

Challenges:

- Say the alphabet. That wasn't a challenge? How about you say the alphabet backwards? (While children are trying to think of the backwards alphabet, play loud music and tell jokes)
 - What do you call a sad strawberry? *A blueberry!*
 - What do you call a hen who counts her own eggs? *A mathema-chicken!*
 - What do you call a bear without any teeth? *A gummy bear!*
 - Why do bicycles fall over? *Because they're two-tired!*
 - How did the barber win the race? *They knew a short cut!*
 - What do you call two bananas? *A pair of slippers!*
 - Why do hummingbirds hum? *Because they don't know the words!*
- March in place and while you're marching, write down the words to the Lord's Prayer! (hand students paper and pen or pencil).
- Do some jumping jacks! Now, don't stop jumping, but see if you can catch these balls while you're still jumping. (Begin tossing light balls towards children.)

What was tough about those things? It's hard to focus on a lot of things at once, isn't it? When you had noise or distractions or extra things in the way, it made it difficult to concentrate on the tasks I gave you. And it's nearly impossible to be moving and doing another motion at the same time.

Do we ever do this in life? There are a few things we might be able to manage "multi-tasking", but it only works for so long. Usually the more we try to juggle, the less successful we are. And this can even apply to how we treat God. When we are too busy, we sort of tune Him out, and it's hard to pray or read God's Word or remember that He should be first and foremost in our lives. If we're always moving and working and doing things, we can neglect Him or forget to take time for prayer.

This brings us to our **#TargetPractice: What is Shabbat and why is it important?.**

Shabbat is Greek for "stop." God instructed His people to take a day every week to stop all work and just focus on Him and family. At that time, Shabbat began at sundown on Friday and lasted until sundown on Saturday. They had to have their food bought and prepared as well as their animals cared for before the sun went down on Friday. Otherwise they did without because even preparing food was considered work.

We don't do that but we do set apart time for God. What is it? Most Christians observe Sunday as the Sabbath and go to church as a way of setting time aside for God.

Is that the only time we can stop and just be in God's presence? No!

Now the rest of the question. **Why is Shabbat important?** Think about our challenges earlier.

In the book of Psalms, there's a beautiful passage that reminds us of how important it is to be still.

Psalm 46:10: "Be still, and know that I am God."

The chapter tells us that God is our refuge and strength, and a help in times of trouble. That means God wants us to turn to HIM for strength, and promises to give us comfort and peace. Being still is a way to allow God to be in charge. We often want to do everything that comes our way, but God wants us to rest in Him. He wants us to just sit in His presence.

If you stop doing jumping jacks or marching, it makes it a lot easier to focus on other tasks. If we stop and allow God to rule in our lives, it can give Him opportunity to work for us, for our benefit and blessings. How do we do that? Slow down sometimes! Take moments to just listen, as tough as it is to quiet your mind. Let God take over. And remember that He is our source of strength. If God can move and then quiet storms and waves, surely He can still our minds and let us trust in Him!

When you are in service on Sundays, it is a perfect time to be still and be in God's presence. When we are doing other things, we are not able to listen as well and hear what God wants us to hear.

What are some other ways we can be still and know that God is God?

Let's say a prayer now to thank God for being a refuge, hope, and peace.

Children's Prayer:

Dear God,
Thank you for being our refuge and strength
Help us to always trust in you
And help us to be still and rest in your peace
Thank you for your love
We love you, God!
In Jesus name, Amen!