

Get Ready!

The Runaway

By: Betsy Moore



Text

Luke 15:11-32

Key Quest Verse

“I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go into the house of the Lord.”

Psalm 122:1

Bible Background

According to Deuteronomy 21:17, the younger son’s share would have been one-third and the older son would receive two-thirds of all his father’s belonging. In most cases, the inheritance would be divided at the father’s death. The Pharisees were criticizing Jesus for accepting sinners and eating with them. Jesus told this parable or story that people might understand His Forgiving Father. The older son who would not forgive represented the Pharisees, who were angry that Jesus was accepting sinners and they were welcomed into God’s kingdom. The Pharisees must have thought that they had done so much for God and here are sinners getting more attention when they had lived such a sinful life. The younger son was forgiven for all he had done because the father loved him. What a great way to explain God’s loving forgiveness to help us realize God is always welcoming us with open arms! We must be careful to our reaction of those who come into the church. We are not the ones to judge we must be willing to forgive as God does.

Get Ready!

Lesson Quest

What I want my students to:

Know: When we make mistakes, God forgives us and wants us in His Kingdom.

Feel: Refreshed when we ask for forgiveness from mistakes!

Do: Always turn to God no matter what!

Leader's Devotion

Read Luke 15:3-7, what are we to learn from this parable? Have you ever been searching to “know who you are” and about lost sight of “Who God is making you?” Before you were a believer, you were lost and God sought you out! The loving shepherd is willing to leave 99 sheep and go in search of one. The lost sheep was in danger of losing its life and the shepherd knew it was worthwhile to search for the lost one. Who in your flock has strayed? Ask God to give you a shepherd’s heart and go in search of the lost sheep. Their eternal life depends on it! The prodigal son was lost but found his way back. Just like the father joyfully accepted his son home, God wants us to search out the lost and accept them into our hearts and our church. Check your attendance book and seek out those who no longer attend! You can make a difference!



Get Set!



Option A

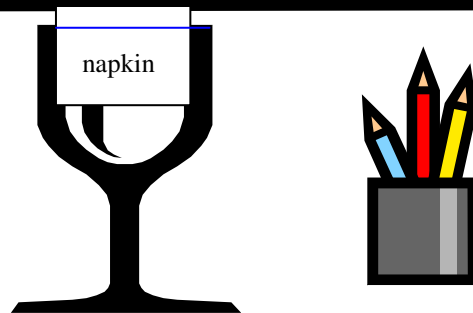
Egg Puppets

Materials: Boiled eggs, pencils (Prepare a hard boiled egg for each student, let them make faces on their egg, however you make a face on a *raw* egg)

How many of you like to receive surprises? I've got a surprise right in this box. I really enjoy knowing what I'm going to get and I don't like to have to wait for it! How about you; Do you like to have to wait on things? Since I don't like to wait either, I'll give you your surprise. These are going to be our pretend babies. So let's draw a face on our baby, but be very gentle. (Give students time to draw a face) Those look great! I'm so excited, I'm going to have a baby girl or boy. I just can't wait to see what I'm going to have! I'll just give it a little peck and peek inside... (crack egg with your pencil) UH OH! I think I goofed! I hope you don't make the same mistake I made with my egg. In our lesson today, we're going to learn of a mistake a boy made and what he learned from his mistake!

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Option B



Materials: Glass filled with water, a paper napkin, rubber band, a coin, and a sharpened pencil

Procedure: Open the napkin and put it over the glass filled with water. Put a rubber band around the rim of the glass so the napkin fits tightly. Put the coin in the middle of the napkin. Students will take turns poking a hole in the napkin with the pencil around the coin. The entire tip of the pencil has to go through the napkin and touch the water. The person who drops the penny into the cup is the prodigal son.

(My grandchildren do this with a jar since there is a lip around the top to fit the rubberband around to hold the napkin in place)

Today we're going to learn how easy it is to not have any money. We're going to play a game to see how fast the money can disappear. Each of you will have a turn to poke the pencil through the napkin and into the water. Whoever drops the money into the water loses the money! In our story today, we're going to learn about a boy that asked his father to give him money so he could go party. When the money was all gone, he had to live with the pigs.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Get Set!**Bible Story**

Teacher Tip: Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles

Before we start our story today, I want you to know that in Bible times, when a man died his oldest son got most of his land and money. In today's story Jesus talked about a man that was very rich and he had two sons that he loved dearly. This story or parable that Jesus told is called the prodigal son. There is a hidden message.

