

Crossing the New Bridge Unit Study

Book by Emily Arnold McCully

Lessons prepared by Wende

Bible/Character –

Happiness –

There were many unhappy people throughout *Crossing the New Bridge*. The banker was upset because some money was missing, and the grocer was upset because of a wrinkle. The poet was crying, and the Mother was flustered. The ragpicker, barber, and pie seller all were sad about one thing or another. Who in the story was happy? The Jubilattis were happy. The Jubilatti family was happy because they were pleased with the bridge they built, but the story tells us they were happy even before that. The Jubilattis could have whined and complained the whole time, about how hot the sun was, or how heavy the stones were. But they made the choice to be happy.

In John 13 Jesus talks of what brings happiness. As he demonstrates to His disciples what a servant's heart looks like by humbling himself to wash their feet without a single complaint, He says, "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If you know these things, happy are ye if you do them." By practicing a life of humility and service, Jesus says will be happy. Do you think this could be the reason the Jubilattis were happy?

What else do we have to be happy about? Let's read on...

Romans Chapter 5:

1Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

5And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

6For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

11And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

We have escaped the wrath of God because of Christ's death, and obtained the joy in God because of Christ's life. Now there is something to be happy about!

Social Studies –

Middle Ages –

We aren't told in this story when it takes place, but judging by the clothing and architecture, it appears to be during medieval times, also called the Middle Ages. This is the period of European history beginning at the downfall of Rome in 476AD to about 1500AD.

During the middle ages, the form of government and society that was set up was called the feudal system. It was based on the ownership of land. While the king of a region owned all the land, he could give possession of tracts to those who worked for and pledged allegiance to him. People were separated into different classes during the middle ages. There was the nobility, or vassals, which was composed of people having hereditary title, rank and privileges. The nobility included those that worked directly for the king, mainly having the job of protecting the kingdom. Then there was the clergy, who were in charge of the spiritual needs of society. And then were the peasantry, also called serfs, who worked for the nobles, cultivating the lands and performing the manual labor. Lastly, there were slaves. Many of the nobles owned slaves, who may have been prisoners captured in war, or people who actually sold themselves to the nobles in

order to survive. The dream of the serf was to become a nobleman, and the dream of the nobleman was to become a knight.

Medieval Times Occupations –

Mayor – A mayor is the chief magistrate of a city, borough, or municipality. In the medieval ages, a mayor was put in office by the King to look over and manage one of his villages.

Bridge Builder – Bridge Builders were people who had experience with building materials and structure, and traveled around to build or repair bridges. During the middle ages, the Roman Catholic Church had the most experienced and organized public works craftsman, including bridge builders.

Scribe – A Scribe required skills in reading, writing and comprehension. The duties of the Scribe included recording the history of the Medieval Ages as well as researching laws and other matters for kings and nobles. Scribes were usually of nobility, because the education needed to be a Scribe was not available to the peasants. They received average salaries, but were also entitled to all the benefits and luxuries of castle life.

Banker – As kings needed to increase their private funds to hire armies, they sought the services of a Banker. Banking was just beginning in the Medieval Times, and the Banker was sometimes referred to as the Moneylender. The Moneylender was able to set his own rules and since he was offering his personal finances, he was often exempt from taxes and levies. He would lend money, and charge interest, whatever amount he decided at the time. If the debtor did not repay, the Banker could seize his land and/or livestock. The Banker made a lavish living.

Sheriff – The sheriff was an important official of a shire or county charged primarily with judicial duties.

Grocer – The grocer was a seller of vegetables and fruits.

Poet – Entertainers such as Poets were an important part of the Medieval Times. Poets, and other entertainers such as musicians and actors were often hired directly by the king and made a good living.

Mother – While Motherhood was not truly considered a medieval occupation, given all the work she had to do; I had to include her!

Pie Seller – This, of course, is someone who sells pies. They would make meat, vegetable, or sweet pies.

