

The Great Commission

Bible Lesson: Matthew 28:16-20

PREPARATION

Objective

Students will understand that God wants us to go and make disciples of all nations.

Outcomes

1. Student will identify the Great Commission “action words” Jesus gave us.
2. Students will say that disciples of Jesus obey his commands.
3. Student will identify one person he or she can tell about Jesus.

Memory Verse

Matthew 28:19a “... go and make disciples of all nations ...” (NIRV)

Directions

1. Review the words and hand motions for the song “Go and Make Disciples.”
2. Review the words and hand motions for the “I Can, Too” finger play.
3. Place “God’s Story Bookmarks” #1-5 in your Bible.



PREPARATION: 15 min.

TEACHING: 30 min.

Materials

- one copy of each of the action signs (pp. 2-6)
- at least one adult or teenage helper
- Bible
- “God’s Story Bookmarks” #1-5 (Introduction pp. 23-24)
- globe or world map
- “I Can, Too” finger play (AS)
- “Go and Make Disciples” song (MS)
- TV/DVD player

Go



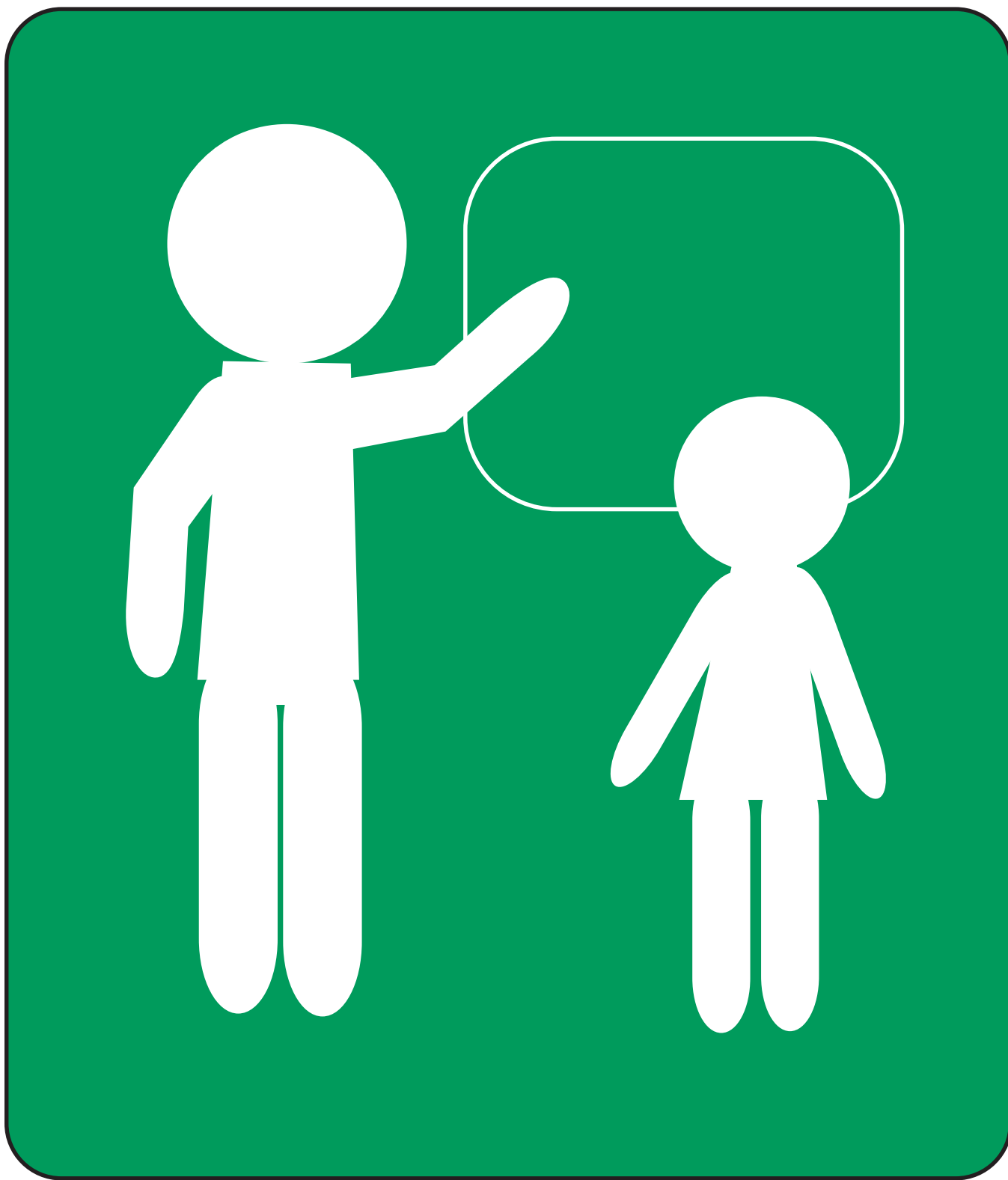
Make Disciples



Baptizing



Teaching



Obey



TEACHING (CORE)

FINGER PLAY: I CAN, TOO

Directions

1. Move students to the area where they will hear the Bible lesson.
2. Have the children stand in a circle.
3. Play the DVD. Lead the students in singing and doing the motions with you to “I Can, Too.”
4. Perform the finger play twice.
5. Have students sit down after the second time through.

MEMORY VERSE SONG: GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES

Matthew 28:19a “... go and make disciples of all nations ...” (NIRV)

Directions

1. Have students stand facing the world map or in a circle around a globe.
2. Open your Bible and read Matthew 28:19-20.
