

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



PENTECOST

Acts 2:1-17 Guided by the Holy Spirit

Encourage the children to wear something red, yellow or orange for this session.

Each child will need:

- Paints (red, yellow and orange), a fork and a piece of card (black works well)

You will need:

- A sign saying 'Pentecost', some grain/wheat, a set of people (like Lego), something to represent wind, something to represent flame, phrase books, a bottle, a Bible or a cross, and all items placed in a bag
- Long piece of felt or material to unfold the story on
- Research on how different cultures greet each other – see Pray It section
<https://ideas.brf.org.uk/speaking-tongues>

Start It

Play a scavenger hunt game – with a twist.

- **Say:** In today's Bible reading, we are going to hear about people who suddenly spoke different languages – and amazingly other people could understand them! So I thought I would try this out: if I spoke a word in a different language, would you be able to bring me back the item I am asking for?
- **Say:** It is a bit of fun, so don't worry if you do not know what I am asking for – just bring back the thing you think it could be.

Have a list of items for the children to collect, in whatever language you want. You can make them as obvious or obscure as you like. If they need help, you can always tell them what room they would find it in. Here are some examples for you to add to:

- Papier (French) – paper
- Kussen (Dutch) – cushion
- Hut (German) – hat
- Pomme (French) – apple
- Penseli (Swahili) – pencil
- Telefono (Italian) – telephone
- Sac (French) – bag
- Copa (Spanish) – Cup or glass
- Schuh (German) – Shoe
- Choklad (Swedish) – chocolate

Comment on how many they got right, and how amazing it was that they (sometimes!) understood what you were asking for although it was in another language.

Tell It

Lay out a long piece of felt or material and have your bag of items ready. Then as you unfold the story, you share the related item and lay it on the felt to help the children see the order in which things happened.

🗨 **Say:** Today is Pentecost.

Show the sign saying 'Pentecost'.

🗨 **Say:** Pentecost is a very special time in the Bible when the disciples and other Christians received the Holy Spirit.

🗨 **Say:** The first Pentecost happened 50 days after Easter Sunday when Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus had already gone back to Heaven, so the disciples and new believers of Jesus were waiting to receive the Holy Spirit, because that's what Jesus told them would happen. Since Jesus wasn't with them in bodily form any more, the Holy Spirit of Jesus would help bring them closer to God.

Show the grain/wheat.

🗨 **Say:** It was a time when the Jews celebrated the end of the grain harvest. It was a time of thanksgiving when the farmers had collected their crops and all the hard work was done. The people would offer two loaves of bread they had made from their crops and two lambs from their flocks as an offering of thanks before the Lord.

🗨 **Say:** Picture it in your mind: Jerusalem – a very busy Jerusalem.

Show the people.

🗨 **Say:** There would have been a lot of people in town at the time, because they were having a special harvest celebration called the Feast of Weeks. This was an important time that all Jewish people had to honour, and they would even come from places far from Jerusalem to celebrate it.

🗨 **Say:** The disciples and other Christians had come together to thank God, when suddenly ...

Show your item that represents wind.

🗨 **Say:** Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a strong wind came from Heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. I wonder – if we all blew as hard as we can now, how much wind we could create.

Ask the children to blow as hard as they can together.

Show your item that represents flame.

🗨 **Say:** Next they saw tongues of fire that separated and came to rest of each of them. I'm not sure if they could see actual tongues of fire, or if it is simply the best way the people could explain what they felt happening. This was a special fire that did not burn up or catch their hair and clothes into flames, but showed that God's Spirit was present.

🗨 **Say:** A lot of times in the Bible God appears as fire, like the fire from the sky to Elijah and as a burning bush to Moses. In our story today the fire was the Holy Spirit!

🗨 **Say:** The Holy Spirit is sort of a special go-between. He is the Spirit of Jesus who makes all things possible. Sometimes when we don't know what to say or how to pray, the Holy Spirit comes in to help. Well, the Holy Spirit came to these disciples and appeared as flames above their heads! So not only did they experience the tongues of fire that came, they were also filled with the Holy Spirit.

