

A Surprising Sight



Find

- Mark who is helping to tell the Easter Story.
- Piece of white material to place behind Mark.
- Team points or prizes to give out in the game
- Catch Phrases written out on paper or put into a slide show.

Introduce

- Ask the children what kind of books they like to read? Then ask the children how they would feel if they were nearly at the last chapter of their book but then realised the final chapter of the book was missed out?
- After reading a book for weeks only to find the final chapter missing is really disappointing and frustrating.
- Many people talk about Easter as if the final chapter in the story is the death of Jesus on the cross and this means the story ends in a sad, disappointing and frustrating place. However this is not the end of the Easter Story there is another far more exciting chapter.
- Introduce Mark, a boy who has been on an Easter adventure - he will help us to explore our Easter story today. Invite a child to come and look what Mark has hidden (*this will be the white material*). Ask the children why they think Mark has some white material. Which part of the Easter story has he been exploring?
- The white material is symbolic of the material that Jesus' body would have been wrapped in when he was placed in the tomb. Perhaps Mark visited his Friend Mary who the Bible tells us visited the tomb Jesus was buried in. I wonder what she found when she got to the tomb?

Play

- This assembly is exploring the surprise Mark's friend Mary saw when she got to the tomb, when the final chapter of the Easter Story came to light. The great thing is that when Mary got to the tomb she didn't see what she expected to see.
- So I thought we would play a game about seeing the unexpected.
- *Place on the screen or write on a piece of paper a catch phrase such as 'IstitchME', and ask the children if they can find the hidden meaning in the catch phrase; the answer being, a stitch in time. Then write out the catch phrases and see if the children can see the hidden meaning in the words. Give out team points or prizes to those that find the hidden meanings.*



continued...



Talk

When Mary got to the tomb on the very first Easter day she was expecting to find the closed tomb and Jesus body inside, but to her surprise what she saw was the stone of the tomb had been rolled away. When she and her friends went inside to investigate more the Bible says they found the white material Jesus' body had been wrapped in, folded neatly and placed on the stone his body would have been laid on. Jesus' body was no-where to be seen. Soon after the women had looked inside the tomb the Bible says an angel appeared and told them not to fear, that Jesus was not dead but he was alive!

How do you think Mark felt as he listened to Mary tell the final chapter of the Easter story; about finding the tomb empty, the angel and the folded material in the tomb?

When Mark heard about the folded white cloth in the tomb this would have stirred up some memories. You see Jesus job was that of a carpenter. It was tradition that when a carpenter finished making something he would fold the apron he was working in up, and place it on the finished piece of work; a sign to those around him that it was finished. So when Mark heard that the white cloth in the tomb was folded and placed in the tomb he would have known this meant Jesus was saying 'It is finished'. My work here is finished; I have done all I set out to do on earth; finishing by overcoming death by rising to life.

Jesus' resurrection was Jesus showing the world that death was not the end anymore, that the final chapter is not one of death but of life.

So the white cloth reminds us that Jesus came to give us life. This is a beautiful ending to a tough story.

Pray

Thank you God that the final chapter of the Easter Story was not disappointing or frustrating and sad, but unexpected, happy and a brilliant surprise. Help us to know the joy of Easter as we reflect on the Easter Stories final chapter. Amen

Classroom follow up:

Make an Easter Card or Easter Garden. Using split pins you could make the Easter card show the tomb stone rolling away to reveal an empty tomb and some white folded material. Around it using tissue paper do flowers as symbols of new life.

A perfect opportunity for Easter craft workshop.

