

SECRET SMUGGLER SESSION PLAN

Secret Smuggler is a short children's film, based on the best-selling book, *God's Smuggler*, written by Brother Andrew the founder of Open Doors, with John and Elizabeth Sherrill © Open Doors 2018.

GET READY

- Order the DVD or download the film from: www.opendoorsuk.org
- Order enough *Secret Smuggler* booklets for each child in your group to take away.

AIMS

- to discover the courageous faith of Bible smuggler Brother Andrew, of Open Doors
- to understand the problems of persecuted Christians and pray for them.

SHORT PLAN

Mix and match from the following activities to create your session. There's more than enough to fill an hour – so you can always save some for another time!



ACTIVITY	RESOURCE	TIME
Set the scene		
Play games	Post-its, coats, Bibles	
Watch <i>Secret Smuggler</i> film	DVD & player or laptop & link	
Quiz		
Act it out		
Copy a Bible verse	Paper, pencils/pens	
Brother Andrew's prayer	<i>Secret Smuggler</i> booklet	
Draw your adventure	Paper, pencils/pens	
Bible-smuggling today		
Pray for secret smugglers in Central Asia		
Take home <i>Secret Smuggler</i> booklets	Enough booklets for everyone	

ACTIVITIES IN DETAIL



SET THE SCENE - Today we're going to find out about someone who was a secret smuggler. Do you think you could be a secret smuggler? Are you good at moving quietly? Can you do things without anyone noticing? Let's see...

GAME: SILENT MOVEMENT - Ask everyone to stand still in a space. Ask: "Are you wearing quiet shoes? We are going to walk slowly and without stomping. First, place the heel of your foot down. Then slowly roll your foot towards your toes onto the ground. As you take each step, put each foot down flat, then lift it up carefully. Breathe quietly. Take long, slow breaths. Keep looking where you're going – and plant your feet slowly, one at a time. Stay close to the walls, where the floorboards are less likely to creak."

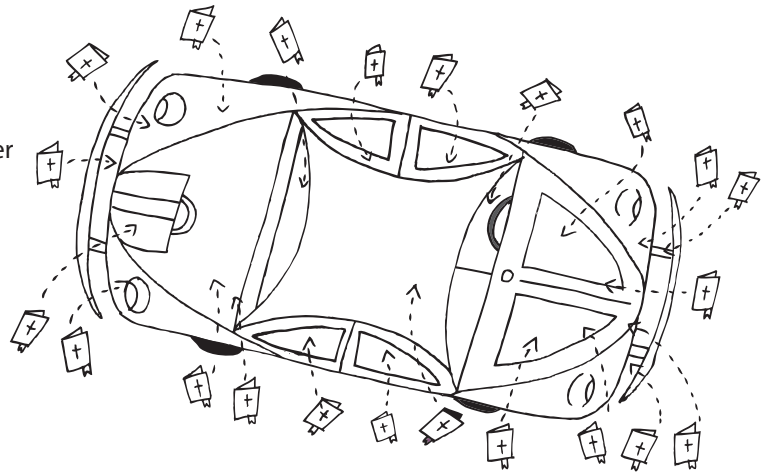
GAME: WHAT'S THE TIME, MR WOLF? - Everyone lines up at one end of the room. At the other end of the room stands 'Mr Wolf', with their back to everyone. Children chorus together: 'What's the time, Mr Wolf?' If Mr Wolf says, 'One o'clock' that means they can take one step closer to him; 'Two o'clock' means two steps, and so on. If the wolf says 'Lunchtime!!' everyone must run away without getting caught. The first person to reach Mr Wolf without him noticing, taps him on the shoulder and becomes the new Mr Wolf.

GAME: SECRET DELIVERY - Give everyone a post-it and tell them they've got to put it on someone's back without them noticing. At the same time, they must avoid getting a post-it slapped on them. If spotted, the poster of the post-it note is out and has to sit down.

FILM - Watch *Secret Smuggler*, the five-minute children's film based on the best-selling book, *God's Smuggler*, written by Brother Andrew the founder of Open Doors, with John and Elizabeth Sherrill © Open Doors 2018.

