



from TORCH TRUST

Resources for children's groups on Sight Loss Sunday





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This resource is designed to give ideas for children's groups that want to follow the theme of Sight Loss Sunday.

The main reading for the children's groups is John 9:1-12. We have provided a mixture of activities aimed at different ages and hopefully adaptable for different size spaces and resources. Please choose activities best suited for your situation and age of children.

Games

Truth or Lie

Aim: To begin to think about trust

Sit in a circle and take turns saying three things about yourself. Two of them must be true and one must be a lie. The rest of the group will guess which is which.

Discuss how people with sight loss may have to trust strangers in a way fully sighted people don't. Ask them to share when they had to trust someone.

Trust to be Caught!

Aim: To put our trust in someone we can't see

One child with arms akimbo has to let themselves fall backwards into the arms of a capable adult who is ready to receive them.

Afterwards, discuss how people with sight loss may have to trust strangers in a way fully sighted people don't. Ask them to share about a time when they had to trust someone.

Mazes

Aim: To begin to understand how listening is important when we are unable to see

Create mazes with teams. Teams can be big or small depending on the number of children. Mazes can be created by putting tables, chairs and other obstacles on the floor (but not in a way to form a trip hazard). Blindfold one person from each team and ask them to try to complete the maze while team members are shouting out instructions.

This is a listening exercise because the blindfolded child needs to not only make sure they listen to the instructions, but also that they only listen to the instructions from their team. Discuss with the children how it felt to be blindfolded. How easy was it to listen and follow their team's instructions?

What am I?

Aim- To begin to understand sight loss and try to complete a challenge without using sight

Ask the children to put on a blindfold and make a person, animal or other object of their choice from playdough, plasticine or similar. Then pass it to someone else wearing a blindfold and have them guess what the object is. When everyone has had a go take blindfolds off and talk about how they found it. Explain that today is Sight Loss Sunday and we are going to be thinking more about people with sight loss.





Bible story

Listen to the Bible.

Materials: Bibles, large print copy of the text (downloadable at sightlossfriendlychurch.org.uk/SLSunday), braille copy of the text (available from Torch Trust), audio recording (visit youtu.be/PKiAXVxOm6o to listen to David Suchet reading the whole of John's Gospel at Westminster Abbey).

Encourage children to close their eyes or wear a blindfold and listen to David Suchet's reading of John 9:1–12. Alternatively, split the children into two groups and get one group to wear a blindfold while the other group takes turns reading the story. Halfway through, swap and let the first group wear the blindfold while the second group reads.

Ask what it was like listening to the story as opposed to reading it. Did they create any images in their head? What difference did it make not being able to see?

Encourage them to think about how a person with sight loss might read this story apart from listening. Show large print and braille samples.

Discuss the story.

After reading John 9 use the following questions to help the children think more about the Bible story. Depending on how many children are present, split into groups or discuss in a circle.

1. What do you think it's like being blind today and what do you think it was like when Jesus lived?
2. How do you think the man felt when Jesus put mud on his eyes? Bring out that he must have decided to trust Jesus.

3. How do you think the man felt when he could see again?
4. Why do you think it was so hard for the man to convince everyone that he had been healed by Jesus?
5. Who did the man think Jesus was? We see the man gradually coming to understand who Jesus is during this story (v11, v17, v25, v30–33 & v38) Who do you think Jesus is? Why?
6. What might it feel like to see when you've never seen before? What would things like people, cars, trees, tables, chairs and animals look like?

Act out the story

Read the story to the children (John 9, adapted below). Talk about the different people and their part. Encourage the children to each take a part in the story and retell it encouraging everyone to act out and speak their lines.

One day, when Jesus and his disciples were on their travels, they walked past a man who had been blind from birth.

"Did he or his parents sin?" asked one disciple.

"Neither," replied Jesus. "This man was born blind so that people can see how God works. I am the light of the world"

After saying this, Jesus spat on the ground and mixed his saliva with the mud. Then he rubbed it on the man's eyes and told him to go to a place called Siloam and wash. The man could suddenly see! He thanked Jesus, and went home to tell everyone about his new sight. His parents recognised him, but everyone else was really confused.

"You look like that guy who begs on the roadside," they said.





“That's because I am that guy, but I can see now.”

“How?” they asked.

“That man called Jesus mixed mud with his saliva, rubbed it on my eyes and told me to go to Siloam and wash and then I could see.”

“Where's that man now then?” they Asked.

“I don't know,” the man replied.

The crowd took the man to the Pharisees so that they might decide what had happened. The Pharisees questioned the man and he told them what had happened. They couldn't understand how Jesus had healed the man and even thought he was lying.

But some of the Pharisees said, “How can a sinner perform such signs?”

They again turned to the blind man and asked, “What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened.”

“He is a prophet. Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!”

The Pharisees shouted insults at the man and threw him out. Jesus heard about what had happened and went to find the man. When Jesus saw him he asked him,

“Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

“Who is he, sir?” the man asked. “Tell me so that I may believe in him.”

Jesus said, “You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you.”

Then the man said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him.

Application

What is it like to have sight loss?

Invite someone with sight loss to join the children for their group. Make sure they feel comfortable talking to the children and answering their questions. Encourage them to talk about their sight loss and their Christian faith. Encourage the children to ask questions.

Memory Verse

I will praise you; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Psalm 139:14

Materials: song 'I am Fearfully and Wonderfully made' by Jim Bailey. A lyric YouTube version can be found here: youtu.be/_LlptOaP_Po

Introduce and read the verse out. Sing the song together as a way to remember this verse.

Remind the children how the man in the story was loved by Jesus. At the end of the story he worships Jesus. We too are loved by Jesus, in fact the Bible says that we all fearfully and wonderfully made. Our memory verse reminds us of this.

Craft: 'Fearfully and Wonderfully Made' frames

Materials: lollipop sticks, card, glue, pens, sequins, buttons, stickers etc. for decorating

Stick 4 lollipop sticks together to form a square frame. Cut card to fit the back of the frame. Draw self portraits on the card and stick to the back of the lollipop frame. Write 'I am fearfully and wonderfully made' around the edge of the frame on the lollipop sticks. Decorate the frames with sequins etc.

Remind the children how the man in the story was loved by Jesus. We too are loved by Jesus, in fact the Bible says that we all fearfully and





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Prayer

- Pray that children with sight loss in the UK and around the world feel included at school, at home and in their friend groups
- Pray for blind and partially sighted children in Ukraine, that they feel God's love and are being well received if they are refugees. That they feel God's protection if they're staying in Ukraine.
- Thank God that today's technology makes it possible for blind and partially sighted children to read the bible and other stories about Jesus.
- Pray that your church would be welcoming to people with sight loss so that they would have the opportunity to get to know Jesus.

Songs

- Jesus' love is very wonderful
- Our God is an awesome God
- My God is so big
- Yes, Jesus loves me
- One more step along the world I go
- I am Fearfully and Wonderfully made

