

Rainbow Fish

By Marcus Pfister

Read Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbKr-kIPTVA>

Color pages 1 and 2

Overview:

Rainbow Fish will not share his sparkling silver scales, so the other fish do not want to be around Rainbow Fish. When Rainbow Fish decides to share his scales, he becomes truly happy.

Moral:

It is better to give than to receive.

Truth/Memory Verse:

Acts 20:35

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." ESV, NIRV

Hand Motions:

It is better to give (move hands away from self) than to get (move hands towards self).

Song:

"This Is My Commandment"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgAMqYPtjLU>

Bible Stories to Read Together:

Mark 12:1-12 - Parable of the Tenants and John 3:16 (Jesus giving his only Son, the "beloved son" of Mark 12:6)
See page 4 for a finish-the-picture activity.

Mark 12:41-45 - The Widow's Offering (the size of the gift is not important as long as the gift comes from the heart)

John 13:1-20 - Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

using a bucket of soapy water on the floor, a stool, and a towel, wash each other's feet. Talk about how nice it is to serve (give to) others.

Gospel Connection:

Jesus gave everything (Philippians 2:8) to the point of death on a cross. We have nothing to give. Even our good works are filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). We are saved by grace alone.

Crafts:

- Using the back of an old or blank CD, make a rainbow fish using jewels, foil, markers, googly eyes, etc. For smaller kids, put dots of glue on the fish and have kids put pieces of brightly-colored torn paper/shreds on top of the glue.
- Cut a slit/triangle out of the side of a paper plate to serve as the fish's mouth. Glue on a googly eye and decorate the plate.
- Use clay or play dough to make the shape of a fish. Decorate with fish tank beads or jewels.
- Cut a fish out of a white sheet of paper or card stock. Place inside of a box. Dip four or five marbles into paint and drop the marbles into the box. Tilt the box forward and back and side to side so that the marbles will make a fun design on the fish.
- Cut a fish out of a white sheet of paper or card stock. Put a marshmallow on the end of a pencil or toothpick. Dip the marshmallow into paint and dot onto the fish.

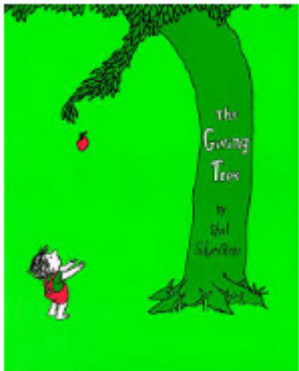
Activities:

- Give each child one dollar and have each child pick out something special for another sibling at the Dollar Store. If there are more than two siblings, each sibling draws the name of another sibling and gives to that sibling.
- Practice random acts of kindness. Leave quarters on the gumball machine at the store. Leave quarters on the washers or dryers at a laundry facility.
- Encourage kids to give (a note, a drawing, help with a chore, etc.) secretly to one person in their family without that person knowing. Or, send anonymous kind notes to neighbors' mailboxes without the neighbors knowing.
- Send letters in the mail to family members or friends.
- Take a package of bottled water or Gatorade to the fire station.

Whichever activity is chosen, talk how it feels to give. See page 3 for a journaling prompt.

Science Connection: water

- Paint on ice cubes with watercolors or tempera paint.
- Mix water with baking soda. Freeze. Paint on the ice.
- Experiment: Which freezes faster...cold or hot water? (called the Mpemba Effect)
- Play "Sink or Float?" Select items from around the house and predict whether they will sink or float. Test each item in a glass (see through) vase of water. See page 5 for a chart and page 6 for a graph.
- For small kids who are working on fine motor skills, have them transfer water from a bowl to an ice cube tray (or small bowls) using a spoon. If you use ice cube trays, add a strawberry or other piece of fruit to each section of water, freeze, and enjoy later.
- For small kids who are working on letter or number recognition, write each letter or number on a milk/water bottle lid. Float the lids in a bucket of water. Give child a large spoon (the kind with slits/holes) and have him or her "fish" for each letter or number.
- For handwriting practice, write letters/words with chalk on chalkboard and have kids paint over the letters/words with water.



