

Ups and Downs of Family Life

- Lesson 1: Families Provide for Needs
- Lesson 2: Being Boys and Girls
- Lesson 3: Resolving Conflicts in the Family
- Lesson 4: Family Rules
- Lesson 5: New Beginnings: Forgiveness in Family Life
- Lesson 6: Celebrating Family Heritage
- Lesson 7: Me and My Family Game
- Lesson 8: Dealing with Death

Goals

- Students will develop their understanding of family life—both its rough spots and its joys.
- Students will develop an understanding of gender differences and similarities.
- Students will develop a Christian perspective on death.

Background

God created us to live in relationship with others. Genesis 2 pictures God the Creator thinking over Adam's relationships and deciding that Adam needed another human being with whom to share his life. "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him" (verse 18). Marriage and, by extension, the family are part of a loving God's plan for human life. Scripture affirms this throughout (see, for example, Psalm 127:3-4). The idea that marriage is a good gift is highlighted by the frequent use in Scripture of marriage as a metaphor of God's relationship to his people (Hosea 1-4, Isaiah 54:4-6, Mark 2:19-20, Ephesians 5:22-23, Revelation 19:7-9).

But marriage and family life have not escaped the effects of sin. Because we are sinful, we have no power within ourselves to maintain healthy family relationships. Our brokenness is reflected in family life. But in Christ we can find healing, forgiveness, and the power to restore relationships and make new beginnings.

With this Christian perspective in mind, how do we teach a unit on the family? As Christians we want to celebrate the joy of God's good gift of family, but we also must recognize the existence of common family struggles. Our homes are not trouble free and glossing over the effects of sin is not helpful to our students. The Bible is brutally honest in its picture of family life. Think of the stories about the families of Jacob, David, and Solomon. Teaching the unit in a moralistic way will only serve to make students who have troubled families feel guilty. God is present in both troubled and tranquil families. The good news is that God came to sinners, to all those with broken and contrite hearts.

Vocabulary

Integrate the following suggested vocabulary:

shelter	family	solve	tradition	commandment
food	honor	female	heritage	responsibility
clothing	forgiveness	problem	males	hope

Unit Resources (Search online for similar resources if these are no longer available)

Anderson, Ray S., and Dennis B. Guernsey. *On Being Family: A Social Theology of the Family*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985.

The central thesis of this teacher resource is that "God has placed human persons in a created order for which the covenant love of God provides the fundamental paradigm" for the formation of family life.

Hart, Carole, and others. *Free to Be ... You and Me*. Toronto/New York: Bantam, 1972.

A collection of poems, stories, and songs that attempt to break down stereotypes and promote self-esteem.

Hoberman, Mary Ann. *Fathers, Mothers, Sisters, Brothers: A Collection of Family Poems*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1991.

Lesson Resources (Search online for similar resources if these are no longer available)

Lesson 1

Dantzer-Rosenthal, Marya. *Some Things Are Different, Some Things Are the Same*. Niles, Ill., Whitman, 1986.

Compares the homes and families of two friends.

Vendrell, Carme, and J.M. Parramón. *Family: Parents*. Educational Series. Toronto/New York: Barron's, 1987.

About the role of parents in raising and caring for children and about how feelings of a child can affect a parent.

_____. *Family: Grandparents*. Educational Series. Toronto/New York: Barron's, 1987.

About the place of grandparents in the family.

Lesson 2

Cole, Joanna. *Asking About Sex and Growing Up*. New York: Morrow, 1988.

Galbraith, Kathryn. *Waiting for Jennifer*. New York: McElderry Books, 1987.

Henkes, Kevin. *Chester's Way*. New York: Greenwillow, 1988.

Hummel, Ruth. *Where Do Babies Come From?* Learning About Sex Series. St. Louis: Concordia, 1982, 1988.

Seven-year-old Suzanne learns how babies grow inside the mother and that both mother and father have a part in making a baby. Includes the following vocabulary: *uterus, navel, pregnant, vagina, vulva, penis, scrotum, testicles, sperm*. A helpful resource written from a Christian perspective and intended for children ages 6-8. One criticism: on the whole the book's approach is direct and natural, but the setting of chapter 2 in a museum is contrived.

Merriam, Eve. *Boys & Girls, Girls & Boys*. New York: Holt, 1972.

Zolotow, Charlotte. *William's Doll*. New York: Harper, 1972.

This classic about a boy who wants a doll is also available on videocassette.

Lessons 3-6

Berenstain, Stan and Jan. *The Berenstain Bears Get in a Fight*. New York: Random, 1982.

Several titles in the Berenstain Bears Series tie deal with health topics. Be aware, however, that some books in the series tend to picture the father as bumbling and ineffective.

Families and Rules: Watch How Well Everything Works. McGraw Hill and Education Services Group.

A 10-minute film about how rules help a family live together.

Girard, Linda Walvoord. *At Daddy's on Saturdays*. Morton Grove, Ill.: Whitman/Toronto: General Publishing, 1987.

Katie discovers that even though her parents live apart, she will maintain her loving relationship with her father. Students whose parents are divorced will find this book reassuring.

Getting Along at Home. South Deerfield, Mass.: Channing L. Bete.

This booklet stresses the value of communication to good family life and gives tips on handling conflict in positive ways. Available from the publisher: 200 State Rd., South Deerfield, Massachusetts 01373-0200 (phone 800-628-7733).

