

# TEN TIPS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

## Enacting Miracles...

Children love miracles. When teaching, find ways to “recreate” them so children can experience the delight and wonder that they bring. Here are a couple of ideas:

**Water to Wine**—Enact the Lord’s first miracle from John 2:1. You will need 2 pitchers, one clear (glass or plastic) and one that you cannot see through (pottery or plastic) and cups. Fill the clear pitcher with water. Put a grape juice concentrate (powder or frozen) in the bottom of the pottery/plastic pitcher before your lesson. Make sure the children do not see the concentrate. As you tell the story, pour the water from the clear pitcher into the pottery pitcher. When you finish the story, pour a cup of the water turned into wine for each child to drink.

**Aaron’s Rod Becomes a Serpent**—Exodus 7:8. You will need a rubber or plastic snake and a stick. Trim a tree branch or stick into Aaron’s rod. Throw it down as Aaron did. When it touches the ground, remove the stick (hide it behind your back) and throw down the snake. As you reach to pick it up, use one hand to grab the serpent and bring the stick out with the other hand.

*Make sure you explain the enactments. Let the children know that the Lord really does miracles, but that we can only enact them!*

## If there’s food in the story, then try some...

Many stories in the Word involve food. Prepare food as a project, or simply bring it in to sample. **Samson and the honey in the lion’s carcass**—Judges 14:8: Bring in honeycomb to eat. **Manna in the wilderness**—Exodus 16. Sprinkle puffed millet or Rice Krispies cereal on a clean floor or a bed sheet for the children to gather. **Loaves and Fishes**—Matthew 14:13. Share five small loaves and two fishes (canned sardines) from a basket.

## Water play...

Many stories in the Word involve water. Children love the sensory experience of dabbling their hands in water. You can reenact the **parting of the Red Sea**—Exodus 14 by filling a cooking or baking tray with **shallow** water. Blow a hair dryer across the water (widthwise) to create a dry path for the Children of Israel to walk on. (Try this ahead of time to be sure you get the right depth to create a path with your hairdryer.) **Naaman** was commanded to wash his leprosy in the Jordan River. Have the children dip their hands in flour to represent leprosy and then wash seven times in the “Jordan” to become clean.

## Act it out...

Older children love to act out action stories from the word. Create a simple script. Access the Word on the internet—e.g. at [www.kemptonproject.org](http://www.kemptonproject.org) or [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com), and copy into a word program. You can easily break the text into character parts and lines.

## Make the most of your setting...

Teaching outdoors? Set up a tent to tell the story of **Abraham and the angel visitors**—Genesis 18. A large sheet will do. Use two sticks as tent poles and rope to safely secure them. For **Moses and the burning bush**—Exodus 3, tie flame-colored strips of fabric to branches on a bush and create a bush that is on fire but not consumed. Measure out the **Tabernacle of Israel** and its court on a large grassy field. Use cones or sticks and string to mark the perimeter. To illustrate the holy city, **New Jerusalem** descending out of heaven—Revelation 21, make a model of the city and tie some fishing line to it. You can put the fishing line over a high tree branch and read the story as the holy city descends.

## Simple costumes...

Start a costume wardrobe with simple large loose-fitting T-shirts in various colors (white for angels, various colors for characters in the Word, *etc.*) Add waist ties and headpieces (cloth rectangles of various kinds and colors). A few plastic crowns will outfit your kings and queens. Once you have a costume cupboard, acting stories from the Word will be easy.

## Easy props...

A natural **stick** can be a shepherd's crook, Aaron's rod, a measuring stick, a scepter or sign of old age. Use a stick to help the children's imaginations get started. Use **gold spray paint** to transform rocks into pieces of gold, a cardboard box into the Ark of the Covenant, a cigar box into a wise man's gift, and more.

## Timesaving shortcuts ...

When cutting out pieces of projects for each child, try folding several times and cutting once. This works for paper, fabric, string, *etc.* Depending on the thickness of the material, you may be able to cut out 8 projects with one cut! Use a **better tool**—when cutting paper, use a paper cutter instead of scissors. Try a rotary blade instead of scissors for cutting fabric. **Write it once and photocopy**—don't get stuck writing something out for each child! **Copy and paste** project titles or recitations. You will fit many on one page and can quickly cut them apart with a paper cutter.

## Extra time on your hands at the end of a lesson?...

Play a game of "**guess who**" or "**Come si Come.**" The leader (teacher or student) says "Come si come," signaling that they have thought of a person, preferably a character from the Word. The rest of the class says, "Who do you come by?" The class then has to guess who the leader has in mind. The leader can only say "yes" or "no." Questions will need to be phrased so that this answers the question, *i.e.* "Is this person a woman?" rather than "Is this a woman or a man?"

Teach younger children a **new song**, possibly with hand motions.

Use names of people in the Word to play "**hangman.**" The leader puts dashes on a piece of paper or the board—each dash representing the letter of a name. If children guess correctly, the letters are put on the dashes. If the children guess incorrectly, one piece of a hangman's noose and person are drawn on the board.

## Instant last-minute lessons...

Try [www.newchurchvineyard.org](http://www.newchurchvineyard.org). You will find a wealth of lesson and activity ideas that are ready-to-use. The New Church Vineyard Magazine is published monthly. You can also access archived issues for a broad selection of topics for toddlers through young adults.

## Internet resources for teachers and teens...

Do you ever read the Word and wonder whether the Heavenly Doctrine for the New Church can shed light on a particular passage? You can now go online and find out using [www.heavenlydoctrines.org](http://www.heavenlydoctrines.org) or [www.kemptonproject.org](http://www.kemptonproject.org). The Kempton Project allows to select a reading from the Word and display related teachings from the Heavenly Doctrines right beside it. HeavenlyDoctrines.org is a great site for helping teens learn how to find out what the Heavenly Doctrines teach. They can search by topic or by book and paragraph number.