

DAY 1 - WHO IS ZACCHAEUS?

The first day will provide opportunities to meet the children, audition them and find out what they know about the story of Zacchaeus. You'll also be thinking about why Zacchaeus chose to be mean to the people of Jericho.

Intro question: Do you know anything about Zacchaeus?

WELCOME ACTIVITY

Create a montage of coin rubbings - use a large sheet of plain wallpaper or backing paper and ask the children to create a mural of coin rubbings. Bring a collection of different coins that can be used (foreign, old, novelty etc) for rubbing and use colourful crayons.

This could be used as a backdrop for your performance later in the week.

GAMES

Game 1 - Ball Hunt: place coloured plastic balls (the kind used in ball pits) around the room. Separate the children into small teams. They are all given 5 minutes to collect as many balls as they can, either from finding balls in the room, or stealing balls from other teams. Do not allow physical contact or running - offenders are to sit out the rest of the game. The aim is to have the most balls at the end of the time limit.

The unfairness of having their balls stolen is an illustration of how the people of Jericho would have felt when Zacchaeus took their money.

Game 2 - Musical Chairs: This party favourite can be played with sheets of newspaper, paper spots or cushions on the floor to avoid the logistics of moving chairs.

Play the songs that will be learnt that day for the children to dance, walk or move around to. When the music stops they must sit on a chair or spot. Remove a spot for each turn; whoever is left standing is out.

At the end of the game discuss: How does it feel to be left out of the game? When, in life, do we leave people out? Have we ever been the person who is left out?

TO DO LIST

- Prepare paper and crayons for the welcome activity
- Bring a collection of coins for rubbing
- Bring a large collection of plastic balls and buckets for game 1
- Hide or place balls around the room
- Prepare chairs, paper or cushions for game 2
- Prepare pens, clay, play dough or biscuits for crafts
- Print and copy coin templates
- Print case studies for Time to reflect

CRAFT

Craft 1 - To Zacchaeus money was the most important thing in the world. Using the template provided design your own coin(s). Usually coins feature a picture of someone important - who could you draw on your coin?

What are your coins worth? What is it that makes money valuable? Are there things that are more valuable than money?

Craft 2 - Transfer your coin designs on to clay, play dough, or, using icing, pipe them onto biscuits.



SONGS

In today's singing rehearsals start learning *So Mean* and *Our Money*.

So Mean is to be sung by the villagers (everyone except Zacchaeus). This song has a very simple chorus, so try to add in the armography early on in the learning process.

In *Our Money* ideally you want Zacchaeus to sing the verses (in character) with the rest of the cast singing the choruses. Take your Zacchaeus to one side during another activity to learn this on their own. Teach the chorus to the villagers. To emphasise the humour have villagers bring on props which represent all the things that Zacchaeus has bought with their money.



TIME TO REFLECT SCENES

When we played the games today, there were times when it may have felt or seemed a little unfair. I wonder how this made us feel?

In our story today, we met Zacchaeus who is kind of the leading role! There were lots of people who thought that he was very unfair. He was a tax collector and people often felt cheated by him and the way he behaved. Paying taxes is a normal thing to do – people pay them all the time. What Zacchaeus did was to take more than the Roman government asked for to use for himself! Do you think that was fair?

In all likelihood, the Roman government didn't pay him very much for the job he did, but it still doesn't seem fair does it?

Sometimes, in our own lives we can see things that are unfair. Do we know how to make things better?

In small groups, we can have a look at some case studies to decide how we could make something fairer or better. (spend some time looking at the cards - provided in the resource pack - together or in small groups. Allow a short time for discussion)

Prayer:

Dear God, help us to be thoughtful and caring towards others, this day and always. Teach us to forgive. Teach us to be fair. Teach us to share. Amen

Hopefully, you will have carried out informal auditioning during registration and are able to identify children to play the nine speaking parts.

During other activities (maybe craft time or a game) take aside small groups to learn their parts for Act 1 of the script. Jacob and Samuel have lines together so take them as a pair and then rehearse the four villagers afterwards.

GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER

Each day this time is allocated for putting together the work you've done so far into a performance.

In today's session you should be looking to run Act 1 with script and the song *So Mean*. If possible include armography.

