

The First Disciples

Lesson Objectives

- The students will describe the calling of the first disciples.
- The students will identify Jesus' purpose.
- The students will think about the costs that they have to count in order to follow Jesus.

Lesson Text

Matthew 4:17-25
Matthew 10:2-4

Scripture Memory Verse

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."
Matthew 4:19

Lesson Plan

Greeting and Registration

Preclass Activity: What Does It Mean to You?

Welcome and Singing

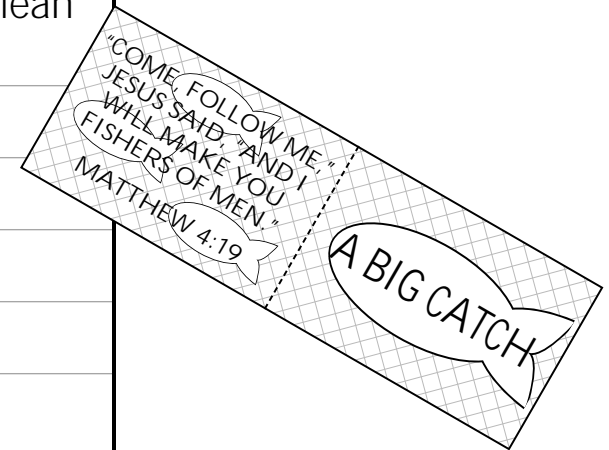
Centers:

Bible Story: The Call to Fish

Craft: A Big Catch

Scripture Memory:
Something's Fishy

NOTE: Allow time for a snack.



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The First Disciples

What Does It Mean to You?

The students will preview important ideas from this week's lesson as they complete this activity.

Materials

For each student:

- pencil
- scissors
- glue stick
- markers

For the teacher:

- juvenile magazines: athletic, fashion, food, family, outdoors
- various stickers
- scissors

Reproducible Pages:

- Page A, 1 copy for each student

Preparation

Complete the activity on your copy of Reproducible Page A.

Instructions

1. Greet the students as they arrive. Explain that in today's lesson they will learn about the first disciples to follow Jesus and consider what it would mean for them to follow Jesus.
2. Show the students your sample. Distribute the copies of Reproducible Page A, scissors, glue sticks, pencils, markers and magazines.
3. Encourage the students to work with a partner or small group. Encourage them to answer the questions on their pages and glue or draw a picture that corresponds to the questions.
4. Circulate among the students to offer help and encouragement.

Teacher Tips

- To save time, cut out some magazine pictures for the students in advance.
- Decorate the Preclass area with nets or other fishing equipment, or pictures of them. Do not include potentially dangerous items.

What Does It Mean to You?

Directions: Answer the following questions about the things that mean the most to you.

What <i>people</i> mean the most to you?	What <i>sports</i> or fashions mean the most to you?	What <i>famous people</i> mean the most to you?
What <i>places</i> mean the most to you?	What <i>things</i> mean the most to you?	On the back of this page, answer the questions: What does the <i>Bible</i> mean to you? What does <i>Jesus</i> mean to you?

The First Disciples

The Call to Fish

The students will participate in today's story of how Jesus called the first disciples.

Materials

For each student:

- adhesive name tag

For the teacher:

- 5 chairs
- 1 medium bath towel
- 1 piece of heavy string, 24"
- costume beard

Reproducible Pages:

- Page B, 1 copy for each student

Preparation

1. On the large writing surface, neatly print: Jesus; Peter and Andrew; James and John; Zebedee; the crowds.
2. Read the script on your copy of Reproducible Page B and practice directing this role-play with great energy and enthusiasm. Give special emphasis to the Narrator sections that you will read.

Introducing the Bible Story

Open your Bible to Matthew 4. Tell the students that they will participate in a short play about today's Bible Story. Introduce the characters:

JESUS—who had been preaching and teaching about God

PETER and ANDREW—two brothers who were fishermen

JAMES and JOHN and their father ZEBEDEE—two brothers who were fishermen with their father

The CROWDS—people who followed Jesus to hear him teach

NARRATOR

Decide who will play the parts of Jesus, Peter, Andrew, James, John and Zebedee. Using the string, tie the towel on Jesus' head as a headpiece and put the beard on Zebedee. Distribute the name tags and have the students write the name of their character.

Choose the remaining students to play the role of the crowd and give them name tags to write the crowd. Distribute the copies of Reproducible Page B to the students.

NOTE: If you have fewer students than roles, include adult assistants or combine two groups for this activity.

Presenting the Bible Story

Using the stage plan on the back of this Lesson Card, arrange the students in their places. Begin by reading the first narration. Then cue Peter and Andrew. Continue directing the students until they have successfully completed the play. Encourage them for their efforts.

Sharing with Others

Ask the students what they think was Jesus' purpose in life. Ask the students to think of one way that they can be like Jesus and be a fisher of men this week. Close with a prayer for the students to feel encouraged when they talk to other people about Jesus.

