

Explore It FOR LEADERS



TAKING A RISK TO HELP OTHERS

Esther 7:3-7

Today we revisit the story of Esther and learn about the Feast of Purim. After June's 'Explore It' sessions the children will be familiar with Esther's story, but today we will focus on her bravery and the way that she took a risk to help others.

Each child will need:

- Character handouts
- Finger puppets sheet (optional) – see Tell It section
- Fancy dress clothes, shakers and rattles (optional) – see Tell It section
- A range of resources to retell the story of Esther, eg paper/pens, Lego, camera, puppets ... – see Action It section

You will need:

- Large version of the memory verse on the wall Philippians 4:8 (NIV)

Start It

● **Say:** Today's session is all about a brave Queen. Her story is found in the Old Testament.

● **Say:** As a nation, in September we mourned the loss of our monarch, Queen Elizabeth II. We now have King Charles III on the throne. See if you know whether the following statements about Queen Elizabeth II are true or false.

1. Queen Elizabeth II's coronation was the first ceremony to be broadcast on the radio.
FALSE – The coronation was the first to be broadcast on the television.
2. Queen Elizabeth loved dogs and her favourite breed was the chihuahua.
FALSE – The Queen loved corgis.
3. While Queen Elizabeth II was on the throne there were 15 Prime Ministers.
TRUE – The final Prime Minister who met the Queen was Liz Truss.
4. The Queen, and now the King, are the only people in the country allowed to drive without a driving licence.
TRUE
5. Queen Elizabeth II had two birthdays.
TRUE – The Queen celebrated her actual birthday on 21 April but had an official birthday in June.

Sing It

● **Say:** In our last session we started learning our memory verse for this month. Today's song is going help us remember the words of Philippians 4:8. Before we sing the song let's read the verse together.

Read:

'Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.'

— (Philippians 4:8 NIV)

'Philippians 4:8 (think about such things)' with actions by CCBC Kids (3 mins 20 secs)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxDZiku02fl&t=113s

Tell It

● **Say:** In the last 'Explore It!' session we attended Belshazzar's feast at the royal palace.

Ask: How did Belshazzar disrespect God and his people at the feast?

● **Say:** Belshazzar and his guests used the sacred silver and gold cups from the Temple as they drank wine and worshipped pagan gods. It didn't end well for King Belshazzar!

● **Say:** In today's session we are going to look at another feast, but it doesn't take place in the story. This feast is celebrated every year to remember a story from the Old Testament of the Bible. You may have learnt about this feast at school.

Ask: What do you know about the Jewish Feast of Purim?

● **Say:** The festival of Purim remembers the story of Esther. At this festival Jews celebrate by retelling the story in the synagogue. The children dress up and act out the story, booing and shaking rattles every time the baddie appears.

● **Say:** The festival is important because it reminds people of God's power to save them.

Introduce the children to the main characters in the story of Esther using the handout.

- King Xerxes
- Queen Esther
- Mordecai – Esther's cousin
- Haman – enemy of the Jews

Give each child one of the character handouts. As they listen to the story ask them to hold up their character picture. Whenever Haman's name is mentioned, remind the children to boo!

Alternatively make finger puppets using the finger puppet sheet.

Depending on resources you could also bring fancy dress clothes for the children (or ask them to come dressed up) and provide shakers for the children who do not have a character picture. These can be used, along with the booing, when Haman's name is mentioned.

Audio story

The story of Esther by Kids Corner (3 mins 44 secs)

www.kidscorner.net/bible-stories/the-story-of-esther

● **Say:** We are going to recap the main events in the story so that you can retell it in your own way.

Discuss and display the main events of the story. The prompts below are provided if the children struggle to remember the details of the story.

- King Xerxes searched the kingdom for a new Queen.
- Esther was chosen to be the new Queen.
- Mordecai, Esther's cousin, reminded her that she was a Jew and urged her not to tell anyone as this could put her in danger.
- Haman persuaded the King to pass a law that would destroy the Jews.
- Mordecai was afraid and went to Queen Esther for help. He asked her to go and see the king.
- Esther knew that going to see the King was extremely dangerous, but she did it anyway.

- The Jews fasted and prayed to God to keep Esther safe.
- Queen Esther went to the King to speak up on behalf of the Jews and they were saved.

Ask: Would you describe Esther as brave? Explain why, or why not.

🗨️ **Say:** Esther was encouraged to be brave by her cousin Mordecai. He spoke these words to Esther.

Read:

'You might keep quiet at this time. Then someone else will help and save the Jews. But you and your father's family will all die. And who knows, you may have been chosen queen for just such a time as this.'

— (Esther 4:14 *ICB*)

🗨️ **Say:** Esther trusted God and spoke out on behalf of the Jewish people, so they were saved from the evil deeds of Haman. God asks us to speak out when people are being mistreated and he gives us the courage to do the right thing, just like Esther.

Action It

Ask the children to retell the story of Esther in their own way. Using the key events from the 'Tell It' section, encourage the children to retell the story of Esther in an interesting way. You can give the children free choice or, if you have specific resources you could use, then you could decide on behalf of the group. The main purpose of the activity is to summarise the main events in the story, share Esther's bravery and remind the children about God's faithfulness.

Here are some ideas for retelling the story:

- Comic strip
- Puppets
- Lego animation
- Act out the story in the style of a pantomime (with booing and hissing)
- Create a story book
- Finger puppets
- Create a song using a well-known tune
- Create a poem

When the creation is complete either share it together or you might like to film it (if appropriate) to share with the rest of the church.

Discuss

- What is the main message of the story of Esther?
- What can we learn from her bravery?
- What one thing could you do to trust God and follow Esther's example this week?

Pray It

🗨️ **Say:** Today we have taken the opportunity to tell the story of Esther in an interesting way. Even though she was afraid, Esther stood up to the evil she saw in the world.

Video

🗨️ **Say:** This week we will remember / have remembered the men and women who bravely stand up to evil and protect us in the armed forces. The video we are about to watch tells their story in a creative way but reminds us of their bravery.

Once the video has finished, read the prayer with the group to bring the session to a close.

A Remembrance Day-inspired Strictly Pros routine by BBC *Strictly Come Dancing* (3 mins 29

secs)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=qOEGNkOlv-4

Pray:

Heavenly Father, we ask that you would be with the soldiers who risk everything to stand up to evil, and bravely do the right thing.

We pray for their families who wait at home filled with worry.

Be with all the families who have lost someone important to them.

Protect those who are caught up in the horrors of war.

When I am afraid of the things I see around me, help me to remember the words of our memory verse.

Help me to focus on you and your faithfulness and, just like Esther, give me the courage to stand up and do the right thing.

Amen.

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

NOVEMBER
SESSION 02

TAKING A RISK TO HELP OTHERS

 Esther 7:3-7

FOR ME



Read

The book of Esther has ten chapters. See if you can read the whole book by your next 'Explore It' session. Here's a mini-reading plan to help you.

Day 1: Esther 1	Day 4: Esther 5 & 6
Day 2: Esther 2	Day 5: Esther 7 & 8
Day 3: Esther 3 & 4	Day 6: Esther 9 & 10

TOGETHER



Share

In this week's session you retold the story of Esther and discovered more about the Festival of Purim. Share everything that you have discovered with the people at home and tell them Esther's story.

'Philippians 4:8 (think about such things)' with actions by CCBC Kids

www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxDZlku02fl&t=113s



Song for the week

'Philippians 4:8 (think about such things)' with actions by CCBC Kids

www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxDZlku02fl&t=113s



Memory verse

'Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.'

— (Philippians 4:8 NIV)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

