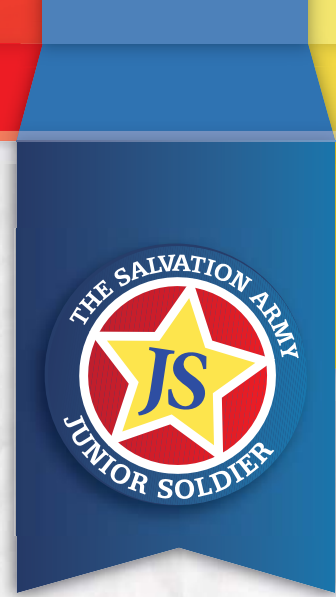


Junior Soldiers

Unit 4 : Lesson 2



Mother's Day

PURPOSE : For children to explore how they might honour mums or other significant women who are a positive influence in their lives.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. 'Honour your father and mother' – which is the first commandment with a promise – 'that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.'

Ephesians 6:1-3

Consider & Prepare

Read:

Exodus 20:12

Proverbs 31:10-31

During this lesson, it is important to remember that not all children have a mum/dad at home that they have an 'ideal' relationship with, and some children may not even know their mum and/or dad. There are hopefully, however, people in the lives of the children that present a positive role model/influence.

God is the best example of a positive parent in our lives. God has instructed us as followers of Jesus to honour and love our parents regardless of their shortcomings.

If there are children in the group with a parent(s) who are not a great role model for them, maybe they can be encouraged to consider God as an example of someone who loves and cares for us and wants the best for us. It may be easier for them to identify this sort of persona with a loving grandparent, uncle or aunt, their Big Bud (if they have one) or a family friend.

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In' –

- Dress-up clothes for relay

For 'The Main Thing' –

- At least 13 table tennis balls
- A shallow tub/container for each team (at least 3)
- Optional music tracks: 'Crocodile Rock' by Elton John; 'All I want is you' by U2

For 'Tying In' –

- A5 pieces of cardboard for making cards
- Craft bits and pieces for decorating cards, e.g. stickers, patterned paper, jewels, ribbon etc.
- Arrange for some women (that the children have suggested previously) to come and join you for celebration morning/afternoon tea at a specific time. Also arrange for the mums of the Junior Soldiers to come and join you at this time.
- Arrange morning/afternoon tea

For 'Home & Beyond' –

- Print off the Home and Beyond cards for each child



Connecting In

Dress-up relay...

Have two or three sets of ladies apparel and items (e.g. dress, apron, slippers, wigs, hand bags, jacket, mobile phone, *Women's Weekly* etc.) at hand. The more items the harder the task. Make even-numbered teams of children and piles of the items that they will need to dress up in.

One at a time, the children will run to the opposite end of the room, to where the dress-up items are. They need to place all the dress-up items on, run back to their team and then take the items off. The next person puts the items on, runs to the opposite end of the room and then takes them off, return to the team and tag the next person to start the next set. The game concludes when all members of each team have had a chance to put on and take off the costume.

- How did you feel trying to get all the items on and off quickly?
- Is there an easier way to do it; some sort of system?
- What would you subtract (or add) to the items?
- Have you ever seen your mum trying to juggle so many things at once?



Link: (Depending on when Mother's Day is in relation to this lesson it would be good to make note that you have just celebrated this day or you will be celebrating it in the near future.) 'Today we are celebrating mums and the role that they may play in our lives. Mums can be very busy people, trying to juggle multiple tasks all at once, just like how you needed to juggle all the items that you had to put on and off during the game.'

'There are often other people in our lives who also love us, care for us, encourage us and help us to live well. We also want to celebrate the positive influence that they can have on how we grow and learn. Jesus wants us to honour our mums and others, so let's have a look at how we might do that today.'

The Main Thing

Croc nest game (rob the nest)...

You might like to have 'Crocodile Rock' by Elton John playing in the background for this activity.

For this activity you will need at least 13 table tennis balls (depending on the size of your group you may need more), a shallow tub for each team and you will need to divide your group into at least three teams of two players or more. Place the teams around the room at regular intervals.

In the middle of the room place some table tennis balls (*an uneven number, at least 13 would be good for this activity*). Each team is a crocodile egg mound and you are all crocs. One croc (person) at a time runs from their nest mound to the 'eggs' in the middle, takes it back to the safety of the nest, and tags the next croc to come and get an 'egg'. The first team with 5 'eggs' wins (*which means you must also steal 'eggs' from other mounds*). Place one person at each mound as the 'Mother' who protects the eggs. The first team to sit down with five 'eggs' wins the game.