Teachers Tips

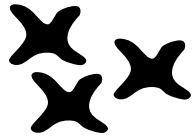
- Think of additional props or stage directions to enhance the presentation of this story.
- Label each character's script and highlight their parts for easy reference during the presentation.



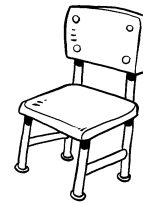
3rd and 4th Grades

The First Disciples

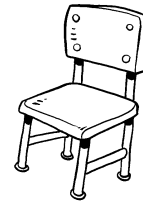
The Call to Fish Stage Plan



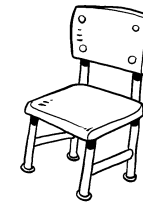
The Crowd



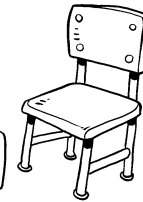
Andrew



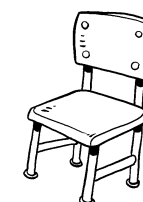
Peter



James



Zebedee



John



Jesus
(1st time)



Jesus
(2nd time)



Jesus
(3rd time)

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The First Disciples

A Big Catch

The students will make a craft to remind them of Jesus' purpose to make fishers of men.

Materials

For each student:

- 6 pieces of pipe cleaner, 6" long and varied colors
- 1 piece of cheesecloth, 12" x 12"
- glue stick
- pencil

For the teacher:

- hole punch
- scissors

Reproducible Pages:

- Page C, 1 copy for every 4 students

Preparation

1. Cut out the tags from the copies of Reproducible Page C. Each student will get one tag.
2. Fold each tag in half and hole punch, as shown in Figure A.
3. Make a sample craft to show the students.

Instructions

1. Introduce today's craft: *In your lesson, you are learning about Jesus calling his disciples to fish for men. They knew very well that fishing was hard work, and they knew they would have to learn from Jesus how to be fishers of men. Today, you are going to make a craft to remind you that Jesus' purpose—and the purpose of all disciples—is to be fishers of men.*
2. Show the students your sample craft. Read the verse on the back of the tag.
3. Distribute the tags you prepared, glue sticks and pencils. Have the students glue the insides of their tags and fold so they stick together. Have them write their names on their tags.

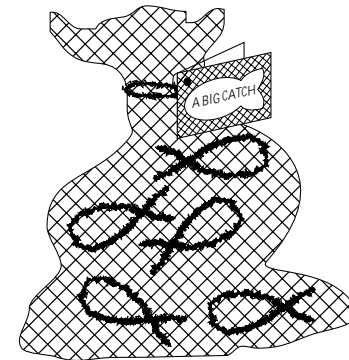
4. Distribute five pipe cleaners to each student. Show the students how to make fish out of the pipe cleaners, as shown in Figure B. Encourage them to make a variety of shaped fish by bending and molding the pipe cleaners.
5. As the students finish, distribute the cheesecloth and the last piece of pipe cleaner. Have them each put the pipe cleaner through the hole in their tag. Help the students to place their fish in their cheesecloth "nets." and then secure with the pipe cleaner. See Figure C.

Conclusion

Ask the students to share ways that Jesus met people. Then have them think of ways that they can bring people to church. Encourage the children that when they bring people to learn about God, they are being like Jesus—they are fishing for men. Close with a prayer for the students to want to be like Jesus.

Teacher Tips

- Encourage the children to be creative with their fish. Help them think of different ways to design them.
- If you want to save class time, glue and hole punch the tags for the students before class.



