



LESSON PLAN

Scripture Texts:

1 Samuel 16:14-23

Luke 11:24-28

Session Theme:

Comfort

a. Welcome to Class

Teachers should arrive in the classroom well in advance of class. Welcome students as they enter, and inquire about their week. Pass out name tags and record attendance on a classroom chart.

b. Icebreaker: Strumming Strings

If you have a stringed instrument at home, bring it to class. Draw the outlines of several stringed instruments on a white board. Examples could include a violin, a guitar, a harp, a hammered dulcimer, a banjo, a cello, etc. When kids arrive, allow them to try playing the instrument if you brought one. Then, invite them to guess the names of all the instrument shapes they see on the board.

Of the different stringed instruments you named, which one is your favorite? Why? In today's story, a king could not relax or rest. So he summoned a musician to play songs to comfort him. Who was this musician and what did he play? Let's begin our lesson and find out!

c. Opening Prayer

Lord God, when we are worried or upset, you comfort us. Help us to comfort those around us by leading them to you and using the gifts you have given us. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

d. SEED Video or Song (Optional)

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This time may also include an opening song or two, using a commercial Sunday School music CD.

Song suggestions for this lesson:

- "Little David, Play On Your Harp" (children's song)
- "Lord of All Hopefulness" (hymn)

e. Brief Bible Background

Read together the introduction to the lessons for the day, and briefly summarize the context and setting:

- Today's Lesson is from the Old Testament
- Scripture Section: Transition

Israel's path to becoming a united monarchy was not an easy one. Samuel was raised up by God at the end of the period of the Judges and became the first of the prophets to serve as God's advisor to the king.

f. Communicate the Bible Story

Always keep in mind that the main purpose of Sunday School is to put people in contact with Bible stories. Use a version that is appropriate to the age level.

Upper Elementary: Read the Bible Story and Rhyme

Youth/Adults: Read the Scripture text from the Bible

For Upper and Lower Elementary, use the Storyteller questions to help the students think about the events of the story.

g. Complete the Worksheet(s)

Continue with the handout sheets appropriate to the age level of the students in class:

Upper Elementary: Worksheet and Drama

Youth: Bible Study (Maps, Timelines, Questions)

Adult: Bible Study Sheet (Introduction and Discussion)

h. Craft and Activity Time

If there is time after covering the Bible story, the class may move to craft and activity time, described on the following page. (Do not let the activity time supersede the actual time spent on the Scripture lesson.)

i. Summarize and Review

Before ending class, briefly summarize the day's lesson one last time. If you have not already done so, introduce the Theme Word for the week, providing the definition, and asking how the lesson connects to that theme.

Youth/Adult: Discuss "Reflection for the Week Ahead"

j. Closing Prayer

Close the session in prayer before dismissal:

Upper Elementary: Practice a prayer from memory (e.g., the Lord's Prayer, Luther's Morning Prayer, etc.)

Youth/Adult: Use the ADTRC Prayer format



Bible Study Leader's Guide

The following is a discussion and answer guide for the Youth and Adult Bible Study sheets. For all leaders, it can serve to provide some background on the Bible lesson.

Discuss: 1 Samuel 16:14-23

1. In what sense was Saul was experiencing more than just a bad mood? What were the underlying spiritual issues that Saul was dealing with at this point in his life?

We have times in our life when we get in a bad mood. When something bad happens, when people are mean to us, or when we seem to be having a string of bad luck — all these can make us sad, frustrated, and angry.

At this point in the story, things were going badly for Saul. But this was not just a matter of bad luck: Saul's problems were the result of his own sinful actions. The Bible makes it clear that this was a *spiritual* issue for Saul. There was a problem in his relationship with God, and Saul was suffering the consequences of this broken relationship.

2. Scripture says that the source of Saul's torment was a "harmful" (ESV) or "evil" (KJV) spirit sent from God. Why do you think God *wanted* Saul to feel bad? Have negative feelings (guilt, regret, sadness) ever resulted in a positive change in your life?

Some people tend to picture evil spirits as little horned and winged goblins dressed in a red suit. But in Scripture, a "spirit" is understood to be an invisible influence — a real force that acts on us from the outside. Usually this is in an emotional way, influencing our attitude, motivation, and how we feel.

Some may find it hard to understand why God would send a negative influence into Saul's life. But the fact is, sometimes we learn more from bad experiences than we do from pleasant ones. When people are engaged in self-destructive behavior (like Saul was), it is often only when they hit "rock bottom" that there is a possibility for change.

