

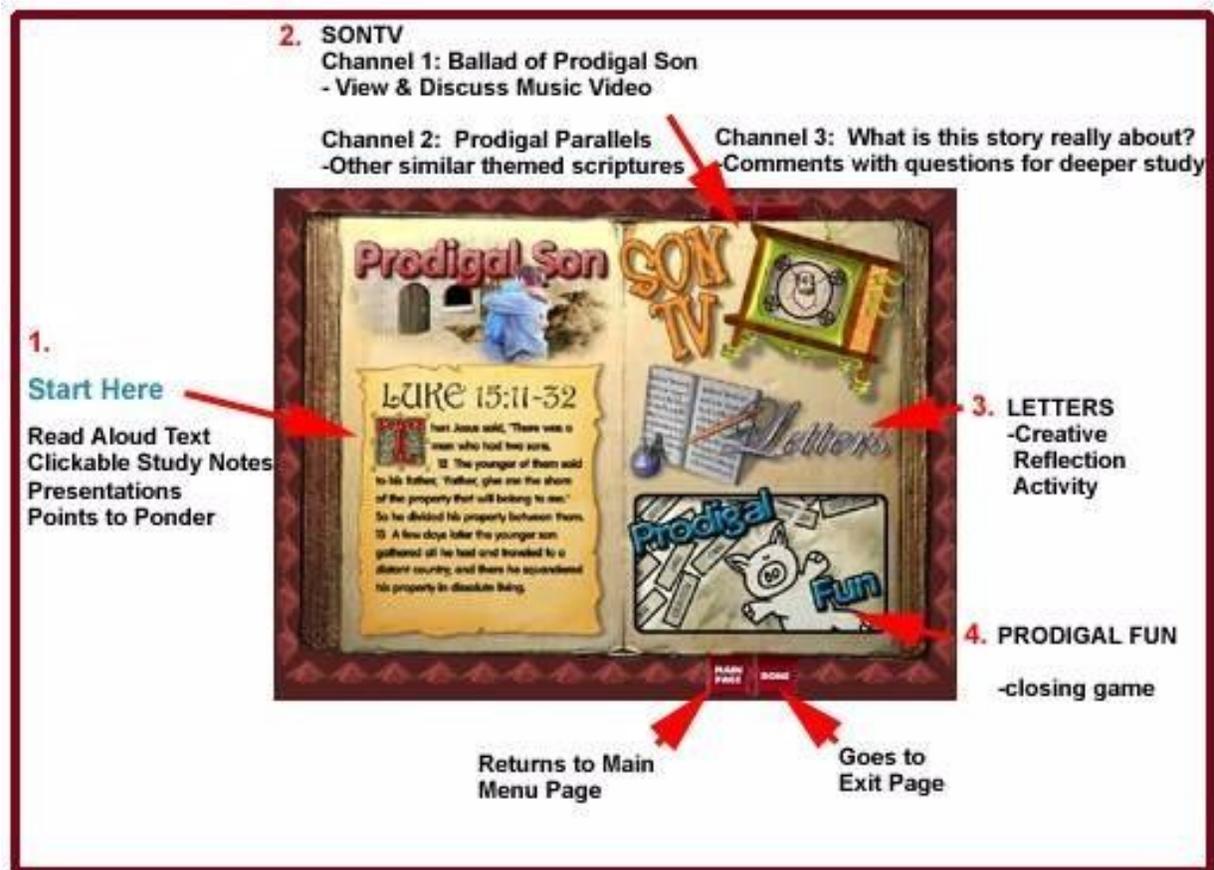
# Guide to Sunday Software's Prodigal Son Software

This program is being made available for free to the supporting members of Rotation.org. During installation, ignore the licensing notes. You have our permission to freely share this program on multiple computers within your church and with members of your congregation for home use. Visit Rotation.org's Software Download forum for more details and more software.



**Technical Notes:** Be sure you have the latest version of Quicktime for Windows (v 7.7.9) installed on your PC. Without it, none of the animated menus or animations will work. Quicktime for Windows is free from Apple. You will also want to **adjust your DISPLAY SCALE** option in Windows to make Good Sam's window fill more of your screen. See the Display notes below. Good Sam works on Windows XP, 7, 8, and 10.

The opening screen is the Main Menu to the Prodigal Son software.



## Recommended Path through the Software:

Bildad will come out at the beginning of the program and suggest the path through the program. You can jump around the program at any time by clicking on Main Page.

