

Freedom

On your marks:

This activity works as a warm-up for looking at a Bible story about freedom or slavery. I'll explain it here with the classic freedom story of the Exodus, but it would adapt easily to other stories like Joseph when he was in prison, Paul and Silas, the people in metaphorical prisons of blindness, demon possession or trapped by greed, the crucifixion and resurrection.

Get set:

You'll need staplers or glue, paints (alas—took me hours to clear this one up), the obvious table covers, strips of paper or thin card about 30 cm long, paper or card on which to paint, one pair of scissors and coloured (in this case blue) paper.

Go!

1. Get the children to make paper chains from the strips of paper by looping them into one another and stapling or gluing the two ends together like a Christmas chain. (Stapling is easier; gluing is more fun and takes longer.) As you make the chains, which can be simply two links or as long as you like, talk about who might be put in chains: what sort of people have to wear chains? Prisoners in the old days, people in police custody in handcuffs, slaves, prisoners of war (you may get mentions of *Pirates of the Caribbean* or similar, which is all to the good). Ask why these people have to wear chains. I wonder how it feels to have to wear chains and be in some sort of prison?
2. Leave the chains to one side for later and give each child a large piece of card or paper. Ask them what colours and shapes they think of when they think of being a prisoner or a slave in chains. Ask them to paint these shapes and colours on their paper.
3. Then do the same with the shapes and colours associated with freedom: how does it feel to be released? To be free?
4. Put the two pictures side by side and ask 'I wonder how we get from this one to this one (from slavery to freedom—though the reverse would also make for an interesting discussion)?'
5. Take the blue paper and scissors and as you cut out a strip of wave shapes, tell the story of the escape from Egypt. As you get to the crossing of the Reed Sea, place the cut-out waves as a bridge between the slavery picture and the freedom picture. Look! The water has become a bridge! How strange!

6. You could ask some of the following, depending on the age of your group:
When do we use water in church? Is it ever a bridge between one thing and another?
Can you think of any other stories where people escaped from slavery to freedom? What was their 'bridge' or 'escape route'?
What other sorts of slavery can you think of where there aren't any actual chains, but someone is still trapped? How might they escape?
What do you think Jesus meant when he said 'The truth will set you free'?

7. Take the paper chains you made earlier and slip them over your wrists. Say that you're all going to pray a prayer for freedom today and ask them to think of a person who is trapped and needs to escape. You could go round and say these out loud. Say a 'rounding up' prayer along the lines of 'Dear God, thank you that you want people to be free to be near you and to be who they really are made to be. We give these people to you now and ask you to break their chains.' As you finish the prayer, everyone rips open the chains and lets them fall on the floor.

8. The next game is seeing who can pick up the most bits of chain and put them in the bin.

Downloaded from Barnabas in Churches - resourcing work among children and families - www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk

Visit our website for ideas, books and resources, news and information about our work and ministry. All that we do is only made possible through generosity of those who support us. Find out more about supporting us - www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk/support-and-donate/

© BRF 2012 | Visit www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk/terms/ for copyright.