Apothecary - An Apothecary, also called a pharmacist, prepared and sold medicines or drugs. They were not as highly regarded as doctors, who were usually only hired by kings and nobles. Apothecaries served the common people. Most remedies came from herbs and roots.

Barber – In addition to cutting hair, Barbers were also dentists, surgeons, and blood-letters.

Miller – A Miller was someone who milled either grain, clothe, or wood.

Ragpicker – A Ragpicker would walk the streets, sorting through the left over rags to find re-usable ones. Rags were recycled to make clothes or blankets.

Medieval Fashions –

This book has wonderful illustrations depicting the kinds of clothes worn in the middle ages. Only the wealthiest people could afford to buy fashionable clothes. Most of the people pictured throughout *Crossing the New Bridge* are peasants. Peasants wore loose fitting clothes that were easy to work in. They were made of rough linen or wool. The men wore long baggy shirts without pockets or zippers, called tunics. They were often tied around the waist with a piece of rope or leather, and a little pouch was attached to hold coins. On their legs peasants wore tight fitting hose made of cloth. Sometimes they were multicolored, being made of whatever fabric was available. Women all wore dresses, also without pockets.

Fur was often used to line clothes because the houses were cold and drafty, but only nobles could wear fine furs. The peasants used dog, cat, badger, and fox fur. Can your child find anyone in the story wearing fur-lined clothes? Who? Purple dye was expensive and only the wealthy could afford clothes of purple. Who in the story is wearing purple? The banker, most likely the wealthiest man in the village, is wearing purple, as well as the poet. In certain European countries there were

laws stating that only nobles were allowed to wear red, so if you saw someone in red, you knew they were in a position of authority. Who wore red in *Crossing the New Bridge*?

Nearly all people, men women, and children, wore some sort of hat. These came in all sorts of shapes and sizes from a simple headdress to fancy chaperons. See how many different hats your child can find. For many years shoes with long toes were fashionable. There was a law made toward the end of the Middle Ages that said only rich people were allowed to wear long toed shoes. Some shoes were as long as 24", and the toes needed to be tied up to the legs so nobody would trip on them! Look at the Mayor's shoes. Ask your child if he would like to wear shoes like that.

Homes in Medieval Times –

Medieval towns were dirty and crowded. Garbage was thrown into the streets. The houses were small and close together, and most people lived as well as worked from their homes. Most houses had clay tiles covering the roof. Because glass was very expensive, windows were instead covered with criss-crossed wood or bars that let some light in but kept some wind out. Every house had a fire pit or fireplace, which was used for all their cooking as well as heating. Water was drawn from outside well pumps, which were usually shared throughout the village. Wealthy people had walled in gardens, where they would spend a lot of time. Ask your child how living in the Medieval Ages was different than how he lives now.

Food in Medieval Times -

The main meat of the villagers was pork. Most families kept a pig and the pigs wandered around the town streets. The villagers also kept animals for milk (Can you find the goats in the story?), meat and eggs. Grains, another important staple for the peasants, were grown on lands owned by the lords. The peasants needed to grind the grains into flours, which they did on a large mill. Have your child locate the mill in the story. What is it powered by? Fish and eels were caught in the ponds and rivers. Can you find the basket of fish? Fish, as well as other meat, was salted and dried to store throughout the winter. The peasants would not waste any food; they knew how hard it was to come by. They had big pots of soup hanging over the fire, which they would eat from and add to every day. The pot was only emptied once a year, so they would be eating soup that could have been cooking for one whole year!

Rabbit Trail: Royalty is not mentioned in *Crossing the New Bridge*, but if you would like to know how the royals ate, a fantastic book is *A Medieval Feast* by Aiki.

England –

We are not told exactly where this story takes place, but if you look closely for clues, you can deduce the location to a certain European country. We know it takes place in Europe because of the clothing and architecture. We know it takes place in a town by a river. And we know the coins they used are called “sovereigns”, the coin of England. So it is a fair assumption that our story takes place in one the coastal towns, along a river, or on one of the islands of the European country, England. Have your child locate England on a world map, in the continent of Europe. England is part of the British Isles, which also includes Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. What body of water is to the west of England? What body of water is to the east of England? What channel separates England from France? Locate London, England’s capital, and also the most populated city in Europe. England is very industrialized, with oil production and car manufacturing being important to England’s economy. Famous English landmarks are the London Tower and the London Bridge, and Big Ben. Have your child research England further in an atlas or other books from the library.

