

Junior Soldiers

Preparation Lesson 5



A Junior Soldier in The Salvation Army

PURPOSE : For children to be able to reflect on the last four sessions and how those key areas fit into and connect to the Junior Soldier promise. They will explore what a Junior Soldier is in The Salvation Army.

I know that Jesus is my Saviour from sin.

I have asked him to forgive my sins, and I will trust him to keep me good.

By his help, I will be his loving and obedient child, and will help others to follow him.

I promise to pray, to read my Bible and to lead a life that is clean in thought word and deed.

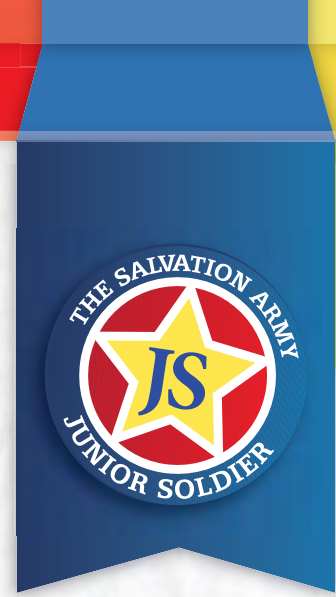
I will not use anything that may injure my body or my mind, including harmful drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

(Promise Focus)

Consider & Prepare

This is an important lesson where the kids will be able to take the teaching from the past four sessions and place it in the framework of what it looks like to be a Junior Soldier in The Salvation Army. It will bring together all the experiences that they have had over the past sessions and help them to understand better the promise that they are going to sign. It is really important during this lesson that there is not just an 'assumed outcome' that the children will proceed through the preparation lessons and then become enrolled. This will probably be the case in most situations, but we need to be careful that the children feel it is **their decision** and not that they are locked in, without a choice. It is important that we treat this process and the kids with respect as they begin to fully understand what it means to be a Junior Soldier. At the conclusion of this lesson it is also important that the kids will have the opportunity to confirm their decision or to choose not to follow through with being enrolled. Prayer, celebration and support are essential tools during this process.

- Game of Pictionary/butchers paper (if needed)
- Symbol sheet with a variety of current symbols for the challenge
- Journals
- Bibles, felt pens, pens, etc.
- Badge templates
- Badge machine and badge parts
- Salvation Army symbols, uniforms, badges, the shield, crest, flag etc.
- Interactive CD Rom or downloaded clip on 'The Salvation Army'
- Baskets with crosses and shields
- Ask the Prayer Pals to be a part of this lesson if you like.



Connecting In

Pictionary:

- Play a game of 'Pictionary' with the kids.
- Depending on how many children you have for this activity, you could play it on a small scale or you could have two teams and use large sheets of butchers paper. You might like to think about the words that you want to get the children to draw; they might tie into the topic but they don't have to.

Symbol Activity:

- Have a range of current symbols that the children can look at and try to identify what product or company they might belong to. What message are these symbols communicating? e.g. Nike tick, McDonalds golden arches, The Wiggles' Big Red Car, Nintendo, Wii, xbox logo's, Facebook, Target, Kmart, Coke, Pepsi, etc. I am sure you could add many more to the list.
- Again, depending on the number of kids you have in your group, this could be done together as a small group, as a competition in small groups or two teams playing off against each other. The winner being the group who guesses the most symbols correctly.



Link: These two activities are about looking at how things communicate a message without necessarily using words—looking at symbols and pictures to communicate a message. Belonging to The Salvation Army can look like many things too, it might be wearing a uniform, people can see the shield and identify you as part of The Salvation Army or it might be that they identify you by the way you live, the things you say and do. This also communicates a message of who you are and possibly who you might belong to (Jesus).

