



Play Your Part!

By Deborah Wassenberg

Introduction:

Children learn that God has given each of them a 'unique' part to play, just like instruments used in an orchestra. When each one uses their gifts faithfully, God creates something beautiful!

Leaders and Volunteers:

Ask your leaders and volunteers to wear a bow tie for today's lesson. It can be any size or colour. They are pretending to be ushers in a Concert Hall where an amazing concert is about to take place! They can show children to their seats and make comments like, 'It's going to be a wonderful concert' and 'A world-famous orchestra is playing today.'

Praise and Worship:

Organise for musicians or a band from Big Church to lead praise and worship in Children's Church for this special lesson, so the children can see the musicians in 'concert' (the word 'concert' means agreement in design or plan).

Skit: The Discordant Orchestra

Scene:

The 'Concert Hall' – chairs set in a semi-circle, a small platform for the conductor to stand on, and a music stand for sheet music, and additional music stands if you can source them. The music the orchestra will be playing is 'Jesus Loves Me, This I Know'.

Characters:

Conductor - wearing a bow tie and carrying a baton and sheet music

Members of the Orchestra – carrying sheet music (optional) and *any or all* of the following instruments...

- Recorder
- Drum
- Triangle
- Maracas or shakers
- Ukulele (with a bow so it can be played like a violin)

- Xylophone

The members of the Orchestra file in and find their seats. They are looking grumpy. A few of the members squabble over seats and music stands. Finally, they settle down for the entrance of the conductor.

The conductor enters and bows to the audience (cue your volunteers to stand and clap). The conductor then turns to the music stand and waits for everyone's attention to be on him. The orchestra begins, but it sounds dreadful! The conductor taps the music stand with his baton to stop the playing. He tries again, and again. Each time, the orchestra will not play harmoniously.

Conductor: What is the issue with my orchestra?
Why can't you play in harmony?

Recorder: (*Jumps up*)
I don't feel appreciated.
The look of horror on people's faces when they see a recorder.
It reminds them of school.
I should play the drums.
(*Sits down*)

Drums: (*Jumps up*)
Typical!
Everyone thinks they've got rhythm and can play the drums.
It's not like playing the saucepans, you know.
It's constant, and it's exhausting.
(*Sits down*)

Triangle: (*Jumps up*)
I wish I had an opportunity to be exhausted!
One note, I get one note, right at the end!
I am underused and underappreciated.
I should play the maracas.
It's a party every time.
(*Sits down*)

Maracas: (*Jumps up*)
I've had enough.
Nobody takes me seriously!
I am an ARTIST.
I trained at the Royal Academy.
I should play the violin...
(*Staring at the 'violin' and pointing*)
Wait a minute...that's not a violin...it's a ukulele!
(*Sits down*)

Ukulele: *(Jumps up)*
I got tired of the ukulele, so I'm playing it like a violin!
People think I'm a one-strum wonder for tropical holidays.
I want to command gravitas.
(Sits down)

Xylophone: *(Jumps up)*
If anyone needs to be taken seriously, it's me!
Some consider the xylophone to be childish.
I am a refined musician!

All members of the orchestra stand and argue with each other.

Conductor: *(Tapping the music stand with his baton)*
Quiet!
Quiet please!

The orchestra members finally quieten to listen.

Conductor: Please sit down.

The orchestra sits.

Conductor: Every member of this orchestra is valued.
Each of you has a different gift that must be used.
Do not compare yourself with someone else.
When everyone plays their part, the music works!

The orchestra nods and focuses on the Conductor as he gently taps the music stand. All eyes forward. Instruments ready. A hush falls over the room. Then — with one united breath — they begin to “play” in harmony to Jesus Loves Me This I Know. You may choose one of two approaches:

Option 1: Use a Recording

Play a beautiful orchestral or instrumental version of *Jesus Loves Me*. Your volunteers mime playing their instruments. Children instantly understand the idea of harmony, teamwork, and following the conductor.

Option 2: Use Real Musicians

If your Big Church band or musicians are joining you, this becomes a live ‘mini-concert’. The children get to see real people using their gifts for God, which reinforces the theme in a powerful, memorable way.

