

The awesome seed



Lesson Plan

Lesson title	The awesome seed
Learning objective	Pupils will explore how all living things, including them, need the right conditions to grow, flourish and bear fruit.
Pupils will:	Draw a parallel between the conditions that seeds need to grow and the conditions and influences the pupils need in their lives to develop their talents.
Key words:	Parable of the Sower, growth, influence, nurture, seeds, germination.

Plan	Resources
<p>Introduction</p> <p>Explain to the pupils that during the “The awesome seed” lesson they will explore how all living things, including themselves, need the right conditions in which to grow, flourish and bear fruit. They will explore this topic through the Parable of the Sower and a story called “The Sun hasn’t fallen from the Sky” and will look at how plants grow from seeds and play “the Seed survival race” game.</p>	
<p>Activity 1</p> <p>Bring in a collection of pictures and objects from your childhood and beyond which show how your present identity and interests have roots in your past. These might include books you have enjoyed, photographs, pictures and even film clips of important people and places, recordings of music, items of sporting equipment, souvenirs from holidays or any items which you treasure from years gone by which still have significance for you today. Display these to the children as you talk about how your past has helped you to become the person you are today. Draw attention to any individual or group of people who sowed these seeds of interest, for example a parent, teacher or sporting team.</p> <p>Invite the children to highlight some of their own key characteristics and interests and to reflect upon how these may have emerged and developed. Ask them to identify what may have shaped them into the people they are today, for example the passion of their parents for a particular football team, craft activity or even commitment to a particular religious community. Encourage them to think, too, of</p>	<p>Resource 1: Gangel, A. (2011), “The Sun hasn’t fallen from the Sky”, Bloomsbury Publishing, London.</p>



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how they may differ from those around them, for example, some children may come from families with great musical aptitude, but may not enjoy learning music themselves. Ask them to consider what might be the reasons for this.

You can also use as an example the story told in the semi autobiographical book "The Sun hasn't fallen from the Sky" (Resource 1). The book is about a girl from a troubled background whose talent in music was recognized and nurtured by her teacher who provided the right conditions for a 'seed to grow'. The pupils may work in groups of four to read an excerpt of the book which describes a key moment in the development of the plot, and create a story board to record the scene using drawing and writing. Then ask each group to perform their story-board to the rest of the class. The pupils can then discuss each other's performances, express how they felt about the characters they played, and the role of each character in nurturing the heroine's talent.

Activity 2

Read or tell the children the Parable of the Sower, using either one of the original Gospel accounts or a version designed for children (see Resources). Explain to them that the story is one that Jesus told to help his followers to understand that while all seeds have the spark of life in them, they need the right conditions in which to grow.

Remind them that Jesus wanted his listeners to respond to the 'seeds of his teachings' and be shaped by them. If possible, enable them to talk to local Christians about what this story means to them and how the teachings of Jesus may be relevant to their own lives. Invite the children to think about which experiences/people 'plant seeds' in their lives.

Finally, look back at the story and encourage the children to highlight the right conditions in which seeds may grow into abundant life. Give them opportunities to consider what conditions they might need if the 'seeds' that exist within them are to 'flourish in the future'. For Muslim children, it could be emphasised that Jesus is a beloved Prophet in Islam whom the Prophet Muhammed met when he made his miraculous journey to Heaven on the Night of Power (which falls in the last 10 days of Ramadan each year).

Resources

Appropriate translations for children of Matthew, 13:3-23, Mark 4:2-20; and/or Luke 8:4-15:

<http://www.request.org.uk/main/bible/jesus/sower/sowertext.htm>

Various animated versions of the parable are also available on Youtube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B11hVutjTbY&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xe0OTB25KTM&feature=related>

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Activity 3

Show the children images of seeds (or real seeds) and discuss what conditions the seeds may need to grow (Resource 2) highlighting the similarities and differences between them. After the discussion split the class into groups of 4 and explain to them how to play the game "The seed survival race" (Resource 3). The pupils by playing the game will find out the different factors that may influence whether and how a seed may grow into a plant. At the end of the game explain to the pupils that individuals need favourable conditions/influences in their life to develop their talents and in a similar way the seeds need favourable conditions to grow into mature plants

Resources

Resource 2: Images and information about seeds from plants that are important in various Christian contexts

Resource 3: "The seed survival race" game



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Plenary

Children could develop collages in the form of triptychs (see Resources) to show the development of 'seeds of influence' in their past, present and future lives. Children could also write a letter or create a card to send their acknowledgements to the people who had inspired them and had a positive influence on their lives.

Children can use the triptych to:

1. tell the story of their own lives and identify things that have happened to them.
2. talk about their beliefs, including (where appropriate) their religious beliefs, and ask other children questions about what they have included in their triptychs and why.
3. describe what they have learned from the Parable of the Sower and what it might mean to a Christian and compare some of the things that have influenced them with those which influence other people, including religious believers.
4. make links between the beliefs and values they have developed and how these are exemplified in their lives and make reference to people who have inspired and influenced them and why.
5. suggest reasons for the similarities and differences between their own beliefs and ideas and those of others and explain why everyone has their own individual response to the question 'what inspires and influences me?'
6. draw a parallel between the conditions/influences they need to develop in life and what a seed needs in order to grow into a mature plant.

Resources

Art materials for the pupils to create the triptychs, perhaps including cardboard for the triptychs themselves, glue, other coloured paper, magazines for pictures, photographs, coloured pencils, markers and where relevant, IT programmes such as Wordle (see <http://www.wordle.net>).