One day his youngest son went to his father and said, I want my share of the money you would give me when you die. I'm tired of all this work and want to travel. Did the dad have to give the money to the boy? No, but the father loved him and gave him the money. What do you think the son did? He packed his bags and rode off to another county. He made lots of friends because he had lots of money. For a while he had a great time partying and doing whatever he wanted. Before long all the money was gone and so were all his party friends. He was poor and had nothing. Now there was a famine in the land and there wasn't much food. The boy got lucky and got a job feeding the pigs. There was no food for him and he was very hungry. He was hungry enough to eat the pig's food. He was dirty and all alone and started thinking about his dad and his dad's servants. At his father's house the servants were given food and had it pretty nice. He started thinking, "Should I stay here in this filthy pig pen or should I go home and try to get a job as a servant in my dad's house. What do you think he did? He left the pigs and went home. Every mile he probably wondered what his dad would say. He hoped he could get a job as a servant. It was a long way home and he was tired and hungry. He was sorry for what he had done. He was still a long way from his house but his dad saw something. The dad wondered, "Can that be my boy?" His dad yelled, "It's my boy!" and he ran toward him never stopping! He was so happy to have his son back! The boy cried, "Dad, I've sinned!" The father forgave him and said, "Bring the best robe for him and a ring and let's have a big dinner party." Do you think the dad was happy?

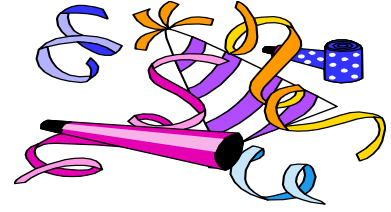
Get Set!



Bible Story cont.

Now the older son was out in the field and heard lots of noise like a party going on. He said, “Sounds like a party or something, what’s going on?” A servant said, “You’re brother is back and your dad is giving him a party.” Now the oldest boy was mad! (act mad and pretend to be oldest son) “That makes me mad, I’ve always been here and did what dad asked but my brother ran off and spent all that money and was bad and now dad is giving HIM a party.” The father tried to explain, “You and I are very close and you’ve always been here with me. Your brother was lost but now he’s found.”

Jesus was trying to tell the people the reason the older brother was not happy was because he was like the Pharisees who were angry that sinners were being converted. The Pharisees thought they were better people and they thought God shouldn’t forgive those sinners, who hadn’t always followed the rules. Jesus told this story to help people understand that God is forgiving and will welcome those back who have wandered away. We should be happy when someone comes to church that hasn’t been there in a long time. Make them feel welcome because even the angels in heaven rejoice.

Go!**Party Poppers****ARTS AND CRAFTS**

Materials: Toilet paper tubes or paper towel tubes cut in $\frac{1}{2}$, crepe paper or tissue paper, curly ribbon.

Quest Connection

Procedure: Give children a tube and let them choose their favorite paper to cover it with. Roll the paper around the tube and secure the paper with tape and let paper overhang on each end of the tube by at least two inches. Tie 5 pieces of curly ribbon together on one end of the tube. Fill the tube with candy or prizes. Squeeze the other end of the tube paper tie and also tie it with curly ribbon and fringe it so it will curl.

It's time to have a party for the lost son who came back! We're so glad all of you students are here today and we are going to celebrate with our party poppers. Each of you has one popper to trade and one popper to take home and keep. Trade poppers and when I count to three everyone say Be Happy and we can pull on our curly ribbon and open our poppers. Ready, One, Two, Three, Be HAPPY!

Close

That is the way it is with God in heaven when someone comes back to church that hasn't been here in a long time! We must be happy to see old friends back in church and celebrate!

Option: Have children make a card or write a letter to a student who hasn't been attending class regularly!

Go!

Balloon Pop!**GAME**

Materials: Fifteen to twenty five balloons. Pushpin for a bulletin board taped to the end a straw with curly ribbon attached at the opposite end. (Fancy Popping Pin)

Quest Connection

Procedure: Before you blow the balloons, insert a small piece of paper that says, candy box, answer a question correctly and win a prize, or Sorry, no prize. With a paper inside each balloon, blow the balloons up and tie them with a string. The more colored balloons the better. After the story is told, let each child take a turn choosing a balloon to collect the secret message inside. Have questions prepared for option 2.