Hazen, Barbara. *Even If I Did Something Awful?* New York: Atheneum, 1981.

Keller, Holly. *Maxine in the Middle*. New York: Greenwillow, 1989.

McPhail, David. *Sisters*. New York: Harcourt, 1984.

Munsch, Robert. *Love You Forever*. Willowdale, Ont.: Firefly, 1982.

Prutzman, Priscilla, and others. *The Friendly Classroom for a Small Planet*. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1988.

Put out by Children's Creative Response to Conflict, an organization with Quaker roots, this teacher resource contains helpful material on conflict resolution. Order from the publisher: P.O. Box 582, Santa Cruz, California 95061.

Sharmat, Marjorie. *Sometimes Papa and Mama Fight*. New York: Harper, 1980.

_____. *My Mother Never Listens to Me*. Niles, Ill.: Whitman, 1984.

Uldry, Janice. *Thump and Plunk*. New York: Harper, 1981.

Zolotow, Charlotte. *If It Weren't for You*. New York: Harper, 1966.

_____. *Timothy Too*. Boston: Houghton, 1986.

Lesson 6

Kopp, Ruth. *Where Has Grandpa Gone?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983.

Written from a Christian perspective, this teacher resource describes how a child perceives death at various age levels and gives suggestions for guiding children through times of loss. Includes a read-aloud section to help explain the meaning of death to children.

The following is a list of K-2 student resources.

Books about the death of animals or pets

Brown, Margaret Wise. *The Dead Bird*. Reprint of 1958 edition. New York: HarperCollins, 1989.

Cohen, Miriam. *Jim's Dog Muffins*. New York: Greenwillow, 1984.

Keller, Holly. *Goodbye, Max*. New York: Greenwillow, 1984.

Sanford, Doris. *It Must Hurt a Lot: A Child's Book About Death*. Portland, Ore.: Multnomah, 1986.

Stock, Catherine. *Better With Two*. New York: Harper, 1988.

Wahl, Mats. *Grandfather's Laika*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 1990.

Books dealing with moving and change or loss

Aliki. *We Are Best Friends*. New York: Greenwillow, 1982.

Hickman, Martha. *My Friend William Moved Away*. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1979.

Hughes, Shirley. *Moving Molly*. New York: Lothrop, 1988.

Sharmat, Marjorie. *Mitchell Is Moving*. New York: Macmillan, 1978.

Waber, Bernard. *Ira Says Goodbye*. Boston: Houghton, 1988.

Zolotow, Charlotte. *Janey*. New York: Harper, 1973.

Books dealing with human death

Clifton, Lucille. *Everett Anderson's Goodbye*. New York: Holt, 1983.

Everett grieves for his dead father. The book begins with a list of the five stages of grieving and follows Everett through each stage of grief.

Cohn, Janice. *I Had a Friend Named Peter: Talking to Children About Death*. New York: Morrow, 1987.

de Paola, Tomie. *Nana Upstairs, Nana Downstairs*. New York: Puffin, 1973.

Egger, Bettina. *Marianne's Grandmother*. New York: Dutton, 1987.

Gould, Deborah. *Grandpa's Slide Show*. New York: Lothrop, 1987.

Kaldhol, Marit, and Wenche Oyen. *Goodbye Rune*. New York: Kane/Miller, 1987.

LESSON 1: FAMILIES PROVIDE FOR NEEDS

Preparation/Materials

- Student Activities 1a and 1b
- Student Activity 2
- Note: Lesson 6 of this unit centers on family heritage and traditions. Each student is requested to bring from home some object tied to his or her heritage. We suggest teachers send a note to parents with the request at the beginning of the unit to provide ample time.

Objectives

- Students will be aware that living in families is part of God’s plan.
- Students will identify ways their family provides for them.
- Students will choose to thank God for their family.

Background

“God established marriage and, by extension, the family as a cornerstone of creation,” states *Horizons Health’s* statement of philosophy. In this lesson, lead students to understand that the family is part of God’s loving design for the human race and awaken in them an appreciation of the blessings of family life.

As you teach this unit, be sensitive to students who may find the subject of family life painful because of divorce, death, or other circumstances. Be aware that there may be family tensions that no one knows about. If a student is reluctant to carry out a specific assignment, find an alternate activity.



Lesson

1. Ask students to identify what a family is. (A simple definition: your family is made up of people who are related to you). Make clear that many different groupings comprise what we call a family and that family members don’t always live together (college age students away from home, etc.).
2. Discuss the origin and purpose of the family. Ask: “How did the family begin? Why do you think God planned for human beings to live in families?” Then ask: “How does your family help you? What are some of the things you receive from your family?”

Use Student Activities 1a and 1b to identify the basic needs that are met by families: food, shelter, clothing, love, help, and learning about God. Have students look carefully at the picture and identify how adult family members are helping children. Point out not only what the family members are doing in the pictures but also the beds, pillows, blankets, food, warmth of the house, washing facilities for clothing, materials for the project in process. Bring out the need each person has for comfort and love and support. What pictures in the visual show family members giving love? If time allows, have the students cut out and color the pictures. Fasten them together with tape.

Lead a discussion on what Christian parents also do to teach their children about God. Elicit from students how parents do this (reading the Bible, praying, talking about how to serve God, going to Sunday School and church.)