1. LUKE 15: Encounter & Learn Approximately 15 minutes. Additional 10-15 if you talk about each study note presentation.
2. SONTV: Dig Deeper Channel One: 10 minutes to view twice and discuss images. Additional 10-15 minutes for older students studying Channels Two and Three.
3. LETTERS: Reflect and Apply Approximately 15-20 minutes for creating content and discussing.
4. PRODIGAL FUN: Have Fun --Approximately 10 minutes

## Prodigal Lesson Plan Tips:

Prodigal Son was designed to be discussed as it unfolds.

Preschoolers and 1<sup>st</sup> graders will enjoy seeing the story and watching the videos but will need help and should skip some of the content.

**Technical Note Before You Start:** Adjust your Windows Display "Scale" to make sure the program fills more of your screen. Be sure the animations are working and if not, install Quicktime 7.7.9. Test the "print" function on the Letters Page to make sure your printer can handle printing the page. If you get a blank page, set your printer properties to "draft" or "economy" (or whatever your printer calls it). If it doesn't work, have students use paper and pen to compose.

Use your Windows Display "Scale" option to make programs with a small 'fixed' window size fill more of your screen.



⇒ The **Windows 10** "scale and layout" option is found in the Windows 10 "Settings App," and not in the Windows Control Panel (for some dumb reason). Type "settings" in your Windows search field to find it, **OR** click any blank area on your Desktop and open your Display Properties. Try 125%.

⇒ The "display scaling" option in **Windows 7 and 8** is found in the Windows Control Panel.

## OUTLINE

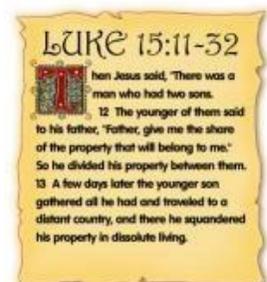
### Luke 15: Hear, See & Read the Story

Hear and See the story read by storyteller Barry Weaver. (Barry is the vocalist and onscreen guitarist in SonTV's music video.) As each section of scripture is read, the program will display images down on the "projection screen." Note: These images come together as video in the SonTV portion of the program --a pleasant surprise in-store for your students.

As each section of scripture pauses, two kinds of STUDY NOTES can now be clicked on to help your students understand the section they have just seen and heard.

<BILDAD> study note buttons launch Bildad the Bible Explorer talking about the meaning of various words and concepts in the verses. Some contain questions.

<HUH> study note buttons that launch animated presentations about the meaning of various words and concepts in the verses.



Technical Note: The interactive study notes animate as they are ROLLED OVER. Click on them to activate the note it is attached to. The PARTY rollover has no study note. It simply plays a phrase from the song "Ballad of the Prodigal Son."

## <HUH> Study Notes:

PROPERTY BETWEEN THEM -- "Give me MY SHARE of the property? No, he wasn't being greedy. In those days a father would often split the family business, property, farmland and/or animals between grown sons. The older son usually received a larger share. What kind of 'property' does GOD share among his children?" Does God give more to some and less to others?

DISTANT COUNTRY -- "The son traveled far from his father's watchful eye and guidance." Where and what do people do to be far from God?

DISSOLUTE LIVING -- Visuals followed by the words: "And that's what Jesus means when he says, 'Dissolute Living.'"

PIGS-- Jewish law forbid the eating of pork. Pigs were considered unclean animals. Jesus knew his audience would understand that the Prodigal Son had sunk to a new low working with unclean animals. What kind of job would signify this new low in your world?

FATTED CALF-- "Sorry bossie, but in those days beef was a valuable source of nutritious food. So valuable, in fact, that you were fed special food for a month or more just before you were cooked for a special occasion. God doesn't offer leftovers to those he forgives. God doesn't hold a grudge or make you sleep in the barn. God orders up a celebration and offers you the finest from his table.

RING-- Like a wedding ring, back in the days of Jesus, a ring was a sign of loyalty and faithfulness. It could also be a sign that the ringbearer had the ring-giver's love, authority and blessing. When the father gives his son a ring, it shows that he trusts him again. Forgiving someone means rebuilding a trusting relationship. How could parents show they trust their children?

