



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 24:13-33

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.

13 Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. These first few lines set the stage for the story. The “two of them” being Cleopas and someone else, possibly his wife. Obviously, these are not of the original 12 disciples, but members of another ring of disciples. But why are they leaving Jerusalem? We are not told. But we can infer from their language. When talking to Jesus about Jesus, they call Jesus a “prophet” and say that they had hoped he’d save Israel (v 21). Notice the past tense and the downgrade to prophet from Messiah. There is a palpable sense of “what could’ve been.” These two disciples are acting like they went to a horse race, bet on the wrong horse and are now returning to their everyday lives – whimsically and sadly reminiscing about the treasure they almost had, but just wasn’t to be. It was looking good there for a moment, things were going to be different, but instead, their horse lost, and so things were going to stay the same.

Jesus himself came near and went with them, 16 but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. Two things about this short passage. 1. Even though the two disciples are discouraged and leaving Jerusalem, they are still talking about Jesus. They haven’t fully returned to their old ways of life yet. The stories of Jesus are still strong in their hearts and minds. As they share and talk to each other of these stories, then Jesus becomes real to them. Appears to them. Joins them. Walks with them. Teaches them. 2. However, even though they are disciples, know Jesus, and are actively remembering the stories of Jesus, they do not recognize the Resurrected Jesus. This tells us that even when resurrection is staring us square in the face, there is something about resurrection that we struggle to fully comprehend or see on a physical level.

31 Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. The thing that causes the two of them to be able to see Jesus is a pattern of life that Jesus lives out in their presence, the pattern of *take, bless, break, give*. Jesus lives out this pattern in three different scripture stories: This story, the feeding of the thousands and the Last Supper. Because these disciples had followed Jesus, had listened and learned what Jesus taught, then they were able to recognize the patterns of Jesus in the moment – they could see that he lived on. That pattern, then, is what opens their eyes. Once they actually *see* the Resurrected Jesus, however, he disappears. Resurrection is not primarily a physical experience for us, even though it was for Jesus. For us, for the disciples, resurrection is the conclusion of our internalizing God’s/Jesus’ way into our lives. The way we internalize God is just like how the disciples internalized: Follow Jesus, talk about the stories, keep Jesus and what he was doing first and foremost in mind. This invites the way of Jesus into our beings and way of life. Jesus’ Way of life continues on, alive and well, when we invite the way of Jesus into our life. This is how the Body of Christ is formed.

33 That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. Once we are aware of how Jesus is alive in us and around us, that changes our focus and our direction. This is shown in a physical sense in the story as the two disciples do a U-turn away from their previous destination, Emmaus, at night no less, and return to where they just left: Jerusalem. Once we are aware of Jesus alive in us, everything changes.

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.

Faith Community – This story starts with the two disciples staying together. Yes, they broke away from the main faith community (the disciples in Jerusalem), and seemed to have given up by returning to their normal lives. But they still stayed with each other as they traveled. The things they had in common were their experiences as disciples. And so, that’s what they talked about as they walked. They talked about Jesus. They probably talked about their own understandings about Jesus and their own experiences with Jesus. This was the bond that held them together and then, as we see in this story, their talking about Jesus also brought in and welcomed the Resurrected Jesus into their midst.

Biblical Literacy – Biblical literacy is a fancy way of saying, “Know the faith stories!” This doesn’t mean you need to know book, chapter and verse. This doesn’t mean you need to memorize bible verses. What this means is that you are familiar and comfortable with the stories, know the characters in the stories by knowing their motivations and mistakes, as well as knowing a general timeline of when they existed. In the Emmaus story, as the three of them walk, Jesus is able to talk to the two disciples using a shared language, the language and stories of the scripture. Jesus speaks to them through the Bible. Being able to see the Resurrected Jesus (as demonstrated in this particular story) is a two-step process, then. It is through the experiences of following Jesus and then talking about those experiences that first invited Jesus into the two disciples’ midst. Then, once Jesus is invited into their midst, their conversation shifts to scripture (starting with Moses, says the story) which eventually leads to the two disciples recognizing Jesus in their midst.

