

THE FIELDS BOX

All of these Bible stories can be told and worked on using the contents of the box.

1. **Creation** *Genesis 1*
2. **Ruth** *Ruth (History)*
3. **Sermon on the Mount – Salt** *Matthew 5:13 (Teaching)*
4. **Sermon on the Mount – Light** *Matthew 5:14 (Teaching)*
5. **Sermon on the Mount – Worry** *Matthew 6:24 (Teaching)*
6. **Feeding of the 5000** *Matthew 14:13 (Miracle)*
7. **The Hidden treasure** *Matthew 13 (Parable)*
8. **The Wheat and the Tares** *Matthew 13:24 (Parable)*
9. **The Lost Sheep** *Luke 15 (Parable)*
10. **The Sower** *Matthew 13 (Parable)*

THE BOX

Setting up the FIELD box will probably take a little time to find all the materials you need. I've tried to include things which are:

- a) cheap to buy – perhaps from a market, a charity shop or a pound shop,
- b) things which you or others might have at home or in your loft (if you're a hoarder like me!)
- c) which are easy to make out of junk or other cheaply bought resources.

You will need to be able to print out some images from a computer. The use of a LAMINATOR will be very helpful – it means that pictures can be used over and over again without getting battered. A basic laminator costs about £15 and you will also need the plastic pouches which are not costly.

BASIC CONTENTS OF BOX

- 2m of green fabric
- 2 or 3 cardboard boxes to put under the green fabric so that they look like hills.
- Piece of blue fabric cut to look like a pond.
- Piece of brown fabric to look like a ploughed field
- Strips of black or grey fabric to look like a long path.
- Around 10 wooden blocks to represent towns.
- Around 20 small wooden pieces/figures to represent people
- Post it pads, A4, A3 paper, pens and pencils

CONTENTS FOR SPECIFIC STORIES

- Large pieces of black, blue and yellow card.
- Laminated pictures of the sun, the moon, stars, plants, flying things
- Yellow piece of card or paper to show that the harvest is ready
- Wheat pictures – small, cut out
- Green/red lolly stick – buy cheap wooden lolly sticks and paint the top half red and the bottom green. Acrylic paint works best.
- A bag of unsalted “salt and shake” crisps and a normal packet. Bowls and card/pens under each bowl.
- Salt cellar
- Eye masks – like you get on aeroplanes or in “Sleepover party kits!”
- Simple lift out jigsaws.
- Yellow chalk
- Torch
- Plastic cup that isn't easy to see through
- A list of worrying things.
- Box of bird food
- Pictures of human food
- Flower pictures and board (card divided into squares to put the flower pictures on)
- Black Paper
- Small toy or wooden ship
- Clay models of 5 loaves and 2 fish. (air hardening clay and acrylic paints work well)

**Resource created by Sarah Brown - Children's Adviser, Diocese of Derby
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- Box with torn up brown tissue paper and a jewel buried in it.
- Box of “jewels” (get a sparkly “pearl” necklace from a charity shop)
- Two types of seeds, they need to look different
- Muddled seed in bowl to try to separate
- Pictures of wheat and weeds
- Sticks and tissue for a bonfire
- Rocks for valley
- Play dough
- Number sheet to count
- Mobile with camera, Laptop or tablet – a mobile phone on its own will be OK!
- Party sparkly things – pom poms etc
- Sheep cut outs
- Pictures of 4 places where seed fell
- Bird (plastic or wood)
- Thistles – purple pom pom
- Pipecleaners
- Paper – recycled will do.
- Lego bricks – about 50 + a marble or ball bearing

YOUR BOX WILL NEED SOME MAINTENANCE TO CHECK THAT THERE IS ENOUGH PAPER AND CARD IN IT.

TOP TIPS FOR ENCOURAGING DISCUSSION

If your group isn't used to discussion – maybe no-one speaks, or everyone speaks at once, or one person dominates... there are ways to work on this.

- a) If no-one speaks, ask them to talk first to one other person next to them. Then ask them to share the other person's idea. This can help if children are reluctant to share their thoughts.
- b) If every one speaks at one, use a wooden egg/ornament/toy and pass it around. You can only speak when you are holding the object.
- c) Use a hat/scarf and ask one to put this on and say what they think someone else might think or say – again stops the embarrassment of sharing.
- d) Use scraps of paper for everyone to write what they think, any questions or anything they don't understand. Collect the papers in and pull one out to talk about. Don't say who wrote it.
- e) A microphone, even if it isn't plugged into anything, is sometimes a good encouragement for some to say what they think!

