

ADDING SCIENCE FUN TO SUNDAY LESSONS

Science is EVERYWHERE and in EVERYTHING we do if we just look for it. Offering Practical Spirituality, Unity centers are the perfect place to add some science to our spiritual discussions. Here are a few starter activities to get the ball rolling (oooooh, you could roll a ball to each other too!) ...

ACTIVITY TO ADD	HOW TO DO IT	TOPICAL TIE INs
CLEAR GEL BALLS IN WATER	Get some of the clear gel balls that are popular in floral arrangements (cheap at the dollar store and already expanded), or available at Steve Spangler Science online (dehydrated and much more expensive but easier to store) – fill a clear pitcher up to halfway with the balls, then further with water – with hand over spout, pour water out, leaving gel balls.	ONENESS – when the gel balls are in a pitcher of water they are basically invisible. Discuss the Oneness of Godness, and how in Truth we are all a part of the whole, then pour the water into an empty pitcher but leave the balls in to illustrate how we are individual expressions within the One.
CROSS THE LINE	Put a large line of blue painter’s masking tape (easiest to remove) across the middle of an area on the floor. Have students line up on one side of the line. Pose statements. Students will cross the line if they agree with the statement, then move back when instructed. Statement possibilities: * I like school * I don’t like school * School is easy * School is hard * Roller coasters are fun * Roller coasters are scary * I usually get along with people * I have a hard time getting along * New things are fun * New things are scary * I like to learn * Learning is hard	BELIEF/FAITH - Faith is what we believe, and what we believe creates the quality of the life we will lead. After activity, discuss and reflect on results and reactions.
ENERGY STICK	Available online or in some toy departments – creates an energy circuit when you touch both ends – and many people can join hands to create a large circuit as well, passing the energy through each body.	CONNECTEDNESS/ONENESS – you can first show one person making the circuit, then that two can, then join the entire group together, making a powerful statement about how we share our energy and how we are connected. It also demonstrates how our energy affects others.

FLOWERS	The purpose of a flower on a plant is to attract bees and butterflies for pollination, after pollination creating seeds, and then dying and falling to the ground to plant the seeds. After exploration, students can make flowers or take live ones home to pass on what they have learned (becoming the teacher).	ENDINGS ARE ALSO BEGINNINGS, TRANSITION, MAKING PEACE WITH CHANGE – we can talk about how things might change in our lives, and then, through illustrating and discussing what flowers are there for, we can explore how death isn't THE end, just one end in a string of things that change from one form to another.
GUESS THE OBJECT	Put small objects in brown paper bags for the students to reach in and identify using only their sense of touch.	PERCEPTION, AWARENESS, APPRECIATION OF OUR SENSES, REACHING PAST WHAT WE SEE
HAND SANITIZER	With a squirt of hand sanitizer, students can explore how we can see it, then not – though even after it is gone we can smell it and know that the water in it has evaporated, going back to join in the always present water cycle, and that some of it is now a part of their hands. This can lead to fantastic discussions!	ONENESS, TRANSCENDENCE, TRANSITION ...
LARVAE (MEAL WORMS, SUPER WORMS OR CATERPILLARS)	You can purchase larvae in most pet stores and if you maintain them, students can see the life cycles they go through, and can have hands-on time handling larvae as well if you have volunteers that are willing to handle them.	TRANSITION, FAITH THROUGH CHANGE – Students can discuss how they feel they have changed since they were babies, since they were years younger, and even the last ways they can remember they have changed. Metamorphosis can show how immense change can be in a way students can relate to.
LENSES/GLASSES	Purchase sunglasses, cut out large cardboard frames or get party favor-type multi-faceted viewers at the dollar store for discussion about how we see everything through our lenses of perception. Allowing ourselves to look through new eyes, we expand our view of the world. Students can decorate frames with affirming words or pictures as reminders.	PERCEPTION, AWARENESS, APPRECIATION, TOLERANCE, INCLUSION ...