In our story today of the prodigal son we learned that God had a special message for the boy. Just like the father welcomed the son back after he had been gone a long time, God welcomes people back who have not worshipped or talked to Him in a while. If you sin ask to be forgiven and Serve God!

Close

We need to remember that God loves us not matter what we say or do. But we must ask for forgiveness and try to do better! Let's talk to God right now!

Dear God, We love you God! Please help us to remember to do what you want us to do! Please forgive our sins! In Jesus' name, Amen.

Go!**Who Gets the Quarter?****GAME**

Materials: Quarter, a table, and 2 teams

Quest Connection

Procedure: Teams stand on opposite sides of the table. Team 1 with the quarter and they pass it to each other under the table. Team 2 has to guess who is holding the coin. When they think they know, they say, “Hands up,” and Team 1 balls their hands into fists and takes them out from under the table. Team 2 then says, “Hands down. One, two, Three,” and team 1 has to put their hands flat down on the table at the same time, being careful not to let Team 2 hear the coin drop! Now team 2 has to guess which member of Team 1 has the coin. If they guess correctly, they get the coin and a turn of passing it under the table. If they are wrong, team 1 keeps the coin.

Close

The prodigal son wasted his money. He was sorry and returned home. His father was glad to see him and threw a party! God wants us to serve Him not matter what we have done He welcomes us back to Him.

Go!**Put God First****GAME**

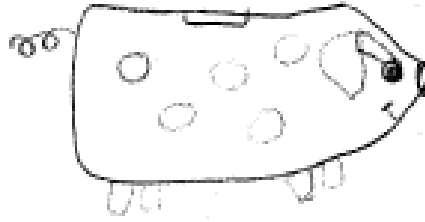
Materials: Mason jar with lid, a small ball, enough rice to fill the jar, and a bowl.

Quest Connection

Procedure: This rice represents all the things we do in a busy day ... school, practice, eating, friends, TV time....(Pour rice in jar)... then we may try to fit God in at the end... (put ball on top and try to put the lid on.) **This just doesn't fit! I know we can fit this all in just like we can do many different things in our life and still trust and serve God. What can we do differently? If we put God first in our day in prayer, let's see what happens!** (pour rice into bowl, put the ball in jar first, then pour rice in... shake it well so the rice will settle)... **putting God first allows all other things to fit!** (put the lid on the jar and tighten, shake the jar) See how the ball eventually rises to the top? **Putting God first, we know that He will help carry us through the day!**

Close

What happened when we did everything first like school and practice and TV and put the rice in first and then the ball? Things didn't go so good did they! The lid wouldn't go on the jar. What happened when we put God first, or put the ball in first and then added all the other things? Right, everything came out all right. God wants us to trust in Him. If we do make a mistake He wants us to ask forgiveness and still come back to Him! He is always there, holding us up, just like the rice is now holding the ball up.

Go!**Piggy Bank****ARTS AND CRAFTS**

Materials: Clean empty one gallon milk containers with lids, glue, scissors, pencils, colored felt; corks, big wiggle eyes, and pink or black pipe cleaners, tacky glue or a hot glue gun.

Quest Connection

Procedure: Have students turn their milk container so the handle is on the top. Glue Big wiggle eyes on either side of the handle near the lid. The milk lid will be the pigs (snout) nose. Help them glue four corks on the bottom to be legs with a hot glue gun. Next have them wind a pipe cleaner around a pencil, poke a small hole in the back end of the milk container and insert the curly tail. Cut ears from the felt in a V shape and glue into place.

If students would like to have spotted pigs they can cut felt circles and glue any place. Help students cut slits in the pigs' back to put their money in. They can shake their money out through the snout.

Close

“The son was so hungry he wanted to eat what the pigs were eating.” Luke 15:15-16

The son thought about what he had done and wanted to go back home. We all make mistakes but if we ask forgiveness God is happy to have us back with him! Just as this father forgave his son, God forgives us!

Go!**Prodigal Ring****FOOD Be Aware of Food Allergies!****Materials:** Stringy licorice**Quest Connection**

Procedure: Give each student one piece of peel-apart licorice. Separate each into small strands. Let each student wrap three strands of licorice together and form it into a ring around their fingers. Cut the extra length and squeeze the ends together to lock the ring on students fingers.

OR:**Materials:** for clay $\frac{3}{4}$ c. of flour, $\frac{1}{2}$ c. of salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ c cornstarch, warm water and food coloring, and a bowl.