The First Disciples

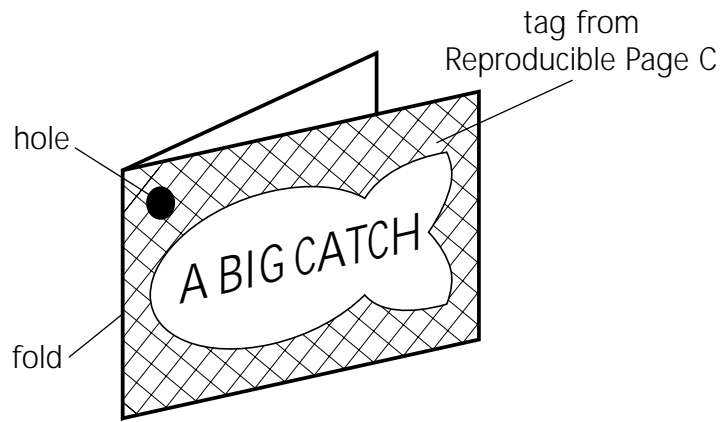


Figure A

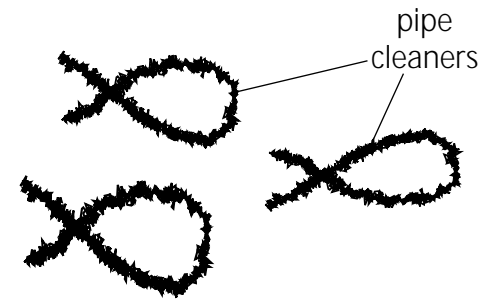


Figure B

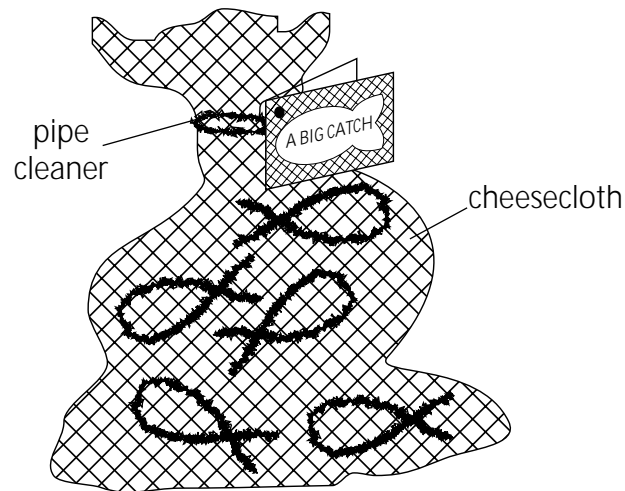


Figure C

The First Disciples

Something's Fishy

The students will learn and memorize today's Scripture Memory Verse through a fun decoding activity.

Scripture Memory Verse

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."
Matthew 4:19

Materials

For each student:

- pencil

Reproducible Pages:

- Page D, 2 copies for the teacher

Preparation

Complete the activity on your copy of Reproducible Page D.

Instructions

1. Introduce today's activity: *In this week's lesson, you are learning about the first disciples that Jesus called to follow him. After Jesus began his ministry, he called men to follow him so that he could teach them how to teach others—or be fishers of men. In today's Scripture Memory Verse, you will learn the words that Jesus said when he called Peter and Andrew.*
2. Tell the students that today's Scripture Memory Verse has been hidden in a special code. Show the students your completed copy of Reproducible Page D. Tell them that they will use the code to help them figure out the verse.
3. Divide the students into two groups and give each group a copy of Reproducible Page D. Choose one student in each team to be the person to write the letters. Tell the groups to decode the verse as quickly as they can. When they have finished, check their work.
4. When both groups have decoded the verse, do the following exercises with them
 - Say the verse with all students three times.
 - Say the verse with the girls three times.
 - Say the verse with the boys three times.
 - Say the verse with the third graders three times.
 - Say the verse with the fourth graders three times.

5. Now ask the students to finish the following incomplete verses for you:

- "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of _____." (men)
- "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you _____." (fishers of men)
- "Come, follow me," Jesus said, _____." (and I will make you fishers of men)
- "Come, follow me, _____." (Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men.")
- "Come, _____" (follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men.")

Non-Coded Variation

Here's an alternative to the decoding activity. You may choose to do this and send the students home with copies of Reproducible Page D. Have the students discover the verse all together using an approach similar to the "Wheel of Fortune" game show. Write the blanks of this verse on a large writing surface with nothing underneath. Students can play in teams or all together to take turns guessing different letters that go in the blanks until they can guess the entire verse. For example: if a student guesses the letter "L" you write it in all the spaces where "L" appears in the verse. Once the verse has been revealed, continue with Steps 4 and 5.

Conclusion

Ask the students how they think they would have felt if Jesus walked by calling out these words to them. Encourage them that Jesus IS still calling people to follow him, and he uses disciples to do it! Close with a prayer thanking God for the privilege of following Jesus.

Teacher Tips

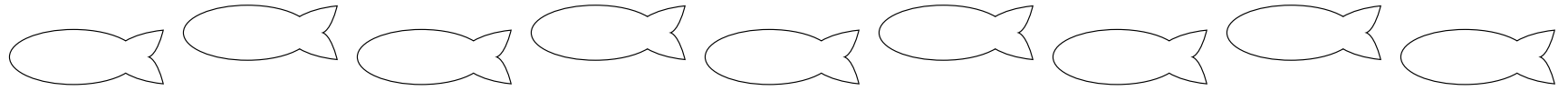
- Think of additional or different ways to vary the ways that the students say today's Scripture Memory Verse in Step 4.



3rd and 4th Grades

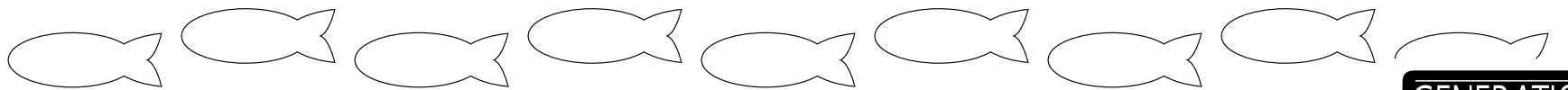
SCRIPTURE MEMORY

The First Disciples



“Come, follow me,” Jesus
said, “and I will make
you fishers of men.”