3. Play the DVD. Sing the song through twice before adding motions.
4. Explain the motions as you add them, as needed. For instance, tell students that they are motioning for someone to follow, because another word for disciple is “follower.” You are motioning for people to become followers of Jesus.

REVIEW: GOD’S STORY BOOKMARKS

Directions

1. Review bookmarks once again. Open your Bible, fold out bookmark #1, and say, “*Do you remember the words and motions for this first bookmark? What part of God’s story does it tell?*”
2. Allow time for responses, and then say, “*Yes, we clasp our hands, as if shaking hands with a good friend and say, ‘In the beginning, God created a strong friendship with people.’*”
3. Fold out bookmark #2 and ask, “*What part of God’s story does this bookmark tell?*” Allow time for response.
4. Lead students to review the motions and words: Break your hands apart, cover your eyes with your hands. Repeat the sentence, “*People sinned and broke this friendship with God.*” Tell students, “*Adam and Eve listened to the serpent’s evil plan. They disobeyed God and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam and Eve broke their strong friendship with God. Our memory verse says that God came looking for Adam and Eve after they disobeyed.*”
5. Say, “*Let’s review Genesis 3:8-9. These verses start out talking about Adam and Eve, ‘They hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called out ... ‘Where are you?’*”

Materials

- “I Can, Too” finger play (AS)
- TV/DVD player

Materials

- Bible
- globe or world map
- “Go and Make Disciples” song (MS)
- TV/DVD player

Materials

- Bible
- “God’s Story Bookmarks” #1-5 (Introduction pp. 23-24)

