

Bible background

1 Samuel 17:34-37; Psalm 23.

Aim of lesson

To show David's trust in God's care.

Preparation required

Cut out one set of sheep, lion and bear. You will need scissors, colouring materials, cotton wool or lint.

Suggested outline of lesson

1. Before the class, hide your sheep and the lion and the bear at various points around the room. Tell the class that they are shepherd boys and girls and must find the sheep and bring them back to the sheepfold for the night. If they see a lion or a bear they must sling an imaginary stone at it to frighten it away. The fold could be the table or a box.
2. Describe how David was a shepherd boy and how he cared for his sheep. Describe him leading the sheep to a place where there was a lot of grass, leading them to a stream so that they could drink, making sure the sheep did not wander off and get lost, looking for those which did, looking out for other animals that might attack the sheep and scaring them off or even fighting them if they attacked. Bring out that David did not run away when a lion or bear came. He knew he should stay and defend the sheep and he trusted in God to help and protect him. You may like to tell the story of the day the lion came and would not be frightened away. Talk about David killing the lion to protect the sheep.
3. Talk about how David knew that God cared for him as he cared for his sheep. Read from Psalm 23 whatever is suitable for your class and explain what David is saying. Talk about David thinking of this psalm while watching his sheep. Perhaps he sang to the sheep and played his harp.
4. Teach the children the song 'The Lord God Is My Shepherd'. When they know it they can skip round like little lambs while they sing.
5. The children can colour and cut out their sheep, lion and bear and take turns hiding them. The sheep can have cotton wool or lint stuck on to them.

Alternative activities

1. Use some play people and toy animals for role play. If you can't find suitable animals you could cut some of the sheep, lions and bears from the activity sheet and mount them on cardboard stands. Use a sandtray and add some rocks and green crumpled up paper grass. Have some water, either in a shallow container in the sand or have pretend water made from silver foil. Hide the bears and lions among the rocks. Build some sheepfolds from Lego, building blocks or pebbles. Now your shepherds can lead their flock to water and pasture, defend them from wild animals and count them safely into the fold at night.
2. Make sheep masks from thin card and stick on some cotton wool.

Relevance to the children's lives

Ask the children in what way God is their shepherd. Draw out the fact that he provides food and drink and takes care of them.

Prayer

Ask the children what David might have prayed at night whilst watching the sheep.

Verse

'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing.' Psalm 23:1.

Song

The Lord God is my shepherd (Tune: For he's a jolly good fellow)

Musical notation for the song 'The Lord God is my shepherd' (Tune: For he's a jolly good fellow). The notation is written on a single treble clef staff in 4/4 time. The melody consists of 16 measures. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4-A4 (beamed eighth notes), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (half). The lyrics are written below the notes. The key signature has one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Chords: C, F, C, G7, C, F, G7, C, F, C, G7, C, C7, F, G7, C

The Lord God is my shepherd (three times)
He takes good care of me (three times)
The Lord God is my shepherd (three times)
He takes good care of me

Music: Traditional.