

How Can We Teach Practical Matters That can Give Children a Better Life?

If the local church feels it is needed, Sunday school teachers may take five minutes or so every week to teach children

some practical principles and/or skills that can enhance their everyday living. The specific principles and skills to be taught could vary widely depending on local needs, but some examples of things the children might learn are:

- Mending clothing
- Good health habits that can help them avoid getting intestinal worms
- Good nutrition
- AIDS prevention
- Simple cooking skills like how to boil an egg
- Reading and writing skills
- Gardening

Here are some ideas for such teaching:

1. It shouldn't take more than about 5 minutes during the Sunday school hour. If more time is desired, another time during the week should be set aside for the teaching or the project.
2. Once a subject is decided upon, think of all the teaching that should be given on that subject. Make a logical outline of it, then divide it into very small segments that can be covered in about 5 minutes each. Each week, teach one of those small segments.
3. The teaching should not consist entirely of lecture. Activity of some kind should be involved. Example: If you are teaching about good nutrition, bring an example of a healthy food into class. Let the children taste it, or pass out seeds for them to plant.
4. Choose the subjects that are most needed in the local setting where you will be teaching.

Lessons to Enhance Everyday Living

Every Child Ministries publishes some short lessons to enhance everyday living on these subjects: 1) Papaya, A Great Food, 2) You Become What You Eat (General lessons on nutrition), and 3) A Special Drink You Can Make at Home to Fight Diarrhea. Teachers may use our lessons if they feel they are needed in their own local settings. They do not have to be taught in the order in which we have given them. Or, if they do not use our lessons, they can use our lessons as models to see how we have arranged and divided the teaching, and how we have incorporated many activities into the teaching. Then they can write their own lessons for their own local settings.

We at Every Child Ministries want to encourage churches to write other lessons on subjects they feel are important. We would love to receive a copy of any such new lessons, and we may consider publishing them so they could help many on the African continent, with the permission of the authors, of course.

LET'S PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

What teaching on everyday subjects is needed where you live? List all the topics that you think are important.

Which is most important or most urgent? Which subject should you teach first? Explain why.

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 List the various elements or parts of that subject in logical order.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

Now divide each element or part into small segments that could be taught in five minutes each. Use other paper for this.

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 Now go back and think of ways the children could actively participate. Try to add participation to every week's lesson if possible. Use other paper.

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Here are some lessons you may use if they are helpful in your locality:

LESSONS ABOUT PAPAYA

Papaya—A Great Food!

Short mini-lessons for 8 weeks, 3-5 minutes each lesson:

Week 1 Show a ripe papaya. Let the children touch and hold it. They can repeat: "Papaya is a great food." "We should eat papaya all the time." "Papaya helps our bodies grow strong." "Papaya is good for digestion." Teach them that papaya contains many good things inside that helps their bodies grow strong and healthy, and also things that help their digestion so that their bodies can get all the good things from the other food they eat.

Week 2 Show a beautiful papaya. Cut it up in bite-size pieces. As you cut, say things like this: Papaya is a beautiful looking fruit. It is a beautiful color. Smell it and say, "It smells wonderful!" Put a bite in your own mouth and say, "Mmm! It tastes really good." Swallow it and say, "It's easy to eat, and it sets well in your tummy." Give each child a piece to eat if they wish. (Never force a child.) Tell them that it's important to save the seeds from the center of the fruit to plant in the village. Put the seeds aside in a safe place for planting next week.

Week 3 Before Sunday school begins, help the children hoe up a good place to plant the papaya seeds. During Sunday school, the children can plant the seeds and water them. Appoint two children to water the seeds every day, or even twice a day if needed. Tell them with great enthusiasm that these seeds will grow a papaya plant, and when it has grown up, they will be able to eat its fruit. The children can repeat, "Papaya is a great food. We really like to eat it."

Week 4 Papaya is full of Vitamin A. Vitamin A helps give us healthy eyes. The children can repeat, "Eating papaya is good for our eyes." Papaya is full of Vitamin C. Vitamin C helps our whole body fight sickness and infection. The children can repeat, "Eating papaya is good for us. It helps our whole body so it won't get sick easily." Show a papaya and cut it up in pieces, giving each child a piece to eat.

Week 5 Show a papaya. Papaya aids in digestion so that our body can get all the vitamins and other good things out of the food we eat. Papaya can help settle our stomachs when they are upset. The children can rub their tummies and repeat, "Papaya helps my stomach digest the food I eat. Papaya is good when I have a tummy ache." After Sunday school, give the children pieces of papaya to eat. Divide the seeds up amongst them and encourage them to plant and water the seeds near their homes.

Week 6 Ask who planted their papaya seeds. Encourage those who did. Review some of the teaching you have given about papaya.

Week 7 Ask the children to tell you what is good about papaya. Let each child give only one idea so that many can participate. Encourage those who give good responses.

Week 8 Ask the children who ate some papaya during the week before. All the other children must shout "O yea! They are the champions!" for those who did.

WE ARE WHAT WE EAT

Lessons on basic nutrition

Short mini-lessons for six weeks:

Week 1 Ask: What are our physical needs?

