

Memory Book Club Lesson Planner – Year Two

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Introduction

Objective

The purpose of the Memory Book Club Lesson Planner is to give facilitators of Memory Book Clubs support by providing lessons, activity ideas, and supportive biblical scriptures designed to promote wellness and hope for children experiencing traumatic life events.

The Memory Book Club Lesson Planner is designed to be used in coordination with Memory Book Clubs and Memory Books. Children are invited to attend monthly Memory Book Clubs where they will receive a personal Memory Book. The personal Memory Book is designed to help children tell their own personal stories with words, drawings, artwork, poems, music and the act of story telling.

The Memory Book Club Lesson Planner should be used to guide children to reveal and express their own thoughts and feelings about what has happened to them. Some children may lack language or verbal skills to speak aloud, or lack understanding to express what they are feeling, but can use other methods we view as play, such as art, play acting, music such as singing or playing instruments to tell their story.

Lessons combine psychological and spiritual perspectives to help children grieve the things and people they have lost, while growing in greater sense of wellbeing and identity.

As a witness to a child's story, it is not important we fully understand what they are saying or showing us but that we are simply a witness to what it is they are expressing. That their story is important.

Lessons

Each of the twelve lessons contained in this Lesson Planner are designed to address thoughts, feelings, and circumstances children are experiencing in their lives, such as death of loved one, homelessness, violence, neglect, poverty, chronic or terminal illness, abuse, incarceration of parent, discrimination or bullying. Most children today are suffering from the presence of grief as the result of these circumstances. The innate sense of hope humans have during difficulties can produce a smile, but hidden deep inside children are silently grieving alone. The lessons promote self-esteem and

confidence while helping children develop a sense of identity in spite of what they are facing.

The lessons contained in the Lesson Planner should be considered 'simple seeds of truth' that have the capacity to encourage healthy developmental growth of trust, autonomy, industry and independence in children living in the midst of loss and enduring grief. As children grow they may revisit preserved stories and derive greater understanding, truthfulness, and insight into the events of their childhood.

These lesson plans are designed to help a child uncover thoughts and feelings they are having about their life, and discover they are valuable, their lives have purpose, and that they are loved by a God who will never ever leave them, abuse them or neglect their needs. That they are loved by a God they can trust, they can love, and live a life learning more about God and His love for them.

Memory Book Club is not an opportunity to tell children what we want them to know, but the opportunity for children to tell us what they want us to know creating a journey designed unique to the child and the needs he/she has. If we allow children to lead on this journey, by telling their story they will ultimately arrive in a place emotionally and spiritually suited for each and every child, unique in every way.

Club Activities

Club activities include 'talking stick time', lessons, time to work in personal memory books, optional craft or art ideas, and closing 'talking stick time'. These activities allow children a safe environment to grieve their losses, re-establish a healthy sense of identity, and express hopes and dreams. Memory Book Club activities are all designed to promote resiliency and post-traumatic growth after experiencing loss and traumatic events. Facilitators and peers act as a valuable witness to a child's story helping a child to discover they are not alone in their loss. Memory Book Club theme is 'I Am Somebody'.

More information

Training for facilitators of Memory Book Club is available in Training Manual, 2015. The Training Manual, 2015 and Introduction to Memory Books for Children and Memory Book Club power point presentation is available at www.memorybooks4children.com/resources. All facilitators are required to complete training prior to starting a Memory Book Club. Volunteers must complete training prior to helping with club events. Hard copies of the Training Manual, 2015 are available on request at memorybooks4children.com/contact us

While the concept of using a simple Memory Book may seem foreign or even too simple to address the needs of children who are grieving, research conducted to explore the outcome using a memory book as a tool by a grieving child reveals positive results by children orphaned, vulnerable and disadvantaged in India, Kenya and South Africa. Most of these children have suffered some of life's most devastating losses, but exhibit resiliency and hope for their future when having a witness to their stories. (See Evaluation of Use of Memory Book Intervention by Orphaned Children in South Africa published by Journal of Pediatric Nursing, July/Aug 2014 for research) (Additional research examining the universality of the memory book as a tool is currently being completed for publication in 2016)

Memory Book Clubs and Memory Books are designed for that process, to process grief; allowing children the opportunity to lead through the telling and retelling of their stories while others act as a witness simply agreeing to accompany them on their journey of grief.

