



Lesson 1

God Surprises Us

TOGETHER

Songs: CH4 448 Lord, the light of your love is shining; JP 258 This little light of mine; JP 78 He's got the whole wide world in His hands

Materials : Map of World, picture of Q11, picture of Premdas and family, picture of SLA building, copies of Bricklayers game, dice, buttons.

Ask a child to show the UK on the map. Show where you live. Can anyone find India? Discover what the children know about India. Help them to see that it is a large country compared to ours. Tell them that India is a country of huge contrasts.

Many people living in towns and cities in India are well educated and have jobs and a modern way of life like ours.

However, most of the people living in the country and in slums on the outskirts of cities are poor and uneducated. Many belong to the lowest caste in Indian society, Dalits, untouchables.

Show a picture of Q11

They are a group of young people in Edinburgh that meet in their church just as you are doing now. Every year they like to offer themselves to a project that needs free labour and sometimes they go away together during the school holidays to work for other communities in Scotland and abroad.

One evening, their leaders Gillie and Brian told them about a children's home and school in Tuni where a man called Premdas and his family looked after Dalit children who otherwise would have nowhere to go. The home was too small. There was nowhere for the children to sleep. Premdas had invited Q11 to go to India to help build a new home for the children. Q11 decided that this would be perfect for their next project.

Ask the children to imagine they are members of Q11. What might their parents say when they said they wanted to go to India? What difficulties would Q11 face?

Some members couldn't go but all helped to raise money and to collect together medical supplies and small gifts to take to these children who had nothing. Q11 worked for two years raising funds and learning bricklaying skills ready to help with the building. When they had raised £28,000 for building materials they were ready to go.

Q11 received a wonderful, friendly welcome from Premdas, his family and all the 120 children in the home and despite many difficulties the new building was built with local workers providing the bricklaying skills and Q11 forming chains to move the bricks. As they lived and played with the smiling children who had no possessions of their own and as they learned the sad stories of their lives and saw the conditions that Dalits lived under the young people of Q11 and their leaders knew that their work

SCOTTISH LOVE IN ACTION ☆ CARING FOR CHILDREN IN INDIA

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was not over. Premdas told them that he believed God had sent them to help him. They realised that their project could not end when they came back to Scotland. Much more needed to be done and Premdah needed to be supported in his work.

Scottish Love in Action was formed, a charity that raises money to support the work in Tuni. Ten years later there are 500 children living in the home and receiving an education but still many more need help.

Discuss Q11's original intention in going to Tuni. (This was originally a short term project) What happened to change their way of thinking?

IN GROUPS

Activity SLA Bricklayers Game (played in small groups of 2-4)
 Materials Copies of game, counters (coloured buttons), dice

SLA Bricklaying Game

27	28	29	Much more help is needed. Go back 8 places.	31	Scottish Love in Action is formed
Q11 help local builders to build the walls. Go on 2 places.		25	24	The children teach Q11 their dances. Move on 4.	22
16	Q11 see how poor the villagers are. Go back to 9.	18	19	20	21
15		Q11 play games with the children. Move on 5 places.	13	Some Q11ers catch a sickness bug. Go back 3.	11
5	6	Q11 are tired out by the heat. Go back 4 places.	8	9	10
Q11 get a very friendly welcome. Move on 2 places.		3	2	1	START

BIBLE STUDY

Tell the children that in the Bible there are many instances where man has set out to do something and has discovered that God's plan for him is something different. God surprises us.

Give two children a card to hold that says, "That's a surprise"

Tell them they have to listen carefully to this story from the Bible and hold up the card each time they think God has surprised someone. The rest of the group might have to prompt them.

Cornelius was a Roman Soldier who believed in God, but he wasn't a Jew and he had never heard of Jesus.

One day he had a dream, a daydream, and he saw an angel coming towards him. (That's a surprise!) The angel told him that God was pleased with him. He told him to send to Joppa to fetch a man called Simon, also known as Peter.

Peter was staying in Joppa with a friend and he too had a dream. He saw something dropping out of the sky - something like a great sheet, tied at the four ends and full of animals, reptiles and wild birds including things no Jew was allowed to eat. (That's a surprise!) Peter heard God telling him that He had made these animals clean and that he could eat them. (That's a surprise!) Three times Peter saw the sheet come down from heaven and each time God told him that He had made these animals clean and that he could eat them. (That's a surprise!)

After Peter had seen the vision messengers arrived from Cornelius. Jewish law did not allow Jews to mix with followers even to visit them but God told Peter to go with the men to visit Cornelius. (That's a surprise!)

So Peter was able to tell Cornelius and his household about Jesus and they were baptised and became part of God's family.

Help the children to understand that, through his dream and in his meeting with Cornelius, Peter realised that God's plan for the spread of the Good News was much bigger than he had thought - It was for everyone, not just the Jews. God surprised Peter. (Acts 10 v1-35)

PRAYER

Include thanks for the spread of God's word through Peter, for Premdas and his work for Dalit children in India and for the work of Scottish Love in Action in raising awareness and funds for the children in Tuni.