6. Continue, *“God made Adam and Eve leave the garden. Their sin separated them from God, which made them very sad. Now, all people start out life separated from God.”*
7. Ask, *“But is that the end of the story? Will people always be separated from God, or did he give a promise?”* Allow time for response and then continue, *“God promised to send a Son who would win over the serpent’s evil plan. God had the winning plan in mind even from the very beginning!”*
8. Fold out bookmark #3 and ask, *“What part of God’s story does this bookmark tell?”* Allow time for response. Lead students to review the motions and words for bookmark #3: Raise arms above head and flex fingers to represent stars. Say, *“God blessed Abraham so that he would bless the nations. God blesses us so that we can bless the nations, too.”*
9. Tell students, *“Today’s Bible lesson is all about bookmark #4! What part of God’s story does this bookmark tell?”* Allow time for response. Say, *“Yes, this bookmark tells us that Jesus is God’s biggest blessing. Jesus takes our punishment for our sin, dying, but then living again.”*
10. Lead students to review the motions and words for bookmark #4: Form your hands into fists, cross your arms in front of your chest. Then release your arms, extending both outward to shoulder height. Lower arms and sweep upwards in front of body, raising hands above head.
11. Fold out bookmark # 5 and say, *“Today’s Bible lesson is all about bookmark #5. What part of God’s story does this bookmark tell?”* Allow time for response.
12. Say, *“Jesus brings back (restores) friendship with God. We should tell others.”*
13. Lead students to learn the motions and words for bookmark #5. Say, *“Jesus brings back (restores) friendship with God.”* Clasp own hands in front of body. Say, *“We should tell others.”* Release hands and point to mouth.

BIBLE LESSON: ACTION WORDS

Directions

1. Have the students sit down. Open your Bible to Matthew 28:16 and remind students about the context of these verses. Say, *“You have already learned that Jesus came to earth as a baby, grew up, and did many kind acts for people. Then he died on the cross to pay for our sins, and God used his great power to raise Jesus to life on the third day. Many people saw him alive again. Some people walked and talked with him, and some even ate with him. Jesus told his disciples to go to a place called Galilee and wait for him there. So, what do you think they did?”* Allow time for response.
2. Ask, *“How can we find out for sure what the disciples did?”* Allow time for responses. Say, *“Let’s read what the Bible says. We should always look in the Bible for answers to our questions about God’s story.”*
3. Read Matthew 28:16-18. Ask, *“Did the disciples go where Jesus told them to go? Did they go to a place called Galilee?”* Allow time for response.

Materials

- action signs (pp. 2-6)
- at least one adult or teenage helper
- globe or world map
- masking tape
- Bible

4. Say, *“Yes, The disciples did exactly what Jesus told them. True disciples of Jesus obey what he says.”*
5. Continue, *“The Bible says that just before he left to go back to heaven, Jesus talked with his followers one last time. He told them what he wanted them to do and then he went away.”*
6. Say, *“Raise your hand if this has ever happened to you or someone you know: Your mother, or father, came to your bedroom door and said, ‘Clean up your room. Put your toys away and make your bed. When I come back, I want to see that you have finished your job and that your room looks beautiful.’”* Allow time for responses.
7. Ask, *“What do you think your parents expect you to do after they leave your room?”* Allow time for responses. Say, *“Yes, parents expect that you will clean up your room.”*
8. Ask, *“What other kinds of jobs do your parents tell you to do?”* Have students finish this statement: *“My parents tell me to ____.”* Allow responses and continue. *“Are they hard or easy jobs, fun or not-so-fun jobs?”* Allow time for responses.
9. Say, *“Yes, some jobs are harder than others, and some are more fun, but good parents do not usually give you jobs that are too hard. They do not usually give you impossible jobs. Good parents know their children pretty well.”*
10. Ask, *“What if some part of the job is too hard for you? What will good parents do then? Will they help you reach up high, or lift something heavy?”* Allow time for responses.
11. Say, *“Yes, one great thing about parents is that they are taller and stronger than a five-year-old, or a six-year-old, or even a seven-year-old. Good parents are happy to help when we ask them.”*
12. Say, *“Jesus gave his followers a job to do when he left this earth. He wants us to finish the job before he comes back. We will learn that God gives us his mighty power so that we can complete the job he gave us. Now what could that job be? Where will we find out?”* Hold up your Bible and allow time for response.
13. Say, *“God tells us right here in the Bible what he wants us to do! Listen carefully as I read. Here are Jesus’ last words to us. I will ask you again after we finish reading for some action words, or things to do.”*
14. Read the first few words of Matthew 28:19 which says that we are to go. Ask, *“What did Jesus tell us to do? What is the first action word?”* Allow time for responses. Read the phrase again, if necessary.
15. Choose a student volunteer to come up and hold the sign for “Go.” Tell the student, *“Every time you hear the word ‘go,’ hold your sign up as high as you can and then bring it down quickly.”* Remind the volunteer if he or she misses. An adult volunteer comes in handy here, to remind the sign holders.
16. Tell seated students, *“Whenever you hear the word ‘go’ and you see the sign go high up in the air, please whisper the word together.”* Practice together to be sure everyone understands.
17. Be sure to pause after each bolded word in the following text, so that

