



## Off Target By Deborah Wassenberg

*'Lady Paramount' is an honorary title bestowed on a female who presents prizes at an archery competition. Reading that sparked the idea for this lesson on Redemption...explained to children in a way that is easy to understand. Archery also ties in with the Memory Verse found in Romans 3:23. 'All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.' Sin, as defined in the original translation of the Bible, means 'to miss the mark'. We are all sinners and fall short. Jesus was the only one who met the standard of perfection!*

### You Tube Song Suggestions:

- Real Love (chapelhill kids)
- My Redeemer Lives (Hillsong Kids)
- This is Amazing Grace (Bethel Kids Music)

### Bible Lesson: Sketch 'The Redemption of the Golden Arrow'

*Characters: Lady Paramount, her Page, a Merchant*

*Scene: the Great Hall*

*Props: chair, wooden chest, a Golden Arrow*

*Lady Paramount is pacing the floor in the Great Hall of her Castle. She is very agitated. A Page enters and bows.*

Page: Good morrow Mistress Paramount!

Lady Paramount: Nay, it is not good morrow at all.  
I am sorely vexed!

Page: Why Mistress?

Lady Paramount: The Golden Arrow Archery Tournament is today.  
The King and Queen will be here.  
And Archers from all over  
the kingdom.

Page: Yes Mistress.  
It is a well-attended tournament.  
The castle is filled with excitement!

Lady Paramount: But I have lost the Golden Arrow!

Page: The Golden Arrow?

Lady Paramount: Yes, yes. It is the prize awarded to the archer  
who wins the Tournament!

Page: Oh, my lady!  
Now, I understand why you are so upset.  
Where did you last see it?

Lady Paramount: I wanted to keep in near to me for safekeeping  
and I dared not leave it in the castle.  
I took it with me riding this morning.  
I thought it was tucked safely in the pocket  
of my cloak but it must  
have fallen out somewhere on my ride.

Page: Where did you ride this morning, Mistress?

Lady Paramount: Through the forest!  
It could be anywhere.  
If I don't have it back in time for the  
Tournament, I will bring disgrace upon  
the entire Kingdom.

Page: Never fear, my Lady.  
I will organise a search party now.  
*(The Page Withdraws)*

SFX: *The sound of trumpets indicates time has passed.*

*The Page re-enters the Great Room, running.*

Lady Paramount: What news of the Golden Arrow?  
Did you find it fallen on the forest floor?

Page: Nay, My Lady.

Lady Paramount: Oh no.

Page: But someone else found it.  
It fell into the hands of a Merchant.  
It sits this very moment on display in his shop.

Lady Paramount: What! But it is mine!  
Bring this Merchant to me, at once!

Page: Yes, My Lady!  
*(Page bows and leaves quickly)*

SFX: *The sound of trumpets*

*As the Page leads the Merchant into the Great Room, Lady Paramount sits regally on her chair to interview the Merchant. The Page bows and introduces the Merchant.*

Page: The Merchant, Lady Paramount.

*The Page steps back and invites the Merchant to step forward.*

Merchant: *(Bowing)*  
Good morning, Lady Paramount.  
It is a fine day for the Golden Arrow Tournament,  
is it not?

Lady Paramount: Just as you say dear Merchant.  
I understand you have something of mine  
for sale?

Merchant: Indeed?

Lady Paramount: A Golden Arrow!  
It is the prize for the Tournament to be  
bestowed on the winner by me.

Merchant: It is true an unusual object  
came into my possession  
this morning.  
A man claimed to have found it  
in the forest.

Lady Paramount: That's it!  
My Golden Arrow!

Merchant: Well, my Lady.  
It is golden in colour.  
But is it yours?

Lady Paramount: Of course it is mine!  
How many Golden Arrows do you think there are in the Kingdom?

Merchant: Who can say, my Lady?  
There are so many Tournaments across the lands these days.  
In any case, it is in my shop, and you may **redeem** it.

Lady Paramount: What? *(Standing to her feet)*  
You want me to **buy back** the Golden Arrow?

Merchant: *Smiles, nods and bows.*

Lady Paramount: But...it is mine!  
It belongs to me.  
I designed it.  
I had it made.  
It's mine!

Merchant: My Lady, with the utmost respect.  
Maybe it is and maybe it isn't.  
What do I know about these things?  
I am but a poor Merchant  
wanting to put food on the table  
for my family.  
You may **buy back** the arrow for  
five hundred pounds.

Page: Why, you thief!  
We could make you give the  
prize back!