SANDALS-- Back in those days, most people didn't own eight pairs of shoes, and clean feet were considered a beautiful thing (especially if they didn't smell at the dinner table). Those who worked hard for a living would often work without sandals -saving their sandals for better occasions. Sandals, especially nice ones, could be a sign of authority, wealth, or status. When you finally accept that God forgives you -- God makes even your feet feel beautiful

IN THE FIELD-- Imagine you are the Older Brother out busting your tail working in the field. Then you hear the news that your creepy do-nothing little ex-brother is back in town and your dad is fawning all over him and maybe even giving him more money. You're steamed! Instead of getting ready to complain and argue, what should you be hoping for when you get to the house?

YOUNG GOAT -- A goat isn't quite as cool as a fatted calf (or as tasty). The Older Son is complaining that his dad has never appreciated HIM that much and thrown him that big a party. What do you think ....does the Older Son have a "beef?"

PROSTITUTES--Due to the sexual content of this study note, we've written it backwards "Prostitutes are people who engage in sex for money." But the other Biblical meaning can be "those who seek after other false gods and a false way of life." Which one do you think Jesus meant?

MINE IS YOURS -- Jesus is saying that God holds nothing back from us, so why complain when God is generous with others? The Older Son has been living with his father, but really needs to start living LIKE his father. Why can't the Older Son understand this and let go of his anger? What's holding him back from accepting his younger brother?

DEAD AND HAS COME TO LIFE-- Is Jesus talking about ZOMBIES ? Well actually, yes. The Bible often refers to people who are living but dead --dead to God. What is it in them that's dead? How can you spot the kind of Zombie Jesus is referring to?

## **Bildad's study notes:**

Severe famine -- "The 'severe famine' Jesus is talking about is the lack of another kind of food: "soul food." What other kinds of 'famines' or bad things can cause a person to realize what they are missing in their life? And what are the good things a person can feed their soul with?"

Hired Hands - "By coming back as a hired hand, the son was humbly letting the father and brother know he didn't expect to be forgiven and his inheritance to be restored. Why then do you suppose the son wanted to come back?"

Kissed him-- "Now before you starting going 'ooo, oooo' about all this smooching business, just remember that in many places in the world -kissing is what both men and women do to greet each other. The important point here, is that the father ran to embrace his son even before the son had said anything. What does that say about how forgiveness should feel when you give or get it?"

Son of yours-- "By saying 'that son of yours' -the Older Brother showed that he no longer considered the Prodigal his brother. Do you think he was right or wrong to think that? In the eyes of God when is another human being no longer your brother or sister?

And then... "Hummm did you notice that Jesus doesn't say how the story ends. Why do you think he didn't? Take a moment and write down, discuss, or maybe even do a skit about how YOU think the story might end."

## SON TV -Dig & Discuss

### Son TV Channel One:

**Ballad of the Prodigal Son** -a music video that recreates the story in a modern day setting. The lyrics can be found at the end of this web document. The chords are G|A|D. The father and son in the video are a real farming father and son. The family's 150 year old farmhouse was used for the interiors and exteriors and all but the older brother in the scene are part of the same family. Vocalist and guitar strummer Barry Weaver is a professional storyteller, musician and school teacher.



### SonTV Channel Two

Jesus spoke on the subject of sons, workers and fairness several times. Here are three. (Channel Two is an optional activity to "dig deeper." It is best suited for older children and youth.)

#### 1. Matthew 21:28 Two Sons in the Vineyard

There was once a man who had two sons. He went to the older one and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." 29 "I don't want to," he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. 30 Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. "Yes, sir," he answered, but he did not go. 31 Which one of the two did what his father wanted?"

"The older one," they answered. So Jesus said to them, "I tell you: the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the Kingdom of God ahead of you. 32 For John the Baptist came to you showing you the right path to take, and you would not believe him; but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. Even when you saw this, you did not later change your minds and believe him.

What matters with Jesus?

#### 2. Matthew 20:8 Workers in the Vineyard

8 When evening came, the owner of a vineyard said to his manager, "Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with those whom I hired late in the day." 9 When those hired late in the day came, each of them received an entire day's wage. 10 Those who had worked longer thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage.

11 So they grumbled against the landowner, 12 saying, "These worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have worked all day in the scorching heat." 13 But the owner replied to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? 14 Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. 15 Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?"

What is the "Vineyard," who are "the workers" and "the last" Jesus might be talking about in our day?

