

Adapting and Creating Special Needs Lesson Materials

Christian Churches Disability Ministry

www.ccdmonline.org



Adapting and Creating Special Needs Lesson Material

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Adapting and Creating Special Needs Sunday School Lessons

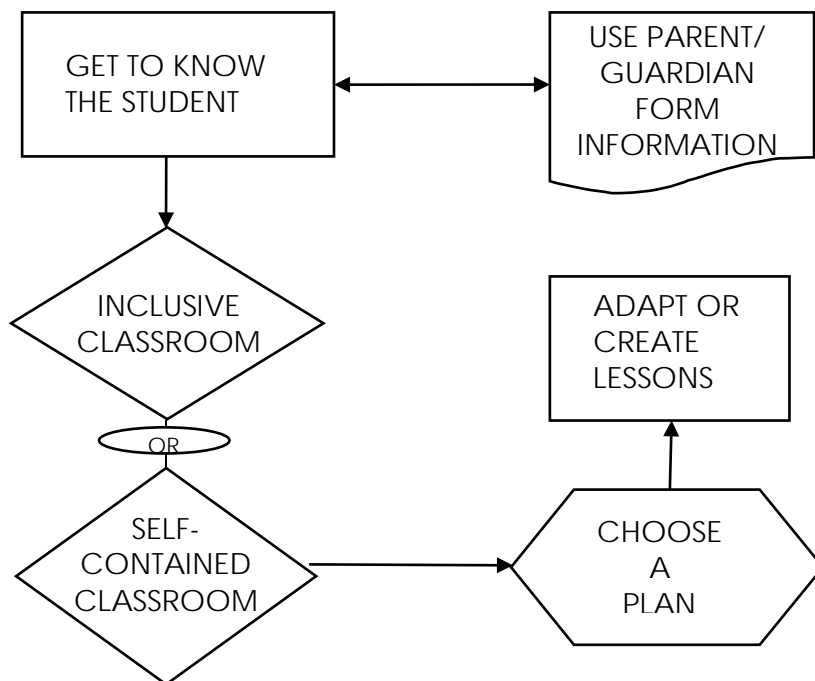
Introduction

Finding published Sunday school materials for students with disabilities can be difficult because disability ministry, though growing, is still relatively new. Including students with some types of disabilities in your classroom may not require any major changes in the structure of lessons.

In all cases, look at the student first and then the disability. Do not immediately assume that because there is a disability, significant changes in the lessons must be made for their benefit.

This book is being written using the scenario that the student is a child. However, the material presented herein is still applicable with respect given to their age and state of dependence if the student is an adult learner.

The Process



Begin the Process

Get to know the student

Begin by asking the parents or guardians to complete a Parent/Guardian Interview Form. (See Exhibit 1, page 29.) Explain to them that this will assist you in planning class routines and lessons so that their child will learn of God's love in a comprehensive and effective environment.

Carefully review the completed form to determine the student's:

- Strengths, weaknesses, physical ability, mental ability, likes, dislikes, allergies, health problems.
- Chronological age and mental age (ex. a child is 10 but functions as a 3 year old).
- How much he or she knows about Christianity.
- Patterns of behavior.
- Learning styles – concrete, literal, multi-sensory, visual, auditory, kinesthetic (learn by moving and active participation), etc.

Talk to the parents. Make sure you understand the information given on the form. Ask additional questions if you feel the answers are necessary to add to the student's learning experience.

If you are not familiar with the characteristics and symptoms of the student's diagnosis, seek sources of knowledge. Obtain and read literature on the subject. Visit the Internet and search for articles and information from organizations that offer enlightenment.

*When necessary, consult someone who may be well informed about unique challenges inherent with the student's diagnosis.

****Remember, confidentiality is important. Do not discuss the student's personal details with others without parental permission.***

Decide - Inclusive or self-contained classroom

Will the lessons be taught in an inclusive (non-disabled and special needs children together) or self-contained (special needs children only) classroom.

Teaching your lesson in a self-contained atmosphere is only necessary when the student's behavior is extremely disruptive or cognitive skills are low, making it necessary to give constant individualized attention.

Whether inclusive or self-contained, each classroom will be comprised of an infinite number of combinations of disabilities and levels of abilities. Even in a self-contained classroom, one child with a certain disability may not have the same learning style or behavior pattern as another child with the same type of disability.

As you are planning your lessons, remember to think about your classroom atmosphere. The classroom must be conducive to learning if your lesson plan is to succeed.

Supply a physically comfortable setting.	Make sure all amenities are accessible and that tables and chairs are appropriately sized for the student.
Clarify a question or answer.	Do not be discouraged about repeating things often – it helps some children with special needs learn and remember what they are being taught.
Provide a buddy.	Acquaint other students about disability etiquette. Assign one or more to help the special needs child with certain activities (such as crafts) as the need arises.
Permit the child to answer questions in an alternative way.	Allow them to mimic, use signing, draw a picture, etc. BE CREATIVE!
Watch the student's reactions.	If a child is becoming too overwhelmed, allow him or her to take a break for a few minutes.

Children usually enjoy participating with the rest of the class and will do what must be done to ensure their inclusion. Have a comfortable classroom setting, provide a buddy, allow students to be expressive (not interruptive) and you can prepare your lessons for delivery to an inclusive class.