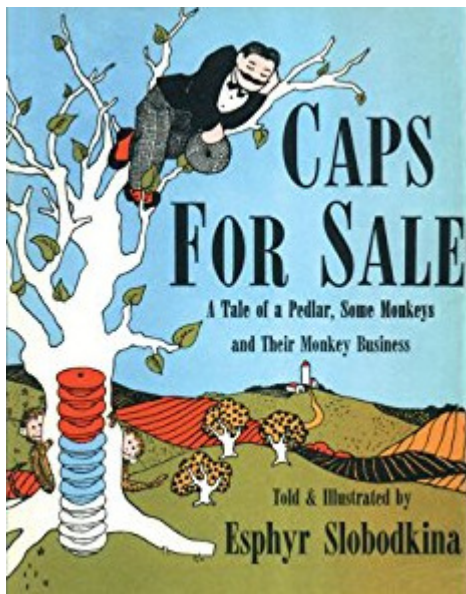
The Giving Tree

By Shel Silverstein

Read Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITZCP6OqRLE>

Color page 7

This book can be used as an alternate to or in addition to Rainbow Fish. Moral, truth, verse, etc. are the same.



Caps for Sale

By Esphyr Slobodkina

Read Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INptSCKqdfg>

Color page 8

Overview:

The peddler is not selling any caps today, so he decides to take a nap under a tree. While he is napping, the monkeys in the tree take the peddler's caps and will not give them back. The monkeys imitate whatever actions the man does. In anger, the man throws his own cap on the ground, and the monkeys do the same with their caps.

Discuss the definition of "imitate" and play a game of Simon Says or another simple imitation game.

Hand Motions:

Do the signs for "God" (there are several ways to sign "God" - do an internet search), "Christ" (touch the middle finger of the right hand to the left palm and repeat on the other hand), and "love" (cross arms at chest) as you say the memory verse.

Truth/Memory Verse:

Ephesians 5:1-2

"Be imitators of God and walk in love as Christ loved us..."

For younger kids - "Be imitators of God. Walk in love."

We should **imitate** Jesus, God the Son, in spiritual growth, in routine faithfulness, and in commitment to God's purpose.

Do we imitate the world or Christ?

Song: Sung to the tune of "The Farmer and the Dell"

Be imitators of God.

Be imitators of God

Walk in love as Christ loved us.

Be imitators of God.

-OR-

"We Love Because God First Loved Us" 1 John 4:19

We love (clap clap) because God first loved us.
We love (clap clap) because God first loved us.
We love (clap clap), we love (clap clap), we love (clap clap)
Because God first (clap) loved (clap) us (clap clap).

Bible Stories to Read Together:

Luke 2:41-52 – The Boy Jesus in the Temple

Christ took on the role of student in the Temple as he listened to and asked questions of the teachers. As Christ did, so should we learn and increase in wisdom of the Scriptures. Spiritual growth requires an active interest in the Word of God. Even as a young boy, Jesus had a clear consciousness of His identity and mission.

The book of Ruth is an example of walking in love, as Ruth served Naomi and as Boaz helped Ruth. Be imitators of this love.

John 2:13-25 – Jesus' First Cleansing of the Temple

The rest of Ephesians 5:2 says that Christ's giving of Himself was a fragrant offering to God. Talk about the sacrifices of the Old Testament. The burning flesh of animals probably did not smell very good, but it was a fragrant offering to God. In the same way, the actions of a believer might "smell" terrible to the world but are a fragrant offering to God. Jesus' cleansing of the Temple did not appear to be loving to those who did not follow Him, but to those who did, they could see Jesus' fierce love for His Father and for holiness and for the purity of worship. Imitate Jesus' love for His Father, for holiness, and for worship that is pure. Even if it does not appear right to the world, it is a fragrant offering to the Lord. Add to the picture of the altar on color page 12 to show a fragrant offering to God. Do we imitate the world or Christ?