#### 3. Luke 15:2 Parable of the Lost Sheep

2 One day the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law started grumbling, "This man welcomes outcasts and even eats with them!" 3 So Jesus told them this parable: 4 "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them—what do you do? You leave the other ninety-nine sheep in the pasture and go looking for the one that got lost until you find it. 5 When you find it, you are so happy that you put it on your shoulders 6 and carry it back home. Then you call your friends and neighbors together and say to them, "I am so happy I found my lost sheep. Let us celebrate!" 7 In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine respectable people who do not need to repent.

How is the parable of the Lost Sheep like the parable of the Prodigal Son

## SonTV CHANNEL THREE: More thoughts for Deeper Study

There are two sets of discussion texts in SonTV Channel 3. The first set is displayed onscreen as you hear the "Native Son." The second prints out when you click the "print lyrics" button.

**Text set 1:** The following text appears onscreen and is more suitable for quick use and older elementary

"Did Jesus mean for the Prodigal Son and Older Brother to represent individual persons - or- groups of people?"

In the time of Jesus some religious people were not willing to accept new believers who had worshipped other gods or who had led ungodly lives. They called these people 'Gentiles' and believed they were no longer worthy to be part of God's family. Even today some churches and Christians have a hard time loving those sinners whom God loves. And yet, that's exactly what the story tells us to do. Now here are some questions for further discussion:"

If the father represents God, what groups could the Prodigal Son represent? ...the Older Son?

Who are the prodigals around you and how does your church welcome them, -or not welcome them in God's house?

What person do you need to forgive and welcome back into your life

**Text Set 2:** There are extra discussion questions on the print-out with the "Native Son" song lyrics. You might want to print them out ahead of time if you're going to be focusing on that song specifically. It's a particularly good song and discussion for teens using the program.

*Age Appropriate Tip: Younger classes may want to bypass going into Channels 2 and 3. Their teacher, however, may want to bring up the content of these channels in discussion.*

## Letters: Reflect on the Story and Apply It

Students are asked to assume various roles in the story and write a letter based on that person's point of view in the story at a certain point in the storyline. In your classroom setting, you may choose to have students write letters back and forth to each other responding to letters given to them by other students. Or, each student can work on a letter and share it with the class after use of the program.



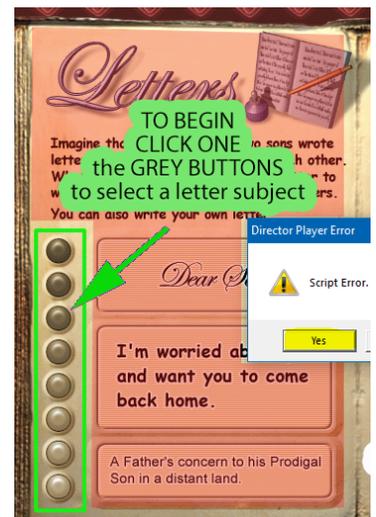
Caution: Selecting ERASE or Main Page will erase the contents of the letter.

**Very Important "Letters" Tech Notes:** Test the Letters print function before class. The print-out is a screen shot of the entire Letter's page. It will only print on half the paper. When first entering the Letters Page, if you click anywhere on the left side other than the grey "letter type" buttons, a "Script Error" will pop up. Click "Yes" to continue and immediately **select one of the GREY "letter type" options.**

Option: Use the "Dear God" or "Dear \_\_\_\_" letters to write your own personal letters to someone. Seal them in an envelope and give them to the leader. The leader mails them 3 or 6 months later.

**On the Letters Page...**

Imagine that the father and two sons wrote letters explaining their feelings to each other. What would be in them? Click on the Grey "Letter Type" buttons, choose one to complete and print it after completing it.



**Here are the "Letter Types" to select from and some suggestions:**

- + Dear Son, I'm worried about you and want you to come back home... A Father's concern to his Prodigal Son in a distant land. (From the Desk of Your Father)
- + Dear Father, This is why I left and why I want to come home... A Prodigal's confession and what he's learned. (From the Pig Pen of your Son)
- + Dear Oldest Child, This is why I welcomed him home and how you should treat him... A Father's

letter to his upset oldest son. (From the Desk of Your Father)

+ Dear Family, Now that we're all back together... The Father's expectations of the Prodigal Son and Oldest Son. (From the Desk of Your Father)

+ Dear Dad and Bro', I am upset with you two because... A letter from the Older Brother to his father and brother. (From the Desk of the Older Brother )

+ Dear God, I'm sorry about... A letter from you to God confessing your sins and discussing the changes you need to make... (From the Desk of a Prodigal)

+ Dear Children.... A letter from God about your life and how God wants to be involved... (From the Desk of God)

+ Dear.....(Write your own letter) This letter was left open for your own creative lettering writing ideas.