Bible Lesson: The Parable of the Talents

Bible References: Matthew 25:14-30

Visuals You Will Need:

1. A rich man
2. The servants and their talents.
3. The first servant with ten talents
4. The second servant with four talents
5. The third servant hiding the one talent
6. The rich man returns
7. Jesus and a group of children playing different musical instruments

Words:

1. Jesus told this parable:
There was once a very rich man who was going on a long trip.
Before he left, he called three of his servants to come and see him.
He said, "I'm going away for a while.
I'm trusting each of you with something special.
Take care of it for me."
Then he gave each servant a different amount of money called talents.
(A talent was worth a lot – like a whole bag of gold!)
2. To the first servant, he gave five talents.
To the second servant, he gave two talents.
To the third servant, he gave one talent.
The rich man didn't give them the same amount because he knew each servant was different.
He gave them what they could handle.
3. The servant with five talents got straight to work.
He traded, planned, worked hard, and used what the master gave him.
Soon, he earned five more talents. Now he had ten!
4. The servant with two talents also worked hard. He used what he had and earned two more. Now he had four!
5. But the servant with one talent didn't even try.
He was scared.
He thought, "What if I mess up? What if I lose it?"
So he dug a hole in the ground and hid the talent.
No work. No trying. No using his gift.
6. After a long time, the master came back and asked the servants what they had done with what he gave them.
The first servant said, "Master, you gave me five talents. Look — I earned five more!"
The master smiled. "Well done, good and faithful servant!
You used what I gave you.
I can trust you with even more."
The second servant said, "Master, you gave me two talents.

Look — I earned two more!"
 The master smiled again.
 "Well done, good and faithful servant!
 You used what I gave you.
 I can trust you with even more."
 Then the third servant came.
 He said, "Master, I knew you were strict.
 I was scared.
 So I hid your talent in the ground.
 Here — you can have it back."
 The master frowned.
 "You didn't even try.
 You didn't use what I gave you.
 You could have done something — anything — but you chose to hide it."
 The master took the talent away and gave it to the servant who had ten.

7. Jesus told this story to teach us something important:

- God gives every person gifts, talents, and abilities.
Just like instruments in an orchestra, they sound different.
- Some people have many. Some have a few.
- But everyone has something.
- No matter if your gift feels small, it is important.
- God doesn't compare us to others — He just wants us to use what He gave us and not hide them like the servant who buried his talent.
- When we use our gifts for God, we are playing our part.
There is unity, teamwork, and harmony.
God is pleased.

Use your gifts for God and don't hide them!

Ministry to the Children:

Jesus told this story to show us something important: God gives every person special gifts — talents, abilities, and things we're good at. But there is one gift that is greater than all the others. It's the gift of Jesus. Before we can play our part for God, before we can use our gifts for Him, we need to belong to Him. We need Jesus to be the Lord of our lives — our Conductor — the One we follow.

In the story, the master gave each servant something valuable. But God gives us something even more valuable: His Son, Jesus, who forgives our sins and gives us a brand-new life!

Memory Verse: Matthew 25:23

Well done, good and faithful servant.

Applause!

Say the verse in a simple rhythm:

Well done (clap, clap)
Good and faithful (clap, clap, clap)
Servant (clap)

Conductor: You are my clapping orchestra! I'm the conductor. When I move my hands fast, you clap fast. When I move them slow, you clap slowly. When I use my fingers, you clap softly. When I spread my fingers, you clap loudly. And when I freeze, you freeze!

Say the memory verse while conducting:

Start **slow and soft**
Switch to **fast and loud**
Drop suddenly to **soft and slow**
End with a dramatic **freeze**
Kids repeat the verse with you while matching the clapping style.

Game: Musical Chairs

You will need:

- Chairs (one fewer than the number of children)
- Music
- Space to walk safely around the chairs

What to do:

- Place the chairs in a circle, facing outward
- Start the music, and the children walk around the chairs while the music plays
- Stop the music suddenly, and everyone must quickly find a chair to sit on
- Because there is one less chair than the number of players, one child will be left standing
- The child left standing steps out of the circle
- Remove one more chair
- Start the music again, and the game continues, and remember, after every round, remove one more chair

Craft: Paper Cup Shakers

You will need

- 2 paper cups (same size)
- Dry filler: rice, lentils, small pasta, or dried beans
- Tape (masking tape or colourful duct tape)
- Stickers, markers, washi tape

What to do:

1. Decorate the cups first
It's much easier before they're taped shut
Children can draw patterns, add stickers, or wrap washi tape around the cups
2. Add the shaker filling
Put a small handful of rice, lentils, or pasta into one cup
Tip: Less is more — too much filler makes it heavy and muffled
3. Join the cups
Place the second cup upside-down on top of the first so the rims meet
4. Seal the shaker
Wrap tape all the way around the rims to seal the cups together
For extra strength, add a second layer of tape

Your children might also like to make drums from tin cans, or tambourines from paper plates!