John 19:26 – Love each other deeply, as Jesus loved His mother and His beloved disciple. Imitate this love.
As you read, draw a picture of what this scene might have looked like.

Luke 19:41 – Jesus Weeps Over the City of Jerusalem

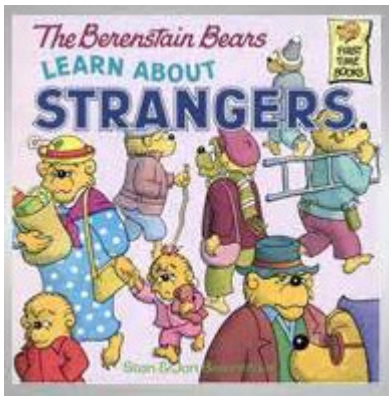
Talk about what it means when somebody weeps. Weeps is usually more sorrowful than just crying. Think of a time that you have wept and share that with the kids. In this verse, Jesus is weeping over the city where God's Holy Temple resides, the city of the Jews who are lost in the superficiality of their hearts. Jesus' love for His people and for Jerusalem caused Him to weep. Imitate this love.

Crafts:

- Using a strip of paper, have kids decorate a "What **Did** Jesus Do" bracelet to help them remember to recall Bible stories of what Jesus did so they can imitate Christ in every situation.
- Color or paint the caps on page 9 and stack and glue them on the man's head on page 10.
- Talk about patterns (for younger kids) and have them color and stack a pattern of hats on page 11.
- Look online for a picture of what it might have looked like when Jesus cleansed the temple. Imitate this piece of art on your own paper.

Science Connection: the human heart (imitating Christ's love)

- Measure and record how the heart rate changes with exercise. For kids who can multiply, talk about counting beats for ten seconds and multiplying by six to find the beats per minute. Use page 13 to record.
- For younger kids, teach them to locate their pulse on their neck, wrist, and/or chest. Use page 14 to make an X where they are able to feel their pulse.
- Imitate the heart – make a model of the heart. Talk about imitating Christ's love.
- Draw/free-hand a human heart on black paper using a pencil. Kids imitate/trace the pencil lines using white crayon. Talk about imitating Christ's love.



The Berenstain Bears Learn about Strangers

By Stan and Jan Berenstain

Readaloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5a11h22o55A>

Color Page 15

Overview:

Brother and Sister Bear learn about strangers. They also learn that outward appearances may be deceiving. Sister Bear sees an apple that is beautiful from the outside but is spoiled on the inside. She also sees an apple that does not look good from the outside, but its insides are delicious. The truth about a person is in his or her heart, not his or her outward appearance.

Hand Motions:

Use the signs for God/Lord and heart as you say the memory verse.

Truth/Memory Verse:

1 Samuel 16:7

"Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." (ESV)

"People look at the outside of a person. But the Lord looks at what is in the heart." (NIRV)

For younger children - "But the Lord looks at what is in the heart."

Bible Stories to Read Together:

1 Samuel 16

The precursor to this story is found in the previous chapter - chapter 15. God's people have asked for a king because they have refused to follow the one true King. The first king is Saul, and the Lord rejects Saul because of Saul's disregard for the word of the Lord (1 Samuel 15:26), and the Lord regrets that He has made Saul king over Israel (1 Samuel 15:35). So, the Lord tells the prophet Samuel to go to Bethlehem to the sons of Jesse because He will appoint a new king from that family, which is the family from which Jesus will come! Samuel looks at one of the sons of Jesse and is sure that this must be the next king. But the Lord tells Samuel that man looks at outward appearance, but the Lord looks at what is in the heart. Samuel anoints David, the youngest of Jesse's sons, as the next king.

Judges 16:4-22 - Samson and Delilah

Delilah was most likely a very beautiful woman. Samson shows that he loves Delilah more than he loves God by telling Delilah the secret of his strength. Delilah's outward appearance tempted Samson to disobey God by marrying a Philistine, and her heart was so greedy that she sold Samson for money.