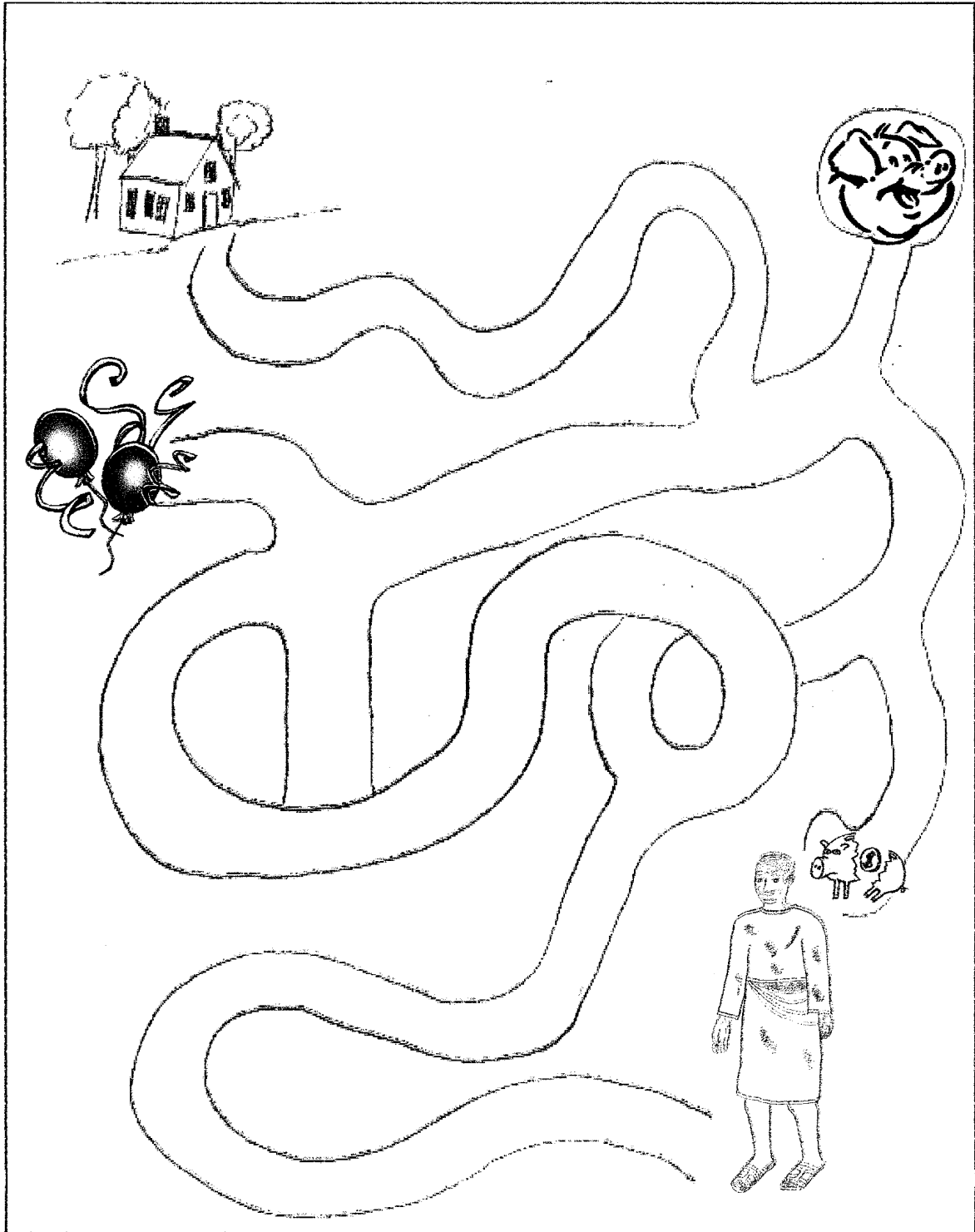
Mix flour, salt, & cornstarch in a bowl. Add warm water until mixture forms a shape. Knead.

Roll into a ball and give each student to form into a ring. Be sure and write students names in their rings with a toothpick and let them dry.

