

6. Now have them look at the picture of the priests blessing grapes. Read *Our Armenian Way*. Tell the children that the priest, like Jesus who blessed the fish and the bread, blesses the grapes before they are given out to the people. 5 min.
7. Snack. This week teach the last line of the *Prayer Before Meals* in English – “Blessed is the Lord in his gifts. Amen.” Remember to say the prayer in Armenian every Sunday to allow the children to hear it and become familiar with it. 5 min.
8. Remain at the table. Read *We Celebrate* together. Then say: “To help us remember the miracle of the bread and the fish and the blessing of the grapes, you are going to make a place mat.” Give out yellow or white paper, 11"x18". Explain to the children that they will fringe the two short ends of their place mats. Demonstrate how to fringe. (They may need your help with this.)
9. “In the center of the mat, glue the *Prayer Before Meals*. Draw a bunch of grapes in each corner and draw two fish and five loaves of bread around the *Jashagestzook* prayer.” Help with the drawing and distribute stickers, if you’re using them (a combination of stickers and children’s drawings are better than stickers alone). They might also want to add some of the ideas they gave when answering *We Celebrate* questions. When they are finished, remind the children that the place mats will help them retell the stories to their parents. 15 min.
10. Story Time: “The Baby is Blessed”
After discussing story questions, conclude: “So here were Simeon and Anna finally seeing the baby they had waited so long for, the baby who would change the world. They were so happy they shared the good news. You, too, can share the good news of Jesus.”
11. Dismissal. 10 min.

Lesson 4: God’s Amazing Zoo

Key Concepts

1. God created the animals.
2. God wants us to care for them.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Examine the display table.
2. Participate in a discussion of animal habitats.
3. Listen to the Bible reading about the creation of the animals.
4. Review God’s message about caring for animals.
5. Learn about “bird letters.”
6. Color a bird letter representing the first initial of their name.

Materials Needed

1. On the display table, a book of bird letters (or just the one from today’s lesson), a globe, library book(s) with pictures of animals.
2. Other materials needed: crayons, optional: stick glue, sequins, shapes, etc. for children to decorate their letters with; bird letters (one for every child’s first name initial, available from the book *Aravod Looso*; if you do not have the book *Aravod Looso* (a copy was sent to every Sunday School), contact the

Department of Christian Education at the Diocese for the letters) crayons or colored pencils.
3. A Children's Bible.

Background for Teacher

Armenian artists have always been fascinated with nature, especially birds. In the 12th – 14th centuries, artists began to form letters of the alphabet into the shapes of fish and men as well as birds.

Some information you can share with the children: Wild animals - like bears, mountain cats, deer and boar - can be found in the mountains of Armenia. There are 346 different kinds of birds in Armenia. Some birds are year-round residents; others come for seasonal stays.

Procedure

1. Welcome the children and direct them to the display table, calling their attention to the bird letters.
2. Stand to say the opening prayer together. 10 min.
3. Invite the children to join you in the story corner. Direct children's attention to the pictures of animals on the opening page. Read *Our Life Together*. Have available reference books on animals from a local library and a globe. Show just a few pictures. Discuss questions. 10 min.
4. Read *God's Word To Us*. Say: "This story is found in the Bible where we read all about how God created the animals, the birds and the creatures living in the ocean. (You can hold up a Bible and point to Genesis.)"
5. Ask: "Where is the picture of a monkey?" Review *We Learn About God* together. Spend a few moments to ask the children about their favorite animals. 5 min.
6. Go to the table. Show some bird letters as you read from *Our Armenian Way*. Ask the children to repeat the Armenian word for bird letter – *turch-na-keer*. Say: "This word comes from the word, *tur-choon*, bird, and *keer*, letter." 5 min.
7. Snack. 10 min.
8. Read *We Celebrate*. Give out the bird letters and say: "This is a bird letter. It is the first letter of your name. Color (decorate) it." When the children have finished, tape the letters to a wall so they can spend time looking at them. 10 min.
9. Story Time: "In My Father's House"
Conclude story time: "Mary kept thinking about how special Jesus was. Let's remember all week about how special Jesus is to us."
10. Dismiss the class. 10 min.

Lesson 5: God Made You and Me

Key Concepts

1. God made us with love.
2. God wants us to love one another.