



FEEDING 5,000

**PRESCHOOL
WORKSHOP**



OVERVIEW



NOTE TO TEACHERS

One of the most important aspects of Heifer's involvement in a community is Passing on the Gift®. It is one of our 12 Cornerstones for Just and Sustainable Development. Each person who receives an animal and training is required to pass on their animal's offspring to another person in the community. People who once thought that they might not have enough food or money for their children are now able to support their own family and to share this blessing with others.

In the late 1930s, Heifer's founder Dan West was working in Spain to help families that had lost a lot during a war. Each day, he handed out cups of milk to the children. After seeing the same children day after day, he realized they needed a cow, so they could have milk at home every day. When he returned home to his farm in Indiana, he sent cows to Spain.

Passing on the Gift and Dan West's story are woven throughout these lessons in a way preschoolers can begin to learn about the complex issues of hunger and poverty.

There are four activity options tailored for preschoolers to choose from, which can be done in any order. Each activity will generally take about 15-20 minutes.



PLANNING

- Greeting
- Free play time: Consider adding lots of farm animal toys to your preschool rooms as a visual focus
- Signal to come to the table: Moo or make an animal sound
- Snack time: Animal crackers; fish crackers; cheese and crackers; milk; fresh vegetables (carrot sticks, celery); dried fruit mix (banana, mango, apple)
- Blessing: Dear God, we thank you for this food, bless it to our use and us to your service. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.
- Activity
- Closing prayer

LESSON 1 – ANIMAL COOKIES

NOAH'S ARK

Genesis 6:11-12, 7:1-5

Learn about Heifer's diversity of animals.

LESSON

Share the story of Noah's ark with the children. This can be directly from the Bible or from a storybook. Remember to emphasize that the important aspect of the story is the establishment of the covenant between God and Noah. God promised Noah that there would always be a relationship between God and humankind.

The story of Noah's ark is a story of hope and salvation. People were making poor choices when God decided to start anew. Today, people continue to make choices that put others at risk of hunger and poverty. Noah provided a powerful example for Heifer founder Dan West. He took action when he saw hungry children. Heifer provides people with the gift of animals and training, which gives them a chance at a better life. Animals provide nutritious food so each member of the family can be strong and healthy. Families sell animal products such as cheese, eggs and yarn to earn income for their families. Then, they can afford school for their children, better homes and medicines so their family can have healthier lives.

SUPPLIES

- Pre-made cookies
- Icing (royal icing like [this](#) or store bought)
- Sprinkles

NOTE:

Each child could make cookies for a bake sale to raise money to purchase an animal or to share cookies with members of the congregation, much like farmers who Pass on the Gift of an animal to another deserving farmer. (Funds from selling cookies can be included with the Fill the Ark or Living Gift Market fundraisers.)

ACTIVITY

Make sugar cookie or gingerbread cookie dough in advance, or buy pre-made dough. Then, have the students decorate the cookies during class time. Use the cookies to talk about how animals provide products—like milk, cheese or eggs—that offer nutrition for families, as well as income.

CLOSING PRAYER

Wonderful God, you made all creation so amazing. We give you thanks for the opportunity to help people around the world live in your creation in a life-giving way. Bless our time together as we learn and bless the families who receive animals and trainings. May they feel our love. Amen.

LESSON 2 – BALLOON GAME

THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

Matthew 22:35-40, Mark 12:28-34 and Luke 10:25-28

Learn about loving your neighbor.

LESSON

The Great Commandment is found in three of the Gospels. Read any of the Scriptures referenced. The Great Commandment conveys Jesus' message to the world to "love the Lord with all your heart, all your soul and with all your mind" and to "love your neighbor as yourself." It restates the ancient law from Deuteronomy known as the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-6). In Jesus' time, every Jew would have known these verses. Even today, this ancient text can be found in the mezuzahs (a piece of parchment with Hebrew verses from the Torah) that are in many Jewish homes. The challenge then and now is to live out the Scriptures, not to just know them.

The Scriptures are to be in your heart at all times. If you act out of love, then you see each person as a child of God, worthy of love. This is doing the will of God. Heifer works toward this principle: love and respect all people.

Heifer provides the gift of animals and training to help farmers around the world feed their families and earn income to send their children to school. Animals are chosen for farmers in different countries based on their needs, the community and the environment.

Passing on the Gift is a vital aspect of Heifer's work in that each farmer commits to pass-on an animal to another farmer in need. In this way, the farmers demonstrate their love for their neighbors.

SUPPLIES

- 8-9" balloons, blown up (approx. 50-100)
- Large containers to hold the balloons for each group

ACTIVITY

The balloon activity explores how Heifer helps change the lives of farmers around the world. The object of this activity is to show love to others by working together to transport balloons from one end of the room to the other.

Students will use different methods to move the balloons from one end of the room to the other. Similarly, Heifer uses different methods, techniques and animals to help people reach the same goal. This is because no two communities are the same, like no two people are the same. Each has different strengths and needs, yet the goal is always the same: to help families take care of themselves and then pass it on.

- Write the names of different animals that Heifer provides on the balloons. Other balloons can include the students' names.
- Divide the class into two groups and gather at one end of the room.

