

Bible background

Jonah 1 and 2

Aim of lesson

To show that God sees and knows all we do.

Preparation required

Make a glove puppet. A dark sock will do with small buttons for eyes. This is the big fish or whale. Make a boat out of your activity sheet or any large box. Put small packages in the boat to throw out when lightening the ship.

Make the finger puppet figure of Jonah or you could use Lego or Play people or make a simple figure from a clothes peg. You will need scissors, glue or tape and colouring materials.

The sock puppet and figure of Jonah will be needed next week.

Suggested outline of lesson

1. Tell the children to hide, within the classroom if you have one. If not, not very far away while you watch them. Then call the children by name to sit down.
2. Explain that you are going to tell them about a man called Jonah who tried to hide from God and how God could see him as easily as you could see them.

Using the figure of Jonah tell the children Jonah's story. Tell them what God wanted Jonah to do, why he did not want to and how he tried to run away. Introduce your model boat here and tell them about the storm, what the sailors thought and how they tried to avoid throwing Jonah overboard. As you tell them what happened to Jonah, bring out the sock puppet of the whale to swallow up the figure of Jonah. Tell how Jonah prayed while in the whale. Conclude with the fish vomiting him up onto land. Bring out that God had forgiven him for disobeying and running away and was going to give him another opportunity to obey.

3. Teach the children the song 'Jonah And The Whale'.
4. Ask the children to make their own boats and figures of Jonah from the activity books, If you have time they could act out the story again with their figures as you tell it. They would have to take turns with the sock puppet or just use their hands.

Alternative activities

1. Make a collage picture, individually or as a class, depicting a stormy sea, the ship and the big fish.
2. Cut out large fish shapes from card for each child to decorate with crayons, paints, sticky shapes or print with corks, sponges, potatoes or fingers. You could make a moveable mouth for your fish by cutting out a separate lower jaw and hinging it with a split pin paper fastener. (An adult should push the fasteners through the card – try pushing in through into a lump of Plasticine.)
3. Make fish from play dough, Plasticine or salt dough.

Relevance to the children's lives

Ask the children if God can see them now, when they are asleep, when they are naughty etc. Can they run away from God?

Prayer

Ask the children what they think Jonah prayed from inside the fish. Was he thankful not to have drowned?

Verse

'He was running away from the Lord.' Jonah 1:10.