3. As part of the class session or during class devotions, thank God for giving us families who care for us and teach us about God. An appropriate prayer song is "For the Beauty of the Earth" (*Psalter Hymnal*, 432), especially verse 3, which refers to the family.
4. **Student activity.** Using Student Activity 2, have students identify the basic need each picture depicts and choose the word from the word bank that matches the picture. Review the lesson ideas as you go over the completed activity with the class. Close the lesson by giving a brief preview of topics to be covered in the unit.



Related Activities

1. Center activity: have students make cards or paper plate wall hangers expressing thanks and love to families for providing for them.
2. Make a bulletin board depicting class members' families. Ask students to bring photographs or draw pictures of their families. Display the pictures side by side and on top of each other as if they are rooms in a house. Make a paper roof with the heading "The Family of God."
3. Have students make collages picturing different family groupings.
4. Have students discuss and write about how someone in their family depends on them.

LESSON 2: BEING BOYS AND GIRLS

Preparation/Materials

- Health puppet or puppets
- Plan details of the puppet script.
- Story or poem to read on relationships/ similarities of boys and girls
- Student Activity
- Optional: Teacher Visual for teaching names of body parts (Unit 6, Lesson 5)

Objectives

- Students will understand that human sexuality is a gift of God.
- Students will understand that according to God’s plan both fathers and mothers have a part in beginning a baby.
- Students will consider gender differences and similarities.

Background

God has designed us as sexual creatures. Our sexuality has purpose and meaning. As males and females we have physically different bodies, but our sexuality is much more than that. Our sexuality has to do with who we are as males and females, with how we understand our sexual selves. Our life experiences shape that understanding. And, perhaps most important of all, our understanding is reflected in our daily relationships with each other.

Of course, although sexuality cannot be equated with the sex act, the sex act is a part of

our sexuality. According to God’s plan, the creation of new life is one of the purposes of our sexuality. Giving accurate information and using correct terms as we describe the process of creating new life shows respect for God’s gift of sexuality. As one author says, “Because God is certainly not embarrassed that we are sexual creatures, neither should we be.”

Providing accurate information about sexuality in developmentally appropriate ways from kindergarten on creates the same kind of foundation for later learning that schools provide in math or language. Specialists in the field of family life education warn that if elementary schools sidestep the issue, sex education at higher levels becomes a struggle to overcome years of accumulated misinformation. Besides, our culture surrounds children from a young age with improper views of sex and sexuality. Teaching children from a young age that sexuality is God’s gift to be used in a way God intends will provide children with the Christian perspective they vitally need.

Be sure to inform parents in advance about what will be covered in this lesson. Good communication establishes trust and prevents misunderstandings. Schools may wish to discuss the specific content of health education at the orientation meetings at the beginning of the school year.



Lesson

1. Have a dialogue with Alex (or set up a dialogue between Chris and Alex) dealing with gender differences. Together you decide on a game to play indoors on a rainy or cold day. When you decide to play house, Alex wants to be the mother. You object and tell him that he can pretend to be the mother for the fun of it, but he can’t really be the mother. Interrupt the dialogue to ask the class who is right. Why can’t boys be mothers? When a girl grows up, she will have a body like her mother, and a boy will have a body like his father. This is part of God’s plan: all people are created either *male* or *female*

(teach the words as new vocabulary). Explain that being born as boys or girls is a special gift of God.

As you continue the dialogue, have the puppet ask you or the class why God made people of both sexes or why mothers are one sex and fathers another. Explain that a mother's body is different from a father's body. It takes both a mother and a father to start a baby. God planned it this way. Every baby starts when two small parts join together and then grow. One part comes from the mother's body (egg) and one part from the father's body (sperm). So the baby belongs to both the mother and the father. They both have a part in starting the baby. You may wish to add that God made male and female bodies so that they fit together in a special way. The sperm from the father enters the mother's body. When the sperm and egg meet, a new baby starts. Then the baby grows inside the mother until it's time to be born. (How much detail you include here will depend on your school's sex education policy.)

Consider using the teacher visual of the human body used in Unit 6, Lesson 5, to teach or review names of male and female body parts. Specifically explain the father's and mother's role in making a baby by stating that the father's penis puts the sperm in the mother's vagina (an opening in the mother's body near the vulva pictured).

Alternate option: read appropriate sections from the book *Where Do Babies Come From?* by Ruth Hummel (Concordia Learning About Sex Series).

Have Alex identify some things he does/uses every day that's different from a girl (wears different clothes, uses a separate washroom at school, perhaps has a separate room at home from his sister).

2. Involve the class in a discussion of similarities between boys and girls. Lead students to understand that boys and girls are different in some ways, but they can do many similar things. Help break down stereotypical views of male/female abilities, personality traits, and vocational choices.
3. Follow up by reading a story or poem that reinforces lesson concepts. *Free to Be ... You and Me*, developed by Marlo Thomas and others, contains several poems (for example, "What Are Little Boys Made Of?" and "My Dog Is a Plumber") that challenge gender stereotypes. Other possible titles are Eve Merriam's *Boys & Girls, Girls & Boys*, Charlotte Zolotow's *William's Doll* (book or film) and Kevin Henkes' *Chester's Way*.
4. **Student activity.** Pair up students to interview each other about interests and likes. (You may have to pair up with a student if the class has an odd number of students.) Turn to the worksheet in the student workbook and explain the activity. If necessary, read the questions with the class.

