

Participants' perspectives



Y5&6 Easter Pause Day: Journeys

Overall aim:

- Provide an opportunity for children to investigate the Easter story in greater depth by considering the contrasting views of the people who were present.

Outline of the day:

- Look again at the Easter story and become more familiar with the key events.
- Approach the day through drama to be able to empathise with the people who were present.
- Create a board game as a way of evaluating the emotional journey of the events of Easter week for those who were there.

Please be aware that you may find that there is far too much material, so please select what you need and not worry about items that cannot be fitted in.

Preparations required before the day:

- Photocopies of relevant sheets
- Bibles (one between two)
- Set up prayer area (optional) Create a quiet, reflective and peaceful area (e.g. an open sided gazebo with comfortable cushions. Have a central cross onto which children can attach prayers and play some reflective Christian music. Suggest that the theme for the prayers reflects their thoughts from the day.
- Resources for making the board games as required (outlines available to download)

Overview of the Day:

Session Aim		Activity
1	To revisit the Easter story starting from Palm Sunday and working through Jesus' time in Jerusalem, his crucifixion and the resurrection.	Use the story circle technique to unpack the key events of the Easter week. Once re-familiarised with the events, use freeze-frame drama techniques to unpack how different characters might have felt during the week.
2	To plan a board game which considers how different characters in the Easter story would have responded to the events.	Children to work in 2s or 3s to plan their board game. Each group to be given a character perspective from which to design their game (and crib sheet to support them with this).
3	To construct their board game. To create the game from the standpoint of one character.	Time given to create and play board games. Children may choose to work on their own, using the ideas from their group in session 2, or may wish to continue collaborating.
4	Play games with friends whose perspective is the game created from?	Spend time playing the games of other groups. Whose perspective is the game from? How can you tell?
	Unstructured session: To provide a space for personal reflection, contemplation and response.	Set up a prayer space with interactive displays and activities where the children can choose to go (not compulsory) if they want space by themselves. See suggestions below.

Revisiting the events of Easter week

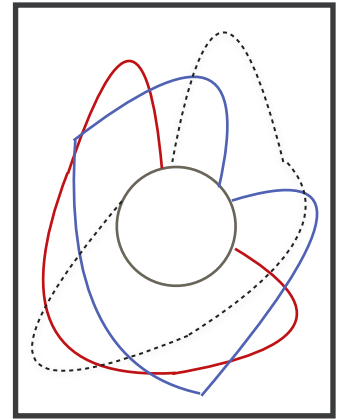
Hearing the story:

Use the story circle technique (see box below) to focus children as they read through an account of Jesus' journey from Palm Sunday to the resurrection. It may be easiest to use the account in Mark's gospel as it is the shortest. Encourage the children to find the verses in their Bibles as the story is retold that way they will know where to locate the story should they need to refer back to it during session 2.

1. Children to sit in small groups around a large sheet of white paper (A1 is recommended as the children will need plenty of gaps to draw in). In the centre draw a circle. From the circle, encourage each child to take their pencil for a walk round the paper.

2. As the Bible passages are read, pause and allow the children time to illustrate each episode of the story somewhere on the page (in one of the spaces created by their wandering pencil lines at the start).

3. At the end, ask the group to **discuss** what they have heard and draw something in the centre circle that summarises what they consider to be the **main important point/learning** that comes from the story.



This is an opportunity for **deep learning** as the children debate which of the scenes were more important and why and try and reach a consensual agreement of what to put in the centre circle as a summary of the most important aspect of the story.

Some children might feel it is the resurrection, others might argue for the moment of death at the crucifixion, others might feel that they should choose an image of how the people around were responding. There is no right or wrong answer, but the discussion and activity with children justifying their ideas should lead to a much deeper understanding of the main events. Afterwards, get the groups to feedback to the rest of the class what they discussed and what they agreed.

Here is how you might consider splitting up the Bible readings:

- Mark 11:1-11 (Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem)
- Mark 14:12-26 (The Last Supper – Jesus shares his last meal with his disciples...the meal that is remembered at Holy Communion/Eucharist)
- Mark 14:32-42 (Jesus is in anguish as he prays in the Garden of Gethsemane and his disciples let him down by falling asleep)
- Mark 14:43-50 (Jesus is arrested)
- Mark 14:53-65 (Jesus is taken and tried by the Jewish leaders)
- Mark 14:66-72 (Peter, one of Jesus' closest disciples, is scared and denies that he knows Jesus)
- Mark 15:1-15 (Jesus is tried by the Roman Governor, Pilate, and the crowd demand that Jesus is crucified)
- Mark 15:33-41 (Jesus dies on the cross)
- Mark 15:42-47 (Jesus is buried)
- Mark 16:1-8 (The female followers of Jesus discover that his has risen)

Timeline of the main events:

To help sequence the events and provide a reference point that the children can check back on for the rest of the day, use the accompanying pictures to create a visual timeline of the Easter.

- Give each picture to a small group of children and ask them to work out as a group who is in the picture and what they are doing. Can they remember where in the story this is a scene from?
- Does anything in their picture surprise them? Can they identify all the characters? Which characters look as though they are experiencing the most emotion?
- Which group thinks that they might have the starting picture? Discuss and agree as a class. Bluetak the relevant picture up at the front of the class and then continue to pick out the other images in order and stick them up.
- By the end, you should have a timeline of the Easter story visually represented across the front of your classroom.