STORY 1 Creation *Genesis 1*

Main Aims	Activities	Extra resources
<p>1.To understand that Genesis 1 tells us that God created everything and why he did this.</p> <p>2.To understand how it feels to have created something which somebody destroys and doesn't really care about.</p> <p>3.To make a decision to care more carefully for an aspect of our world</p>	<p>ACTIVITY1. TELL THE STORY letting the children add card and the laminated cards. In the beginning there was nothing, no light, no sea, no sky, just darkness (Black card) God said, "Let there be light" – (Yellow card) That's good!" he said. On the second day he made dry land and a sky over it. "blue for sky) – On the third day God decided to put all the water in one place and call it "the sea" and on the dry land he made every kind of plant you could imagine. "It's looking great!" said God. On the fourth day God decided to organise the light he'd made into a sun to shine by day and a moon to shine by night. He added loots of twinkly stars. "Great" said God.</p> <p>On the 5th day God made the sea teem with all kinds of swimming fish and animals, and then he made the sky be full of amazing birds, swooping and flying about.</p> <p>On the sixth day the land was filled with all kinds of hopping, crawling, pouncing running animals. They were magnificent. And finally, to look after all this amazing creation, God made a man and a woman.</p> <p>That's very good indeed", said God!</p> <p>And on the 7th day? Well, God had a rest, of course!</p> <p>ACTIVITY2.TO SORT THE LAMINATED PICTURES and try to remember which order they were created in. Then choose your favourite group of living things and write or draw as many as you can think of from that group on a large piece of paper. Why do you think God was so pleased with his creation?</p> <p>ACTIVITY3. END OF PERFECTION? Warn the children first that something nasty is going to happen to their finished model! Then give them some playdough to make a model of a favourite animal or bird. Only give a few minutes, but then ask them to show the person next to them, who is going to squash it without even looking at it! Use your discretion- some children might not want to do this!</p> <p>Talk about how this felt, and compare how it might be for God when people spoil his creation. Let them decide which part of creation they could help care more for. Write or draw this on a postit, then lead a prayer and let the children add their idea if they wish.</p>	<p>A3 card one black, one yellow, one blue</p> <p>Laminated pictures – sun, moon, stars, plants, flying things, swimming things, dry land animals, humans.</p> <p>Pots of playdough.</p> <p>Cards for ordering creation</p> <p>Postits and pens</p>

Story 2. Ruth *book of Ruth (History)*

Main Aims	Activities	Resources
<p>1. To understand what it means to be loyal to someone, especially when they are sad.</p> <p>2. To know that God's kingdom is for people from all cultures and backgrounds</p> <p>3. Consider who acted bravely in this story</p>	<p>Set out the green fabric over the two boxes. Make the path go right from one side to the other over the mountain. Use blocks to make a town on either side of the mountain. Tell the story of how Elimelech, his wife Naomi, and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, went from Bethlehem to Moab. Explain that the two sons married women from the local tribes. Orpah and Ruth. Then first Elimelech and then both the sons died Leaving Naomi and her two Moabite daughters in law who decided to go back to Bethlehem. They both loved Naomi, but she told them to go back to their homes so that they might get new husbands. Orpay went, but Ruth would not – she loved Naomi and wanted to stay with her. What would the children have done?</p> <p>2. Now set up the brown earth and put the yellow, then the wheat on top. Explain what gleaning was – saving the wheat at the edge of the field for poor people. Explain that as Ruth worked hard, getting grain for her and Naomi, Farmer Boaz was watching and he decided that he would like to marry her. Soon a baby was born – he was called Obed. When he grew up he had a son to and called him Jesse. And Jesse too had a son and his name was David – does his name sound familiar?</p> <p>ACTIVitY2 This is a long and quite complex story so after telling it, ask the children to use the models and the scene to tell the story back to you.</p> <p>ACTIVitY3 Using a piece of paper, draw a plinth, like an Olympic medal presentation block and decide which character you think is the most brave, the second and the third most brave. Each child/group should decide on what they think, then ask them to explain why they have decided this. Depending on the age/number of children you might want to try to discuss until there is a group decision.</p>	<p>Set up the brown soil. You need a yellow piece of card or paper to show that the harvest is ready</p> <p>Wheat pictures</p>



You could make large versions of a medal like this and encourage the children to design a medal for the characters who were brave. Even better, use card and real ribbon, then do a presentation with the children explaining why the person should win the medal.