Try to start allocating positions on stage for all of the children, and encourage the choir to react to the story as it happens.

It is good to remind the children in this time of what they have learnt about the story of Zacchaeus so far and link this with what is happening on stage.

DAY 2 - JESUS IS COMING!

As the title would indicate today you start to think about Jesus's place in the story. Today's games, activities, song and script are all focused on the anticipation that the people of Jericho felt about this 'celebrity' arriving in their town.

Intro question: Why do you think Jesus was going to Jericho?

WELCOME ACTIVITY

Using pictures from magazines or printed from the internet make a collage of famous people on a large sheet of paper. Whilst children do this think about why some people are famous - What skills or abilities do we admire in people? Why do famous people have so many 'followers'? Ask the children to write their suggestions around the people on the collage.

Jesus had lots of followers and lots of people in his time would have heard about him. He was a celebrity of his day. How would the people of Jericho feel about Jesus coming?

GAMES

Game 1 - Jerusalem to Jericho: In this game children are divided into teams who have to travel from Jerusalem to Jericho. Divide their path into spaces (with markers or sheets of paper) - each team has a dice to roll and moves according to the instructions on the dice included in the resource pack.

Beware teams moving each other back! The winning team is the first to get all members across to Jericho.

Game 2 - Jerusalem to Jericho: to add another layer to this game the teams now have to travel using mats (or towels). Players can't touch the floor, and no more than two players can be on any one mat at the same time.

Give each team two mats and make it a race to get to the other side. This will require good team work and co-ordination. Give the teams a minute before you start the race to plan how they will do it.

TO DO LIST

- Collect magazines or print pictures of celebrities for the mural
- Prepare paper, scissors and glue for the welcome activity
- Print and assemble dice for game 1
- Bring mats or towels for game 2 (2 per team)
- Prepare people templates - either bought from Baker Ross or draw around a child on card
- Prepare card, paints, leaf templates and step ladder for craft 2
- Prepare pictures of famous people for the Time to reflect

CRAFT

Craft 1 - Many people came to see Jesus where ever he went. Create a crowd background by asking the children to decorate cut-out people shapes, the larger the better!

This could be done with pens, paints, cut and stick or any other method you choose.

When done, attach these figures together to make a crowd backdrop for your performance.

Craft 2 - Make your tree! This will be an important part of the scenery for your performance.

A good way of doing this would be to have a small group of children painting or making a trunk with branches on large sheets of cardboard, whilst other children make individual leaves to be attached.

When you use the tree in the performance ideally you need it look like Zacchaeus climbs and sits in it, so attach it to a step ladder that he can stand on so that his head pops over the top.



SONGS

The new song today is *He's Gonna Be*. If you have strong singers, the lines of the verses which begin 'Have you heard...' could be divided up into solos or small groups who are excitedly gossiping about Jesus arriving in Jericho.

You will probably need to explain the meaning of the words 'Messiah' and 'Revolution' and give a brief idea of the stories that Jesus told: the prodigal son and the lost sheep are mentioned in this song.

Continue practicing yesterday's songs, adding armography where possible.



TIME TO REFLECT

(Have ready a few pictures of famous people that the children would know. Try to choose some good influences and some not so good!)

There are lots of famous people that we could name. Perhaps we could spend a few moments looking at these people and thinking about what makes them famous. *(allow time for discussion and thoughts about good influences or bad influences)*

In our story we meet Jesus who had become famous in his time. I wonder what you know about Jesus? *(Allow a short time for discussion)*

Lots of people wanted to meet Jesus because they had heard about the good things he had done. Here are a few stories about the good Jesus had done:

Healing people who were blind.

Raising people from the dead.

Feeding five thousand people.

Telling amazing stories to help people understand about God.

Do you think you would have wanted to meet Jesus? Zacchaeus certainly did, as we will discover through this week.

Prayer: Thank you Jesus for showing us your kindness in the stories we have looked at today. Help us to see your kindness to others each day in the people we meet and teach us to be kind to others. Amen

SCENES

Today you will be looking to learn Act 2. Take small groups aside again to work on small scenes. Zacchaeus, Miriam, Jacob, Samuel and Villager 1 share the first part of the Act.

Later get all four villagers and Miriam together to rehearse the second part.