Ancient Traditions and Superstitions -

Traditions are customs or practices that are passed from generation to generation. Some traditions are continued for so long that they almost have the force of law. While some traditions can shape our character, bind together families and friends, and write the chapters of our family history books, others, such as “The first person to cross a new bridge must be the happiest in town,” are founded on irrational feelings and fear. These kinds of traditions are called superstitions, and were very common in the Middle Ages, a time when ignorance and reaction ran rampant. Do you have any family traditions? Are you superstitious about anything? Many families have traditional meals they serve for certain holidays, or traditional gifts they give for certain birthdays. These are fun things, which can be a good foundation for happy family memories. Superstitions, however, are believed to have bad outcomes if not adhered to. They instill a fear or panic in people. Share some superstitions you have seen followed, even today. What is said to happen if you break a mirror? How about if a black cat crosses your path? Why do many tall

buildings not have a thirteenth floor? As Christians, we should not believe in superstitions, for they show a trust in the supernatural instead of a trust in God.

Read about the superstitious Athenians in Acts 17. Can you be very religious and still not know God?}

Science –

Simple Machines –

Long ago there were no gas or diesel machines, or electric tools. People needed to use simple machines to make their jobs easier. Simple machines help our muscles to feel stronger. Can you find any simple machines throughout *Crossing the New Bridge*?

Inclined Plane – An inclined plane, also called a ramp, is a flat surface that slants. It makes it easy to move things up and down because it helps to spread out the amount of work you do. Which is easier, climbing straight up a ladder, or walking up a ramp? It is much easier to walk up a ramp. Look at the picture of the Jubilattis getting off the boat when they first arrive. What are they using to come ashore?

Wheel – Wheels reduce resistance, changing dragging to rolling. It is much easier to roll a load on wheels than it is to drag it. Can you find any wheels in the story? You can see wagon wheels and a large milling wheel. If the weather is pleasant, do some experiments with wheels outdoors. If you have a wagon, demonstrate how it is easier to pull something on wheels than it is to push something on the ground. Do this experiment with your bicycle to see how much farther and faster you can travel with wheels: First, take two large steps on foot and measure the distance. Then, get on your bicycle, starting with one foot at the top, push your foot all the way down and then all the way up. Did you go farther taking two steps by foot, or two steps on your bicycle? This shows how much farther and faster we can go with the use of wheels.

Lever – Levers can be short or long. They can be curved or straight. Sometimes two levers are used together, such as a pair of pliers, and other times they can be used by themselves, such as a long stick used to pry on something. The longer the lever, the more “leverage” you have. The simplest kind of lever is a straight board and something to rest it on, called the fulcrum. Your child will be familiar with a big

lever at the playground, a see saw. Levers make pushing and lifting easier, because they balance out weight. Can you find any levers in the story? The banker's scale is actually a lever, balancing out one side with the other. The fulcrum is the chain from which the scale hangs. What would happen if the fulcrum weren't centered?

Pulley – Find the picture of the Mother with all the unruly children. If you look in the background you will see a pulley being used to get materials up to the bridge. Pulleys are a grooved wheel, and when used in conjunction with rope, will save you energy by working for you. Pulleys are used to lift and move things. With enough pulleys and rope, your child could lift an elephant all by himself! Look for more pictures of pulleys throughout the story.

Bridge Building –

Bridges are structures that go over a body of water, a road, or a valley, to connect one place to another. There are many kinds of bridges throughout the world. The earliest bridges consisted of logs that were laid over brooks, or wooden slats lying across two cables that are stretched across a narrow valley. Up until the Roman age, wooden beam bridges seemed to be the only style known. It is said that the first instance of the arched bridge design was by the Romans in 127 B.C. These Roman bridges were level roads supported on one or more semi-circular arches. This design puts most of the force straight down, which makes it possible to build across a valley one arch at a time, instead of having to span the entire width at once in order to use abutments on either side for support.