Choose a plan

At this point, you must choose whether to adapt or create your own lessons. Your choice will depend on the student, teaching preparation time, classroom (inclusive or self-contained), and other factors.

We will consider three action plans

1. **General Published Material** → **Adapt**
2. **Special Needs Curriculum** → **Adapt**
3. **Custom** → **Create**

1. **Use customary published Sunday school materials. Adapt each lesson and activity so that the child with a disability can participate and benefit.**

Generally published Sunday school materials are written to cover a broad range of students, but they do not consider special needs. Therefore, some children with disabilities may not receive the full benefit of the message imparted in the lesson.

The degree of adaptation of standard lessons depends on the challenges associated with the student's disability.

Physical or Sensory	Few if any revisions to lessons may need to be made since the student's cognitive skills are likely to be on a par with others. Associated activities may need to be adjusted to accommodate individual needs.
Cognitive	Stress the lesson's application to the student's everyday life/experience. *Keep the activities, pictures, stories, concepts, and language simple and easy to understand (take mental age in to consideration.)

*Know that if the children are chronologically older, they may become offended by pictures and activities meant for little children (even if they correlate with the student's mental age). If this happens, do activities and show pictures that are geared toward their same age peers, but use age appropriate language they will understand.

Keep a written record of how you have adapted a lesson and whether it was successful or not (keep in mind that some things may need to be changed as you deal with each individual's challenges and circumstances.) (See Exhibit 2, page 32)

2. Purchase special needs curriculum and then adapt each lesson to fit your students' needs.

Your church education ministry may have a standard source for curriculum material. If not, communicate with established disability ministries. Ask about their methods for creating and/or adapting Sunday school lessons.

There are several publishers and curriculum companies that produce special needs lesson plans. Please see our list of resources following the sample plans.

These companies produce high quality material. However, generalized special needs materials may not always relate to the specific needs of an individual student and must be adapted.

3. Create your own lessons and materials with each child specifically in mind.

Find a good children's devotional or Bible storybook on par with the student's mental age. If you choose to compile your own lessons, consider using the New Century Version (NCV) of the Bible. It puts the scriptures in easy to understand language. Create lessons that will reach and teach your students.

Let your creative movement flow

Pray for guidance

Consider your student

- Age (chronological and mental)
- Challenge (behavioral, cognitive, physical or sensory)
- Reading and writing ability
- Level of religious understanding
- Spiritual need

Find a bible verse or passage of scripture to serve as the basis for your lesson.

Keep it simple. Ask yourself, *what is the best way for me to reinforce this message to my student?*

- Pictures
- Role playing
- Singing
- Crafts
- Game or physical activity

Incorporate any or all of the above into your lesson plan.

Remember, your lessons do not have to be filled with activities. Depending on the student, a straight-line method may be the most effective.

- ❑ Tell the student a Bible story.
- ❑ Show them pictures that are applicable as you tell the story.
- ❑ Ask questions so that you will know if they understand what is going on in the story.
- ❑ If they do not seem to understand, try to relate what is happening in more current or individualized terms.
- ❑ Solicit student involvement. Ask what they might do in similar circumstances.
- ❑ Show how what is taught in the lesson can be used in their daily living.
- ❑ Ask what they learned from the lesson.

Do not be afraid to change your lesson plan as you go along. However, give your initial approach a chance to work before making any modifications.

See how CCDM does it

CCDM offers several publications that help Sunday school teachers be more effective; one of them is ***52 Lessons Plans for Students with Cognitive Disabilities***, which will give you some good creative ideas.

This material is structured to help teachers prepare their own lessons. They are basic plans that can be adapted to meet the individual needs of students.

The *emphasis verses* shown in this publication are from the New Century Version (NCV) of the Bible. The NCV puts the scriptures in easy to understand language. The emphasis verses are not meant to be memory verses. It is most significant that students understand the concepts addressed in the lessons.

The publication is in four sections, each with a different theme:

Section 1	God
Section 2	Jesus
Section 3	Bible Characters
Section 4	Being a Christian

On the following pages, you will find four lessons, one from each section. After the fourth lesson, we will give some pointers on using them to reach students with specific patterns of behavior.

Visit our website at www.ccdmonline.org for a complete list of available publications.

Sample #1 from Section One

God Listens to Me

Objectives:

Students will learn that God listens to us when we talk to Him.

Materials:

Plain paper or pre-drawn ears
Crayons
Contact paper
Scissors

Scripture:

Acts 16:22-26

Lesson:

Tell the story of Paul in prison: The Bible tells us about a man named Paul who was thrown in jail because he believed in God's Son, Jesus. The people were angry with Paul and his friend Silas. They beat Paul and Silas with sticks. The man in charge of the jail tied up their feet and threw them into a dark place. The prison did not make Paul or Silas afraid. Instead of giving in to fear and crying, they prayed to God and sang songs to Him. They sang so loudly that everyone in the prison heard them.

Suddenly the earth began to shake. The ground moved under their feet, and the bars of the prison began to rattle. Suddenly the doors to the jail opened. God had heard the prayers of Paul and Silas and He set them free.