Have students present their interviews. One option is to read the questions one at a time and ask class members to read their answers. Discuss the results. Are answers

diverse or do many students like the same things? Is there a boy/girl pattern to some answers? If so, discuss possible reasons for the patterns.

Another option is to tabulate and graph the answers. What patterns emerge? Are patterns gender based? If so, talk about causes or reasons. If not, note and discuss that fact.

5. **Closure:** "God created human beings as male and female, as boys and girls. Although some parts of the male body and female body are different, many parts are the same. (Have children name similar parts.) Male and female or father and mother both have a part in making a baby, but we know, too, that God is the one who gives the baby life. That's a mystery and a miracle! Another thing to remember is that boys and girls and men and women are equally God's children. And we are all called to serve and love God."

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Related Activities

1. Discuss how families prepare for the arrival of a new baby. Ask an expectant mother to talk about what she and other family members are doing to get ready for the baby.
2. Integrate with language arts. Have students write two or three sentences in their journals about why they like being a girl or a boy.
3. Write poems or a class poem entitled "What Are Little Children Made of, Made of?" First read and talk about the classic nursery rhymes:

What are little girls made of, made of?
What are little girls made of?
Sugar and spice and all that's nice.
That's what little girls are made of.

What are little boys made of, made of?
What are little boys made of?
Frogs and snails and puppy dog tails.
That's what little boys are made of.

Then write poems in the same patterns, emphasizing things children have in common.

LESSON 3: RESOLVING CONFLICTS IN THE FAMILY

Preparation/Materials

- Ask two class members to stage a disagreement during the class period. At the beginning of the class session, invite them to choose a book to read or a game or toy to use. Have them both choose the same object.
- Student Activity

Objectives

- Students will understand the concept of conflict.
- Students will evaluate ways of resolving conflicts.
- Students will develop conflict resolution skills.

Background

Children need to know that even loving families sometimes disagree with each other. Conflicts are a “natural” part of life on this planet, especially between people who are with each other for many hours each day and share the same time, space, and objects. And children need reassurance that conflicts do not mean that family members don’t love each other.

However, unresolved conflicts are harmful. They can harm a person’s physical, social, emotional, and spiritual health. God instructs us to “take care of our wrath.” This is not only a good biblical principle, it is a good health principle, too. Unresolved conflict causes stress and stress-related illnesses. And the anger and bitterness that results from unresolved conflict affects our relationship with God, creating distance between

us and God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers.” This scriptural directive approaches the reason for resolving conflict from a different direction. God desires that we live in peace and that we, relying on God’s grace and the power of the Spirit, become peacemakers. Nurturing children in the skills and attitudes of peace is kingdom-building work. Instilling in children the desire to be peacemakers is a first step.

How do we teach children to resolve conflicts? First, avoid handing down solutions. Instead, stimulate students to look for creative solutions and join them in the search. A spirit of cooperation in looking for a solution reinforces the value of cooperation—a necessary ingredient of conflict resolution. Second, encourage students to recognize and try to understand the feelings of those involved in the disagreement. Third, have the students attempt to identify the underlying cause of the conflict. Sometimes feelings run so high that the real cause is buried. Since lack of effective communication is often a contributing factor, stress the importance of good two-way communication in resolving many conflicts.

At this grade level, the two lessons focusing on conflict resolution have been placed in the family living unit. However, the material could be moved to the next unit and taught in the context of the school or of the wider community. Bear in mind, however, that lessons focusing on conflict resolution will be taught in that wider context in grade 3.

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Lesson (1-2 sessions)

1. Begin the lesson with the pre-arranged roleplay of an argument. End the conflict by taking the object away from the students and asking them to sit down. (If you prefer, use the health puppets to demonstrate the conflict situations.)

2. Ask other class members what happened and why. (The students fought or argued because both wanted the same thing.) Define and teach the word *conflict* to the class. Ask: "How did the conflict end?" (Teacher took the object away.) Have students identify common family conflicts they have had that ended in a similar way. (Two children fight over a game, and a parent takes game away; they fight over which TV program to watch, and parents turn off the TV.) Also identify what feelings these situations caused. Tell students that even though family members love and help each other, they sometimes also disagree.
3. Roleplay the opening situation again. This time have the two students try to solve their problem. Consider following these steps:
 1. Have the two parties sit down facing each other. Ask each to tell his or her side without interruption. You may help the participants understand and empathize with the other side.
 2. Ask the two parties to brainstorm ideas on how to solve the problem. (If you wish, also ask the class for suggestions.)
 3. Have the disputants decide which solution they can agree on. (Ownership of the solution should always belong to the people involved in the conflict, not what the larger group thinks "is the best ending.")
4. Roleplay other conflicts and follow the same formula as in Step 3 for resolution. Use the following suggested situations and/or others the students suggest.
 - Siblings A and B are playing with a toy that belongs to A. B starts roughhousing and the toy breaks. A wants B to pay for a new one. B says the toy was all worn out, anyway.
 - Sibling A calls B a name and constantly teases. Child B retaliates by stealing or breaking property that belongs to A.
 - Siblings A and B are building with some blocks. They refuse to let younger sibling C help. Child C knocks down the tower.
 - Siblings A and B share a room. A makes a mess and doesn't clean up. B wants A to do a fair share of the clean up work.
5. **Student activity.** Have students read the story starter and then write an ending to the story. Suggest they think about how Jim, Jill, and Jane might solve their conflict. Have volunteers share their story endings. Do the endings promote a "win/win" solution? Or do they set up a situation that will lead to similar conflict in the future?
6. **Closure.** Summarize the main points of the lesson. Stress that recognizing the feelings of others, being willing to cooperate in looking for a solution, and talking together about the conflict can help open up ways to solve it.