Other bridge designs evolved over time, including beam bridges, truss bridges, and suspension bridges. During the middle ages, the Roman Catholic Church, the most organized and skilled institution to take on large public works projects, built most European bridges. The Jubilattis were most likely from Italy, and built the bridge in the Roman style. Have your child examine the picture of the bridge in *Crossing the New Bridge*. What kind of bridge does he think it is? The new bridge that the Jubilattis built was a stone and mortar arch bridge with wood reinforcements. The semicircular arch construction was very strong. Look for the family hauling the large stones up the pulley system. Stones were used because of their strength and availability. There are still some stone-arch bridges in existence today. There is a 12,000-foot stone-arch bridge with 222 arches connecting Venice to Italy. The world's largest single stone-arch bridge is the Syra Bridge in Germany, which is 295 feet wide. Structure is very important in the building of bridges. If too large of an area doesn't have adequate support, or the materials are faulty, the bridge may

collapse. Have your child try his hand at building different kinds of bridges out of building toys.

Hiccups –

The apothecary mixed up the hiccup potion with the dropsy potion. Everybody at one time or another gets hiccups, but do you know what causes them? Inside your chest cavity there is a muscle called a diaphragm. When you breathe in, the diaphragm contracts, or moves down, giving your lungs more room to expand. When you exhale, the diaphragm moves up, squeezing the air out of your lungs. Sometimes, though, the diaphragm goes into spasms. The air rushes into your lungs, and the epiglottis (flap that covers the windpipe) quickly closes to stop the flow of air. The air rushing in causes the “hic” sound. The closing of the flap is the “cup” sound. Do you have a favorite “potion” to get rid of hiccups? Some people say a spoonful of sugar helps; while others say holding your breath or getting a quick scare can chase the hiccups away. If somebody gets a severe case of hiccups, where it goes on for days or longer, there is medicine that can calm down the diaphragm muscle and make the spasms stop.

Language Arts –

Vocabulary –

Calamity – a disaster

Commotion – excitement; social disorder

Triumphal – victorious; successful

Procession – parade

Vault – a strongly protected place for keeping valuables

Sovereign – An English gold coin equivalent to one pound or twenty shillings.

Enchantment – delight filled

Dropsy – an abnormal accumulation of fluids in body cavities.

Folktales –

Crossing the New Bridge is an original folktale about the true source of happiness. Folk tales are stories that are told rather than read; they are passed down from one generation to another generation. Maybe your child has played “Whisper Down the Lane” before. If not, play this game to demonstrate how a story can change, sometimes only slightly and sometimes not, as it is told and retold again.

As folktales are passed down, the stories take on characteristics of the time and place in which they are told, as well as the personality of the person telling the tale. Folk tales often have timeless themes or morals, such as sharing, compassion, being gullible, etc. Can your child identify the moral of *Crossing the New Bridge*? What does the story tell you about the true source of happiness? The Jubilattis did what they loved, and were very happy when they did it well.

Choosing Names for Characters –

One decision an author of fiction stories needs to make is choosing names for the characters. Emily Arnold McCully often chooses very fitting ones. In this story, the bridge building family is named Jubilatti. Have your child look up the word “jubilant” in the dictionary. The name containing the root word for “joy” is the most fitting name for the happiest family in town!

Cause and Effect –

An author will sometimes arrange a paragraph with a general statement giving a cause of a problem or situation and a number of statements expressing the specific effects. Emily Arnold McCully uses many cause and effect statements throughout her story. Can you find any? Go over these cause/effect statements from the story asking your child to recall the cause as you say the effect:

“We’ll run out of food!” because there is no bridge.

The banker is not happy because “A sovereign is missing!”

The grocer is not happy because “There is a wrinkle on my forehead!”