It would also be good to spend some time with Zacchaeus one to one to learn the verses of *Our Money* if this is being sung as a solo.

GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER

Today's aim will be to get both Act 1 and 2 to a point where you can run them on stage.

As well as running the scenes and singing the songs down you will need to spend time preparing the props and their introduction during the song *Our Money*. This song can be played for laughs so don't be afraid to ham it up and exaggerate the use of props.

DAY 3 - IN THAT TREE

Day 3 focuses on why Zacchaeus climbed the tree and how Jesus knew who he was. In terms of the overall story this is the turning point: when Zacchaeus goes from outcast to the focus of everyone's attention.

Intro Question: Why do you think people didn't like Zacchaeus?

WELCOME ACTIVITY

Print off the colouring and puzzle sheets in the resource pack for the children to complete upon arrival.

GAMES

Game 1 - Build a tree: In this game give children a time limit in which they have to build the highest free standing 'tree' that they can. This could be done individually or in small groups (2-3 children).

Possible methods include using dried spaghetti and marshmallows, or newspaper and sellotape. The important thing is that the structure should be free standing.

Game 2 - Zacchaeus, come down: Space the children evenly around your room by placing masking tape markers on the floor. The children must each stay on their marker at all times.

The children will play the part of villagers trying to stop Zacchaeus from coming down from the tree. Zacchaeus is represented by a balloon that they must keep in the air.

Time the villagers to see how long they can keep Zacchaeus from coming down. This could be done in teams taking turns competitively, or an attempt to improve on the collective personal best.

TO DO LIST

- Print colouring and puzzle sheets for welcome activity
- Prepare resources for building a 'tree' for game 1
- Prepare balloons and masking tape for game 2
- Collect cardboard tubes, clothes pegs, wool, green paper, pens and glue for craft 1
- Collect tetrapak drinks cartons and mirrors for craft 2
- Print sheep templates for a time to reflect

CRAFT

Craft 1 - Make a cardboard tube tree with Zacchaeus sitting on top. Using a cardboard tube as the tree trunk add leaves made of paper. Decorate a clothes peg to look like Zacchaeus.

Instructions are included in the resource pack.

Craft 2 - Zacchaeus had to climb a tree to see over all of the crowds. Another way to see over things is to use a periscope.

Following the instructions in the resource pack make your own periscopes.



SONGS

In today's session introduce the song *In That Tree*. Whilst the verses of this song are sung from the perspective of Zacchaeus all the cast should sing this song. However you could have Zacchaeus and Jesus miming the action described in the lyrics whilst the other children sing.



An effective addition to the song would be crouching down for the section beginning 'So I take a firm branch' and gradually standing to full height by the chorus. The 'woahs' are about conveying Zacchaeus's excitement - some arm waving or freestyle dancing here would add to the performance.

Continue rehearsing the previous songs.

TIME TO REFLECT

In today's part of the story, we get to the point where Jesus and Zacchaeus meet! We have already discussed what Jesus was famous for and why Zacchaeus would have wanted to see Jesus.

Because Zacchaeus was a very short man he couldn't see. People wouldn't let him through the crowds either, because of the sort of man that he was. They didn't think that he was good enough to see Jesus! How wrong they were! When Jesus saw Zacchaeus, he called him down and invited himself for tea. I wonder why he did that? I wonder how he even knew Zacchaeus' name?

Do you think Jesus knows who you are? Do you think that he knows your name? There is a verse in the bible that says this:

I am the good shepherd, I know my sheep and my sheep know me.
John 10: 14

We often refer to God as a shepherd, caring for us and looking out for us.

Let's spend some time thinking about that. How does it make you feel?

Jesus knew that Zacchaeus was in need of some help that day and so he called him out of the tree. Jesus knows when you need help and is willing to be there for you.

We are not always sure of the things we need to say to God when we need help, but he knows. There is a sheep cut-out provided today for you to use in our time with God. If you want to, spend some time writing things you need help with. If it helps to write things as a prayer, then you can. If you simply want to write things down, that is OK too. Sometimes it helps to speak to someone else and so any of the adults here will be happy to talk to you.

