



Shaping the Hearts of Pre-K & K Children with Special Needs

BIBLE REVIEW

The most common way to evaluate children's understanding of a lesson is to ask them to tell what they remember. For children with language delays, this can be frustrating at best and impossible at worst. But it is important to remember that the lack of ability to use expressive language does not mean a lesson has not been internalized.

Give children with developmental delays the opportunity to review a lesson by *showing* you what they have learned. Instead of asking them to verbally tell you a fact about the story, use the teaching pictures and allow the children to review the story by pointing out specific parts of the picture.

ASK: **Can you point to Jesus? John the Baptist? the angel? Matthew? Zacchaeus?**

Can you show me the gifts the wise men brought to Jesus?

Can you point to the dove?

Can you show me where Zacchaeus went so he could see Jesus?

Allowing children with language and speech delays to answer by pointing out story facts will be less frustrating for them. For them, a picture really can be worth a thousand words.

SING AND PRAY

Materials

bubble solution, bubble wand

Teaching Tip

To make your own bubble solution, combine $\frac{1}{2}$ cup light corn syrup, 1–1½ cups dishwashing liquid, and 4 cups water.

Recalling the words to songs may prove frustrating to children with language-based developmental delays. Often nonverbal children feel completely left out of corporate worship. But we can take the admonition of the psalmist in Psalm 47:1 to “clap your hands” and have another option for leading children in worship.

Tell the children you are going to play praise music, and they can sing along with the music if they want to. Explain that you will blow bubbles as the music plays. The children can clap their hands in praise as they pop the bubbles. Clapping improves bilateral functioning, balance, and motor planning. The laughter and fun that will ensue during this worship activity will surely be a joyful noise to the Lord!



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SNACKS

Snack time is a part of many classroom schedules. More than a time to feed children's physical bodies, this can be a time when you set classroom routine and provide sensory input. Just as scents and smells can be alerting or calming, so can the sense of taste. Particular foods can be organized according to texture, taste, and temperature.

Crunchy foods, such as pretzels, crackers, and chips provide sensory input as the child works to chew the food. Licking or sucking foods, such as frozen fruit treats, can provide calming oral-motor sensations. Ask the parents of a child with special needs what kind of snack their child is drawn to and consider providing this for the entire class—after checking for allergies, of course! Making this minor adjustment may add just the calming factor to your routine that you are looking for.