

Pick a Card, Any Card



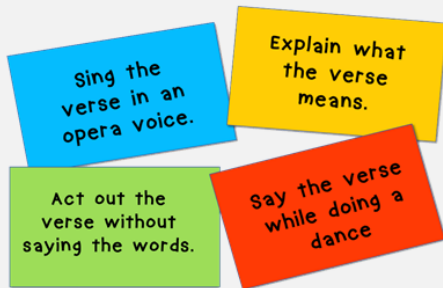
I had a lot of fun this week working with students at the [South Pacific Bible College](#) here, in New Zealand. It was their “Outreach Week” so I got to share with them the importance of reaching out to the children around us.

After talking about that we launched right into some hands-on participation in the behind-the-scenes work of Mission Bible Class. Among other things, the students prepared a demonstration video for the website. In the future teachers around the world will be able to access this free resource when they share God’s Word with children.

[Click here](#) or on the picture below to link to the “Pick a Card” Memory Verse Game demonstration video. I can tell you first-hand that children really enjoy playing this game.

Thanks for your help, Students!

“Pick a Card” Memory Game



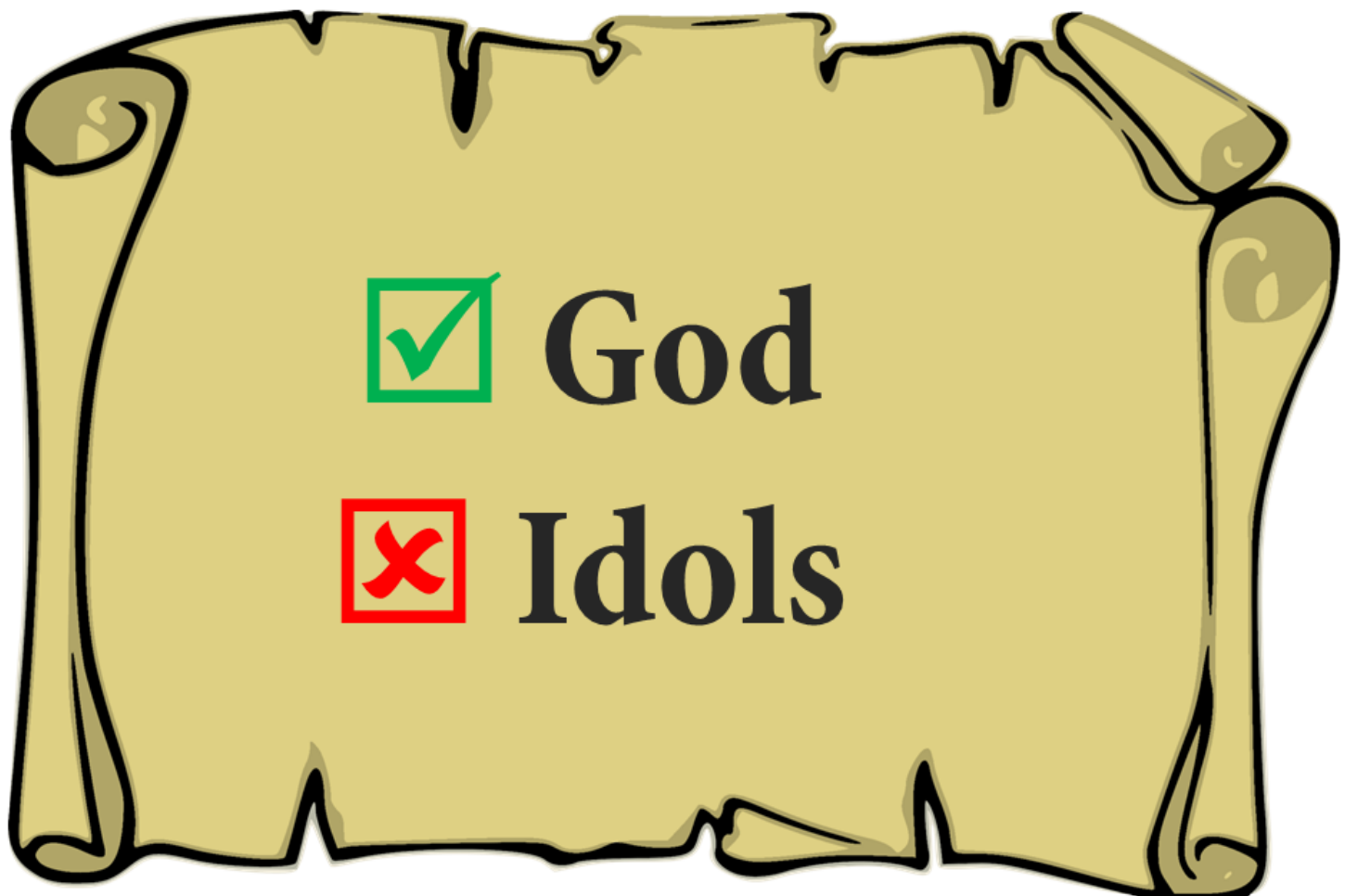
Children learn a memory verse by repeating it numerous times in this fun and easy game.