Activities:

Close to the beginning of the book, there is a page that tells what activities Brother and Sister Bear each like to do. Some of the activities are shared by both cubs and some are unique to each cub. Use this page to make a Venn diagram of Brother's and Sister's likes. See activity page 16.

Teach the kids the meaning of the saying "fox in sheep's clothing" (appearance is gentle from the outside but sneaky and mean from the inside). Use color page 17. For younger children learning letters/sounds, pull the "x" out of fox and do activities related to that letter.

- Punch four holes in the shape of a square into a small (4"x4") piece of posterboard. Using a piece of string, show the kids how to cross stitch an X.



- Using the game Perfection, remove the X piece. Have kids complete the puzzle and tell you which piece is missing. Search the room for the missing piece (hide-and-go-seek for the X).



- Create a fox out of hearts.



- Use Q-Tips or cut-up straws to make Xs.

Science Connection: social priming in psychology (for older kids)

After Sister Bear learns about strangers, she sees the world around her very differently. There are several pages dedicated to this point in the book. This is called social priming - exposure to a particular thought or idea causes a person to focus on that particular thought/idea/thing in the world around him or her. Because Sister learns about the dangers of strangers, she sees everybody around her as a dangerous stranger.

See pages 18 and 19. Fold each page in half. Have child read the words on the left side of the page over and over for 30-60 seconds. Then turn the paper over and have him or her fill in the blanks to make a word. Because he or she has been exposed to words related to night and darkness, he or she is more likely to fill in the blanks to form the word "dark." On the next page, the most common word is "book" since the words on the left side of the page are related to schoolwork.

This demonstration can also be done with colors. Have student stare at the color on page 20 for 30-60 seconds. Have him or her then look around the room and call out colors that he or she sees. The child will likely see more blue in the room than other colors.

Younger children could learn basic facts about apples - they are a fruit, they grow on trees, they come in many colors, they have seeds inside (cut an apple open to expose the seeds, dip one side of the apple in paint, and stamp onto paper).

Learn this rhyme about an apple tree:

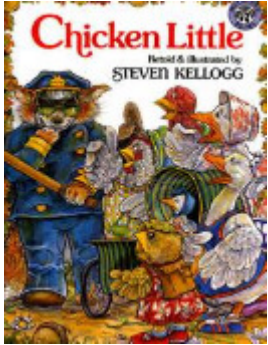
Way up high in the apple tree, (wave arms high)

Two little apples smiled at me. (hold up two fingers, point to your smile)

I shook that tree as hard as I could, (shake with arms)

Down came the apples. (pretend to bite an apple) Yumm (rub belly), they were good!

Make a coffee filter apple. Draw with washable markers on a coffee filter. Spray with water so that colors run together. Let dry. Glue inside of a cutout of an apple.

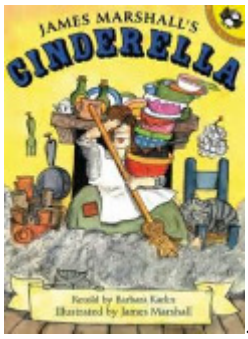


Chicken Little

By Steven Kellogg

Read Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtzGVANBwOM>

This book can be used as an alternate to or in addition to Learn about Strangers. Moral, truth, verse, etc. are the same (the fox is dressed in police clothes and pretends to help the birds).



Cinderella

By James Marshall

Read Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqIzdiPvSgQ>

Color Page 21

Overview: This is the "classic" story of Cinderella. Cinderella's enemies are her stepmother and two stepsisters.

Truth/Memory Verse:

Matthew 5:44

"Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you."

