

Religious Studies Lesson

The Boys' Brigade & The Girls' Brigade actually appear on some RS syllabuses. Schools may be interested in a leader coming in and talking about the activities provided for young people in a faith setting, why churches have special activities for young people, and what activities are undertaken with a special interest in how they linked to Christianity.

The following ideas can be used in conjunction with the associated PowerPoint presentation:

- Introduce yourself and tell the group what you plan to cover in the session, e.g. A brief history of The Boys' Brigade, what The Boys' Brigade is like today, and the impact that it makes.
- Play "Who wants to be a Millionaire?". This activity will give you an opportunity to explore the history of The Boys' Brigade. In between questions to very briefly expand on any points, e.g. after question 2 explain that whilst the majority of members of the organisation are male that there are also female members, also note that the vast majority of members are not from Church attending backgrounds. You may like to introduce prizes (check with the teaching staff first!) for the relevant milestones whilst playing. Use the normal rules, but when an answer is incorrect ask for a new player and continue the game from where the last contestant ended.
- Now move on to describe The Boys' Brigade today. Begin with a brief explanation telling the young people that every BB group is attached to a church and typically meets in a church hall, leaders are appointed by the Church typically from their members, and The Boys' Brigade is used as part of their out reach into the local community. Explain that through our activities we seek to do things that typically you can't do at school or at home.
- Now begin to explore the under-11 age groups and give the group a picture of each section, e.g. Anchors is fun, creative and noisy, in Juniors we encourage independence, adventure, and opportunities to look beyond themselves. Tell the group the ages, range and example of activities (e.g. Body, Mind, Spirit, Creativity, and Community), and entitlements that children attending BB have.
- Now do the same with the older age groups. Begin by showing the recruitment movie. Begin explaining that the emphasis of the Discover programme is on involvement in decision making, and learning new skills. Say Challenge Plus focuses on planning and young people delivering their own programme, learning life skills and children's and youth work leadership skills. Describe the range of activities, e.g. Community, Creativity and Skills, giving examples. You may like to include a bit about the major awards and residential.
- Move on to talk about how The Boys' Brigade is linked to the Christian Faith. Explain that every group is associated with a church or group of churches, but that we welcome children and young people from any or no faith. Suggest that a high percentage of children and young people have no other connection with church, and consequently we cater for the varied interests of all children & young people. Some activities have a specific/ explicit faith element, and some activities don't. Emphasise that we don't just have a narrow spiritual interest in

Key Tips!

- Have some recruitment leaflets to give out.
- This could be a great opportunity to gain some volunteers. Use some of the student recruitment material, and remind them that it can count towards any DofE volunteering.
- It may be appropriate to work alongside The Girls' Brigade to deliver this session

children & young people, but also a physical, emotional, mental, and social concern. Remind the group of the parable of the sheep and goats from Matthew 25. Explain that Jesus teaches us that whenever we do anything for those in need, it is like we are doing it to him. Consequently, you can't speak about Jesus with any authority if you're not also interested in other areas of children and young people's lives, e.g. health, emotional well being, or whether they've got a job. Therefore whatever we do is ultimately linked to faith, as it's all connected!

- Split the larger group into three, and get each section to think about why different groups might be interested in organisations like The Boys' Brigade (e.g. children, young people, parents, churches). Tell the group about some of our research:
 1. Motivations for children attending BB - Good fun (63); Play Games (46%); Friendships (10%); Learn about God (9%); Praise & Achievement (6%); Educational & Learn skills (5%)
 2. Motivation for parents – Increase in child's confidence, independence, self esteem & self value (58%); Friendships with children of different backgrounds and ages (46%); Involved in wide range of activities and skills (40%) Christian morals and role models (26%), fun & happy place (18%)
 3. Tell the group that The Boys' Brigade tries to act as a bridge builder between the Church and the local community. Explain that between 1995-2005 there was a 62% drop in 10-19 year olds attending church, and 59% of churches now have no one attending aged 15-19. Add that 83% of young people believe their community doesn't care about them. The Boys' Brigade wants to partner with churches to demonstrate that they do care about young people. We believe that if churches want 16 year olds in their congregation they need to provide age appropriate activities, if children & young people start engaging in church activities then the rest of their family and friends could follow.
- Finish by summarising what you have covered in the session, e.g. A brief history of The Boys' Brigade, what The Boys' Brigade is like today, and the impact that it makes. Remember to thank the group, and give them a handout summarising the information you have given to them.