

Our Stories – God’s Story

Lesson 1

Opening Games

Depending on time you can pick and choose these games. The goal for this first class is to make students and adults feel comfortable in the space, learn a couple names, and establish a sense of community. The games are a bit silly on purpose. This breaks down the impulse to be “cool” and allows for vulnerability. Make sure the adults in the room participate as well. The sooner the kids see each other, and the adults as allies the sooner the deep conversations can begin.

Many of these games are good to keep in your back pocket throughout if you need to fill time, get wiggles out, or encourage mixing and interaction.

Fast Names

Learning names can be stressful, and anxiety driving. This is designed to get the names out there in a fun way without having to remember them all in a short time frame.

Equipment: Stop Watch (a phone works well)

- 1) Have everyone form a circle
- 2) Starting with the person on your left ask them to say their name as soon as you give the signal, start your timer.
- 3) Everyone else will say their own name out loud as soon as the person next to them is done.
- 4) The impulse of names will circle the group until it returns to you, stop the timer
- 5) Record the time and tell the group how fast they were.
- 6) Do this a few times, change directions, say names loudly, then try quietly, or in a funny voice (you can ask if anyone thinks they can name everyone in the room, but don’t put a lot of pressure on it. Offer yourself up for the challenge too)

Walk & Stop

Simple conversations to mingle and mix the group. Keep an eye that people are actually moving around to new people.

- 1) Ask everyone to walk around until you say stop
- 2) When you say stop they need to form groups of 3-4 people
- 3) You then will give them a topic to talk about for a specific time period (5-8mins), make sure they all introduce themselves to everyone else in the group.
 - a. Dream Vacation
 - b. What they would do with \$50
 - c. Ideal weekend activity
- 4) After each round ask if anyone can name everyone in their group.

Evolution

A reoccurring question from teenagers as they begin to form their personal faith is if they can believe in evolution and in God. Even though this game does not really touch the actual discussion of evolution

and God it at least offers the idea that these kinds of topics are encouraged. It hopefully will begin to open the kids up to thinking about what issues seem to stand in conflict with faith and see this journey as the place to talk.

You do not need any equipment for this game. It is also a good go to time killer as the class continues.

- 1) Tell everyone to spread out in the room so they are not touching anyone else.
- 2) Introduce the pattern of evolution. Have everyone do the position as you teach it. (this is a good time to encourage the adults or any “cool” kids to let down the walls and participate. The levels are:
 - a. Egg: Hands on your knees
 - b. Chicken: Hands tucked in arm pits and elbows flapping
 - c. T-Rex: Short arms in front with claw hands
 - d. Superhero: One fist on hip and other arm stretched out in front like superman flying
- 3) Clearly establish a standard ‘Rock-Paper-Scissors’ protocol for everyone to follow. (Rock, Paper, Scissors, Shoot)
- 4) Explain that with each and every round played, the winner advances up one level, and the loser goes down one level.
- 5) Players can only play someone on their level. They will need to move around the room looking for someone else on their level to play. (You can challenge them to call out names as they need and see someone on their level)
- 6) Individuals move up and down the levels (up when they win, down when they lose) several times during the contest.
- 7) Once a player reaches the superhero level and wins against another superhero they can sit down for the lesson.

Expectations

Take some time to make sure everyone understands what confirmation is. Make clear what you expect from each student, partner, and parent. Then tell what you will be doing as the teacher. This can be a time to establish class rules (Respect each other, listen when others are talking, take notes, etc). You can go over assignments, statement of faith, or anything they need to know will need to be done.

Antsy Game

They will get antsy sitting through class. It is wise to have a game or two to get them up and refocus the group.

Creator, Jesus, Spirit

- 1) Introduce the three positions for each part of the trinity. Have them act them out with a partner so they are sure to learn them.
 - a. Creator: Three people face each other in a circle, hold hands, and hold their arms out like they have the earth between them

- b. Jesus: Two people stand back to back with their arms held out straight to form a cross
 - c. Spirit: Three people link their elbows and stand side by side in a line
- 2) You will turn around and face away from the group
 - 3) The group will walk around until you yell out one of the positions (Creator, Jesus, or Spirit)
 - 4) Then you will turn around (give a little time for them to get into position but you also want to catch a couple of them out of position)
 - 5) Once you turn around anyone who is without a partner or not in the right position sits down (play a couple rounds without elimination so everyone gets time to play)
 - 6) Continue playing until most people are sitting and ready for the class

Lesson

This first-class video is designed to do as a whole class. Take this time to model how you expect them to watch with their partners at home for the remainder of the series. This is the only video you will watch in class. Pause when it says, take notes, share stories, read the scripture, etc. together so the kids and partners know how to do this going forward.

Ending Game

Bible Story Skits

Equipment: Children's Bibles

- 1) Put the youth into groups (whatever number makes sense for your class) As you make the groups keep in mind mixing kids who do not know one another, boys/girls, etc.
- 2) Give each group a Bible
- 3) Tell them they are to come up with a 2 minute skit of any Bible story they want. They can talk (later in the year we will do a charades version of this)

While the kids plan their skits I took the covenant partners into the hall to explain my expectations and see if they have any questions. My main concern is that they let the kids be open, ask tough questions, engage challenging doctrines, and be open themselves about their faith journey and struggles.

Then come back in and watch the skits.