QUIZ - See what the children remember of the story by asking the following questions:

1. In which country was Brother Andrew born? **The Netherlands.**
2. He wanted to follow God so went to Bible college. Where? **In Glasgow/ Scotland.**
3. Brother Andrew went to Poland where he found how difficult it was to be a Christian. Why? Name one thing the people at church told him. **They were being watched by the government.**
4. Name another. **Church leaders had been arrested. Bible schools had been closed.**
5. Before Brother Andrew left Poland, a Bible verse came into his mind. What was it? **'Strengthen what remains and is about to die' (Revelation 3:2).** (What do you think it meant to him?)
6. In church in Czechoslovakia, Andrew saw an old lady holding up her Bible high. Why was she doing that? **So that everyone could read it – she was the only one with a Bible. They didn't have Bibles of their own.** (Some had parts of the Bible written out in notebooks.)
7. What did Andrew decide to do after that? **He took Bibles to Christians in countries where they weren't allowed.**
8. How did he take Bibles into Yugoslavia? **He packed them into the blue car (that his friends gave him).**
9. As he entered the country, there were guards waiting to check his car. What did he pray? **"Lord, you made blind eyes see. Please make seeing eyes blind!"** (Did the guards find the Bibles? No!)
10. Can you remember any other places Brother Andrew took Bibles afterwards? **Bulgaria, Romania, Russia/Moscow.**



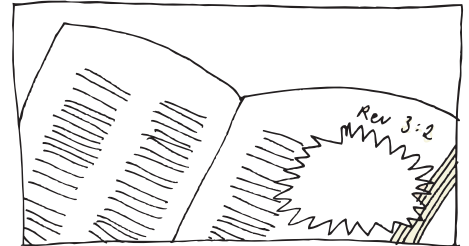
GAME: HIDE THE BIBLES - Choose one of these games:

- Break the group into two teams – each appoints a 'secret smuggler'. Each smuggler wears a big old coat. Give each team a pile of small books or Bibles. Each group has 30 seconds to hide as many books as it can in the smuggler's coat. Test the smuggler by making them walk past two 'guards' without dropping any Bibles. The team that conceals the most is the winner.
- Break the group in two. Send one half out of the room. Give the other half several Bibles to hide. When the first group comes back in, they have to find all the Bibles in a given time. Can group two find more – or do it quicker?
- Elect a 'spy' and send them out of the room. The rest of the group hide a Bible somewhere. When the spy comes back in, the group are not allowed to speak but they can lead the spy to the Bible by clapping softly (far away) or loudly (nearby).

ACT IT OUT - Pick one or more of these ways to bring the story to life:

- With as large a group as you like, make the shape of Brother Andrew's car. Can you make it move? Now add sound.
- Ask groups of three to make a still picture of the time when Andrew is stopped by the border guards. They need to show the tension of the moment. When you clap they must bring the scene to life, silently, for 10 seconds. Then clap again to freeze. Bring the scene to life again, this time using speech.
- Pair up the groups of three to make groups of six. Now create the scene in the Czechoslovakian church with the old lady holding up the Bible for everyone to read. Show what happens when Brother Andrew walks in. How does everyone react?

COPY A BIBLE VERSE - Encourage children to write out a Bible verse, as Christians do in countries where they don't have the whole Bible. Choose, for example, Revelation 3:2 'Strengthen what remains and is about to die' or 1 Corinthians 16:13: 'Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong'. Then lift them up high, like the old lady in Czechoslovakia, for everyone to read.



BROTHER ANDREW'S PRAYER - Andrew was a man of adventure, but he became a man of prayer. Read the first half of his story in the *Secret Smuggler* booklet to find out how God changed his life. Ask if anyone needs prayer for help or healing – this may be best done in small groups. Either let children pray themselves, or gather up their requests and pray on their behalf.

DRAW YOUR PICTURE - What kind of adventure would you like God to send you on that helps others?

Would you like to...