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Related Activities

- Extend the lesson to include classroom conflict resolution.

Consider establishing a “peace table” in your classroom. (Many teachers who use conflict resolution in their classrooms find that it cuts down on time spent disciplining and gives them more time to teach. The children monitor themselves.) This does not have to be an actual table; it could be a mat or a pair of chairs. It is a designated spot where students can go when they are having some form of disagreement—a neutral location for working things out. Near the peace table, mount these directions:

1. Take turns talking and listening.
2. Brainstorm ideas.
3. Agree on a solution.

Stress the following important points.

(1) If students can work through the formula cooperatively, the results are their own! They will be choosing what will happen in the future. (2) Sometimes they will have to repeat steps one and two several times before they can finish step three. (3) Sometimes it helps to begin (before step 1) by writing down what they think the problem is. After step 3 they may also write down what they have agreed upon and then both sign it. (The teacher may keep the contract.)

LESSON 4: FAMILY RULES

Preparation/Materials

- For student activity:
posterboard, one piece per student
art materials of choice
- Optional: health puppets

Objectives

- Students will become aware of the purpose of family rules.
- Students will choose to honor family rules.

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Lesson

1. Tell the class about a rule in your family you didn't like very much. Ask students why they think your family had the rule and whether or not they think it was a good rule. Or if you and your class enjoy the health puppets, have Chris and Alex talk about a family rule (one puppet doesn't like the rule, but the other defends it).
2. Identify or elicit from students some reasons why families have rules for children:
 - for safety (calling parents from friends' homes to say where you are or when you're coming home, not using tools belonging to parents)
 - for health (going to bed at set times, eating properly, bathing frequently, limiting TV time)
 - for helping family members get along and sharing work in the home (doing chores, limiting telephone or bathroom time, sharing toys and games)

Write the reasons on the board, and ask the class to give examples of each type of rule. Explain that even though children may not like all the rules in their family, the purpose of the rules is to keep them healthy and safe and to help them get along with others. Making rules is one way parents care for their children.

3. **Student activity.** Assign students to make posters illustrating a few of their family rules. Give students the opportunity to present and explain their posters to the rest of the class. Encourage them to identify why parents made the rule.

Or try role reversal. Ask students to imagine that they are the parents and have them make up rules for the "children" in the home. Assign them to make a poster illustrating their rules. Discuss the posters and have class members explain the reasons for the rules.

4. **Closure:** "Today we talked about why families need some rules. Which rules are the hardest for you to follow?"



Related Activities

1. Enjoy Karla Kuskin's humorous poem "Rules" in the *Random House Book of Poetry for Children* (Random House, 1983). Students may also enjoy making up their own poems about rules.
2. Show the film *Families and Rules: Watch How Well Everything Works*. A 10-minute film showing how rules help a family live and work together.

LESSON 5: NEW BEGINNINGS— FORGIVENESS IN FAMILY LIFE

Preparation/Materials

- Write the poem “Up in the Pine” on chart paper.
- Songs of choice on lesson theme

Objectives

- Students will understand that God enables us to make new beginnings in family life.
- Students will learn or review the fifth commandment.

Background

Because family life has not escaped the effects of sin, relationships in families are marred by quarreling, estrangements, and lovelessness. The previous lessons on resolving

family conflicts recognize that Christian families are not exempt from the alienating effects of sin. This lesson stresses that in Christ Christian families can find healing for broken relationships, forgiveness, and power to make new beginnings. By relying on God’s grace and asking for the Spirit’s power, family members can restore relationships and family life can be a source of joy.

As you teach this lesson, be sensitive to child abuse issues. Although children are called to obey and respect parents, parents are called to act in a Christ-like way and to respect children entrusted to their care as God’s image-bearers.

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Lesson

1. Display the chart and read the following poem by Nancy Dingman Watson:

Up in the Pine

I’m by myself
I want to be
I don’t want anyone
Playing with me

I’m all alone
In the top of the pine
Daddy spanked me
And I don’t feel fine

I can look way out
On the woods and lakes
I can hear the buzz
That the chain saw makes

And a woodpecker chopping
In the crabapple tree
With his red crest bobbing
But he doesn’t see me

If anybody hollers
I'll pretend I'm not there
I may miss dinner
But I don't care

The pine needles swish
And the wind whistles free
And up in the pine
Is only me

It's starting to rain
But the tree keeps me dry
We toss in the black clouds
The tree and I

Now Daddy's calling.
He never stays mad.
He probably feels awful
Because I'm sad.

I'll answer Daddy.
He's concerned about the weather.
I'll climb down and he'll take my hand
And we'll go in the house together.

Read the poem with the class. Then ask students to tell the "story" of the poem. How does the child in the tree feel? What about the father? Why? How do they feel at the end of the poem?