"A young child in South Africa sitting at a small table at an HIV/AIDS clinic leaned over her paper burying her work with her arm and head. She looked up only to choose another crayon from the jar of many. I took a seat next to her and simply watched. She continued to cover her paper, choosing another crayon occasionally without acknowledging my presence. Then I simply said, 'You choose pink'. I said nothing else. 'You choose orange'. Again, I responded with simply what she had done. The young child began to change crayons more frequently. Again, I responded with simply what she had done. After a few minutes, the child raised her head and shyly looked at me. As she continued to draw, she lifted her arm revealing her work. She changed crayons simply to produce my response. When she smiled, I smiled back. When she studied my eyes, I looked into her eyes. I was a mirror for this child. A mirror that says to the child, I am alive, someone sees me." ~ Tamara Faris, RN, MS and Founder of Memory Books for Children International

Memory Book Club Format

Volunteers facilitate the club event by setting date and time, putting out advertising, rehearsing lesson and activity. If option 2 Activity is chosen art and craft supplies will need to be purchased and assembled. (art and craft supplies will be provided by individual club sponsors) Club format, including 'talking stick time' led by lead facilitator. There should be enough volunteers to facilitate club events to adequately interact with each child during club.

It is suggested Memory Book Club be held once a month, on same day, same week in same facility at same time to provide continuity. Filers may be sent to families for reminders of upcoming Memory Book Club. Memory Book Club may be one child and one adult, or many children with many volunteers.

Club begins – Facilitators begin club by singing theme song 'I Am Somebody'. Volunteer facilitators clapping hands together and move into a circle where every face can be seen. (See 'I Am Somebody' wording and music)

First Talking Stick Time – Remaining in circle, lead facilitator welcomes everyone, introduces new children and new volunteers by name. Facilitator holds talking stick and reminds everyone how the talking stick rules work. See 'talking stick rules and use'. Lead facilitator asks if anyone would like to share something that happened this week; ie celebrated a birthday, learned to ride bicycle, lost a tooth, was sick. Passing the talking stick from person to person. If a child does not want to share anything they can simply say 'pass' and pass the talking stick onto the next person.

Lesson Time – Lead facilitator invites everyone to sit in circle. Facilitator reads lesson from Lesson Planner. These lessons are not designed to give in any particular order. Use your own discretion. Children may ask questions, make comments related to lesson. Facilitator may invite children to give examples from their lives about the lesson. Always remind everyone to the 'talking stick rules'. Supportive biblical scripture may be shared here.

Activity Time – Option 1 – Invite children to locate a picture or page in their personal memory book to write or draw what the lesson means to them. (Make sure every child is given a personal memory book). Facilitators may want to provide pencils, colored pencils, crayons for this activity. Invite children to write supportive bible scripture in their memory book.

Option 2 – If available, art and craft supplies to complete a craft can be provided by club sponsor here. Learning songs, or playing an instrument like drums, or a drama may be inserted here.

It is important to read and understand Reflective Art, Reflective Play and Reflective Listening techniques found in Training Manual, 2015 to assure this time is effective and valuable to children.

Talking Stick Closure Time – As children are completing their work, invite children who have finished to come to the front, and read their story or show their drawing from today's lesson. Remember to have them hold the talking stick whenever anyone shares. Thank them, and invite everyone to clap. Invite children to memorize the supportive biblical scripture and stand and share it (optional). Facilitators may want to give a sticker child can place in their memory book next to written scripture for this activity that promotes courage to accomplish this task.

Closing Time – Sing 'I Am Somebody' passing the talking stick from person to person as the song is sung. Thank everyone for coming and invite everyone to come next time, bringing memory books. Invite children and adults to bring a friend next time. (You may want to hand out a flier for next months date and time)

What is a 'talking stick'?

The talking stick has been used for centuries by many American Indian tribes as a means of just and impartial hearings. The talking stick was commonly used in council circles to designate the person who had the right to speak. When matters of great concern came before the council, the lead elder would hold the talking stick and begin the discussion. When he finished what he had to say he would hold out the talking stick, and whoever wished to speak after him would take it. In this manner the stick was passed from one individual to another until all who wished to speak had done so. The stick was passed back to the leading elder for safekeeping.

Permission to talk is given the person who is holding the talking stick. No one else is allowed to talk or whisper when someone else is holding the talking stick. During the first few Memory Book Club events, talking stick time may be very short, because children may not feel comfortable talking. In time more and more children will want to talk, and the time needed will increase.

