



OVERVIEW SECTION

How to Read This Lesson Plan

The **Overview Section** is the foundation of this lesson plan. The questions and activities for the class that you will be teaching on Sunday morning have been based (sometimes loosely) upon what you read in this section. The **Overview Section** is composed of five components (each component is underlined in the lesson plan):

- How to Read This Lesson Plan** (defines all components of the lesson plan)
- Purpose of Sunday Morning Spiritual Formation** (a reminder of why we do this)
- Scripture(s) for the Session** (a reminder that the scripture is to be read in every class)
- Key Verses & Theology** (background for teachers to ponder)
- Themes to Focus on from the Scripture** (the ideas that the session's lessons are based on)

The actual lesson is found in the second section, **The Sunday Morning Experience Section**. Think of this section as the step-by-step instruction guide to your Sunday morning teaching experience. There are four components to this section (again, each component is underlined in the actual lesson plan):

- Preparation** (including supplies needed)
- Classroom Statement** (a brief explanation of what will be taught/happening in the classroom)
- Step-by-step process of the lesson** (including the scripture to be read)
- Suggested variations for age groups** (Self-explanatory but not always applicable)

We encourage you to read the rest of this **Overview Section** before reading the **Sunday Morning Experience Section**.

Purpose of Sunday Morning Spiritual Formation

The purpose of Sunday Morning Spiritual Formation is, with God's help and in community, to hear and interact with the stories of our faith tradition, to pray, worship and play together, and to equip and support the building of relationships with God and with each other.

Scripture(s) for the Session: Luke 8:22-25 (with Mark 4:39 inserted)

Please READ this aloud in every class you teach. The actual words to the scripture can be found in **The Sunday Morning Experience Section: Step-by-Step process of the lesson**. When reading to the class, please read it from the lesson plan (not an actual Bible) as the wording of the scripture has been modified to help clarify some language issues.

Key Verses & Theology: These are provided to help the teachers think about and build a framework for understanding the story to help in answering some of the questions that the students might raise in class.

...they woke him up, shouting, "Master! we are perishing!" We're not told how long the disciples wait before waking Jesus up. Remember that some of the disciples are fisherman and are used to being in storms while on the boat. They might have even displayed some pride and tried to convince the other disciples not to wake Jesus up during "a little squall." So the strength of the storm has to be pretty severe in order to for the disciples to wake Jesus up. The detail we're given before Jesus is awoken is that the boat was filling with water. And what a way for Jesus to wake up, with water sloshing in the boat, the wind and waves crashing about while his disciples yell at him, "WAKE UP! WE'RE DYING!" This seems like pretty typical behavior of all of us, though, doesn't it? For us to think we can manage a situation and that we don't need to ask for help until WHOOSH, the waves crash around us and we realize that we're in over our heads. And then, because we waited so long to ask for help, when we finally do ask for help, it's with alarm and urgency! HURRY UP! WE'RE DYING HERE!

And he woke up and rebuked the wind and the raging waves. [He said, "Peace! Be still!"] The storm ceased, and there was a calm. To the original listeners of the story, the word "sea" would also be heard as "chaos." So if we insert "chaos" into the story in place of "sea," we see that the disciples are trying to stay above the chaos and keep it out of the boat. But the chaos finally gets in, not just into the boat, but into the disciples too. They internalize the chaos and shake Jesus awake in a panic. Jesus on the other hand is not letting the panic in. He's at rest. He's peaceful. Then when he speaks into the chaos, he externalizes the peace that is inside of him. He speaks his peace out loud, and the storm is calmed. Whereas the chaos takes hold of the disciples, the peace in Jesus takes hold of the environment around him.

Where is your faith? The disciples are not trusting God. And if they are not filled with trust, then they must be filled with something else. And in this case, it's the chaos filling them up. The disciples wonder who this person is who can calm the sea. But it's not the person, it's what's inside the person. It's so much easier to think it's the person. That's what the disciples do, right? But if calming the sea is about who the person is, then Jesus is being unfair when he chastises his disciples with his question, "Where is your faith?" As their teacher, Jesus knows that they stopped trusting and because they stopped trusting, they were overcome by the chaos, instead of being filled with God's trust and sharing that peace with those around them, like what Jesus does when he calms the storm.

Themes to Focus on from the Scripture: Themes are provided to help teachers understand the teaching of the *session* (not necessarily the class). Sometimes an activity in one class may not match up with any of the themes.

Authority – Jesus trusts that God, who shaped the watery chaos into creation, is the one who is in charge. It is this trust Jesus has in God that then rebukes the sea and then calms the storm. It is this trust that Jesus has that then leads him to wonder what the disciples were trusting instead, "Where is your faith?" The disciples were trusting that the chaos was stronger than God. While Jesus gives God the authority to command his actions, the disciples give the storm the authority to command their actions.