The Main Thing

Promise Activity

Divide the Junior Soldier promise into five key sections, i.e. the five sentences that make up the promise. In the journal the kids will be asked to design a graphic/symbol or image to match each part of the promise. *(If the children are given the opportunity to design their own logo/image they will identify more with this and have more possibility of remembering what the promise is about – give them some suggestions and ideas as to what it might look like.)*

Get the kids to make some of their symbols/designs into badges for themselves. Have some templates ready for them to add their design to. See if you can find a badge making machine you can borrow.

What is a Junior Soldier?

- **Someone who has made a promise to God and The Salvation Army and is working at keeping this promise in the way they live. This promise is called a 'covenant' with God.**
- *(Talk through examples of everyday covenants, e.g. marriage, work agreements, legal contracts etc).*
- Being a Junior Soldier means that you are showing that you have a relationship with God. It also means that you are connected with a specific church, i.e. The Salvation Army.
- Often when we belong to a group, there is something that stands out to say who we belong to: in The Salvation Army one thing is a uniform. For Junior Soldiers, this might look slightly different for each corps and will be up to your leaders, but might look like, a T-shirt with a shield/logo on it, wearing a Junior Soldier badge or a shirt or polo that has 'The Salvation Army' on it.
- Being in a relationship with God means that you will learn about Him and spend time with Him. This is called 'discipleship'.
- Part of being friends with God is showing that we love Him and that we love others—this is often reflected in the things we say, think and do. Some of the things that we do in response to being in a relationship with God were explored in the last session and might be called 'mission' or 'service'; this is how we can help and serve others as we are called to do by God.



The Salvation Army

- "The Booths": You might like to ask your Corps Officers if they have a DVD clip about how the Salvation Army started. *(You may have to contact DHQ and see if they have one you can borrow)*

Symbols of the Salvation Army

- Included in the journals will be a picture showing a small part of the 'flag', 'crest' and 'shield'.
- Ask the children to go around the hall with a camera to find these three symbols, and take photos of them. They can also include these photos when printed, in their journal.
 - The flag
 - The crest
 - The shield
- When you see the big golden 'M', what are you going to get?
 - A happy meal
 - Chips, drinks, sundae, the same menu items
 - The same tables and chairs
 - The same sort of playground
 - The same serviettes, straws, cups, etc.
- It is similar with the Salvation Army.
- When you see this flag—you will know that the people there worship God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- When you see this crest you will know that they are people who follow the way of Jesus and the gospel.
- When you see the shield you know the people in that place/wearing it are going to be people who help and care about you no matter what.
- The symbols of The Salvation Army give people the message of who we are, who we belong to and what we do.
- When you say you will become a Salvation Army Junior Soldier you are saying that you will do these things: Love God. Follow Jesus. Help others.

Tying In

Reflection – ‘How are you feeling about belonging to The Salvation Army? How are you feeling about being enrolled as a Junior Soldier?’

Pray together and give the children the opportunity to choose to be a follower of Jesus and then a separate opportunity to choose to be enrolled as a Junior Soldier.

- One option for this is taking the children into the main hall and using the mercy seat as a place to pray together.
- Sitting in a circle – in the middle of the circle you have two baskets – one with crosses in it and one with the Junior Soldier badge cutouts or the shield cut out. If the children decide that they want to be a follower of Jesus, they take a cross and you all pray together for those that make this decision. Then those who have taken a cross can have the opportunity to choose if they want to become a Junior Soldier, they take a shield/badge and then you all pray together for those that make that decision. They can then stick the items they have chosen into their journal.

Work with the kids on remembering the promise

- You might like to do this in a creative way or you might like to use the symbols that the children designed to help them remember the promise.
- There is a copy of the promise outlined in the journal.



Home & Beyond

The ‘Home and Beyond’ section will be outlined in the journal for the kids but it is important that we make them aware of it, what it means and even challenge them about what they will do in response to this section.

- Share your promise with your parents/friends/Prayer Pal – get them to help you practice it.
- Ask them to pray for you in preparation for your enrolment and for keeping your covenant with God.