

Bible background

Luke 2:39-40, 51-52; Luke 4:14-30

Aim of lesson

To set the background to Jesus' return to his hometown so that the response of the villagers can be understood.

Preparation required

You will need sticky tape and colouring materials and (per scroll) - paper, pencils or straws or dowel, ribbon or tape or wool.

Suggested outline of lesson

1. Talk about life in Nazareth; pictures would be useful to show how the homes were designed and clustered together so that the idea of a close community is seen.
2. Compare life then and now especially for the children e.g. TV, supermarkets, electricity, running water.
3. Go into a little more detail about carpenters, for which Nazareth was renowned. Tell the children about the things they would make for the local community.
4. Tell the children about how the children of Jesus' time spent their days, going to the synagogue (school) at age of 5 as they do but how they only used their Bible (Torah) to learn from and how they learned a lot by memory. A boy was also expected to learn his father's trade after school.
5. Describe how they all went to the synagogue on the Sabbath, as we go to our meetings on a Sunday, and read from the Torah.
6. This leads on to the occasion when Jesus himself read in the synagogue when he returned to Nazareth. Remind the children that all who listened knew who he was; they had seen him grow up in Joseph the carpenter's house.
7. Tell the children about what happened when Jesus read to them, amazing them with his words, and how he annoyed them by telling them that here in Nazareth he would not be recognised for who he really was.
8. Describe what they tried to do and how Jesus escaped.

Alternative activities

1. Role-play. The children can be given the necessary props or just encouraged to mime activities such as household chores e.g. sweeping, fetching water, cooking (they could help you to make some salt dough, knead it and shape it into 'bread') helping in the carpenter's shop e.g. sweeping, sawing, hammering etc. Alternatively they could mime playing with friends e.g. Hide & Seek, Tig, Grandmother's Footsteps, Throw and Catch.
2. Make a house and workshop out of Lego, Plasticine or blocks and add some Plasticine figures and furniture.
3. Give each child 2 pieces of paper divided in half. On the first piece of paper get them to draw something they do to help a parent/carer in one half and something Jesus did to help Mary and Joseph in the other. On the second piece of paper get them to draw a picture of themselves playing a favourite game with their friends in one half and Jesus and his friends in the other half. You may wish to scribe appropriate captions for each picture.
4. Circle time. Sit in a circle and ask everyone to say something Jesus did at home in Nazareth e.g. helping Mary to cook or clean, helping Joseph in the workshop, going to school, playing with his friends etc. On the next circuit everyone has to say something they do to help at home, to help at school, when they play with their friends. Draw out similarities and differences.

Relevance to the children's lives

Coming to Sunday School each week helps us to learn about Jesus and God. We can be jealous of people we know who have special ability.

Prayer

'Help us to listen and believe what we read in the Bible and learn at Sunday School.'

Verse

'All spoke well of him... 'Isn't this Joseph's son?'; they asked.' Luke 4:22.