

I Am Thankful for My Hands

PURPOSE

To help each child appreciate his or her hands and what they can do.

PREPARATION

1. Prayerfully study Matthew 19:13–15 and Doctrine and Covenants 20:70; 35:6; 42:43–44.
2. Prepare a bag or box containing familiar objects with different textures and shapes, such as a rock, a leaf, a piece of fabric, a spoon, a comb, and a pencil. Include at least one object per child in the class.
3. If possible, make a copy of the sign language handout (found at the end of the lesson) for each child.
4. Materials needed:
 - a. A Bible.
 - b. A small object such as a button or coin.
 - c. Picture 1-8, Passing the Sacrament (62021); picture 1-11, Boy Being Baptized (62018); picture 1-12, Girl Being Confirmed (62020); picture 1-39, Blessing a Baby; picture 1-40, Administering to the Sick (62342).
5. Make the necessary preparations for any Enrichment Activities you want to use.

Note to the teacher: Be sensitive to the feelings of any children in your class who have physical disabilities. Focus on the things their bodies *can* do, not on their disabilities.

**LEARNING
ACTIVITIES**

Attention Activity

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Have a child reach a hand into the bag or box you have prepared, without looking into it. Ask the child to feel one of the objects, tell what it feels like (soft, hard, smooth, rough), and try to guess what it is. Then have the child remove the object from the bag or box and show it to the class. Let the other children feel it. Continue until every child has had a turn.

- What did you use to reach into the bag (box)?
- What did you use to feel the object?

Explain that our hands are a great blessing to us. We can use our hands in many ways.

We can do many things with our hands

Have the children hold up their hands and look at them. Talk about what the children can do with their hands. They can pick something up with their fingers and thumb; they can hold something in their palms; they can wave and turn their hands in all directions.

Activity

Using a small object such as a button or coin, have the children take turns trying to pick up the object without using their thumbs. Remind the children that every single part of our bodies is important.

Activity

- How did your hands help you get ready to come to church?

Have the children pantomime morning activities, such as washing their faces, getting dressed, combing their hair, eating, and brushing their teeth.

- How do your hands help you play?

Have the children pantomime ways they use their hands in play, such as bouncing a ball, feeding a doll, building with blocks or sand, or playing a drum.

- How do your hands help you work?

Have the children pantomime ways they use their hands to work, such as picking up toys, setting the table, making a bed, or feeding a pet.

- How do your hands help you when you come to church?

Have the children pantomime ways we use our hands in church, such as shaking hands, holding a picture, raising a hand to answer a question, or taking the sacrament.

Help the children understand that our hands are a great blessing to us and that Heavenly Father and Jesus want us to use our hands to help ourselves and to help others. Explain that Heavenly Father and Jesus do not want us to use our hands to be unkind to others—to hit or pinch or scratch. They want us to learn to use our hands in the right ways.

Other people use their hands to help us

- How do your parents and other family members use their hands to help you?

Talk about how our families prepare our food, wash our clothing, tie our shoes, play with us, and do many other things for us.

Explain that men who hold the priesthood can bless us through the laying on of hands. Show the pictures listed in the “Preparation” section, one at a time, and let the children identify the different kinds of blessings we can receive through the hands of priesthood holders. Help them understand that we can be given blessings when we are babies; we can be baptized when we are eight years old; we can be confirmed after baptism and be given the gift of the Holy Ghost; we can take the bread and water, which is blessed and passed by priesthood holders, during the sacrament each week; and we can receive blessings when we are sick.

Story

Open your Bible to Matthew 19:13–15 and tell the story of Jesus blessing the children. Read aloud the first part of verse 13 (through *pray*). Talk about how Jesus used his hands to bless the children.

Explain that Jesus also used his hands to help people in other ways, such as blessing them when they were sick, blind, or deaf.

Our hands can talk

Use your hands to wave or beckon. Ask the children what you are saying with your hands.

Explain that some people who are deaf and cannot hear or talk make signs with their hands that mean words. They talk with their hands. This is called sign language.

Activity

Using the handout at the end of the lesson, teach the children how to say “father,” “mother,” and “I love you” in sign language. If possible, give each child a copy of the handout to take home and share with his or her family.

Testimony

Hold up your hands and express your gratitude for them. Encourage the children to thank Heavenly Father for their hands and to use their hands to help themselves and others.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Choose some of these activities to use during the lesson.

1. Trace the outline of each child’s hands on a sheet of paper. Write *I am thankful for my hands* on each paper, and let the child color the tracing and take it home.
2. Help the children sing or say the words to “I Have Two Little Hands” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 272) or “My Hands” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 273). Improvise actions as suggested by the words.
3. If location and weather permit, take the children for an outside walk to touch things with different textures, such as brick, stucco, tree trunks, and grass.