Emphasis Verse:

"They will call to me, and I will answer them. I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue them and honor them." (Psalms 91:15)

Application:

Even when we feel no one is listening to us, when we feel all alone, God listens and He cares. Paul and Silas were down in a deep dark jail and were locked up and tied up. They were not free to move where they wanted or do what they wanted. But they never got discouraged. They prayed to God, they sang, and God listened. The Bible also tells us that when we pray, He listens.

Activity:

Have the students talk about times when God has listened to them. Either give them a pre-drawn picture of an ear or a blank piece of paper. Have them color it in and then cut it out. Then with the contact paper, laminate it. Have them put it in their Bible or someplace special as a reminder. When they look at it they can know that God is there, and His ear is always listening.

Sample #2 from Section Two

The Devil Tempts Jesus

Objectives:

Students will discover that Jesus was tempted to do wrong things just as we are.

Materials:

Finger Paints
Paper

Scripture:

Matthew 4:1-11

Lesson:

Talk about the three temptations the devil put before Jesus. Jesus was in the desert. He went without food for forty days and forty nights, and He was very hungry. The devil came to Jesus and tempted Him to sin. The devil told Him to turn the rocks into bread. Jesus said it would take more than bread to keep a man alive. Then the devil told Jesus to jump off a high building and let the angels save Him, but Jesus told the devil it was wrong to test God. Then the devil said if Jesus would worship him, he would give Jesus all the nations of the world. But Jesus answered that He could only worship God. The devil finally gave up and went away. Then the angels came down to take care of Jesus. (Suggestion: You might tell the story in a conversation perhaps with puppets.)

Emphasis Verse:

"Jesus said to the devil, 'Go away from me, Satan! It is written in the Scriptures, 'You must worship the Lord your God. Serve only Him!'" (Matthew 4:10)

Application:

Jesus was tempted just as we are everyday, because He was a human just like us. He never gave in to the temptations because He had faith in God. We can love Jesus much more now that we know that He understands how we feel, because He went through temptations just like we do.

Activity:

Using finger paints, have all the students express how they think the devil looks and how they feel about him. As they express their ideas, discuss with them how the devil tries to get us to do things that we should not do.

Sample #3 from Section Three

Joshua

Objective:

Students will learn that God will help them with the bad things that happen in their lives.

Materials:

Cardboard boxes
Markers

Scripture:

Joshua 6:1-27

Lesson:

Tell the story of Joshua and the battle of Jericho: Joshua was a general who led the army of God's people. God told him to attack the city of Jericho, but this would be difficult, because Jericho had great, high walls built all around it. God told Joshua to march his whole army around the city quietly for six days. On the seventh day they marched around the city seven times blowing their trumpets and shouting. Then the walls would fall down flat, and Joshua and his army could march right in. They did what God told them to do, and it worked! The walls fell down, and their army entered and captured the city just like God told them.

Emphasis Verse:

"Everyone who is a child of God has the power to win against the world" (1 John 5:4).

Application:

When we do what the Lord tells us to do, HE will help us. No matter how big the problems in our lives may be, God can help us deal with them. Discuss the challenges that we face today. Encourage students to share some of their problems. Also talk about some of their victories. (Suggestion: Because this idea may be abstract to the student, the teacher may want to use terms that are appropriate to the mental age.)

Activity:

Build a wall with cardboard boxes. Write on the "walls" things that you discussed that the students struggle with. Dramatize the story of marching around the walls and blowing the trumpets. Then watch the calls come tumbling down.

Sample #4 from Section Four

Being a Christian – Forgiving Others

Objectives:

Students will learn the importance of forgiveness.

Materials:

Paper
Pencils

Scripture:

Matthew 6:9-15

Lesson:

In the Bible, Jesus tells us that if we want God to forgive our sins, we must forgive those who sin against us. That means that if someone does something wrong to us, we must forgive them. If we hold on to our bad feelings toward them, it gets in the way of your love for God. It makes the Holy Spirit sad when we keep our bitterness and anger. He does not want us to talk about other people in a mean way. The Bible says to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God has forgiven us.

Emphasis Verse:

“Yes, if you forgive others for the things they do wrong, then your Father in Heaven will also forgive you for the things that you do wrong.” (Matthew 6:14).

Application:

Sometimes it is hard to forgive. When someone does something that hurts us or makes us mad, we want to hurt them too. But Jesus tells us to forgive those who do wrong to us. He wants us to be kind. He tells us to remember that God has forgiven us. We should also do the same for others.

Activity:

Have the students make a list of things that people have done to them that made them sad. Then have them make a list of things that we do that make God sad. Would He forgive us? As they answer “yes,” mark off the things that make God sad. Ask if we should forgive those who make us sad.

Put it all together

Notice the simplicity of the samples from *52 Lessons Plans for Students with Cognitive Disabilities*.

Objective → Scripture basis → Lesson → Application → Activity

Keep it simple and plan ahead

- ❑ Use a lesson plan preparation sheet (See Exhibit 2, page 32).
- ❑ How many students are expected to be in your class?
- ❑ What are the special needs characteristics that may effect what you do and/or say as you present the lesson?
- ❑ Will you need to make any changes to the classroom?
If so, what?
- ❑ What is the objective of your lesson?
- ❑ How will you address the challenges?
- ❑ Base your lesson action plans on the characteristics associated with the diagnosis. Factor in any personal traits particular to the student.