Matthew 4:19



3rd and 4th Grades

Lesson Objectives

- The students will describe the calling of the first disciples.
- The students will identify Jesus' purpose.
- The students will think about the costs that they have to count in order to follow Jesus.

Lesson Text

Matthew 4:17-25
Matthew 10:2-4

Scripture Memory Verse

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

Matthew 4:19

Lesson Plan

Greeting and Registration

Preclass Activity: Catch of the Day

Welcome and Singing

Centers:

Life Application: The Price Is Right

Game: Man Overboard!

Bible Skills: A Fishy Business

NOTE: Allow time for a snack.

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Catch of the Day

The students will review key ideas from this week's lesson as they complete this activity.

Materials

For each student:

- pencil

Reproducible Pages:

- Page E, 1 copy for each student

Preparation

Complete the activity on your copy of Reproducible Page E.

Instructions

1. Greet the students as they arrive. Remind them that they are learning about Jesus' first disciples. Explain that they will review key ideas from this lesson in this activity.
2. Show the students your sample. Distribute the copies of Reproducible Page E and pencils.
3. Encourage the students to work with a partner or small group. Make sure to pair students who missed this week's lesson with those who did not.
4. Circulate among the students to offer help finding Matthew 4 and to offer encouragement.

Teacher Tips

- Be sensitive to new or visiting students who are not familiar with the Bible. Pair them with confident students or with an assistant teacher.
- Offer fish or fish-shaped crackers and juice for a Preclass snack to help set the mood for this lesson. (Obtain parental permission before serving food to your students.)

The Price Is Right

The students will review this week's lesson as they think of what it might cost them to follow Jesus.

Materials

For each student:

- 1 small piece of paper

For the teacher:

- pen
- hat or small container
- object with a price tag under \$5

Preparation

1. Read Matthew 4:17-25 to review the events of this week's Bible Story.
2. Practice leading this activity with personal conviction.

Reviewing the Bible Story

Open your Bible to Matthew 4. *In your Bible Story this week, you learned how Jesus called the first disciples to follow him and become fishers of men. Jesus' purpose was to teach people about God and show them God's love so that they would obey God and love him back. Jesus chose twelve men to be with him so that he could teach them and show them God's words and God's love. In order to follow Jesus, the disciples had to stop what they were doing. Do you remember what Peter and Andrew were doing when Jesus called them? (fishing) Do you remember what James and John were doing when Jesus called them? (fishing) All these men had to think about what it would take to follow Jesus. They knew that they would have to leave their nets and boats behind so they could be Jesus' disciples.*

Ask the students to say what they would like to be or do as a career when they grow up. Write each response on a small piece of paper and place them all in the hat.

Life Application

Remind the students that Peter, Andrew, James and John were all fishermen. This means they made their money from catching fish. It was not just a hobby or something they did for fun on the week-ends. When Jesus called them, they left their work to follow him.

- Ask the students what they think this decision cost these men. (Prompt responses such as: the money they would have made from fishing that day; their reputation among the other fishermen—some may have thought that they were not dependable because they left in the middle of their work; money from people who would not buy fish from them in the future; etc.)
- Remind them that none of these "costs" were enough to stop them from following Jesus. Explain that Jesus was more important to them than money, reputation or their future plans because they trusted that God would take care of these things.

Take out the hat with the papers inside. Pull out one paper and read it to the group. Explain that to follow Jesus means being willing to give up our plans so that we can live out God's plans.

NOTE: Explain that this does not mean we should not make plans, but that we should ask God to help us make plans that please him.

Read the papers to the students, asking them to say if they would be willing to give up being/doing this to follow Jesus. Tell the students that anything they value and need to give up would be a "cost" they might have to count one day. Also include more current plans such as a trip, a party, a movie as possible costs they might have to count.

Conclusion

Bring out the object with a price tag and pass it around. Ask them how much it costs. Ask the students if any of them have enough money in their pocket to buy it. Next, pass around a Bible and ask the students how much they think it costs to know God and go to heaven. Ask them if they think they have what it takes to get there. Close with a prayer for the students to see that there is nothing more valuable than knowing and loving God.

Teacher Tips

- Try to bring in an object whose price is under \$5 to make the illustration more realistic.



3rd and 4th Grades



Man Overboard!

The students will review the names of the first disciples as they play this game of mixed-up names.

Materials

For the teacher:

- 12 removable adhesive labels
- 12 chairs
- black marker

Preparation

1. Write the names of the twelve apostles on the labels as they appear on the back of this Lesson Card.
2. Place each label on the inside of one of the chairs.