Recognition – Recognition is not automatic. As a child, I had the hardest time finding specific shirts in my closet. I didn’t move the shirts in any particular order (like from left to right). I just flung my hand out and swiped at them. I also was impatient and often ready to give up with a sigh and a “It’s not here” complaint. I’d then attempt to shift responsibility and have someone else look for me, “Mom, where’d you put my shirt?” To be able to recognize and name something that is before you takes work and preparation. To be able to recognize the Resurrected Jesus in our midst, we need to first follow and know Jesus, the man. We need to know the other scripture stories as well. And we need to discuss these stories and experiences with each other. As we do these things, then we’ll see how the Resurrected Jesus is living within us and our faith community.



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: 12 pictures, each one printed out twice, from previous lessons with their names underneath them (can be found in WRM S3.Session 9 Movement & Games Supply Document); print the pictures on half-pages, then tape another half-page over the front of the picture, positioning the tape to function like a hinge – so that the front page can be lifted up to reveal the picture underneath; floating clamp for tennis racket stringing; guitar slide; book holder (Note: the clamp, slide and holder can easily be exchanged with your own three items that you think the students will have a difficult time identifying)
- Set-up required: You'll want to tape the 24 pictures to the classroom wall before class begins. Tape them with the covering page facing front and the tape-as-a-hinge being on the top-side – so that the covering page will hang down on its own, but can be easily moved to reveal the picture. I usually arrange the pictures in a 4 x 6 configuration. Use painter's tape so as to protect the paint on the walls. Be sure to shuffle the pictures before putting them on the wall. Also, keep in mind the height of your students – you'll want even the smallest of them to be able to reach the top row of pictures.

Classroom Statement

This Movement and Games class consists of reading the Walk to Emmaus scripture story and then playing two games. The first game "What IS this?" seeks to demonstrate that seeing is not the same as recognizing and that previous knowledge is needed to recognize what is in front of us, including the Resurrected Jesus. The second game is a memory game that seeks to demonstrate how we help each other remember and how previous knowledge informs our present understanding.

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 from our last session (not necessarily last week, but last SESSION!), we read about Jesus' Trial and how he was found guilty (even though he was innocent) and was crucified.
- That story happened on a Friday. The story we're going to read now happens on the Sunday after that Friday.
- In the story, we find out that even though Jesus died, he didn't stay that way. God resurrected him from the dead!
- That's what Resurrection means: To bring back from the dead.
- There's another important word that gets used in the story that I want to make sure we know what it means. The word "recognize" means to know what or whom you are seeing. For example, "I didn't recognize my dog in the dark hallway until I turned on the light."
- Let's see what happens in the story...

READ Luke 24:13-33 NRSV

13 Now on that same day two of the disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, 16 but the disciples' eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And Jesus said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. 18 Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" 19 Jesus asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. 22 Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 23 and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him."

25 Then Jesus said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! 26 Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" 27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, Jesus interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. 28 As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. 29 But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. 30 When Jesus was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized Jesus; and he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" 33 That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven disciples and their companions gathered together.

ASK (answers in parentheses)

- When Resurrected Jesus joins the two disciples, do the disciples recognize him? (no)
- Do you think this is strange that they don't recognize him? Why/why not?
- The two disciples eventually DO recognize Jesus, though. What things does Jesus do that happen that help them to recognize him? (Jesus teaches them about the Messiah using the scriptures and then he sits down to eat with them, and when he does that he, takes, prays, breaks the bread and gives it)

TELL

- Since we are somewhat familiar with the story of Jesus' resurrection, it might be a little hard for us to understand why the disciples can't recognize Resurrected Jesus.
- So our first activity today is to try and recognize some items that we can see, touch, feel and ask questions about.
- Do you think this will be easy or hard?
- Well, Let's find out!

EXPLAIN "What IS this?" Activity

- The activity we're going to start out with is a guessing game.
- We're going to split into two teams.
- Each team will choose a captain for the round.
- A round consists of figuring out what the item is that I'll be holding up in front of you.
- During the round, teams will take turns.
- A turn consists of the captain of the team asking me a "yes/no" question and then making a guess as to what the thing is. The team can help the captain ask the question and make the guess, but I will only accept questions and guesses from the captain of the team.
- A valid guess will either be the name of the object or the correct action that the object does or is used for.
- The round ends when one team correctly guesses the item.
- Whoever wins the round gets one point.
- We'll play best out of three, which means if one team gets two in a row, then we won't play a third round.