Examples

Diagnosis	Characteristic	Adjustment(s)	Comments
Autism	Rigidity	Post a picture schedule for the class.	The student will express less negativity if they know what to expect.
Cerebral Palsy	Lack of motor skills	If the student's motor skills will not permit participation in an activity, design a role that is appropriate.	Assign a contributing part in the activity.
Behavior Disorder	Trying to get attention of classmates	Seat the student close to teacher and more than arm length from fellow students.	Prevent close proximity to other students.

Writing out the preparation plans for your class will give you a better picture of collective effects and may help you avoid potential difficulties.

Remember, you want all of your students to benefit from your teaching. Do your basic planning for the **group** and then **group** your plans for special needs.

Take comfort

Even though the opportunity to plan lessons is a blessing, we may sometime feel unqualified to undertake such an awesome task.

Be guided by 2 Timothy 1:7:

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (NKJV)

Proceed with an undaunted attitude. Know that you have the power to do all things with love and the Holy Spirit will guide your thoughts as you prepare your lessons.

Leslie Giese, former CCDM staff member and Johnson University alumna was challenged to adapt and create Sunday school lessons for special needs students. The four lessons that follow and much of the material in this publication stem from her efforts.

The sources for the material she used in her preparation are listed. However, some may not be readily available.

Leslie was asked to do this to demonstrate that years of teaching experience are not a pre-requisite for creating and adapting your own lessons.

The only requirement is that you love God and want to pass on the good news about Him to others.

Sample Lesson Plans

Sample Lesson Plan One is from published Sunday school materials adapted for special needs students. Modifications found in these lessons are not the only ways these activities can be adapted and the combinations of disabilities are not the only ones that will be found in your classrooms.

Sample Lesson Plan I – Adapted Published Lessons

Unit 1: God Made Everything, Heartshaper’s Early Elementary Curriculum, Standard Publishing, 2005.

Lesson One: God Makes the World

A Powerful Purpose: – Children will learn about God and His power.

Lesson Plan:

Step 1.	Focus In	10-15 minutes
Step 2.	Explore His Word	20 minutes
Step 3.	Make It Real	10-15 minutes
Step 4.	Live It Out	5-10 minutes

Materials:

HeartShaper lesson materials, paper lunch bags, pinecone, grass, bark, flower, leaf, construction paper, scissors, plain paper or construction paper, glue, square facial tissue box, markers or crayons.

The Lesson:

Step 1:

Focus In

Quick Step - Guess What?

Let’s explore things God made as we play a fun guessing game. Try to guess what God made from the clues I give you. Tell kids to raise their hands when they know what God made.

- I am in the sky and very hot. (sun)
- I grow tall and sometimes fruit grows on me. (tree)
- I am in the sky and look puffy. (cloud)
-

Etc.

- How are things alike? (God made them)
- Could we make any of these things? (No, only God could)

All of these things God made are awesome. I'm glad the Bible tells us that only God made the world.

Modifications:

Physical Disability – If unable to raise one of their hands, give the student a bell to ring or some other suitable device to be a part of the game.

Sensory Disability – (Sight) Call out the student's name to recognize, do not simply point to the person you are calling on to give an answer.

Speech or Autism – Have pictures available for the student to point to if they wish to give an answer.

Mental Retardation (MR) or Learning Disability– Ask the student if they would like to make a guess or describe something God made. Invite gently but do not insist on participation.

Option - Discovery Bags

Let's think about things God made as we do a fun activity. Before class, lay the items on a table or on the floor and cover them. Give each child a small bag, then uncover the items. Tell the children to pick an item that God made (pinecone, grass, bark, flower, leaf, etc.) and place it in their bags. Have the children switch bags with each other. Ask one child to reach into his bag and describe what he feels. The rest of the children can guess what the item is. Make sure everyone has a turn. Remind the children that all the items are things God made on the first four days of creation. If you have a magnifying glass, let children use it to look at the items.

- **How are these things alike?** (God made them.)
- **Could you make any of these things?** (No, only God could.)

All of these things God made are really great. I'm glad the Bible tells us that only God made the world.

Modifications:

Autism – Be aware that these students may be overly sensitive to certain textures. Handle any reluctance gently.

Allergies – Know if your students have any allergies that may effect what natural materials you should use.

Bible Memory - Genesis 1:1, 25, 26

Read Genesis 1:1, 25, 26 from your Bible. **Our Bible Memory verses tell us that only God made the world. What are some things you like that God made?** (Let several children respond.) Distribute copies of the Bible Memory activity. Ask kids to listen and read along as Track 7 is played. Play again and ask kids to read the group part as you read the leader's part. As time permits, do again and let a child read the leader's part. **We should be happy that God made a wonderful world for us to live in. And we should be really happy that God made all of us. Remember what the Bible says: only God made the world.**

Modifications:

MR/LD/Autism – If the child does not understand the question, try rephrasing it a couple different ways. Allow the child to answer in an alternate way – let the

child act out the answer or draw a picture because he or she may not be able to put the answer into words.

Step 2:

Explore His Word

God Makes the World (Genesis 1:1-19)

Our Bible story comes from the Old Testament book of Genesis. Open your Bible to Genesis. **Genesis is the first book of the Old Testament. Genesis tells about God making the world.** Have children find Genesis in their Bibles. Ask for a volunteer to read the first verse. **The Bible tells us only God made the world.**

Help me tell the Bible story. When you hear a number, hold up that many fingers. When you hear me say, "And God saw that it was" finish that sentence by saying good. Listen to hear what God made on the first four days of creation.