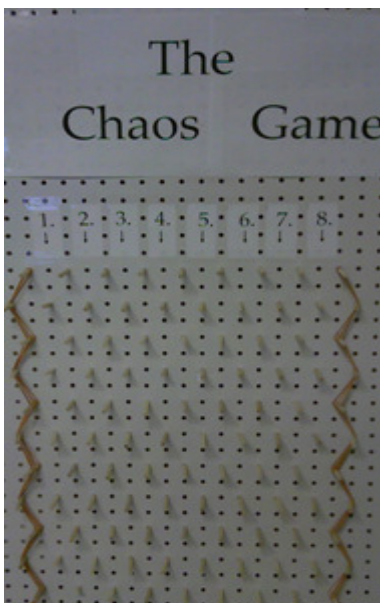
Rebuke – The word, “rebuke” is a somewhat archaic term that means to turn away an action, word or thought (usually with words). Jesus turns away the chaos with words of peace. “Be still,” he says. In a Biblical context, the word “rebuke” means to turn away the ways of living that do not include God. Chaotic living is a way of life that does not include God. Just as Jesus rebukes the chaotic way of the storm, so can we rebuke the ways of life that might even be well-known, but do not invite God into our lives.

Peace – “All I want for Christmas is my two front teeth and world peace!” But what *is* world peace? No wars? Or do all the nations have to actually like each other as well? What about each country... do the people in each country have to like each other in order for world peace to exist? Yes, there is a longing for the world to be at peace. But for that to really happen, there must first be peace within you and within me. Peace starts at the individual level. We see this with Jesus. The disciples know no peace. The weather is not exhibiting peace. But yet, the story ends with peace. Why? Because Jesus was at peace. Jesus was trusting God. The peace in Jesus was strong – it was not overcome by the storm. And it was contagious. The storm “caught” the peace in Jesus and the peace took hold. The peace in Jesus was externalized and the environment around him became peaceful. This is how world peace happens: One person at a time trusting God and living accordingly.

THE SUNDAY MORNING EXPERIENCE SECTION

Preparation

- Print out this lesson plan and bring it with you on the Sunday Mornings you are teaching
- Arrive at pre-arranged time to join other teachers, shepherds and staff for an opening prayer.
- **Supplies Needed:** two 18" square (1 square foot would probably work just fine) boards with juice boxes taped/glued on to it; 10 marbles per team (so at least 20 marbles), a container to carry each set of marbles in (I just used plastic cups); 4 to 6 half-dollar coins, two 5-foot segments of rope/yarn/string to designate start/end lines; Plinko board
- **Plinko board prep:** I built my own Plinko board for this lesson. To do this I bought a peg board (6' tall, 4' wide, I think) and then bought eight 1/4" dowell rods (they were a few feet long and their diameter fits the peg holes of the peg board) and then cut them into 1 1/2 inch segments with a table saw. Then I inserted the 1 1/2" pegs halfway into *every other* peg hole, then *skipped* a line and started over again, only this time with the pegs *staggered one hole over*. I think I did 9 vertical by 14 horizontal lines total. Make it as big as you want, or use however many pegs you have. On the sides of the Plinko board, I put rubberbands on the end pegs to create a boundary to help keep the half-dollars in – which doesn't work particularly well – but that's ok because it helps demonstrate chaos all the better. At the bottom of the Plinko Board, tape dixie-sized cups on the bottom of the plinko board. Using a marker, write "Point #'s" on the Dixie cups – use multiples of 100 for ease of score keeping and be sure to have at least two "zero" cups. Finally, print out numbers, sign and arrows to tape in different places on the board. Pictures below help show better detail. Also in the pictures are the 18" square boards with juice boxes.



Classroom Statement

This Movement and Games class consists of reading the “Jesus calms the storm” scripture story and three activities. Those activities are: 1. The “Plinko” game (from Price is Right) that helps demonstrate characteristics of chaos, 2. Pretending to be a balloon that's filled with too much air that shows how too much chaos inside of us affects us, and 3. A marble relay race as a way to experience how what is on the inside of us (hopefully peace, but also chaos) affects the things and people around us.

Step-by-Step Process of Lesson

Shepherd comes in with students

SHEPHERD ASKS “Question of the Day.”

INTRODUCE yourself

Hi, my name is ____ and I want you call me (tell the students how they may address you).

PRAY Short and simple is perfect. For example:

God, thank you for this day and for each other. We need your help. Help us to learn about you this day. Amen.

TELL

- In the story we’re going to read today, Jesus and the disciples find themselves in a storm.
- Jesus and the disciples have different reactions to the storm.
- Listen for what Jesus does differently than his disciples.

READ Luke 8:22-25 with Mark 4:39 inserted with []s. NRSV.

22 One day Jesus got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set sail, 23 and while they were sailing, Jesus fell asleep. A windstorm picked up and swept down on the lake, and the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. 24 The disciples went to Jesus and woke him up, shouting, "Master, Master, we are going to die!" And Jesus woke up and rebuked the wind and the raging waves. [He said, "Peace! Be still!"] Then the storm ceased, and there was a calm. 25 Jesus said to them, "Where is your faith?" The disciples were afraid and amazed, and said to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?"

