

Bible background

Acts 25:10-12; Acts 27

Aim of lesson

To show how Paul's faith saved many people.

Preparation required

Make a boat shape from a tissue/cereal box to use in lesson. You can place this on a sheet of tissue paper or blue material to represent the sea.

Cut out items of cargo etc. for the boat to use as the story progresses. If each child is to make a boat you will need one box per child.

Suggested outline of lesson

1. Remind the children that Paul was being sent to Rome as a prisoner. He was the responsibility of a Roman centurion. You may need to explain responsibility. Explain what it implied here.
2. Briefly describe a Roman grain ship, a picture would help. Tell them about all the things on the boat and the 276 men on board.
3. Describe the storm and how the men would feel, both afraid and ill. The clouds were so dark that they did not see sun or moon for fourteen days.
4. Tell the children how they managed to keep the boat afloat. Use your pictures to 'throw out' at appropriate times.
5. Talk about Paul's confidence because he believed what God had told him. He reassured everyone.
6. Tell them about the final night when they put down the four anchors and how the small boat was loosed due to an attempted escape, and dispose of all the grain sacks explaining that they ate first.
7. Explain what they saw in the morning light and how they were safe despite the breaking up of the ship.

Alternative activities

1. If you have a water tray you could make some boats or use toy ones. Swirl the water around to make a storm. Beware! Protect floor, clothing and have mops or floor cloths available.
2. Make Plasticine boats, load them with cargo and people and then shipwreck them. You could also make a Plasticine island for the people to swim to.
3. Role-play. Make a ship from furniture, a mat or blanket or large cardboard boxes and act out the story. Have an 'island' for everyone to swim to.
4. Make some storm sound effects with shakers (tubs or plastic bottles filled with dried peas, rice or lentils and securely taped) or just voices. (Teach the children a start/stop signal to begin with so that you can control the noise levels!)
5. As a group, using very thick paper or card, paint or sponge print a stormy sea and sky. (The addition of some PVA glue gives poster paint a lovely thick texture with which you can create wave effects using a comb or cardboard scraper.) Cut out a ship to stick on to the picture when the paint is dry.

Relevance to the children's lives

God takes good care of us, however afraid we might be. You might discuss what makes them afraid.

Prayer

Get the children to suggest a prayer to help them when they are afraid.

Verse

'I have had God's help to this very day.' Acts 26:22.