



Dainty Morsels or Dangerous Mouthfuls!

By Deborah Wassenberg

Introduction:

Some words look sweet and tasty – like a little treat – but they sneak deep inside and hurt people. Gossip is a dangerous mouthful. God wants us to fill up on His words, not whispers.

Warmup Activity: The Whisper Game

1. Form a Line or Circle

Kids stand in a straight line or sit in a circle. The closer they are, the easier it is — spread them out for extra giggles.

2. Leader Gives the First Message

Whisper a short sentence into the first child's ear. Keep it simple for younger kids, silly for older ones.

Examples:

"Purple parrots pick perfect peaches."

"My kangaroo loves chocolate milk."

"God's words are sweet and strong."

3. Whisper Down the Line

Each child whispers the message **once** into the next child's ear. No repeating. No shouting. No acting it out.

4. Last Child Says It Out Loud

The final child announces what they heard.

Cue laughter — it's almost always different.

5. Reveal the Original Message

The leader says the real sentence. Kids compare the two versions.

Bible Lesson: Miriam's Gossip

Bible Reference: Numbers 12; Proverbs 18:8

Visuals You Will Need:

1. Proverbs 18:8
2. Children whispering
3. The Israelites in the wilderness
4. Miriam and Aaron

5. Miriam whispering to Aaron
6. Miriam with a sneaky or sour look on her face
7. Cloud and the Tent of Meeting
8. Miriam with leprosy
9. Moses prays
10. Miriam, Aaron and Moses reunited
11. Gossiping kids
12. The Bible

Words:

1. The Whisper Game showed us that whispers change as they travel.
They got twisted.
That's what our lesson from the Book of Proverbs is about today.
Proverbs is God's book of wise sayings.
They're short and easy to remember.
They help you make good choices, use kind words, stay out of trouble, and live in a way that makes God smile.
They're God's way of showing you how life works best because you avoid problems before they happen.
They're like looking both ways before you cross a road.
Our lesson comes from Proverbs Chapter 18 and verse 8.
(Read from your Bible)
**The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels,
And they go down into the innermost parts of the body.**
2. A whisperer is someone who shares secrets, gossips, or engages in sneaky talk.
Their words feel like a 'treat'.
Interesting.
Juicy.
Exciting.
But once you 'eat them' (by listening to them and repeating them), they go deep inside and cause hurt.
God takes whispering or gossiping very seriously!
3. Moses, Aaron, and Miriam were walking with God's people through the hot, dusty wilderness.
They packed up their tents, followed the cloud, and trusted God to show them where to go next.
4. Miriam was Moses' big sister.
She loved him.
She had protected him when he was a baby, and she was a leader among the people.
Aaron was Moses' brother.
He helped Moses speak to the people.
They were a strong team.

5. But one day...something small slipped into Miriam's heart.
It started as a tiny whisper.
Miriam leaned close to Aaron.
'Why does Moses get to be the leader all the time?
God speaks to us too, you know.'
Aaron frowned.
'Well, yes, I suppose He does.'
Miriam whispered again, a little quieter, a little sharper.
'And have you seen who Moses married?
I don't like it.
I don't like her.
I don't like this.
I don't like Moses being in charge.
I think he's making too many mistakes.
He should ask for my advice.'
6. Her words were like dainty morsels – tiny, tasty, interesting little bites of complaint.
Aaron listened.
Miriam whispered more.
The morsels went even deeper.
But God heard every word.
7. Suddenly the cloud – the very presence of God – came down and stood at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.
It was bright, heavy, and serious.
'Moses. Aaron. Miriam,' God called.
All three stepped forward.
God spoke with a voice that made the ground tremble.
'When I speak to prophets, I use visions and dreams.
But Moses... Moses is different.
I speak to him face to face.
Why were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?'
Aaron's eyes grew wide.
Miriam's heart thumped.
The whispers didn't feel sweet anymore.
Then the cloud lifted.
8. Aaron turned to Miriam — and gasped.
Miriam's skin had turned white like snow.
She had leprosy — a sickness that showed on the outside what had happened on the inside.
The gossip had gone deep, just like Proverbs says.
9. Aaron cried out, 'Moses! Please! Don't let her stay like this! Help her!'
Moses didn't say, 'Well, she shouldn't have gossiped.'
He didn't say, 'She hurt me — let her suffer.'
He lifted his hands and prayed with all his heart.
'Lord, please heal her!'

10. God answered.

Miriam needed to stay outside the camp for seven days — a time to heal, a time to think, and a time to let the dangerous morsels leave her heart.

And the whole camp waited.

No one moved.

No one travelled.