Story 3 Sermon on the Mount – Salt *Matthew 5:13 (Teaching)*

Main Aims	Activities	Resources
<p>1. (Depending on age group) To listen to some of the teaching which Jesus gave his disciples (+ older) and consider that some opposition to what our natural reaction would be.</p> <p>2. To appreciate the differences that salt makes to our food etc and to consider what Jesus means when he says that we should be like salt.</p> <p>3. To aim to do one thing today to be “like salt”</p>	<p>ACTIVITY1 Tell and wonder about the story. Jesus was going up the mountain to sit and teach his disciples. You’re going to read out some statements and the children have to decide if this is really something that Jesus said or not, showing the green end of their lolly stick if they think it’s true and the red I they think it’s wrong.</p> <p>Jesus says you will be happy if you: (See sheet – I have done this sheet with children and adults and most can’t link these statements to what Jesus says. I suggest you have a large copy of the Good News Translation and refer to this!)</p> <p>Finish by showing the salt cellar and saying “We should be like salt”. Give one of the cards they disagree with and give a short time to talk about (if they want to) why this is hard.</p> <p>ACTIVITY2 Let them taste the two types of crisps and write all over the card the things salt does. (Remind about preserving, cleaning wounds etc)</p> <p>3. Eating crisps prayer, as we promise to do one thing to be more salty today.</p>	<p>Set out the green fabric over the boxes to make a mountain. You need all your people figures. Give all the children a green/red lolly stick.</p> <p>Sheet of things which Jesus might have said. (and GNB translation)</p> <p>A bag of unsalted “salt and shake” crisps and a normal packet. Bowls and card/pens under each bowl. Salt cellar</p>

Did Jesus Really say... (use SOME of these) (GNB translates “Blessed” as “Happy”)

People are happy when they work for peace.
 People are happy when they don’t pretend to be more important than they are.
 People are happy because God comforts them when they feel sad.
 People are happy when others see their faith in God and are mean to them
 People are happy when they are kind and helpful to anyone who needs help.
 People are happy when others who don’t follow Jesus tell lies about you.

Story 5. Sermon on the Mount – Worry *Matthew 6:24 (Teaching)*

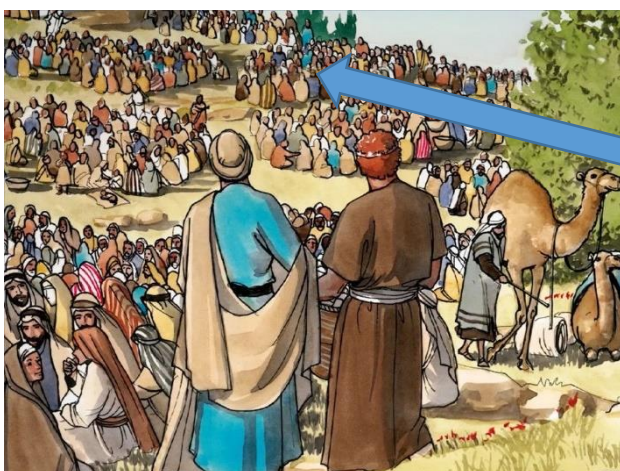
Main Aims	Activities	Extra Resources
1. To talk about things that we worry about – in a general way.	ACTIVITY1 Set up the green hill and figures again. Give everyone a green and red lolly stick and ask them to show which things they sometimes worry about. Green for no, I don't worry, red for yes this does stop me and worry me. Read out a fairly fun list, "spiders, losing my mobile, friend being off school, losing mum in Tesco's etc. Finish by asking about being worried that there will be no chocolate biscuits at home today, and that your favourite jumper has got a big hole in it.	A list of worrying things. Lolly sticks
2. To understand that Jesus said his disciples should look at the birds whenever they felt worried about food	ACTIVITY2 Show some human food and let the children describe where they come from and the fact that humans play a part. Then show the bird food and agree that although this is bought from a shop, all of the things grow naturally. God cares for his creation.	Box of bird food. And human food processed and not Eg biscuit, tin tomatoes, apple, bread roll, dry pasta etc.
3. To understand that Jesus said his disciples should look at the flowers whenever they felt worried about clothes.	3. Show the photos of the flowers. Do the children think that they're dressed well? Use the numbered board to put them in order. Their favourite at the top. On plain paper design the most funny/exciting /beautiful flower you can; then write somewhere on your paper what you're going to do the next time you feel worried.	Flower pictures and board



See Worry Flowers sheet.

