

Ups and Downs – A Lesson Plan on the Highs and Lows in Life

This lesson plan on the Transfiguration will help youth consider the ups and downs of life. Sometimes we are in a really great place, but eventually we have to come down the mountain.

Opening Game for Ups and Down

Start this lesson plan by playing [Cups and Downs](#). In this game, players must turn plastic cups over. See the [complete instructions here](#).

Those cups had a lot of ups and downs during that game. Ups and downs are a part of our daily lives too.

Go around the room. Have each youth tell one high point from the past week and one low point.

Most of us have high points and low points to share. Life is full of highs and lows, ups and downs. This is our natural cycle. But it seems like the higher you are, the harder it is to come down.

Read the following gospel passage:

Scripture Reading for Lesson Plan on Highs and Lows

[Mark 9:2-10](#) (The Transfiguration of our Lord) – the Gospel Reading for the [2nd Sunday of Lent – Year B](#)

Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them.

Then Elijah appeared to them along with Moses, and they were conversing with Jesus.

Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, “Rabbi, it is good that we are here! Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He hardly knew what to say, they were so terrified.

Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; from the cloud came a voice, “This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.” Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them.

As they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them not to relate what they had seen to anyone, except when the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what rising from the dead meant.

[Mark 9:2-10](#)

Discussion for the Ups and Downs Lesson Plan

Imagine that you are with Peter, John and James. Jesus takes you on a hike up a mountain. It is a sunny day. There is a soft breeze blowing. It is nice to get away from the crowds and have a chance to spend some quiet time with Jesus.

Suddenly, something happens. Jesus becomes the brightest thing you have ever seen. Elijah and Moses, who are Old Testament superheroes, show up. Peter even suggests putting up some tents so you could just stay here. And then to top it all off, you hear the voice of the Father, calling Jesus “Beloved”.

And then it is just you and Jesus again. Jesus says, “Let’s go home. And don’t tell anyone about this.”

- What would your reaction be?
- Would you want to stay on the mountain a little longer and talk to Jesus about what happened?
- If you thought Jesus was just a man before, how would the transfiguration change your view of him?
- Would you be ready to go back down the mountain right away?

Now you are back in the local village. Once again, you are with the other apostles. All of the cares of daily life as a disciple of Jesus are right there with you. Somebody has to get food for the meal. Who is going to clean up afterwards? We are moving on to another town tomorrow, and we need to get our things packed up. The more you get caught up in the tasks of the day, the harder it is to remember your experience on the mountain.

The transfiguration of Jesus on the mountaintop helped the apostles understand that he was truly the Son of God, the Light of the World.

- Do you think in later days, when the authorities were closing in on Jesus, or later when the early Church was being persecuted, the memory of this experience helped the apostles?
- Can you think of a time when you felt especially close to God?

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- Does remembering this experience help you when you experience hardship?

Retreats can often be mountaintop experiences. You can feel so close to Jesus and those around you that you are going to explode with energy. But then you have to go home and deal with homework and chores and siblings. But you will have other times when you feel especially close to God also. These are important also.

Remembering these mountaintop experiences can be really helpful. You can't go back, but you can remember what you learned. And the memory can help you through more difficult events in your lives

Reflection Questions for the Ups and Downs Lesson Plan

- What are some of the best experiences you've had in your life?
- What was really great about these experiences?
- How did you feel when these events were over?
- Do you have any photos or mementos to help you remember how you felt?

The following questions are especially helpful if this is being done in conjunction with a retreat:

- What are some things you can do to help you remember your mountaintop?
 - Keep a journal
 - Receive the sacraments, just like you did on retreat
 - Keep in touch with people who shared your mountaintop experience and see how they are doing
 - Spend some time talking to Jesus in adoration

Challenge for this Highs and Lows Lesson Plan

This week, spend some time thinking about a time you felt close to God. Ask the Holy Spirit to join you. Really spend some time in your memory. Close your eyes and put yourself there. Try to remember the senses you experienced there – touch, smell, touch, hearing, taste. Enjoy reliving the experience. And then hold onto that feeling.

Prayer for the Lesson Plan on Ups and Downs

Close by having a [popcorn prayer circle](#).

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More Resources

[More Lesson Plans](#)

[Learn how to let Jesus calm the storms in teen life](#)

[Learn how the fruits of the Spirit can change your life](#)

[Lego Transfiguration Video](#)

[Mountain Time – A Lesson Plan on Mountains in the Bible](#)