Dear Jesus, thank you for always being there for us even if we don't realise it. Thank you that when we ask for your help you listen to us and help us. Teach us to see how you are helping us, because we don't always see it. Thank you that you know us by our names. Amen

SCENES

Act 3 is quite dialogue heavy so you will need to bring Samuel, Jacob, Zacchaeus and all four villagers together for a rehearsal.

You may also need to recap previous scenes from other days.

GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER

Begin with a recap of the previous two Acts of the play. Ensure that the children are clear on staging and when they are supposed to move.

In Act 3 you will be looking to depict Jesus for the first time as well as have Zacchaeus climb the tree. All this must be coordinated during the singing of *In That Tree*. Remind the children to sing whilst this action takes place!

DAY 4 - A CHANGE OF HEART

Day 4 concludes the story of Zacchaeus. We will explore why Zacchaeus had a change of heart and think about what Jesus said to him that could have had such a dramatic effect.

This will also be the last day of learning new songs and scenes.

Intro question: How do you think Jesus knew Zacchaeus' name?

WELCOME ACTIVITY

Place a large piece of paper on the floor, with coloured pens around it. Ask the children to answer the question 'What would you do if Jesus came to your house?'

Children could draw or write their responses.

GAMES

Game 1 - Bible Verse Puzzle: Print off copies of the full bible verse for today so that there are enough for each team to have one. Cut the bible verses into puzzle pieces and either mix them up in a large box, or hide them around the room.

Each team has to assemble their full verse as quickly as they can, however only one member from each team can go and search for one piece of the puzzle at a time. The winning team is the one that assembles their full verse and reads it together aloud. See the resource pack bible reading puzzle sheets.

Game 2 - Payback: Divide the children into four teams. Each team should start off with 10 balls. Each time the teams answer correctly, they get to give a ball away to another team. The aim is to be the first team without any balls.

Encourage children to think strategically about who they give their balls to.

TO DO LIST

- Prepare a large sheet of paper and pens for the welcome activity
- Print and cut up the bible verse into puzzle pieces for game 1
- Prepare buckets and balls for game 2
- Prepare pens, paper and other necessary equipment for making posters for craft 1
- Print copies of the flickbook pictures for craft 2

CRAFT

Craft 1 - Create a poster of all the things that Zacchaeus did that the children have learnt throughout the week.

Craft 2 - Using the pages in the resource pack print off the pictures for a flickbook of Zacchaeus climbing the tree and Jesus calling him down.

Children use the stick figures to draw their own characters.

Staple the pages together to function as a flickbook.

NB - this works best when printed on thin card.



SONGS

The last new song to learn is *Seek and Save*. In this song the villagers are eager to find out what has happened in Zacchaeus's house when he met with Jesus. Try to 'act out' the song as a conversation between the villagers.

Each chorus should be treated as a big party - everyone is responding to the remarkable events of the story. The second quieter chorus could be a solo for Jesus; telling the villagers what he said, before they all join in for the big double chorus at the end.

Continue rehearsing the previous songs.



TIME TO REFLECT

Today we discover the difference that Jesus made in Zacchaeus' life when they sat down and talked. The bible doesn't tell us what they talked about, but I wonder if we could fill in the gaps. What do you think was said?

When Jesus and Zacchaeus leave the house, we can see that Zacchaeus is a changed man and he starts to put right things that he had done. I wonder how the people felt when they got back four times the amount of money they were owed? I wonder what Zacchaeus felt?

The bible verse we looked at when playing the games today says:

Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

These old fashioned words still have a lot of meaning today. They're in the song we sing and in the script too so we know they're important to the story. I wonder if you can think what they mean.

Jesus meant that to God Zacchaeus was still important and loved, even though he had done bad things. When Jesus says he *came to seek and to save the lost* he means that he was sent to find people who didn't know God (lost) and to show them who God is so they could live forever in Heaven with him (saved).

Even though Jesus said these words a very long time ago we believe that Jesus does not want us to be lost to him either. How can we come close to God so we are not lost? If we have got things wrong, how can we make it right? Zacchaeus allowed Jesus to help him get it right, he didn't do it by himself. Perhaps we need to ask Jesus to help us too?

