

Journey to El Salvador ~ Lesson Plans for Preschool & Kindergarten

Activity: Unpacking the Suitcase

Supplies Needed:

Small suitcase with the following items loaded inside:

- Pretend Airplane Ticket
- Sunscreen
- A kids' book in Spanish (Green Eggs and Ham is a good choice)
- A simple map of El Salvador
- Beach Towel (use a Salvadoran one if you have one)
- A Bible (use a Spanish or bilingual Bible if you have one)
- A box of crayons

Each of these items represents something that you will be describing in more detail about a trip to El Salvador. You can either use a power point with pictures or have additional large, laminated photos in the suitcase. (Number your pictures to keep track of the order that you want to use them in, or stack them in order under the suitcase.) Begin with the general country kinds of things and end with the more specific sister church kinds of things. If you have photos from previous visits to El Salvador use those and personalize your lesson with things that are meaningful in our sister church relationship.

Suggested Script for Unpacking the Suitcase

We are going to pretend to go on a trip to visit our friends in El Salvador. So, let's see if we have everything we need in our suitcase. *Unzip the suitcase just enough so you can reach in and pull out items one by one as you talk about them.*

Pull out the airline ticket.

What is this? We need to take an airplane to travel to El Salvador because it is very far away. *(Show the airport picture.)* We need to leave Milwaukee really early in the morning, and we get to El Salvador after lunch.

Pull out the sun screen.

What is this? Why do you think we would need this if we go to El Salvador. *(It is sunny and hot.)*

Pull out the sunny photo of El Salvador. In El Salvador there is never any snow. During the dry season it never rains. During the rainy season, it rains at night but it is still sunny during the day. El Salvador sometimes has bad storms like hurricanes. *Pull out the rainy photo.* When it rains, the rain on the roof is so loud that you can't hear anything else.

Pull out the Spanish book. Start to read a little bit (just sound it out if you don't know any Spanish and it is OK if you are struggling).

What is this? Can anybody read this? *(If so, let them read a sentence.)* Unless we can read Spanish, we cannot read this book. In El Salvador, most of the people speak Spanish. Do you know any words in Spanish? *(Give the kids a moment to share their words. If anyone on your teaching team can teach a simple song in Spanish, this would be a good time for that. Two suggested songs are at the end of this lesson plan.)*

Pull out the map. Show that El Salvador has mountains.

El Salvador has lots of mountains. Most of El Salvador's big mountains are volcanoes. *(Pull out the picture of volcanoes.)* Sometimes the volcanoes let out some steam from the earth. Sometimes there are earthquakes. *(The kids might want to talk about that a little. In 2001 there were 2 strong earthquakes in El Salvador which destroyed lots of houses. Reassure them that earthquakes can be scary, but that they are a natural part of the earth works. In El Salvador, we have helped people to have strong houses that won't fall down in an earthquake.)*

Show that El Salvador is next to the ocean. El Salvador is next to the ocean. What kinds of things do you think the people do who live near the ocean? *(fishing, swimming, surfing, people eat lots of things that come from the ocean)*

Pull out the beach towel. (If you used an action song and the kids need to re-settle, you could use a beach blanket for them all to sit on, or small towels for each child to have his or her own special beach spot.) So, we need a beach towel if we go to El Salvador, because maybe we will go to the beach. *(Pull out the pictures of the beach and the boats. Ask the kids what they see.)*

Pull out the Bible. What's this? Why do we need our Bibles in El Salvador? (Go to church and Sunday School)

We will go to church and to Sunday School at our Sister Church. Does anyone know the name of our sister church? *(Los Héroes de la Fe – Heroes of the Faith)* We say "sister church" because our churches are like sisters or like family. Part of our family lives in the United States, and part of our family lives in El Salvador. *(Show the pictures of our sister church, Sunday School children, pastor – describe as much as you can about the pictures – name the pastor (Santiago) and the scholarship students (Franklin and Keily)).*

Pull out the box of crayons. What's this? Every week in Sunday School, the children in our sister church color a picture to take home to help them remember their Bible lesson. We are going to do that too. (Each student will receive a coloring book to take home. A letter to the parents is on the cover. Students can start coloring at Sunday School and then take the book home to finish.)

Pull out the craft example.

Activity: Tissue Paper Cross

Supplies needed:

Tag board or poster board crosses, cut out
Small squares of tissue paper (1 – 2” squares) – lots of bright colors
Glue set out on plastic lids
Old pencils (optional) or cotton swabs or paint brushes
A piñata and/or papel picado (optional)

Process:

Each student will glue tissue paper scrunchies onto his or her cross. Students can use the pencils as the form around which to scrunch the tissue paper and then dip it into the glue before placing it onto the cross. Or, the students can use the swabs or paint brushes to cover a little part of the cross with glue and then use their finger as the scrunchie mold and stick the scrunchies onto the glue area.

Explanation:

Children in El Salvador make many things from tissue paper. *(if you have a piñata or papel picado to show, share it and ask the kids if they know what it is – papel picado are the snowflake-like cut-outs that Salvadorans put onto string and hang up in their churches and towns for celebrations.)*

We are going to make tissue paper crosses today to help us remember to pray for our sister church *(Los Héroes de la Fe, Pastor Santiago, Franklin, Keily)*