You can also put a time limit on this game so it doesn't go on forever and the winning team is the one who has the most eggs when you call stop.

Mama Croc ...

Dress up as a 'wildlife warrior' in the fashion of David Attenborough or Steve Irwin and pretend you are doing a classroom presentation on crocodiles. It would be good to print out some photos A3 size and put them on cardboard to show 'the class' or even put them in a PowerPoint show. You will find some examples of pictures you might like to use attached to the end of the lesson.

Crocodiles are one of the most attentive and caring reptiles in the animal kingdom. You wouldn't think so though - big, scary teeth; aggressive and territorial temperaments; very dangerous animals indeed.

Did you know that most reptiles lay eggs and then leave? Turtles make holes for their eggs and then leave on vacation. Tiny turtles have to dig their way out of the sand and make it to the shoreline before the seagulls come and pick them off one by one. Most mother snakes leave their eggs immediately and go back to laying in wait to scare bush-walkers. Even most lizards lay their eggs and then head off to find some gourmet bug or spider and don't return.

But crocs are different. The mother croc uses her mouth and feet to build a nice safe nest for her eggs. She builds a mound out of mud, sticks, leaves and stuff and then lays her eggs gently in the middle (crocs can lay about 50 eggs in one nest). She then carefully covers the hole and waits nearby. She protects the mound from any intruders or poachers ferociously. And when the baby crocs are born she helps to dig them out of the nest and takes them to the water for their first meal of tadpoles, fishorbugs.

God is like this—he faithfully watches us and loves us 'from the cradle to the grave'.

Scripture – Psalm 139:13–16 '...before you were born I knew you'

Scripture – Psalm 91:4 – 'He [God] will cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you will find refuge; His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.'

'He will cover you with his feathers.

He will shelter you with his wings.

His faithful promises are your armor and protection.' (NLT)

None of us have perfect parents. God has given us another type of family that shows love and protection to us - the church. Choose to read Matthew 12:48–50 or Luke 8:19–21 and ask:

- Who does Jesus say are his mother and brothers (and, in some translations, sisters)?
- What do we have to do to be part of Jesus' family?

We have become the adopted family of God. God loves us each very, very much.

Read 1 John 3:1a and 1 John 4:7–8 and ask:

- Who are God's children?
- How do we show we are God's children?
- What role does God take in making us his children?

The 'Army Mother', Catherine Booth, was a mother to the motherless.

The Salvation Army was started by William and Catherine Booth and they had nine children of their own to raise, but Catherine became known as the 'Army Mother' because of her work especially with women and girls who needed



support and attention and care. She helped so many of them to start new lives and have new hope, that she became the unofficial 'mother' to them. It's a lovely title because it shows how much she cared for people and that she treated them with the same love and understanding with which she raised her own children.

- Last time we were together we asked you to suggest some women in our church that have a positive influence on others or set a good example. Can you name some of these women?
- What is it that stands out to you about these woman?
- How can we honour these ladies and show them our appreciation? (Practical gift, act of service, hug and 'thanks', etc.)



Tying In

Encouragement cards ...

Using cardboard, get the children to write or draw to their mums (or another influential female role model in their life) all the things they admire and like about that woman. (It would probably be helpful to have a little brainstorm before the children start and write some key statements or questions on the board or large sheet of butches paper.) When the children have finished their cards it would be good, as a prayer time, to go around the group and ask the children to share at least one thing that they have celebrated about their mum/significant lady.

Celebrate ...

When you meet with your Junior Soldiers before this session, ask them who they think are women in the church who have a positive influence on others; who would they suggest are good role models? You can then invite them to come to certain part of the session so that the children can engage with them and celebrate together while sharing a snack. The children may have time to prepare something to eat together or you could arrange some people to bring some items to share and celebrate together. You may even want to open this up for the Junior Soldiers to bring their mum to share this time of celebration together.

Home & Beyond

Print off the Home & Beyond cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journal or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

ARK – Act of Random Kindness

- Show an act of random kindness to your mother, aunty, grandmother, neighbour, teacher, or other significant lady this week. (It would be good to talk this through before the children leave so they have some ideas as to what they might do.)

OR

- Interview your Big Bud or a member of your family/church and ask them who their female role models are and what they love most about them. If you have a video camera (or movie setting on your camera/phone) you might like to record this or you could write out what you learned in your journal/notebook.

Three interview questions for above:

- Who are your female role models?
- Why are they important?
- In what way would you like to be like them?

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