4. Do the following activity to help the children count their fingers and thumbs:

Counting Fingers

Hold up one hand and use a finger of your other hand to point and count, beginning with the smallest finger.

One finger, two fingers, three fingers, four.
Now a thumb to make one more.
Five there are on this one hand,
Just as Heavenly Father planned.

Hold up the other hand and point and count the same way.

One finger, two fingers, three fingers, four.
Now a thumb to make one more.
Five there are on this hand, too.
I can teach them what to do.

Hold up both hands and bend each finger as it is counted.

Ten in all—let's count once more.
One and two and three and four,
Five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten—all.
(*Straighten all the fingers at the same time.*)
They can stand up straight and tall.

5. Sing the song "Fun to Do" (*Children's Songbook*, p. 253) several times. For each verse, let the children tell something their hands can do, such as bouncing a ball, picking a flower, rocking a doll, playing the piano, or waving good-bye.
6. Help the children do the following activity verse, using the actions suggested by the words:

I Reach Up High

I reach up high
And reach down low
And give both hands a shake.
I spread my fingers way out far,
And now a fist I make.
I reach in front
And reach in back;
I clap my hands this way.
Then sit and rest them in my lap,
Where quietly they'll stay.

**ADDITIONAL
ACTIVITIES FOR
YOUNGER
CHILDREN**

1. Help the children do the actions to the following activity verse while you say the words:

I Like My Hands

I like my hands; they are my friends (*hold hands in front and look at them*).
They are busy and helpful until the day ends (*pantomime work hands do*).
They can quietly fold (*fold hands*) or clap really loud (*clap*)!
When they do what is right, it makes me proud!

2. Have the children sit in a circle. Describe a situation and have the children pantomime what their hands should do in that situation.

Examples:

Show me what your hands should do before it's time to eat.
Show me what your hands should do when you are listening to a story.

Show me what your hands should do when you're asked to pick up your toys.
Show me what your hands should do when you say a prayer.

Explain that we must help our hands to always do the things that they should.

3. Recite the following verse with the children, doing the actions suggested by the words:

Clap Your Hands

Clap your hands, clap your hands,
Clap them just like me.

Touch your shoulders, touch your shoulders,
Touch them just like me.

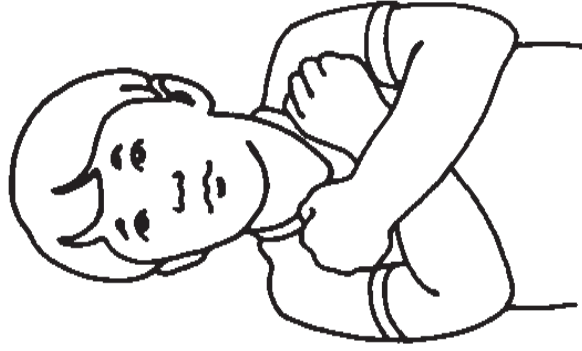
Tap your knees, tap your knees,
Tap them just like me.

Shake your head, shake your head,
Shake it just like me.

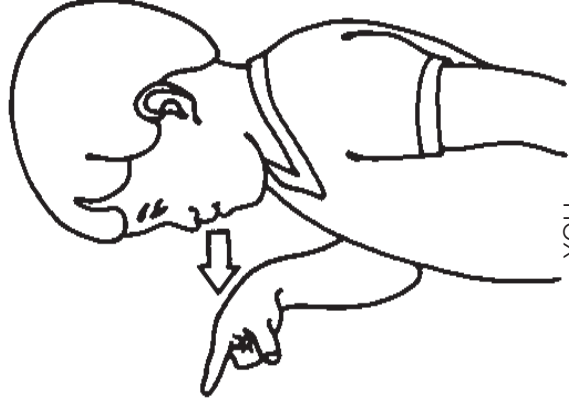
Clap your hands, clap your hands,
Now let them quiet be.



I



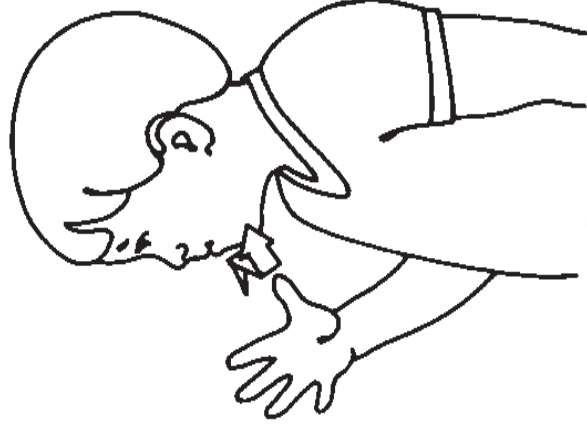
LOVE



YOU



FATHER



MOTHER

Our Hands Can Talk