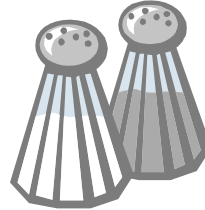


# SPICE RACK®

## 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](mailto:colyer@ymarchitects.com) with any questions!

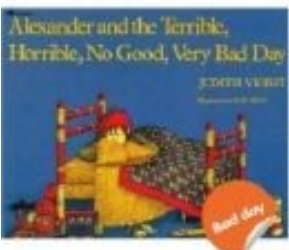
## “FORSAKEN”

### Psalm 22

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

#### II. Engaging the Brain

##### A. Story Time: Terrible, Horrible, No-Good, Very Bad Day



1. If you have a class that is mature enough to be childlike, grab a copy of Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day and bring it to class today.
2. Read the story, having the group or a “select choir” from the class join you on the refrain, “It was a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.”
3. Process Questions

→ What is your first reaction to this kids' story?

→ Are any parts of this story true for people your age?



- Design sustainable, deep impact youth ministries, one church at a time.
- Build the competence, joy and longevity of professional youth workers,
- Construct bridges to the best youth ministry resources available today.

[www.ymarchitects.com](http://www.ymarchitects.com)

## **B. Check-In Question: Best and Worst of the Week**

1. If your group does well beginning the class by going around the group with a check in question, start with someone who had a lousy week to begin the check-in question.
2. Check in Question: What are the best thing and the worst thing that happened to you this week?

## **C. Heart Chart (A Tool for Developing Affective Thinkers)**



1. Hang a couple large sheets of butcher paper on the wall.
2. Give everyone in the class a crayon.
3. Explain to the group that they have two minutes to fill the butcher paper sheets with “heart words,” words like “sad, ashamed, afraid,” etc.
4. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
5. Have the group get up and take two minutes to fill their heart charts.
6. Process Questions
  - **How well do you think we did?**
  - **Did we come up with more or less words than you thought we would?**
  - **Some people have real trouble using heart words. Why do you think that is?**
  - **Which of these three groups do you think are best at using heart words—children, teenagers or adults? Why?**

## **D. Brainstorming: Quick Responses to Pain**

1. Explain to the group that you want them to take a couple minutes to come up with all the different responses to pain that they can think of in 1 minute.
2. Pull out a flip chart or a chalkboard.
3. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
4. Give the group one minute to come up with all the possible responses to pain that they can think of.
5. Follow up by giving a few painful situations, and asking if they can think of any other responses that they haven't already come up with.
6. The situations:
  - a. Your girlfriend of three years has just broken up with you and, three hours after breaking up, started going out with your best friend.
  - b. You are constantly being put down by people at school. There is NO ONE there that you can be yourself with.
  - c. Your baby sister died tragically 6 months ago and your parents announce to you that they are getting a divorce.

d.

### III. Igniting the Heart

#### A. Crayons Bible Study

1. Bring out a big pile of crayons and ask everyone to take three different colors.
2. Distribute copies of the psalm (attached)
3. Explain how you want the group to use the three colors
  - a. **Color One**: Mark any parts that describe how you have felt at some point in your life.
  - b. **Color Two**: Mark any parts of the psalm that describe something that Jesus went through.
  - c. **Color Three**: Mark what you think are the highest and the lowest points of the psalm.
4. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
5. Give the group three minutes to complete this task.
6. Process Questions

- What kind of things did you come up with that Jesus went through?
- What do you think are the highest and the lowest points in this psalm?
- Would you describe this psalm as primarily positive or negative?
- What do you think God thinks about “negative” prayers?

#### B. Into the Killer’s Head: Why would someone open fire at a school?

1. Possible Video Option
  - a. If you happen to have (or happen to be able to record) a news clip of the coverage of a school shooting, bring one to class today.
  - b. Show the clip to the group.
2. If you don’t have a clip to get the group thinking, ask what they remember about school shootings they have heard about in the news.
3. Process Questions

- How close do you think the emotions of school killers and the emotions of the writer of Psalm 22 are?
- What is the big difference?
- When you are in the pits, how important is it for you to have someone you can talk to?
- What advice would you give to someone who said, “I’d love to have someone to talk to, but I just don’t have anyone.” (You might bring out a Wilson volleyball, from “Castaway” as an option)



- Why do you think some people keep other people out of their lives?
- What do you think the possibility is that at your school there is at least one person who is feeling desperate enough to shoot up the school?
- If Jesus came to your school, how would he react to that person?
- How would Jesus handle it if that person rejected him?
- Do you think God expects us to befriend despairing, angry unlovable people?
- Suppose two of you wanted to befriend someone like that at your school, how would you go about doing it?

### C. Journal Sheets: Psalm 22 and You

1. Distribute pencils and copies of the journal sheet.
2. Give the group 2 minutes to answer the questions.
3. 4x4
  - a. Divide the group into groups of four (younger groups may need an adult in each one).
  - b. Have each group appoint a leader.
  - c. Explain that the leader is the one who “goes first” and keeps the group talking.
  - d. Explain that the groups have 3 minutes to share their answers to the journal sheet questions.
  - e. Invite the groups to ask questions to clarify instructions before beginning.
4. When three minutes is up, ask the following process questions:
  - Were there any surprises in the answers you heard?
  - Was there anything you looked at that made you think about your faith a little differently?
  - After talking about your answers to the journal sheet questions, are there any topics you want to talk about a little more?

