

Praise Factory Resources: Tools for Your Curriculum Tool Box

Pirates, Welcome!

While obviously the Praise Factory resources were originally intended for use in the curriculums I've written, this is far from the only way to use them. Most of them can be used alongside other curriculums... and that pleases me to no end. The point is reaching the hearts and minds of children, not the name of the curriculum. I would like to introduce you to a few favorites of mine that are easily adaptable and enriching, in hopes that they might do this very thing.

ACTS Prayer

ACTS is an acronym that stands for Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication-- four, key elements of prayer. All three of the Praise Factory curriculums help the children think about prayer using this acronym. Why? Because so often children (and quite frankly, most adults), tend to gravitate towards the vending machine "gimme" mentality in their prayers. They are quite good at asking God for what they want, but not so good and praising Him for who He is, understanding the extent of their sin and confessing it to God, nor remembering to thank Him for the abundant blessings and answers to prayers He has given to us already. (Even as I write this, I felt so convicted about my morning's fairly vending-machine-like prayer that I stopped writing and went to pray in all these ways!)

The ACTS prayer can be applied to any Bible story, Bible verse and therefore is extremely easy to add to the lesson in any curriculum, let alone be a great way for families to have a meaty, yet simple devotional time. Although you can just give the kids an ACTS from whatever Bible truth or verses you are studying, we find that it is best if you encourage them to come up with their own. With the youngest children, this may be only choosing one or two elements, such as Thanksgiving and Supplication, with you filling in the rest. But as they get older, you can encourage them to find all four elements.

Only one word of warning: please do not let the children think this is the only way to pray. Remind them that this is just a way to help them pray. God does not only accept prayers in this format!

Songs and Sign Language

We have found that the children learn and retain the Bible verses so much better when they sing them. The Praise Factory curriculum includes about 150 Bible verse, all set to song. The sheet music and audio are downloadable from the website or you can order hard-copies. Currently they are available only in groups by units. If you download the CD lists of songs, you can find the Bible verses you are using in your own curriculum and use these songs to complement what you are teaching.

The Praise Factory Investigators CDs include all the music that is used in all three curriculums. There are sign language sheets for each of the PFI Bible verse songs, so you can include actions to go along with the words. There is also sign language for the 50+ hymns used in the curriculum, too.

We are working towards putting all the songs on the website by book of the Bible, too, for easy access for people just wanting to use the music in other ways than with the Praise Factory curriculum.

There are songbooks with lyrics and lead sheets for each of the three curriculums available on the website, too.

The Games

Perhaps the most popular source of pirating of resources from the Praise Factory curriculums are the games. I have written the games so that they can be used to review any Bible story, Bible truth or Bible verse. There are two sets: one set for the preschoolers (used in Hide 'n' Seek Kids and Deep Down Detectives) and one set for the elementary school age children (PFI).

If you have a curriculum with not enough wiggle built into it; or, perhaps, lots of wiggle, but no content built into it. (Not a conduit of truth, just an energy-buster), then you may find these games a welcome resource.

Here is a little guide to which type of game can be adapted for what use in other curriculums and how.

PRESCHOOL GAMES

Story Review Games:

All of these games make use of our story board figures. If you have a set of Betty Lukens flannelgraph figures, you can select characters and use them for any Bible story you have in mind.

Bible Verse Games:

No adaptations needed.

Music, Movement and Memory:

These games reinforce the truths in song. All you need is to pick a song of your choice that fits in with your lesson and you are good to go.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GAMES

Story Review Games:

No adaptations needed.

Bible Truth Games:

These games are used to reinforce the Bible Truth being learned in PFI, but can easily be used as a story game or reinforce other truths you are teaching.

Bible Verse Games:

No adaptations needed.

Music Games

These games are used to reinforce the Bible verse song or hymn the children are learning. They all incorporate sign language. If you are doing one of the Bible verse songs or hymns we use in PFI, then you only need to print out the sign language for that particular song and you are all set. If, however, you are doing an entirely different song, the entire, comprehensive Sign Language Dictionary we built for use in PFI is available online. It is huge, but you will almost certainly find the sign language you need for your own songs.

VIPP Games

VIPP stands for Very Important Prayer Person. We have identified six categories of VIPP at our church: Church Staff, Elders, Deacons, Missionaries, Special Volunteers and just plain ole Church Members. A teacher gathers information about the VIPP ahead of time and gives the children "Clue Card" coloring sheets that they use to fill in the information they learn and can take home to keep on praying for the VIPP. The VIPP games use a set (or sometimes two sets) of these coloring sheets to help the children review what they have learned. See pp.324-333 for what the VIPP Clue Card coloring sheets look like.

The preschool and elementary school games are all included in the next, two sections of this book. They are also all online for easy print out.