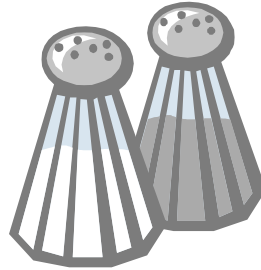


SPICE RACK®

E-Curriculum



by Mark DeVries

Note to the Teachers: The easiest thing to do (which actually becomes the most difficult before the end of the class!) is to use the same teaching method for the entire class period. What most of us are used to is simply lecturing or asking questions. And hey, if your kids are walking out each week saying, "Man, that connected with me. The hour just flew by!," then those two methods are fine. What this curriculum seeks to do is to give you active exercises that take the kids' attention off of you and their own discomfort enough that they CAN naturally answer the questions you want them to get at. Remember the rule: *1 minute of attention for each year of life lived*. That means that even in our older classes, we should be shooting for changing our teaching methods 3 times in the class period. The reason there are seven different exercises is that I'm guessing that 4 of them won't work for your group. If an exercise doesn't work, try the next one. But please try to engage the kids with something besides the standard lecture and Q&A. Thanks for all your work in loving God's kids! Also, to aid you in your preparation, any special supplies recommended for this lesson are outlined in a box. Contact colyer@ymarchitects.com with any questions!

“WALKING IN TRUTH/WALKING IN LOVE”

2 John

I. Gathering (Attendance, Announcements, First-Timers)

II. Engaging the Brain

A. Check-In Go-Around: Most Convincing Illusion

1. Move the group into a circle.
2. Starting with the person in the group wearing the brightest clothing in the class, ask everyone in the group to answer this question: "What is the most convincing illusion you have ever seen?"

3. Once everyone has given their answers, ask the following process questions:



- Does anyone have a trick (an illusion) you can show us? (If you—the teacher—have one, you could do it here. Also it might be helpful to bring a deck of cards.)
- Who is the least likely to be fooled by illusion?
- Who is the most likely?

B. Review: “Hello! Is Anybody Out There?”

1. “The Last Word” Competition

- a. Divide the class into two teams.
- b. Ask each team to select a leader.
- c. Have the two leaders join you at the front of the room—each leader standing in front of his or her group.
- d. Explain how the competition will work.
 - 1) The object of the game is to be the team to have the last word.
 - 2) The groups will go back and forth, each having ten seconds to come up with one thing they remember having done or talked about in Sunday School over the past year (i.e., after side one gives an answer, side two has ten seconds to come up with an answer).
 - 3) The first team not to successfully come up with an answer loses.
- e. Invite the group to ask questions about the instructions.

2. Process Questions

- If you were to summarize what parts of the Bible we have been studying over the last year, what would you say?
- Based on your answers in this competition, how well would you say we are doing as teachers? (Dangerous question, I know.)

C. Basket of Questions

1. Write each of the following questions on different slips of paper.

- How do you feel about ministers making too much money?
- How do you feel about the people who stand on the street corners with their “Will work for food” signs?
- How do you feel about a minister who always expects people in the congregation to pay for his or her meal when they go out to lunch?
- How would you feel if our pastor asked if he could live with your family for a month? A day? A year?
- How do you feel about relatives staying too long when they come to visit?

- How do you feel about telling someone who needs a place to stay, “Sorry, but you can’t stay here?”
- How do you feel about ministers asking for money?



2. Put all the slips of paper into a hat or basket.
3. Explain that you are going to hand the basket of questions to someone in the group and that you want that person to draw a question, read it to the group and then give an honest answer.
4. Explain that after every answer is given, the group is then free to add their comments.
5. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
6. Play “Basket of Questions.”
7. Process Questions

- Did you notice any common themes in the questions that were just answered?
- Which question do you think was the most controversial?
- Based on the questions you have just heard, do you have any idea what book in the Bible might deal with those kinds of questions? (Hint: The book we’ll be working on today as one of the shortest books in the New Testament.)

III. Igniting the Heart

A. The Text: Welcome to the CIA



1. Divide the class into “secret agent” pairs (a little Mission Impossible music here would be nice— either recorded or sung by the group).
2. Distribute a copy of 2 John (it’s pretty short) to each pair.
3. Explain to the pairs that each pair has been given a clue sheet (2 John). On this sheet are clues to what problem was going on in the church that John is writing to.
4. Explain that the pairs have exactly three minutes to try to determine from this short book what specific problem was being addressed.
5. After the three minutes are up, give the pairs two more minutes to develop their own unique version of the situation to which the letter was written. Explain that this version should include specific names (fictitious, of course) and events that led to this letter.
6. Remind the group that, as always, creativity will be rewarded.
7. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
8. After 5 minutes is up, have the pairs each explain what situation they think the text is addressing.
9. Mini-Lecture: Explain the real story

During the first century, there were a number of Christian teachers who traveled the Roman Empire. And when they did, they would rely on local Christians for food and lodging. No problem so far.

But, before long, false teachers (such as a group called the “Gnostics,” who believed that Jesus could not have come in a real human body. To the Gnostics, the body was evil, and therefore, it would be impossible for a pure God to take on a body—see 2 John 7).