### D. Musical Bonus: Creed



1. Find the song “My Own Prison” by the group Creed (on their album by the same title).
2. Play the song for the group, having the group look at the lyric sheet.
3. Lyric Sheet: “My Own Prison” (first verse and chorus only)

*A court is in session, a verdict is in/No appeal on the docket today/Just my own sin/The walls are cold and pale/The cage made of steel/Screams fill the room/Alone I drop and kneel/Silence now the sound/My breath the only motion around/Demons cluttering around/My face showing no emotion/Shackled by my sentence/Expecting no return/Here there is no penance/My skin begins to burn*

*So I held my head up high/Hiding hate that burns inside/Which only fuels their selfish pride/We're all held captive/Out from the sun/A sun that shines on only some/We the meek are all in one*

4. If you can't find the music (or don't have time, you could just use the lyric sheet above).
5. Process Questions

→ **What do you see in the words to this song that is similar to the words of Psalm 22?**

→ **How are the two different?**

## **IV. Taking It Home**

### **A. Writing Your Own Forsaken Psalm**

1. Remind the group that there were very different attitudes at different points in Psalm 22.
2. Intro Question: What were some of the different attitude or feeling that the writer of this psalm had (for example, at one point, the psalm is full of despair, and at another, it is full of hope).
3. Ask the group members to turn over their journal sheets and write their own short "forsaken psalm," a prayer that someone could use when they are feeling abandoned and forsaken.
4. Invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
5. Give the group 2-3 minute to complete their psalms.
6. Process Questions

→ **Most youth groups seem to do much better with pizza and fun but don't seem to know what to do with the down times. How honest do you think our group members are with each other when things aren't going so well?**

→ **How honest do you think our prayers are when we are together?**

### **B. Praying Our Forsaken Psalms**

1. For the closing prayer, invite the group members to pray parts or all of the psalms they have written.
2. Before praying, invite the group to ask questions to clarify the instructions.
3. Close with a time of student-led prayer, asking one of the students to begin and another student to end.

↓ **JOURNAL SHEET BELOW** ↓

# JOURNAL SHEET

## FORSAKEN

### PSALM 22

1) Rank the following people 1-4, based on whom you think suffers the most and the least.

- The student who is killed by an angry classmate at school
- The abused and lonely student who did the shooting
- The parent of the student who was killed
- The parents of the student who did the killing

2) I think that those who trust God

- will experience less trouble in this life.
- will experience more trouble in this life.
- may experience more or less trouble but will have more strength to handle it.
- will experience about the same amount of trouble as the average person.

3) I think God allows suffering because...

- there's nothing God can do about it.
- people need to be punished for doing what is wrong.
- it's a fallen world and not everything makes sense in a fallen world.
- he has a reason that we will never know this side of heaven.
- I've got my own explanation:

4) Why do you think Jesus quoted the first few words of Psalm 22 from the cross?

- He felt forsaken by God.
- He was practicing his Scripture memory verses.
- He knew that the people listening to him would know that Psalm 22 ends trusting God, even though it begins questioning God

5) When I am discouraged, I am more likely/less likely (circle one) to turn to God

6) Compared to the average person your age, do you think you have suffered...

- less than the average teenager?
- more than the average teenager?
- about the same as the average teenager?

7) Knowing that Jesus felt "forsaken" by God, makes me feel...

- confused...wondering why God would make someone he loves suffer
- comforted...like maybe Jesus doesn't condemn me for doubting God
- ticked...if that's the kind of God we've got, I don't know that I want any part of God
- afraid...I thought God was supposed to protect me from problems.

## Psalm 22

My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?  
Why are you so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning?  
O My God, I cry in the daytime, but you do not hear;  
And in the night season, and am not silent.  
But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel.  
Our fathers trusted in You; they trusted in You, and You delivered them.  
They cried to You, and were delivered; They trusted in You, and were not ashamed.  
But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised by the people.  
All those who see me ridicule me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head,  
saying, "He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue him;  
Let Him deliver him, since He delights in him!"  
But You are He who took me out of the womb;  
You made me trust while on my mother's breasts.  
O was cast upon You from birth. From my mother's womb, You have been my God.  
Be not far from me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help.  
Many bulls have surrounded me, strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me.  
They gape at me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion.  
I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint;  
My heart is like wax; it has melted within me.  
My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue clings to my jaws;  
You have brought me to the dust of death.  
For dogs have surrounded me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed me.  
They pierced my hands and my feet;  
I can count all my bones. They look and stare at me.  
They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.  
But you, O Lord, do not be far from me; O my Strength, hasten to help me!  
Deliver me from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog.  
Save me from the lion's mouth and from the horns of the wild oxen!  
You have answered me.  
I will declare Your name to my brethren;  
In the midst of the assembly I will praise You.  
You who fear the Lord, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,  
And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!  
For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;  
Nor has He hidden His face from him; but when he cried to Him, He heard.  
My praise shall be of You in the great assembly;  
I will pay my vows before those who fear Him.  
The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek Him will praise the Lord.  
Let your heart live forever!  
All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord,  
And all the families of the nations shall worship before You.  
For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He rules over the nations.  
All the prosperous of the earth shall eat and worship;  
All those who go down to the dust shall bow before Him,  
Even he who cannot keep himself alive. A posterity shall serve Him.  
It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation.,  
They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born,  
That He has done this.

