

A Yiddish Club Activity Alphabet Games – Scrabble

We have played various games using letters of the alphabet. Do you remember *Hangman*? You are given the first and last letters of a word and had dashes for each unknown letter.

Another game is geography where you have the name of a place—city, state, country, etc. and you need to name a place that started with the last letter of the given place. I remember getting into a loop of A's with America, Asia, Africa, Australia, Alabama Atlanta, Antarctica, Albania, Algeria, Arabia, Armenia, Ankara Abyssinia, Alexandria, and Altoona.

Scrabble is probably the most popular word game. It has a board of 15x15 squares (a checkerboard has 8x8 squares). Yiddish Scrabble is a fun way to improve your Yiddish vocabulary.

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Date: Tue, 1 Nov 94 3:42:43 EST
From: dave@cai.lsuc.on.ca (David Sherman)
Subject: Yiddish Scrabble

Let me dredge up an old posting of mine to mail.yiddish...

We had a terrific time at the Yugntruf Yidish-Vokh in Copake NY, from Aug 31 to Sept 6. That was in 1989. Of course, we had an equally terrific time at yidish-vokh in 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994 (Dos vet zein nokh a brieve, ven ikh vel hobn tseit tsu shreibn fun dem.) Among the unplanned activities, we found ourselves in a game of Scrabble in Yiddish with Josh Waletsky and his family. They have a Scrabble set which has been done over in Yiddish.

Josh told me the value and breakdowns of the letters were done by someone else about 50 years ago. I think some of them need adjusting. Josh's set had only 90 letters instead of 100:

Letter	Value	How Many Tiles
aleph	1	12
beis/veis	3	4
gimel	3	4
daled	2	3
heh	3	3
vov (vowel)	1	5

Letter	Value	How Many Tiles
vov-vov (cons.)	2	2
zayin	1	1
ches	10	1
tes	2	5
yud	1	4
yud-yud ("ey")	2	3
caph/khaph	4	2
lamed	2	3
mem	2	4
nun	2	4
samekh	1	3
ayin	1	6
pey	3	2
fey	3	2
tsadik	8	2
kuph	4	3
resh	1	4
shin	2	4
tof/sof	10	1
<blank>	0	3

A computer-based analysis of word frequencies in something like a dictionary (not just written text) would be helpful, but I'm pretty sure the above numbers need some adjustment. Clearly there should be more zayins, for example. Anyway, it was a great way to improve our vocabulary. (Did you know that "mi", mem-yud, means "effort"? Or that "mesh", mem-ayin-shin, means "brass"?)

David Sherman

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Date: December 6, 2004
From: SBruk@aol.com
Subject: Re: Yiddish Scrabble

A .pdf teke mit etiketn af Yiddish Scrabble kent men gefinen afn farbindungen teyl fun www.yugntruf.org/yiddish.html.

A .pdf file with labels for Yiddish Scrabble may be downloaded from the links page at www.yugntruf.org/yiddish.html. The direct link is www.yugntruf.org/yidscrablables.pdf.

Sabina Brukner