

Primary assembly

Education Sunday 2010

FIRM FOUNDATIONS

PowerPoint and music as children enter

PowerPoint available to download. Suggested music:

- 'One Foundation' – Bob Marley
- 'You raise me up' – Westlife
- 'Foundation' – Spandau Ballet

You will need:

- Sandpit or sand tray
- Wet sand – for making a sandcastle
- Bucket and spade
- Watering can full of water
- Large bottle of water

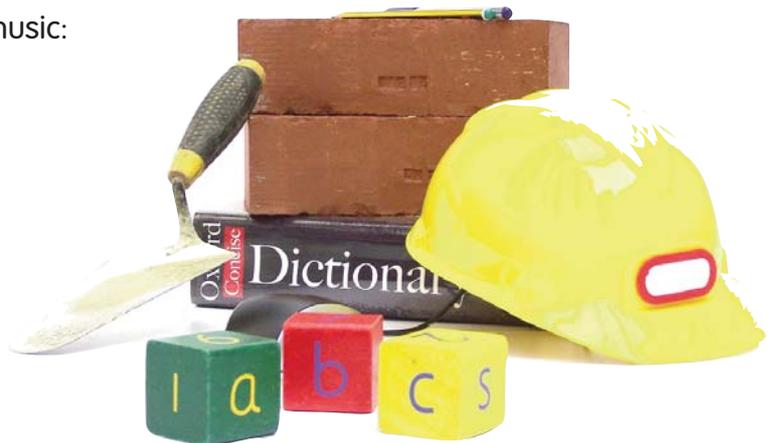


Illustration and talk

Begin by asking for a volunteer to come up and help. Ask your volunteer to make a sandcastle. Ask the children to imagine this is a real castle or a school. What would happen if the sun came out and it got really sunny? (It would dry out and start to crack). What about wind? (You could use a fan or hair dryer to demonstrate the effects.) What would happen if it started to rain? (Demonstrate this with light rain from the watering can.) What would happen if there was a flood? Demonstrate this with heavy rain and allow the castle to wash away.

Ask the children to think about their school. What is it built on? (Rocks, concrete, foundations etc) If necessary go back to the PowerPoint. Is it built on anything else? What makes it special?

St Paul talked about Jesus being the foundation that Christians should build their lives on. When Jesus was on earth he said that if people listened to him and followed his way of living, then when trouble came (like the water and wind causing our sandcastle to fall) they would be ok - Jesus would be a firm foundation for their lives.

For many hundreds of years the churches in this country have believed and continue to believe in building strong foundations. Around 200 years ago the churches in England realised that education was a really important foundation for people's lives, and at that time school was only for people who had enough money to pay for it. Many people could never go to school. So the churches began opening schools for the poor. Eventually this led to free education for everyone - what an amazing gift! Christian churches have been joined by other faiths and are still providing education today, both in this country where school is free, and in other countries where not everyone can go to school.

This Sunday (adapt as appropriate) is Education Sunday, when we think about teachers and pupils and all those people who work in schools. This year we are especially remembering the amazing gift of the churches to our nation: how they are helping to educate children and young people so that they will have firm foundations for their lives, as well as thanking God for all those people who work in our schools.

Song

Suggested songs:

- All Over the world (The Building Song) – Come and Praise, 61
- If I had a hammer- Come and Praise, 71
- Don't build your house on the sandy land

(For other fun songs for children see www.charliesband.co.uk)

Bible Reading

Matthew 7. 24-27

1 Corinthians 3.10-11, 16-23

Prayer

Dear God,

We thank you for our school, for the people who built it, the people who manage it, the people who clean and look after it and for all the staff who teach in it. We thank you for all the people in the churches, for those in the past who believed that education was so important and began founding schools and for all of those who continue to support schools today. We thank you for all those people who are helping us to build strong foundations in our lives. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen

Historical notes

2011 marks the bicentenary of the National Society, which came after the Royal Lancasterian Society (subsequently the British and Foreign School Society) of 1808. These two pioneering societies were followed by the Wesleyan Education Committee, the Catholic Poor Schools Committee and others in the Congregational, Baptist, Primitive and other Methodist Churches. The church schools they established (and which they continue to support) helped lay the foundations for mass and, later, free school provision in England.

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The Education Sunday 2011 theme was devised by an ecumenical steering group co-ordinated by Churches Together in England representing the following Christian denominations and organisations: the Association of Christian Teachers, the Baptist Union, the Catholic Church, the Church of England and the National Society, the Methodist Church, The Salvation Army, the Student Christian Movement and the United Reformed Church. The material in this resource was written and sourced by members of the Education Sunday steering group. All worship material in this publication may be freely copied for single-occasion use as part of Christian worship. Any organisations or individuals wishing to reproduce this material in any other circumstances should seek prior permission from the Education Sunday Steering Group, Churches Together in England, 27 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HH.