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When Destructive Behaviour is a Good Thing



If you asked me what my Bible Class was like this week I would have to say it was quite destructive...in a good way!

The 4 and 5 year old children have been learning about the [Divided Kingdom](#) and this particular lesson was about [King Josiah](#) and how he attempted to restore true worship of God in Judah. [2 Kings 22-23:30](#); [2 Chronicles 34-36](#)

As I read about [King Josiah](#) and his zealous destruction of idols and places of false worship I wrestled with how I would relate the severe actions of destruction and even death to the lives of these 4 and 5 year olds without giving them nightmares or encouraging destructive behaviour in general.

How do we relate tough lessons in the Bible to children?

Here's how I prepared for the lesson about Josiah. There were many actions and themes that children this age would find confusing and disturbing. So, as I read about Josiah, I tried to focus on God and then thought about how Josiah responded to him. Here's what I came up with:

- God is Holy and Josiah believed this passionately and wanted to honour him.
- God desires and commands our sole worship. Josiah was indignant about the prevalent idol worship in the kingdom.
- God expects to be taken seriously. Josiah took his kingship seriously and was determined to change his kingdom.
- God displays emotions but he always does the right thing. Josiah's anger, indignation and outrage did not lead him to sin. These emotions propelled him into actions that honoured God.
- God's Word is true. Josiah had respect for God's Word and obeyed it.
- God is concerned about everyone. As king, Josiah displayed leadership and shared God's Word with his people.

Trying to teach all of these would have been too much for 4 and 5 year olds to comprehend so I focused on just two main points that I thought they could best relate to. I felt confident in the priority of these choices since they are also how God started when he issued the 10 Commandments.

1. God is Holy.
2. Do not worship idols or anything else besides God.



God is Holy

We spent time in a “special” area I had created in our classroom. I wasn’t trying to re-create the temple but I made the space special with some silver wrapping paper and some strings of gold beads that I found. As we sat in this space we read from God’s special book, talked about the special tabernacle and temple and then spent some time talking about how God is different and holy.

Do Not Worship Idols

After sharing the Bible story we spent some time destroying idols! The children took turns finding a scroll I hid underneath some carpet tiles. If they found the scroll they “read” it.

Yes! for God.....No! for idols

Once they found and read the scroll they then followed Josiah’s example in clearing out all of the idols. The biblical version is much more graphic. We expressed our outrage by kicking them and knocking them down.

To conclude the class we gathered in and focused on God’s holiness one more time.

For older children I would follow up by taping pictures of other “idols” on the boxes to show that anything we place as more important than God can be our idol. This might include possessions, beauty, sports...and the list goes on.

- [Click here to download instructions and pictures for the “Destroying Idols” activity.](#)
- [Click here for resources for teaching about Josiah.](#)

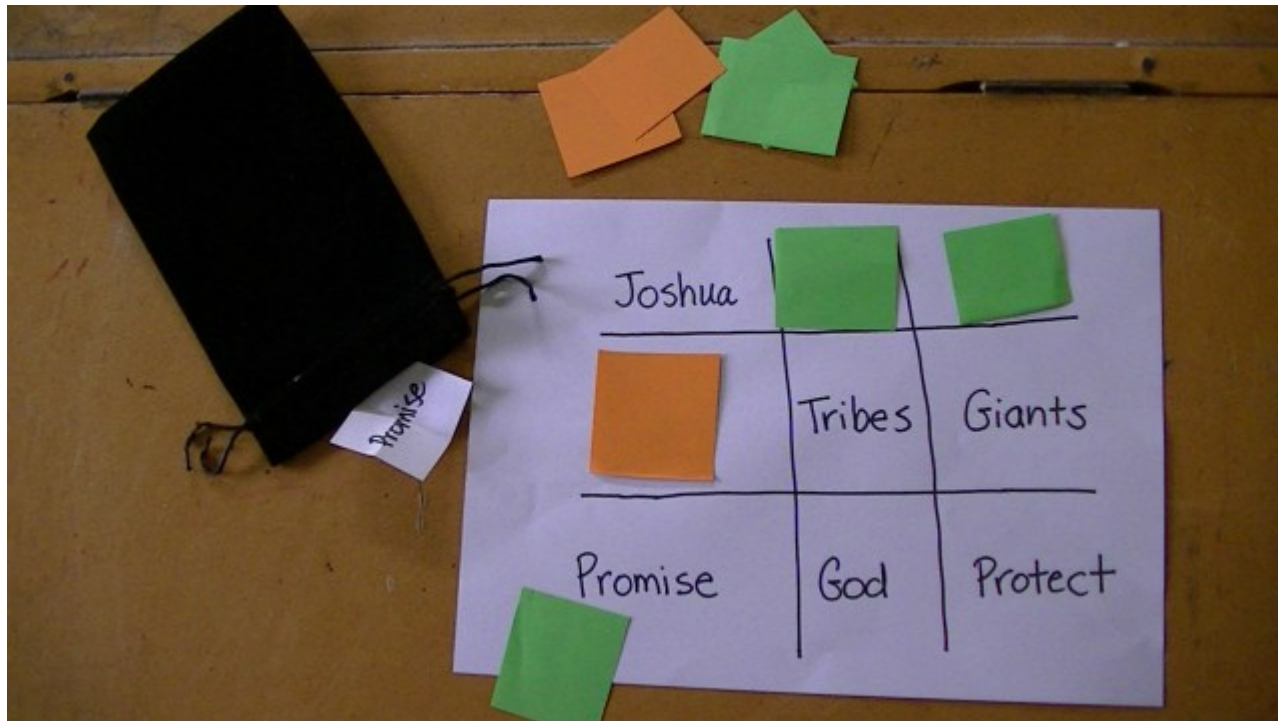
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Same Game – Different Name