3. David's music had a genuine effect on Saul. Have you ever been cheered up or calmed down by listening to music? What style or kind of songs do that best for you?

Most people can attest to the power of music to soothe and comfort, as well as to energize and inspire. This, too, is a spiritual influence that God can use to accomplish his purpose.

Science has shown that the type of music we listen to can have a real effect on increasing or

decreasing stress. Not only can soft, relaxing music bring down our heart rate and blood pressure, but loud and intense music can have the opposite effect.

4. Martin Luther said, "Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world." Do you agree? Do you think this is only something a musician can appreciate? Why or why not?

Martin Luther was a big fan of music. Like David, he was a musician and singer himself, and wrote many hymns that we still sing today. He knew that there is a power in music to affect people's faith, and it is an important part of worship.

While people trained in music may have a deeper appreciation of music's value, this influence is not limited to musicians only. All of us can enjoy the feelings that music inspires and appreciate how many types of music can match our moods.

5. Spiritually speaking, how do words and music complement one another? With regard to faith and worship, what can music convey better than words alone? What is instrumental music alone not able to convey?

Poetry and verse are meant to inspire — to convey not just information, but feeling and emotion as well. Music does this well. When used together, music can add a deeper dimension to what the words convey. Music can also help us better remember words and learn them by heart.

However, music alone is not able to convey a message. Unless we already have words we remember to a tune, purely instrumental music cannot communicate the gospel. For that we need a word from God.

6. Many of the songs we find in the Book of Psalms are attributed to David. Page through the Psalms to find an example. What is that Psalm about? What promise does it convey from God?

Answers will vary. Some Psalms express happiness and joy, while others express sadness and grief. Many are prayers addressed to God asking for help; others are confessions of faith or expressions of praise and thanks to God.

7. Read Luke 11:24-28. What is Jesus telling us about spiritual warfare? Is faith a "quick fix"? In our lives of faith, why is it necessary to continually "hear the Word and keep it"?

Our spiritual attitude is not a "once and done" sort of thing. Moods and emotions come and go — and often come and go again. This is why we need to continually hear the promise of God, to keep us steadfast in faith and renew our hope.

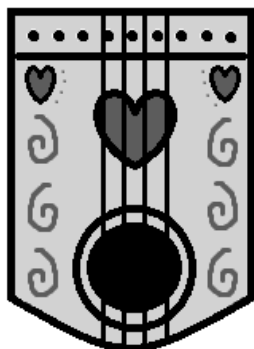
Classroom Craft and Activity Page

Listed below are in-class activities and craft projects related to the theme for the day. Choose one of the following based on the age and capabilities of the students. (Never let the activity or craft time take precedence over the biblical story.)

Activity 1: David's Lyre Craft

Materials Needed:

- Cardboard or card stock
- Yarn
- Pencils
- Markers
- Scissors
- Tape



Instructions:

Give each child a piece of cardboard (or card stock) and a pencil.

- Have kids draw two curved lines to round off the bottom edges of the cardboard.
- Cut along the lines to create a large "U" shape.
- Next, draw a circle as a sound hole towards the bottom of the "U" shape (see picture above).
- Color in the circle with a dark marker. (Older kids may want to instead poke through the circle with scissors and cut it out to make their lyre look more realistic.)
- Using markers, decorate the lyre with colorful designs.
- Give each child four pieces of yarn, sized so they will be longer than the front of their instrument.
- Invite kids to wrap each piece of yarn vertically along the front of the lyre to look like strings.
- Tape each piece of yarn to the back side of the instrument. (Yarn won't make a sound but will still look realistic.)
- When everyone has finished their lyre craft, invite kids to show the class what they have done and to explain why they decorated it as they did.

Music, it is said, "soothes the savage soul." King Saul certainly found this to be true, which is why he called for David to play his harp.

What kind of music helps you feel better when you are worried or sad? Christians through the centuries have often felt uplifted by singing hymns of praise to God. What are your favorite ones?

Activity 2: Saul's Song Activity

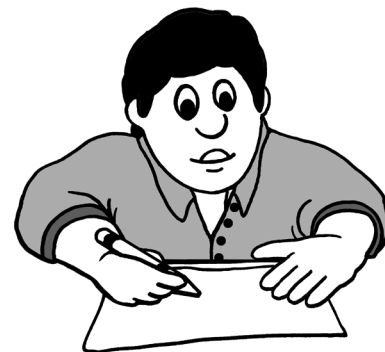
Materials Needed:

- Scrap paper
- Pencils or pens

Instructions:

In today's Bible story, David used music to calm King Saul. We do similar things for babies or children who can't sleep, as music is very soothing.