Printing Tips: The Print-out will automatically include the title (ex. "Dear Son") and the first line seen on the left side of the screen and above here in this document (ex. "I'm worried about you..."). Students should begin typing the body of the letter, not the salutation. If you want to save ink, open the printer properties when the print panel pops up and select "draft" or "economy." The Letters page will print in black and white.

Age Appropriate Tip: Have older students available to do the typing for first graders and younger students. You might have second graders print a letter page and write their own letter as best they can with a marker (they don't have the keyboard skills yet).

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## MORE RESOURCES

### Lyrics to "Ballad of the Prodigal Son"—the song in the music video found in SonTV Channel 1.

Music and Lyrics by Neil and Shelley MacQueen Copyright Sunday Software. Chords: G | A | D

Verse 1: Well.... there once was a prodigal son, who wanted some prodigal fun, left his daddy's land, took the money and ran, to live by the prodigal ton, underneath the prodigal son

REFRAIN:

There's a party tonight, cold root beer on ice, I ain't going home and I ain't gonna phone, there's a party tonight.

Verse 2: Soon the money all ran out, got a bad case of the gout.

His friends left him knee deep in prodigal sin, shaken with self-doubt, it was really quite a big rout.

REFRAIN:

There's a party tonight, cold root beer on ice, I ain't going home and I ain't gonna phone, there's a party tonight.

Verse 3: So he got him a prodigal job, sloppin' the prodigal hogs, til he summoned the courage to get home in a hurry saying, "sinned against God and my dad, man I've been really bad."

REFRAIN:

There was a party last night, cold root beer on ice. I wasn't going home and I wasn't gonna phone, it was a party alright.

Verse 4: A sight for sore eyes did he see (said the dad now), his son coming back on his knees. He said, Dad I'm home can you throw me a bone, Forgive my sins daddy please, this time I'll let you lead. (no refrain here and the next verse has an added line)

Well the others looked in disgust, older brother put up a fuss. But the dad said hey it's gonna be ok, he's been lost and down but now he's found, I'd do the same for you don't you know that it's true, He's said my boy's alright, gonna be a party tonight.

REFRAIN and spoken words:

There's a party tonight. (Spoken: ) get him a ring now, Party tonight and some new shoes

There's a party tonight kill the fatted calf, Party tonight here son you take half (party tonight) what is that smell?

(party tonight) you thought I wouldn't love you? Well, as a matter of fact I'll always love you no matter what. I would have waited for you forever. Welcome Home Son

## Lyrics to "Native Son"

by Steve Lindsley, Copyright 1999 MRM productions. Used with permission. Found in SonTV Channel 2.

It's been years since I walked this place, It's been years since the memories Of a love long forgotten  
To touch the hem of your coat, and to feel your presence, Like our bond was never broken  
And I had not made it home in a lifetime  
I wandered the paths of change, Rode waves of confusion, And I longed for the yearning  
These people they touched my soul, this place calls to my spirit, And says child you're still only growing  
And I have come many miles for a lifetime  
Sing to the sky in her blueness, And ride on the wind as it blows, And love with a love that keeps on giving  
Look here and see now I'm your native son  
Many people have journeyed with me, Lacked a heart of compassion, Their eyes blind to the beauty  
It's not far to the end of the road, to the place called lonely, Where hope is just a memory  
But I'll find hope in you for more than a lifetime  
Sing to the sky in her blueness... Can you see it love comes around can you feel it round and round and round

Sing to the sky in her blueness... Welcome home to the prodigal son, I'm your native son

Possible questions for discussion:

- What "change" and "confusion" have you experienced?
  - What place calls to your spirit? Who are the people who have touched your heart?
  - What does he mean when he sings, "I'll find hope in you for more than a lifetime."
  - What feeling is conveyed by the refrain: "Sing to the sky....And ride on the wind ... "
  - What people around you "lack a heart of compassion" or are "blind to the beauty?"
  - What is the "love that keeps on giving?"
  - What is the song about? What is it saying to you?
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## Prodigal Son Software Lesson Outline