Instructions

1. Introduce today's activity: *In this week's lesson, you have been learning about the first disciples that Jesus called to follow him. There were twelve disciples who were chosen by Jesus to go and make disciples of others. Jesus spent special time with these men, teaching and preaching the good news about God. In our game today, you will review the names of these twelve disciples in a fun game of mixed-up names.*
2. Show the students the labels and chairs that you prepared and read each one. Have the students each sit in a chair. (For groups with less than twelve students, remove the extra chairs. Make sure to note the names on the chairs that you remove.)
3. Tell the students that you will call out the disciples' names in a random order. When a student hears the name on his chair called, he should stand up and then sit down. Do this several times.
4. Call two names at a time, followed by "switch." Have the students switch seats with each other.
5. Call three names at a time, followed by "switch" and have the students switch seats.
6. Call four names at a time, followed by "switch" and have the students switch seats.
7. Continue in this way, calling as many names as you like. Finally, call "Man Overboard!" and have all the students switch seats.



Variation for Smaller Groups

For groups of six students or less, place two names on six chairs and have the students respond when either (or both) of the names are called.

Challenging Version

Try the following variations to make the game less predictable and more challenging:

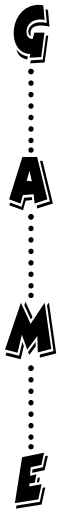
- Vary the number of names you call from round to round, i.e two, then five, then three, etc.
- Call "Man Overboard" several times during the game.
- Call the disciples' names followed by "Scripture Switch" in which the students called must first stand and say the Scripture Memory Verse together before they can switch seats: "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19).

Conclusion

Ask the students to share their favorite part of this week's Bible Story and tell why. Close with a prayer thanking God for sending Jesus so that we could be his disciples.

Teacher Tips

- This game can be played without chairs and the labels worn on the students' clothing.



Peter
Andrew
James (son of Zebedee)
John
Philip
Bartholomew
Thomas
Matthew
James (son of Alphaeus)
Thaddaeus
Simon (the Zealot)
Judas Iscariot

A Fishy Business

The students will review key ideas and concepts from this week's lesson as they enjoy a tasty activity.

Materials

For each student:

- pencil

For the teacher:

- 1 box of miniature fish crackers or cookies

Reproducible Pages:

- Page F, 1 copy for each student

IMPORTANT: Obtain parental permission before serving food to your students.

Preparation

Complete the activity on your copy of Reproducible Page F.

Instructions

1. Introduce today's activity: *In this week's lesson, you have been learning about Jesus' first disciples. There were twelve disciples who were chosen by Jesus to go and make disciples of others. Jesus came to make fishers of men. He spent special time with these men, teaching and preaching the good news about God. Today, you will review important ideas about Jesus' purpose and the purpose of a disciple.*
2. Show the students the sample game card on the back of this Lesson Card. Tell the students that they will write the words from the fishing nets on their pages into the empty spaces provided. Distribute the copies of Reproducible Page F and pencils. Tell the students to write each of the words in whatever order they choose on their pages in the spaces. Circulate among the students to help them.
3. Bring out the miniature fish-shaped crackers or cookies. Tell the students that you will call out numbers, and they will place crackers on the spaces. After each round, have each student say the word on the number you called. Then, have them use the word to describe one thing about Jesus.

- For example: You call #2 and a student places a cracker on that space in which he has written the word "follow." The student uses that word to describe Jesus: "Jesus called people to FOLLOW him."
4. For the next round, call out two numbers. Have the students each place two crackers on their game cards and then take turns using both of their words to describe Jesus, e.g: "Jesus called people to FOLLOW him so he could make them into FISHERS of men."
 5. Continue for as long as time permits, increasing the numbers called so that the students can increase the words they use to describe Jesus.
 6. For a challenge, have the students try to use all the words to describe Jesus' purpose.
- NOTE: Bring enough fish crackers so that the students can eat their crackers after each round.

Two-by-Two Variation

Have the students find partners when they first arrive. Distribute one copy of Reproducible Page F to each pair and have them work together for the entire activity.

Conclusion

Ask the students what they think is the most exciting thing about being a disciple of Jesus. Close with a prayer asking God to help the students see God's plan for them to be disciples of Jesus.

Teacher Tips

- Know your students. Use the two-by-two version for groups where a large number of students are quiet or unsure of themselves. Use the individualized version for groups where the students are more confident to talk to a group of students. In both versions, encourage the students to help each other.
- Make extra copies of Reproducible Page F for students who want to play this game at home.
- Throw out the students' copies of Reproducible Page F after each rotation since the crackers will leave stains.

