



“The Phoenix Rising”

Lesson Overview

Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to understand the importance of rising above our difficulties and letting go of things that no longer serve us.

Unity Principle:

- #3 – Human beings create their experience by the activity of their thinking. Everything in the manifest realm has its beginnings in thought.
- #5 – Knowing the laws of Truth is not enough. A person must live the Truth he/she knows.

Important Points:

- If we are willing to let go of our difficulties and leave them in the past they won't be in the present to weigh us down.
- No matter what happens to us we can always be “born anew.” (We can let go of the past and start again.)
- We have the power within ourselves to help ourselves.

Definitions:

- **Phoenix:** (From: “*Fantastic Beasts & Where To Find Them*” by Newt Scamander) The “Phoenix is a magnificent, swan-sized, scarlet bird with a long golden tail, beak and talons. The Phoenix lives to an immense age as it can regenerate, bursting into flames when its body begins to fail and rising again from the ashes as a chick. The Phoenix is a gentle creature that has never been known to kill and eats only herbs. It can disappear and appear at will. Phoenix song is magical; it is reputed to increase the courage of the pure of heart and to strike fear into the hearts of the impure. Phoenix tears have powerful healing properties.”

The Phoenix represents our ability to heal and to rise again.

Story Synopsis & Interpretation

Story Synopsis

Harry is in Dumbledore's office and sees the Phoenix on his perch. All of a sudden the bird bursts into flames and turns to ash. Harry is very upset, thinking that he may be blamed for what happened.

When Dumbledore comes in he looks at the pile of ashes and declares that it was "about time!" He then explains that the Phoenix is eternal and the body it had been in was very old and it was time to let go of the old (body) and begin anew. Soon a new chick would grow out of the ashes to be his pet once again.

Story Interpretation

The Phoenix represents, in us, the power to let go and rise again from any difficulty or challenge. When we are willing to let the past go and to be focused on the present, we are able to fully engage with life and to see all of the blessings that are around us.

It is said that the Phoenix's tears have healing properties. This reinforces the idea that letting go and rising again is a good thing. When we live appreciatively in the cycle of life: engaging in our life experiences; feeling our feelings; letting go; moving on; gaining the wisdom; rising again, it is a healing force in our lives.

Supplies

DVD	<i>Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, J.K. Rowling</i>		
Activity	OPENING ACTIVITY	CREATIVE EXPERIENCE #1	CREATIVE EXPERIENCE #2
Title	<u>Healing Tears</u>	<u>Healing Water</u>	<u>Rising Up</u>
Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Phoenix Tear Sheets," 1/ child, (<i>See end of lesson</i>) • Markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water dissolving paper, cut into small pieces, 1 piece/child • Permanent Sharpie markers • Large bowl of water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helium Balloons with a weight on the bottom, 2/ classroom • Small blank slips of paper, 2 or 3/child • Paper clips, 2 or 3/child • Small pieces of playdough

Lesson #7



Opening Activity

Healing Tears

The purpose of this activity is to explore what heals you.

Supplies

- “Phoenix Tear Sheets,” 1/child, (See end of lesson)
- Markers

Action

- In this part of the story it is said that the Phoenix tears have the power to heal. It is also stated in the books that Harry was protected from Voldemort by the power of his mother’s love.
- On each of the tears write or draw a picture of what heals and protects you.

SAMPLE

Lesson #7



Sacred Circle

Uniting Affirmation

Invite one of the children to create an affirmation that affirms the lesson of the day, for example: My name is _____. I am _____. The rest of the circle then affirms the first child by saying, "(Name), you are _____." The next child then repeats the affirmation and is affirmed by the circle. This continues until all of the children and teachers have been affirmed.

The Blessing

This activity gives the children the opportunity to bless all those present and all those who could not be with them for the day. This helps the children to know that their presence in the classroom is important and that they are missed when they are absent.

Lead the children in a blessing for all those who are part of your spiritual family.

Sacred Breath

This is the time when we use a breathing exercise to de-stress and to move our attention into the present moment. If the children are distracted and moving around it will be more difficult for them to pay attention to what is happening in the circle.

Breathing Examples Include:

- **Be a Balloon:** Extend your arms out to your sides, about waist high. Then breathe in by taking small breaths through your nose and with each breath, raise your arms until your hands meet over your head. It is like pumping up a balloon. Hold for a few seconds and then release your breath as if you were a balloon deflating.
- **Be a Drain:** Tighten up all of your muscles - even your face. Lift your shoulders as high as they will go and clench your fists. Hold for a few seconds and then relax everything allowing the tensions to leave your body.

Share A Prayer

Share the, *Prayer for Protection,*" or another prayer that you would like the children to know.

Love Offering

Lead the children in blessing the love offering by inviting them to hold their offering in their hand (*their offering can be money or can be anything they would like to bless the world with, such as: love, joy, peace*) and pray the blessing of your choice. Then pass the basket and invite each child to add their offering.

Celebrations

Invite the children to share something they would like to celebrate. Use noise makers and pom-poms to cheer after each celebration.



“The Phoenix Rising”

Before the Movie...

Before showing the movie, explain to the children that we will be watching a little bit of the movie each week and then we will explore what each part represents. This week we explore the power of letting go and how letting go adds to our healing.

“Harry Potter & the Chamber of Secrets” - DVD Chapter: 19 (6 Minutes)

Begin as Harry is walking through the hall and end when Harry turns to walk out of Dumbledore’s office.

Harry is in Dumbledore’s office and sees the Phoenix on his perch. All of a sudden the bird bursts into flames and turns to ash. Harry is very upset, thinking that he may be blamed for what happened.