Please do not worry about the time needed to allow children to share. You may invite a number of children to share the topic of the day to promote self-esteem. If a child does not want to share, they simply take the talking stick and say 'pass', passing the talking stick to the next person. (A child may pass without saying anything at all. That is okay.)

The talking stick carries respect for free speech and assures the speaker he has the freedom and power to say what is in his heart without fear of reprisal, humiliation or judgment. The correct response to a child sharing is simply 'thank you for sharing' or simply repeats the final words the child speaks. Facilitators do not need to respond with correction or advice after a child has spoken. Simply repeating the words of what they say tells the child, I am heard. 'You feel happy to make your bloom today or you learned you are loved by God today'. When in doubt, always respond beginning with 'you _____' always keeps the focus on the child and their own story. Never use 'I' in this circumstance, because the story focus turns to you. If you are reminded of something in your own life, look for an opportunity to share it with someone at a different time and place because your story is important too.

The talking stick made of wood, 15 inches or 40 cm long, may be decorated with paint or simply plain, Make sure wood is smooth and absent of splinters. Store the talking stick in a safe place so it will not be necessary to replace. Never, ever use the talking stick for discipline, or even slapping across the hand when speaking. It must remain a friend to all.

Lesson No. 13 – Guard Your Heart

Lesson

What we think about is very important. It is in our mind that we decide to do something, whether it is good or bad. So, how can we avoid making bad decisions to do wrong things? How can we choose to think good thoughts that lead to good choices and good actions?

The answer is simple: We can submit our thoughts to Jesus inside of us. We can ask Him whether He approves or disapproves of what we are thinking about. If He approves, fine. But if He disapproves, then we need to turn our thoughts to other things. One of the best ways that Jesus has given us to change bad thinking into good thinking is to turn our attention to words from the Bible. We can do this at any time, anywhere we are after we have memorized some verses from God's Word, the Bible. God's Word is full of God's wisdom.

Satan knows that he can spoil God's good plans for our lives by causing us to think about things that God does not approve of. The devil knows that if we think wrong thoughts long enough, it will eventually lead to us doing wrong things, like we did before we gave our life to Jesus. Following God's wisdom is like putting a fence around our hearts and minds. Wisdom keeps us out of trouble by stopping bad thinking before it leads to bad actions.

To have a pure heart, we must submit all our thoughts to Jesus. If we are willing to do that, He can change us to be more like Him.

Activities

Option – 1 Invite children to locate a fence inside their memory book, where they can write what today's lesson means to them.

Option – 2 Invite children to draw a heart on a page inside their memory book, drawing flowers filling inside the heart. Draw a fence across the heart labeling it 'A fence of Wisdom'.

Talking Stick Time

- Invite children to come forward and show their drawing, describing what the lesson means to them.
- Invite children to stand, placing hands over heart, and repeat a prayer you say to protect their hearts, and to forgive them for the wrong thoughts, giving them a pure heart.
- Invite children to come forward and recite supportive scripture; Proverb 4:23 Be careful what you think, because your thoughts run your life. (NCV)

Review of Lesson

Listening and following the words of Jesus help children learn how to have good thoughts and make good choices producing a life of beauty like a flower garden. _

Lesson No. 14 – Planting Peace

Lesson

How can a little child bring peace to the world? The principle for peace is the same as the principle for crops. Never underestimate the power of a seed; whether a wheat seed or a peace seed.

Even tiny seeds can push aside heavy, rocky soil and grow a crop. Give it a little water, light and fertilizer and watch one of God's greatest mysteries. A tiny seed, like a mustard seed, can produce a large tree.

Plant a single word of love, offer a smile to someone, say a prayer for another person and watch peace grow. Continue to plant peace in your home, your school, your community and watch how a child can bring peace to the world. Peace truly begins with me!

Activities

Option 1 – Invite children to locate a drawing of plant, or draw a plant inside their memory book and write what the lesson means to them

Option 2 – Plant a seed together and watch it grow.

