

Junior Soldiers

UNIT 14 : LESSION 7



Recognising God's voice

PURPOSE: For the children to understand that they can discern God's voice more easily by spending time with him.

The Lord is our God, and we are his people, the sheep he takes care of in his own pasture.

Listen to God's voice today!

Psalm 95:7

Consider & Prepare

Read:

John 10:1-5

John 10:27

Psalm 95:7

We live in a noisy world. There are lots of different voices telling children what to believe, what to value and which path to take. How can children recognise and tune into God's voice?

Time spent with Jesus is key.

In this lesson, we will explore Jesus' statement that he is the Good Shepherd (John 10:1-21) and we are his sheep. By spending time with their shepherd, sheep learn to recognise his voice. This helps them differentiate his voice from others who might lead them astray or cause them harm.

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- For Option 1: A selection of noises, some that are important to tune in to, others that are not. For example, ambulance siren (important), pop song (not important), smoke alarm (important), person burping (not important). You can find these on YouTube.
- For Option 2: Ten pieces of A4 paper (coloured would be nice, but not essential). A blindfold. Masking tape.

For 'The Main Thing'

- Bibles
- OPTIONAL: The video 'Do sheep only obey their master's voice?' At the time of publishing the URL is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e45dVgWgV64>
- Butchers paper and markers

For 'Tying In'

- Bible

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the Home & Beyond cards for each child.

Connecting in

Option 1

Important sounds

Say, "I am going to play some different sounds. If you think the sound is important to listen to, go to the left side of the room. If you think the noise is okay to ignore, go to the right side of the room."

Play different sounds. We have provided some examples.

- Ambulance siren
- Pop song
- Smoke alarm
- Person burping
- Kookaburra laughing
- Car honking
- Frog croaking
- Children laughing
- Thunder crash

Link: There is a lot of noise in our world. To stay safe and make good choices, we need to tune into some noises and ignore others.

In this lesson, we are going to look at how Christians can tune into the voice of God.

Option 2

Follow my voice

Add a loop of masking tape to each sheet of paper (this will prevent them slipping) and stick them to the floor to form a pathway.

Explain to the children that the paper represents lily pads.

Ask for a volunteer to walk across the lily pads, blindfolded.

Ask them to choose another child to direct them through the course, using only their voice.

The same children will do this activity twice.

The first time, instruct all other children to be noisy, calling out random instructions to make it hard for the child to hear the correct instructions. (If you only have a couple of children, you could play some music or traffic sounds).

The second time, instruct all other children to be silent.

Ask all the children to sit down and invite them to reflect:

- What did you notice about that activity?
- Ask the child who was moving across the course: How easy was it to hear your partner among all the other voices?

Link:

As Christians we want to hear God's voice. We want to hear what God has to say about who we are and how we should live. This can be hard when there are so many other voices and other noises. In this lesson, we are going to look at some ways that Christians can tune into the voice of God.

The Main Thing

Ask the children to look up John 10:1-5 and ask a volunteer to read it to the group.

In this verse, Jesus says he is the Good Shepherd, and we are his sheep. I wonder if you can think of some ways that we are like Jesus' sheep?

Did you know that sheep are very good at recognising their master?

Show the YouTube clip 'Do sheep only listen to their master's voice' OR say, "On YouTube, there is a popular clip where three visitors to a farm try to call some sheep over to them. Each gives it their best shot, mimicking the words and tone of voice the farmer usually uses. The sheep completely ignore them. They know it is not their master's voice. Finally, the farmer calls the sheep. Immediately, they start bleating and begin making their way towards him."

Ask the group:

- Why might it be important for sheep to know their master's voice? How does knowing his voice keep them safe?
- How do you think the sheep learnt their master's voice?
- Have you ever felt like God is speaking to you – maybe helping you with a decision, or encouraging you?

As Christians, we can get to know Jesus' voice better through practice. We learn to know God's voice by listening for it.

Take a large sheet of butcher's paper and brainstorm ways that we can listen for and tune into God's voice.

E.g.

- Listen to a Christian song
- Keep a prayer journal
- Talk with your Christian role models
- Ask God about a big decision and pay attention to how your tummy feels – uneasy or at peace?

Tying In

Busyness and noise can sometimes make it harder to tune into God's voice.

One thing Jesus did during his time on earth was to move to a quiet place on his own where he could pray.

Ask a volunteer to read Mark 1:35.

Ask the group:

- Have you ever spent some time praying on your own? What happened?
- Where/when/how could you set aside time for quiet, solo prayer this week?

Memory Verse

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me." John 10:27 (NLT)

Practice saying the verse together with the following actions:

- Listen – Put hand to ear
- Voice – Put hand to mouth
- Know – Put finger to temple
- Follow – Walk on the spot

Say it together several times, speeding up for an extra challenge the final time.

Prayer Time

Spend five minutes being still and silent, focusing on Jesus' presence with you. If you find yourself getting distracted, you might find it helpful to repeat his name in your mind: 'Jesus, Jesus, Jesus'.

Home & Beyond

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

Choose a time and place when you will set aside time to listen to Jesus this week and next. Next time you gather for Junior Soldiers, share how this experience was for you.

Memorise John 10:27.

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