<p>“MINDFUL MOMENTS” JARS</p>	<p>Use pickle or spaghetti sauce-style jars with the labels and glue removed. Add water, glitter, food coloring and even small beads or objects, along with either a few drops of clear glue or corn syrup to thicken the water. Seal the jars with glue of desired. Shake the jar to create a swirl, and settle as the jar contents settle.</p>	<p>MEDITATION, PRAYER, SILENCE, MINDFULNESS, QUIET, SELF-SOOTHING ...</p>
<p>OUBLECK</p>	<p>Oobleck is this wonderful substance that when you push against it, it becomes rigid and hard ... but if you gently interact it flows like liquid (recipe attached). You can give everyone a small container of it with instructions on what to do with it to take home.</p>	<p>NONRESISTANCE, PATIENCE, ALLOWING, ACCEPTANCE – This can allow great discussions about what the students are experiencing as they interact, and around the concept of ALLOWING or NONRESISTANCE in general.</p>
<p>PINECONE BIRD FEEDERS</p>	<p>Add a pipe cleaner at the top for a holder/hanger, and then roll pinecones in peanut butter and then in bird seed.</p>	<p>ONENESS, CONNECTEDNESS, SERVICE, STEWARDSHIP ...</p>
<p>PLAY DOUGH</p>	<p>Making play dough with the students is a great way to open conversation about how sometimes in life, different things can come together to create something wonderful, even if we can't see it at the time. (see recipe attached)</p>	<p>CREATION/CREATIVITY, PATIENCE ...</p>
<p>PUZZLES</p>	<p>From word searches to mazes to toys, puzzles can be used to look at (and discuss) how sometimes to reach our answers, our guidance, our solutions ... it may seem like we have very far to go and distractions can abound ... and as we explore the frustrations that can arise while solving the puzzles, we will explore how we can calm the storm and relax, even as we encounter things that might make us feel we can't.</p>	<p>FAITH, BELIEF, CALMING & CENTERING TOOLS, ACCEPTANCE, PATIENCE ...</p>

RESISTANCE IS FUTILE	You can use tug of war, Chinese finger traps, anything that creates resistance to illustrate how what we resist, persists. Resistance creates opposition and makes things tougher than they need to be – or even energizes the ‘opposition’. If we allow what is to simply be, to feel what we need to feel about it and then see how we can work with and within it, we can find acceptance and even empowerment in any situation.	ACCEPTANCE, NONRESISTANCE, FAITH, AWARENESS, OPENING
SEEDS	Mustard seeds (with Bible verse lesson), flowers or food-bearing plants – small or even large ones like coconuts can be used for this. You can do anything from simply explain that to grow, seeds must break open to sprout (opening ourselves to grow), send students home with seeds in small starter pots or Ziploc bags with wet paper towels, or just a large seed as a remembrance.	FAITH, BELIEF – Everything that we believe grows something in our life. Our beliefs are like seeds. Some beliefs are strong and big and grow big things, and some are tiny and don’t grow much. All can grow and help to sustain life though
SHIFT THE BALANCE	Have a teeter totter-type apparatus, two cups of water to add marbles or rocks to, or even two bags someone holds, having students add a ball or item to one of the bags while making statements or asking opinion questions about whether they think something is “good” or “bad”, and watch what happens to the balance.	AWARENESS, BALANCE, OPENNESS, PERCEPTION, JUDGEMENT ...
SLIME/GOO	This is a great way to talk with students about how random things some together to create fun, how we sometimes need to look for a bigger picture, how we interact with others to change an outcome and so much more fun! (see recipe attached)	CREATION/CREATIVITY, REACTION, PATIENCE, OPENNESS, MEDITATION, MINDFULLNESS, CALM, SILENCE

SNACKING FOR SOCIAL SOLUTIONS	<p>Random items in Ziploc bags to students, (crackers, cheese, pretzels, peanut butter, celery – items that would not necessarily be best alone) – ask how we could make this snack time better, we will have snacks pre-bagged, with only 1 kind of item in a bag. Don't ask students what they want, just hand everyone a bag and ask them to wait before they open it. Once all are distributed, ask if each person would have a well-rounded snack experience with the ONE item they have. When everyone says no, ask them to look around the room and share any ideas they might have to make snack time "better" for everyone. (someone is bound to say they could share their snacks, which is part of what we will be exploring today). Once the group explores possibilities, pool snacks or share them and let the students take this on themselves.</p>	<p>COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, PROBLEM SOLVING, ONENESS ...</p>
SPIRALS	<p>illustrate how when we lay the spiral down flat, we see how as it goes around and around things are right next to each other, and when we stretch it out we see the upward movement. We will talk about how in our life we revisit similar situations repeatedly and how we can be different each time we do (as in the first day of preschool or kindergarten as compared to the first day of fourth grade).</p>	<p>FAITH, ACCEPTANCE, NONRESISTANCE ...</p>
THAUMOTROPE (circle discs)	<p>Cut circles out of cardstock or old file folders, at least 2" across. Punch holes out on sides and loop yarn through them. Have students draw one picture on one side, and another on the other, then spin to combine separate pictures into one image.</p>	<p>SEPARATE THINGS COME TOGETHER TO MAKE SOMETHING NEW, ALL OF THE ABOVE AS WELL!</p>

