

Upfront Bible 6

Jesus is a friend who doesn't pass the blame

John 9 (selected sections)

Characters:

Leader A

Leader B

Blind man

Jesus

Five Disciples (can include impromptu volunteers)

Two Pharisees

A: Hey, do you want to play a game of eye-spy?

B: No, not really. I'm actually here to tell the story of Jesus and a blind man

A: *(trying to be convincing)* But it's great game

B: *(trying to be even more convincing)* It's from the Bible

A: What shall we do?

B: *(appealing to the audience)* The game or the story?

A: *(appealing to the audience)* The story or the game?

A&B: *(turning to each other)* Both!!

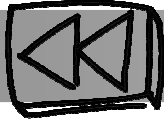
A: I'll go first, with the game. I spy with my little eye something beginning with M

(take 3 guesses, moving through the audience.)

Give up? *(Wait for response)*

I spy with my little eye something beginning with M ... Man! See over there, that guy *(pointing to 'Blind man character' who has dark glasses)*. Let's give him a wave *(encourage audience to wave at Blind man, who ignores it)*

B: I don't think he can see us. *(Waves a few more times.)* Story time now! This is a story from the Bible, from the Book of 'John'



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As Jesus walked along, he saw a man who had been blind since birth. ²Jesus' disciples asked, "Teacher, why was this man born blind? Was it because he or his parents sinned?" ³"No, it wasn't!" Jesus answered. "But because of his blindness, you will see God work a miracle for him. ⁴As long as it is day, we must do what the one who sent me wants me to do.

During the reading a 'Jesus' character (person in a t-shirt clearly marked with "Jesus" and about five 'disciples' carrying cards with a question mark ? on one side and an arrow ⇨ on the other. The disciples 'circle' around the blind man, alternately showing their question marks and arrows (pointing at him).

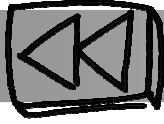
- A: So that's the guy? He's blind. Time for round two! I spy with my little eye something beginning with M.
- B: We had this one before didn't we?
- A: No – a different M thing
(take three guesses)
- A: Give up? Mud – something beginning with M is Mud.
- B: Well, I would think that was a bit strange except ... there's some mud coming up in our story. Let's get back to it.

⁶After Jesus said this, he spit on the ground. He made some mud and smeared it on the man's eyes. ⁷Then he said, "Go and wash off the mud in Siloam Pool." The man went and washed in Siloam, which means "One Who Is Sent." When he had washed off the mud, he could see.

During this reading each of the disciples one by one in quick succession do a 'spitting' activity.

- 1) spit on hands and slick back hair*
- 2) spit on pointer finger and test wind direction*
- 3) spit on hands, rub them together and get ready to fight*
- 4) spit on pointer finger and clean teeth*

Jesus then spits on the ground, bends down, makes mud and wipes it just under the man's eyes. Jesus points in one direction, the man begins to walk in the opposite direction, but the disciples take hold of him, turn him round and escort him in the direction Jesus originally had pointed.



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A: Game time again? Eye spy with my little eye something beginning with N

Give some hints like:

- *Humming the "Neighbours" TV theme song*
- *Homer Simpson and Ned Flanders are ...*
- *'Starts with N and rhymes with 'Labours'*

B: Neighbours! Well done team – there are lots of neighbours here. But back to our story. It so happens that we need some neighbours, the neighbours of the man who was blind, that Jesus healed.

A: By the way, I like the way Jesus doesn't get sucked into the question about whose fault it is, or who's to blame – he just heals the guy.

⁸The man's neighbors and the people who had seen him begging wondered if he really could be the same man. ⁹Some of them said he was the same beggar, while others said he only looked like him. But he told them, "I am that man." ¹⁰"Then how can you see?" they asked. ¹¹He answered, "Someone named Jesus made some mud and smeared it on my eyes. He told me to go and wash it off in Siloam Pool. When I did, I could see." ¹²"Where is he now?" they asked. "I don't know," he answered.