(Give the story cards to children to hold up or you can attach them to a piece of poster board at the appropriate times.)

Modifications:

Blind – Describe the picture on the story cards as they are being held up.

MR/Autism – Explain the pictures that are being shown and tell how they relate to the story. Pair the student with a buddy who can prompt them to hold up fingers and respond by saying "good".

Behavior Problems – Have a volunteer close by to keep the child calm and attentive during the story. Take a break if the child gets too excited. Walk down the hallway if needed and while you are walking tell the story so the child will not be behind when he/she gets back to the classroom.

Deaf/Hearing Impaired –If the student can read lips, seat them so that they can see you clearly. Have an interpreter if possible.

Bible Review Activity

Let's see what you remember from the Bible story. Jump up when you think you know an answer. You may want to print and use the Review Questions from the *Resources* CD to help children further review the story.

- **What did God make on the first day of creation?** (light)
- **What did God make on the second day of creation?** (sky)
- etc

Only God made the world. Let's learn a fun song about God making the world. Play "The Seven Days of Creation," doing only the first four days. Then invite children to stand and sing along. For each day of creation, they can hold up that many fingers. To help children learn the words, you can hold up the story cards used in the Bible story: first day-1a, second day-1b, third day-1d, fourth day-1e and 1f.

Modifications:

Autism/Behavior Problems – This child may not want to be in on all the commotion so give this child the opportunity to sit quietly and color pictures related to the story.

Physical Disability – If the child is in a wheelchair and has use of his/her hands, the child can raise his hands, ring a bell or use some other designated assistive device to be recognized.

Non Verbal/Autistic – The child may like to pantomime or sign instead of singing.

Bible Skill Builder and Bible Memory Activity

We're going to read about God making the world and learn our Bible Memory verses. Help children find Genesis 1:1, 25 and 26 in their Bibles. Tell children that Genesis is the first book of the Bible and the first book of the Old Testament. Ask for volunteers to read the verses or you can read them.

Hold up the first Bible Memory puzzle, 1g. Point to the words as you slowly say them and invite children to read the words with you. Then take the puzzle apart. Let the children put the pieces together and then read the verse. Do the same with the other two puzzles, 1h and 1i. If you have time, kids may enjoy doing the Bible Memory activity described in Step 1 Bible Memory. **Only God made the world. And He made a beautiful world for us!**

Modifications:

MR/LD/Autism – These children may have a difficult time reading aloud. They may also be challenged by a puzzle. Pair them with a buddy. Stress that the main thing is to work together to solve the puzzle and by doing so, they can learn more about God's love for us.

Step 3

Make It Real

Ways to Praise

We've learned that only God made the world. He made the light, the sky, waters, dry land, trees, plants, fruits, vegetables, the sun, and the moon and stars. Let's think of ways to praise God for making the world as we play a game.

Give each child a piece of construction paper. Ask children to stand and form a large circle, laying their pieces of paper in front of them. Tell children that they will walk around the pieces of paper as the music plays. When the music stops, ask a few children to name something God made that is the same color as the paper they are standing behind. They can also tell how they could praise God for that thing. (Example: God made the green grass. I could praise God for green grass by helping to take care of it.) Continue playing so that everyone can have at least one turn. (Ways to praise God for making the world could include: telling Him thank You, taking care of the thing He has made, or telling others that God made it.)

Modifications:

Physical Disability – Wheelchair, be certain there is enough room for the student to navigate. If space is limited or mobility is an issue, put the pieces of paper in a container and let each student choose a piece of paper (without looking) as the music plays.

Blind – Pair the student with a buddy. Once the color is chosen, the buddy names what is that color and the student tells how they praise God for it.

Look What God Made

We've learned that only God made the world. He made the light, the sky, water, dry land, trees, plants, fruits, vegetables, the sun, and the moon and stars. Let's think of ways to praise God for making the world as we do an activity.

Before class, type or print the following into three columns or rows and then make a copy for each child. Leave plenty of space after each phrase so children can glue on pictures. The phrases are: I can thank God for; I can help take care of; I can tell others that God made.

Distribute the activity pages and scissors. As children cut out the pictures, talk about the things that God made on the first four days of creation. Then distribute the papers you have prepared and read the phrases. Tell children that they can put any of the pictures under the first phrase if they plan on thanking God for that thing. They can put any of the pictures under the second phrase if they plan on helping to take care of that thing. They can put any of the pictures under the third phrase if they plan on telling others that God made that thing.

Modifications

Blind –Color the pictures with crayons or puffy paint before class so the paint has time to dry. The child can then choose the pictures. Pair the student with a buddy to help with placement of pictures if necessary.

General – Cut out and group the pictures for each student prior to class; this will avert any problems due to dexterity, comprehension, or behavior issues.

Story from Weekly Bible Reader®

We've learned that only God made the world. He made the light, the sky, water, dry land, trees, plants, fruits, vegetables, the sun, and the moon and stars. Let's think of ways to praise God for making the world as we read a story together. Read "A Walk with Grandpa" from Issue 1.

Modifications:

MR/LD – Read the story slowly.