The poet is not happy because “I can’t write a verse as perfect as this rosebud.”

The Mother is not happy because child fell down the chimney, soup boiled over, baby ran out and cow ran away, shoes went down the well and the bed broke.

The bridge can’t be used because of the tradition.

The Jubilattis were happy because they built the best bridge of their life!

Mayor forgave the old woman because everyone was happy!

Onomatopoeia – “Bang, Bang” came the sounds of the bridge builders. Words that imitate sounds are called onomatopoeia. Can your child think of any other onomatopoeic words?

Interjection –

There are eight parts of speech, one of them being an interjection. Interjections are used to communicate strong emotion or surprise. Punctuation, usually an exclamation point, is used to separate an interjection from the rest of the sentence. Here are some examples of interjections found throughout *Crossing the New Bridge*:

“Thank goodness!”

“Heave ho!”

“Oh no! Oh horrors!”

“Look!”

“Perfect!”

Can your child think of any others? Listen to and/or watch *School House Rock’s* “Interjections” song.

Nursery Rhymes –

Your child is most likely familiar with the old nursery rhyme “London Bridge has Fallen Down.” Remind your child that London is the capital of England. It may be fun this week to recite the poem in its entirety and see how it compares to the bridge in *Crossing the New Bridge*.

London Bridge has fallen down,
Fallen down, fallen down,
London Bridge has fallen down,
My fair Lady.

Build it up with wood and clay,
Wood and clay, wood and clay,
Build it up with wood and clay,
My fair Lady.

Wood and clay will wash away,
Wash away, wash away,
Wood and clay will wash away,
My fair Lady.

Build it up with bricks and mortar,
Bricks and mortar, bricks and mortar,
Build it up with bricks and mortar,
My fair Lady.

Bricks and mortar will not stay,
Will not stay, will not stay,
Bricks and mortar will not stay,
My fair Lady.

Build it up with iron and steel,
Iron and steel, iron and steel,
Build it up with iron and steel,
My fair Lady.

Iron and steel will bend and bow,
Bend and bow, bend and bow,
Iron and steel will bend and bow,
My fair Lady.

Build it up with silver and gold,
Silver and gold, silver and gold,
Build it up with silver and gold,
My fair Lady.

Silver and gold will be stolen away,
Stolen away, stolen away,
Silver and gold will be stolen away,
My fair Lady.

Set a man to watch all night,
Watch all night, watch all night,
Set a man to watch all night,
My fair Lady.

Suppose the man should fall asleep,
Fall asleep, fall asleep,

Suppose the man should fall asleep?
My fair Lady.

Give him a pipe to smoke all night,
Smoke all night, smoke all night,
Give him a pipe to smoke all night,
My fair Lady.

Math –

Place Value Through 1000 –

The Banker counted out the coins...1,026...1,027...Etc. Your 2nd or 3rd grade child can use this as an opportunity to learn or review place values up to 1000. Have him look at the number 1,026. Ask him which digit is in the ones place, the tens place, the hundreds place, and the thousands place. Have him write it out as an expanded numeral:

$1026 = 1000 + 0 + 20 + 6$. Do the same thing with 1,027. Present more numbers to reinforce place value.

Square –

When the Jubilatti's first came off the boat, Papa was caring a square. A square is an "L" shaped device to measure or lay out right angles. A right angle is an angle whose sides are perpendicular to each other, at an angle of 90 degrees. A right angle looks like the corner of a square. If you have a square, demonstrate the use of one to your child. If you don't have one, have your child draw one out on graph paper, explaining the terms perpendicular and right angle. Why would a bridge builder need a square? Builders of all sorts use squares to make sure their angles are straight and true.