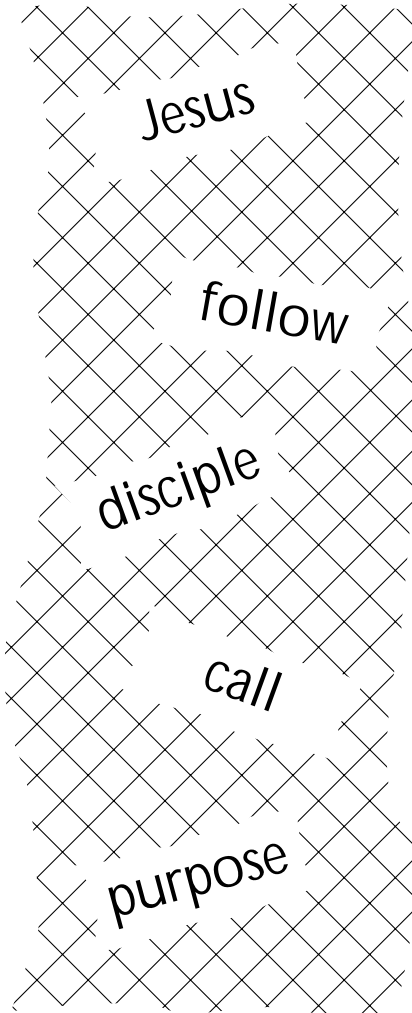


3rd and 4th Grades

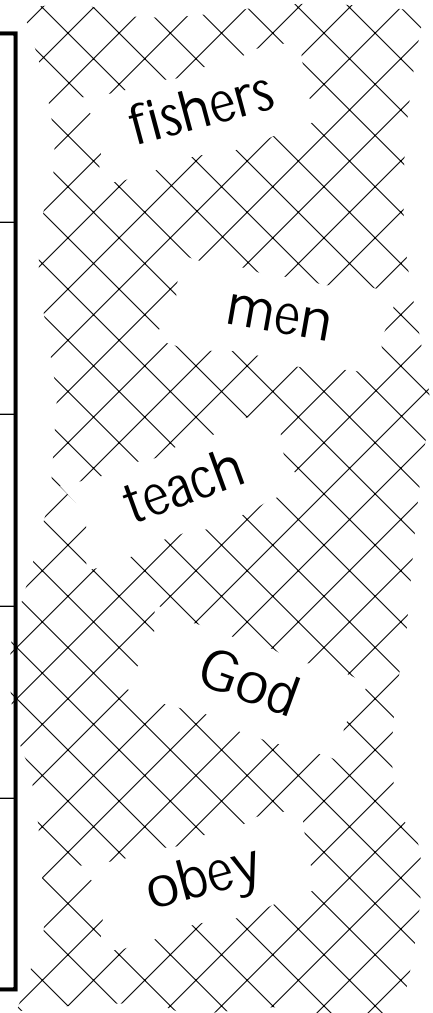
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A Fishy Business

Write the words in the nets into the spaces below.



1 disciple	2 fishers
3 call	4 teach
5 men	6 follow
7 obey	8 God
9 Jesus	10 purpose



3rd and 4th Grades

What Does It Mean to You? Name _____

Directions: Answer the following questions about the things that mean the most to you.

What *people* mean the most to you?

What *sports* or fashions mean the most to you?

What *famous people* mean the most to you?

What *places* mean the most to you?

What *things* mean the most to you?

On the back of this page, answer the questions:

What does the *Bible* mean to you?

What does *Jesus* mean to you?



3rd and 4th Grades

The Call to Fish

NARRATOR (with excitement): Today's story comes from Matthew 4:17-25. The Bible says that Jesus began preaching to the people and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." Like John the Baptist, Jesus wanted people to stop sinning and start doing the things that pleased God. Jesus taught and did many things to show the people that God had sent him.

Jesus wanted to find other men who would preach and teach the same message. Jesus' purpose in life was to make disciples. He did that by teaching people how to love and obey God. Look! Here comes Jesus!

JESUS (teaching the crowds): Repent! For the kingdom of heaven is near. God wants you to change and do the things that make him happy. Don't sin. Love God and do what he says. (Jesus and the crowd walk away.)

PETER and ANDREW (in their fishing boat, pretending to throw a net): One, two, three—heave ho!

JESUS (walking by Peter and Andrew's boat): Come! Follow me. I will make you fishers of men!

PETER and ANDREW (looking at each other): Yeah! Let's go! (They get out of their boat and follow Jesus.)

NARRATOR: After Peter and Andrew followed Jesus, Jesus kept on walking along. He saw some other brothers named James and John in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets for fishing. Let's see what happens!

JAMES (talking to John and excited): John, don't look now but I think that Jesus is walking over here.

JOHN (talking to James and amazed): I think you are right. He's coming over to our boat!

JESUS (to James and John): Come! Follow me. I will make you fishers of men!

JAMES and JOHN (looking at each other and then at their father Zebedee): Let's go! (They get out of their boat and follow Jesus. Zebedee waves good-bye.)

NARRATOR: "Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them. Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him" (Matthew 4:23-24).

By Matthew 10, we learn that Jesus had called twelve disciples to be with him, so that he could teach them and send them out to teach, preach and heal the sick. These twelve disciples were called apostles. An apostle was chosen by Jesus to help people in special ways. To these twelve, Jesus gave power to heal every sickness and disease as well as to drive out evil demons. The names of the twelve were: Simon (who was also called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James and John, the sons of Zebedee; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector; another man named James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; another man named Simon, called Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus.