Talking Stick Time

- Invite children to come forward and show their drawing and share what the lesson means to them
- Invite children to recite supportive scripture; James 3:16-18 Where jealousy and selfishness are, there will be confusion and every kind of evil. But the wisdom that comes from God is first of all pure, then peaceful, gentle, and easy to please. This wisdom is always ready to help those who are troubled and to do good for others. It is always fair and honest. People who work for peace in a peaceful way plant a crop of right living.
- Invite children to plant a seed together, nurture it with water and sunshine and celebrate when it grows

Invite children to share an act of love and peace they have done or seen. Plant a seed together and watch it grow.

Review of Lesson

Like a small seed, a small act of kindness can grow to produce a world of peace.

Lesson No. 15 – Light to the World

Lesson

Did you know that you are a light? If you have God's Spirit inside you, the Bible says you have hope that shines like a ray of light for others to see, like stars that shine in a dark world.

Look around you. Kids really want love, guidance, and purpose. Even adults seem worried and troubled sometimes about things they cannot control. But they are lost in the dark without the Lord. They need you to share with them the light of hope you have in Jesus.

Tell them what Jesus did on the cross. Let them know that Jesus stands ready to forgive and to save, just as He has done for you. Invite them into the light of Jesus' love. In Him there is no darkness, but light that shines brightly always.

Activities

Option 1- Invite children to learn song 'This Little Light of Mine'. When they have learned the song give them an opportunity to sing it in public.

Option 2 – Invite children to write words of song inside their memory book, and learn to sing it.

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine. (repeat)

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Hide it under a bush, OH NO! I'm gonna let it shine. (repeat)

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Won't let Satan blow it out, I'm gonna let it shine. (repeat)

I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

(Use hand motions making a light with one finger)

Talking Stick Time

Invite children to come forward and recite supportive scripture; Psalm 18:28 Lord, you keep the lamp of my life burning brightly. You are my God. You bring light into my darkness. (NCV)

Review of Lesson

God in us creates a light that shines. The light in us can be encouraging to others who live in this dark and hopeless world. Let your light shine brightly.

Lesson No. 16 – Make a Joyful Noise

Lesson

What do people do when their favorite athletic team wins? Whether it is football, soccer, or basketball, they shout! They celebrate!

When we are excited about something, it shows in the way we act. It shines on our faces, so why should it be any different when we discover that the God of heaven and earth loves us? God cares for us? He offers to be our Father, and asks that we become His child. When we accept His Son Jesus has died and paid the penalty for our all our sins, and we then ask Jesus be our Lord over our life we have now become a 'child of God'.

How amazing is that? That is really something to celebrate! Shout and clap our hands! Dance and sing! Play instruments and beat the drums! Shout 'I am a child of God! His love for me never ends!'

If we get excited about winning a football game, how much more should we be excited about being loved by God Himself. Let's not just celebrate today, but everyday for God's love for me never ends.

Activities

Option 1 – Look around the community for instruments you can borrow for this memory book club activity; cymbals, drums, tambourines, flutes, etc. Or help children to make musical instruments from discarded materials.

Now sing, play instruments, dance and celebrate!

Option 2 – Invite children to write a song of celebration inside their memory book, and present it at memory book club.

Talking Stick Time

Invite children to come forward and recite supportive scripture; Psalm 150:6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord; or sing or play their song they wrote. (NCV)

Review of Lesson

If we celebrate winning a soccer game win, how much more should we celebrate God, and all He has created, all He has done for me, and His forever love for me.

Lesson No. 17 – Anchored by Hope

Lesson

Have you ever seen a boat or been on a boat? When it's time to stop or keep the boat from moving, a heavy metal anchor attached to the boat can be thrown into the water to keep the boat from moving or drifting off course.

We can have an anchor too! It is not made of heavy metal, but out of the truth we find in God's word. His promise to forgive us and never ever leave us becomes the anchor our souls need. This hope keeps us from drifting away from God and His love. Sometimes it is hard to believe that someone could love us so much that they'd forgive us for everything we have ever done that is sin. But that is how much God loves us. Like we have never done anything wrong!

But God does exactly that. Loves us always. That is the promise we can anchor our hope into, and trust He will do everything we promises. Love us always.

Activities

Option 1 – Invite children to find an anchor in their memory book and write what this lesson means to them. They may also write the supportive scripture near the anchor.

Option 2 – Invite children to cut out a paper anchor writing the word MY HOPE on it, pasting it inside their memory book next to the word 'God's Promises'. The anchor may be used for a bookmark.