- Feed the hungry
- Cure the sick
- Build homes for the homeless
- Bring clean water to remote villages
- Become a church leader
- Write about God
- Translate the Bible
- Look after orphans
- Raise money for charity
- Help young people with problems
- Pray for miracles
- Tell people about Jesus?



How might you need God's help to do this? Draw it. Discuss it. Pray about it.

BIBLE-SMUGGLING TODAY - Open Doors still smuggles Bibles to Christians in Central Asia – a region that includes a number of countries bordering Russia. (We deliberately keep the geography vague to protect secret Christians). Tell Brother B's story: *A Coat Full of Bibles* and ask children to pray for secret smugglers – see next page.



TAKEAWAY SECRET SMUGGLER BOOKLETS - Give each child a booklet to take home.

A COAT FULL OF BIBLES!

Inspired by the life-changing love of Jesus, there are still believers around the world today who show the courageous faith of Brother Andrew through smuggling Bibles. Brother B is one of them.

REJECTED BY FAMILY

In most families in Central Asia, it is considered shameful to have children who are born deaf, blind or disabled, so they are hidden away. Brother B was born deaf. He says, "My life was horrible. I had a rich father with many brothers and sisters but during big celebrations I was hidden away so that no-one would see me. At the age of six, I was sent to a 'home' for deaf people. I wondered why no-one would come and visit." At the age of eight, he was so sad he didn't want to live any more. As he grew up he was so unhappy he drank a lot of alcohol – and this made him violent. He was unhappy and he made his wife very unhappy, too.

WASHED CLEAN

But things changed when he met a deaf man who told him about Jesus. To begin with, Brother B carried on drinking and took no notice, but he didn't forget what the man said. "A little while later when I got home I took up a bottle of vodka - but I couldn't drink it. I threw it out of the window. I went looking for this man and asked him to tell me more." The deaf man did so, and took him to a church where the pastor prayed for him. "When I went home," says Brother B, "I felt I'd been washed clean."

SECRET LANGUAGE

After this, Brother B began to tell other deaf people about Jesus – and now he does it all over the place. "What we do is, we go to a village and find the deaf people. Usually they are all porters in the marketplace, or shoe repairers. If you find one deaf person, they usually know all the others!" Using sign language has its advantages, because no-one else can understand what they're saying! But groups of Christians still need to meet secretly because of the risk of police raids and beatings. After one raid, Brother B was put in prison. His church prayed and three days later, he was released. But it's still very dangerous – and they always ask God to protect them.

A COAT FULL OF BIBLES

Brother B smuggles Bibles into other Central Asian countries: "We wanted to cross the border into a neighbouring country and make contact with the deaf people there. It is very difficult to get into that country, but we found a crossing-point and we risked the journey. They needed Bibles. At one point in the summer, the border was more open, so we could cross a little easier. We wore big coats and stuffed them with Bibles. I was walking very slowly through customs! The officers said, "What's wrong with you?" I explained that I was lame and deaf and so they left me alone!" Now there are lots of groups of deaf people in that country who follow Jesus.

PRAY FOR SECRET SMUGGLERS - Due to increased control at the borders of Central Asian countries, e.g. new x-ray equipment, as well as greater punishments for unofficially importing religious materials - huge fines, loss of property and imprisonment - there is a great deal of fear amongst all who are involved in the distribution of Bibles and Christian books. An Open Doors contact says, "Most of the local brothers and sisters are very much afraid to receive literature and keep it in their homes. As Open Doors, we travel a lot to bring Bibles and books. Often these are riskful trips. We never know what can happen when a customs officer stops you, or a police car stops you for a regular check. We really depend on Him and your prayers. We heard that Brother Andrew used this old smuggler prayer, so we use it also: "Lord, close their eyes."

- Ask God to protect His children in Central Asia, especially those who are deaf, blind or disabled.
- Pray for the safety of everyone involved in smuggling Bibles to secret Christians
- Pray that the stories of Jesus' love and God's promises in the Bible will give secret Christians strength and hope.

