Stories that change lives

**How can we thrill 3-7’s with the Bible?**

**What is a 3-7 year old?**

*Pick two 3-7 year olds you know.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | #1 | #2 |
| How would you choose to spend an hour with them? |  |  |
| 1:1- how would you engage them with the Bible? |  |  |
| What is your prayer for them? |  |  |

**3-7 year olds are *just the same* as you in every way that matters:** Identity!

* *Created in God’s image to worship They find their home in him*
* *Created for relationship with others They exist to be loved and to love*
* *Living in a broken world They hurt. They know they can’t do it*
* *Damaged by sin Their hearts don’t cry to Christ as their rock*
* *Christ died to redeem them They have one they can go to for healing*
* *Longing for the new creation There is a place of peace and contentment*

**→ How does that change the way we walk into the room?**

**3-7 year olds are *different* to you in some ways:** Developmentally!

**Physically**

* They want to be moving around. *Can we teach through movement and the senses?*
* Wide range of abilities in this age group. From jumping, running, kicking and tiptoes to well developed hand/eye coordination, balance and basic gymnastics

**Emotionally**

* Need stable, consistent environment to feel secure. *Routine is helpful*
* Self-centred, want to be first all the time. Little awareness of the needs of others.
* Seeks adult approval, reassurance and praise. *Nine words of praise for every word of rebuke.*

**Spiritually**

* Can grasp authority structures and right/wrong. God is in charge; we obey him.
* Understands guilt and shame
* Character is being changed, not competence
* Foundations are being built, but can not be seen while being absolutely essential.

**Socially**

* Selfish! Not easily able to take turns. Can insist on working independently.
* Very willing to talk. Less willing to listen to others. *Ask the same question to all.*
* Outgoing, friendly. Little division between boys and girls.
* Group activities are starting to be possible. Cooperation is limited.

**Intellectually**

* Literal thinkers. *Abstract concepts must be put into concrete terms.*
* Little concept of time or distance. *Enjoys stories. Use stories with pictures, movement and action to teach.*
* Enjoys telling stories, pretending (drama), role plays
* Two or three step instructions is the limit. Only the very eldest can read confidently.

**→ What make this age group difficult to teach?**

**→ What make this age group great to teach?**

**Key Tools**

* Story
  + Using narrative to turn key abstract truth into concrete understanding
  + **Not** reading or explaining. **But** engaging and discovering.
  + Go visual, dramatic, props, drawing and organic great fun
  + Holding, touching, tasting, listening, moving
  + Repetition
  + The children can retell the story in small groups
* Active Play
  + Natural, fun play to reinforce your big idea
  + ‘a child’s play is their work’
  + Be part of their play. It is their play.
  + Don’t be constrained by the props or the space. They aren’t!
* Routine
  + Security, training, team work and improved behaviour

**Luke 7: 36-50**

**Theme:** Jesus cared for the woman who had lived a sinful life. He forgave her and sent her away with peace. So she adored him

**Aim:** Let us love Jesus hugely (& potentially awkwardly) out of thanks for our forgiveness. Let’s not think that we’re too good to show humble, public thanks to Jesus Christ