

The Bible in English

Note: any activities involving photographing pupils must have parental permission.

Introduction

Trouble! Talk about the type of behaviour that gets people into trouble. Now imagine getting into trouble for doing something right. Pupils can create some examples and use them as a basis for drama.

Farah, you were very kind to others on the playground, so no golden time this week.

Grace, you worked really hard so no playtime for you!

Ryan, you were horrible to Jack, on the pitch last week, so you're in the school team this week.

Such a world would be very unfair. There was such a time when doing something good got you into trouble.

Core material

Explain that for many years the people of England did not have the Bible in their own language. Use as much of the presentation *The Bible in English* as is appropriate. People got into trouble – big trouble – if they translated the Bible into English, although most people would agree now that it is a good thing to do. In those

days translating the Bible into English was a crime. The King and the church rulers were frightened of people reading the Bible for themselves. They thought that English was not an appropriate language for the Bible, that the Bible was too hard for ordinary people to understand and people would become critical of their leaders if they read what the Bible said about how rulers should behave.

Tyndale worked hard for a long time to understand Hebrew and Greek so that he could translate the Bible. He had to spend many years moving from place to place so that he was not caught. He finally died for what he believed to be right. He, like Christians today, believed that reading the Bible makes a difference to life. For example the Bible comforts Christians in times of difficulty. In such times, they might read Psalm 23;

'The Lord is my Shepherd, I will not want for anything . . . though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for you are with me,' (paraphrased).

The Bible also encourages people to work for justice.

'Let justice roll like a river,' Amos 5:24 (paraphrase).

Use the presentation *Changing English John 3:16* to see how English developed and is reflected in different translations.

Select from the following activities:

The story of William Tyndale is an example of someone who risked their life to translate the Bible into English.

- Turn the story of William Tyndale into a play that can be presented as part of a school assembly. (Only refer to his death, do not re-enact it!)

1. Show the presentation **William Tyndale** without telling the story. What sense can the pupils make of it? Use the time that images are on screen for the pupils to think of ideas.
 - In groups: Pupils should read **The story of William Tyndale** and compare it to their story. How close did they come to the original story?
 - Alternatively pupils can listen to the presentation **William Tyndale**. Give pupils things to listen for.
2. Using **The story of William Tyndale**, highlight key moments and ask pupils to say why they are significant. What questions do they want to ask about Tyndale? Use these as the basis for research and discussion (see resources).
 - Decide what is important about this story for Christians.
 - Write a commentary for the presentation that will communicate the importance of Tyndale.
 - Pupils can create two extra slides for the presentation that will bring out the significance of Tyndale.

Reflection

Look at the presentation **William Tyndale** again. What qualities of character did Tyndale express? In groups pupils can create a 'word chain' to reflect the qualities Tyndale expressed in his life. Each word is written on a strip of coloured paper and then looped to form a link in the chain. Ask pupils to look at the qualities on their chain. Are there times when we can show the right qualities in the wrong situation? For example, perseverance in doing wrong is not helpful!

Resources

T Dowley *Essential Bible Reference Series The Story of the Bible* (Candle Books)

An American children's animated version of *The William Tyndale Story* is available for purchase online. A preview is available at www.chitorch.org/index.php/torchlighters/ Teachers will need to check DVDs for suitability.

The Queen's Smuggler by D and N Jackson (Bethany House publishers). A novel for 9-12 years olds.