students have time to repeat the word without talking over you. You do not want them to miss what you are saying next.

18. Say, “*Jesus said, ‘go.’ (pause) That is pretty clear, isn’t it? We might **go** (pause) next door, or **go** (pause) to the person in the desk next to us, or **go** (pause) to someone in our own house! Or we might **go** (pause) to someone in a faraway land. Oops ... we have not read that far in the verse yet! Let’s read on!*” (The “Go” sign-holder will be putting the sign up and down several times while you talk!)
19. Read further into the verse until you have read that we are to make disciples of all nations. Ask, “*What is the second action word? We are supposed to **go** (pause) and do something ... do what?*” Allow time for responses.
20. Choose a volunteer to come up and hold the sign for “Make Disciples.” Tell the student, “*Every time you hear the words ‘make disciples,’ hold your sign up as high as you can and then bring it down quickly.*”
21. Tell seated students, “*Whenever you hear the words ‘make disciples’ and you see the sign go high up in the air, please whisper the words together.*”
22. Say, “*Jesus said to **go** (pause) and **make disciples** (pause).*”
23. Say, “*When we **go** (pause) and **make disciples** (pause), or followers of Jesus, we first have to explain how Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins. We have been learning how to do that, haven’t we? You are getting prepared to tell others about Jesus. But when we **go** (pause) and **make disciples** (pause), it is much more than just telling a person how to have their sins forgiven. A disciple is sometimes also called a follower of Jesus, or a friend of Jesus. So, a disciple means more than just someone who sins are forgiven. What more could there be? Let’s look for the answers right here in the Bible!*”
24. Read the portion of verse 19 about baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Ask, “*What is the third action word? What are we supposed to do in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit?*” Allow time for responses.
25. Choose a volunteer to come up and hold the sign for “Baptizing.” Tell the student, “*Every time you hear the word ‘baptizing,’ hold your sign up as high as you can and then bring it down quickly.*”
26. Tell seated students, “*Whenever you hear the word ‘baptizing’ and you see the sign go high up in the air, please whisper the word together.*”
27. Say, “*Jesus told us that we are to **go** (pause) and **make disciples** (pause) of all nations, **baptizing** (pause) them ...*”
28. Say, “*Raise your hand if you have ever seen the pastor, or someone else, **baptizing** (pause) a new disciple.*” Allow time for responses.
29. Say, “*When we see a pastor, or someone else, **baptizing** (pause) a new disciple, that disciple is showing the whole world, ‘I have turned away from my old life of doing just the things I wanted to do. I have stopped living just to make myself happy. Now I want to live my life to please Jesus, because I love him so much!’*”
30. Ask, “*Does Jesus want us to **make disciples** (pause) only in our neighborhood?*” Allow time for responses.