Talking Stick Time

Invite children to come forward and recite the supportive scripture; Hebrews 6:18-19 God took an oath so we would have good reason not to give up. We have run away from everything else to take hold of the hope offered to us in God's promise. So God have His promise and His oath. Those two things can't change. He couldn't lie about them. Our hope is certain. It is something for the soul to hold onto. (NCV)

Invite children to come forward and read what they wrote the lesson meant to them.

Review of Lesson

God wants us to never give up. Even when life is stormy, like the sea, He wants us to place our trust in Him. He will do everything He promises.

Lesson No. 18 – Kid Power

Lesson

Has anyone said to you, 'You're too young'? Well, God says you're never too young for Him. With His help, you can do great deeds and be a great person.

You can share your meal with someone who has none. You can share the 'limelight' when asked to do something important at home or school by inviting someone else to help you. You can be a friend to someone who needs a friend. You can pray for someone who is suffering. You can tell someone how you asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior. You can be loving, kind, and good to those around you. You can tell someone thank you for doing something for you, or you can offer to help someone in need.

You may be young. But you can do great things. You can be a great person, even though you are small or young. God made you unique. There is no one like you. There has never been another like you, and there never ever will be. You may have a talent for singing, drawing, schoolwork, carpentry, and gardening.

When you share your talent by helping others, it is an act of worship to God. Show God how much you love how He made you by offering Him a gift of doing something great. You are never too young or small to do something great for God!

Activities

Invite children to:

Write and sing a song out loud for God to hear.

Or write a love letter to God inside your memory book.

Or help someone who needs help with his or her garden, housework, schoolwork, etc.

Or listen to a friend when they are struggling, and offer to pray for them.

Talking Stick Time

Invite children to come forward to share how they used their 'Kid Power' to do something great for God.

Invite children to come forward and recite the supportive scripture; I Timothy 4:12 Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young. Set any example for the believers in what you say and in how you live. Also, set an example in how you love and in what you believe. Show the believers how to be pure and live for God. (NCV)

Review of Lesson

Even though you are young, God has equipped you to do great things. Look for ways to please God by loving His people.

Lesson No. 19 – Remembering

Lesson

Sometimes life is very difficult and hard to understand. People we love may die and leave us all alone. Or someone we love may leave us, making it difficult to understand why they would leave me if they love me. Sometimes the answers to these questions are difficult to find making me feel afraid and alone. Sometimes it makes me feel like I can't sleep, or eat, or go to school. All I need is for the person I love to come back. I simply want to be loved again.

Do you ever feel these things or ask these questions?

These are all good questions. They are important questions. But, sometimes there are no good answers to the questions we have.

Just like learning a little bit each school day, God will answer all our questions a little bit each day. We can't learn all there is to know about a subject, and we can't learn all there is to know about God's plan for our lives in one day.

When we feel afraid, like sliding down into a pit of death, God wants us to remember His promise to pull us out. When we are sad and alone, He wants us to remember He set our feet on a solid rock that will not give way. If we stand on all God's promises, it is a very firm place to stand. He will give us a song to sing from our heart, a song to lift our spirit to God.

God wants us to remember all these things He teaches us each day. One day we will know all the answers to all our questions. Today, God wants you to know He wants to fill that empty place your loved one left, fill it with His unending love. He wants you to remember you are loved. God will always be with you, and always love you.

Activities

Option 1 – Invite children to find a heart inside their memory book and write the story about the person they loved.

Option 2 – Have a 'Luminary Ceremony' by lighting a candle for those who have left us. Invite children to stand and name the person they are remembering.

Talking Stick Time

Invite children to come forward and say the name of who they are remembering.

Invite the children to come forward and recite the supportive scripture; Psalm 40:1-3 I was patient while I waited for the Lord. He turned to me and heard my cry for help. I was sliding down into the pit of death, and he pulled me out. He brought me up out of the mud and dirt. He set my feet on a rock. He gave me a firm place to stand on. He gave me new song to sing. It is a hymn of praise to our God. (NCV)

Review of Lesson

Life can be hard. And sometimes there are no good answers to the things that happen. We can trust God to care for us during these difficult times.

Lesson No. 20 – Healed by my Faith

Lesson

Is your body sick? Maybe your legs hurt or your vision is blurry or you have itchy skin or a sore that will not heal. Jesus knows how you feel. He cares about how you feel. Maybe you hurt on the inside. Maybe your heart feels broken. You might feel pain from being afraid or alone. Maybe you feel ashamed from something you did. Even though the hurt you feel on the inside cannot be seen, Jesus knows about how you feel on the inside, too.

