

More Than Hearing Worksheet

Episode: COrd3x2019

Texts: [Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10](#) • [Psalm 19](#) • [1 Corinthians 12:12-31a](#) • [Luke 4:14-21](#)

WORD Smart

A word smart person, or someone with linguistic intelligence, is good with words and language, whether writing, reading or speaking.

This is the ability to enjoy and use language through word games, books, recordings, trivia, poetry, papers, discussion, and other forms of using words. This person needs words in order to communicate.

~From Diana Waring, [Types of Intelligences](#)

Text: **Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10**

8:1 all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel.

2 Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who **could hear with understanding**. This was on the first day of the seventh month. 3 He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and **those who could understand**; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law.

5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. 6 Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground.

8 **So they read from the book**, from the law of God, **with interpretation**. They gave the sense, so that the people **understood the reading**. 9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. 10 Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

Smarts	Images in the text/ interesting exegesis	Illustrations	SFX
WORD smart	The people <i>request</i> Ezra bring the book and Nehemiah read it - they want to hear what it	1) Vs 8 → Will Shortz, the Puzzle Master for NPR's Sunday morning puzzle, often brings a type of	1) Does your congregation have any letters written to them? We get letters from people to whom we

	<p>says!</p>	<p>puzzle that requires contestants to know two word phrases that contain certain combinations of letters. For example, this past week (January 20, 2019), the challenge was to find a compound word or two word phrases using the long vowel sound of "i" in the first word, and "e" in the second word. As in, "color akin to chartreuse is Lime Green". Often as players go through this deceptively simple game, they will run into a wall and struggle mightily until they either have a brainstorm and figure it out or are given a hint. Often, they say out loud, "OH!" - or I do as I'm driving to church and drinking my coffee! I suspect the people listening to Nehemiah had a similar experience.</p> <p>2) Understand 3x vss. 2, 3, 8</p> <p>I'ג to discern perceive or recognize (something). <i>Apart, separate, detect, differentiate, recognize, comprehend</i></p> <p>While not explicit in this text, we may presume that those who understand are the people who have mastered language comprehension, the most basic component of communication. The children's book Amelia Bedelia is a trove of misapprehension of language resulting in</p>	<p>have supported financially and one of our elders will always read them at the beginning of the service. She then tacks them to the bulletin board in the narthex, so people can read them later. It's always pleasant to hear how we have effected some good.</p> <p>2) Do you as a pastor have any letters that you've received that have made a difference in your ministry? Have you gotten a thank you note or Christmas card that gives you a sense that you've done a good thing for the kingdom? David told me that someone told him to hang on to those notes and cards and pull them out from time to time to keep the fires burning.</p> <p>3) Jill Duffield suggests a prayer from A Book of Reformed Prayers called "Right Hearing of God's Word":</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"O God, inexhaustible source of all good things, we bless thee for the gifts of thy love. Grant that we may hear thy word with a real desire to receive what it promises and to practice what it commands. Engrave it not only on our minds but in our hearts, and transform us by thy Spirit into the image of thy Son, making us contemplate thy glory in the clear mirror of the Gospel."</p>
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		<p>humor for the reader and total frustration for Mrs. Rogers - until she learns how to communicate with Amelia.</p> <p>3) When someone says to you, "Which do you want first, <u>the good news or the bad news?</u>" The people just want the news. Luther says that the Gospel is bad news before it can be good news - which is the order we see in the passage. The people mourn and Nehemiah tells them to rejoice, because NOW they know.</p>	4) David "talking" to his phone! lol
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Text: **Psalm 19**

- 1 The heavens **are telling** the glory of God;
and the firmament **proclaims** his handiwork.
- 2 Day to day **pours forth speech**,
and night to night **declares knowledge**.
- 3 There is no **speech**, nor are there **words**;
their **voice** is not heard;
- 4 yet their **voice** goes out through all the earth,
and their **words** to the end of the world.

In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,
5 which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,
and like a strong man runs its course with joy.
6 Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them;
and nothing is hid from its heat.

7 The **law** of the Lord is perfect,
reviving the soul;
the **decrees** of the Lord are sure,
making wise the simple;
8 the **precepts** of the Lord are right,
rejoicing the heart;
the **commandment** of the Lord is clear,
enlightening the eyes;
9 the fear of the Lord is pure,
enduring forever;
the **ordinances** of the Lord are true
and righteous altogether.
10 More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey,
and drippings of the honeycomb.