Autism – Let the child choose where he/she wants to sit and listen to the story. The child may be able to concentrate better if he/she is comfortable and possibly distanced from the rest of the group.

In General – Let all the children (with disabilities) have a chance to answer – you may have to call on them but do not force participation.

Step 4

Live It Out

Prayers of Praise

We've learned that only God made the world. And we've discovered some ways

we can praise God for making the world. Let's pray and praise Him now using words and motions and sign language.

Ask children to stand, and teach them the following motions and sign language: **I**-point to self; **praise**-applaud; **God**-raise a hand to the heavens and then downward; **world**-make a large circle with both hands; **sun**-put a hand over eyes looking up; **tree**-raise an arm up high; **flower**-hold a hand up to nose and pretend to smell. Invite children to say with you the following prayers of praise to God, using words and motions. Say the prayers slowly. Pause after each phrase as marked.

I praise You, God (pause), **for making the world.** (pause)

I praise You, God (pause), **for making the sun.** (pause)

I praise You, God (pause), **for making trees.** (pause)

I praise You, God (pause), **for making flowers.** (pause)

In Jesus' name, amen.

Modification Note:

If there is a child in your class who uses signing, ask, do not insist if they would like to lead this activity.

We Praise You God!

We've learned that only God made the world. And we've discovered some ways we can praise God for making the world. So let's praise Him now. Before class, prepare one cube as instructed. Make enough copies of page 89 for each child to have one. Encourage children to make the creation cube at home and play with family and friends.

Ask children to stand and form a circle. Have each child take a turn tossing the cube. The child can say the name of what is on the picture that is facing up. Then have all the children say together with enthusiasm, "**We praise You, God, for making .**" Make sure each child gets at least one turn.

Close with prayer. Invite all the children to say the following prayer with you: **God, we thank You for making the world. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Modifications:

Blind – Prepare the student's cube using crayon or puffy paint or other textures.

Behavior Problems/Physical Disability – Have the students remain seated and ask them to hold up a sign for which they give special praise.

Summary: As you will notice, all of the modifications mentioned here simple. They are made without detracting from the structure, aim and delivery of the lesson. The goal is be sure students of all abilities benefit in an integrated environment. Know your students and make lesson adjustments as necessary.

NON-PUBLISHED LESSONS

Leslie compiled the next three lessons. She uses her own original lesson material along with activities from published material. The lesson and activities were then adapted to fit each of three disabilities. The three disabilities represented are the ones Sunday school teachers usually are the most challenged by:

Mental Retardation
Autism
Behavior Problems

The lessons are similar and they can be fused and used in a classroom that includes students with all three disabilities.

THEME:

Kindness – Based on the story of the Good Samaritan.

Self-contained classroom – elementary

Sample Lesson Plan 2 – Adapted Published Lessons and Original Material

Good Samaritan (Adapted for use with students with Mental Retardation)

Step 1:

Read the story

Find a well-written children's version of the Good Samaritan that uses simple language and lots of pictures. Ask some questions such as: How did the Samaritan help the stranger? What was wrong with the stranger? Why did the other people pass by the stranger without helping him? Would you help the stranger or someone you saw was hurt? Etc.

Step 2:

Role Playing

Gather four or five adult (or older student) volunteers to act out the story. Have the Samaritan ask the children to help him (or her) bandage the stranger and take him (or her) to the inn. The children will enjoy participating in the story and this will make it more real to them. It will also help them to apply it to their own lives. Another idea is to let the students act out the story.

Step 3:
Hug Tag

Kershner, Jan. Mix and Match Ideas for Preschool Ministry. Group Books: Loveland, Colorado 1997. **Page. 41**

Choose a "tagger" for every ten children. Give each a "tagger" hat. Tell the children that the only way they can be safe from the "tagger" is by hugging someone. Kids can form hugging groups of any number. On a signal, all kids must run and try to find new hugging groups. If anyone is tagged while "unhugged," that person becomes the "tagger" and wears the tagging hat.

Step 4:
Good Samaritan Song

Mix and Match Ideas for Preschool Ministry – **pg. 63-64** (Sung to the tune of "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush")

There was a man by the side of the road

(Motion your arm and hand to the sides as if showing where the man is lying.)

By the side of the road, by the side of the road.

There was a man by the side of the road,

And he needed help.

(Hold both arms out in front of you as if reaching out to someone.)

The priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan

(Point to the left, the front, and the right.)

The Samaritan, the Samaritan.

The priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan

Which one helped this man?

(Shrug your shoulders with elbows bent and palms up.)

The Good Samaritan helped this man.

(Hold both hands over your heart and then extend both arms as if reaching out to someone.)

Helped this man, helped this man.

The Good Samaritan helped this man,

And we can help too.

(Point to yourself with both hands and then extend both arms as if reaching out to someone.)

Step 5:
Snack

You can let the children take a break and munch on some "Kindness Cookies" or "Kindness Crackers" and juice. The cookies and crackers can be decorated by drawing smiley faces on them with either icing or cheese. (Consult allergy list.)

Step 6:
Memory Work

These children will have a hard time memorizing long verses and the language used in most Bibles. An easy way to simplify this task is to start with a paraphrased version of Scripture and then base the memory work around a few key words in the verse. Put it in a similar language as what you hear the children speak. The memory verse for this lesson is "love your neighbor (others) as much as you love yourself."