So some folks were preaching false doctrine and others were pretending to be Christian teachers just to get the free room and board. An early church manual called the Didache (pronounced Did-a-kay) set these two interesting regulations:

Visiting ministers may only be entertained for a day or two. If the so-called prophet stayed three days, it was a sign that he was a false prophet. If a prophet “under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit” asked for money, he was considered a false prophet.

10. Process Questions

- **What do you think about the rules from the Didache?**
- **Which of the scenarios from our group was the closest to the truth?**
- **Suppose you wanted to determine if a person claiming to be a preacher was genuine or was in ministry only for the money or the power. How could you tell?**
- **Suppose a friend of yours goes off to college and gets involved in what feels to you like a weird, controlling religious group. How could you tell if that group was the real deal or a fraud?**

B. Creative Tension: Truth and Love

1. A Little Visual Aid

- a. Invite one of the class members to come to the front of the room.
- b. Have this class member face you and join hands with you.
- c. Now ask your partner to lean back as you lean back.
- d. As you are both leaning back holding each other up, give this mini-lecture: “Some truths come in pairs. Just like the two of us are holding each other up by pulling against each other, sometime a single truth only makes sense if it is held in tension with another truth.”

2. A Morning at the Improv

- a. Write out the following two situations on two different cards:
 - 1) Situation One



- a. The Characters: a parent and a teenage son or daughter
- b. The Situation: The teenager has just flunked five out of six subjects. He or she did make a B in Art.
- c. The Attitude: The parent is LOVING without being truthful.

2) Situation Two

- a. The Characters: best friends
- b. Te Situation: One of the friends has just been dumped by a boyfriend/girlfriend.
- c. The Attitude: The friend who did not lose the romantic relationship is TRUTHFUL without being loving.

b. Instructions

- 1) Ask for four volunteers who would be willing to act out two different situations.
- 2) Explain that you will be giving each pair a sheet that has the two characters in the skit and the situation. Each pair will have one minute to prepare and then one minute to act out the situation.
- 3) Allow the pairs to ask questions to clarify the instructions.

c. After the improvisations have been presented, ask the following process questions:

- What similarities did you see between the two skits?
- If you were to rank the parent and the counseling friend, which would you say was the best and which would you say was the worst?
- Which was being truthful?
- Which was being loving?
- Can you give an example of a type of Christian who might be truthful without being loving?
- Can you give an example of a type of Christian who might be loving without being truthful?
- What happens when a Christian doesn't love truthfully or tell the truth lovingly?
- When you become parents, which do you think you will have more trouble with—being loving or being truthful and expecting obedience from your children?

C. Round Robin Q&A: Questions You'd Ask If John Were Here



1. Ask the group to imagine that John, the letter writer, is in the class.
2. Explain that the group will be using a tennis ball (or a shoe or a small teaching assistant) to indicate who will be speaking.
3. Explain that as each speaker asks a question, that person will determine which other person in the class will play the role of John and answer the question.

4. Explain that when the questioner speaks, he or she will hold the tennis ball (or other object). When he or she selects the person who will answer the question, the questioner will throw the object to that person, saying, "Well, John, what do you say?"
5. The answer person gives an answer (a guess is fine) and then asks his or her own question, throwing the ball to the new John and asking, "Well, John, what do you say?"
6. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
7. For any students who might have difficulty coming up with a question, offer one of the following questions on a 3x5 card:
 - How would you advise Christians today to avoid deception?
 - When you talk about "walking in the truth," does that mean that it's okay for me to talk badly about someone if it's true?
 - Do you have any tips for me to decide if a minister is really from God or if they are just phonies?
 - In your letter you talk about the Antichrist. Is there just one of those or are there lots of them?
 - What do you mean when you say that anyone who "runs ahead" does not have God?
 - Can you tell me a little more about this lady you were writing to?
 - Are there some people we shouldn't let stay in our houses? Or were you just talking about a specific situation back then?

IV. Taking It Home

A. Quick Feedback Sheet



1. Distribute pencils and copies of the Quick Feedback Sheet.
2. Give the group two minutes to complete their sheets.
3. Process Questions

- **What did you get for the fourth question?**
- **How about the third?**
- **What problem in our group do you think John might address if he were to write us a letter?**

B. One Word Prayer

1. Move the group into a circle.
2. Invite the group members to each pray one word that summarizes a need in the group that they would like to bring to God. You could have the group go around the circle (giving the option to say "pass" as the word) or simply let the group members give their words "popcorn style."

↓ QUICK FEEDBACK SHEET BELOW ↓

QUICK FEEDBACK SHEET

2 JOHN

Return this portion of this sheet to your teacher or team leader at the end of class.

1. Our youth group is...

- big on truth but not too big on love.
- big on love but not too big on truth.
- just right the right balance of the two.

2. In John's letter, he says to the lady who receives the letter that he has great joy that "some of your children are walking in the truth." If he were writing about you, do you think he would consider you would be one of "some" who are walking in the truth?

Yes No

3. If John were writing a letter to our group, what problem do you think he would be addressing?

4. What would his attitude be toward our class?

- Proud—You guys are right on track.
- Angry—You're missing the whole point.
- Confused—I'm not sure what you guys believe, and more importantly, I don't think you know either.
- Patient—You don't understand the important stuff now, but you're starting to get it.
- Distracted—I'm really too busy to think about your class.

5. One need that my friends have that our youth group is completely missing is....

6. Include prayer requests or any message you would like to the youth leaders.