11 Moreover by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.
12 But who can detect their errors?
Clear me from hidden faults.
13 Keep back your servant also from the insolent;
do not let them have dominion over me.
Then I shall be blameless,
and innocent of great transgression.

14 Let the **words of my mouth** and the **meditation of my heart**
be acceptable to you,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

Smarts	Images in the text/ interesting exegesis	Illustrations	SFX
WORD smart	<p>Fred Craddock writes that the psalm has three movements:</p> <p>1st → the language of nature and how creation speaks to us (verses 1-6),</p> <p>2nd → the word of God given to us in the law of Moses that reveals God's intention for God's people to live in creation (verses 7-10), and</p> <p>3rd → how each "word", from creation and from the law, echo deep within us and shape our lives and the way we live (verses 11-14).</p>	<p>1) Nature is a language spoken without words and read without books. Its existence stands as a testament to the reality we see and the invisible structure supporting it. For some, this is God; for others, it is the result of processes begun out of our sight.</p> <p>Doug Bratt at Center for Excellence in Preaching writes:</p> <p>"The psalmist insists God's glory is visible in God's handiwork that is the "heavens" and "skies." The Reformed confession of faith that is the Belgic Confession makes a similar claim in Article 2 where it insists, "the universe is before our eyes like a beautiful book in which all creatures ... are as letters to make us ponder the invisible things of God: his eternal power and his divinity."</p> <p>And Scott Hoezee writes: "The heavens declare the glory of God in a universal language that needs no translation from German into Dutch, from Farsi into Japanese. It's a universal tongue whose grammar and vocabulary are intelligible to anyone willing to listen."</p>	<p>1) Read the first four verses with time enough between them for people to sit with the images the words bring to mind.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What story do the heavens tell them about God's glory? • What proclamation do mountains, oceans, the sky make? • What do days say to you? What does night say? <p>2) I saw someone say that for a children's time, when they used this passage and talked about the word of God being more desirable than fine gold and sweeter than honey, she passed out honey sticks to the kids. It's a neat, if potentially messy, idea and if your congregation is small enough, you could do a similar thing.</p>

Text: **1 Corinthians 12:12-31a**

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

14 Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15 If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the **hearing** be? If the whole body **were hearing**, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. 19 If all were a single member, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many members, yet one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 22 On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23 and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; 24 whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, 25 that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. 26 If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30 Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But strive for the greater gifts.

Smarts	Images in the text/ interesting exegesis	Illustrations	SFX
WORD smart	The point Paul is stressing in this passage is the unity of the group; affirming differences that enliven the whole which makes it that much more vital and vibrant. PLUS the unity in which we find ourselves is Christ not a group of humans.	Because this passage is so familiar to many, try a different analogy - e.g. last week we suggested using a biome instead of a body as the metaphor. Try using a classroom, or an emergency room, or a corporate office, or a recipe, or the government.	Body Part Bingo - make up bingo cards with the different body parts and church roles mentioned by Paul in the boxes. The free space is BODY. Let people mark their cards while you read the passage.

Text: Luke 4:14-21

The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry

14 Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. 15 He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth

16 When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. **He stood up to read**, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

20 And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21 Then he began to say to them, "**Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.**"

Smarts	Images in the text/ interesting exegesis	Illustrations	SFX
WORD smart	Part of the problem of hearing this passage especially verses 18 & 19 is that we do not hear that <i>we</i> are the poor, captive, blind, or oppressed. Or, we spiritualize it and tame the images if we apply them to our own situation.	1) Jesus leaves out the end of Isaiah's passage "...and the day of vengeance of our God". For the Jews listening to him read, it would be like any of us going to a sporting event and hearing someone sing "The Star Spangled Banner" without the last line "...and the home of the brave". Just imagine hearing the singer going for that grand note on the word "FREEEEEEEE" and then just walk away. 2) The word "fulfilled" is	Again, these verses are familiar, so try some <u>synonym</u> substitutions. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For "poor" use "deeply destitute".• "Broken hearted" = "crushed"• "Release" = "pardon"• "Recovery of sight" = "looking up"• "Oppressed" = "shattered"

in the perfect tense which indicates an [ongoing result](#) of a completed action. On that day in Nazareth, Jesus sat down and told everyone who heard his voice at that time, that the One who was to fulfill verses 18-19 has come to do it. Since this is in the perfect, we can interpret this action of Jesus to still be in effect now in 2019.