Close

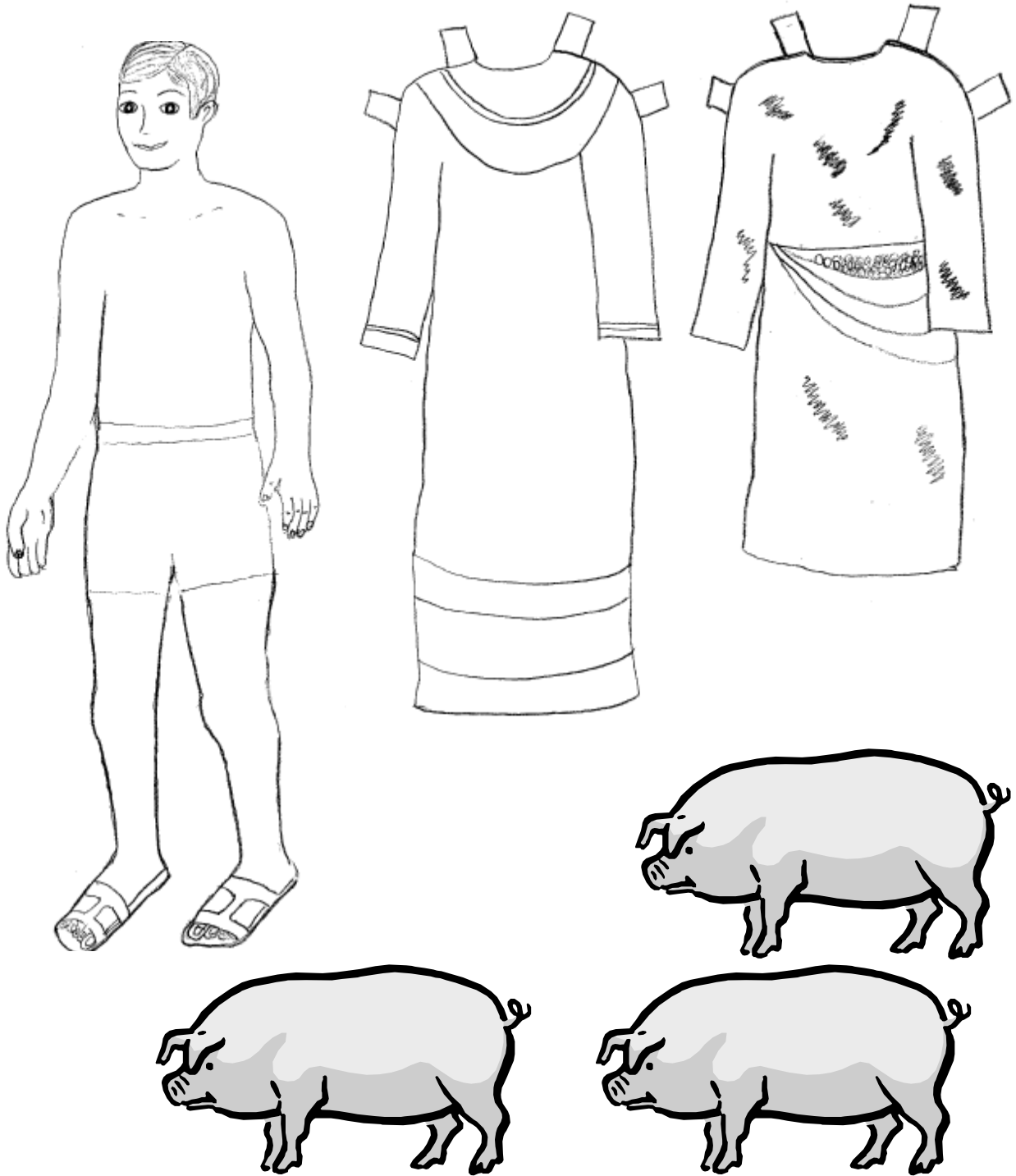
The prodigal son left his father and went to the city to party. He wasted all his money and did some bad things. He was sorry for what he had done and wanted to go back home. His father was Happy to see him and gave him a beautiful robe and a ring to wear. When someone who was lost returns to God, we should celebrate. This ring will remind us of how even the angels in heaven celebrate for someone who was lost but know is found back worshipping God!

Help the lost boy find his way home!



Prodigal Son Paper Doll

Cut the doll and clothes out and color. Retell the story of feeding the pigs and being welcomed home by his father. Glue sequins on the happy celebration gown!