Today, Jesus is still calling people to follow him. He does it through the message of the Bible and disciples who are living right now. Each of you will have a chance to learn how to become a disciple and follow Jesus as you get older—but you can start today to live like Jesus and obey God's words in the Bible.



3rd and 4th Grades

Core/Craft

1 copy for every 4 students

"COME, FOLLOW ME,"
JESUS SAID, "AND I
WILL MAKE YOU
FISHERS OF MEN."
MATTHEW 4:19

A BIG CATCH

"COME, FOLLOW ME,"
JESUS SAID, "AND I
WILL MAKE YOU
FISHERS OF MEN."
MATTHEW 4:19

A BIG CATCH

"COME, FOLLOW ME,"
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MATTHEW 4:19

A BIG CATCH

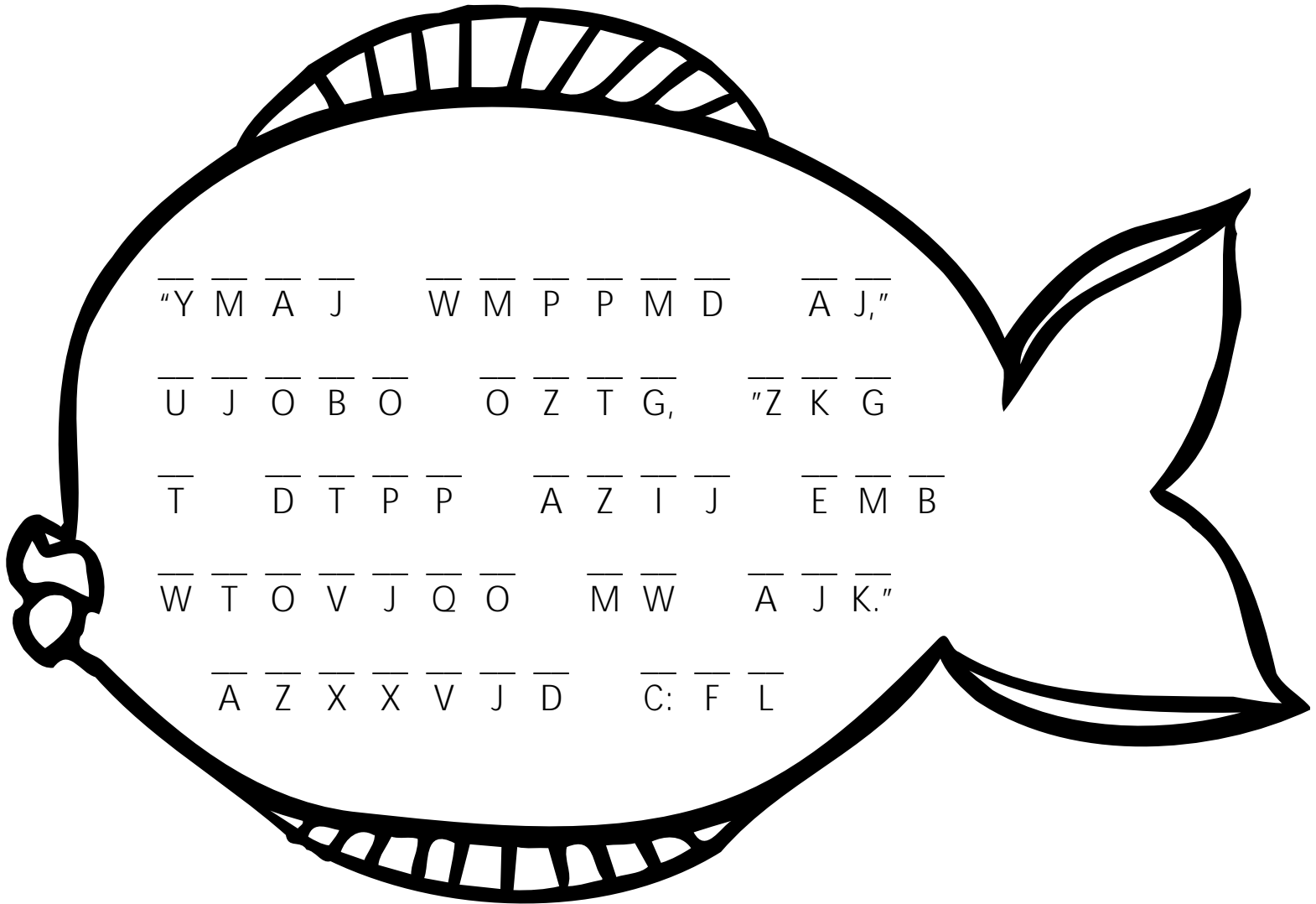
A BIG CATCH

"COME, FOLLOW ME,"
JESUS SAID, "AND I
WILL MAKE YOU
FISHERS OF MEN."
MATTHEW 4:19



3rd and 4th Grades

Something's Fishy



"Y M A J W M P P M D A J,"

U J O B O O Z T G, "Z K G

T D T P P A Z I J E M B

W T O V J Q O M W A J K."