Show the phrase book(s).

🗨 **Say:** Then another amazing thing happened. The disciples started speaking in other languages. There were lots of people in Jerusalem that day who spoke different languages, and the disciples didn't have any dictionaries or translators with them ... yet the disciples were able to make themselves understood in other languages! The Holy Spirit had given them this power. And so the disciples eagerly started sharing the story of Jesus.

🗨 **Say:** People, crowds of people, ran over to see what all the noise was about and were

amazed to hear their own languages spoken by the disciples. The Bible even lists up to 16 different places people were from who could hear their language spoken!

- **Say:** Things must have sounded crazy! Imagine all these people speaking many different languages at the same time. And the shouting! They were shouting out praises to God as they were so excited that something amazing from God had just happened to them!

Ask the children to think of an exciting thing to tell you. Then, at the command 'Go!', everyone has to share their story at the same time! See if it's possible to hear them all.

Show the bottle.

- **Say:** Some of the crowd started making fun of the disciples and started to say that they had drunk too much wine and it was the wine making them act funny. When Peter heard these rumours he raised his voice and talked to the crowd. He explained that they weren't drinking wine because it was only nine in the morning! He told them they were not drunk but were full of God's love.

Show the Bible or the cross.

- **Say:** A lot of people came to believe in Jesus that day, and after that the disciples began meeting together regularly. They shared everything with other believers, and continued meeting and sharing and caring for one another.

Video

Watch the video *God's Story: Peter preaches* by Crossroads Kids' club (2 mins 29 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKa9jqvJ378>

- **Say:** The special thing about having the Holy Spirit is that God never leaves us, so we can talk to him or ask for help at any time.
- **Say:** The Holy Spirit helps us in many ways, by comforting and teaching, by helping us grow in our relationship with God and giving us strength to get rid of the bad habits in our lives. The Holy Spirit also gives us power and helps us know when we've done something wrong and helps us understand what God wants us to do with our lives.
- **Say:** So, the Holy Spirit is super helpful to us! He becomes a part of us when we become a Christian. When we're ready to try to live a life pleasing to God, the Holy Spirit becomes part of us so we have a part of God with us all the time. And when we have our dreams, when we know what we should be doing in our lives, the Holy Spirit will help guide us in the way we should go.

Sing It

A choice of two songs this week.

Here is a song about the Holy Spirit filling us up. It's a simple repetitive song but good to join in if you don't know it.

'Holy Spirit fills me up – action dance' (2 mins 34 secs)

<https://youtu.be/K7GDwNd6uTU>

Believing in Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit can be hard sometimes. But with faith, we can trust what Jesus has ahead of us and he will help us through his Holy Spirit, to make all things possible.

[Kids song] 'By faith – lyrics' (2 mins 40 secs)

<https://youtu.be/5fCZnijbmoI>

Action It

Explain that we are going to create a picture of the Pentecost flames, the fire reflecting the power of the Holy Spirit.

Use a fork to blob some paint on to the paper and then swirl and pull or brush with the fork.

Encourage colour mixing as the 'flames' flicker together ...

As you share the painting, create a discussion:

- ➔ How might the disciples have felt seeing tongues of fire above their heads?
- ➔ How would you have felt?
- ➔ What do you know about the power of fire?
- ➔ What about the Holy Spirit? Have you experienced the Holy Spirit helping you?

🗨 **Say:** Just before we pray, let's just go back to the items we shared at the start and see if you can remember what part of the story they relate to.

Show all the items on the felt/material as a recap and ask the children to tell you what they represented.

Pray It

🗨 **Say:** When we pray, we always start by greeting God, like saying 'Dear Lord' or 'Dear Heavenly Father'. In the story today we heard that different languages were spoken.

Ask: Does anyone know how to say hello in a different language?

Share some ideas from <https://ideas.brf.org.uk/speaking-tongues>

🗨 **Say:** Let's greet Jesus in whatever language we know and ask him to let the Holy Spirit work in our lives.

Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.