

Early Years

- Use small world props to tell the story. Or read a book of the Easter Story. Or tell the story and give the children sad/happy faces to hold up at the appropriate moments.
- Explore parts of the story - crucifixion and resurrection. Then explore sad/happy emotions.
- Celebrate!

Crucifixion

- Can they make a cross? Using their body, with a friend, what can they find to make a cross? What size of cross can they make? Can they draw a cross? Sand? Chalk? Etc.
- Can they go on a 'cross hunt'? How many crosses can they find?
- Playdoh mat

Resurrection

- Finding stones - order them little to big. I wonder how big the stone had to be to cover the entrance of the cave?
- Finding 'Caves' -
- Rolling stones/balls - what shape is best for rolling? Is it easier to roll heavy ones or light ones? Is it easier to roll big ones or small ones? The stone covering the cave was really big and heavy - do you think it would have been easy to move?
- Playdoh mats

Sad/happy

- Draw or create a sad face.
 - What was sad in the story?
 - What makes you sad?
- Can you turn your sad face into a happy face.
 - What was happy in the story?
 - What makes you happy?
- Happy/sad quiz - read out a list of things - do they make you happy or sad? Hold up a sad face or a happy face. This could help lead into a discussion on death.

Celebrate!

- Go on an egg hunt. Decorate and roll eggs. Go for a 'new life walk'. What can you find that is coming alive? Create an Easter garden.

Next stage

- Active quiz on the story
- Read it for themselves in a Bible or Easter story book
- Sequence pictures from the story. Add on emotions.

Next stage: discover more detail

Add to the story. Add to the emotions explored.

- Tell the story
 - Palm Sunday (Beginners Bible P427-432) Get the kids to act it out as you tell it. Stop and ask how people were feeling in this story. (happy, joyful, excited etc)
 - Garden of Gethsemane, Trial, Crucifixion and Death (Beginners Bible P446-452) Stop and ask how people were feeling in this story.
 - Resurrection (Beginners Bible P453-458) Stop and ask how people were feeling in this story.
- Create/draw a scene from the story. (discuss before hand what scene they are going to create. They could be given the choice or they could all be allocated one so you have a complete set.) On a whiteboard, write down:
 - what happened to Jesus at that part of the story?
 - Who did people think Jesus was? What did they think about him?
- Easter egg hunt to find questions to answer. (questions inside plastic eggs)
- Active game considering emotions in the story: have a set of pictures representing various parts of the story. They have to listen to the statements and go to the picture they think is the right one. e.g. where did someone feel sad? Each time ask - who felt like that? Why were they feeling like that?

Also you could

- Read it for ourselves in the Beginners Bible
- Sequence the story, adding in emotions.
- Pretend to be one of the characters. Write about what you can see and hear. How are you feeling? What do you think about Jesus? What do you think might happen next? What are you worried about or excited about?

I would use ideas from the Early Years section to continue exploring the story. Especially exploring your emotions (they could have a wider selection of emotions to choose from

in a quiz, not just sad/happy, again could lead on to discussions about death and grief.) and having an Easter celebration.

Next stage: deeper still

Now we're assuming a base line knowledge and are going to encourage the children to discover the details in the story.

- Start with a quiz. To recap and remind them of the story. (Or discover a lack of knowledge!)
- Hear/read/watch the story. Maybe tell it relating it to objects (use as visual aids) that appear in the story.
- We're going to focus on each part of the Easter Story in turn. At each part the children could:
 - read the story for themselves in the Bible.
 - Underline any words they don't understand.
 - Write down who are the characters in this part of the story.
 - For each character answer the questions "Who did they think Jesus was?" "How were they feeling?"
 - Share something new they've learned.
 - What do they think this part of the story tells them about Jesus?
 - Do a small activity.
 - Create the scene (in groups - playdoh, freeze frame, act it out, natural art etc)
- The parts we'll look at are:
 - Palm Sunday
 - Garden Gethsemane and arrest
 - Trials
 - Crucifixion and Death
 - Resurrection
- This could either be done as a carousel lesson or you could look at the different parts of the stories altogether over a couple of lessons. If you did it the second way there could be a variety of more active activities to go along side each part of the story.
- Egg hunt. Put questions about the story in plastic eggs for them to find and answer.
- Don't forget to have an Easter celebration! Make sure they can explain all the

traditions.

Gospel summary: (Gospel = Good news)

Use the attached notes to explain to the children why Christians think the Easter story is good news. How Jesus' death was part of God's plan to allow people to be his friends and live forever in heaven. Link this to why Good Friday is named that.