

Literacy for Life



Description:

Interactive introduction to the importance of literacy

Aims:

Learn the meaning of the word "literacy"
Recognize the importance of literacy

Audience:

Early elementary

Minimum Time Requirements:

10 minutes

Scripture to Study

1 John 4:18
1 John 5:4, 5

Materials:

- Poster or overhead transparency of dot-to-dot puzzle (page 5)
- Overhead projector and screen / white wall if using a transparency for the puzzle
- Marker for completing puzzle. (If working with an overhead transparency, be sure to use a marker that you can wash off.)
- Firefly story pictures 1-4
- Optional: battery-operated tea light
- Optional: flashlight
- Paper with the word "literacy" printed on it from page 6
- Bible with page-markers at 1 John 4:18 and 1 John 5:4, 5

Pre-class Preparations

- Prepare a large poster or an overhead transparency of the dot-to-dot puzzle from page 5 and print out one copy of the word “literacy” from page 6.
- Decide how to display the puzzle and the word so that all the children can see them at once.
- Print out and color the four pictures for the firefly story
- Optional: print out one copy of the booklet format of the firefly story for each child to take home, color and tell the story.

Class Time

Display the incomplete dot-to-dot puzzle for all the children to see. Ask,

Can you guess what this picture shows?

After a few students provide guesses, explain,

It is hard to figure out what the picture is when you can only see parts of it.

That is kind of what it is like when you don't know how to read. The words on a page look like just a bunch of squiggles. When you learn how to read, you learn to recognize these squiggles. First you recognize letters and then words and then sentences.

Ask three volunteers to draw on the overhead transparency or poster, completing the dot-to-dot puzzle. Volunteer one should connect dots A through F. Volunteer two should connect dots F through L. Volunteer three should connect dots L through R. Thank your volunteers, and after they are seated again ask,

What is the picture?

Pause for a response.

Yes, it is a Bible! You can see it now. When you can read, you can understand the words on the page, just like you can recognize this picture, now that our volunteers have connected the dots.

Display the word “literacy”.

Here's a big word. Does anyone know what this “literacy” means?

Allow a few children to respond.

Literacy is being able to read and write, not just letters and words, but numbers as well. Many people in the world (including adults) haven't learned to read and write yet.

What if your mother could not read? Would she know how much medicine to give you? Could she read you a story or follow a recipe to bake you a cake?

Following some discussion, say,

Let's play a little game. When I say something that you *would*

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only be able to do if you *could* read or write, *stand* up. If it is something you *could* do without reading or writing, *stay seated*, and *cover* your eyes. Ready? **(You may need to repeat the instructions or ask a child to repeat the instructions to be sure they are understood.)**

Read the following list.

Walk the dog (sit)

Buy the cake mix your mom asked you to get for her (stand)

Find the letter “S” on a sign (stand)

Play Monopoly Junior (stand)

Bake cookies with a new recipe (stand)

Plant a seed (sit)

Paint a picture following the paint-by-number directions (stand)

Print your name (stand)

Listen to a story (sit)

Find the biography of William Cameron Townsend at the library (stand)

Find John 3:16 in your Bible (stand)

Instruct the children to sit down. Then continue,

Wow! Literacy is pretty important in our lives, isn't it?

What is the most important thing a person could ever read?

Allow children to give a few answers. Hopefully, someone will say that it is the Bible. If not, tell them the answer.

Optional idea: hold a battery-operated tea light in your hand to simulate a firefly while telling the following story. If possible, dim the lights in the room. Continue,

Listen to this story that Bible translator Adji Arakou from Togo, Africa told. It tells us how being able to read God's Word takes away the fear that some traditional beliefs produce.

The Lama people of Togo live in fear because of many traditional beliefs. But since the light of God's good news started shining in the Lama area—almost everywhere now—people in Christian homes no longer even discuss such beliefs. As a result, this generation of young people no

Materials:

- Optional: battery-operated tea light
- Flashlight (optional)
- Firefly story pictures 1-3

longer fears harmless, everyday events as they once did.

(Picture 1 – optional: turn on flash light) In the old Lama culture people believed that fireflies and bees carried messages from dead family members to the living. If a bee came into the house or courtyard, people expected a message from the other side of the grave. It was the same for fireflies—insects that fly only at night. If someone was preparing supper outside, and a firefly began flying around the cooking fire, the whole family became very upset. Sometimes the father wouldn't even eat that night because he was so worried. He feared that a family member would have an accident, get sick or even die. Early the next morning he would find a traditional priest to interpret the sign for him.

(Picture 2) Lama Christians thank God that those old traditions no longer frighten them. One evening while a Lama Christian family ate in their courtyard, the electricity went out. There they sat in the dark with no lantern or even a match nearby.