*"Who forgives? Who to forgive? When to forgive? and How to forgive?"*

### Three Observations for Teachers:

- 1) The Father acts in unexpected and unusual ways.
  - Giving the inheritance generously when asked.
  - Hiking up his robe and running to greet his lost son in full view of his kin and workers (which demonstrates the personality of the father (God) in a way that would not have been expected.
  - Giving warm welcome instead of punishment and throwing a party.
  - Dealing kindly with the older son.
- 2) The older brother could be understood as ISRAEL or the CHURCH, or unwelcoming CHRISTIANS, or jealous siblings — depending on who you think Jesus or Luke is speaking to. The "prodigal" could be you, me, Gentiles (non-Jews), Jews, Christians, outcasts, or anyone who thinks they don't need God. Imagining "who's who" presents some interesting revelations and discussion opportunities.
- 3) The story also works on a personal level. Who are we in the story? What do we learn when we think of ourselves as the son, or the brother, or the father?
  - Are you the P.Son thinking you can make your own rules? What do you have to confess? Are you surprised by your Father's grace? How can you change what people think of you after you've done something bad?
  - Are you the father who is ready to welcome the sinner home, and not hold their past against them? How might our church be acting like the older brother to those new to the faith?
  - Are you the Older Sibling who thinking you are BETTER than someone else, deserve more, more loved by your parent, more loved by God than other people or groups?
  - Are you someone who doesn't forgives sins or forget wrongs? Are you the son who has made some bad decisions and needs forgiveness?

# A Prodigal Son Software Lesson Plan:

**1. Gather the kids and have them tell you the story of the Prodigal Son.** Fill in what they have forgotten. Have a race to see who can find the passage in a printed Bible. As they try to find it, give them clues, such as, “Luke”, then, “it’s in the same chapter as the parable of the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin”, then “chapter 15”.

**2. Write out the Question of the Day:** “Who forgives? Who to forgive? When to forgive? Why forgive? and How to forgive?” At the end of the lesson, you will ask them to answer those questions.

## 3. Dive into the Prodigal Son software

**a. First do the Luke 15 Story.** Work through select study notes on each page.

Pause at the end of the story to highlight key ideas before moving on.

**b. Go to SonTV “Channel 1” and view the music video “Ballad of the Prodigal Son”.** This will knit together the whole story, and has a snappy song!

**c. Channel 3’s second section is a set of graphically presented Questions about the Prodigal Parable.** These can be answered by readers at the computer in a small group discussion, or presented by the teacher to the entire class. The questions are listed in the printable guide. Question Examples: What people might be Prodigals coming back to your church? Who do YOU need to forgive and welcome back in your life?

OPTIONS: Note: Channels 2 and 3 can be used with older students –or those with more time or for another lesson period.

Channel 2 presents the related stories in Matthew of “The Two Sons in the Vineyard” and “The Workers in the Vineyard” with additional study questions. These are good for older classes with extra time, or for another lesson time using the program.

Channel 3 has two sections: The first is a song by Christian recording artist Steve Lindsley. The lyrics are in the guide and have discussion questions with them.

**d. Go into “Letters”.** Assign various letter options to your workstations. The programs guide has a list of all the letter options. Help them think through how to express themselves in writing. Have them read their letter out loud to the class. Comment on the language of forgiveness.... how certain words and actions can come from the heart or sound fake. What really is forgiveness? What does God require?

Non-readers will need help, and the activity can be revised as something the non-readers might want to color on a page, –a situation in their life or at school that needs forgiven. You will need to stoke the discussion with examples.

OPTION: Hand students a blank sheet of paper and a letter envelope. On that paper they are to write either the name of someone they need to forgive, the sin that needs forgiven, how you hope it will turn out, and why it’s important to forgive that person, then have them seal that letter in the envelope and put their name on it. Collect the letters and tell them that “in a month I’m going to give you back your letter so you can see how you’ve done forgiving someone”.

## 4. CLOSING

Tell the kids that after this closing they’ll get to play the Prodigal Fun game.

a. Look at the opening questions and ask the kids to answer them out loud:

“Who forgives? Who to forgive? When to forgive? Why forgive? and How to forgive?”

b. Pile their letters on a table, have everyone place their hands on the pile and close their eyes and repeat the teacher’s prayer:

(Repeating after the teacher...)

*Dear God | I’m sorry for my sins. | It hurts me when people sin against me, | so I know that my sins must make you feel bad too. | Please help me keep from doing wrong, | teach me to do what’s right. | Remind me that you are always looking for me | and will always throw your arms around me even when I have done wrong, | And that I should do the same with others who sin. | Amen.*

## 5. PLAY THE PRODIGAL FUN GAME