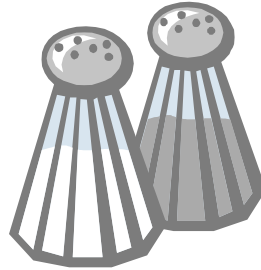


SPICE RACK.®

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!*

“DO YOU LOVE ME?”

I John 3:16-20

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

II. Engaging the Brain

A. Love Demonstration Survey

1. When the kids come in, hand each of them a piece of paper and a pencil.
2. Explain that you want the group to look at a few different styles of showing love this morning.
3. Have the group number their papers from 1 to 7.
4. Explain that they are about to see 7 different styles of love and that after each one, they are to rate each demonstration (on a scale of 1-10 – 1 being no love at all shown; 10 being tremendous love shown) for how effectively that style communicates love.

5. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
6. Have two people prepared to act out each of these demonstrations (could be youth or adult, but they need to have had a little prep time before class begins).
7. For each demonstration, the pair of actors will come in from different sides of the room and act out one of these situations:



- #1: Nonchalantly walking toward each other and shaking hands
- #2: Walking past each other and saying “hey”
- #3: Enthusiastically greeting each other with a high five
- #4: Passing each other, completely ignoring the other
- #5: Seeing each other from a distance and running together like long lost brothers who have been waiting for this moment for twenty years
- #6: Seeing each other from a distance, waving, faking a handshake, passing the hand and shaking the other’s foot
- #7: One walking in and looking hungry, and the other giving some money

8. Process Questions

- So what did you think—Which demonstration did you rate the highest?
- Which did you rate the lowest?
- Which style are the people you know most comfortable with?
- Which one are the people you know the least comfortable with?
- Which greeting do you think most strangers in our group receive?
- Were there any greetings that you would never use?
- Are there any greetings that you think, as a Christian, you should never use?

B. Bite the Bag



1. Bring two well-wrapped presents to class (the more tape the better).
2. Divide the group into two teams and put each team in a circle.
3. Explain that the object of the game is to pass the box around the circle while the music is playing (or the teacher is humming). When the music stops, the person holding the present has one “bite” to try to open the present with his or her teeth.
4. The process is repeated until one group gets its present opened.
5. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
6. Play the game.
7. Process Questions

- How would you feel this year if you only gave gifts that couldn’t be wrapped—for example, doing something for your parents, spending time, rather than money?

- How would you feel this year if you only received gifts that couldn't be wrapped?
- Have you ever received a gift like this that you really loved? Can you give a few examples?

C. "Outburst" (Spice Rack Style)

1. Divide the class up into two teams.
2. Ask how many in the group have ever played "Outburst" before.
3. Remind them of the rules.
 - a. For each round, one team will be "the bursters" and the other will be "the checkers."
 - b. The checkers will have a list of ten items in a particular category.
 - c. The checkers name the category (for example, "Things that are blue").
 - d. The bursters then have one minute to shout out as many of the items on the checkers' list as possible.
 - e. When bursters shout out a word that is on the checkers' list, the checkers will say, "Got it!"
4. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
5. Round One
 - a. Category: Songs That Have Love in the Title
 - b. The Words (Below are a few examples. Make up your own list with songs that your group would be more familiar with.)
 - Love Me Tender
 - What's Love Got to Do With It?
 - Love of Another Kind
 - Jesus Loves Me
 - Or make up your own...
6. Round Two (bursters and checkers change sides)
 - a. Category: Things People Do When They Love Each Other
 - b. The Words:
 - Talk
 - Hold hands
 - Laugh
 - Say "I love you"
 - Write love letters
 - Talk on the phone
 - Go out
 - Exchange gifts
 - Listen
 - Trust each other



7. Feel free to make up your own additional rounds, as time permits, for example... “Things in the Bible about Love”
 - For God so loved the world...
 - Love one another
 - Jonathan and David loved each other
 - Or make up your own...

