

Using Flannelgraph Figures

To Hold Attention and Increase Learning

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Choosing and identifying flannelgraph figures

- ◆ Make sure the pieces are a set
(Backing, numbering, clothing, photo guides)
- ◆ Make sure the pieces are complete for the lesson you want to teach
(Use photo guides or numbers.) If not, you will learn later to improvise.
- ◆ Make sure the figures are “sticky” enough to adhere easily to the board. You can add other flannel scraps on the back if necessary.
- ◆ Select all the figures for the lesson you will be teaching. Put the others aside back in the envelope.
- ◆ Make sure you understand what each figure represents—WHO it is, WHAT it is.

Placement of the board and the teacher

Board eye level with students

Will they sit or stand? Teacher can sit or stand to reach their level.

Size large enough for all to see

Consider the size of the group, the conditions where you will be teaching, distance from student farthest away from teacher.

Teacher not to block the view

Stand to side, or place an object and walk a step or two away.

Placement of figures on the flannel board

Where to place figures on the board?

- ◆ Aim for a realistic looking picture—like real life
- ◆ Foreground—lower part of board—places near to you—figures larger
- ◆ Background—upper part of board—places further away from you—figures smaller
- ◆ Distance shown by two things—size of figure & placement on lower or upper part of board.

- ◆ Figures about all same size shows they are in one place together
- ◆ Large differences in sizes show distance away
- ◆ Feet must normally be on the floor or ground.
- ◆ Feet go on the colored part of floor or ground, not on the line. For instance, not on the horizon line or the line between the floor and the wall.
- ◆ Use small guide pictures to determine & practice placement

When to place figures on the board?

Making notes on the lesson outline

- ◆ Numbers or letters, assigned by lesson or self assigned.
- ◆ Draw simple outline in notes.

Timing placement of materials with teaching of lesson]

- ◆ Piece by piece as the lesson unfolds
 - ◆ OK to put up backgrounds ahead, but not characters
 - ◆ FIRST, TELL the action. THEN, SHOW the action. Students can be thinking about what you said while you put the piece on the board.
 - ◆ Remove unnecessary pieces before adding new pieces.
 - ◆ Do not describe the pieces or talk about the pieces. TELL THE STORY.
 - ◆ DO NOT say I SEE or ask WHAT DO YOU SEE? Let your storytelling carry the lesson, and the flannelgraph figures illustrate it.
 - ◆ Do not say THIS IS....Jesus, etc. It is not Jesus. It is a piece of paper or felt. Tell the story, and when you mention Jesus, put his picture on the board.
 - ◆ Practice telling lesson with figures
- ◆ **Changing the flannel backgrounds**
 - ✓ Using multiple boards
 - ✓ Using a plain background and a second piece of flannel
 - ✓ Using multiple backgrounds
 - ✓ Using overlays

Organizing figures for teaching—

Before use:

Stack or lay out in order of usage.

Layout of materials must be within arm's reach of teacher.

If stacking materials, you must know which figures must be reused. Lay them aside or ask a student to hold the piece for you.

After use:

Make sure figures are complete and in good repair. Return them to the envelope with the others from that series. **Attention! Flannelgraph pieces get lost & damaged easily. Return them to their place immediately after use to minimize problems.**

Simplifying for use with younger children or outdoors

- ◆ For preschool children, simple or no background is best
- ◆ Use only main characters, eliminate other pieces
- ◆ For outdoor use, one simple figure on a small, hand held board can be effective and provides teacher mobility.

Allowing the children to place the figures

- ◆ With supervision, can allow them to replace figures and retell lesson for review
- ◆ Ask a child to place the figure but point to the spot.
- ◆ Ask him to move it up or down, right or left if necessary.
GOOD! When he gets it right.
- ◆ Make sure hands are clean.

Special problems and suggestions

Problems with outdoor use (same with rooms where wind blows through)

- ◆ Problem with wind affects both pieces and board
 - Helpers can hold pieces/board
 - Plain background attached to board or clip background to board twice on each side
 - Can use small, hand-held board
 - Can use magnetic board or velcro with flannel board
 - Plain flannel board not recommended for very windy situations

Care of materials

- ◆ Keep sets together—return soon after use
- ◆ Collect small pieces in envelope
- ◆ Clean hands
- ◆ Soft eraser removes some dirt
- ◆ Transport in a protective carrying case

Repair/ replacement of materials

- ◆ Call attention to any damage when returning materials
- ◆ Some replacement objects can be drawn on paper & backed with flannel pieces or drawn directly onto flannel.
- ◆ Care of large felt sets—organizing, hand washing, hand-drawn replacements

Other suggestions for using flannelgraph

Key words—For those in school, write one or two key words for each lesson clearly on a strip of paper and back it with flannel scraps. Be sure to choose words and style of writing appropriate for the age and educational level of the class you are teaching. For younger children use simple words like Jesus or Love, but only if they are dealt with in the lesson. When you mention the word in your teaching, put the word on the board and ask the children to repeat it after you.

Memory verse—For those who can read or are learning to read, you can write some or all of the memory verse on paper strips and back them with flannel scraps. With younger children or with longer verses, write very short phrases together. Say the verse slowly as you put up the strips, having the children repeat after you. Later you can remove the strips one by one, testing the children each time to see if they can say it without the words. For a fun review game for older children, scramble the words on the board and have them rearrange them in the right order. Or, give one word or phrase to several students. Have the class recite the verse together. The children who are holding the words or phrases but listen carefully and put their flannel pieces on the board at the appropriate times.

NOTE: Each of ECM's Resource Libraries have LOTS of flannelgraph sets. Ask the overseer of the library nearest you to show you what we have available for loan. We are praying that using flannelgraph lessons effectively will soon help increase the effectiveness of your teaching AND increase your students' attention to your lessons. May God bless you in this important work of teaching the next generation for Jesus Christ.