What does Jesus care about most, your insides or your outsides? He cares for both!

In Luke 8:5-13, an officer in the Roman army believed in the authority Jesus had to heal the officer's servant. Jesus told him, 'Go your way, and as you believe so let it be done for you.' And the officer's servant was healed that same hour.

In Mark 5:25-34, a woman who had been sick for twelve years, and had spent all she her money on physicians yet was still unhealed. Yet she believed 'if only I may touch His clothes (Jesus clothes), I shall be made well.' Jesus noted that her faith made the difference. Faith didn't heal her, but she placed her faith in the one who could, Jesus.

Jesus encourages us to believe God's healing power. Pray. Believe. Walk. God wants to heal you!

Activities

Option 1 – Invite children to write inside their memory book what this lesson means to them.

Option 2 – Read the entire story about the officer's faith in Jesus' healing power.

Talking Stick Time

Invite children to come forward for prayer for healing.

Invite children to pray for one another for healing.

Invite children to come forward and share when God healed them.

Invite children to come forward and recite the supportive scripture; Acts 19:11-12 God did amazing miracles through Paul. Even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him (Paul) were taken to those who were sick. When this happened, their sicknesses were healed and evil spirits left them. (NCV)

Review of Lesson

Jesus has the power to heal our body. All we must do is pray and believe. The rest is up to God.

Lesson No. 21 – Stand Against Evil

Lesson

Long ago, knights learned to wear armor during battle to keep an enemy's weapon, like a spear or sword from inflicting a fatal wound. Each piece of armor provided protection from head to toe. The knight carried a shield to deflect and a sword to fight.

In this world there is an enemy who came to kill and destroy God's children. Do you know who this enemy is? Satan. God cast Satan from heaven, and allowed him authority over earth. So Satan rules over earth with his evil. Can you identify the evil in this world? It is the sin of this world; stealing, killing, lying, deceit, etc.

But God's children have authority over Satan and can stand against these evil deeds by wearing the armor of God. This is not metal armor worn by knights. Lets look at what this armor is, and how it protects us as children of God.

The helmet of salvation protects our minds from lies formed against God's word. The breastplate of righteousness protects our heart, so we may live a pure life. The belt of truth holds the armor together. My shield is my faith, and my sword is the word of God. The shoes I wear are peace, so that I walk in peace. This armor keeps me safe from all of Satan's evil and bad ideas.

Do not leave any part of your life unprotected. Dress yourself in God's armor. Take up your shield of faith, and sword, God's word. Evil days may come, but you will be able to stand against evil and prevail.

Activities

Option 1 – Invite children to find a knight dressed in armor inside their memory book and write what this lesson means to them. Record the supportive scripture there.

Option 2 – Invite children to perform a drama acting out the role of putting on armor to defend against and stand against evil.

Talking Stick Time

- Invite children to come forward and read what they wrote about the lesson
- Invite children to come forward and recite supportive scripture; Ephesians 6:13 So put on all of God's armor. Evil days will come. But you will be able to stand up to anything. And after you have done everything you can. You will still be standing. (NCV)

Review of Lesson

With God's help, I will defeat the enemies evil plans to wound and destroy me. And stand.

Lesson No. 22 – When I am Sad

Lesson

Sometimes life hurts. Sometimes people that love you disappoint you. Sometimes people we love die and leave us. Sometimes there are so many things I struggle with; hunger, poor school performance, being homeless, someone hurting me or many other difficult times. Life is difficult and everyone feels sad sometime.

Feeling sad is called sorrow. On the outside, sorrow makes us cry or be angry. Sometimes sorrow makes us feel like running away, or hide, or not feel like eating or sleeping. On the inside sorrow causes us to feel sick, tired, get headaches, forget homework or what we are suppose to do. Sorrow can make us feel like not playing or having fun. We just want to be alone.

Have you ever felt so sad that you couldn't even talk about it? To talk about it made you feel even sadder? Or that no one seems to care that you are sad.

Don't try and hide your sad feelings. Cry if you feel like crying. Find someone to talk to if you need to talk. You may have questions about what has happened. Ask an adult you trust; like a teacher or family member about the things you want to know. Talking with a trusted friend or adult may help you to feel better. They may not have the answers you need, but knowing you are not alone will help.