Story 6. Feeding of the 5000 *John (Miracle)*

Main Aims	Activities	Extra Resources
<p>1. To know the story of the feeding of the 5000</p> <p>2. To appreciate what it meant to the boy to give away all he had to eat when he was hungry</p>	<p>ACTIVITY1 Set up the green hillside and the lake at the bottom. Show Jesus crossing the lake and the crowds following him round the edge. Jesus and his disciples go up the hill and crowd follow because they are so impressed by the way Jesus has healed so many. Ask a couple of children to be Philip and another disciple (or two) YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN! Ask them where they could get food for all these hungry people.</p> <p>ACTIVITY2 One at a time the children mention their favourite food. Describe it carefully, make sure everyone feels really hungry after describing food. Now describe the boy bringing his lunch to Jesus. Use the wooden figures on the model and explain that every wooden figure is showing at least 500 people! Now look at your loaves and fish – how do you feel?</p> <p>3. What would you say to Jesus when he had done this miracle? What would you say to other people that you met? Draw yourself with two speech bubbles to show these. If you have time and the group are still interested you could make the link with the Israelites long ago when they had escaped from Egypt. They had nothing to eat and grumbled at Moses – the man in charge. Moses prayed and the next morning (make all the wooden figures go to sleep – then scatter little torn up bits of white paper over the grass. This is MANNA – it was like bread and God provided just enough for all the people every morning. Are these two stories similar? What do they show us?</p>	<p>Ship</p> <p>Clay models of 5 loaves and 2 fish. Give everyone some plasticine or playdough. First make your favourite food, then make a couple of rolls and fish.</p>



Extra – you are this person in the crowd – someone else can be a radio reporter with a phone to record your words – like most interviews you have no time to prepare! What would you say?

Story 7. The Hidden treasure *Matthew 13 (Parable)*

Main Aims	Activities	Extra Resources
1. To learn the short story of the hidden treasure.	<p>ACTIVITY1 Set up the green hills and some blocks to indicate a smart house. Hide the box somewhere in the scene.</p> <p>Act out the man discovering the treasure, returning it and then going to sell everything he owned.</p>	Box with torn up brown tissue paper and a jewel buried in it.
2. To think about what treasure we would find which might make us think we've found the best there is.	<p>ACTIVITY2 Let the children choose a jewel from the box. The need to imagine it's a real ruby/diamond etc. worth loads of money. Keep going round the children asking them what they would swap. Start with small things – doughnut, bag of crisps etc and go up to PS4, laptop. Etc. Think what it would feel like to swap everything so that you had a precious stone.</p>	Box of "jewels"
3. To understand what the treasure is that Jesus is referring to in the parable.	<p>ACTIVITY3 Now make two lines or sit on two sides of the table. Who thinks the man made the right decision and who thinks he made the wrong decision? Any child who wants to can walk between the lines and listen to what each side thinks. What do the children think that Jesus was thinking of when he described the treasure? – Being one of God's children – it's worth everything. Who wants to change sides? Let some more people walk through the line/s.</p>	



If you have time to prepare an empty squash bottle with sand and around 8 small objects inside, your younger children will probably enjoy searching for the treasure. (Older ones might too!) There is a photo of all the objects to find, and obviously you will need to tape up the lid securely as they are not allowed to empty the sand out. Add a tiny "pearl" which is the most valuable (and hard to find) of all.

Story 8. The Wheat and the Tares *Matthew 13:24 (Parable)*

Main Aims	Activities	Extra Resources
<p>1. To understand that the farmer in the story left the bad seed to grow so that the good seed could grow too.</p> <p>To begin to understand what ideas this story might suggest as to why bad things happen in the world.</p> <p>2. To consider what the options for the farmer are.</p> <p>4. To start to see that God, in a similar way to the farmer, sometimes allows bad things to grow along with the good things.</p>	<p>ACTIVITY1 Set up, with the children’s help, the grass, hill and brown soil, use some blocks to make the farmers house.</p> <p>Show the farmer choosing and sowing good seed in his field, then going back home and sleeping. Then use a figure to be an enemy who comes along and sows weed seed too. Give the children a bowl of mixed seed in some sand and ask them to see how many they can separate in a minute.</p> <p>ACTIVITY2 As this is very hard, what ideas have the children got for the farmer? Write or draw on a postcard your idea for what the farmer should do about the seeds growing in the field.</p> <p>Describe what he did, waiting until the wheat and the weeds are both grown and then harvesting everything. He burns the weeds that he doesn’t want. Was this a good plan? Did anyone else think of this?</p> <p>ACTIVITY3 If you had to decide on something in the world that you wanted to get rid of, what would it be? Write it on paper and throw it into our pretend bonfire. (or if you’re feeling brave you could use a metal bucket outside and have a real burning. (Check Health and Safety)</p> <p>ACTIVITY4 <i>Younger children</i> might prefer to play with the farmer scene or draw a picture.</p> <p><i>Older children</i> – they receive a message (letter, text, email etc) from a fictitious friend saying something like, “I’ve just seen that terrible war on the news, or, there were pictures of all the damage that an earthquake has done. How can you believe in God when so many bad things happen?”</p> <p>A big question, but spend some time discussing whether the story we’ve heard today helps us at all.</p> <p>Wheat and weeds picture to discuss at home.</p> <p>CONCLUSION</p> <p>To think about what we could learn from this parable. (But remember... Jesus very seldom told people what the message of his parables was, we need to avoid telling the children what we think and encourage them to explore the meaning for themselves</p>	<p>Two types of seeds, they need to look different</p> <p>Muddled seed in bowl with some sand to try to separate</p> <p>Postcards, pens, pencils</p> <p>Pictures or straw models of wheat and weeds</p> <p>Sticks and tissue for a bonfire</p> <p>Paper and pens, possibly metal bucket and matches</p> <p>Sheet</p>



