

A Closer Look

QUESTIONS FOR CUBS

NOTE TO PARENTS/TEACHERS:

The goal of this questions-and-answers section is to initiate interaction between you and your kids. Please do not just read the questions and answers to your kids. These answers are given for you at an adult level to think about and to process. Once that is accomplished, you can then translate them into appropriate answers for your kids.

LESSON

Using the gifts God has given us

KEY VERSE

“Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly.” (Rom. 12:6)

EAR CHECK (STORY COMPREHENSION)

- Q: What activity is Gooz really good at?
A: *Painting*
- Q: What gift does Staci receive?
A: *A magnifying glass*
- Q: Gooz thinks she is on a what?
A: *A caper*
- Q: Who does Staci give flowers to?
A: *Mr. Shufflebee for Mrs. Shufflebee*
- Q: Who is Staci’s magnifying glass from?
A: *Miss Harbor*

HEART CHECK (SPIRITUAL APPLICATION)

- Q: Gooz discovers that she has the amazing gift of being able to paint while Staci is frustrated that she can’t even paint a star. Why would God give wonderful gifts to some and not to others?**
- A: It can seem very unfair. God has given us all different gifts. Admittedly some are more visible and seem more valuable than others, but that is not the way God sees it. God has given each of us gifts to discover and develop not only for His glory but also for the good of others (1 Cor. 12:4-7; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Pet. 4:10).

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Q: A special someone placed a gift on Staci's front porch, which began a wonderful adventure for her. In order to help Staci get over her frustration about painting, why didn't that special someone just tell Staci that she had other wonderful gifts?

A: That special someone (Miss Harbor) had a special gift herself, which was the wisdom to know that simply telling these things to Staci would not have made an impact on her at all. Miss Harbor's gift of creativity enabled her to come up with a clever way to get Staci to see for herself what was already plain for everyone else to see: that Staci was a wonderfully gifted and special cub. This is a great example of how we all can benefit from each other's gifts if we will choose to use them well (1 Cor. 12:16-18).

Q: While Staci and Gooz were eating popcorn and talking, Gooz used another amazing gift that she didn't know she had. What was it?

A: She saw the truth of Staci's situation and was able to tell her in a caring and meaningful way that she was wrong and had a bad attitude. That is an amazing gift to have!

"I" CHECK (PERSONAL APPLICATION)

1. Gooz was an excellent painter. Do you have any skills or talents that you do well? What are they?
2. Can you name some skills or talents God has given others?
3. Why is it a good thing that God has made us all different?
4. Sometimes we can get jealous when someone is able to do something better than we can. What are some good things to do when you are jealous of someone?
5. Gooz and Miss Harbor worked together to encourage Staci and help her see some of the things that she does well. What things could you do to encourage someone who may feel as Staci did?

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

I love this episode because we all hit the bottom of the barrel at times. When we do, nothing anyone says can cheer us up or convince us that we have any worth. This may actually happen more often to adults than to kids. We are also prone to look at others' extraordinary gifts with jealousy and anger. In *A Closer Look*, Staci is already discouraged by her recent failures, so when Gooz discovers her own amazing talent, Staci falls into complete despair.

We tend to put gifts and talents in two categories. First, there are the "good" gifts—the highly visible gifts that draw a lot of attention. Second, there are the other gifts, "average" gifts—the kind that are very important in life but do not inspire admiration. Most of us see ourselves as possessors of "average" gifts. However, God absolutely does not see things this way!

Each of us has truly been gifted by God. What may come as a surprise to many is that He didn't give us these gifts to use only for ourselves. This misunderstanding creates confusion and disillusionment in the whole area of gifts. God has given us gifts for the privilege of honouring Him and serving others. If we use them only for our glory, things tend to go wrong...sometimes very wrong. As believers, we are responsible not only to discover our gifts but also to use and enjoy them. When we use a gift the way we're meant to, it feels good!

One of a child's great challenges is believing that he or she is valuable. Kids sometimes do harmful things to make themselves feel important. What a life-changing experience it is for kids to find an adult like Miss Harbor, who will guide them to discover how to use their God-given gifts and talents in the proper ways. Sadly, many adults with the wisdom and ability to mentor children never choose to step up and do it.

By the end of the episode, Staci realizes she hasn't gained anything she did not already possess. She is still the same girl with the same set of talents and abilities, and now she believes she is a person of value. She is encouraged to continue to properly use the gifts God gave her. Encouragement and enlightenment are gifts that nearly every adult can give and that every kid desperately needs. It's amazing that God made us that way, isn't it?



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