Drama activity:

To help with session 2 close the session by thinking about how different characters would have felt at different points in the week. Children to work in small groups to create a freeze-frame scene for each of the following emotions. NB their scenes are not generic poses of those emotions, but should show a snap shot of part of the Easter story. This will elicit a much deeper understanding of the story and be of greater benefit to the children for session 2. They can choose which characters to use and which episodes from the Easter week to draw on:

- Despair
- Jubilation
- Disappointment
- Confusion
- Guilt
- Astonishment

Examples for each:

- *Despair*: Disciples react to Jesus' arrest/death/the crowd demanding crucifixion, the burial of Jesus...
- *Jubilation*: Crowd's reaction to Jesus as he enters Jerusalem, reaction of women/disciples when they hear that he is risen, Jewish leaders' reaction to hearing the crowd call for crucifixion...
- *Disappointment*: Jesus' reaction when Peter betrays him, Jesus' reaction when the disciples fall asleep in the Garden of Gethsemane, Pilate's reaction when the crowd call for crucifixion...
- *Confusion*: Disciples' reaction to Jesus' words at the Last Supper, Jewish leaders' reaction as they put Jesus on trial and listen to his response, bystanders' response to the events of nature at the crucifixion...

- *Guilt*: Peter's response to denying he knew Jesus, Disciples' response to falling asleep in the Garden of Gethsemane, Judas' response after kissing Jesus...
- *Astonishment*: Bystanders experiencing darkness at the crucifixion, disciples/female followers hearing that he is risen...

Reflecting on the events and planning a board game

The idea for the rest of the day is to encourage the children to create a board game about the Easter week. Please avoid the temptation to focus on this as a DT activity to create a durable and neat game. The intention is to focus on the *thinking* behind the game structure (ie why players move forwards and backwards, miss goes etc). The game will enable them to show not only that they can correctly sequence the events of that week, but give them an opportunity to consider how people at the time reacted to those events.

Depending on your class, select a variety of board game outlines from the web or it may be more appropriate for your children to design their own journey game.

So that the activity is not a simple task involving recall of the story, set each group of children to design their game from one of the following perspectives:

- Peter (probably the easiest to do)
- The Jewish Leaders
- The Roman Soldiers
- The crowd (ie not Jesus' followers, just people in Jerusalem anyway)

The game can then use the highs and lows of these people's experiences as instances for missing turns, advancing extra places or having to go backwards. Inventive children may be able to find further ways to use the story and these characters' experiences and feelings to extend their game. More able children may use the more extreme experiences to create longer ladders/snakes/more extra moves and less significant experiences in the Easter Week for smaller advances/losses on their board game. To aid the children in planning their game, please see the planning sheets. It may benefit the children to work in pairs or threes to help with ideas in this planning stage.

In the table below are some ideas for each of the characters (but this is by no means an exhaustive list)...

NB: There will be differences of opinion as to what should be a forwards/backwards go. For instance, one child might think that it was a good thing for the crowd that when they shouted for Barabbas that Pilate listened and did what they said, other children might think that it was terrible. Equally, children's views of responses to the resurrection might vary enormously. Perhaps the soldiers were pleased that Jesus came alive again because they had realised who he truly was...or maybe they were petrified for themselves because they would be accused of not guarding the body correctly. There are no right or wrong answers, but the discussions that arise will be exciting and will be the source of the deepest learning during the day about Easter.

Character	Reason to miss a go/go backwards/go down a snake:	Reasons to roll again/climb a ladder:
Peter	Falls asleep in the Garden of Gethsemane. Denies knowing Jesus. Helps taking down the body from the cross.	Leading the crowd in cheering Jesus as he enters Jerusalem. Find somewhere to celebrate Passover together. Hear the news that Jesus is alive.
The Jewish Leaders	Jesus enters Jerusalem with a large crowd in tow, all cheering him on. Unable to find a good reason at his trial to have him killed, have to use false evidence. Pilate does not seem convinced and offers to release Barabbas instead.	Judas agrees to betray Jesus. Jesus is arrested in a place where there are no crowds all done on the quiet. Crowd calls for Jesus to be crucified.
The Roman Soldiers	Jesus arrives in Jerusalem, bringing large crowds with him. You worry about controlling these crowds peacefully. You are ordered to lash Jesus 40 times and prepare him for crucifixion. You must guard his tomb. You are worried that something will go wrong.	The crowd outside Pilate's house remains calm, there is no unrest for you to deal with. You win when you cast lots for Jesus' clothing.
The Crowd	The sky turns dark as Jesus dies. You are scared because you do not understand what is happening.	You join in the celebration as Jesus enters Jerusalem. You have heard that he is the Messiah, come to rescue you. You have celebrated Passover with your friends and had a good time.

Making and playing the games

Allow sufficient time for this to be high quality and for the children to be able to play and compare their games with those of their friends. Did they pick out similar elements in the story for their games? Could they guess which character perspective the game was created from? If so, how?