

Rabbi Yaakov Aichenbaum

MA elem. edu.; MA special edu.

Phone (570)446-4488 / E-mail: ryathelist@gmail.com

The Chumash Vocabulary Test[©]

Dear Mechanchim,

There is an expression in Navi: "לא זה הדרך ולא זה העיר"--*this is not the way and this is not the city*. We can learn from the Navi that in order to achieve anything in life, a person must first determine his goal and then he must ascertain the means that will enable him to achieve this goal. The goal is the "city" and the "way" is the path to achieve the goal. Thousands of years later, modern educational literature would refer to these concepts as *goals* and *objectives*.

An indispensable goal of our chaderim and days schools is to impart to their talmidim the ability to learn Chumash independently. One of the essential objectives that lead to the ability to learn Chumash independently is the acquisition of a core sight-word vocabulary in *lashon hakodesh*. Unfortunately, while most Chumash lessons do introduce new vocabulary words and students are often responsible for these words on tests; many students do not retain this knowledge in the long-term. While some students do achieve proficiency in *lashon hakodesh* with much exposure to the Chumash, many students who are not linguistically adept fail to achieve this objective.

Consequently, precious time often needs to be spent even in upper elementary grades on simple translation. Also, less time is devoted to vocabulary and translation in the upper grades since it is erroneously assumed that students already know the translation. Unfortunately, without explicit and systematic vocabulary instruction, it is possible that many students in a class will not acquire a sufficient Chumash vocabulary. For the lower end of a class, weak vocabulary skills can also be a contributing factor to a downward spiral of frustration and failure.

In order to address this vital issue properly, a school requires the following information: an accurate assessment of the level of vocabulary proficiency that its students have achieved; a baseline of comparison from similar schools; and a clearly defined vocabulary proficiency goal for each grade. Until recently, there was no systematic way for a school to assess and determine its vocabulary norms. The Chumash Vocabulary Test[©] was designed to fill this void. The Chumash Vocabulary Test[©] is an assessment tool that provides a cost effective and time efficient way to evaluate class and school-wide vocabulary achievements. It can also be used to help identify students who need remediation. In addition, the test can be used to compare your school's achievement to other schools of similar caliber. Finally, it can help a school to determine its vocabulary goals and objectives.

For further information, please contact me. I am looking forward to discussing with you how your school can benefit from The Chumash Vocabulary Test[©].

Sincerely yours,

Rabbi Yaakov Aichenbaum