A Z X X V J D C: F L

Code:	A B C D E F G H I J K L M O P Q T U V W X Y Z
Key:	M U 4 W Y 1 D V K E N 9 O S L R I J H F T C A



3rd and 4th Grades

Catch of the Day

Name _____

Directions: Open your Bible to Matthew 4:17-25 and fill in the blanks with the words in the net below.

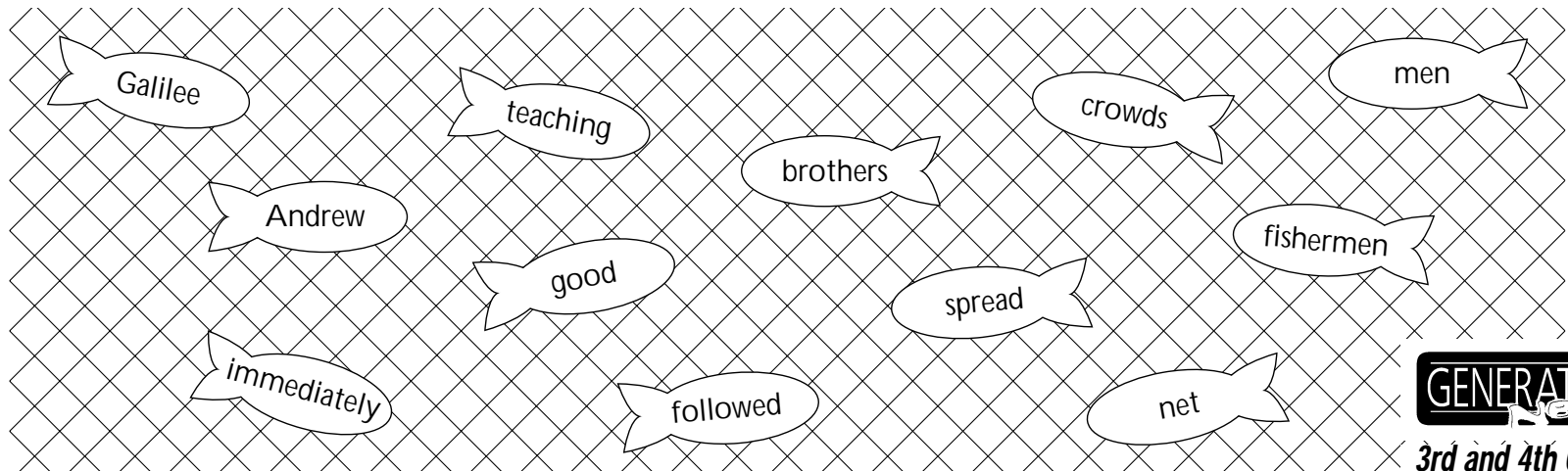
From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of _____, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother _____. They were casting a _____ into the lake, for they were _____. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of _____." At once they left their nets and _____ him.

Going on from there, he saw two other _____, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and _____ they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Jesus went throughout Galilee, _____ in their synagogues, preaching the _____ news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. News about him _____ all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them. Large _____ from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

Matthew 4:17-25



3rd and 4th Grades

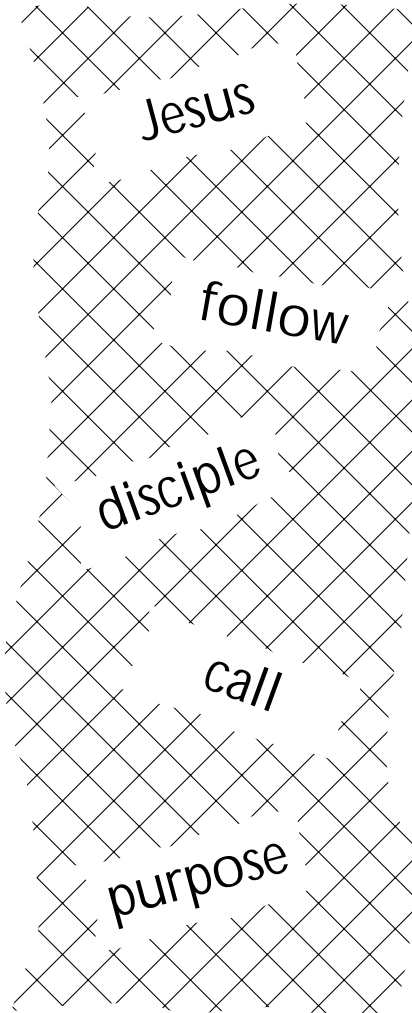
Supplement/Bible Skills

1 copy for each student (Optional – extra copies)

A Fishy Business

Name _____

Write the words in the nets into the spaces below.



1	2
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3	4
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
5	6
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
7	8
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
9	10
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