ASK (answers are in parenthesis)

- At the beginning of the story, what do Jesus and his disciples set out to do? (sail to the other side of the lake)
- Once they start sailing, what does Jesus do? (he sleeps)
- While they are sailing, what happens to Jesus and the disciples? (they get hit by a storm)
- What do the disciples do? (wake up Jesus)
- Are you surprised that Jesus is still sleeping and has to be woken up? Why?
- What does Jesus do once he’s woken up? (he calms the storm)

- How does he calm the storm? (he speaks to it/rebukes it)
- What does he say to the storm? (Peace. Be still).

TELL

- You might remember this from other classes: The people who first heard this story (2000 years ago), had a language that understood chaos and the sea to be the same thing.
- So the people who first heard this story heard that the disciples and Jesus were sailing on the sea, but the first listeners also heard that Jesus and the disciples were sailing on chaos.
- We may not know what chaos is, so let's talk about chaos.
- Chaos is something that we cannot predict or control. Chaos is when lots of things are happening all at once or when the things that are happening don't make any sense.
- We're going to play a game now that will hopefully help us understand chaos better...

EXPLAIN PLINKO Game

- So we're going to get into two teams.
- [do that]
- Now that we're in two teams, one player from each team will step up and will receive a chip (a half-dollar piece).
- Then, (either at the same time or one after another) you'll place your chip somewhere at the top of the board and let go of your chip.
- The idea is to try and get your chip to land in one of these cups down here that are labeled with points.
- If your teammate's chip lands in a cup, your team gets those points added to your total.
- Team with the highest score wins.

DO Plinko Game

ASK/TELL

- So when someone got a chip in the cup, did you or someone else try to copy what that person did to get the same result? (yes)
- And what happened when you tried to get the same result? (the chip did not go the same way as it did before)
- So we were not able to control what we wanted to have happen, right?
- The word we would use to describe how the chip acted is "unpredictable" and "uncontrollable." Chaos is both unpredictable and uncontrollable.
- And when we find ourselves in a time and place where the things happening around us are unpredictable and uncontrollable, we start to feel those same things on the inside of ourselves, as well.
- This is what was happening for the disciples: The storm and the waves became too uncontrollable and too unpredictable and they started to feel that chaos on the inside of them.
- But Jesus didn't. He just kept sleeping, until his disciples woke him up.

EXPLAIN Balloon exercise

- When the chaos around us starts to get inside of us, it can sometimes take awhile for us to notice that it is inside of us.
- We are going to do a movement activity where each of us is going to pretend to be a balloon that is slowly being inflated.
- So, we're going to start in a squatting position, all curled up on the ground into a little ball, but with our feet flat on the floor.
- Now, with every breath that I take (I'll breathe loudly!), we're going to get just a little big bigger. Copy my moves as I breathe really loudly.

1. Breath – Slowly raise head
2. Breath – Slowly move arms away from torso
3. Breath – Slowly extend forearms
4. Breath – Slowly extend fingers
5. Breath – Slowly extend knees (so that you're standing up but bent over still)
6. Breath – Slowly unfold at the waist
7. Breath – Slowly straighten so that you're standing straight up
8. Breath – Slowly lift arms straight out to the side
9. Breath – Slowly lift arms straight into the air, above head
10. Breath – Stand on the tips of your toes...
11. Breath – Fill your chest with as much air as possible
12. Now...one more breath and... – OH NO! You're too full! Explode like a balloon with too much air in it! Go running around the room, crash into the wall (or each other), collapse to the floor and lie there.

TELL

- You blew up!
- Did you blow up right away? (No)
- Why not? (took awhile for the air to build up or "accumulate" in you)
- This is how chaos works as well. It slowly builds up inside of us and then once there's enough of it in us, then we panic or explode and crash into each other.
- But in the story that we read, this doesn't happen to Jesus.

Explain Marble board Activity

- We're going to get back into our two teams again.
- And we're going to do a relay race.
- Each team gets this board with juice boxes glued on to it.
- Two members from the team will hold this board (one per side) and walk across the room from this part of the room (designated by a rope) to this side of the room (also designated by a rope) where the next two members of the team will take over.
- First team to have all members walk from one rope to the other rope wins.
- On each board will be ___ marbles (depending on age: 5, 7 or 10 marbles). If one marble or more fall off, then the two people carrying the board have to pick the marble up and return to the start line, put the marble back on the board with the other marbles and start over!

DO Marble Board Relay Race

ASK

- What happened when you went to fast? (the marbles fell off)
- So what did you have to do? (go slow)
- Was that hard to do since you were in a race? (probably)
- But when you did go slower, you made less mistakes, right?

TELL

- In the story, we see that Jesus slows down.
- He's resting.
- We also see that there's a sense of peace about Jesus.
- In the middle of all that chaos, he's peacefully resting.
- And then, when the disciples wake him up, instead of letting the chaos in, Jesus instead "shares" his peace and the storm is calmed.
- One of the ways that we experience God's peace is by being still.
- And that's what Jesus was doing in this story. He was being still.
- And then, that's what he tells the storm to do as well: To be still.
- As we see with the marble activity, going slower was better.
- Going slower actually made us faster.
- And that's the good news for today:
 1. When we slow down, then we are more able to pay attention to God.
 2. When we slow down and pay attention to God, then we will experience God's peace.
 3. And when we're filled with God's peace, then we will be able to share that peace with others.

CLEAN UP