



THE ENCOURAGER

Help for Sunday School Teachers—Dedicated to those who take the Word of Life to Children Everywhere

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THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

A Sunday school teacher decided to have her young class memorize one of the most quoted passages in the Bible, Psalm 23. She gave them a month to learn it. Rick was excited about the task - but he just couldn't remember.

After much practice, he could barely get past the first line. On the day that the kids were scheduled to recite Psalm 23 in front of their parents, Rickey was nervous. When it was his turn, he stepped up to the microphone and said proudly, "The Lord is my Shepherd, and that's all I need to know."



Interaction & Involvement

It has frequently proved helpful to use activities during Sunday School lessons to maintain the attention of the class.

An example of this would be the story of **Joseph in Egypt** when his brothers came from Canaan to buy grain. We started the lesson by reading Scripture selections relating their second visit to Egypt in Genesis 43-45. In telling the story, we began to use props including white pillow cases and headbands to wear as a partial costume—so the girls could imagine themselves as the characters in the story. Next we ranged them in ages from oldest to youngest and they got name tags to wear with the names in the same order as the sons of Jacob. The teacher got to be Joseph as there weren't quite enough students. (Using just the main characters in the story would be sufficient and suitable for classes with fewer students.) Another way of creating interest would be to share this lesson activity with another teacher and his / her class.



We discussed how Joseph might feel in seeing his youngest brother Benjamin. Also how Simeon would feel about getting out of prison and being reunited with his family. Then the students sat in order of age at the classroom table and were served cracked corn (from a crock-pot!) and grape juice. Of course, Benjamin received a very large helping of corn. If a student is acting the part of Joseph, he or she could eat in another area by themselves. After the meal, the students received brown paper bags (with their corresponding bible names on them) containing trail mix and sunflower seeds. Benjamin's bag also had a toy cup as well. The students had time to open the bags as though they left Egypt to return home.

We talked about how the brothers, as they faced this apparent theft, would be confronted with their own sin against Joseph so many years before. As well, that Joseph was testing them to see if they would treat Benjamin badly also or if there was any sign of repentance.

We finished telling how Joseph saw the true change in his brothers and then revealed himself and his very genuine love for them. Then the gospel was brought in and any questions were answered. The 8—11 year old girls really appreciated the story and were quick to relate it to their families afterward.

Another story that worked well was the story of **Achan**. Rachel was teaching the story of the Israelites entering the city of Jericho. To prepare the classroom, she removed the furniture and covered the floor with striped blankets. Under the one near where she sat, she hid a bright silk robe, a gold oblong candle base, and a bag of chocolate coins. As the students came into the room, she had them sit on the floor with her and read the scriptures together. She talked about God's command not to take any of the things in Jericho for themselves. Then Achan's disobedience was described and how he had hidden the stolen treasure in his tent. (If anyone had a small tent—that would be a good prop). As they discussed how God held the whole nation accountable and how Achan was singled out, the teacher pulled out the hidden items and finished the story telling of the judgment upon Achan and his household. This story reveals the truth of God's all-seeing eye and the serious result of sin. At the end, the students were able to enjoy the chocolate coins as a little treat.

Rachel's Ideas for this lesson were described to us by Mary Seale, Indiana, PA