31. Say, “Jesus told us to **go** (pause) to all nations. That means he wants disciples from all over the world.”
32. Move to the globe or world map. Point to your country and say, “Here we are on the map. Does Jesus want us to **make disciples** (pause) here in our own country?” Allow time for responses about the name of your city, state, country, etc., and confirm that Jesus wants us to make disciples here.
33. Then point to another country, name it, and ask, “Does Jesus want us to **go** (pause) and **make disciples** (pause) in ____ (country name)?” Allow time for responses and confirm that we are to make disciples there, too.
34. Reinforce the truth by saying, “Yes, Jesus wants disciples here, and in Mexico, Korea, China, India, Russia, Brazil, Nigeria, Iraq, Australia, Papua New Guinea, and everywhere else, too!” Say, “So, Jesus said to ‘**go** (pause) and **make disciples** (pause) of all nations, **baptizing** (pause) them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.’”
35. Ask the three sign-holders, “Are your arms getting tired yet?” Tell them that they are doing a good job.
36. Read the next portion of the verse, stopping after the word teaching. (Do not read on to the portion about obeying quite yet.) Ask, “Did you hear another action word in that part of the verse?” Allow time for responses.
37. Choose a volunteer to come up and hold the sign for “teaching.” Tell the student, “Every time you hear the word ‘teaching,’ hold your sign up as high as you can and then bring it down quickly.”
38. Tell seated students; “Whenever you hear the word ‘teaching’ and you see the sign go high up in the air, please whisper the word together.”
39. Review, “So, Jesus said to **go** (pause) and **make disciples** (pause) of all nations, **baptizing** (pause) them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and **teaching** (pause) them ...”
40. Read the next portion of the verse that talks about obeying everything Jesus commanded. Ask, “Did you hear another action word in that part of the verse?” Allow time for responses.
41. Choose a volunteer to come up and hold the sign for “Obey.” Tell the student volunteer, “Every time you hear the word ‘obey,’ hold your sign up as high as you can and then bring it down quickly.”
42. Tell seated students, “Whenever you hear the word ‘obey’ and you see the sign go high up in the air, please whisper the word together.”
43. Review, “So, Jesus said to **go** (pause) and **make disciples** (pause) of all nations, **baptizing** (pause) them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching** (pause) them to **obey** (pause) all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’ Remember, God is with us. He never gives us impossible jobs and when jobs are hard, he gives us his power to complete them.”
44. Say, “You all have done a good job of whispering. Now let’s say as much of the verse together as we can, right out loud. You can say with me any of the words that go with the action words, too! See how many you can get.” Lead students to repeat the verse, with sign-holders raising their signs at the right times.

IN CLOSING ...

Thank the student helpers. Collect their signs and post them on the wall where everyone can see them. Tell everyone what a good job they did and ask everyone to give each other a hand. Start the applause.



CRAFT: PRAYER WHEEL

Before the Activity Directions

1. Copy the “Prayer Wheel” onto lightweight cardstock for each student.

Directions

1. Tell the students that they will make a prayer wheel that they can use during prayer time and then take with them to use at home.
2. Pass out the “Prayer Requests” sheet, crayons or markers, and scissors to each student.
3. Have the students color the pictures and cut out the circle.
4. Pass out a “Prayer Wheel” to each student and have students cut around the circle.
5. Direct students’ attention to the shaded wedge-shaped window and have them cut it out.
6. Help the students stack their two circles, putting the one with the cut-out window on top.
7. Pass out one paper fastener to each student and show them the black dot in the middle of the wheel. Help them to poke the point of the paper fastener through the center of both circles and bend down the prongs on the back.
8. Tape down the prongs of the paper fasteners to prevent scratching.



PREPARATION: 5 min.

