Isaac Digs Wells

Bible Story
Genesis 26:12-33

Teacher Challenge
God blessed Isaac so abundantly that the people around him became jealous. They filled in his wells and ordered him to leave—time after time! Isaac could have taken revenge, but he didn’t. Later, the king who had banished him came to make peace with him, saying, “We saw clearly that the Lord was with you” (Genesis 26:28). Had Isaac stuck up for his rights or struck back in retaliation, God’s favor would not have been so obvious. In a world where water was not always easily accessible, Isaac gave up a precious resource, showing merciful love to others and trusting God for the outcome.

→ What are some opportunities you have to show God’s love to people around you?

→ What good things might happen as a result of the love and mercy you show?

As you seek to follow God in every area of your life, ask God to give you new ways to show His merciful love. Then the people around you—including the children you teach—will see that God is with you as He was with Isaac. And they will want to grow in trusting God and showing His love, too!

Teacher’s Planning
1. Choose which centers you will provide and the order in which children will participate in them. For tips on schedule planning, see page 9.

2. Plan who will lead each center, making sure to have one adult for approximately every six children. For staffing tips and ideas, see page 12.

God’s Word
“Love your neighbor.” Matthew 22:39

God’s Word and Me
I can choose to show love instead of arguing.
Play to Learn

Active Game Center: Beanbag Toss

Collect
Bible, containers such as buckets or baskets, masking tape, beanbags.

Prepare
Set containers in a row on one side of your playing area. Place a masking-tape line 3 feet (.9 m) from the containers.

Do
1. Children stand behind the masking-tape line and take turns tossing beanbags into containers. After a couple of minutes, select a volunteer to retrieve the tossed beanbags.
2. Continue tossing and selecting volunteer retrievers as time and interest allow.

Talk About
- The Bible says, “Love your neighbor.” We can show love to others, instead of arguing with them. Let’s play a game where we get to show love.
- Matthew has been a good helper! He has shown love by picking up the beanbags and bringing them back to the line. Thank you, Matthew!
- Brianna, how can you show love at home? You can give your sister a turn with your dolls instead of arguing with her.
- Pray, Dear God, help us to show love to others.

For Younger Children
Children stand close to containers and drop beanbags in containers.

For Older Children
Gather different-colored containers, or tape a different colored sheet of paper to each container. Children name the color container they are aiming for before tossing the beanbag.

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Play to Learn

Art Center:
Play Dough Wells

Collect
Bible, play dough.

Do
Children roll small amounts of play dough into balls to make stones. Children stack “stones” in circles to make wells.

Talk About
- In today’s Bible story, Isaac’s helpers dug wells. When Isaac’s neighbors wanted the wells, Isaac did not argue with them. He built new wells! Let’s make some wells.
- The Bible says, “Love your neighbor.” We can show love to others, instead of arguing with them.
- Julian, tell about one of your toys that your brother sometimes wants to play with. What can you do instead of arguing with him? Giving him a turn with your video game is a way to show love!
- Pray briefly, Dear God, help us to show love to others.

For Younger Children
Children simply play with play dough.

For Older Children
Children make “stones.” Say, Make a well using ten stones. Children count stones and make well. Repeat, increasing the number of stones for each well.

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Play to Learn

Construction Center: Street Scene

Collect
Bible, blocks, yarn.

Do
1. Children use blocks to outline squares large enough to stand in and use as houses.
2. Using yarn, children outline a road in front of the houses. Children walk down the road to act out visiting friends at their block houses.

Talk About
- The Bible says, “Love your neighbor.” One way to show love to neighbors is to visit them. Let’s build a neighborhood and visit each other.
- Mario, I see you moved over to give Alexia room to build. That was very kind! You know how to be a kind neighbor.
- Being kind is one way to show love to a neighbor. Joshua, what is another way to show love? Yes, sharing the blocks with your friends is a way to show love.
- Stephanie, when might it be hard to show love to a friend? (When the friend is saying mean things. When the friend won’t share.) Sometimes it’s hard to be kind, but we can choose to show love, instead of arguing.

For Younger Children
Use masking tape to outline a road across the activity area. Younger children place blocks on masking-tape lines. Instead of outlining squares to make houses, children can place sheets of construction paper or carpet squares along road for houses. Children walk on road to act out visiting neighbors.

For Older Children
As children walk down the yarn road to act out visiting friends, they repeat the Bible verse with teachers.

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Play to Learn
Dramatic Play Center: Neighborly Meals

Collect
Bible, toy dishes and food, chairs and table.

Do
1. Children use toy dishes and food to prepare a meal.
2. Children choose who will be the visitors and who will be the hosts. When the meal is ready, the hosts serve the meal to the visitors.

Talk About
- The Bible says, “Love your neighbor.” We show love to our neighbors when we are kind to them. Let’s cook some food for some visitors.
- Emma, how can you show love to your friends? You can share your crayons.
- Kami, thank you for giving Brooke a turn at the stove. You know how to show love by sharing!
- Pray briefly, Dear God, please help us to show love to others.

