

The Woman at the Well: Games Workshop “Moved by the Spirit”

A lesson written by Jan Marshall for Brenthaven Church. Permission to copy materials granted for non-commercial use provided credit is given and all cited references remain with this material. Adapted by Beth Tobin for Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Olympia, WA, February 2014. Scripture: John 4:1-30, 39-42



Bible Text: John 4:4-30, 39-42

Memory Verses:

“Worship in spirit and in truth.” John 4:24 NIV

“Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst.” John 4:14 NIV

Objectives:

After completing this Rotation, participants will be able to:

- Name that the story is found in the New Testament. Identify the meaning of the word “gospel.”
- Locate the story in John. Identify the four Gospels.
- Retell the story in his/her own words.
- Discover how radical it was for a Jewish person to associate with a Samaritan.
- Explore the woman’s position in society; discuss the significance of the compassion that Jesus offered.
- Define “living water” as what Jesus offers us: a close relationship with God - assurance that God loves us, no matter what.
- Recognize the change that took place in the woman. Recognize how our wanting this living water can change us.

Workshop Summary: In this workshop, the learners will attempt to assemble a puzzle without looking at the picture or at the front of the pieces themselves. Then they will attempt to assemble it by looking at only the front of the pieces. Finally, they will attempt to assemble it by having all the information in the form of the picture the puzzle should take. They will compare this to the Samaritan woman’s revelation that Jesus was the Messiah after receiving more and more information about him during their conversation.

Concepts:

The Spirit of God is not contained in boundaries. Sinners are not left out of God’s love and concern. Jesus reveals his identity—as Messiah ushering in the kingdom of God—to someone on the margins of society. The movement outward from the Jewish community to the world is begun early in Jesus’ ministry.

Supplies:

Several jigsaw puzzles removed from the boxes (note: it is important that the children not see the picture of the puzzle they will work); the puzzle boxes; The Children’s Bible in 365 Stories, The Adventure Bible a timer or watch to time the contest; pencils.

The Woman at the Well Rotation Games Lesson Plan

Teacher preparation:

Read the Bible passages. Read over the background material included with your teacher packet. Study the lesson plan to become familiar with the procedure.

Welcome and Introductions:

Greet the children and introduce yourself. Remember that you are interacting with a different group of students each week—some may not know you. Wear your nametag and make sure that the children are wearing theirs.

Lesson Plan:

1. Divide the group into at least two teams (if there are enough students; if not, let the entire class work as a group.) Give each team a jigsaw puzzle. Turn the pieces face down and see which team can assemble the most pieces within a given time limit. (1 or 2 minutes is enough for older children. Younger children may need more time.) At the end of the time limit talk about the difficulty of doing this without 1) seeing the pieces, and 2) knowing what the picture is like.
2. Let the groups turn their pieces face up and try again. Set another time limit. At the end of the time discuss the difficulty of this again—was it easier with more information?
3. Finally, let them see the puzzle box, so they know what their pictures look like. Set a final time limit, and ask them to assemble as much of the puzzle as they can this time.
4. After announcing a winner, discuss how difficult it is to do some things with just a little bit of information. But after you collect enough facts, the answer/solution seems very clear. As we study today's story of the woman at the well, observe how she collects bits of information about Jesus and eventually sees who he really is.
5. To set the stage for the story, explain to the children that the Jews of that day did not talk to Samaritans and men did not usually speak to women in public unless they were related or unless they were accompanied by members of their families. It was also unusual for a woman to go to the well by herself and in the middle of the day because of the heat.
6. Hand out the Bibles and have the children turn to page 325. Or help children find the story in the Adventure Bible. Read the story, pausing and discussing each bit of information that the woman discovers about Jesus. Jesus does not condemn the woman because of her life. She then becomes the first one to tell the Samaritans about Jesus and the new life she has found in Christ. Read the memory verses together. Ask the children what they think these verses show about the woman's discovery.
7. Use the following questions for discussion until you run out of time:
 - The Samaritans were descendants of Jews who had intermarried with foreign nations centuries before, and conflict between the Jews and the Samaritans is mentioned in a number of places throughout the Bible. Jesus could have bypassed Samaria, as many other Jews would have. Why do you think he didn't? Accept any answer but point out that this single visit would have long-lasting impact, both on this community where he stayed, and on his disciples.

The Woman at the Well Rotation Games Lesson Plan

- What excuses might Jesus have used to keep from talking to this woman? Accept any answer but some that might be included are: Men did not talk to women; he knew the woman had a bad reputation; it was hot and he was tired; his disciples would not understand; etc.
- Who might be people that we look down on today or are outcast in our society that would be like the Samaritan woman? Accept any answer. Some might include certain ethnic groups, visibly disabled people, and old people.
- Jesus did not make excuses as he began talking with the woman. What can we learn from the way he started talking? Accept any answers. Some might include: It is easier to talk to people if we have something in common. Jesus was thirsty and asked for a drink then told her he could quench her spiritual thirst.
- How would you feel if someone started telling you about personal things in your life that you thought were well hidden? Would it make a difference whether or not you thought the person was accusing you of something?
- We have seen that the woman discovered things about Jesus little by little. Did she leave it up to others to discover who Jesus was in the same way? What can we learn from her response? She was quick to share the truth she had discovered.
- How do you think the woman identified herself before she met Jesus? As a Samaritan woman who was not well thought of. How did she identify herself after she met Jesus? As a follower of Jesus.

Closure:

Distribute Faith Journal Sheets and Pencils.

Say: "Like the woman at the well, all people are thirsty. What are some things you could say in the following situations to help get the person thinking about Jesus?"

- a. A friend has had a loved one die. What would he or she be thirsty for? What could you say to that person?
- b. A new kid in school seems really lonely. What would he or she be thirsty for? What could you say to that person?
- c. A person who thinks he or she is the best at a certain task (like a sport)? What would he or she be thirsty for? What could you say to that person?
- d. A person who thinks he or she can do nothing right? What would he or she be thirsty for? What could you say to that person?

Ask the children to write about one of the situations in the closure above and tell what they might do or say.

Closing prayer:

Close with the following prayer, or use one of your own:

God, help us to be able to share the news with others that you can make a difference in their lives. Help us always to show others your love. Amen

The Woman at the Well Rotation
Games Lesson Plan

Dismissal:

Have the children help you tidy up the workshop space.

References:

“The Whole People of God” Biblical Background for March 7, 1999, pages 23-26.
Campbell, Stan; Griffin, Evan; Duckworth, John; Thompson, Rick; and Townsend, John,
Ph.D.; QuickStudies: Ready-To –Use Bibles Studies for Youth Groups, Luke and John.
Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook Publishing Co., 1992. p. 116-118.