They stayed until Miriam was brought back, healthy and restored.

Because even though gossip hurts, God loves to heal.

And Moses loved his sister.

And God wanted His people to learn.

11. Gossip is dangerous!

- ‘Did you hear what she said?’
- ‘Don’t tell anyone, but...’
- ‘I’m only telling you...’

Gossip hurts friendships.

Gossip spreads lies or half-truths.

Gossip makes people feel unsafe and miserable.

12. Did you know that God’s Words are good food?

That’s what the prophet Jeremiah wrote.

(Read from your Bible: Jeremiah 15:16)

‘Your words were found, and I ate them.’

That’s why you need to read your Bible.

Because God’s words fill your heart with joy, strength, courage, kindness.

When you ‘eat’ God’s words, you speak life, not whispers.

Ministry to the Children:

Today we learned that gossip looks sweet — like a dainty little treat — but it goes deep and hurts people. Our whispers can hurt people, too. When someone whispers gossip:

STOP! Don’t ‘eat’ it.

SWAP! Say something kind or change the subject.

Salvation:

Here’s Good News! When Jesus spoke, people felt safe. When Jesus spoke, storms stopped. When Jesus spoke, sick people were healed. When Jesus spoke, hearts came alive. And Jesus came to fix the problem inside us — the part that wants to whisper gossip, complain, or say hurtful things. The Bible says that sin is anything inside us that goes against God’s way — including the words we say. Sin goes deep, just like gossip goes deep. But Jesus came to take all that sin away. He died on the Cross to forgive every wrong word we’ve ever said. He rose again to give us a new heart — a heart that wants to speak God’s words. And now, when we turn away from our sins and believe in and follow Jesus, He forgives our sins and cleanses us from all wickedness. He then fills us with His Spirit. His Spirit helps us choose: kind words, brave words, honest words, healing words, God’s words!

Memory Verse: Ephesians 4:29 (NCV)

When you talk, do not say harmful things, but say what people need – words that will help others become stronger. Then what you say will do good to those who listen to you.

Unscramble the Words!

Preparation

1. Write the key words of the verse on separate cards or strips of paper.
 - Keep each word large and easy to read.
 - For younger kids, group words into short phrases instead of single words.
2. Mix up the cards so the verse is out of order.
3. Place the scrambled cards on a table, on the floor, or tape them to a wall.

How to Play

Option 1: Team Race

1. Divide the kids into two teams.
2. Give each team a scrambled set of the verse cards.
3. On “Go!” teams race to arrange the cards in the correct order.
4. The first team to finish calls out the verse together.
5. The leader checks the order and celebrates correct attempts.

Option 2: Whole Group Build

1. Spread all the scrambled cards on the floor.
2. Invite kids to come up one at a time and choose the next correct word.
3. Place each chosen word in a line across the front.
4. If a child chooses the wrong word, gently guide them:
 - “Does that sound like the next part?”
 - “Let’s check the verse together.”
5. Continue until the whole verse is built.

Game: Colossal Serves!

You will need:

- Beach balls
- A net (or rope or even a row of chairs)

How to play:

- Divide children into two teams
- Give each group multiple beach balls (depending on the size of the team)
- On the signal, children throw (colossal serves) over the net to the other side!

Craft: Colossal Serve Placemat

A bright, oversized placemat children can use during snack time or take home as a reminder to 'serve' BIG kindness, not dainty morsels of gossip.

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Cut the Placemat Shape

Cut the cardboard into a large rectangle. (You can round the corners for a softer look.)

2. Add the Title

At the top, write in big letters: **COLOSSAL SERVE!** Explain to kids: "This placemat reminds us to serve BIG kindness with our words."

3. Decorate the Background

Let kids colour or paint the cardboard. Ideas:

- Bright stripes
- Giant hearts
- Sunbursts
- Waves or zigzags

4. Glue on the BIG Words

Give kids oversized word cut-outs. They glue them around the placemat like "menu items" they can serve:

- KINDNESS
- ENCOURAGEMENT
- TRUTH
- GOD'S WORD
- PEACE
- HELP

5. Add the Verse Reference

Write this somewhere on the placemat: **Ephesians 4:29 — Use words that build others up.**

6. Personalise It

Kids add their name and one "BIG thing" they want to serve this week. Examples:

- "I will serve kindness."
- "I will serve truth."

- “I will serve encouragement.”

7. Laminate the Placemat

Place the finished artwork into an A3 laminating pouch. Run it through the laminator so it becomes durable and wipe-clean.

8. Use It!

Kids take it home and use it at mealtimes as a reminder: “My words are a colossal serve — I choose to serve kindness.”