For Younger Children
Children make the meal and eat together as a pretend family, rather than hosts serving visitors.

For Older Children
Children wash hands and serve real food (crackers, small pieces of fruit, etc.) on paper plates.
Listen to Learn

Genesis 26:12-33

Collect
Bible, Bible Story 13 pictures from God’s Story for Me Poster Pack #2, Preschool Music #2 DVD or CD and player, index cards, marker.

Prepare
Write a “1” or “2” on an index card, making a card for each child.

Greet Each Other
Help children form pairs. Pairs stand facing each other a few feet apart. It’s fun to do things with neighbors. Let’s use our bodies as we sing this song. Play “Pointing Song” (track #18 on CD). Lead children in singing song and doing motions suggested in the song.

Tell the Story
Open your Bible to Genesis 26. Tell the story using the pictured motions (keywords in bold) or show Bible Story 13 pictures.

When have you or someone you know dug a hole in the ground? What kinds of tools were used? Listen to hear about a time Isaac’s helpers had to dig in the ground again and again.

In Bible times, people did not have sinks and faucets in their homes. People got their water outdoors. They would dip buckets or jars into deep holes in the ground called wells.

Isaac needed to dig a well, so his family and his helpers and his animals could have good water to drink. Dig, dig, dig—Isaac’s helpers worked hard. The hole got deeper and deeper. Then water began to fill up the hole!

Everyone was happy, EXCEPT Isaac’s neighbors. They shouted, “That well is OURS!” They started a big argument. Isaac did not want to argue with his neighbors. So Isaac let them have the well. Isaac moved to another place. He told his helpers to dig another well. Dig, dig, dig—the helpers worked hard. Soon water began to fill up the hole. They had found water again!

But then Isaac’s neighbors came again. “That well is OURS!” they shouted. They were so angry. They may have pushed and shoved Isaac’s helpers.

Isaac still wanted to be kind to his neighbors. So again Isaac moved to another place. And he told his helpers to dig ANOTHER well. Dig, dig, dig—the helpers worked hard. Soon water began to fill up the hole.

One night soon after, God said to Isaac, “Do not be afraid, Isaac. I will always be with you.” Isaac thanked God for being with him.

Isaac’s neighbors came again. But this time they did not shout. They did not push. They said, “We know God is with you. We will not argue with you anymore.”

Isaac was very happy! He invited the neighbors to stay for dinner. Isaac was glad God helped him to be kind.

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“Love your neighbor.” Matthew 22:39

I can choose to show love instead of arguing.
Talk About the Story
How did Isaac show love to his neighbors? (Isaac didn’t argue with them. Isaac had his helpers dig new wells.) Isaac chose to show love to his neighbors, instead of arguing with them. We can choose to show love to our neighbors, too. Who are our neighbors? (The people who live on our street. Our friends. Our family. Everyone!) What is a way you can show love to someone today?

Sing to God
Let’s sing a song about something important to do. Lead children in singing “Choosing” (on DVD or track 4 on CD) and doing motions suggested by the song. We can obey God by showing love to other people. Even when we might feel like arguing, we can choose to show love instead.

Hear and Say God’s Word
Holding your Bible open to Matthew 22:39, say verse aloud. Our neighbors are all the people we know. We can choose to show love to others every day! Lead children in saying the verse. First the children to your left say “Love” and then the children on your right say “your neighbor.” Have children repeat the verse in this manner several times, alternating which group says the phrases.

Pray to God
Let’s ask God to help us show love, instead of arguing. Volunteers take turns completing the following prayer by naming someone to whom they can show love: Dear God, please help me show love to . . .

Praise to God
God tells us to love our neighbor. Let’s play a game to talk about people we can show God’s love to. Lay prepared cards facedown on the floor in an open area. Children walk around the area while you play “Welcome, Hello!” (track 1 on CD). When music stops, each child picks up the nearest card and identifies the numeral. Several volunteers then tell either one or two ways to show God’s love or one or two people to whom they can be kind.

Option: Children name people they know (brother, sister, friend, cousin, etc.) or categories of people (teacher, firefighter, etc.) and insert in place of the words “your neighbor.”
Talk to Learn

Bible Story Activity Pages Center

Collect
A copy of Activity 13 from The Big Book of Bible Story Activity Pages #2 for yourself and each child, crayons or markers; optional—small squares of blue tissue paper, glue.

Do
Lead children to complete pages following the instructions. (Optional: Children glue tissue paper to water in well.) Use the conversation suggestions as children complete their pages and retell the story.

Preschool Puzzle Center

Collect
Copies of Bible Story Puzzle 13, Bible Verse Puzzle 13 and/or Challenge Puzzle 13 from The Big Book of Preschool Puzzles #2 for each child; pencils, crayons or markers.

Do
Children complete the puzzles and color pages. Use the conversation suggestions on the pages.

Read-Aloud Story Center

Collect
A copy of Story Picture 13 from The Big Book of Read-Aloud Stories #2 for yourself and each child, crayons or markers.

Do
Read the story and distribute pictures. Use the conversation suggestions as children complete their pages.