Step 7:

Art

Have the children draw a picture of a time when they helped someone else. If they cannot think of an actual time when they helped someone, have them draw a picture of a way in which they would like to help someone in the future.

Sample Lesson Plan 3 – Adapted Published Lessons and Original Material

Good Samaritan (Adapted for use with students with Autism)

Step 1:

Read the story

Find a well written children's version of the Good Samaritan that uses simple language and lots of pictures. It might help to have enlarged pictures from the story hanging on the wall that you can point to as you tell the story. Ask some questions such as, "How did the Samaritan help the stranger?" "What was wrong with the stranger?" "Why did the other people pass by the stranger without helping him?" "Would you help the stranger or someone you saw was hurt?" Etc.

Step 2:

Good Samaritan Song

Mix and Match Ideas for Preschool Ministry – pg. 63-64 (Sung to the tune of "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush")

There was a man by the side of the road

(Motion your arm and hand to the sides as if showing where the man is lying.)

By the side of the road, by the side of the road.

There was a man by the side of the road,

And he needed help.

(Hold both arms out in front of you as if reaching out to someone.)

The priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan

(Point to the left, the front, and the right.)

The Samaritan, the Samaritan.

The priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan

Which one helped this man?

(Shrug your shoulders with elbows bent and palms up.)

The Good Samaritan helped this man.

(Hold both hands over your heart and then extend both arms as if reaching out to someone.)

Helped this man, helped this man.

The Good Samaritan helped this man,

And we can help too.

(Point to yourself with both hands and then extend both arms as if reaching out to someone.)

Step 3:

Warm Fuzzies

Make a card out of construction paper and decorate the outside with soft materials (cotton balls, felt, yarn, pom-poms, etc.) then help the children write a kind message to a friend (to make it more fun you could use letter stickers instead of having them write).

The outside of the card will stimulate their sense of touch and help them remember what kind of words are like “warm fuzzies.”

Step 4:

Video

Many children with autism learn well by watching a story, not just hearing it. It would likely be helpful to find a copy of the Good Samaritan story on video and let the children watch it.

Step 5:

Snack

You can let the children take a break and munch on some “Kindness Cookies” or “Kindness Crackers” and juice. The cookies and crackers can be decorated by drawing smiley faces on them with either icing or cheese. (Some children with autism will have aversions to certain textures or tastes of different foods; double check with parents about these and have an alternate choice of snacks on hand.)

Step 6:

Memory Work

These children will have a hard time memorizing long verses and the language used in most Bibles. An easy way to simplify this task is to start with a paraphrased version of Scripture and then base the memory work around a few key words in the verse. Put it in a similar language as what you hear the children speak. The memory verse for this lesson is “love your neighbor (others) as much as you love yourself.” Simple picture cards work well for this type of activity. Many verses can be illustrated to help a child with autism understand and remember the verse. This verse could be illustrated by drawing two stick figures, one labeled neighbor and one labeled self, and the one that is labeled self has a heart drawn in the chest area. Draw an arrow pointing from the heart (of self) to the neighbor figure and then from the heart (of self) to the self figure.

Step 7:

Role Playing

Gather four or five adult (or older student) volunteers to act out the story. Have the Samaritan ask the children to help him (or her) bandage the stranger and take him (or her) to the inn. The children will enjoy participating in the story and this will make it more real to them. It will also help them to apply it to their own lives.

Step 8: We'll Be Kind to One Another

Mix and Match Ideas for Preschool Ministry – pg. 65-66

(Sung to the tune of "She'll be Coming 'Round the Mountain")

We'll be kind to one another. Yes we will!
We'll be kind to one another. Yes we will!
We'll be kind to one another -
To our sisters and our brothers.
We'll be kind to one another. Yes we will!

We'll be kind to one another. Yes we will!
We'll be kind to one another. Yes we will!
We'll be kind to one another -
To our fathers and our mothers.
We'll be kind to one another. Yes we will!

We'll be kind to one another. Yes we will!
We'll be kind to one another. Yes we will!
We'll be kind to one another -
Learn to love and help each other.
We'll be kind to one another. Yes we will!

Sample Lesson Plan 4 – Adapted Published Lessons and Original Material

Good Samaritan (Adapted for use with students with Behavior Problems)

Step 1:

Read the story

Find a well written children's version of the Good Samaritan that uses simple language and lots of pictures. It might help to have enlarged pictures from the story hanging on the wall that you can point to as you tell the story. Ask some questions such as, "How did the Samaritan help the stranger?" "What was wrong with the stranger?" "Why did the other people pass by the stranger without helping him?" "Would you help the stranger or someone you saw was hurt?" Etc.

Step 2:

Role Playing

Draw five names out of a hat and have them act out the story (drawing out of a hat keeps the choosing fair and arguments over favoritism to a minimum). This will get the children up and moving around and keep them from getting restless (when they get bored, they get into trouble). Becoming involved in the story also helps the story become more applicable to their lives and they will be more likely to help someone if they have participated in a similar act (even if it was pretend). Also have them share ways they have helped someone in the past and give them ample praise and encourage them to continue being kind and helping people.

