

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C– Epiphany 8
Lesson Plans for Younger Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: Sirach 27:4-7

Background In this season we continue to hear teachings on how to live in right relationship with God. Most weeks we hear from the prophets, but some words of wisdom come from other parts of scripture. The challenge may be to see how these ancient words apply to our lives today.

Notation for This Week

These words come from the Apocrypha from Sirach also known as Ecclesiasticus. Written by Jeshua be Eleazar be Sira in Alexandria, Egypt in the second century BCE, Sirach gives us wise phrases much like the book of Proverbs. Today’s passage is about judging strangers by their words (and actions) rather than trusting them outright. Without developing xenophobia, we might choose to pay more attention to the wisdom of our words and the fruits of our actions.

Theme: It is not Wise to Judge

Before Class: Invite a potter or gardener to visit. Arrange for clay or plants/seeds for the children to work with. Find a large piece of poster board for the children’s wisdom. Create a sandbox with treasures for panning. Obtain the books if you decide to read them.

Gathering: Greet the children and encourage them to share things about themselves that people cannot guess just by looking at them. Perhaps they have a skill or hobby or past experience to share. Talk about the danger of judging a book by its cover or a person by their appearance without getting to know them.

Opening Prayer:

Wise and wonderful God, we know we have much to learn. Help us to share our wisdom with others and to learn from each other and from you. Amen.

Sing: Seek Ye First (Hymnal 1982)

The Story: Sirach 27:4-7

Read the passage to the children.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder which part of the reading stood out for you?
- I wonder what questions you might have?
- I wonder how we get to really know someone?
- I wonder how we can share wisdom with each other?

Activities:

Treasure: Set up a sandbox or big box or pot of sand. Insert small treasures and toys into it. Provide strainers and colanders and allow the children a chance to go “panning for treasure.” Talk about how this is like or unlike seeking wisdom or figuring out what is true.

Crafter: Invite a potter or a gardener in to share about their craft. Encourage them to explain how things can change in the kiln or grow into something quite different depending on how it has been pruned and tended. Give the children a chance to work with a similar art form- either clay or gardening/planting.

Read: “Poppy’s Puppet” by Patricia Lee Gauch or “Little Yau” by Janell Cannon. Discuss the role of wisdom in these books. (Optional)

Gather the children for some brainstorming on wisdom that they would like to pass on to others. Offer some prompts like wisdom for living in peace with family members, ways to show God’s love, ways to show responsibility for yourself, ways to figure out the what is right. Write all of these together in a random pattern on a large sheet of paper and invite them to decorate the paper. Hang in your classroom.

Challenge for the Week: Challenge the children to listen for wise sayings during the week and share them with the class next week.

Sing:

Day by Day - either the version from Godspell, Hymnal 1982 or My Heart Sings Out

Closing Prayer: Wonderful God, help us to seek your wisdom every day. Open our ears, open our minds, open our hearts so that we can know you and serve you. Amen.