



Places of Power

Overview

Take a tour of the places of power and beauty that are found on the earth and within each of us by reading and wondering about the book *Places of Power* by Michael DeMunn.



45 minutes



All Ages



Newcomer Friendly

Aims & Objectives

This story helps children wonder about the unique and beautiful places in the world that are special to them, and to ultimately help them realize that there is that of God in each of us — our places of power.

Reading List

Sparkling Still provides tools for teachers of children ages 3-12. Included are sample lessons, a master lesson plan, ideas for building classroom community, an introduction to wondering questions and more.

Sparkling Still provides useful instructions on:

- Creating the circle and other components of your time together: pages 5-22
- Reading out loud with children: pages 16-17
- Wondering with children and adults: pages vii-xi and 6-7
- Individual Art Responses: page 7
- Art Supplies: pages 20-22

Credits: Anne Collins, Sally Farneth, Susan Hopkins,
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Materials & Setup

Book: *Places of Power* by Michael DeMunn, illustrated by Noah Buchanan
([link to purchase: http://tinyurl.com/z2snzgz](http://tinyurl.com/z2snzgz))

Video: 6 minutes (password = deepen) ([video link: https://vimeo.com/183924993](https://vimeo.com/183924993))

Summary of the Story

Native Americans have long honored places on the earth that they felt had a strong connection to the Great Spirit: places of power. The author continues to illustrate the concept by showing a variety of different places that feel special. On the last page, he says, “Places of Power are all over the Earth, but inside each of us is the greatest Place of Power of all...this is because our Maker lives there and why each one of us is so special.”

Suggestions for reading for teacher spiritual preparation before exercise/lesson

Psalm 24 The earth is the Lord's...

I Corinthians 10:26 For the Earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.

Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal

#10 For the Beauty of the Earth

#149 I Celebrate the Inward Light

#120 Fairest Lord Jesus

Materials Needed for Activity Response

For Individual Art Response:

- drawing paper
- crayons, markers, or pastels
- other supplies

For Teacher-directed Activity:

- paper or notebooks for journaling, pens and/or pencils

Take Home Notes (one per family)

Note for children to take home after exercise/lesson or to email to parents during week prior to this lesson:

Today we read *Places of Power* by Michael DeMunn. We learned about special places of power, especially our very own places of power inside ourselves, or as Quakers would say, “That of God in each of us.”

Instructions

Welcome the children to the circle. Be sure to introduce everyone, if visitors are present.

Invite children and adults to go around the circle sharing one or two plusses and minuses from their day or week. It helps to ask for 2 items only, either 2 of one or one of each. Children are comfortable with a limit, unless another person's comment sparks another one for an individual child.

Sing a centering song, such as "God's Love is a Light," hymn #218, *Worship in Song, A Friends Hymnal*, and/or one of the songs previously suggested under Materials. In addition, or instead of, use breathing or other exercise to center the group. The simplest way is to breathe deeply three times. Adding lifting arms up and down with the breath or holding tummy during deep breaths can help.

Show the cover of the book, read the title and author's name. Ask the children a question that invites them to wonder about the story.

I wonder what the author means by "places of power."

Read the story, holding the book so all can see. Depending on reader's comfort level with the children, allow comments during the story, especially from younger children.

After reading the story, invite the children to wonder about the story with you.

Wondering Questions

I wonder what you liked in the story today?

I wonder what page you would choose if you were in the story.

I wonder if you have a special place where you feel God's power?

After the children have finished wondering and are ready to go to the next activity, introduce either the option for individual reflective art response or a teacher-directed activity, depending on what you have planned.

Individual Art Response

Children choose from a collection of attractive art supplies and work individually for about 15 minutes to create something of importance to the child. It may or may not be a direct reflection on the story they just heard and wondered about

Teacher-directed Activity

Take a walk around your meetinghouse grounds. Is there a special place that reminds you of a place of power? Perhaps the children might want to talk about it or just sit and enjoy it.

Adults or older children might prefer to visualize such a place of power and then journal about their experience there.

Closing

Provide a 5-minute warning before the children need to clean up. After clean up, gather the children in a circle and ask them to name one thing for which they are grateful. Sing songs while waiting for their parents to pick them up, or before joining the adults after the rise of Meeting for Worship.

If the children join their loved ones while Meeting for Worship is still in progress, before you lead them back to the meeting room, invite them to remember how they still themselves and some things about the morning that they may want to think about during the final moments of Meeting for Worship.

Hand out the Take Home Notes, if using, as parents pick up the children in the First Day School room, or after the rise of Meeting for Worship, if joining loved ones in worship.