2. **Discussion.** Use the poem as a springboard for talking about new beginnings in family life. Explain that because our families are part of the wider family of God what the Bible teaches about how we should live bears on our family life. Include the following points in discussion:
 - Teach or review God's commandment to honor father and mother. Discuss what it means. Note that God gave us this command (or rule) to help us in family life. Have students identify how it affects family life.
 - We all do and say hurtful things. Knowing about God's forgiveness and being able to ask God's help to say we're sorry makes a big difference in family life. We can make a new beginning.
 - Talk about why it's hard to say we're sorry. Have students suggest specific ways to communicate that they're sorry for what they did or said ("I'm sorry I hurt your feelings." "I was tired and crabby yesterday. I'm sorry I was mean." "I lost my temper; I'm sorry.") How do they feel after they tell someone they're sorry and how do they feel after someone apologizes to them?

3. Close the lesson by singing “Forgive Me, God, for Things I Do.” Talk about the naming of the lyrics. If you wish, sing other songs of the theme of the lesson. Two suggestions are “Love, Love, Love” (*Proclaim* 2, 27) and “We Pray for Each Other” (*Songs of God’s Love*, 69—verses 1 and 3).



Related Activities

1. Have the class memorize and/or illustrate the poem “Up in the Pine.” Or consider acting out the poem. Designate one desk or table as the tree and have a child sit on it. Then have others add sound effects (wind blowing, someone calling, woodpecker pecking, saw buzzing). Then have another child act the part of the father who calls and then meets the child climbing out of the “tree.”
2. Read children’s literature dealing with family relationships. Audio record one of the books and place it at a center for students to listen to. Have them write several sentences in response in their journals. Some titles:
Even If I Did Something Awful? by Barbara Hazen (emphasizes the unconditional love of parents)
Sisters by David McPhail
The Berenstain Bears Get in a Fight by Stan and Jan Berenstain
Thump and Plunk by Janice Udry
If It Weren’t for You and *Timothy Too* by Charlotte Zolotow
Sometimes Papa and Mama Fight and *My Mother Never Listens to Me* by Marjorie Sharmat
Love You Forever by Robert Munsch

Forgive me, God, for things I do

Elizabeth McE. Shields, St. 1;
Sandra Myhr Anderson, St. 2;
Beverly Schultz Mullins, St. 3

John Day's Psalter

For - give me, God for things I do that are not kind and
I thank you, God, for Christ, your Son, who gave his life for
When some-one is un - kind to me then help me, God, to

good; me see for - give me, God, and help me try to and
how I might have keep on for - give - ness now him as

do from you the my keep things sin lov - ing I be should. free. me.

LESSON 6: CELEBRATING FAMILY HERITAGE

Preparation/Materials

- Ask each student to bring an object from home that tells something about his or her heritage. Choose a heritage object of your own to show the class.
- Set up a display table for heritage objects. Cover it with colored paper or a cloth. Create various heights with boxes under the cloth or paper. Construct a large sign “Our Family Heritage” for the table.

- Mural paper
- Large talking balloon shape, one per student

Objectives

- Students will become aware of and appreciate their family heritage.
- Students will develop appreciation for diverse family styles and backgrounds.



Lesson

1. Introduce the lesson showing the class your family heritage object. Tell students what it means to your family or what it tells about your family background. Explain what the word *heritage* means. What things might be part of a family heritage?
2. Give each student the opportunity to present a heritage item and explain what it tells about his or her family. After presentations, students can put the objects on the display table.
3. **Circle talk.** Discuss the just-completed activity. Talk about variations and/or similarities in the family heritages that are represented. Make the point that families have different backgrounds and different styles of living and doing things. Encourage appreciation and acceptance of divergent family lifestyles.

Note that each family has its own way of celebrating birthdays, baptisms, holidays or church feast days, or special family events (reunions, graduations, etc.). Have volunteers share some of their family traditions. Teach the word *traditions* to the class.

4. **Student activity.** Create a mural entitled “Our Family Traditions.” Have each student illustrate a family tradition on a section of mural paper. Then give each child a large talking balloon on which to write a statement explaining or naming the tradition.

Examples:

The examples are presented in four circles:

- Circle 1: I love baking Christmas cookies with Grandma.
- Circle 2: Every Sunday morning we eat pancakes.
- Circle 3: We watch fireworks on July 4.
- Circle 4: My family always goes to the woods to cut a Christmas tree.

Alternate options: each student can draw a self-portrait on the mural and then attach the talking balloon near the portrait. Or have students make only the talking balloons, and hang the balloons around the room or create a Family Traditions bulletin board with them.

5. **Closure.** Reflect on the lesson with students. Ask what they liked best about it. Or encourage them to look to the future: Are there any traditions they would like their family to start?



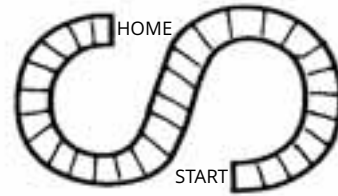
Related Activities

1. Have students write a few sentences on a 3" x 5" index card about their family heritage object. Attach the card to the object on the display table.
2. Invite parents, grandparents, and other classes to visit the classroom and enjoy the mural and display of items.
3. Ask one or more parents to talk to the class about their heritage and/or family traditions. If possible, invite parents from divergent cultural backgrounds.
4. Integrate with social studies and study family life in other cultures. What kind of family traditions or customs or holidays do they have? What are usual roles of family members?
5. Show pictures of family groupings from other cultures. Which family would each child like to visit? What do they think they might enjoy learning about that family? Have them write a few sentences (possibly in their journals) telling their choice of family and what they would like to know.
6. Focus on family stories—"Remember when Aunt Sue got stuck in the chair?" Find ways for students to share stories of funny events. For example, they can record the stories at a center for the whole class to enjoy.