The children can give different answers, like:

- We need strong eyes so we can see well to find food in the forest.
- We need strong bodies so we can hunt and fish.
- We need strong bodies so we will live out our full years and not die too young.
- We need strong bodies so we can get water for our families.
- We need strong bodies so we will not get sick easily.
- We need strong bodies so we can enjoy playing.
- We need to be smart so we can do well in school, Etc.

Ask: How does what we eat help us meet these needs?

Children may give answers like these:

- Good food helps our body fight infection and illness.
- Good food helps our bodies grow strong.
- Good food helps our eyes become strong so we can see better.
- Good food helps our brains develop so we will be smart. Etc.

Week 2 We need to eat many different kinds of foods. Show many nutritious foods that are readily and inexpensively available in your area. Tell them the name of each food, and talk about how it grows. Show them how to wash it and cook it. Bring an example of a nutritious food you have prepared ahead of time in a specially delicious way. Give them all a little bit to taste.

Week 3 Tell the children that today we will discuss one of the things our body needs—protein. The problem is that often we do not eat enough protein. How does protein help us? Protein helps our muscles grow strong. It helps our brains develop so we will have the intelligence we need. It helps our hair grow strong and healthy, not red or yellow and sickly.

Week 4 Our bodies need protein. So, which foods have protein? Beans, meat, eggs, milk, gourd seeds and seeds of all kinds, peanuts, plantains, fish, chicken, insects, corn, grains, caterpillars, etc. Are these foods all expensive like meat? No. We can be strong and healthy even if we are not able to eat the expensive foods like meat. Many good protein foods can be grown in the garden or can be gathered in the forest.

Week 5 Bring some good protein foods to class. Tell the children that to eat well, they need to eat some protein foods like these. Show them the protein foods. Let them touch and hold the foods. Let them repeat the names of the foods. Talk about how each food grows, and how it is prepared for cooking. Let them all taste a little of a protein food you have already cooked, or one that is ready to eat without cooking, like gourd seeds or peanuts.

Week 6 Ask the children what good foods we can find in the forests near us. (If in a city, ask what they can find easily in the local market.) They answer, for example: greens of many kinds, insects, caterpillars. What good foods can we hunt or fish for? Children answer, for example: Fish of many kinds, animals from the forest like okapi or monkey, animals from the grasslands like antelope or snake, etc.

WHEN A CHILD HAS DIARRHEA

Short mini-lessons for 8 weeks:

Week 1 Diarrhea is a very serious sickness. It can cause great pain in the stomach and intestinal areas. If a child has diarrhea for long, it can even result in death. When a child has diarrhea, he needs help quickly. This special drink like a medicine is one good way to help a child who has diarrhea. Show and explain the recipe for making the drink.

Recipe for making the special drink:

Stir together: 1 liter room temperature clean drinking water that has been boiled
 2 tablespoons sugar or honey
 ¼ teaspoon salt
 ¼ teaspoon bicarbonate,
 or another ¼ teaspoon salt
 ½ cup fruit juice (orange, grapefruit, coconut milk, mashed banana, or other)
 Show a flashcard of the recipe or write it on a piece of paper or the blackboard.

Week 2 Diarrhea can be a symptom of a serious illness that needs to be treated by the doctor. If the child does not respond quickly, the parents should contact a doctor. However, many times this special drink will help. Review the recipe for making the drink.

Week 3 Put on a demonstration to show the children how to make this drink. Make the recipe as the children watch, explaining to them step by step what you are doing. Bring little cups or spoons so each child can taste the drink. Give each child a clean cup or spoon, and be sure to wash them well afterwards.

Week 4 Make up the recipe before class starts, but do not put in the fruit juice. Bring several different kinds of fruit juice. Put some of the drink in different glasses, and a different kind of fruit juice in each one. Let the children use their own spoons to taste the different flavors. Which do they seem to like best?

Week 5 Let one child make up the recipe as the others watch. He can follow the recipe card, and he should explain to the class what he is doing. Other children can help him or remind him if needed. After class, have the children take the special drink to a mother whose child is sick and explain to her how to use it. They may also pray for her sick child.

Week 6 Another child takes a turn at making up the recipe as the rest of the class watches. This time he is not allowed to look at the recipe card, but other children can remind him or correct him as needed. Again have the children take the drink to a sick family, explain how to use the drink, and pray for the sick person.

Week 7 The intestines are the part of our bodies that take water and nutrients from our food and put it into our blood. The blood then takes the water and good nutrients to all parts of our bodies, wherever they are needed. It is necessary for our bodies to get water in this way. When we have diarrhea, our intestines do not take in the water we need from our food. Even though we may drink a lot of water, our bodies do not get that water, because it just goes out again as diarrhea. This is why children can so easily die of diarrhea, because the water is needed for blood, and blood is essential for our bodies. The drink we are making works by causing the intestines to begin taking water into our blood again. It is a great help to children, because it keeps them from dehydrating, which is the biggest danger when a child has diarrhea.

Week 8 Have the children show you in a mime how to make the special drink for diarrhea. (A mime is a skit acted out by actions only without use of words.) They can all make motions as if they are making the drink. Let one child explain the addition of each ingredient. Ask them what they should do if this still

does not help (take the child to a doctor as quickly as possible). Give the children the assignment of explaining to their parents all they have learned.