



Joseph Smith

Introduction ideas and questions:

- Have you ever really wondered about what to do in a certain situation?
- Have you ever really wanted to know the answer to a question?
- Perhaps you asked your parents or your friends or your teachers about it but were still not sure what you should do.

If you've ever felt any of these things, you are not alone. When Joseph Smith was fourteen years old, he had a question. He was living on his family's farm in Palmyra, New York. In the town where they lived, there was a great deal of excitement about religion. There were many preachers from many different churches. Each said that he had the truth and tried to convince people to join his church. Joseph wondered which of the churches he should join. He asked himself, "What is to be done? Who of all these parties are right; or, are they all wrong together? If any one of them be right, which is it, and how shall I know it?" (JS—H 1:10).

One day Joseph read in the Bible, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5). Joseph decided to do what the scripture said. He decided to ask Heavenly Father which church was right so that he would know which one he should join.

Joseph had never prayed out loud before. He decided to go to a grove of trees near his home to ask Heavenly Father his question. On a beautiful spring morning, he walked into the grove, looked around to be sure that he was alone, and knelt in prayer. As he began his prayer, a terrible feeling of darkness surrounded him. It was so strong that he thought it was going to destroy him! He prayed with all his heart to Heavenly Father for help. At that moment, a pillar of light appeared over his head and came down and rested on him. The darkness left him, and he saw two Heavenly Beings standing above him in the air. One spoke to him, saying, "*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*" (JS—H 1:17.)

The two Heavenly Beings were Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. The Savior told Joseph that he should not join any of the churches because they were all wrong. Joseph had the answer to his question. Later, he received visits from other heavenly messengers and learned what Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ wanted him to do to help restore the gospel to the earth. He followed Their directions.

Joseph Smith organized The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and became the first prophet and President of the Church. He translated the Book of Mormon, built the first latter-day temple, and received most of the revelations found in the Doctrine and Covenants. We are grateful to him for helping to restore the gospel to the earth. And we should be thankful for the example of faith and courage he set for all of us. What a blessing it is that Joseph Smith prayed to Heavenly Father when he needed an answer. We, too, can go to Heavenly Father in prayer and receive answers to important questions in our lives. Through prayer we can also receive a testimony from Heavenly Father that Joseph Smith was a prophet.

Story About Joseph Smith

“One of the Most Daring and Heroic Deeds”

Classic Stories from the Lives of Our Prophets, Joseph Smith Pages 18-19

While on the mountains some distance from Washington, our coachman stepped into a public house to get a drink, when the horses took fright and ran down the hill at full speed. I persuaded my fellow travelers to be quiet and retain their seats, but had to hold one woman to prevent her from throwing her infant out of the coach. The passengers were exceedingly agitated, but I used every persuasion to calm their feelings, and opening the door, I secured my hold on the side of the coach the best way I could, and succeeded in placing myself in the coachman's seat and reining up the horses, after they had run some two or three miles. And neither coach, horses, or passengers received any injury. My course was spoken of in the highest terms of commendation as being one of the most daring and heroic deeds, and no language could express the gratitude of the passengers when they found themselves safe and the horses quiet. There were some members of Congress with us, who proposed naming the incident to that body, believing they would reward such conduct by some public act; but on inquiring my name to mention as the author of their safety, and finding it to be Joseph Smith the “Mormon Prophet,” as they called me, I heard no more of their praise, gratitude, or reward.

Joseph Jumble!

All Joseph Smith pieces are placed in the center of the playing area or table. Each player takes a turn rolling a pair of dice. If they roll a double of any kind, they take a puzzle piece from the center of the table. It is best to start with the bottom piece of the character. This piece says, “Joseph Smith” on it. The players can choose to pick all the same color of pieces or choose different colors. The dice keep getting passed around until one player has successfully rolled doubles five times and has completed a picture of Joseph Smith.

Game Alteration

Using the pieces for Joseph Jumble, change the game by making it a question/answer game. You could have someone answer the questions correctly to place a piece. It could be done together or in teams. Here are some questions you could use:

When was the Church organized? (April 6, 1830)

Who was the first President of the Church? (Joseph Smith)

What is a prophet? (One called to speak for Heavenly Father)

Who appeared to Joseph Smith when he prayed in the Sacred Grove? (Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ)

What was Joseph Smith told during the First Vision? (To join none of the churches)

What was the name of the angel who appeared to Joseph Smith about three years after the First Vision?” (Moroni)

Who was Moroni? (The last prophet in the Book of Mormon)

Why did Moroni visit Joseph Smith? (To teach him and prepare him to receive the gold plates)

Who appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to restore the Aaronic Priesthood? (John the Baptist)

