

Lesson Plan: The Good News Scroll

Subject: Early Christian Apologetics

Grade Level: Elementary (Ages 6-10)

Time: 20 Minutes

Materials Needed

- One long strip of paper per student (e.g., cut a standard 8.5x11" sheet in half lengthwise and tape the two pieces end-to-end to make a long strip, or use cash register paper)
 - Crayons, colored pencils, or markers
 - Optional: Two craft sticks, small dowels, or pencils to be the scroll handles
 - Optional: Tape or glue to attach the paper to the handles
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Lesson Structure

1. Learning Objectives (What we'll learn)

- Students will be able to explain, in their own words, that "apologetics" means sharing why you believe something.
- Students will identify storytelling as a primary way early Christians shared their faith.
- Students will create their own "Good News Scroll" to practice the concept of sharing a positive message visually.

2. The Hook: The World's Best Cookie! (3 minutes)

- **Teacher:** "Imagine you just baked the world's most delicious chocolate chip cookie. It's warm and gooey and perfect. What's the first thing you would want to do?" (*Listen for answers like "Eat it!" and then guide them toward "Share it with someone!"*)
- **Teacher:** "Exactly! When you have really good news—like a secret cookie recipe or an amazing story—you want to share it with people you care about. You might even tell them **why** it's the best cookie ever."
- **Teacher:** "The very first Christians felt the same way. They believed the story of Jesus was the best news in the whole world, and they couldn't wait to share it. There's a big word for explaining **why** you believe in good news: **apologetics**. Can you say that with me? A-pol-o-get-ics. It just means giving a good reason for the hope you have."

3. Instructional Activity: How Did They Share? (5 minutes)

- **Teacher:** "Today, if we want to share news, we can text, call, or post a video. But back then, they didn't have any of that! How do you think they shared their stories?" (*Guide students to answers like talking, letters, drawing*).
 - **Teacher:** "That's right! They told stories and wrote letters. Often, they wrote on **scrolls**, which were long pieces of paper rolled up. They would unroll the scroll to tell the story. Their apology, or their reason for believing, was the story of Jesus itself—how he loved people, healed them, and taught them to be kind."
 - **Teacher:** "Another part of their 'apology' wasn't words at all. It was how they acted. They were known for being brave, helping the poor, and being kind even when it was hard. Their
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actions made people ask, 'Why are you so hopeful and kind?' And that gave them a chance to share their story."

4. Creative Application: Make a "Good News Scroll" (10 minutes)

- **Teacher:** "Now it's your turn to be like an early Christian and create a 'Good News Scroll.' Your job is to share some good news by drawing it. You are going to make a story with pictures that shows something good."
- **Instructions for the Student:**
 1. Take your long strip of paper.
 2. Think of some 'good news.' It can be your favorite story about Jesus (like feeding the 5,000 or the Good Samaritan), or it can be a true story about a time someone was kind to you, or a time you were brave or helpful.
 3. Draw that story in 2 or 3 simple pictures, like a comic strip, on your paper. Don't worry about making it perfect! Just tell the story.
- *(As the student works, the teacher can ask questions to reinforce the concept):*
 - "Tell me about the story you chose. Why is that 'good news' to you?"
 - "Who would you want to share this scroll with?"
- **Finishing the Scroll:** Once the drawing is done, help the student tape each end of the paper to a craft stick or pencil and roll it up into a scroll.

5. Lesson Closure & Assessment (2 minutes)

- **Teacher:** "Okay, time to share our good news! Unroll your scroll and tell me the story you drew."
- *(The student presents their scroll and explains the pictures. This is the assessment—their ability to articulate a positive story serves as their 'apology'.)*
- **Teacher:** "That's fantastic! You just did exactly what the first Christians did. You used a scroll to share a story about something good and hopeful. You gave a reason for the good news. And that is what apologetics is all about: sharing the good news you believe in, with your words, your art, and your actions."

Differentiation & Inclusivity

- **For Extra Support:** The teacher can draw simple outlines for the student to color in, or help write one or two words to label the pictures (e.g., "HELP" or "SMILE"). The focus should be on the student's verbal explanation of the story.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** An older or more advanced student can be challenged to add a short sentence to each picture on their scroll. They could also be asked, "If someone saw your scroll and asked you a question about it, what would you say?"