



Yosef and the Hundred Steps

Ages 6-9
A story and 9 activities

Yosef and the Hundred Steps

Yosef wants to be able to read a whole page of Chumash by himself.

He can read single words. He can read a line if he goes slowly. But a whole page seems as far away as the moon. Every time he tries, he loses his place, and the letters swim together.

"I'll never get there," he tells his rebbi, Rabbi Klein.

Rabbi Klein smiles. "Come with me to the window."

Outside, on a hill behind the school, there is a long set of stone steps leading up to a lookout. "Do you see those?"

"Yes."

"There are a hundred of them. When I was your age, I wanted to reach the top. But a hundred is so many. So I made a rule. Every day, one more step."

"One more?"

"On the first day, I climbed one step and came down. On the second day, two. On the third, three. Nobody told me to. I just did it."

"That sounds so slow," says Yosef.

"It was. But a hundred days later, I stood at the top. And I could see the whole town."

Yosef looks at the steps. "Could I do that with reading?"

"What do you think?"

He thinks hard. "One more word each day?"

"Why not? Today, read one line. Tomorrow, one line and one word. Every day, a tiny bit more."

That afternoon, Yosef reads one line of Chumash. It takes a long time, but he does it. He makes a chart on a piece of paper, with a square for every day. He colors in the first square.

On the next day, he reads the line and one more word. He colors in a square. On day three, another word. Slowly, the squares begin to fill the page.

Some days are hard. On the fifth day, he is tired, and the letters wobble. He wants to skip. But he remembers the steps. He reads his line, even if it is short. It counts. He colors the square.

On the tenth day, he can read two lines. On the twentieth, a full paragraph. His voice gets steadier. His finger moves along the words without losing its place.

After forty days, Rabbi Klein listens as Yosef reads half a page. He doesn't stumble once.

"Wonderful, Yosef," he says. "You're climbing."

"It's not that hard now," says Yosef, surprised.

"Because every step made you stronger."

On the sixtieth day, Yosef stands in front of the class and reads a full page. His voice is clear, and he doesn't rush. When he finishes, everyone claps. Rabbi Klein's eyes are shiny.

That Shabbos, Yosef reads the beginning of the parsha to Totty. Totty's smile reaches all the way to his ears.

On Sunday, Yosef walks to the stone steps and starts to climb. One step, two. By the time he reaches ten, he is breathing hard. He sits down and laughs.

Some mornings, Yosef's little sister sits next to him and pretends to read, too, running her finger along the page. He likes having a reading partner, even a tiny one who makes up all the words.

"One more tomorrow," he says.



Activity 1 of 9

Remember the story

1. What does Yosef want to read?

2. How many stone steps are there?

3. What is the daily rule?

4. On which day does he read a full page?



Activity 2 of 9

Fact or guess? (circle one)

1. Yosef makes a chart with a square for every day. Fact / Guess
2. Yosef reads a full page on the first day. Fact / Guess
3. Rabbi Klein climbs the steps as a boy. Fact / Guess
4. Totty smiles when Yosef reads. Fact / Guess



Activity 3 of 9

Think and write

1. Why does a whole page seem so far away?

2. How does the chart help?

3. What could you practice a tiny bit each day?

Activity 4 of 9

Word search (find all 6)

Words: STEPS, CHUMASH, CHART, PAGE, DAILY, CLIMB

H	S	L	T	C	B	L	N	K	B	F
U	V	K	V	H	F	N	G	N	V	J
L	V	P	F	A	C	L	I	M	B	E
J	M	I	W	R	G	T	P	I	V	S
D	F	D	I	T	P	A	G	E	D	T
A	S	O	C	T	L	N	D	I	C	E
I	C	P	O	J	A	D	F	H	E	P
L	G	D	W	L	W	A	O	J	F	S
Y	U	V	C	H	U	M	A	S	H	U
V	A	N	W	S	D	L	Y	H	W	N
W	V	N	T	U	J	S	A	U	I	F



Activity 5 of 9

Scrambled words (from the story)

1. ESSPT = _____

2. TRHCA = _____

3. GAPE = _____

4. AAPPHRAGR = _____

5. UKLTOOO = _____



Activity 6 of 9

Say it out loud

Practice each line in a calm, steady voice:

"One more tomorrow."

"Every step makes me stronger."

"I can do a little each day."

Activity 7 of 9

My chart

My Daily Steps Chart

Day / moment	What I practiced	How much	Colored square
Day 1			
Day 2			
Day 3			



Activity 8 of 9

Draw it

Draw the hundred stone steps climbing the hill to the lookout.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to draw the hundred stone steps climbing the hill to the lookout.



Activity 9 of 9

Answers

Remember the story:

1. A whole page of Chumash
2. One hundred
3. One more step each day
4. The sixtieth

Fact or guess: 1 Fact; 2 Guess; 3 Fact; 4 Fact

Scrambled words: STEPS, CHART, PAGE, PARAGRAPH, LOOKOUT

Think and write: answers will vary; talk them over together.