LESSON 7: ME AND MY FAMILY GAME

Preparation/Materials

- For student game:
 Student Activity
 file folders, one for each student
 dice or spinners, one die or spinner for each pair of students
 tokens or other playing pieces, one for each student
 art materials for decorating game boards
 blank game cards of construction paper of two contrasting colors, 10 of one color and 8 of the other for each student
 (Make colors light enough so writing will show.)
- Make a sample game board to show the class.



- Write a note to parents to explain the board game. Suggest that parents play the game with their child and discuss the positive and negative squares.

Objectives

- Students will make a game to review ups and downs of family life.
- Students will identify some of their own ups and downs.



Lesson

1. Introduce the lesson project—making a Me and My Family game. Explain that students will make gameboards on which they will write events from their own life. Show students the sample game board.
2. Making the game—step 1. Work with students to help them list what they will write on their personal game squares. They should write personal events in about 10 squares. Suggest they identify 6 positive or “good” things that happened to them (or family members) and about 4 negative or “bad” things.

Turn to the Student Activity in the student workbook. Walk students through the process of choosing events to use in their games. (This functions as a review as you recall concepts covered in the unit.) Have students write down their rough ideas on the top part of the worksheet. Suggest or elicit from students a few “good” or “bad” things to spark ideas, but have students write down something from their own family life experience.

Suggested review format:

- God planned for us to live in families. Our families love and care for us in many ways. Ask students to recall ways. Suggest or elicit a few “good” things to write down.

Examples:

- Adopted/born into my family. God gave me a family.
- My warm bed.
- Family takes care of me.

- God has planned us to be boys and girls.
Examples:
 - I like being a girl/boy.
 - I can do ...
 - I want to be ...
 - I'm good at ...
- Family members sometimes fight or hurt each other's feelings.
Examples:
 - Fight about TV.
 - Tease my brother.
- We need rules for families to run smoothly and for our own protection. (Ask students to think of a rule they kept or perhaps broke.)
Examples:
 - Cleaned up my room.
 - Forgot to feed the dog.
- We have a family heritage and family traditions.
Examples:
 - Made cookies with ...
 - Went camping with ...
 - Ate pumpkin pie at ...

Other ideas to include are personal events such as catching the measles, breaking an arm or leg, having tonsils removed, making room for a new brother or sister, moving, or a special vacation trip. Consider having students end with a positive, affirming square ("I'm 8 and feeling great", or "I'm a big 7 now").

3. Making the game—step 2. Next, students should sort out their suggestions and decide which they will use on the game board. (Note that they'll need to use as few words as possible.) Direct them to write their final choices in chronological order in the space provided on the bottom of the worksheet. You may wish to check the list at this stage.

Have students write playing instructions on 10 bonus or plus cards of one color and 8 minus cards of another color. Brainstorm a list of instruction suggestions and write them on the board.

Examples:

- Miss one turn.
- Take another turn.
- Go back one space.
- Go ahead two spaces.
- Move to the next (color) square.

Again, they can write their choices on the worksheet. Have them fill in the name of the correct color on the bottom of the worksheet. Then have them write their choices on the construction paper cards of the correct color.

4. Making the game—step 3. Each student makes a game board on the inside of a file folder. Show students the sample. Demonstrate how to draw a game path (“a snake with two curves”). Direct them to draw it very lightly in pencil first on the folder and to check with you before going over the lines with markers.

Next, students mark off approximately 30 spaces. Have them write out the ten personal events from their worksheet on ten of the board spaces. Have them color code the personal squares to the game cards (positive squares one color and negative squares another).

5. Making the game—step 4. Students can decorate their game boards and, if time permits, the outside of the file folder (a design incorporating names of family members might be suggested).
6. Playing the game. Explain how to play. You may wish to write out the instructions and give students a copy.

How to play:

- Two players for each game board (Students can play with a partner. After one round use the partner’s game board.)
- One die or spinner
- One token or playing piece for each player
- Place the game cards of each color in a separate pile. Place them face down on the game board.
- Roll a die or spin the spinner. Move the right number of spaces.
- When landing on a colored/personal space, take a card of the same color. Follow the directions. Return the card face down to the bottom of the pile.
- The first player to reach HOME wins.

Give students time to enjoy playing their games.

7. **Closure.** Talk about the activity. What was the hardest about making the games? What was the most fun? Tell students that the game is theirs to take home and play with family members. Put a note to parents in each file folder.

LESSON 8: DEALING WITH DEATH

Preparation/Materials

- Books of choice for Options 2 and 3

Objectives

- Students will recognize that all human beings must die as a result of sin.
- Students will recognize that in the face of death sadness is a fitting emotion.
- Students will know the comfort of the Christian hope.

Background

The tendency of many North American adults is to try to shield children from the reality of death. The motivation is a desire to protect children, to make the children's lives easier. But death is an inescapable part of life—even for children—in a world marred by sin. Trying to screen out death actually does children a disservice. In fact, with no guidance from parents or teachers, children may struggle with distorted ideas or fears. By guiding their learning about death, adults give children correct information and open the possibility of sharing feelings and fears about death. In the Christian community, they can convey the hope of resurrection life in Christ.