III. Igniting the Heart

A. Looking More Closely at the Text

1. As a group, read through I John 3:16-20.
2. Process Questions
 - How many of you in the past year have been physically in need of one of these things: Food? Clothes? Shelter?
 - How many times in the past year have you been in need of a good friend you could trust?
 - According to this verse, should we give something to everyone who asks us?
 - Can you think of some tangible way that a Christian teenager in America might follow the command: “We ought to lay down our lives for our brothers”?
 - Who qualifies as “our brothers”?
 - What if you don’t feel like loving someone? Aren’t you being fake if you try to love them when you don’t feel any love toward them?
 - Which do you think God would rather us do—show love or feel love?
 - How would our youth group be different if we took this passage seriously?
3. Read the entire passage again, and see if the group can come to some agreement on the single most important verse.
4. Once the group comes to some consensus, have the class work toward memorizing this verse. Have them say the verse together a few times, and then spot check a few confident individuals to see if they have learned it.

B. If you want to show that you love me...

1. Brainstorming: What Does Love Look Like?
 - a. Invite the group to brainstorm all the ways that a person might express love.
 - b. Explain that these don’t necessarily have to be ways that the brainstormer would like to have love expressed to him or her, that the purpose is to get as many ideas as possible on the board as quickly as possible.

- c. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify instructions.
- d. Give the group 2 minutes to brainstorm ideas. Record the ideas on the board or on a flip chart at the front of the class.
- e. If the group doesn't come up with these ideas, add them:



- Sending flowers
- Teasing
- Name-calling
- Practical jokes
- Sending a card
- Giving money
- Spending time together
- Making a sacrifice
- Touching

2. Best and Worst Go Around

- a. Move the group into a circle.
- b. Starting with the person who has gotten the most speeding tickets, have each person choose from the brainstormed list their favorite way of receiving an expression of love and their least favorite way.
- c. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions before you begin.
- d. Go around the group, giving each person to tell his or her favorite and least favorite way of receiving love.

3. Process Questions

- **What did you discover in that exercise?**
- **Do you think most people give the kind of love they hope to receive or do you think they tend to give the kind of love they think the person they are with would like to receive?**
- **Is it difficult to talk about “love” apart from romance? Why do you think that is?**
- **What happens if the people closest to you don't know the expression of love that means the most to you?**
- **How could you let them know?**
- **Do you think people who don't know how to express love are basically just selfish and lazy people?**

C. Encouragement Cards



1. Before class begins, fold pieces of construction paper (or regular paper) in half, as if you were making a card for someone. Bring enough of these folded sheets so that each person in the group will have one.
2. Move the group into a circle, and give everyone his or her own card.
3. Distribute pens, pencils or crayons to the group.
4. Ask everyone to write his or her name on the front of his or her card.
5. Ask everyone to pass his card one person to the left.

6. Explain that you want to give the group the opportunity to practice the principles they have just read about.
7. Give the following instructions to the group:
 - a. You've got 30 seconds to write something encouraging on the card in front of you.

- b. When time is called, all the cards will be passed one more person to the left.
 - c. The next person will have 30 seconds to write an encouragement note.
 - d. We'll repeat the process until the each person's card comes back to him or her.
 - e. We're hoping that during the time we are writing that we help each other focus by making this a silent exercise.
8. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
9. After you have completed this process, you have one of two options:
- a. You can collect all the cards, and keep them during the next week and write your own notes of encouragement. Depending on the maturity level of the class, you may need to check the notes to make sure that nothing hurtful has been written. You may want to send these to the kids some time during the week or give them out in class next week.
 - b. If your group is relatively mature, you can simply send the group home with their cards.
10. Process Questions



- Where do most teenagers look to find encouragement?
- Do you think most of them get enough?
- How important is it for your parents to encourage you?
- Right now in your life, which means more to you, an encouraging word or note from a friend or one from an adult in your life?

IV. Taking it Home

A. Send each class member out with two ribbons.

1. Ask them each to go to a person who has loved or encouraged them and give that person a ribbon, telling about the ribbon's significance and why he or she was chosen to receive it.
2. Explain to the group that after they have given the first ribbon that they are to give their chosen persons the second ribbon, asking them to give the second ribbon to someone who has encouraged and loved them.
3. Before distributing the ribbons, invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.

B. Before the group leaves review the chosen Scripture memory verse at least one time.

C. Pray for the Class—that their love for others would be real and that they could spread the Light and the gift of knowing Christ to those around them.