Teacher’s notes

Suggestions for your session
About MAF

Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) is a Christian organisation which flies small planes in 27 developing countries worldwide. Flights carry people and supplies to communities living far from roads, medical clinics, hospitals or shops. A short flight can save hours — and sometimes even days — of difficult and dangerous travel. Today is a special opportunity to learn more about MAF and to join with other churches and Sunday School groups across the world in praying for MAF’s work.

Opening activity

As you hand out the worksheets to the children, introduce them to Sadrick (not his real name), the young boy on the front who lives in a remote place called Mougulu in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

Because there are no roads, the only way in and out of his village is on foot or by MAF aircraft. It takes 7 days to walk to the nearest town but just 28 minutes to fly!

Following an earthquake which hit PNG last year, MAF planes have delivered all sorts of supplies to help people in communities like Mougulu to rebuild their homes and churches.

Flights have carried food, medicine, volley balls, soccer balls, Bibles, guitars, tambourines, saws, spanners, hinges, padlocks and solar lights. (You may need to recap this list when the children do the Cargo Scramble on the back of the worksheet!)

Sadrick’s dream is to become a pilot or aircraft maintenance engineer one day. Ask the children about their dreams for the future.

- What do you dream of doing when you are older?
- What skills, abilities or special talents do you think you might need?
Listening game

It’s important that no one sees your props before or during this listening game! Collect a few items which make a distinctive noise and ask the children to work out what’s making each sound.

You could:

• Rustle an empty crisp packet
• Set an alarm clock to ring
• Play a mobile phone ringtone
• Shake a jar of pasta or rice
• Blow a whistle or recorder
• Open a bottle of fizzy water
• Sit on a whoopee cushion!

Discuss with the children which noise would be most likely to wake them up if they heard it in the middle of the night.

Story time

Introduce the story by telling the children they are going to hear about a boy in the Bible called Samuel, who was about 12 years old when he heard an unexpected sound during the night.

But first, you could share a little about his family:

A lady called Hannah was deeply sad because she had no children. She prayed for a son and promised God that, if her prayer was answered, she would give him back to serve the Lord for his whole life. God answered her prayer and Hannah kept her promise.

When Samuel was old enough, she took him to the temple to serve under Eli the priest. Every year, Hannah visited the temple to worship God and bring Samuel a new robe she had made for him. The Lord blessed her and her husband with three more sons and two daughters.
**God calls Samuel (1 Samuel 3:1-10, ICB)**

The boy Samuel served the Lord under Eli. In those days the Lord did not speak directly to people very often. There were very few visions.

Eli’s eyes were so weak he was almost blind. One night he was lying in bed. Samuel was also in bed in the Lord’s Holy Tent. The Ark of the Covenant was in the Holy Tent. God’s lamp was still burning.

Then the Lord called Samuel. Samuel answered, ‘I am here!’ He ran to Eli and said, ‘I am here. You called me.’

But Eli said, ‘I didn’t call you. Go back to bed.’ So Samuel went back to bed.

The Lord called again, ‘Samuel!’

Samuel again went to Eli and said, ‘I am here. You called me.’

Again Eli said, ‘I didn’t call you. Go back to bed.’

Samuel did not yet know the Lord. The Lord had not spoken directly to him yet.

The Lord called Samuel for the third time. Samuel got up and went to Eli. He said, ‘I am here. You called me.’

Then Eli realised the Lord was calling the boy. So he told Samuel, ‘Go to bed. If he calls you again, say, “Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening.”’ So Samuel went and lay down in bed.

The Lord came and stood there. He called as he had before. He said, ‘Samuel, Samuel!’

Samuel said, ‘Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening.’
Questions and word search

Invite the children to answer the 2 questions below, based on the passage, which form 2 bonus words in the word search. There’s a space for them to write the answers on the back of their worksheets. When they complete the rest of the word search is entirely up to you!

1. Who did Samuel think was calling him? — Eli

2. How many times did God call to Samuel? — Four
Cool ‘called’ kids!

It is still possible to hear God’s voice. Ask the children to share what ways God might speak to us? (a voice, pictures, thoughts, feelings, smells). Ask the children how we can share God’s love through our talents.

These three stories feature children and young people in different parts of the world who have found ways to share God’s love with others.

Their photos appear on the worksheet, together with boxes alongside, where the children can write or draw something to remind them of the stories. There’s also an empty box where those taking part in this activity can draw a picture of themselves, and space for them to think about how they can share God’s love to encourage a neighbour, friend or family member.

Story 1: God knows what we love doing

Miles loves sport — especially football! When he and his parents moved from Arnhem Land to PNG to continue their work with MAF, he was excited to discover that a football club was starting at his school.

Not only that, but the coach is a Christian who encourages each player to be all that God has called them to be. Miles and his teammates pray before and after each training session and enjoy making new friends with other football fanatics!

Just like Miles, we can show God’s love to other people who share the things we love doing.

• Discuss the children’s hobbies and interests with them and work out which activities are good to do on your own and which ones are better with others.
Story 2: God loves a cheerful giver

Lorelai lives in Folkestone, not far from the MAF office where her mum works.

Instead of receiving presents on her sixth birthday, she asked friends to give money to MAF.

Lorelai also donated her pocket money to help buy a new plane for South Sudan. Here’s why in her own words:

‘Because the little planes help the people who are poor. They need the money to give them food, a Bible and medicine, and to take them to hospital.’

There are hundreds of different ways to raise money and bless others who don’t have the things we take for granted.

- Encourage the children to think about how they could become cheerful givers and maybe raise a few pounds for MAF one day!

Story 3: God wants us to love our neighbours

Nice is a teenager from South Sudan who was forced to leave her country because of war. She and her family now live in a refugee camp in Uganda where life is very tough.

Imagine having 600 children in your classroom and only one lesson a day because there aren’t enough teachers.

A special loan helped Nice set up a small shop selling groceries and a few treats such as sweets and bottled drinks. It’s a practical way for her to bless her neighbours and earn a little money for her family. Talk to the children about how we can show love to the people around us.

- Ask your group, ‘Do you know the names of your neighbours?’ Think about a few ways to bless and encourage those who live nearby.
Prayer time

There are some additional activities on the Children’s worksheet or you could finish your session by using the labyrinth prayers or prayer jar ideas included in the enclosed Creative ways to pray leaflet.

A few prayer pointers

• Pray that Sadrick will be able to learn the skills he needs to become a pilot or aircraft maintenance engineer one day

• Pray for Miles as he looks for new opportunities to use sport as a way to serve God

• Thank God for cheerful givers like Lorelai who support MAF’s work and inspire others to get involved

• Pray for lasting peace in South Sudan so Nice and her family can return home safely

• Just as God called Samuel by name, He knows our names, too. Ask God to bless each of the children in your group.

A prayer you could say as a group, with the children:

Thank You, Lord, that we are never too old or too young to hear Your call. Help us to be ready to do whatever You ask. Amen.