Explain that for this activity, kids will try their hand at writing their own lullaby. They can set it to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle" or a different children's song if they prefer. Remind them of the tune to "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" or another simple tune by humming the music.



Invite kids to think of words they might use to comfort someone who is troubled and can't sleep. Would they encourage the sleepless one by reminding them that God is keeping watch all through the night? Would they help them focus on the morning

light? Would they use some humor to get them laughing? Tell kids to give this some thought before jotting down words.

When everyone has finished, divide the class into pairs and ask kids to share their song with their partner. If anyone is particularly brave (as David had to be in singing for a king!) they can also share their song with the class.

Sharing music with others can be intimidating. Yet it is also such a gift to those who hear it!

Imagine how nervous David must have been to play his lyre or harp for King Saul. With God's help, however, he rose above his fear in order to help someone else.

The next time you are called upon to sing or do something publicly, remember brave David, and trust that God will be with you too!

Worksheet Answer Key

Shown below are the answers and solution to the children's worksheet for this week's lesson:

Vocabulary Word for the Week:

Teachers may want to introduce the theme word for the week to help expand students' biblical vocabulary:

Comfort

to care for someone who is hurting
and try to help them feel better

*When King Saul was upset,
David comforted Saul by playing music
to help him relax and calm down.*

Reflection for the Week Ahead

What sort of music soothes your spirit? Do you like country or pop, classical or jazz? Maybe you like a parent to sing to you. Whatever music you like best, you know that it can calm your nerves (or drive you crazy, like some very loud, discordant music does). How might you use music to settle yourself down when you get anxious or upset? Soft music can also be a way to help you enter into a time of prayer.

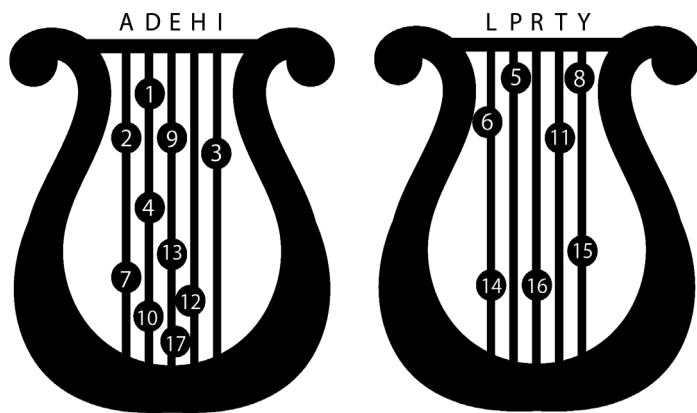
Why don't you try using music during this next week as a way to help you center yourself for prayer? Ask a parent or other adult to join you in this prayer practice. Choose a favorite station on a streaming service such as Pandora or Amazon Music. Then sit quietly and speak to God, saying, "Lord God, I want to be with you in this time. I want to listen for your voice and I know you hear the cries of my heart. I simply want to dwell in your holy presence." And then just sit quietly for a few minutes. Perhaps even shut your eyes. When you are finished with this prayer practice, pray the Lord's Prayer.

Spend a few minutes talking with your parent or other adult who joined you in this prayer time about how it felt to be silent and still. Did the music help you settle down? What might you do differently next time?

The Practice of Prayer

On the lines below, write a prayer thanking God for being the source of our security and hope. Call upon him for his protection, strength, and guidance, especially when you are upset. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you peace.

Practice using the ADTRC Prayer Form: Address, Description, Thanks, Request, Conclusion.



Message:

“ DAVID PLAYED THE LYRE ”

Words that can be made from these letters include:

aid	dill	real	paid	laid
lip	rip	he	ale	ape
dip	lay	led	lead	plaid
ad	add	addle	lad	pad
had	dad	real	lid	divide
raid	year	ear	leer	ride
pile	dial	ire	dire	dear
dare	ape	lapel	live	evade
day	pay	lay	ray	play
pat	avid	part	tail	pride
pet	pit	art	aim	adder
lap	lad	lard	year	yard

DID YOU KNOW?

People often don't realize how small the land of Israel really is. The towns of Bethlehem and Gibeah are only about **six** miles from Jerusalem — within walking distance!