

JOURNEY IN... YEAR THREE

ON BEING HUMAN

MUSIC

This lesson's Big Ideas:

- Being human means having a capacity to speak and do both good and evil things and plenty of things in-between.
- Good and evil aren't forces that can exist in a vacuum. They are consequences of our actions which are influenced by many factors in our lives. We have to live with the consequences of all our actions, both good and evil and everywhere in between.
- Unitarian Universalists commit themselves to discerning good from evil using our own hearts and minds, to affirming the inherent worth and dignity of all, and to standing on the side of goodness. and love.

Lesson Materials

- CD of 8-10 tracks of movie music—*leitmotifs* for "good guys" and "bad guys"
- CD of two karaoke background tracks for rap songs
- Flipchart & markers or chalkboard
- Paper, pencils
- Other instruments

TEACHER REFLECTION AND PREPARATION

🕒 Ahead of time

Even on this small stage we have our two sides, and something might be done by throwing all one's weight on the scale of breadth, tolerance, charity, temperance, peace, and kindness to man and beast. We can't all strike very big blows, and even the little ones count for something.

- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

"Are there, infinitely varying with each individual, inbred forces of Good and Evil in all of us, deep down below the reach of mortal encouragement and mortal repression - hidden Good and hidden Evil, both alike at the mercy of the liberating opportunity and the sufficient temptation?"

- Wilkie Collins

"The forces that tend for evil are great and terrible, but the forces of truth and love and courage and honesty and generosity and sympathy are also stronger than ever before."

"War with evil; but show no spirit of malignity toward the man who may be responsible for the evil. Put it out of his power to do wrong."

- Theodore Roosevelt

"It is a man's own mind, not his enemy or foe, that lures him to evil ways."

-Siddhartha Buddha

"Men do not differ much about what things they will call evils; they differ enormously about what evils they will call excusable."

- GK Chesterton

"All that is required for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing."

- Edmund Burke

Reflect on your own perspective on good and evil. What has your life taught you about human nature? Do any of the above ideas conflict with or reflect your own beliefs? As a Unitarian Universalist, what is your relationship to these forces, to the struggle between them, both within and without?

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL LESSON

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YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCES: FEEDBACK AND NOTES

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GATHERING AND FOCUSING

🕒 2-3 minutes

Take a moment to check-in with everyone. You can ask them to hum the song that's been in their head lately.

PRIMARY ACTIVITY ONE LISTENING

🕒 10-15 minutes

We've got a CD of movie music – themes that accompany the “good guys” and the “bad guys” in some familiar films. We'll listen to the music and use the themes as springboards for discussion.

- Play a minute or two of each track.
- Ask if the kids know with which movie and which character the theme is associated.
- Is this character the “good guy” or the “bad guy”? Why? Can you tell even if you haven't seen this movie? How?
- Does the character do anything opposite in the film? Does the “bad guy” ever do something good or vice versa?
- Are there really “good guys” or “bad guys” in real life? Is it possible that everyone is a mix of good and bad? How do our choices affect the world around us?

PRIMARY ACTIVITY TWO RAP TIME!

🕒 35-40 minutes

- Rap music is a powerful, popular kind of music. All kinds of people enjoy rap music. Many people today feel that some messages in rap music are sometimes negative. They speak of choices that are unkind, unfair or even evil. Some rap artists are focusing on positive messages in their music. If Unitarian Universalists made rap music, what do you think the words would be about?
- Together, your class will come up with a rap song today. The children can either use the rap to tell the story of Cain and Abel that we're learning about in the Story and Drama workshops or the class can make up a new message about choices between good and evil.
- We've got a CD of two different background tracks. We'll vote to pick the one we like.

Some basic questions for the planning process:

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL LESSON

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- Do raps usually rhyme?
- Do raps sometimes repeat a part several times, like a refrain?
- Should a rap for our UU church include words like swear words or insults?
- Should we all work together at the same time, or should we divide into groups and have each group work on one part?
- Should we take notes and write our lyrics on paper or on the board?
- When we perform it, should everyone rap at the same time or take turns doing the rapping?
- Should we have sound effects or instruments other than words?

Play the background tracks for the class and vote for the one they'd like to use. Spend a minute or two counting and clapping the beat until the kids settle into the rhythm. If a group decides to rap about Cain and Abel, take a few minutes to review the plot and themes of the story. If the class wants to have a refrain or a repetitive word or phrase, work that out first. Then, try a few verses.

Feel free to share successful raps from previous workshops or verses that you've written on your own as inspiration.

Wondering Together

- I wonder what the best part of our rap is?
- I wonder if you like to listen to rap outside of Sunday School?
- I wonder what the words are of some rap songs that you've heard?
- I wonder why some people choose to write rap music about unkind, unfair or even evil things while other people choose to write rap about positive, kind and encouraging things?
- I wonder how music can help us learn about good and evil?

CLOSING AND LEAVE-TAKING

🕒 2 minutes

Gather in a circle, take each other's hands and speak these words responsively, teacher beginning and children responding:

Inside us all is a seed of hate and a seed of love

I will water the seed of love.

Inside us all is a seed of anger and a seed of calm

I will water the seed of calm

Inside us all is a seed of violence and a seed of peace

I will water the seed of peace

Inside us all is a seed of evil and a seed of good

I will water the seed of good