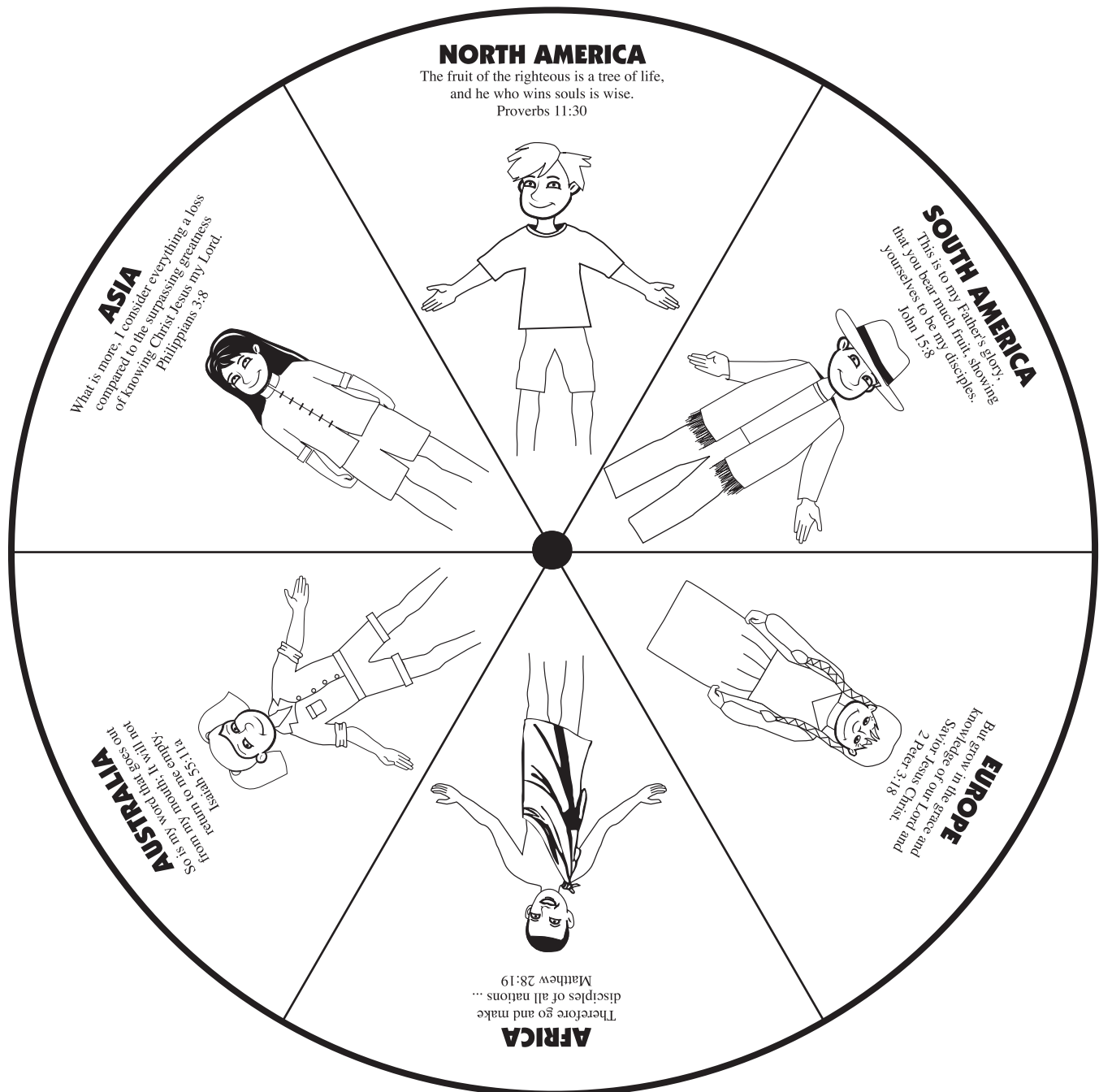
TEACHING: 15 min.

Materials

- “Prayer Wheel” (p. 14)
- one copy of the “Prayer Requests” for each student (p. 15)
- paper fasteners
- one piece of 8 ½ x 11-inch lightweight cardstock, any color, for each student
- scissors
- crayons, markers
- clear tape



Prayer Requests





GAME: JUMP TO IT!

Before the Activity Directions

1. Place tape on floor or tape down yarn to mark off four circles. The smallest circle should be large enough for all your children to fit inside tightly. Children should be able to touch the people next to him or her without moving a step.
2. The second circle should encompass the smallest circle and be large enough for children to stand fingertip to fingertip.
3. The third circle should encompass the second circle and children should not be able to touch one another without moving a step.
4. The fourth and largest circle should encompass the third circle and children should not be able to touch one another without having to move several steps.