Dear God, just like Zacchaeus we sometimes get things wrong. Thank you for giving us a second chance to get it right. Help us to remember that we are never too big to say sorry and make amends, just like Zacchaeus did. Amen

SCENES

Act 4 brings the story to conclusion. There are a number of cheesy jokes and references to song titles in the dialogue, so help the children to understand how to play these with a 'wink and a nudge'.

As this is a short scene you may have time to go back over previously learnt sections of the play.

GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER

By now you should only have the Megamix to learn, so once you have run through the acting for this act you should have time to recap previous scenes.

Ensure that the rest of the cast know where the jokes are and understand how to react. A hearty groan after each pun will go down well with your audience.

DAY 5 - GET THE SHOW ON THE ROAD

Day 5 is a day to recap and prepare, both in terms of the teaching elements and the show. Today you are likely to deviate the most from the suggested timetable. Don't be afraid to divert attention to areas of the show or story that need more time.

Get ready - it's show time!

Intro Question: Zacchaeus made some good choices at the end of the story, what good choices could you make in your life?

WELCOME ACTIVITY

Create a question box and give each child three small cards or pieces of paper. Encourage them to think up three questions that they'd like to ask. These could be about any aspect of the week.

Is there a part of the story they want to think more about?

Is there something difficult in the story that they don't understand?

Do they want to know more about who Jesus was?

Are they interested in The Salvation Army and what it does?

Is there a part of the performance they have questions about?

You will address some of these in the time to reflect later on.

You could also use any colouring or puzzle sheets that the children haven't used on previous days.

GAMES

There are no new games for day 5, as today is focused on preparing for the show.

However you may well find that recapping previously popular games between other activities will help to re-energise weary actors and singers. They will also break up the periods of hard work and concentration that you are likely to encounter today.

TO DO LIST

- Prepare a post box and cards for children to write their questions on for the welcome activity
- Prepare large sheets of paper, paints and pens for craft 1
- Prepare paper, scissors and glue for the welcome activity
- Ensure all props and costume items are in place for the performance

CRAFT

As today is mostly about show preparations there is only one stand-alone craft idea. However, you may need time to finish making scenery or costumes.

Craft 1 - Create a hand tree. On large sheets of paper children dip a forearm in brown paint and print a trunk shape with their out-spread fingers as branches. After cleaning their arm they use green paint to make finger prints to represent leaves along the branches of the tree.



GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER

Hopefully by day 5 you have learnt the vast majority of the material for the show.

You will also have the *Megamix* to learn - this is largely repetition of previous tunes and lyrics, but be careful of transitions and lyrics that have changed.

Today is about refining and improving the performance and making sure that everyone is clear about what happens when.

Think particularly about which children need to be in what places for different parts of the story. Who collects props and moves scenery?



TIME TO REFLECT

Today's thoughts focus on the children's post-box questions and we allow children to really wonder on the story of Zacchaeus.

Before the session read through the questions and thoughts to ensure that you only present to the whole group of children what is appropriate to do so. Don't shy away from tough questions, but remove questions that could be irrelevant or silly.

It might be useful to re-cap the story or find a good YouTube video of the story to watch before you look at the questions together.

Read each question aloud to the group. Where possible encourage the children to suggest their own answers to the questions, or feedback their own reflections on each other's thoughts. Be prepared to offer your own answers - try to do so in a positive 'I believe' or 'in The Salvation Army we believe' and not a blanket 'we believe' as some children in your group may be exploring faith for the first time.

The questions will be a starting point, but the children may develop further questions and thoughts as the discussion takes place.

As you allow the children to unpack the story, remember there are no right or wrong answers and we allow children to let their thoughts develop with little or no interference. This session might be shorter than other days, but equally if the children can carry this further, then allow them to.

You might choose to ask some wondering questions:

I wonder which part of the story you liked best?

I wonder who in the story you identify with - Jesus, Zacchaeus or the villagers?

I wonder which part of the story feels like it's about you?

Children may find it easier to talk in small groups than as a whole group - if so give groups the chance to feedback to the whole group after their discussions.

After the children have had time to think and discuss things together offer them the chance to talk to an adult 1-1 or spend some quiet time with God. Play some reflective music whilst you sit in contemplation.

Father God, thank you for being part of our time today. Help us to look to you when we are not sure and guide us to make good choices in our lives. Amen