Do you think the farmer made the right decision?

Story 9. The Lost Sheep *Luke 15 (Parable)*

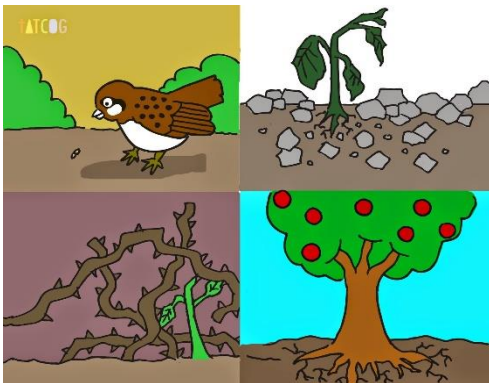
Main Aims	Activities	Extra Resources
<p>1. To understand that things and sometimes people do get lost and to appreciate what this is like.</p> <p>2. To hear and understand the story of the lost sheep</p> <p>3. To understand the joy that there is when something lost is found.</p>	<p>ACTIVITY1 Use some LEGO and ask a couple of children to hide the ball bearing somewhere in their model. The others have just two goes to find it. Now change to hiding the person.</p> <p>ACTIVITY2 Use the green fabric, the hill, the lake, the rocks the sheep pen, tell the story – the sheep who follow the shepherd to the grass, the lake and home through the dark valley where one gets lost. Tell the story up to the point where all but one are home. Use the lolly sticks and the questions to work out what the shepherd could do. (Send a neighbour/servant to find the sheep, forget about it, hope it finds its own way home etc.)</p> <p>ACTIVITY3 Use little sheep models (there are plenty in the shops around Easter time!) and cheap party bits and bobs. Make a sheep party room in groups or individually, on a tray or in a box. Take photos from sheep’s eye angles and load them onto the computer if possible. Make some speech bubbles from the shepherd which explain why he is so delighted that the sheep is back home..</p>	<p>Rocks for Valley Lego bricks and ball bearing or marble</p> <p>Lolly Sticks</p> <p>Sheep models, party things, eg streamers, sequins, maybe little “iced gem” type biscuits. Mobile with camera Laptop or tablet Party sparkly things</p>



What is it like to be found?

Story 10. The Sower *Matthew 13 (Parable)*

Main Aims	Activities	Extra Resources
<p>To learn what happens in the story.</p> <p>2. To think about what the parable might mean.</p> <p>3. To reflect on the meaning for us.</p>	<p>ACTIVITY1 Set out the grass, the brown soil, the path, a farmhouse. Also a lake, the boat and a crowd of people that's where Jesus was when he told this story. Tell the story of the seed landing on the path, among the rocks, among the thorns and in the good soil.</p> <p>ACTIVITY2 Give everyone a pipecleaner and ask them to make a shape to show what happened to each seed. You might think that Jesus was telling a story to show farmers that they should be careful when they are sowing their seeds, but later on in the Bible passage he explains another meaning to his friends.</p> <p>ACTIVITY3 Use a piece of paper (scrap is fine), and think about some things which might stop you listening to Jesus words. (Give some ideas for those who have none) eg I find it hard to understand when I try to read the Bible, I would rather play on my phone I want to be out playing football. When everyone has thought of something go around and invite each child to mime the thing that stops hearing Jesus good words. When everyone is done, go round again and see what ideas the other have to help.</p>	<p>Seeds Rocks Bird Thistles</p> <p>Pipecleaners</p> <p>Paper</p>



Draw you own or cut and stick one of the many online examples of this story to remind you of the parable and its meaning.