Directions

1. Discuss with children what each of the circles on the floor represents.
 - The smallest circle represents your Jerusalem. Give the circle the name of your city.
 - The second circle represents your Judea. Give the name for this circle the name of your state or providence.
 - The third circle represents Samaria or the different cultures found in your state or region. Name the circle after cultures with which your children would be familiar.
 - The fourth and largest circle represents the ends of the earth. Give this circle the name of an unreached people group or call out different countries your children would recognize.
2. Tell the children they will begin in the smallest circle, their city. Explain that because God doesn't want the good news to stay in our city we need to "jump to it" when it comes to sharing Christ with people in other places. When you call out a name (your state, your city, a different ethnic group, different country) they are to jump forward or backward to the circle representing that name.
3. Practice the game once or twice so children understand what to do.
4. As children learn the names and are able to move quicker, speed up the game so there is a lot of hopping going on.
5. Variation: To increase difficulty, give the circles more names for the children to remember. For example: the smallest circle can be named after all the elementary schools represented by your students and the Judea circle can be named after many different cities in your state.



PREPARATION: 10 min.

TEACHING: 15 min.

Materials

- masking tape or yarn
- a large room or blacktop area with plenty of open space



SNACK: FRUIT SKEWERS

Makes 10 servings (one serving = two apple cubes, two orange sections, two grapes, and two strawberries)

Directions

1. Cut each apple into eighths. Slice these sections in half to make two cubes.
2. Sprinkle with orange or lemon juice to prevent the apples from turning brown.
3. Peel oranges and divide them into sections.
4. Remove strawberry stems.
5. Pass out plates and have students name the kinds of fruit they see. Say, *“God created many different kinds of fruit. God also created many different kinds of people. He loves all peoples and wants them to know and worship him. If you believe in Jesus, God wants you to bless other people by telling them about God. What could you tell someone about God that would bless them?”* Allow time for responses.
6. On each plate, put two apple cubes, two orange sections, two grapes, and two strawberries.
7. Allow children to put a serving of yogurt on their plate, using their spoon.
8. Give each child two toothpicks to skewer their fruit and dip it in the yogurt.



PREPARATION: 15 min.

TEACHING: 8 min.

Materials

- three apples
- 20 strawberries
- three oranges
- 20 seedless grapes
- orange or lemon juice
- vanilla yogurt
- small paper plates
- toothpicks
- plastic spoons



PRAYER ACTIVITY: MISSIONARY PRAYER WHEEL

Note: Students will make the prayer wheel for this activity as their craft (pp. 13-15).

Directions

1. Remind students that Jesus told his followers to go tell others about Jesus. This is called the “Great Commission.” Have the students look at their prayer wheel as you read the verse together.
2. Use the world map to show students the nation of Israel, where the early followers of Jesus lived. Tell students that throughout history, followers of Jesus have traveled to all of the continents to tell others the about him. Point to the continents on the world map. Name each continent for the students and have them repeat after you.
3. On the map, point to the continent where the students live. Have them turn their prayer wheel until that window shows. Read the verse together and use the thoughts in the verse to generate prayer. For example, pray that followers of Jesus in North America will tell people around them and in other nations that God is worthy to be worshiped.
4. Choose a student to come up to the map and point to another continent. Have students turn their prayer wheel to the matching continent. Read the verse and use the ideas in the verse to pray. You may wish to adapt this activity to your own setting. For example, if your church partners with a missionary family in Asia, insert their name into the verse for Asia.
5. Continue in the same way until all of the continents have been used. Some observant students may notice that the continent of Antarctica is not included. Explain that because of its cold climate, Antarctica has very few people. Pray for followers of Jesus who may live there.



PREPARATION: none

TEACHING: 15 min.

Materials

- prayer wheels from “Prayer Wheel” craft (pp. 13-15)
- world map