

Five Little Fingers

ACT 1: in the staffroom

It was 8.45am on Thursday morning and Mrs Sencoe was already looking agitated as she crossed the staffroom towards me. 'Help!' she began, 'Ofsted are coming.'

Nearby voices in the staffroom dropped to a whisper and I thought I heard a coffee cup fall to the office floor. Mrs Sencoe took a deep breath and continued: 'The Governors have circulated a paper saying we should be having *Christian* collective worship in the classroom ... *every day!* We don't know where to start. Can you come on over and help us?' My mind flitted to the Macedonian man in Paul's vision in Acts 16.

Being a fully paid-up ACT member, I was pleased to be asked. Mrs Sencoe had seen me lead the singing for school assemblies and knew I was a Bible-believing Christian. But the scale of the request still seemed overwhelming.

I spoke into the silence. 'Well, I'd love to help of course, but I can't be in your classroom every day.' There was a short pause. Mrs Sencoe thought I'd stopped to think; I thought I'd stopped to pray. Could I really lend a hand?

ACT 2: in the studio

9.30am on Tuesday morning. Holidays were always a busy time in the Fishy Music studios and this one was no different. The first day had been spent sketching some pilot scripts for a five-minute collective worship track for each day of the week with some simple actions, a short meditation and a repeated prayer. And now we had penned a theme song. We were almost ready for the first recording session. Enthusiasm ran high.



Trevor Stevens has degrees in Education and Music, a PhD in Psychology and is an Advanced Skills Teacher in the field of Autism.

Trevor is a worship leader and has significant experience in the music production industry, working as a session musician in some of London's leading recording studios.

Trevor and Karina now live in Oxfordshire, where they have a recording studio and manage Fishy Music.

'What we need here is simplicity,' warned Karina, the Fishy Music sound engineer, 'A friendly voice and a simple guitar accompaniment as if you were in the room, so that any child will be able to listen for five minutes.'

The red light came on. Guitar intros and the theme song were recorded and some simple sound effects added to the voice-over to hold the children's attention. By the end of the holidays five tracks were mastered and the first batch of CDs was ready for distribution.

ACT 3: in the classroom

It was 10.15am on a Monday morning and a smartly-dressed visitor sat in the corner of Mrs Sencoe's classroom, silently clutching a clipboard. Mrs Sencoe sat frozen in the middle of a circle of eager faces. She re-read the words on the CD case in her hand: *All you need to do is press play and let the instructions guide the children.* A county supplies clock could be heard ticking in the silence.

Then suddenly a friendly voice from the CD player announced, 'It's time to listen very carefully for ... Five Little Fingers.' The small circle of six year olds spontaneously joined in with the suggested actions.

By 10.45am the smartly-dressed visitor was debriefing Mrs Sencoe by the book display before going to sit in the corner of yet another classroom. The visitor's clipboard lay perched on the corner of a nearby table. The Ofsted summary notes read: *Five Little Fingers is a very effective assembly routine.* Mrs Sencoe smiled.

■ Trevor Stevens

Information

Five Little Fingers is an audio CD of original material designed to bring collective Christian worship into the classroom on a daily basis: 'five minutes with God, five days of the week.' *FingerTIPS* is a booklet of User Notes and resources to support it. *Five Little Fingers* is currently being used in over 250 schools across the UK. Fishy Music has also produced *Five Christmas Visitors* and *Five Funny Feelings*. The latter is designed to combine collective worship with the Emotional Literacy Strategy.



For more information on these worship CDs, visit www.fishymusic.co.uk or email karina@fishymusic.co.uk