



THE ENCOURAGER

Help for Sunday School Teachers— Dedicated to those who take the Word of Life to Children Everywhere

The ENCOURAGER
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F. B. I.

FBI = Fun Bible Investigators

Such was the theme of our Children's Meetings this fall, and it went well.

We live in Carnduff, a small town in Saskatchewan, and meet with the assembly in

Glen Ewen. Every year we have a children's outreach in two of the surrounding towns, Carnduff and Oxbow. Over the years, the number of kids we've had attending at Carnduff has diminished dramatically. The last few years, we've been getting no more than 15 kids, most of whom are Christian's kids. There have been no 'school-aged' children from Christian Families going to the Carnduff school recently and so this has affected our numbers quite a bit! We decided that we needed a change, since we were hesitant to bring this outreach to a stop altogether. We then borrowed the FBI theme, but came up with our own ideas on what to do for this children's outreach.

Here are some of the things that we did:

First of all we decided that we would try and make everything fit with an investigative theme.

Whether the verse, story, etc, we wanted to have a common theme... Investigating the Bible!

1. When each child registered each night at the door, they were to pick up their "FBI Badge" which had their name and unique FBI Number on it, starting with 001, and so on. It was laminated and had a string to put around their necks. This was quite a hit!
2. We started off with singing, which didn't have too much investigating - only if we didn't know a tune, perhaps! :)
3. We thought it very important to learn a Bible verse each week and wanted it to really sink in. Over the years we've just done repetition, but unsure if it was working. This year, we tried "solving" the verse. It involved several kids, depending on the verse length. Printing the verse on large pieces of paper and backing them with coloured paper, we divided the verse into words or partial sentences and then shuffled them. We gave "helpers" from the audience each a piece of the verse and had them read it over and put it in the order that made sense. After we "solved" the verse, we repeated it many times. Though it took a bit longer than usual, the kids really seemed to enjoy this part and seemed to learn the verse better too, which was our goal!
4. The story was not long, but it was to involve the audience more. We wanted to find stories in the Bible that had an issue or problem to be "solved". For instance, one night the story was about "Achan and Ai: Why has God left us?" Another night was "Who stole the body of Jesus?" The story was told with acting and props, or at least a object lesson to get their attention. On the night of Creation, balloon creatures were made and that was also a real hit. The kids really paid attention when they had something to capture their attention! The speaker was to involve the kids in "solving" the story, making them "Fun Bible Investigators".
5. After the story, we had a quiz and a game called "Zonk!" The kids answered questions and were able to turn over tiles (with a colour and shape on them) to reveal the points below for their team. If it said ZONK, they lost all their points. They were offered 2 chances to reveal a tile, but there was risk in getting a ZONK if they tried more than once. The kids loved it, and were happy to be quizzed in order to play.
6. To top the night off, we either did a small craft or played a game with all the kids. This requires time and effort, and lots of "man-power" if you're doing a craft. But well worth it. The kids painted a wooden frame with their FBI # on it, they put together "Foamy" doorhangers, etc. We found that the craft required more time than we'd allotted and next year would leave at least 40min to an hour for the craft.

We really appreciated having the kids come and enjoy themselves, all the while learning and investigating the Bible and its stories. Though our numbers didn't increase by the hundreds, we are finding that kids are coming back this year to be FBI again and are even bringing out more friends and (as told by a Mother) anxious to tell friends and family that they're a member of the FBI. Is it reaching into homes in town? You can count on it! We hope this has been some help to you and you can find more fun ways to help kids investigate the Bible, too!

