



Children's Lesson: Generosity

For children in middle and upper elementary grades

(Students must be old enough to understand that the slime in the illustration is not edible.)

OBJECTIVE:

Teach children about the power of generosity and how Christ can take what we give, however small, and multiply it into much for His Kingdom.

TEACHER NOTE: Packing an Operation Christmas Child shoebox is an excellent way to teach children about the power of generosity. God uses these small gifts to open doors for the Gospel all around the world.

KEY VERSES: JOHN 6:5-13

⁵ *Jesus looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him. So he said to Philip, "Where can we buy bread for these people to eat?"* ⁶ *He asked this only to test Philip. He already knew what he was going to do.*

⁷ *Philip answered him, "Suppose we were able to buy enough bread for each person to have just a bite. That would take more than half a year's pay!"*

⁸ *Another of his disciples spoke up. It was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He said,* ⁹ *"Here is a boy with five small loaves of barley bread. He also has two small fish. But how far will that go in such a large crowd?"*

¹⁰ *Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down. About 5,000 men were there.* ¹¹ *Then Jesus took the loaves and gave thanks. He handed out the bread to those who were seated. He gave them as much as they wanted. And he did the same with the fish.*

¹² *When all of them had enough to eat, Jesus spoke to his disciples. "Gather the leftover pieces," he said. "Don't waste anything."* ¹³ *So they gathered what was left over from the five barley loaves. They filled 12 baskets with the pieces left by those who had eaten.*

John 6:5-13, NIV

KEY ILLUSTRATION: SLIME AND FOOD COLORING

Just as a few tiny drops of food coloring can change the color of an entire batch of slime, so too can God take the small gifts we can bring to multiply His Kingdom.

Demonstrate this Biblical truth to children by playing with slime. Discuss with the children how the tiny drop of food coloring affects the slime—changing the color of the whole batch, just as Christ multiplied the small, but faithful, gift of a young boy to bring Him honor and glory and bless thousands of people in the crowd.



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INSTRUCTIONS:

TEACHER NOTE: Remind children to wash their hands after playing with slime. Be sure boys and girls know the slime is NOT edible.

1. Make the slime before instructional time.

Fluffy Slime Recipe

1 c. white school glue

2 T. saline solution

1 t. baking soda

1-2 c. shaving cream

Combine school glue with saline solution.

Add in baking soda.

Stir in shaving cream.

2. Distribute bowls of slime to the children after the "Unpacking the Illustration" portion below.
3. Give each child a different bottle of food coloring.
4. Allow the children to mix food coloring into their slime and play with the slime.
5. Discuss with the children how Jesus can take our small gifts and use them to bless others and multiply His Kingdom.

UNPACKING THE ILLUSTRATION: BEFORE DISTRIBUTING SLIME TO CHILDREN

1. Read the key verses with the children from John 6:5-13.
 - a. Discovery question: Why did Jesus ask the disciples to get food for the crowd? *Because they were hungry.*
 - b. Discovery question: Were the disciples able to buy enough food to feed the crowd? *No.*
 - c. Discovery question: Where did Jesus get the five loaves and two fish to feed the crowd of over 5,000 people? *From a boy in the crowd.*
 - d. Lesson integration question: What do you think would have happened if the little boy had not given up his food? *He would not have been able to participate in the miracle Jesus did.*
2. Define generosity.
 - a. A generous person thinks of others' needs above their own.
3. Talk about Jesus' faithfulness with this little boy's generosity.
 - a. If the little boy had been reluctant to give up his five loaves and two fish, he would have missed out on being part of one of Jesus' most famous miracles. By giving the little that he had, the boy took a step of faith, even without knowing what Jesus would do with his gift. Jesus took this boy's small, but faithful, gift and multiplied it to bless a multitude of people.



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4. Apply the story to children's ability to be generous.
 - a. Application point: If Jesus could do so much with the little this boy gave, imagine what He can do with your faithful gift. Just like the tiny drop of food coloring changes the color of all the slime, so, too, can Christ take our gifts and use them to further His Kingdom and bless others. We give because Christ has given us so much. When we are faithful to be generous, even though the gift may be small, we are able to be a part of the great works the Lord is doing all around the world.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD CONNECTION

TEACHER NOTE: Follow the speaking points in this section if you'd like to incorporate this lesson into your church's or group's Operation Christmas Child project.

When you pack a simple shoebox gift, you are choosing to be generous with your time and money. The Lord takes these gifts and uses them all around the world to open doors for children to hear the message of His love for them. Shoebox gifts show children that they are loved by God and soften their hearts to the Good News of Jesus Christ! Let's take a look at how God is using simple gift-filled shoeboxes to spread His Kingdom all over the world.

VIDEO OPTION: "BRYCE'S STORY: SHOEBOX STARTS TRANSFORMATION"

Follow-up Questions:

1. How did Bryce feel when he received his shoebox gift?
He felt happy.
2. What made Bryce's life change?
Hearing the Gospel message and accepting Jesus Christ as his Savior.
3. What happened when Bryce shared the Gospel with his family?
His parents and brothers also accepted Christ into their hearts.
4. What is Bryce doing now?
Discipling other children.





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STORYTIME OPTION:

In Fiji, an island nation in the South Pacific, a local church took gift-filled shoeboxes into a village of farmers who believed in another religion. One young son who received a shoebox gift began attending a kids' club started by the church. There he heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ and wanted to learn more, even though his family was against it. The boy eventually started going to a youth program at the local church where he gave his life to the Lord. His sisters also began attending church with him, and his father decided he would let his son be baptized!

Just like Jesus took the five loaves and two fish and multiplied them to feed over 5,000 people, He can take your simple shoebox gift and use it to spread the Gospel and multiply His Kingdom! God can take our gifts, however small, and use them to bring Him glory and invite us into the incredible work He is doing all around the world.