You will not always feel sad. God has promised to replace your sorrow so that you will again smile or even dance. God promises that one day life will be happy again. He can and will do this for you!

Activities

Invite children to write the story that makes them sad inside their memory book. Invite children to sing and dance together. Allow children experiencing sadness to sit it out if they choose.

Talking Stick Time

Invite children to come forward and read their story about what makes them sad. Offer support if they cry. Encourage them to keep reading, or discontinue. Always thank a child for sharing their story simply, 'Thank you for sharing your story'. Invite children to come forward and recite supportive scripture; Psalm 30:11-12 You changed my sorrow into dancing. You took away my clothes of sadness, and clothed me in happiness. I will sing to you and not be silent, Lord, my God I will praise you forever. (NCV)

Review of Lesson

Sometimes life hurts. God promises to replace our sadness with happiness. It may take time, but God is true to His promise. One day we may even feel like dancing.

Lesson No. 23 – Why be Kind?

Lesson

Each morning I wake, I have a choice to make. Will I repay evil with an evil deed of my own? Will I say an unkind word to someone who has said an unkind word to me? Will I share what I have with someone who has nothing?

Everyday we have an opportunity to choose to be kind. But, without Jesus in us, it is difficult to be kind, especially to those who are unkind to us. But, when Jesus comes into our heart, we can choose to be kind, instead of how we once were when we were selfish, unforgiving, jealous, angry, hating and causing trouble and gossiping about others.

When we belong to Jesus, we can give up our selfish feelings and evil things we want to do to repay someone for their evil action. Instead, Jesus can help us to be kind and loving, extend forgiveness and patience, and act with goodness, gentleness and self-control.

To these things I can commit my day. If I succeed, I will give thanks to Jesus for helping me to be kind. If I fail, I must seek forgiveness from God and the people to whom I have hurt. Only then can I lay my head down at night, and sleep in peace.

Why be kind? I will be respected, please both God and others, and live a life of peace.

Activities

Option 1 – Invite children to write a story about when they or someone they know was kind inside their memory book.

Option 2 – Invite children to make a necklace from something in nature; grass, twine, etc. and wear it to remind them to be kind.

Talking Stick Time

Invite children to come forward and read the story they wrote about kindness.

Invite children to come forward and recite the supportive scripture; Proverbs 3:3-4 Don't forget kindness and truth. Wear them like a necklace. Write them on your heart as if on a tablet. Then you will be respected and will please both God and people. (NCV)

Review of Lesson

Everyday I can choose to be kind or not. God promises if I choose kindness I will live a life of peace.

Lesson No. 24 – I Fly Away

Lesson

Do you ever feel in danger or unsafe? It is important to know what to do if you ever feel in danger or unsafe.

Have you ever watched the birds of the air fly high in the air, finding shelter and protection high in the tree? When danger comes they simply fly away to escape. Do you know God wants to protect you when you feel in danger or unsafe.

There was a woman in the bible called Ruth. She became widowed and was left to care for herself and her mother-in-law Naomi. Although she had no money and nowhere to live, God made a way for her to be safe and protected.

Ruth went to a field and picked all the grain left behind by the harvesters. She and Naomi were able to eat food others didn't want or need. The landowner named Boaz noted Ruth's kindness to her mother-in-law and said, 'May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge' (Ruth 1:12). Ruth not only found favor with God, but Boaz, a wealthy and respected man grew to love and care for Ruth and Naomi.

When you are worried about where to go to be safe, call upon God to show you where to go, and what to do to be safe. Like Ruth, God may want you to ask an adult to help you when you are in danger. Like the birds of the air, sing a song of praise to God and trust Him to keep you safe in the shadow of God's Mighty wings.

Activities

Option 1 – Invite children to write inside their memory book what this lesson means to them. Record the supportive scripture in their memory book.

Option 2 – Invite children to play a game of tag, labeling one place like a tree as safe.

Talking Stick Time

Invite children to come forward and read what they wrote about this lesson.

Invite children to come forward and recite the supportive scripture; Isaiah 40:31
But those who trust in the Lord will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak. (NCV)

Review of Lesson

When you feel in danger or unsafe, pray and ask God what to do. He will tell you if you need to run to a trusted adult. He will provide a way to escape to safety.

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Lesson Completion

Please list date of completion, Lesson No. below