

Object Lessons

Object lessons are a lot like parables. Common everyday things are used to teach a lesson that has deeper spiritual meaning. Object lessons are fun to do, they are engaging, and they are easy to remember.

There are some things to keep in mind when you do an object lesson in Sunday school:

- Keep it simple.
- Have a clear biblical message.
- Involve the children in doing and interpreting the lesson.
- Always have a few Bible passages to look up and talk about. The passages should be carefully selected to drive the lesson home.

There are several ways to involve the children in doing object lessons. Here are some suggestions:

- Have the children prepare and present the lessons.
- Recruit volunteers to help you present the lesson. In fact, many object lessons can be designed around the children so that their active participation is necessary to make the lesson work. This can be a lot of fun for everyone if it is kept simple.
- Draw everyone into the discussion when the follow-up question is asked: "What do you think the lesson means?"
- Have everyone open their Bibles and find the relevant passages. Older children can help younger ones with this if necessary. Let volunteers read the passages aloud.

As a rule, object lessons should be short. In a Sunday school setting they are often used as start-up or wrap-up activities. In either case, ten to fifteen minutes is a good time frame to shoot for. The impact of a lesson can be lost if it drags on too long.

And one more thing. Always practice an object lesson before you do it with the children. Make sure it works the way you want it to.

Hey, That's Not Fair! – 1 Corinthians 6:8

Materials:

- Clear glass or plastic bowl full of M & Ms.
- A box of small plastic baggies.
- Table spoon.
- One large plastic bag, big enough to hold all the M & Ms.

You'll need one of the children to be an accomplice!



Lesson:

Start by showing everyone the bowl full of M & Ms. Question: How many of you like M & Ms?

Tell the children that you will call them up, one at a time, to get some M & Ms.

As each child comes up, give them the table spoon and a small baggie. Let them put two scoops of M & Ms into their bag.

After two or three children have gotten their M & Ms, call your accomplice up. He suddenly pulls the large plastic bag from of his pocket, dumps the rest of the bowl into his bag, and runs back to his seat waving the bag full of M & Ms and cheering!

Yell at your accomplice: "What are you doing? That's not fair!"

Questions for the rest of the children: Is it fair? Is it cheating? Do *you* ever cheat? How does it feel to be cheated?

Have the children read the following Bible passages together. Make sure the children know what the words mean (e.g., abomination, defraud). Let them explain how each passage applies to the lesson. Deuteronomy 25:13-16 (cheating vs. being fair); 1 Corinthians 6:8-9a (defrauding others); Colossians 3:25 (getting what you deserve); 2 Timothy 2:5 (playing by the rules); Acts 20:35 (giving is better than getting); Galatians 5:14 (loving your neighbor as yourself).

Have your accomplice come back up and help you share the M & Ms with the rest of the children. What's the lesson in having *him* help you do this?