(Picture 3 – optional: turn out flashlight, let tea light in your hand be seen) Just then, one of those dancing lights, a firefly, passed by. Clarisse, one of the little girls in the family, got up and caught the firefly in her hand. She went into the kitchen to look for matches, using the firefly to light her way. She lit the lantern and the darkness fled.*

Oh, wow! Just think about how God honored Clarisse's faith. Through reading God's Word and believing what God said in His Word, Clarisse no longer needed to fear fireflies. He gave her the courage to catch a firefly. He protected her and gave her peace because she was trusting one of His promises. That is so exciting! God's Word is full of promises for those who walk with Him. In faith, perhaps Clarisse was claiming one of these two promises:

Ask volunteers to read 1 John 4:18 and 1 John 5:4, 5. Continue, I'm glad our two volunteers could read these verses to us, aren't you? How could these verses help you in your everyday life just like they helped Clarisse?

Allow a few children to respond. Then continue, Let's thank God that we can read the Bible in our language and learn to have faith in Him. Let's pray that He will help others learn to read His Word so that they can have faith in Him, too.

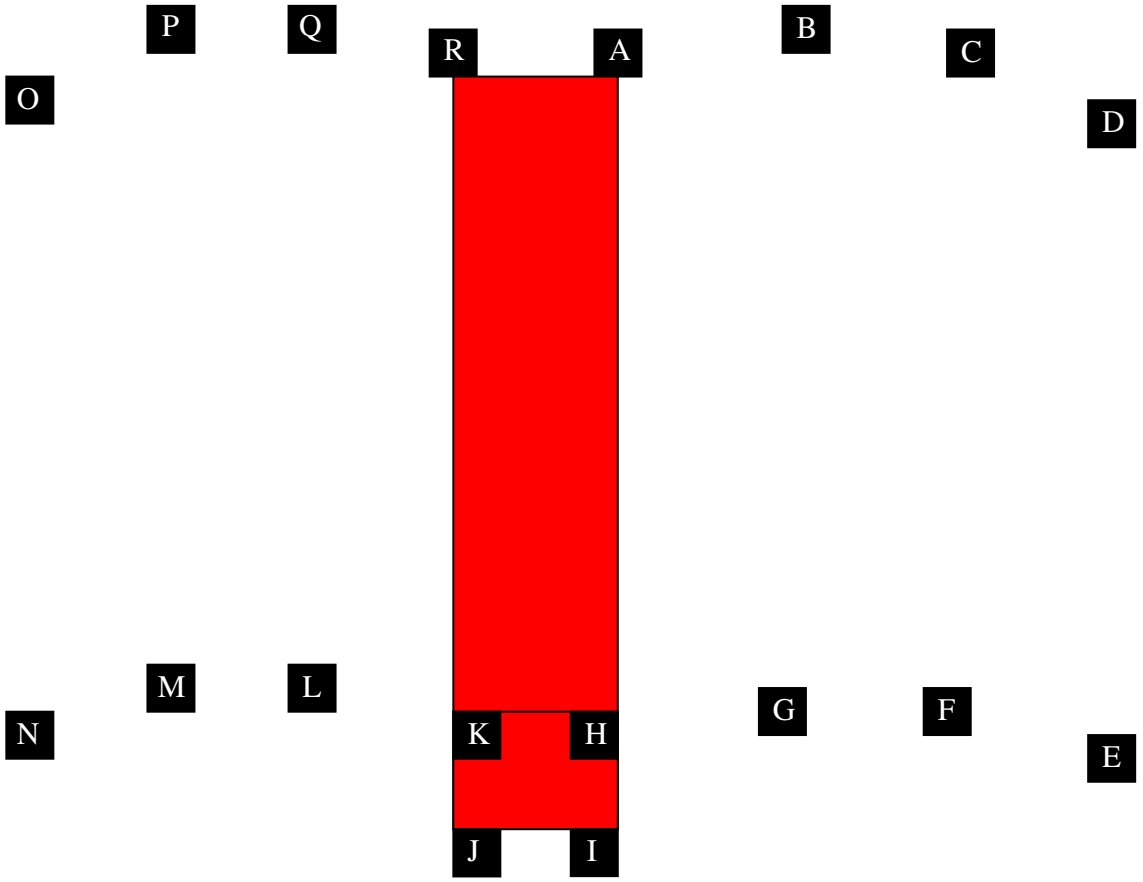
Lead the children in a short prayer.

Optional: Pass out the "Firefly Story" coloring booklet for children to take home and tell the story to their family.

*Adapted from an account written by **Pastor Adji Arakou**, Lama Bible translator, Togo. Translated from French by Carol Brinneman, former Lama translation team member.

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- Bible with page-markers at 1 John 4:18 and 1 John 5:4, 5



literacy



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3