Ruth Kopp in a helpful book entitled *Where Has Grandpa Gone?* helps us understand the concept of death a child has at various age levels. Between the ages of two and six, most children see "everything that moves and has activity as being alive and personal." Since young children also tend to personify abstract ideas, as they become aware of death they think of it as a powerful being that can "come at will and remove people and pets" they love. They develop a variety of ways to fend off the "monster death." Children from about three and four years old, for example, may hide in the comfort of a security blanket, while from about four to

six or seven, they use "fantasy, magic, and wishful thinking" to protect themselves and those they love. But gradually at about six or seven, children acquire what Kopp calls a materialist attitude toward death: they shift their protection against death "from fantasy to the tangible, physical world." In this phase they become aware of their bodies and how they work and find a defense against death in physical fitness—an idea reinforced by North American society. They think that if they are strong and healthy enough, they can prevent illness or injury. During the next phase from about eight to eleven, children rationally explore their world and the idea of death. They look for reasons and explanations for illnesses, for the most part ignoring the emotions.

So from a young age children are aware of death, and they struggle to deal with it. It isn't possible to shield them from death. However, by sensitively dealing with the subject, we can offer them support and hold out to them the comfort of being a child of God and trusting God to make all things well.

In teaching about death and dying, we should also be aware of the mistaken and unbiblical emphasis in much of the current literature on the topic. Death is often presented as the natural end of life. We are urged to accept death as a natural and, sometimes, even as a beautiful and fitting end to life. It's true, of course, that in the world as we know it—a broken world suffering under the effects of sin—death is a fact and the life cycle inevitably ends in death. But the Bible clearly teaches that death is not a friend but an enemy. Death is the result of human sin. God created us not for death but for life. Christians believe Christ has removed the sting of death and in him we already have new life that never ends. Christ's resurrection body is the guarantee of the resurrection of our bodies.

This lesson—included in *Horizons Health* at kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2—provides several activities and lists of resources from which to choose. Your choices will depend on what approach you are comfortable with and on your classroom situation. We suggest you use the resources for a session on the subject of death at the close of this unit on the family and/or when the subject of death comes up nat-

urally in the classroom or fits in with the class's Bible studies (for example, tie it in with the lesson on the death of Elijah or with your celebration of Easter). Since there is not much children's literature on death written from a Christian perspective, bear in mind that it is crucial to critically read the books listed below and to provide Christian perspective through comment and discussion.

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Lesson

Option 1. Tell about the loss of someone you know, how sad you felt and how you missed the person. Talk about the source of your comfort and how that helped you.

Option 2. Introduce the idea of change or loss by reading a book about moving and loss entailed by the ones who are moving or staying. Use this as a starting point for discussing loss through death.

- We Are Best Friends* by Aliki
- My Friend William Moved Away* by Martha Hickman
- Ira Says Goodbye* by Bernard Waber
- Janey* by Charlotte Zolotow
- Mitchell Is Moving* by Marjorie Sharmat
- Moving Molly* by Shirley Hughes

Option 3. Use the subject of the death of pets to lead into a general discussion of death. Tell students about a pet you or one of your family members had that died and read one of the many excellent books available on the death of a pet. Although these books focus on the death of pets, many of them obliquely refer to death of people. Some available book titles:

- Father's Laika* by Mats Wahl
- Jim's Dog Muffins* by Miriam Cohen
- Goodbye, Max* by Holly Keller
- The Dead Bird* by Margaret Wise Brown
- Better With Two* by Catherine Stock
- It Must Hurt a Lot: A Child's Book About Death* by Doris Sanford

After reading the story, have students identify some of the feelings that the main character or characters had. Allow time for students to ask questions or to talk about family pets that have died. Stress that sadness is an appropriate feeling when a loved pet dies.

Option 4. Read a book dealing with human death. Although these books deal with death in a sensitive way, none of them is written from a Christian perspective. Thus it is important to read the books critically and spend time discussing the Christian hope in the face of death.

Goodbye Rune by Marit Kaldhol and Wenche Oyen

My Grandma Leonie by Bijou LeTord

Grandpa's Slide Show by Deborah Gould

The Saddest Time by Norma Simon

Marianne's Grandmother by Bettina Egger

I Had a Friend Named Peter: Talking to Children About Death

Nana Upstairs, Nana Downstairs by Tomie de Paola

Everett Anderson's Goodbye by Lucille Clifton

One book with a solid Christian perspective, *Emma Says Goodbye* by Carolyn Nystrom, deals with the death of a child's aunt from leukemia. Although the book is too difficult for most grade 2 students, teachers may wish to read parts of it or use ideas for discussion.

Option 5. Use an occasion that naturally arises in the classroom, the death of a relative or friend of a class member, to talk about the subject of death. Be sure to stress the Christian hope, but also talk about feelings connected with death. Although Christians believe in new and eternal life in Christ, grief is nonetheless a fitting response to the loss of a loved one. Identify concrete ways to help the one who is grieving.

Use appropriate Scripture passages such as Psalm 23 or the story of Jesus' resurrection as a basis for continued discussion. And sing appropriate songs about Christ's resurrection or about the comfort of the Christian hope. A few suggested titles:

"Children of the Heavenly Father" (*Psalter Hymnal*, 440; *Songs of God's Love*, 62)

"He's Got the Whole World in His Hands" (*Songs of God's Love*, 56)

"The Lord's My Shepherd" (*Proclaim Songbook 2*, 16; *Psalter Hymnal*, 161; alternate tune, *Children's Hymnbook*, 19)

"Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" (*Proclaim Songbook 2*, 25)