Hand Motions:

Love (cross arms over chest), pray (touch palms together)

This is a neat video that presents a memorable image of loving your enemies:

<https://video.search.yahoo.com/search/video?fr=mcafee&p=love+your+enemies+pray+for+those+who+hurt+you+song#id=3&vid=c23a550296dd7ac8f439af85e0904d55&action=view>

Bible Stories to Read Together:

Read about the mocking of Jesus as He hung on the cross - Matthew 27:41-44, 49; Luke 23:35-39. Next, read 1 Peter 2:23, which states, "When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly." Also, read Isaiah 53:7, which states, "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth." Also, 1 Peter 3:9 states, "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing."

Talk about the attributes of God - holy, perfect, righteous, just, etc. Talk about what the thief said about Jesus on the cross (Luke 23:41). Talk about what sin is and that just one sin is enough to separate you from a holy and perfect God. God cannot be where there is sin. Talk about Jesus on the cross, when He took on the sin of the world, and cried out, asking why God had turned away from Him (Matthew 27:46). God turned away from His beloved, precious, treasured Son because His Son was bearing the sin of His people. To demonstrate this, put vegetable or canola oil a few inches high in a clear bottle or vase. This represents the holiness and purity and perfection of God. Add an equal amount of water on top of the oil. Talk about that water being pure/clear, as man was prior to the first sin in the Garden. Add a few drops of food coloring (or paint) to the water to become sin. Shake, mix, or stir the oil-water mixture and note how the water and oil do not mix - they stay separate. This can remind us that God and sin can never mix and remind us of our desperate need for a Savior. Use this bottle or vase as a centerpiece.

Record results on page 23.

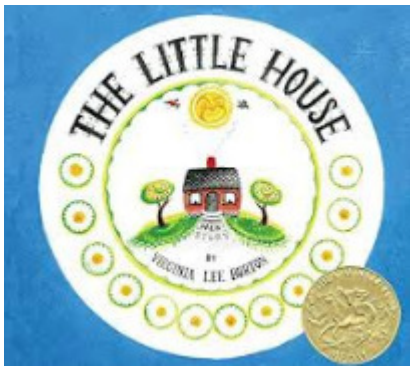
Acts 7:54-60 - The Stoning of Stephen

Example of having compassion, pity, and love for the enemy.

Color page 22.

Activities:

Pick up a few large stones or make large "stones" from wadded paper. Talk about what stoning was like. Write "forgive" on one of the stones and display as a centerpiece on the table or in front of the door where you most commonly enter and exit the house as a reminder of loving one's enemies.



The Little House

By Virginia Lee Burton

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkHDuXcH5jw>

Overview:

A little house is built, sturdy and strong, out in the country. This little house loves watching the days and seasons pass as the fields, trees, and meadows are all around. She sometimes wonders what life would be like in the city, but she's very content.

Over time, the area around the little house is built up. Apartments are built all around. Roads come and then trolleys and subway trains. The little house is neglected and sad.

And then, one day, the great-great-granddaughter of the house's original builders comes along. When she realizes that this is the same little house that has long been in her family, she has the house moved out into the country where it fits beautifully and is much happier.

Fill out page 24 after reading.

Talk about older homes often being built out of very sturdy, strong wood and their builders taking lots of time and care in their building. The little house was built in this way. This is the portion of the book that will be pulled out and paralleled to Bible.

Truth/Memory Verse:

Matthew 7:24

"The wise man built his house upon the rock."

Bible Story to Read Together:

Matthew 7:24-27 - Build Your House upon the Rock

Song:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eu5bBDRpzPM>

Activity:

Get two shallow plastic containers, such as food storage containers. Using play dough or clay/putty, put two balls several inches apart on the bottom of only one of the plastic containers. Using wooden sticks or pipe cleaners, construct a simple frame of a house. Cover the bottom of the container with small rocks so that the play dough is covered. In the second container, fill the bottom with sand and construct a similar house using wooden sticks or pipe cleaners. As you read the story, fill each container with water, being sure that the house built on the sand falls down. The play dough or clay/putty in the rock container should help the house stay steady so that the point can be illustrated.

Talk about how to build your house upon the rock. Write words or phrases (such as Jesus, read the Bible, pray, etc.) inside of the H-house on page 25.