<p>THUMBS DOWN!</p>	<p>Tape down everyone's thumbs! (there is generally a lot of giggling and silliness when this takes place) Once everyone has their thumb immobilized, set up an obstacle course of tasks everyone needs to accomplish ~ with no thumbs ~ including buttoning a button, drawing a smiley face, building a tower of blocks, gluing something down) ... all will be at different levels of difficulty. After the course, sit down to share experiences and discuss how life without any one of us would be very different, and sometimes difficult!</p>	<p>ONENESS ...</p>
<p>THUNDER TUBE</p>	<p>You can purchase these or even Google how to make them for the group. We can use them to discuss fears, how our actions amplify and move outward to touch others, how we can react to something that really can't hurt us ... so many possibilities!</p>	<p>FAITH, RADIATING LIGHT, LETTING GO OF FEAR ...</p>
<p>TUNING FORK</p>	<p>Strike a tuning fork and hold it in the air and it doesn't seem to do much. Touch the end to the surface of a table and you will hear it get louder and feel the vibration radiating through the table. Leads to discussing how we resonate, what we send out, etc.</p>	<p>RESONANCE ...</p>
<p>WEB OF YARN</p>	<p>Roll up a sizable ball of yarn. Have everyone stand in a circle or sit around a table. Have the person who starts hold the end, then roll or toss the ball to someone across the circle. That person will catch the ball, take hold of the string they caught and toss the ball across to the next person (while holding onto the string they caught). Keep tossing, catching, holding and tossing over</p>	<p>ONENESS, ALL OF THE ABOVE!</p>

	<p>and over until everyone is holding one or several parts of the whole string, creating a web affect. Take a moment to see (and discuss) how we are all connected, and then have one person let go. Observe and discuss the effect on the whole. Repeat with another person and so on, depending on how large your circle is. We can discuss and gain understanding about how each of us impacts the whole as individuals.</p>	
SO MANY MORE!!!	HAVE FUN FINDING MORE TO INCORPORATE!	

“Slime” (or Flubber, Goo - or Polly the Polymer!)

- * Pitcher or large cups
- * Equal parts glue and water (we'll say 2 cups for this example)
- * Borax (about ¼ cup)
- * Water (4 cups)

1. In one container, mix equal parts glue and water.
 2. Pour water in another container, and dissolve the borax into it by stirring.
 3. Pour the glue/water solution into the borax/water mixture and stir for about a minute. A chemical reaction will create your Goo!
 4. Remove the “Slime” you have created from the water solution after about a minute and work it through to make sure that it is completely mixed. Have fun!
 5. If you would like your goo to have a color, there are two ways to accomplish that. First, you can simply put food coloring in the glue/water before you put it into the borax/water. My favorite way though, is to leave it white when you make it, and then as you play with it, flatten it out like a pancake and color the top side with a regular marker or highlighter. Fold the colored side in, and play with the goo normally. The color will mix through the goo with time, but will look like tie dye as it initially starts mixing. Colors will blend as they move through the goo. Don't mix too many, or you will end up with a yucky greyish color.
- ** DO NOT let your polymer come into contact with cloth or paper ~ it will stick!! If it somehow does get stuck on cloth, try to remove it immediately by hand or with soap and water. If that will not remove it add vinegar, and scrape it off. The vinegar will dissolve the polymer.

“Oobleck”

- * Large bowl or baking pan with high sides
- * Cornstarch (1 box)
- * Water (approximately 1 ½ cups)
- * Food coloring, if desired

1. Add the water slowly, until you have about the texture of pancake batter.
 2. If you would like color, add the food coloring.
 3. Run your hands slowly through the mixture to experience it in liquid form, or quickly to see how solid it can become. Have fun!
- ** DO NOT pour this down your drain, it will clog it up! When you are done playing with this, simply throw it in the garbage.

REALLY EASY UNCOOKED PLAY-DOUGH

You will need:

- * 1 cup salt
- * 1 cup water
- * 2 cups flour
- * Large mixing bowl, if desired
- * Any color food coloring
- * Something waterproof (like a plastic tablecloth) to cover your work surface

1. Measure out 2 cups of flour, and pour it into the bowl or put it on the table surface.
2. Measure out 1 cup of salt, and add that to the flour. Mix the two together lightly. If you are using just the table as your work surface, create a hole in the center of the flour/salt mixture to pour your water into.
3. Measure out 1 cup of water and pour it into the bowl, or the center of your mixture.
4. Put several drops of food coloring into the water. If you would like to give it a scent, you can add a few drops of vanilla or other extracts.
5. Mix the ingredients together, using a spoon, spatula, or even your hands! As you mix, the dough will start to form. Continue to knead the dough. Once the dough is formed, it will pick up any previous mess in the bowl or on the table, just like magic!

Time to 'tweak' your dough. If it's too dry, put water on your hands and knead the dough. Too wet? Add a bit more flour. Not the right color? Add some more food coloring and knead some more.

6. Store your dough in a Zip-lock bag or airtight container. It will last about a week, possibly longer if you refrigerate it. Have fun!

PLEASE NOTE: There is the same amount of salt and water, and twice as much flour ... you can make the recipe as many cups, bowls or buckets as you wish with that equation. Feel free to double, triple, or even more!