

Here's a simple, interactive story you can use in an all-age slot in your church service. Below, you'll find ideas for other ways you can use the story for a more lively junior church session!

## An interactive story for an all-age slot in church

### Read these instructions to your congregation before you start your story!

This is a story about a boy called Marc. It's also a story about toilets and water and walking a long way! It's a sad story that turns into a happy story.

I want you to join in with the story by keeping your ears open for five important words: **toilets**, **water**, **walk**, **sad** and **smile**.

When you hear **toilets**, I want you to make a flushing noise and pretend to flush a loo.

When you hear **water**, pretend to drink from a glass.

When you hear **walk, walk** on the spot.

When you hear **sad**, look **sad**.

And can you guess what I want you to do when you hear a **smile**?!

Here we go...

### The story:

Marc is nine years old and lives in Africa, in a place called the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Marc and his family used to have a big house and land where they could grow food. Marc would often **walk** up and down between the crops, bringing **water** and helping his mum.

It's a beautiful country but there is a lot of fighting, which is really **sad**.

When Marc was very young, a terrible thing happened. Men with guns came to his village and made everyone run away. Marc and his family were very frightened.

They had to **walk** for a whole week to try to find somewhere safe. Eventually they reached a camp where they could stay with lots of other people.

At the camp, they lived in tents, and they had to **walk** a long way to find **water** from a stream. There was nowhere to go to the **toilet**. There were too many people in the same small space. The smell was terrible!

Can you imagine what that would be like?

For a long time, Marc was very **sad**. He didn't have anywhere to call home, and he missed his old village. He wanted to see his Mum **smile** again.

Some days, he just wanted to **walk** home.

Marc was sometimes sick because of the dirty **water** and the lack of toilets. That made him **sad** too.

Then they moved to another camp where kind people had built brand-new **toilets** and put in a tap so that Marc and his family could have clean **water**.



The kind people also taught Marc and his family how to wash their hands so that they would stay healthy. Marc had a big **smile** on his face – he was so happy! He was happy that his Mum had a big **smile** too.

This camp feels a little bit more like home. Marc has lots of friends and they play every day. It is a place with clean **water** and new **toilets**. It's a place where families care for each other. And it is a place with lots of **smiles**.

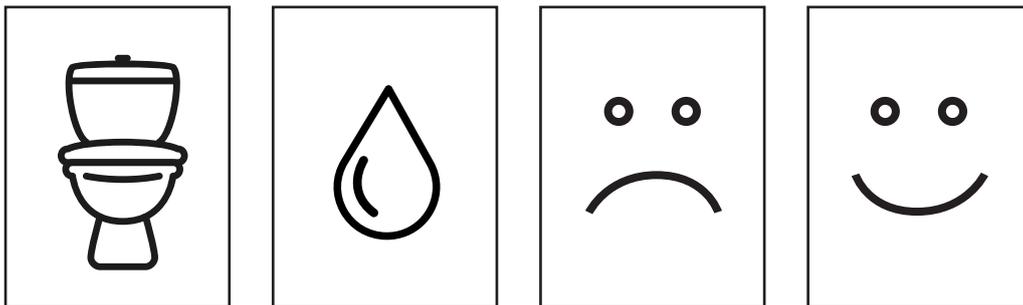
One day, when it's safe, Marc and his family want to go back home. Please pray for them.

I want to finish this story with a question. How far do you have to **walk** to get **water** or go to the **toilet**? Do we ever thank God for our bathroom? Maybe we should!

## Story games for Junior Church

### Game 1: Action stations

You could turn Marc's story into a game by pinning up at opposite corners of the room pictures of a toilet, a water tap, a sad face and a happy face. Each time children hear the words toilet, water, sad and smile, they have to run to the relevant picture. When they hear the word walk, they have to walk around the room in a circle until they hear the next key word.



### Game 2: Ladder of legs

Divide your group into pairs, putting children of equal height or strength together. Invite them to sit opposite one another in their pairs, with their legs stretched out and soles touching. The pairs line up down the room, to create a ladder of legs, with plenty of space between each 'rung'!

Give each pair a key word ie toilet, water, sad, smile or walk. (You can remove words if you have fewer than ten children or if there are more than ten children in your group, you could add in new words such as Joshué, camp. Alternatively, you could have more than one pair with the same word.)

As you read the story, children listen for their word and run down the ladder, jumping over legs, and around the outside of the ladder. The aim is to get back to their place before their opposite partner. If yours is a particularly competitive group, you could keep a score!

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or call **0300 321 3217** for more info

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