

Fun Memory Activity to Learn the Commandments by Sally S. Johnston

If you would like a small child to memorize a passage or a prayer, try this activity. This will be a joint effort between you and the child's parents, with the majority of work done at home.

Each night the child is to open a numbered envelope. Inside is an index card with a line from a passage or prayer. This line is to be repeated and memorized for that night. After the child has memorized the new line, the parent hands the child a star sticker for him to stick on the index card, showing that he did a great job. Each consecutive night, the child opens the next envelope. The new card has a new line to be memorized, and then the child repeats the lines from the previous nights. By the end of the week, the child will have memorized the whole passage or prayer. Ask him to return the cards to Sunday School the following week. Have a "great job" poster on the wall to stick stars on. As the child repeats each card correctly, put a new star on the poster. The child will feel so proud of himself when he repeats the passage by heart, and sees all the stars under his name.

A fun extension to this activity is to write questions or instructions on the back of each card. These questions can be for both the child and his/her parent. They can be random or tailored to the passage on the front of the card. This is a great and fun way to get parents involved in the spiritual growth of their child. The list could go on and on, but here are a few ideas:

- What does this line mean to you/your mom/your dad?
- Give an example of how you can show or express this thought.
- How has your mom/dad expressed this thought?
- What three things does your mom/dad love most about you?
- What three things do you love most about your mom/dad?
- Give your mom/dad a big hug and a super-duper kiss.
- Where is God?
- How does God love you?

Materials:

- Box of small envelopes
- Colored index cards
- Package of small and large sticker stars
- Poster board

Directions:

Set aside 7 envelopes and number them 1-7. The numbers represent the order of the envelopes. (Example - the first envelope opened will have 1 written on it.)

Divide your passage or prayer into 7 equal parts.

Write these on the 7 separate index cards. At the top of the card, write the new line that is to be memorized for that night. Below this, write all the lines that have been memorized before. You can also write this information on a computer and paste the print out on the index card.

Place the index cards in correct order in the envelopes.

Include at least one star in each envelope.

On Sunday, give each child a collection of envelopes to take home, and explain the activity to the parent. It is important to ask for, and get a verbal commitment from the parent. Be sure to explain the activity to the child and get him excited about it. This way if the parent forgets, the child will remind him.

Prepare a "great job" poster for your Sunday School class wall and have fun.

— Sally S. Johnston