

A Kid Started It

An Activity for Children

by Jackie Saxon and Katie Cook

This activity was designed for a children's camp, but it can be used in Sunday school, Vacation Bible School or any other Christian education setting. Have the props and "costumes" ready when the children arrive. (Depending on time and resources, you may prefer to let the children dress up in "period" costumes.) Assign roles. (You may want to do this by ballot, so that the children are sure there is no favoritism; you would simply write down the names of the characters on slips of paper, fold them and let the children draw them out of a basket.) Let the children help you lay out the "set." (An alternative idea would be perhaps to take the children outside if there is a suitable place for it. You could bring them inside for the last part.) Ask the actors to take their places—Jesus will be on the "rock" and the others will be gathered around. Scatter the Twelve among the Crowd. You will probably want Philip to be close to Boy-with-Lunch. Make sure Boy-with-Lunch has the lunch box. Depending on how many teachers or helpers you have, ask them to sit among the children and help them listen for their part. After asking them to listen carefully for their parts, read John 6:1-14 to them. When you have read through the scripture, ask the children to go over what their role calls for. Next, tell them that you are going to read through the passage again, and their job is to act it out as you read. Tell them this is the dress rehearsal. Then read the passage slowly, prompting them if you need to. Plan your pauses so that each speaking actor will have a chance to speak his or her part. Then go through it once more, "for real." If you are outside, after this would be the time to go back inside to "process" what they have acted out. Talk to them about hunger. You could say something like "Just as the people with Jesus that day were hungry, there are hungry people in our world and in our community." Talk about how, once the boy shared, there was enough for everyone.

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

- Jesus
- Philip
- Andrew
- Boy with Lunch (*this could be a girl!!*)
- One of the Twelve (*10 of them—name them if you want*)
- Person in Crowd (*assign this to all children who don't have another part*)

SET:

- Green blanket for grass
- "Rock" for Jesus to sit on (*could be a chair with a blanket draped over it, a tree stump, a large turned-over bucket, etc.*)

PROPS:

- at least 12 baskets
- One child's lunch box (*a Lion King one would be fun*)
- Construction-paper bread loaves and fish (*enough for each child to have one*)
- A large banner (or posterboard, or large map of the world) with the words "What Can One Kid Do?"

COSTUMES:

- 8 1/2 x 11 posterboard pieces (with string attached to hang around children's necks) inscribed with the name of each character

Make sure the banner or sign saying "What Can One Kid Do?" is prominently displayed. (You might consider using an old, large map of the world for this.) Pass out the construction-paper loaves and fish. Talk about how Jesus still cares about hungry people and wants us to do what we can to help them. Ask each one to think of something he or she can do to help hungry people, to write it down on the construction paper, and tape it to the banner. Then remind the children that in the Bible story it was a "kid" who started it. End with a prayer that God would help each one to know how to help hungry people. Note: The idea for this activity was inspired by the "A Kid Started It" campaign created by the hunger program of the Presbyterian Church USA. The folks at the hunger program produced colorful T-shirts that said "A Kid Started It" with loaves-and-fishes art—with matching temporary "tattoos." The tattoos, they reported, were wildly successful. If you have the time and resources to produce some kind of "souvenir" of this activity, it would help to reinforce the children's memories of the story—and especially the knowledge that it was, indeed, a child who first gave up his lunch.

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Seeds of Hope Publishers

Hope Is in Our Hands: Lessons & Activities about Hunger for Children & Youth