

Lesson Plan: Peace, Be Still

A 30-minute Bible activity and craft exploring how we can find peace in our own "storms" through the story of Jesus calming the storm.

Materials Needed

- Bible (or a printout of Mark 4:35-41)
 - A clear plastic bottle with a secure lid (a water or soda bottle works well)
 - Water
 - Baby oil or vegetable oil
 - Blue food coloring
 - Glitter (optional, silver or blue works well for "rain")
 - A very small, lightweight object to be the "boat" (e.g., a small wood chip, a tiny piece of foam, a Lego brick)
 - One sheet of white paper (cardstock is ideal, but regular paper is fine)
 - A ruler
 - A pencil
 - Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
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Lesson Activities & Instructions

Part 1: The Storm in a Bottle (10 minutes)

Activity Goal: To create a tangible, sensory model of the storm and the calm.

1. **Read the Story:** Start by reading the story of Jesus calming the storm together from **Mark 4:35-41**. Read it with expression, emphasizing the disciples' fear and the power in Jesus's voice.
 2. **Build the Sea:** Hand the empty bottle to Ann. Instruct her to fill it about halfway with water. Add a few drops of blue food coloring and gently swirl it.
 3. **Add the Boat:** Have Ann drop the small "boat" object into the water. If you're using glitter, add a pinch now to represent the chaotic wind and rain.
 4. **Create the Storm:** Now, carefully pour oil into the bottle until it's almost full, leaving about an inch of air at the top. Screw the lid on as tightly as you can.
 5. **Engage with the Story:** Say, "*When the storm hit, the Bible says the waves were crashing over the boat! Shake the bottle and let's see our storm.*" Let Ann shake it vigorously. Watch the "boat" get tossed around in the swirling, glittery waves.
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6. **"Peace, Be Still":** After a moment, say, *"Then Jesus stood up and said, 'Peace! Be still!' Now, let's set our bottle down and see what happens."* Place the bottle on the table and watch as the oil and water separate, the glitter slowly settles, and the "boat" rests on the calm line between them. This visually demonstrates the story's climax.

Part 2: "Before & After" Storm Art (15 minutes)

Craft Goal: To creatively express the transformation from fear to peace.

1. **Connect to Our Lives:** While the bottle settles, ask Ann: *"A storm on the sea is scary, but sometimes we have 'storms' in our hearts, like when we feel worried about a test, sad about a friend, or scared of the dark. What does a 'storm' in your life feel like?"*
2. **Divide the Page:** Give Ann the sheet of paper. Have her use a pencil and ruler to draw a large, wavy line that divides the paper in half, either diagonally or horizontally.
3. **Draw the Storm (Side 1):** On one side of the wavy line, ask her to draw the scene **during** the storm. Encourage her to use dark colors (grays, dark blues, black). She can draw huge waves, lightning, rain, and a little boat being tossed around. Maybe she can draw the faces of the disciples looking worried.
4. **Draw the Calm (Side 2):** On the other side of the line, she will draw the scene **after** Jesus spoke. She should draw the same boat, but now the water is smooth and glassy. She can use bright, peaceful colors—a yellow sun or a starry night sky, light blues, and peaceful expressions on the disciples' faces.
5. **Creative Freedom:** Encourage her to add details. Where is Jesus in her picture? What does "peace" look like versus what "fear" looks like? This is her artistic interpretation.

Part 3: Reflection & Wrap-Up (5 minutes)

Goal: To solidify the lesson's personal application.

1. **Share the Art:** Ask Ann to explain her drawing to you. What is happening on each side? What colors did she choose and why?
2. **Closing Thought:** Hold up the settled storm bottle. Say, *"This story is a wonderful reminder that no matter how big or scary our personal 'storms' feel, we can always talk to Jesus and ask Him to bring His peace into our hearts, just like He did on the sea."*
3. **Final Question:** Ask, *"What is one thing you can remember from this story the next time you feel worried or afraid?"*