

In One Ear, Out the Other

Description: a game contrasting participants who pass a whispered and a written message

Aim: to illustrate the importance of having God's Word in your own written language

Audience: children grades 1-6, minimum 10 participants

Time: 10 minutes

Equipment: pen and paper; optional slide, transparency or poster of Romans 5:8

Scripture to Study: Romans 5:8, 2 Chronicles 34:14-33

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Leader's Instructions:

Pre-class Preparations:

1. On a small piece of paper write this: "God wants everyone in the world to know how much He loves them.

Pass this paper to the next child in the row after you whisper the message to them. Don't let the children in the other rows see this paper."

1. Optional: Prepare a PowerPoint slide, overhead transparency, poster, white or black board of Romans 5:8.

Class Time:

1. Have the children sit in rows with a minimum of two rows with equal numbers in each row*.
2. Explain that because this game has lots of whispering, everyone must be very quiet. Only those passing the message are allowed to speak. Explain that you are going to send a message down each of the rows, to see if the same message reaches the other end. When the person on the opposite end receives the message they must stand up in their place to show that they have finished.
3. Start at the far end of each row and whisper this message to the person on the end: "God wants everyone in the world to know how much He loves them."
4. When you get to the back row, explain to the one on the end that their message is going to be passed in a *different* way. Whisper the message, but also give them the written message to read. Tell them not to let the rows in front of them see the paper, but secretly read it and pass it down the line as they whisper.
5. When you have given the message to each of the rows, return to the front and wait for the message to be passed down to the opposite end. When a child is standing at the end of each row, ask each one, starting in front, what the message was that they received.
6. Now use the Discussion and Application Section below to explain why you've played the game.

Discussion and Application:

1. Only those on the back row got the message right. Do you know why? It's because they were asked to play the game a little

differently. They not only whispered the message to each other, they had it written down as well! (“No fair,” the children protest?) Hmmm, that’s just like real life for over 2,000 language groups around the world! They don’t have the Bible written in their language. They just have to remember what someone told them. Is that fair?

2. If you pass a message by word of mouth, it changes more and more as it gets passed on. The message you end up with is *not* the message that started out. But when the message is written down, and especially if it’s in the language you understand best, then the last person will get the same message as the first.
3. It’s like that with the Bible. The Bible tells us that “God wants everyone in the world to know how much He loves them.” We can understand this important message and trust it because it’s written down in our own language.
4. Ask someone to read out Romans 5:8, or show the one you have prepared, and discuss it.
5. Around the world millions of people still have never heard, in their own language, the message of God’s love for them. Wycliffe Bible Translators believes that this message is more important than anything else on earth. They want everyone around the world to have a translation of God’s Word that they can understand well!
6. It’s a big job, and translators can’t do it alone. God wants all His people to team up and reach the world with His Good News. How can you help? You can pray and give. Could you write letters or emails to encourage people who are doing translation work? Could you go on a short-term trip with your parents? How about studying a foreign language as one of your classes? Take time to pray and ask God what He wants you to do to help get His message all around the world.

*This activity works particularly well in a school assembly where children are seated in rows, with the youngest at the front and the oldest at the back. The youngest ones will not be able to remember such a long message, but will enjoy the activity anyway. The older ones will be able to read well and keep their paper “answer sheet” a secret!

Notes: