Bonus Activities

For all ages:

Read Books: Choose a few books for your class or take your class to the church library to pick out books to read. Help children read as needed. Talk about how reading helps us learn new things and experience new worlds.

For elementary students:

Learn New Names: Choose a different language and write the names of several items in your classroom in English and in a language of your choice. Then, call out an item using the non-English language word and encourage children to find the object that matches the word.

For all ages:

Play with Blocks: Gather blocks (preschool) or Legos (elementary) and encourage children to work together to build something. Once they have finished, talk about how the bottom blocks are the foundation. The things we learn in our first years at school are the foundation for us to be able to learn harder things as we grow older.

Pathlight

www.cbf.net/pathlight

CBF's *Pathlight* curriculum helps children explore the Good News of Jesus through stories, scripture and activities.

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Pathlight

Your word is a lamp that gives light wherever I walk. **Psalm 119:105 (CEV)**

Theme Overview

Kirk and Suzie are CBF field personnel serving ethnic minority people throughout Southeast Asia. For over 30 years, they have been working on helping God transform lives through their work in literacy, Bible translation, and advocacy. This session focuses on the theme of planting roots.

Bible Verse

Matthew 13:31-32

Jesus told them another story: The kingdom of heaven is like what happens when a farmer plants a mustard seed in a field. Although it is the smallest of all seeds, it grows larger than any garden plant and becomes a tree. Birds even come and nest on its branches. (CEV)

Session Outline

Prepare

- Make copies of the Student Handout.
- Review the Story and Bible Verse.

Welcome

- Greet students as they arrive.
- **Ask:** What are your favorite subjects at school? Who is your favorite teacher? Why are they your favorite?

Engage

- Distribute the Student Handout.
- Read and discuss the Bible Verse.
- Work on the Handout Activity.
- Transition to Story Time.

Share

- Tell the story, "Learning in My Language."
- Share the photo and caption.
- Discuss the Story and pray.

Conclude

- Lead students in Bonus Activities as time permits.

Learning in My Language

"Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today. My name is Kirk, and I work with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship as field personnel serving ethnic minority people in Southeast Asia. My wife, Suzie, and I have been doing this for more than 30 years. I am a linguist, Bible translator and literacy expert. Around the world, children are struggling to read. They are struggling to learn. And for many, they speak a language at home that is different from what they are learning in school. When we first moved to Southeast Asia, we didn't speak Thai, Chinese, Japanese or any of the many dialects of the people with whom we work. And so the first thing we did was work to learn a new language. So there I was, sitting in my bamboo house with a grass roof, on the other side of the world, trying to learn a new language. And it was difficult! Now, 30 years later, we have worked to translate the New Testament into the Bisu language and are currently working on other translations and adaptations. Why are we spending our time doing this when English is spoken in many places? Because we have learned that children do better when they learn in their own language. In their first few years of school, non-English speakers learn reading, science, math and even English better when they are learning in the language that their families speak. I have learned this in our time with the Bisu, and I know that this change can help children around the world learn."

Discussion and Prayer ✱

- **Ask:** Why did Kirk work so hard to learn a new language?
- **Ask:** Imagine if your teacher started teaching you in a different language, one that you don't speak. How would you feel?
- **Ask:** Have you ever learned a new language? Was it easy or hard to learn? If you haven't, think about what it might be like to need to learn a new language. Do you think it would be hard to learn?
- **Say:** Kirk and Suzie help change the lives of the people around them. One way they do this is by helping them learn about God in their own language. They also advocate for children to be able to learn in their own language.
- **Pray:** Thank you, God, for Kirk and Suzie. Please help them as they work hard to translate the Bible for others. Please help leaders of the world listen to them as they advocate for children around the world. Amen.

Kirk and Suzie

Kirk and Suzie are CBF field personnel who have served ethnic minority people throughout Southeast Asia for more than 30 years.

STUDENT HANDOUT
SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

Pathlight

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Learn About

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Bible Verse

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Translation

Use a mirror to see if you can read our Bible verse!

Matthew 13:31-32

Jesus told them another story: The kingdom of heaven is like what happens when a farmer plants a mustard seed in a field. Although it is the smallest of all seeds, it grows larger than any garden plant and becomes a tree. Birds even come and nest on its branches. (CEV)

Once you have discovered the verse, create your own code to share the verse with others. You can scramble the letters of each word, swap out some letters to create a code or make up a language for it. Just be sure you write down your answer key for the language!