Step 3:

Hug Tag*

Mix and Match Ideas for Preschool Ministry – pg. 41

Choose a "tagger" for every ten children. Give each a "tagger" hat. Tell the children that the only way they can be safe from the "tagger" is by hugging someone. Kids can form hugging groups of any number. On a signal, all kids must run and try to find new hugging groups. If anyone is tagged while "unhugged," that person becomes the "tagger" and wears the tagging hat.

*Be careful with this activity, the children with behavior problems may be too physical – if this happens change it to hand shake tag or shoulder rub tag (or something not quite as physical as hugging).

Step 4:

Good Samaritan Song

Mix and Match Ideas for Preschool Ministry – **pg. 63-64** (Sung to the tune of “Here We Go ‘Round the Mulberry Bush”)

There was a man by the side of the road

(Motion your arm and hand to the sides as if showing where the man is lying.)

By the side of the road, by the side of the road.

There was a man by the side of the road,

And he needed help.

(Hold both arms out in front of you as if reaching out to someone.)

The priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan

(Point to the left, the front, and the right.)

The Samaritan, the Samaritan.

The priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan

Which one helped this man?

(Shrug your shoulders with elbows bent and palms up.)

The Good Samaritan helped this man.

(Hold both hands over your heart and then extend both arms as if reaching out to someone.)

Helped this man, helped this man.

The Good Samaritan helped this man,

And we can help too.

(Point to yourself with both hands and then extend both arms as if reaching out to someone.)

Step 5:

Snack

You can let the children take a break and munch on some “Kindness Cookies” or “Kindness Crackers” and juice. The cookies and crackers can be decorated by drawing smiley faces on them with either icing or cheese. (Some children with autism will have aversions to certain textures or tastes of different foods; double check with parents about these and have an alternate choice of snacks on hand.)

Step 6:

Memory Work

These children will have a hard time memorizing long verses and the language used in most Bibles. An easy way to simplify this task is to start with a paraphrased version of Scripture and then base the memory work around a few key words in the verse. Put it in a similar language as what you hear the children speak. The memory verse for this lesson is “love your neighbor (others) as much as you love yourself.”

Step 7:

Partner Work

Review the Good Samaritan story and how the stranger was helped. With a buddy have the children think of four nice things (each) they could do that day for someone else. This will help the lesson apply to their daily lives.

Step 8:

Art

Have the children draw a picture of a time when they helped someone else. If they cannot think of an actual time they helped someone, have them draw a picture of a way in which they would like to help someone in the future.

Creative Resources:

New Century Bible, Word Publishing, a division of Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Bethesda Lutheran Home - *Breakthrough* (older children and adults). Each issue of Breakthrough (4 annually) contains a feature article and a combination of the other resources serving people with developmental disabilities. Call 1.800.369.4636 ext. 3535 or visit website at <http://bethesdalutherancommunities.org/page.aspx?pid=805> for more information.

Friendship Ministries – Friendship Series. Offers publications that promote the mission to share God’s love with people who have cognitive impairments and to enable them to become an active part of God’s family. Nella Uitvlugt, Executive Director Call 1-888-866-8966 or visit website www.friendship.org .

LifeWay – Visit their website at www.lifeway.com. Enter “disabilities” and search for informative articles and publications on special needs ministry.

Listed below are websites that will help you with general lesson preparation. They contain reference material and suggestions for themes, art, activities

www.sundayschoollessons.com

www.ebibleteacher.com

www.kidssundayschool.com

www.gospelcom.net

www.jesussite.com

www.crosswalk.com

We have reviewed the resources listed above for content. However, our recommendation of them does not constitute an endorsement. We encourage you to evaluate these resources for yourself.

Exhibit 1

Parent/Guardian Interview Form

Child's Name:	Birth date:
Address:	
Telephone:	E-mail
Parent's Names:	
Siblings' Names	

Specific Diagnosis:

Education

Is child in school? If yes, where?
Type of placement:
Teacher's name:
Teacher's phone and e-mail:

Behavior

Is the child on medication? If so, what is it and how often does it have to be administered?
Describe the child's behavior (Is he aggressive? Does he hit, bite, throw, run away, yell, pull hair? Is he self-abusive?)
What do you do to control his behavior?
How does he deal with people he doesn't know?

Food

Please describe any nonstandard eating habits the child has:

Is he allergic to any foods? If so, please describe the food and reaction.

Please list any food restrictions:

What type of snack food does he prefer?

Independence and Prosthetic Devices

Does the child take care of his or her toileting needs?

Does the child feed him or herself?

Does the child dress him or herself?

Does the child use a hearing aid? Cane? Wheelchair? Walker? Have artificial limbs? Any other prosthetic device? Or medical equipment?

Communication

Is the child's speech understandable to people who don't know him or her?

How does the child communicate basic needs? (such as asking for a drink or using the toilet?)

Does he or she use any sign language or a language board?

What special care needs should we be aware of?

Religion

What is the child's previous experience attending church?

What is the family's religious background and practice?

What concepts does the child understand: God, Jesus, Church, Heaven?

Other: (Add any questions that will help you get a good overview of how the child functions. Remember to get the information you need to make the placement in the classroom a positive one for him and his family).

EXHIBIT 2
Sample
Lesson plan preparation sheet

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Name of Class: _____

Age/Grade Level: _____

Objective: _____

Lesson Title: _____

Modifications

Comments

Physical classroom set up

Lesson:

Activities:
