

Daniel and the Lions

Hear the story.

Children will need to read or hear the story of Daniel in the Lions den. As you ask them to watch or read the story remind them it's a Christian story from the Bible. Explain Daniel was a Jew, he loved God and tried to live his way. Years before, he and other Jews had been captured and taken to a strange country called Babylon. The Babylonians didn't believe in God.

Watch the story:

<https://scottishbiblesociety.org/resources/daniel-and-the-lions-den-powerpoint/> (The Bibleworld pictures made into a video with a simple voiceover of the story.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uD4KowNCiTs> (Fiona tells the story and encourages children to join in)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZV3eQ2PBqHE> (Saddleback Kids)

Read the story:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=daniel+6&version=NLT>

If they have their own Bible or Children's Bible at home encourage them to find the story and read it there.

Check our understanding.

Choose one or more of the activities in this section to help ensure the children have understood the story.

Online Quizzes (using google forms):

Yes or No quiz that will reinforce learning about Christian belief found in the story.

<https://forms.gle/wmSQQchfCexDFyvJ7>

Multiple choice quiz: Who said what? Can they identify which character said which dialogue?

<https://forms.gle/VaG4jbGEZWzso7YG9>

For younger children encourage them to get someone to ask them the questions from the Yes or No quiz. They could make up actions for yes and no. Perhaps they could jump up for yes and sit down for no.

Create your favourite part of the story:

Choose your favourite part of the story.

Make or draw a picture of the part of the story that you have chosen. You could:

- draw a picture
- go outside and find twigs, stones and grass to make a natural picture
- create a collage or model with craft materials or construction toys that you have at home.

Tell someone else in your family all about your picture. Can you tell them the whole story?

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Drama fun:

Look at the following summary of the story. Can you make up actions to go along with each part?

- Daniel was in Babylon a long way from home.
- He prayed to God three times a day
- The king passed a new law that said, "Pray only to me!"
- Daniel kept praying to God
- Daniel was thrown into the lions' den
- God sent an angel to shut the lions' mouth
- The king worshipped Daniel's God

Daniel's diary:

- Ask the children to write a diary as if they were Daniel.
- Include entries from the day the King put him in charge, the day the new law was made, the day after he was thrown into the lions.
- Include information on what was happening to him and on what he was feeling and thinking.

Big thinking:

Ask the children to:

- Create a mind map of what this story reveals about the Christian God. What did he do in the story? What was he like in the story?
- Around the mind map ask them to write down any questions they've got about the story. What would they ask the King? What would they ask Daniel? What would they ask God?

Start thinking.

As children explore this story they will have the opportunity to learn about the importance of prayer for Christians and/or consider how Daniel held onto his beliefs and values in a new place.

Who did Daniel trust when he was scared?

Build a lions' den using duplo or other construction. Add a 'Daniel' to the lions' den then pretend to be the lions. Roar, then suddenly stop when God shuts the lions' mouth.

Chat: Do you think Daniel was scared when the king sent him to the lions' den? It's OK to be scared about things. Who did Daniel trust? What happened in the end?

Christians believe that we can trust God to look after us. Who do you trust when you're scared?

Prayer:

Daniel prayed. What does it mean for Christians to pray? Watch this short video to help you understand.

<https://request.org.uk/restart/2017/05/30/question-pod-3/>

Can you write a prayer imagining you were Daniel? The king has just made his new law. What would you say to God? What might you say 'thank you' for what might you ask God to help you with?

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Describing Daniel:

- Create a picture or model of Daniel, inside or outside, using whatever materials you wish too.
- Around your picture or model add words that describe Daniel. What was he like? How did he behave? Can you remember how he was described in the story?
- That's how Daniel was known, he chose to be that kind of person. What kind of person are you choosing to be? Write a list of 5 describing words that you hope people would use to describe you.
- You can create a picture or model of yourself if you'd like and add those words to it. Keep it as a reminder to be that kind of person when you go back to school.

How does it feel when things change:

This activity could be done individually or the children could share their feelings by adding to a PowerPoint or Jam board.

As a young man Daniel was taken away from his home in Israel and taken to Babylon with only a few of his friends.

- Draw or copy three emojis that describe how you think Daniel might have felt as he started to live in Babylon. Explain why you chose those ones.
- We've been out of school for a while now. What will it be like when it all changes again and we go back to school?
- Draw or copy three emojis that describe how you are feeling about going back to school. Explain why you chose those ones.

Turning thinking into action.

Life changed for Daniel and life is going to change (again) for all our pupils. This may be simply going back to a familiar school or it may be a new school or new class. What can they learn from Daniel that will help them as they move on?

Who can help us?:

Christians believe that God kept Daniel safe in the lions' den. Have a look around your house for some things that keep you safe. They might include things like a bicycle helmet or sun cream. How many things can you find? How do these things keep you safe?

At home, there are people like mum that keep you safe. Who will keep you safe when you go back to school? How many different people can you think of? These are people that we can trust when everything around us is changing. Can you draw a picture of them. You could upload it to your google classroom for the person to see.

How does it feel when things change?:

Ask someone at home to fill the kettle with water and switch it on. What happens to the water when it boils? Fill an ice cube tray with water. Pop it into the freezer. What happens to the water?

The water changed - maybe into steam or into ice. Think about what might change when you go back to school? For each thing that you have mentioned, make a face to show how you feel about that thing. Did you manage to make an excited face? A happy face? A worried face? What could you do to change a sad face into a happy face or a worried face into a confident face?

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Being thankful:

When Christians pray they say thank you to God. It's been a big change having to stay at home during the Coronavirus outbreak and it's been hard as we miss our friends and school. But what we can be thankful for? Can you think of 5 things you could say thank you for about this time?

What's important to you:

Even though Daniel was living in a new culture in Babylon he was determined not to forget about his belief in God and the importance of prayer. It would have been hard because the Babylonians didn't share his beliefs.

As we go back to school, maybe to a new school and new class, what's important to you? What do you not want to forget about?

- What have you started doing (or stopped doing) during this time we've had to stay at home that you want to keep doing (or not doing)?
- What beliefs or values are you going to stick with even if no-one else is?

Asking for help:

When Christians pray they ask God for help. I'm sure Daniel asked God for help when the King made the new law. If you were to pray what would you ask God to help you with? Think especially about going back to school (moving class), what would you ask for help with? Write a prayer about these things. (You could combine this with 'being thankful' and include saying thank you and asking for help in this prayer.)

Christians ask God for help, but they also ask other people for help. Who could you ask to help you?