When Dumbledore comes in he looks at the pile of ashes and declares that it was “about time!” He then explains that the Phoenix is eternal and the body it had been in was very old and it was time to let go of the old (body) and begin anew. Soon a new chick would grow out of the ashes to be his pet once again.

Story Focus/Interpretation

The Phoenix represents, in us, the power to let go and rise again from any difficulty or challenge. When we are willing to let the past go and to be focused on the present, we are able to fully engage with life and to see all of the blessings that are around us.

It is said that the Phoenix’s tears have healing properties. This reinforces the idea that letting go and rising again is a good thing. When we live appreciatively in the cycle of life: engaging in our life experiences; feeling our feelings; letting go; moving on; gaining the wisdom; rising again, it is a healing force in our lives.

Discussion Questions

- What does Harry encounter in that hall?
- What does Filch say to Harry?
- What does Harry see next?
- Who comes into the hall next?
- Where does she take Harry?
- What does Harry see when he first enters Dumbledore's office?
- What does the Sorting Hat say to him?
- What does Harry ask the Hat?
- What is the Hat's response?
- What happens next?
- What does Dumbledore tell him about the Phoenix?
- What does Dumbledore say is fascinating about the Phoenix?
- What does Dumbledore tell Hagrid?
- What does Dumbledore ask Harry?
- How does Harry respond?
- How did you feel when the Phoenix burst into flames?
- How did you feel when the new chick was born?
- Dumbledore said that the Phoenix was carrying a heavy load. What do you think that means?
- If a "heavy load" means having a lot of things on your mind or worrying about something, what kind of "heavy load" are you carrying?
- How does it make you feel?
- What are some ways that you could let go of some of the things you are carrying?
- When we are worried about something and we have an opportunity to talk to someone who loves us, how does that feel?
- What are some things we can do to help others?

Creative Activity

Lesson #7



Healing Water

The purpose of this activity is to explore letting go and our healing powers.

Supplies

- Water dissolving paper, cut into small pieces, 1 piece/child
- Permanent Sharpie markers
- Large bowl of water

Action Part

- Give each child a piece of water dissolving paper.
- Tell them that the dissolving paper represents the concerns and worries that are weighing them down.
- Invite them to think, for a moment, about what that means to them personally.
- Then invite them to choose a Sharpie marker. Share with them that this kind of marker is permanent so be careful not to get it on their clothes.
- Invite them to think of a personal affirmation that helps them to remember that they are not alone or reminds them of what it feels like to feel light and free, with no worries weighing them down. *(You may need to help the younger children come up with the correct wording. One way is to begin with, "I Am _____," and invite them to fill in the blank.)*
- Ask them to write the affirmation on their piece of paper using the permanent marker.
- Once they have finished this step, invite them to gather around the large bowl of water. Share with them that the water represents our healing powers and the Spirit of God within us.
- Lead them in a short prayer of release focusing on the power of the Christ within to always be there to lift us up as we become willing to let go of what is bothering us. Then invite them to, one by one, place their piece of paper in the water.
- Observe what happens. *(The paper will begin to dissolve but the words written in permanent marker will continue to float on the surface of the water.)*

Share

- What did you observe?
- What do you think it means?
- What happened to the paper?
- What is left?
- How does your inner Christ support you in life?

Creative Activity

Lesson #7



Games of Skill & Mystery

Rising Up

The purpose of this activity is to explore ways of releasing our burdens and lightening up.

Supplies

- Helium Balloons with a weight on the bottom, 2/ classroom
- Small blank slips of paper, 2 or 3/ child
- Paper clips, 2 or 3/child
- Small pieces of playdough

Action

- Hand out the slips of paper to the children and invite the children to write down different things they worry about or some things that are bothering them.
- Explain to the children that the balloons represent our God-selves. When we are free from worry (nothing is attached to the string of the balloon) we float free and easy allowing Spirit (the air) to guide us. Let the balloon float free (*make sure the string is long enough for you to retrieve it*).
- But, when we weigh down our soul with unnecessary worries, by being unwilling to let go of the past, etc – we don't float as free and Spirit (*the air*) has a harder time guiding us to where we need to go.
- Invite the children to attach the paper clips to their slips of paper.
- Use small pieces of playdough to attach the paper clips to the string of the balloon. (*Make sure to add enough weight so the balloon barely rises.*)
- Release the balloons and observe what happens.

Sharing

- What did you notice?
- What happened to the free balloons?
- What happened to the balloons that were weighted down by "stuff."
- How do you see this happening in your life or the world?
- What are some ways to help the balloon fly free again? (*Invite the children to create affirmations for each note attached to the balloon. Invite them to notice what happens as you say each affirmation and then remove it from the balloon.*)
- What are some things you can do to help yourself feel lighter and freer?

Quick Tips...

- Each Youth Ministry program is unique as to how the morning is closed. Some programs end with the students joining the adults in the Sanctuary and some close on their own,
- No matter how your program is designed, offering a closing to the students helps them find completion with the lessons, helps them create a bridge to next week and gives them an opportunity to share what they have experienced.

Reconnecting Activity

- Create a ritual that invites the students back into the circle. You might use a song, ring a bell, or create a clap.

Closing Song

- Using a song of your choice, invite the students to sing together. The purpose is to assist them in bringing their attention back to the circle.

Random Acts of Kindness

- Share all the kindness expressed today.

Sacred Sharing

- Invite the students to share what the day's experience meant to them.

Sacred Breath

- Close with a centering breath or a brief meditation.

Closing Commitment:

- Invite the class to close with the class motto or a "Yea, God!"

SAMPLE

What heals and supports me...

