

Flowers and Bulrushes

Unit One



“ . . . if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

Philippians 4:8

SCRIPTURAL OBJECTIVES FOR THE UNIT:

- To practice thinking positive, happy thoughts by emphasizing the good in day to day circumstances.
- To practice responding to other students' artwork in an encouraging, uplifting way by using “building up” words instead of “tearing down” words.
- To define “*virtue*” as *goodness* and to paraphrase Philippians 4:8 in the following way: “If you can find any goodness in a thing, or if you can find any things that are worth praising, then think about those things.”
- To relate talking with thinking so that the children understand that the things they think will become the things they say.
- To develop a sensitivity toward the feelings of others and to create a sense of security in the students by the knowledge that others will not be criticizing their work.

SUGGESTIONS FOR INTRODUCING THE SCRIPTURAL THEME:

Introduce the scriptural theme by playing the following game: Write names of certain foods, animals, school subjects, chores, etc. on separate pieces of paper. Then put them in a hat or a box to be drawn during the game. Make sure the foods are not as appealing as ice cream! The object of the game is to speak only uplifting, positive words about each item no matter how distasteful the choice may seem. The children will find the game challenging if the items for discussion are carefully chosen. Draw papers from the hat one by one, discussing each in a positive light.

Refer to the scripture on **page 1** of the student booklet. Define “*virtue*” as *goodness* and paraphrase Philippians 4:8 in the following way: “If you can find any goodness in a thing, or if you can find any things that are worth praising, then think about those things.” (It should be revealing to discover that there is more goodness in most things than initially meets the eye.)

Tell the children to practice not only saying positive words, but also thinking happy thoughts. By doing so, it will be easy to say good things, because **the things we think become the words we speak.**

Make it clear to the students that there will be no criticizing, laughing, or negative responses of any kind to one another’s work during art class. The only comments that will be made by fellow students will be uplifting ones. You may want to refer to these kinds of words as “building up” words and contrast them to “tearing down” words. “Tearing down” words are the kind that cause hurt and damage, and they certainly do not glorify God.

Refer to the cartoon about Susan and have the children describe the scene: Susan is practicing thinking happy thoughts. Since we have a choice what kinds of things we think about, it is our responsibility to choose our thoughts carefully. Psalm 19:14 says, “*Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight.*”