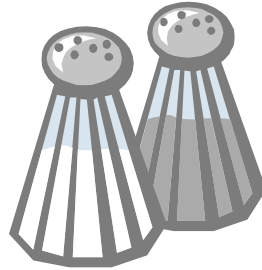


SPICE RACK®

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 THE LIGHT”

I John 1:5-10, 2:9-11

I. Gathering (Attendance, Announcements, First Timers)

II. Engaging the Brain

A. Plant Set Up: Dead or Alive?

1. Bring to class today two plants: a green, alive plant and a brown, withering dead, plant.
2. Once the group has gathered, ask the following process questions:

→ If these two plants were your only clue about what the message for today is about, what would you guess that it is?



- What kinds of things does a plant need to become healthy and green?
- If you wanted to kill a plant, what kinds of things would you do to it?

B. Hide-and-Seek (for the more active groups)

1. Play a game or two of hide-and-seek in your classroom.
2. Instructions
 - a. One person is “it.”
 - b. He or she wears a blindfold as the seeker.
 - c. The hiding people cannot move.
 - d. Once they are tagged, they move to a designated corner of the room until the round is over.
3. Play a couple rounds, until the group begins to relax together.
4. Process Questions
 - To the “seeker”: How did it feel trying to find people without being able to see where you were going or what you were looking for?
 - What would have made the game easier for the “seeker”?
 - If this game were the only clue you had about what our class will be about today, what would you guess the topic would be?

C. Strobe Light Extravaganza (For Those with Dark Classrooms)

1. If you can dig up a strobe light from some disco-loving church member (try your senior pastor first), bring one to class today.
2. Have all the kids stand on one side of the room.
3. Leave the room set up with chairs.
4. Turn all the lights off, and ask the kids try to find their way across the room in the dark.
5. Next, have the kids again stand on one side of the room. With all the lights off, turn on the strobe light, and have them find their way across the room with the light flashing.
6. Finally, without the strobe light, but with the lights off, do this same exercise again, but this time, shine a very powerful flashlight or spotlight at their destination.
7. Process Questions



- Which light gave you the most help in finding your way across the room?
- Which light is most like your own spiritual life?
- If a friend were trying to learn God’s direction for his or her life and came to you asking, “Should I expect God’s direction to be crystal clear or a little bit fuzzy?” What would you say?

- Have you ever had a time in your life when you really wanted to know what God wanted you to do, but you felt like you couldn't see it clearly? Can you tell about it?

D. Reflections on the Theater



1. Imagine...
 - a. Have the class think about the last time they went to a movie during the daytime.
 - b. Process Questions
 - What does it feel like to enter a dark movie theater when you've been in the light? (Shock to the eyes? Hard to adjust?)
 - What happens after you've been in the theater for a while?
 - How does it feel to walk out into the light after the movie is over?
2. Check in Question: Scared of the Dark?
 - a. Starting with the person with the most black on, go around the group, having each person answer one of the following check-in questions:
 - i. If you're all alone in your dark house at night, what do you do?
 - ii. Tell about a time when you have been scared in the dark.
 - b. Process Questions
 - Why do you think having the lights on makes us feel safer?
 - Besides helping us not to bump into things, what else is light good for?

III. Igniting the Heart

A. The Text in the Light

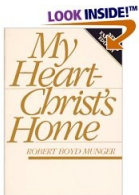
1. Write 1 John 1:5-10 and 2:9-11 (with the largest possible letters) on the board or on a flip chart.
2. Bring a small laser light to class today (the kind that teachers or tour guides might use to point to distant objects).
3. Move the group into teams of 3 or 4 people each.
4. Give the groups one minute to pick what they believe to be the two most important words for hearing what God is saying in these verses.
5. Invite the groups to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
6. After the groups have all picked their key words, explain that you want them to show the rest of the group their key words without speaking.
7. Pull out the laser light and give the following instructions:
 - a. Someone from each group to be the pointer.



- b. He or she will point the light at the two key words by drawing a light circle around those words long enough to make it clear to the rest of the groups what word has been chosen.
 - c. All the groups will remain silent while the words are chosen.
 - d. After each word is pointed to, the teacher will circle the word (with chalk or marker).
 - e. After the pointer for one group is finished, he or she will pass the laser to the next group.
8. Invite the groups to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
 9. Once the key word pinpointing process is complete, ask the following process questions:

- **Based on the words that are circled, what observations do you have about what these verses are all about?**
- **What do you think it means to “walk in darkness”?**
- **Can a person be a Christian and still “walk in darkness”?**
- **What do you think it means that those who hate are “still in the darkness”?**
- **Have you have seen (or have you ever experienced) hatred “blinding” someone?**
- **According to what John is saying here, are there certain people that it is okay to hate— say Hitler, for example?**
- **How would you respond to a friend who said, “Everybody hates somebody”?**
- **Have you ever known someone who acted as if they never did anything wrong? How would this passage relate to that person?**