Scale/Balance –

During the Middle Ages, and thousands of years previously, many countries used gold and silver for their coins. Look at the picture of the banker surrounded by all the coins. The coins were each a certain weight, and by weighing the coins, the banker could tell how much money he had. A sovereign is an English gold coin that is equivalent to one-pound sterling (meaning 91.7% pure). Twenty shillings was

equal to one sovereign. 100 pence was equal to one sovereign. By stacking 5 sovereigns on one side of the scale, the banker could easily balance the scale to get the same number on the other side without counting. One sovereign would balance out 20 shillings. Five pence would balance out one shilling. Many societies throughout history broke down because of a dishonest money system. Gold was taken out of coins, and inferior metals were put in their place. Governments shaved the edges of the gold coins, and used the shavings to melt down and make new coins, leaving the original weighing less than what it should. Bankers rigged their scales to represent dishonest numbers, or used faulty weights to counter the coins on the scale. Here are some Bible verses speaking about the importance of a fair system of weights and measures:

A False balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight. Proverbs 11:1

Divers weights are an abomination unto the Lord; and a false balance is not good. Proverbs 20:23

A just weight and balance are the Lord's: all the weights of the bag are his work. Proverbs 16:11

Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and a scant measure that is abominable? Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights? Micah 6:11-12

Help your child to make a scale. You will need a straight stick, about 18-24" long, two disposable cups or bowls, and some string. Find the center of the stick, and hang a string loop from it. Punch three holes in each of the cups, spaced evenly around, and tie an 18" piece of string to each of the holes. Gather the ends of the string together, and attach to the ends of the stick. It is important that they are spaced correctly, or you will not have a just balance. Check your scale for accuracy by placing two known same items in each of the cups, such as two quarters, to check for accuracy. Then use the scale to balance different items. Which weighs more, a penny or a quarter? How many pennies will balance out a quarter? How about a dime? Weigh different items you find throughout the house. Have your child first make guess as to what weighs more. Was he right?

Hat Math –

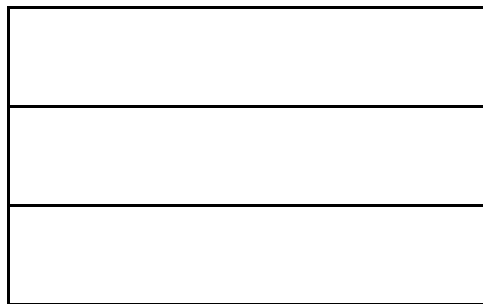
Your youngest children may enjoy this math lesson on classification and grouping. Have your child collect up all the hats he can find. Ask him to look at the colors and

to group them together with like items. Then have him group by shapes, textures, and then sizes. Explain that math is all about grouping and comparing like and unlike things. Can you find any hats in the story that match hats you own? Have child try to count all the hats in the story he can find.

Arts and Crafts –

Horizon --

Examine the illustrations throughout the story that show the horizon. The horizon is the line as far as your eye can see where the land and water meet the sky. Have your child fold a piece of paper in thirds long ways, like this:



Unfold and flatten your paper. The top line will be your horizon. On the bottom section, draw grass and dirt for the land. On the middle section, draw trees or mountains, some of which are poking up beyond the horizon. The top section is where you would draw the sky, including some clouds or the sun if you like. Color in your picture with crayons, colored pencils, or as Emily Arnold McCully did, use watercolors.

Watercolor –

Emily Arnold McCully used watercolors to illustrate this story. Especially beautiful are the paintings of the sunsets in the end of the story. Have your child paint a beautiful sunset picture, copying the colors that Ms. McCully used. If you have a Rainbow Art sponge set, it makes a lovely sunset.

Medallions –

The mayor wore a large medallion, probably made of gold, around his neck. Gold medallions worn in the Middle Ages often were impressed with an image of the king. Help your child to make dough, using one-part flour to two parts salt, and

enough water to make it pliable. You can add a few drops of yellow food coloring if you want it to look like gold. Roll out the dough about ¼" thick, and cut into round disks using a glass or a cookie cutter. Poke a hole in the top with a straw. Have your child draw on the dough his own face, or maybe even the face of our King, Jesus! Let the medallion dry overnight (might take a couple of nights depending on the humidity), and then paint it with gold paint or cover with gold glitter, if desired. Hang from a long string or ribbon.

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