I thought I'd finish off 2014 by posting a simple game to use as a review in Bible Class.

Well, at least I assumed it would be simple!



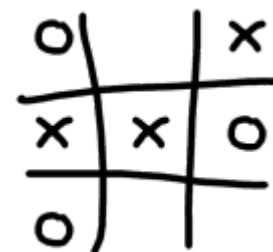
A woman named Debbie (Arizona, USA) emailed me awhile back with the suggestion of adapting an “X and O” game into a review activity for Bible Class. Children list words and ideas and then play a game similar to “tic-tac-toe” or “noughts and crosses”. The example in the picture above is from the Bible lesson [Conquering the Land and Fighting Giants](#).

I thought such a simple idea would be easy to explain until I began filming a “how-to” video and writing out instructions. Hopefully, the final result makes sense. [Click here to learn how to use the game in your Bible Class](#).

Same Game-Different Name

It turns out that many of us play the game but we know it by different names. That's why I stuck with the simple title of “[X and O Review Game](#)”. Here are some of the other names listed by [Wikipedia](#):

- Tick-tack-toe, Tic-tac-toe, Tick-tat-toe, or Tit-tat-toe (USA, Canada)
- Noughts and crosses or Naughts and crosses (United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa)
- Exy-Ozys, Xsie-Osies (verbal name only) (Northern Ireland)
- Xs and Os (Egypt, Republic of Ireland, Canada, Zimbabwe, Romania)
- O-X (Mauritius)



Older Than You Think

I was amazed to find out that In fact, 1st Century Romans played a version of this game that was very similar to what we play today! So this game has been played since the time of Christ.

Same Same but Different

As my Thai friends say, “same-same but different”. God’s Word does not change but it is shared in different languages and and by various methods that fit the culture and understanding of the hearer. You know the needs of the children you are teaching. I’m hoping you are reading the ideas on www.missionbibleclass.org and then adapting them to your own teaching situation and language.

If a simple and inconsequential game of “X and O” can still be played and enjoyed by adults and children century after century then how much more lasting is the Word of God for all people for all time?

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Searching the Scriptures for the Answer



Is it possible to teach a Bible class without opening a Bible? The surprising answer is that many people do just that.

When we use curriculum (or even this website) we might find so much information already prepared for us that we forget that we are teaching from God's Word. We may use great visual aids and various games and activities but never actually open a Bible in class.

If the teacher is not using a Bible then we shouldn't be surprised if the children do not feel a need to.

In the Book of Acts people from two different locations were compared by how they studied God's Word.

*Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.
Acts 17:11, NIV*

I want to be like the Bereans! I want my students to be like the Bereans!

One way to help teach the children to search the Scriptures is through puzzles and games that require them to open their Bibles and search for the answers. After teaching about how [Jesus Healed Ten Lepers](#) I asked the children to unscramble some important words from [Luke 17:11-19](#). At first, the children tried to work the puzzle without their Bibles but they soon realised that it was a little harder than they had thought. With their Bibles open, they were soon able to unscramble these important words: Jesus, Leprosy, Healed, Thanked and Faith.

[Click here to learn how to make simple Bottle Cap Word Puzzles for your class.](#)



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Who's Holding the Bag? Game

Today I had fun making a "how to" video for playing a review or application game for Bible class.

Two girls allowed me to video them explaining how to make a home-made rice bag that can be used for a variety of games in Bible classes. Spending this fun morning with them reminded me again that we don't need expensive teaching tools to share God's with children. We made a great game using rice, old socks and a little imagination.

[Click here to see the video and complete instructions.](#)



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