(Take about five volunteers; give each person an A4 'portrait' of the blind man, each in a slightly different pose. While the next part of the story is read, these volunteers walk through the audience, pointing to the picture and raising their hands in a questioning pose, repeatedly) The disciples bring the man back, and they repeat the 'spitting' action of Jesus, from the previous scene.

A: Another round of I spy? I spy with my little eye something beginning with H.

This one is tricky. There are lots of people here who are on one of these. Maybe this is a good round for one of the grown ups. Something beginning with H.

(Allow a couple of guesses.)

More clues? If you don't have to go to school or to work ... if you can stay home, or go and camp somewhere, you might be on one of these ...

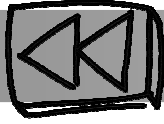
(Allow a couple of guesses.)

Most kids wish these could last forever, and by the middle of January, most mums can't wait for them to end...

Starts with H and rhymes with "Lollydays".

Holidays!!! Now I don't suppose there's a holiday in your Bible Story?

B: As a matter of fact ...



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¹³⁻¹⁴The day when Jesus made the mud and healed the man was a Sabbath Holiday. So the people took the man to the Pharisees. ¹⁵They asked him how he was able to see, and he answered, "Jesus made some mud and smeared it on my eyes. Then after I washed it off, I could see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man Jesus doesn't come from God. If he did, he would not break the law of the Sabbath Holiday." Others asked, "How could someone who is a sinner work such a miracle?" Since the Pharisees could not agree among themselves, ¹⁷they asked the man, "What do you say about this one who healed your eyes?" "He is a prophet!" the man told them. ¹⁸But the Jewish leaders would not believe that the man had once been blind. They sent for his parents ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this the son that you said was born blind? How can he now see?" ²⁰The man's parents answered, "We are certain that he is our son, and we know that he was born blind. ²¹But we don't know how he got his sight or who gave it to him. Ask him! He is old enough to speak for himself."

²²⁻²³The man's parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders.

During this section you will need two pharisees- either leaders or kids. The Blind man and the Pharisees move to the front in full view. The Pharisees hold up large eye charts first showing the front side (different from each other) and then the reverse side (both the same)

Chart 1

H O W
C A N
Y O U
S E E
?

Chart 2

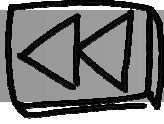
H O W
C A N A
B A D
P E R S O N D O
S O M E T H I N G S O
W O N D E R F U L ?

Reverse side of both charts

W H A T
D O Y O U
T H I N K
A B O U T
J E S U S
?

- A: Time for I Spy again ... but I think this time we might do an eye-test with these charts.
B: Now things are getting a bit tricky in this story.

(During this next section the Disciples, the Pharisees and the Blind man hand pass a ball from person to person, back and forth. The ball should have the word "Blame" clearly written on it)



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First the Disciples want to blame the man or his parents for being blind, then Jesus heals him. Now the leaders want to blame Jesus for healing the man when it's supposed to be a holiday. Then they want to get the parents in and blame them, and they say "Don't blame us, ask him." Then they get the man back and try to get him to pass the blame on to Jesus, and he says, "How can someone be blamed for doing something good?"

- A: And then – let me guess -- they pass the blame back to the man, who was blind.
B: They do.
A: I spy with my little eye something beginning with J

(Jesus catches the last handpass, and hurls the ball away behind the backdrop, out of sight)

- B: Can I guess? Is it Jesus?
A: How did you know?
B: Because it says here in the Bible story.

³⁵When Jesus heard what had happened, he went and found the man. Then Jesus asked, "Do you have faith in the Son of Man?"

³⁶He replied, "Sir, if you will tell me who he is, I will put my faith in him."

³⁷"You have already seen him," Jesus answered, "and right now he is talking with you."

³⁸The man said, "Lord, I put my faith in you!" Then he worshipped Jesus.

- A: Great Story!
B: Great Game!