Merchant: Would you harm me?  
I purchased the item legally  
from the man who brought it in.  
It would not be lawful for you  
to take it from me by force.

Lady Paramount: Five hundred pounds?  
That is indeed a great sum!  
To **redeem** the Golden Arrow  
will take all I have.

Merchant: *(Turns to leave)*  
Perhaps the Tournament will  
attract another buyer...

Lady Paramount: No, wait.  
I will **redeem** the arrow.  
*(Turns to the Page)*  
Bring my chest.

*The Page brings a wooden chest to Lady Paramount, bowing as he presents it to her. Lady Paramount takes it and opens the lid and looks down at all the money inside. She snaps the lid down sharply and hands the chest to the merchant.*

Lady Paramount: Here is all I have to **buy back** the arrow.

*(The Merchant takes the chest, checks inside, then pulls the Golden Arrow out from under his cloak and hands it over to her. He bows quickly and retreats)*

Lady Paramount: The Golden Arrow!  
*(Speaking to it)*  
**At great cost to myself...I have redeemed you!**

SFX: *Trumpets sound as the cast leave the stage and the Leader enters.*

## Ministry to the Children:

How upset would you be if you had to **redeem** or **buy back** something that was already yours? Did you know that's what God did when He sent His Son Jesus to die for you and me? We all belonged to God. He designed us. He made us. But because of our sin we were lost to Him. God had to find a way to **redeem** us. He asked Jesus to leave His heavenly home. To come to earth and die on the Cross to pay for our sins. Jesus bought us back. He paid for us with all He had. He paid with his life! That is how precious we are to God. *Altar Call.*

# Memory Verse: Romans 3:23

'All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.'

## You will need:

- Children's Archery set (I bought one at Kmart for \$20.00)
- Masking tape
- Words of the Memory Verse individually written on gold card in the shape of an arrow.

## What to do:

- Set up the target in an outdoor area.
- Use the masking tape to indicate where archers can shoot from (younger children can stand closer to the target) and areas where the children can safely watch.
- Choose children to be archers. (Not everyone will have a turn so allow time at the end of the morning for everyone to have go. We did this until parents came to collect their kids. One Dad said, 'Archery in Children's Church...Wow!' I think he wanted a turn.)
- When an archer hits the target, they will be awarded a Golden Arrow (a word of the Memory Verse)
- When all the words have been **redeemed**, put them in the correct order and recite aloud together.

## Archery Terms:

*It's fun to be able to impress the children with the use of archery terms!*

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Bouncer</b>    | an arrow that hits the target and then falls out                     |
| <b>Bowstring</b>  | the string of the bow  |
| <b>Bullseye</b>   | The centre of the target   |
| <b>Drawing</b>    | the pulling of the bowstring to an extreme stretch                   |
| <b>Grip</b>       | the position on the bow handle where the bow is held                 |
| <b>Hit</b>        | the term which describes an arrow which has embedded into the target |
| <b>Quiver</b>     | a container for holding arrows                                       |
| <b>Release</b>    | to relax the drawing hand fingers to free the bow string             |
| <b>Robin Hood</b> | when one arrow becomes imbedded into the back of another arrow       |
| <b>Shaft</b>      | the most important of all structural parts in an arrow               |
| <b>Upshot</b>     | the archery contest's last shot                                      |

## Game: Arrow Chase

- The players are divided into two parties. The Arrow party and the Hunting party. Each player in the Arrow party has a stick of chalk.
- The Arrow party starts out on a run over any route chosen by their leader. Every three metres the runners must chalk a small arrow somewhere along their path.
- The Hunting party must try to overtake these runners discovering their course by the arrows.
- The Hunting party give the runners a head start and then pursues them.
- When the Arrow party draws arrows they can make it difficult for the Hunting party to find them although it is a rule of the game that the arrow must be in plain sight. For example it may be marked on the farther side of a post or up high or near the ground but never hidden like under a ledge.
- The Arrow party will take a course that will eventually bring them back to the starting point.
- The Hunting party try to overtake them before they can accomplish this.

## Craft: Arrow Pencil

### **You will need:**

- Lead pencil per child
- Glue (use a glue gun under adult supervision or tacky glue that dries quickly)
- Sticky tape (optional - for taping two arrow tips together)
- Feathers
- Card/paper
- Scissors
- Wool scraps (optional)

### **What to do:**

Children cut out two arrow tips (triangles) from card or paper and glue either side of the tip of the pencil. Then glue feathers to the eraser end. To extend the craft the children could wind wool around the pencil to create coloured stripes.

