

Waiting

Water, Air, and Sky

Waiting is hard, for children and adults alike. Sometimes we wait for small things like the bus or our turn in line. Sometimes we are waiting for something that happens slowly and gradually, almost imperceptibly, like water evaporating from a glass. Throughout life we must wait. We wait for healing or for our dreams to become reality; we even wait to understand our faith. This activity is a visual reminder that many of the things we hope for in life come slowly.

Designed for Ages 8+

Materials

1. Pitcher with 8 ounces of water
2. Empty glass

Time Investment: 5 minutes of active time, up to a month or more of waiting

How To

1. Someone reads aloud Romans 8:25, which says, *“If we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently”* (NIV). The reader asks two questions:

(1) “What does it feel like to wait a long time for something?” and (2) “What is something you are waiting for now?”

2. After the questions, say, *“We are going to start an activity now about waiting, and it will take a very long time. Each of us is going to pour a little bit of this water into this glass, and then we will put the glass somewhere we can check on it every day. We will wait to see how long the water stays in the glass and how long it takes to evaporate. As we pass by and see how long it is taking, we might feel*

discouraged or wonder if it is ever going to happen, but slowly, very slowly, all of the water will evaporate. The water becomes part of the air, but it is such a slow process we hardly notice it.”

3. Take turns pouring the water into the glass, and decide where to put it in your house. Choose a place where people will pass by it regularly but will not disturb it.

4. Walk by the glass on a regular basis and take note of how the water is evaporating. Comment with family members on the progress from time to time. When the water has finally evaporated completely, schedule a time the family will come back together for a discussion.

5. Read the Bible verse together again:

“If we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.”

Ask: (1) *“How did it feel to wait for the water to evaporate?”* Give prompts if nobody comes up with a reaction. *“Was it boring? Did you feel like it was happening so slowly you could hardly see it? Was it exciting to imagine that the day would finally be here?”* and (2) *“What are some things that we wait for that take a very long time?”* Some ideas for this question include healing, a new baby, perfecting a skill, etc.

6. Close with a prayer:

“Thank you, God, for this lesson about waiting. Help us to remember that you are with us, even when waiting for something important that takes a long time. Amen.”

Notes

- It takes a very long time for 8 ounces of water to evaporate from a glass. Though there are variables that change the amount of time it will take, you can plan on anywhere from two weeks to a month, on average. Although many things affect the rate of evaporation, two main things will accelerate or slow down the process: (1) the surface area—the wider the glass, the quicker evaporation will happen; (2) the temperature—the colder the ambient temperature, the slower the evaporation.
- Some children will be drawn to this activity and check on the water daily, or even more frequently, to see its progress. Others might be tempted to ignore it. The empty glass might remain empty for a long time before some remember the activity at all. When someone finally notices, call everyone together for the discussion questions.

Variations

- Color the water with food coloring to make it even more noticeable (and less likely the water will be thrown away!).
- Label the glass “the waiting glass,” or something similar.
- Try syncing the water evaporation with a key event in your family’s life. See which happens first, the evaporation of all the water or the event you are waiting for (birth of a new baby, for example).