- At the opposite end of the room, place a box or bag to contain the balloons.
- While dividing the balloons equally between the groups, share information about the animals.
- Ask the groups to form two lines, as they will need to transport the balloons in pairs. If you have a small group, you can challenge them to move all the balloons in five minutes using the list below of transportation methods. If they accomplish this, see if they can beat their previous time.
- Each pair must transport the balloon to the container on the other side of the room using a specific transportation method. Once the pair has deposited the balloon in the bag or box provided across the room, the pair will run back and tag the second pair, who will then pick up a balloon and transport it across the room in its given method.

TRANSPORTATION METHODS

Pair One: Carry the balloon between their right elbows

Pair Two: Carry the balloon between their left pointer fingers

Pair Three: Carry the balloon between their left knees

Pair Four: Carry the balloon between their hips

Pair Five: Carry the balloon between their forearms

Make up additional transportation methods as needed. Have fun!

When all the balloons are at the opposite end of the room in their containers, ask the students to say "Love your neighbor as yourself!"

CLOSING PRAYER

Dear Lord, thank you for creating each of us in a unique way. Help us embrace our differences so we can all work together. May we show love and kindness to every person we meet. Amen.

LESSON 3 – FISH PRINT

FEEDING OF THE 5,000

John 6:1-14

Learn how fish are part of Heifer's wide range of animals.

LESSON

Share the story from the Bible, or a storybook, about Jesus feeding the 5,000 with only two fish and five loaves of bread.

There is an old saying that if you give a person a fish, they will be hungry again tomorrow. If you teach the person to fish, the person can feed themselves for life.

Dan West, who started Heifer, traveled to Spain to help serve milk to refugees of the Spanish Civil War. He realized that it wasn't enough to simply provide children with a cup of milk each day. They needed the means to supply their own milk. He said, "Not a cup, but a cow." When he returned to his farm in Indiana, he decided to send cows back to Spain. By providing families with a cow, everyone in the family can have milk to drink and extra income from selling milk. The family then passes on their cow's first offspring—or baby—to another family in need.

SUPPLIES

- Newspaper
- Smocks or old T-shirts
- Paint brushes
- Tempera paints in several colors
- Bowls of water to rinse brushes
- Several foam fish shapes
- Paper for each student or fabric banner (muslin to hang across room)

ACTIVITY

Have the children create fish prints to remind them of the story about how Jesus took two fish and five loaves of bread to feed thousands of people.

CLOSING PRAYER

God, we ask that you will open our hearts and show us how we can help others. We want to serve you by sharing our gifts with others here and around the world. Amen.

LESSON 4 – GOOD DIRT

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-35

Learn how animals benefit the environment.

LESSON

Before a family receives their animal from Heifer, the parents have to go to school. They learn how to become farmers, care for their animals and keep them healthy. They also learn how to care for the Earth so it can continue to provide for their needs and for future generations.

One animal that really helps make compost rich and good for the soil is the earthworm. The worms eat anything organic, which means living. Earthworms help break down larger pieces of plant material, such as food scraps, and turn it into a nutrient-rich addition to dirt. Earthworms also help break up hard soil that creates space for water to flow. In a healthy acre of soil, there can be 500,000 worms. That's a lot of help on the farm!

SUPPLIES

Ingredients to make Good Dirt, featured in the recipe [here](#)

- Animal crackers
- Small bowls (one per three children)

NOTE:

Decide in advance if you will have each child make one extra cup to pass on or if you will make lots and invite the congregation to share and make a donation to your class to purchase an animal.

ACTIVITY

Ask the students to gather around the mixing bowls, two to three children per bowl if possible, and then share the following information as you assemble the plastic cups.

- Have students measure the appropriate amount of milk and pour it carefully into their bowl.
Milk is good for you, but you need more than just milk to live. We are all responsible for helping the Earth be a better, healthier place so it can grow more food and support life.
- Sprinkle the chocolate pudding mix on top of the milk. As you stir the pudding mix into the milk, think about the fact that Heifer helps people make good dirt.
Hard dirt is not good for growing plants for animals or people. The ground has to be worked in a way that it is broken up so that plants can send their roots deep into the soil to get food and water.

- Show students the whole cookie and explain how it is hard like dry soil that is not useful for farmers.

The whole cookie is like dirt in some places, hard and solid. Farmers learn how to break up the dirt and add compost, natural things, so it will grow better plants. Earthworms are great helpers in making the ground ready for plants.

- Once the pudding is mixed, set it aside and prepare to crush the cookies. Break up the cookies to make good “dirt.”

Then, families pass on the gifts of animals and training to other families in their community who also need help.

- Give each participant at least two cups. We are going to make two cups, one to eat ourselves and one to share.
 - » Scoop some pudding into each cup
 - » Place the cookie crumbs on top of the pudding
 - » Place gummy worms so they are coming out of the cup
 - » Add animal crackers to the top of the cup to represent the animals Heifer provides
 - » Encourage the students to share—pass on—one cup with a friend

CLOSING PRAYER

Wonderful God, you made all creation so amazing. Thank you for making all the animals and giving them each unique jobs to do. Amen.