waited appropriately for students to respond – didn’t rush or lose patience * She used the command-form pattern * She used humor and novelty * She used positive reinforcement * She worked with groups (those sitting at a table), as well as with individuals * She demonstrated to the students and when they were wrong in their actions, she corrected them by modeling. * She changed the instruction so it wouldn’t be predictable. * She planned the instructions so that at a certain point in the lesson when everyone was sitting at their tables, they had everything they needed for the next step. [It was like magic!] * She scanned the group constantly to see how everyone was responding * She offered opportunities for everyone to respond (e.g., “*ken/lo*”) | * Never took a break * Didn’t use transitions – she just went and did the next step (e.g., didn’t say, “next we are going to…”) * Had multiple examples of her vocabulary (like *hametz*) * Introduced new words with many repetitions and practiced with old commands. * When the students were hesitant, she did the action with them, otherwise, she often just stood watching them * She started with concrete objects and went to pictures and words. * There was evidence of planning – and there was a pay off at the end where they could sing the four questions. * Her pacing was steady and even * She was patient! * She engaged the non-active learner * She was responsive to student responses * She seemed to evaluate where students were and changed the commands appropriately. |

From the **STUDENTS** we saw:

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| * They responded correctly to most commands * They watched her and each other * They self corrected (e.g., when Marcia said *larootz,* some of them started jumping, then they looked around and ran) * There were mistakes – some students didn’t understand all the basic commands * There was some spontaneous use of Hebrew * Where their eyes were focused seemed to be important and helpful | * They responded to her humor * They did it quickly * They might have been a little robotic * They listened, and also anticipated commands. * Their facial expressions were helpful to the teacher to know if they “got it.” * They gave encouragement to fellow students |

In the **CONTENT** we saw:

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| * It started with a warm-up and ended with a review * It was focused and planned * There was a definite structure to the lesson * There was accuracy in the Hebrew * There was consistency between the props and the words taught | * Cool props! * There was a “Breads of the World” set among the props * There was pay off at the end – the materials and script was preplanned and it all fell into place |

**We talked about the challenges we have when working with HTM to help students with the meaning words within prayers:**

* Long blessings have many words
* Words can actually be abstract concepts
* We need to consider the materials needed (printed words, props, pictures, actions/miming) … and lots of materials takes lots of organization.
* Engaging the whole class can be challenging – we need to consider the non-active child, too
* Some prayers/blessings may be more appropriate to explore with older students, than younger ones.
* The number of years a child/class has been learning HTM makes a difference in what we can tackle.