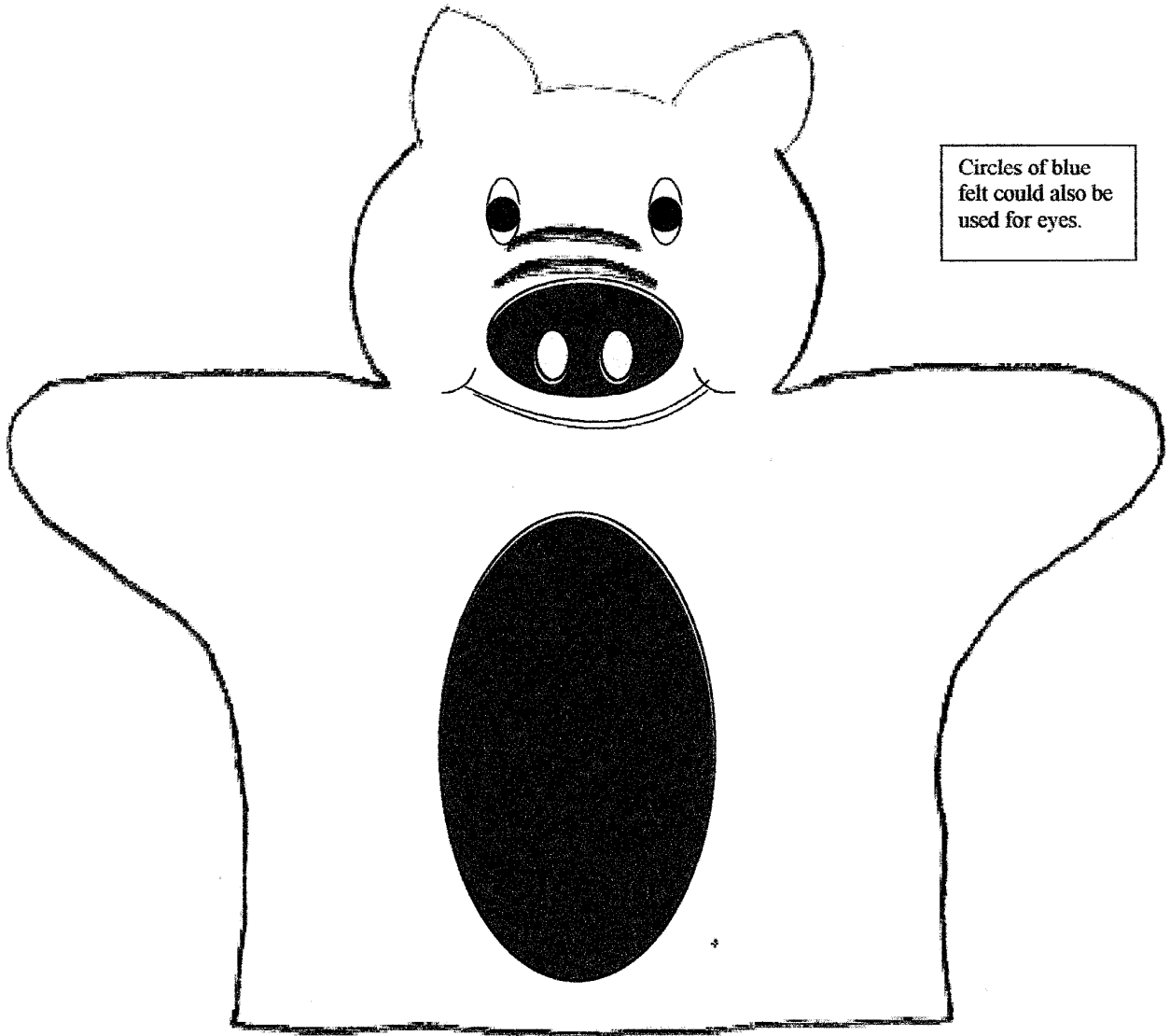


Puppet

Materials: pink felt, dark pink felt for snout and tummy, light pink felt for nose circles, wiggle eyes, hot glue gun, permanent marker

Preparation: Cut two pig patterns for each student and hot glue them together leaving the bottom open for student's hand to fit inside. Cut snout and tummy from dark pink felt

Procedure: Let each student glue snout and tummy on. Draw features on the pig with felt pen for mouth and wrinkled nose. Hot glue wiggle eyes into place. Retell the story and have the pigs oink for their food as a doll pretends to feed them.



Circles of blue felt could also be used for eyes.

Find the pigs and circle them. How many did you find?
Color the picture and see if you know what the boy should do?
This boy was sorry and wanted to find his way back home!