DO the "What IS this?" Activity (Note: You're probably going to have to give hints to help them out)

*The three objects are (please see note under **Supplies Needed**. If you have other items to be identified, you do not need to read this description of items):*

1. The polished metal tube is a "guitar slide." It is used to make a metallic sliding sound on guitars – usually used in country, bluegrass or blues music. It is usually placed on the pinky finger of the chord hand (aka the non-strumming hand)
2. The wire frame object is a "book holder" or "book stand." It is used to hold a book open and upright so that you can read the book without using your hands, except to turn pages. Very handy for cookbooks.
3. The blue and black clamp with duck tape on the handle is a "floating clamp" used to maintain the tension of tennis strings when stringing (putting new strings on) a tennis racket.

ASK

- So the objects were right in front of you! Why didn't you get the answers right away?
- What helped you finally figure out the answer? (asking the right questions; getting hints from the teacher)

TELL

- So this is what's happening to the disciples in this story.
- Resurrected Jesus is right in front of them, but because they've never seen and barely have heard about Resurrected Jesus, they don't know what it/he looks like. They can't recognize him without knowing more of what's going on.
- Also, it does seem like the Resurrected Jesus looks somehow different than regular Jesus did.
- What helps the two disciples to finally recognize Resurrected Jesus is their previous knowledge of Jesus and of the Old Testament bible stories.
- The disciples would not have been able to ever recognize the Resurrected Jesus if they hadn't been Jesus' disciples and didn't know the Old Testament bible stories.
- For example: Just think how hard it would've been to guess what the "guitar slide" was if you didn't even know what a guitar was!?! Probably impossible, right?
- So our next activity is a game that stresses how important it is to pay attention to the information that is given to us.

EXPLAIN instructions for "Memory" Activity

- We need to get into two even teams.
- On the wall, as you can see, there are pieces of paper.
- On the other side of those pieces of paper there are pictures of characters from scripture stories that we've talked about this past year (Just like Jesus talked about and reviewed the bible stories with the disciples in the story, so are we going to remember the stories we've talked about this past year).
- Each picture has an identical twin.
- The goal is to match the two identical pictures together by choosing two pictures to turn over (this is just a big game of memory!).
- Team A will go first, and one member from the team will choose two pictures.
- If that person picks two cards that do not match, then it is the other team's turn.
- Then, the next time it is Team A's turn, someone else from Team A will choose pictures.
- If you do match two pictures, then you and your team gets to go again.
- (NOTE: **Do not mention this line** if you, as the teacher, do not know all the stories from the year): When you match two pictures, you'll also get an opportunity for an extra point by telling the story we've studied in class that the character is in
- The game ends when all the pictures have been matched
- The team with the most matched pictures wins.

DO Memory Activity (play TWO times – the FIRST time do not let teammates help the person who is choosing; the SECOND time, let teammates give advice by helping their teammate remember where the pictures are in the game)

ASK

- When you played the first time and your teammates couldn't help you, was it easier or harder to remember where the pictures were?
- After hearing what stories the characters were in in the first round, was it easier to remember what stories the characters were in during the second round?

TELL

- In the Emmaus story that we read today, we see the disciples talking about stories about Jesus. And then when Jesus joins them, we see Jesus talk to the disciples about stories that are found in the Old Testament of the Bible.
- These two things (talking about Jesus stories and Old Testament Stories) help the disciples to better understand and then recognize the Resurrected Jesus.
- Resurrection is not an easy thing to understand or recognize.
- The easiest thing to say and know about resurrection is that it reminds us that nothing is bigger, stronger, more powerful than God – not even death.
- But there's much more to Resurrection than that! And what we see in this Emmaus story is that the disciples aren't able to better understand resurrection until they are reminded of the stories of Jesus and the Old Testament.
- This is one of the reasons why we have Sunday School the way we do, where you get to hear the same story three times during a session – the idea is that this will better help you to remember and be familiar with the story.
- So keep coming to Sunday school class, keep reading the Bible stories at home, and keep talking to your parents about what you're learning in class and reading in the Bible stories. It'll help you and those around you better recognize the Resurrected Jesus.

CLEAN UP