

שְׁמַע

Checklist:

- Reading: read *shema* without error
- Comprehension: Answer the questions in full, well thought out sentences
- Vocabulary: Do the root words exercises.

When you have completed the checklist, ask your teacher to test you to see if you are ready to move on to the next prayer.

Shema

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ אֶחָד

בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלֻכּוֹתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד

Hear, O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is One!

Blessed is God's glorious majesty forever and ever

Comprehension

The enlarged ו and enlarged ט combine together to make the word וט, meaning witness. Why do you think those letters are enlarged? What does being a witness have to do with the Shema?

Shema comes from the Torah. The second line of the Shema is not found in the Torah. Based on what it means, why do you think we recite that line when we say the Shema?

The Shema is only six words long, yet uses God's name twice. Why do you think God's name is written twice in such a short prayer? Do you think this prayer could be as effective if God's name was only written once?

Why do you think we need to listen to the fact that God is one? Why is this prayer such an important prayer in our tradition?

Vocabulary

The last two words of Shema are **לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד**. When translated literally, לְ means 'to,' עוֹלָם means 'world,' וָ means 'and,' and עֶד means 'eternity.' Put together that makes 'to world and eternity.' Without looking back at the actual translation of the prayer, how would you translate those words into more normal English?

The word **שְׁמַע** is written in the command form of the verb (imagine telling a dog to "Sit! Stay!"). This **שְׁמַע** is written in the same way as "Listen!" why do you think this prayer uses the command form of the verb?