B. Story Time: “My Heart, Christ’s Home”



1. If you have not read this little pamphlet recently to your group, pick up a copy at your local Christian bookstore (or from InterVarsity Press).
3. Have the group get comfortable, and explain that you want to read a little parable about the Christian life.
4. You may want to let the group know that it will take ten minutes or so to read the story.
5. After you have read the story, ask the following process questions:
 - **What images stick out for you from the story we have just read?**
 - **Any ideas about how this story might tie into the whole idea of “living in the light”?**
 - **For most Christian teenagers that you know, which rooms are the ones that kids tend to have the most trouble letting Christ take control?**
 - **In which rooms does the presence of Jesus seem the most comfortable?**

- If Jesus wanted to come in and totally rearrange your whole life, how do you think you would react?
- Can you be a Christian without being willing to let Jesus rearrange whatever he wants to rearrange?

C. Survey Says!

1. Distribute copies of the attached survey and pencils.
2. Walk through the instructions on the survey and invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
3. Have the kids fill out the survey. Reassure them that they will not need to turn their answers in.
4. After they have finished, ask them to figure out individually whether their surveys indicate more darkness or more light. (They don't have to share this information, but encourage them to think about the reasons for darkness in some of these areas of their lives.)
5. Process Questions

- Are these kinds of surveys helpful for you?
- What areas would you guess that people in our group indicated were the “darkest,” the places where they seem to be hiding the most from God?
- There are a number of popular musicians now days who give very open thanks to God for their talent but whose lyrics and lifestyles are often opposed to God's best. What do you think about that inconsistency?

D. A Story-Telling Alternative: The Wilde Story of Dorian Grey

1. Read the following story to the group:

A famous writer once wrote of an extremely handsome young man who was so attractive that a great artist desired to make this man the subject of a portrait. The artist told the man that he had never seen a face more attractive and pure.

But when the artist had completed the painting and presented it to the young man, the man was so enthralled by his own appearance that he decided to make a pact that whatever consequences that might come from his foolish or immoral actions would disfigure the portrait, but never harm his own appearance.

The young man received his wish, and he lived a life of sensuality, indulgence, and even murder, but his physical appearance reflected none of these awful actions. He was spurred on to live even more wickedly, until one day he uncovered the portrait which he had kept hidden for years, and he saw the hideousness of the face, which bore the horror and scars of a life scandalously lived. This young man proceeded to hide this portrait, so that no one would find out about his sinful lifestyle.

One day, the artist saw the portrait and confronted the young man about his way of life. The artist begged the man to turn his wasteful life around and seek God's

forgiveness. Suddenly, filled with rage, the man grabbed a knife and killed the artist, silencing his voice of truth.

After this murder, the young man could no longer stand the judgment that the portrait seemed to make on him just by its awful appearance. So, he took the knife and sought to destroy this visible reminder of his sins. He stabbed the knife through the canvas. Instantly, the portrait returned to its original beauty.

When the servants who heard the scream in the attic arrived on the scene, they found the portrait returned to its original beauty. And nearby on the floor lay a man stabbed to death, so disfigured and hideous in appearance that even his own servants could not recognize him.

(adapted from Ravi Zacharias' Deliver Us From Evil, pp. xiii-xiv)

2. Process Questions

- C.S. Lewis says that every decision we make turns us into a more heavenly or more hellish creature. Do you agree?
- Do you think you can tell by a person's face what kind of life they are living?
- What kind of invisible effects does sin have on our lives?
- What makes sin or darkness so attractive sometimes?
- What makes "living in the light" attractive?
- Have you ever known someone who was naturally beautiful and whose lifestyle eventually made them increasingly ugly?
- Have you ever known someone who was average looking but who became increasingly attractive because of his or her lifestyle and attitude?

IV. Taking it Home

A. Just for Me: Ask a few of the group members to share one thing from the class today that will stick with them.

B. Glow-in-the-Dark Reminders



1. Invite those who would like to surrender 100% of their lives to the light of Christ to carry away a visible reminder of that commitment.
2. Provide a glow-in-the-dark bracelet for any youth who wants one as a reminder of their commitment today.

C. Pray for the group: that each of them, through God's guidance, could distinguish the light from the darkness, and would run to the Light.

↓ JOURNAL SHEET BELOW ↓

JOURNAL SHEET
1 JOHN 1:5-10, 2:9-11
“WHAT ARE YOU HIDING?”

How much light do you allow God to shine in these areas of your life?

Respond to each area with one of these symbols:

! = Light Shines Fully—“I’ve given this completely over to God.”

\$ = Light Shines, But Not Brightly—“I’ve prayed, but I still hesitate letting God control this part of my life.”

^ = Light is Extremely Dim—“I’d kind of like to get God involved, but I’m afraid to start letting Him be in control.”

0 = Darkness—“Honestly, I really don’t want God to be involved in this part of my life.”

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