



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:** 24 alka-seltzer tablets (at the most), at least two 35 mm film canisters (ask the film people at CVS or local drug store – they’ve got tons. Also, you’ll want canisters with lids that seal tightly), clear glass of water, clear glass of vegetable oil; bucket for water to drain into; at least 10 pounds of non-hardening modeling clay; a large, somewhat shallow container (I used a plastic lid intended for one of those large tinfoil cooking pans that you can buy at the Dollar Store). Popsicle/craft sticks, a pitcher of water, clumping kitty litter, a cup to use to pour the cat litter
- **Supply Prep Needed:** You have to build a riverbank and dam for this class. Take the large shallow container and put a thin layer of clay along the whole bottom. Then build the riverbank with clay from one corner of the container to the opposite diagonal corner – this is the “mouth” of the river. At the “mouth,” cut the container, so water can drain out. Wedge craft sticks (one on-top of the other) about 3 inches from the “mouth” of the river. Then, after another 3 inches from the mouth, wedge in two more craft sticks. This is your dam. Pics below for illustration.



Classroom Statement

This Science class consists of reading the "Jesus calms the storm" scripture story and three science experiments. The three experiments are as follows: 1. Use alka-seltzer in water to demonstrate how being filled with chaos leads to chaotic reactions. Compare this to alka-seltzer in oil to show how being filled with God's peace leads to no chaotic reactions. 2. Still using alka-seltzer tablets, put in film canisters and have the alka-seltzer pop the tops off to show how a build-up of chaos causes us to "lose" it. 3. Build a dam using clay and popsicle sticks to show how the dam has to be filled with God's Holy Spirit, instead of being empty, in order to keep the water/chaos out.

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.

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)

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 they also heard the story as saying 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.
- When an accident happens, then we often experience chaos.

EXPLAIN and DO Alka-seltzer demonstration with water and oil

- We're going to pretend that these two glasses are not glasses, but people.
- We're going to pretend that this glass over represents the disciples.
- And this other glass, we're going to pretend is Jesus.
- This glass, the disciple glass is empty.
- But then once the storm picked up, and the water (which also means what? – Chaos!) started flooding into the boat, that chaos also entered into the disciples and filled them up.
- So we're going to put some water into this glass of the disciples.
- But Jesus was not filled up with the chaotic water.
- Instead, he was paying attention to God and so he was filled with God's Holy Spirit.
- We'll pour some vegetable oil into the Jesus glass to show that he's full of the Holy Spirit.
- Now, we're going to pretend that these little alka-seltzer tablets are the storm.
- So when the storm strikes, (drop it into the disciple glass), what happens? (lots of bubbles)
- That's because the disciples were paying attention to the sea and its chaos and was therefore filled with chaos, instead of God's Holy Spirit.
- So what happens when the storm strikes Jesus? (drop the alka-seltzer tablet into the Jesus glass with vegetable oil – there should be no reaction)
- No bubbles, right?
- The storm doesn't stir any chaos in Jesus because Jesus is filled with God's Holy Spirit.
- Now let's do a demonstration that shows what happens to us when we're filled with chaos

EXPLAIN & DO Alka-Seltzer pop-off demonstration

- We're going to take a 35 mm film canister and we're going to pretend that this film canister is like the disciples.
- They are slowly filling up with chaos, so we're going to put some water in them (fill 1/2 to 2/3rds full with water).
- And when the storm strikes, that stirs up their chaos, right?
- So, we're going to take this alka-seltzer pill (use the whole tablet) which we're going to pretend is the storm, and we're going to drop it into the disciples canister.

- Now, we're going to put the cap on and wait to see what happens [While you wait, ask: What do you think will happen?]
- While you are waiting: Hold the canister so that when the top pops off, the canister won't tip over. Lid will hit the ceiling with a lot of force. If you are fast enough, you can pop the top back on and the tablet will have enough fizz left to pop it off again.
- [When lid pops off, then say]: When chaos gets inside of us, and starts to stir, eventually what happens to us is that we panic. What this means is that we say or do things because we're really afraid. And when we're acting out of fear, we will not make the best decisions.
- So again, what happens if we pretend Jesus is this canister and we fill him with the Holy Spirit vegetable oil? What would happen? (Nothing!) Right. Which means that Jesus is able then to know what to do.

EXPLAIN & DO Dam Experiment/Demonstration

- Ok, we're going to do one more experiment to show how being filled with the Holy Spirit helps us keep the chaos from getting inside of us.
- So first, we're going to build a dam to stop a river.
- The first dam will have two walls.
- To make the first wall, we're going to put in some popsicle sticks (on their sides, so that the width/faces will face the water/current) and wedge them into the clay on top of one another (invite the students to help you do this, if its not done already).
- Now we're going to put in a second wall of popsicle sticks about 2 inches behind the first wall.
- With that done, we're going to see if our dam will stop the water. What do you think, will it?
- But before I do that, what word are we thinking the water represents? (chaos!)
- [Pour water into the start of the river. See if the dam stops the water.]

ASK

- Did the dam stop the water? (No, not completely)
- What do you think could help the popsicle sticks stop the water?
- Maybe there's something we could put between the two popsicle stick walls?
- Maybe we could put some sand between the popsicle walls?

TELL

- Ok, we're now pouring sand in-between the two popsicle stick walls.
- Before I pour the water in a second time, what do you think is going to happen?
- [Pour water into the start of the river. See if the dam stops the water.]

DO 2nd River/Dam Experiment

ASK

- Did it work? (hopefully)
- What made the difference? (the sand)

TELL

- Earlier I said that Jesus was filled with God's Holy Spirit. Being filled with God's Holy Spirit leaves no room for chaos.

- If we pretend like the two popsicle stick walls were like a person, was the empty person able to stop the water? (No).
- But if we pretend like the kitty litter is God's Holy Spirit, and we fill the person up with God's Holy Spirit, was the chaos/water stopped then? (Yes).
- And that's the good news today: When we receive and are filled with God's perfect love, then the chaos does not move through us. Instead, we bring peace and calm to what's happening, just like Jesus brought peace and calm to the storm.

If there's extra time, let the students play around with popping the tops off of the film canisters with alka-seltzer tablets and water. Let them see how far they can get the caps to go!

CLEAN UP