

Send North America: Montreal

Mission Lesson: Friends First

Kids learning to live "life on mission" in North America.

Items needed:

- Travel bag
- Winter attire
- French/English dictionary
- Travel snacks
- Personal hygiene items
- Map of North America
- Bible

Summary: Through pretending to be taking a mission trip to help a Montreal church planter, the leader will teach children geographical and cultural information about Montreal, which is a city in the Canadian province of Quebec. Children will learn that only .5 percent of the people in Montreal are evangelical Christians. That is less than one person in 100. Children may better understand that as one person in 200.

Note: This lesson assumes participants have some knowledge of the Send North America church planting strategy and Send North America cities.

Lesson Objective:

Children will learn they can help people know they can have a real friendship with Jesus by being a real friend to them first.

Bible Verses:

John 15:12-15

Background information: Montreal is a city in the province of Quebec. Quebec is the only French-speaking province in Canada. French Canadians are called Quebecois, and they are very proud of their French heritage. Hundreds of years ago, the English were given control over the Quebecois and tried to assimilate them into English culture. This was met with much resistance and resentment, which still exists today.

Most Quebecois will say they are culturally Roman Catholic. Though they claim Catholicism, they don't see God as relevant to their lives. Hardly any of them know why Jesus died on the cross.

They see evangelical Christians (those who emphasize salvation by faith in the atoning death of Jesus Christ through personal conversion, the authority of Scripture and the importance of preaching, as contrasted with ritual) as persons trying to force something English (Protestant) on them. They are resistant to the gospel for that reason.

We can show them what it is like to have a personal relationship with Jesus by following His example of being a friend. We can give them a new vision of what Jesus' Church is.

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Lesson:

Pack the travel bag with the winter attire, the snacks, the map, the dictionary and the Bible. Gather the children as one group. Welcome them, carrying the loaded travel bag, and proceed as follows:

Well, I think I have most of what I need for my mission trip. (Pull out, one at a time, the toothbrush, hairbrush and snacks.) Yep, here's my toothbrush and hairbrush—and my snacks—really don't want to forget my snacks.

I am going to help a church planter in one of the North American Mission Board's Send North America cities. Want to know which one? Any guesses? (Take guesses.) Let's see if you can guess more exactly from the things I have in my bag.

(Pull out the winter attire.) Hmmm, what can you guess from these things? (Someplace cold) That's right, the place where I am going is cold most of the year. Summertime is fairly warm, but spring, fall and winter can be pretty cold. Any guesses? (Take more guesses. Hopefully none know yet.)

Here is another hint. (Pull out the French/English dictionary.) I will need to know French to talk to the people in this city. What do you think about that? This city is in North America, but the official language there is French. And that is what most of the people there speak. Any guesses where this city is in North America or which one it is? (Take guesses.)

(If no one guesses correctly, reveal that the city is Montreal.) Montreal is a large city in the Province of Quebec in Canada. (Use the map of North America to show them where Montreal is in relation to your church.) Montreal is only an hour drive from the U.S. border, but is culturally nothing like the United States. French is the official language in Quebec. It is the only French-speaking province in Canada.

People in Montreal and Quebec are very proud of their French heritage and resist if they feel anyone is trying to change them from French to English. Most of the people say they are Roman Catholic, but they don't go to church. God is not part of their lives. There are many big, beautiful church buildings in Montreal, but most are empty.

The people see church as just a ceremonial service. They don't understand they can have Jesus as their friend and Savior. They don't understand that the sadness they feel inside is because they have an empty place in their hearts that Jesus is meant to fill.

We can show them that true happiness is found when we have a friendship with Jesus. We can be the kind of friend to them that Jesus is to us. Let's read the words of Jesus to see how we can be a friend to others. (Pull the Bible out of the bag, and read John 15:12-15.)

From this passage, we can be a friend to others in two basic ways:

1. Love them as Jesus loved us— Jesus put our needs before His own. He is always there to comfort, heal and provide. Because we are human, we don't have the supernatural power Jesus has to heal and provide, but there are many ways we can still be a friend in this way (see a. below). Jesus also laid down His life for us. We may never be asked to die for another person, but we can sacrifice some things in our lives for the sake of others (see b. below). We can be a friend to others through our actions.

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- a. Name some ways we can comfort, heal and provide for others. (Be there when they are sick, teach them how to pray, bring food and clothing, listen to their problems, forgive them if they wrong us, etc.)
 - b. Name some things we can sacrifice for the sake of others. (Our time, our money, our belongings, etc.)
2. Jesus told us everything about God- Jesus not only told us all about God, He showed us God in Himself. When we look at Jesus, we see God. The people in Jesus' day understood that true friends speak openly and honestly, holding nothing back. But we should always speak in the spirit of love. We can be a friend to others through our words, and we can be a friend by showing through our actions what Jesus is like.
- a. Name some ways we can be a friend to others through our words. (Tell them about Jesus in a loving way, never lie, apologize when we are wrong or have hurt them, don't speak harshly, pray for them, encourage them, etc.)
 - b. Name some ways we can be a friend to others through our actions. (We can love them the way Jesus loves us. See item 1.)

Missionaries in Montreal say ministry is hard there, but not impossible. We know God can do anything. We are responsible for doing what He tells us to do, and He touches the hearts of people. God wants us to show and tell people in Montreal about Him.

Action

What actions can we take to love the people in Montreal who don't know Jesus and who don't have a church family to love and help them? (Let the children offer some suggestions.) Here are some more things we can do:

1. Pray that the people in Montreal will seek God.
2. Pray that many people will go to Montreal to plant churches so more people in Montreal can have a church family.
3. Pray for the church planters and their families. Visit namb.net/Montreal to learn names and view profiles.
4. Support ministry in Montreal through our generous offerings.
5. Prepare ourselves in case God wants us to one day serve Him in Montreal.

Close in prayer, inviting a child to pray for the items mentioned above.

For articles, video and more information on Send North America: Montreal, go to namb.net/Montreal.