



Helping Kids Use Their Words Wisely God’s Way

When Words Tear Down Instead of Build Up

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explain why gossip and unkind words can damage trust and relationships.
2. Describe how Miriam and Aaron’s words hurt Moses and upset God.
3. Practice using words that build others up instead of tearing them down.

Scripture Focus

- “When the cloud lifted from above the tent, Miriam’s skin was leprous—it became as white as snow.” (Numbers 12:10, *ESV*)
- “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up.” (Ephesians 4:29, *ESV*)

Lesson Flow (25 min)

1. Connect (3 min)

- **Opening Thought:** Ask: “Have you ever been part of a conversation where someone said something mean or untrue about another person? How did that make you feel?”
- **Assessment:** Teacher observes student attentiveness and willingness to share.

2. Teach (7 min)

- **Bible Story:** Read or retell the story of Miriam and Aaron Speaking Against Moses (Numbers 12:1-15)

Moses’ sister Miriam and brother Aaron started talking badly about Moses behind his back. They were jealous and said unkind things, questioning whether God really spoke only through Moses. But God heard their words. He called them to the Tent of Meeting and reminded them that Moses was His chosen leader. When God’s presence lifted, Miriam’s skin became white with leprosy—a serious sign showing that their gossip had caused harm.

Aaron quickly apologized, and Moses prayed for his sister's healing. God forgave them, and Miriam was healed after seven days outside the camp. This story reminds us that God cares deeply about the words we speak and the hearts they come from. Words should not be weapons—they are meant to build trust, bring peace, and reflect God's love. Gossip divides, but forgiveness and wise words can heal.

- **Discussion Questions:**

1. Why did God become upset with Miriam and Aaron's words?
2. How did Moses respond when his sister was punished?

- **Explain:**

- God hears every word we say, even the ones whispered.
- Words should not be weapons. Using kind, truthful words shows respect for God and others.

- **Assessment:** Teacher checks understanding through student answers and engagement.

3. Model (7 min)

- **Teacher shares:** an honest story about a time you caught yourself saying something unkind and how you made it right.
- **Student activity:** Invite kids to play "Wise Words Pictionary" or role-play short "word choice" scenarios—one where gossip spreads hurt and another where someone wisely corrects or encourages a friend in private instead of telling others.
- **Assessment:** Teacher notes engagement and ability to apply wise-speech principles to examples.

4. Pray (2-3 min)

- "Dear God, help us use our words wisely. Teach us to stop gossip before it starts and to speak truth and kindness instead. Thank You for forgiving us when we fail. Make our mouths speak words of truth in love. Amen."
- **Assessment:** Teacher observes participation and reverence during prayer.

5. Closing/Reflection (5 min)

- **Key Takeaway:** Speak truth that helps, not words that hurt.
- **Student Reflection:** Ask students to write or share one way they can "build up" someone this week with their words—through encouragement, honesty, or kindness.
- **Teacher closes:** Remind students that every word we speak can build or break. Choose to build up with your words and reflect God's heart wherever you go.
- **Assessment:** Teacher listens for understanding and willingness to apply the lesson.

Optional Extension: Independent Practice

- Have students create a "Words That Build" poster. On one side, list examples of gossip or hurtful talk; on the other, write kind, truthful words that heal. Display them to encourage positive speech.