

Lesson Plan: *Sasha and the Dragon* and Big Feelings

Appropriate for multiple ages, with variations, preschool through upper elementary.

Objective: Students will use *Sasha and the Dragon* as a springboard to talk about big feelings like loneliness, fear, grief, and displacement, and how our big feelings are safe with Christ and His saints. This is designed to be very flexible; the needs of your students will vary dramatically.

Materials: *Sasha and the Dragon*, by Laura E. Wolfe,

Craft feathers (like [these from OTC](#))

Optional craft project: Icon bookmarks with feathers

Bookmark blanks (colored [cardstock](#) or a [craft kit like this](#))

Markers, glitter glue, and/or other decorative items

Small icon prints to fit on bookmark

See [Sasha and the Dragon on Pinterest](#) for some links to icons of St. Michael.

References:

1. Karen Young at Hey Sigmund wrote a good article on talking to kids about self-regulating during big emotions. #2 on the list on that page talks about how mindfulness strengthens the pre-frontal cortex. It's possible that this is part of the way prayer acts *physiologically*, too—and prayer is perhaps even more important than skills in a psychological toolbox.

[Teaching Kids to Self-Regulate](#)

2. Elissa Bjeletich recently wrote an excellent article about talking with children about death. Hint: You don't have to hide it from them.

[Talking About Death & Grieving With Children](#)

Procedure:

1. Open with Prayer: *Our Father, Heavenly King, or prayer of your choice.*

2. Ask students about big feelings. Who do they go to when they have big feelings? A parent, a good friend? How about Jesus and the saints?

3. Introduce *Sasha and the Dragon*. Instruct students to notice the big feelings in the story.

4. Read *Sasha and the Dragon*.

5. Talk about the book. Ask age-appropriate questions and lead age-appropriate discussion according to the students' needs.

This will vary depending on your students and your circumstances! This story can be used as a springboard for some pretty deep issues—be sure to address these with your students, as these are the meat and potatoes of their spiritual education. Review other available lesson plans for ideas.

6. Ask students about big feelings in *Sasha and the Dragon*. Write down students' answers on a whiteboard. Examples of discussion starters:

How does Sasha feel? (Scared, lonely, displaced.)

Does Saint Michael take Sasha's fear seriously? (Yes!) Why is that important?

What did Sasha learn about his feelings?

How did he share what he learned with others around him?

How are big feelings like dragons?

How do God and His saints help us with our dragons?

7. What about the other people in the story? Help your students stretch their empathy skills by asking them to imagine the feelings of other characters in the story: the neighbor kids, the parents, the grandmother.

8. Give students a feather each to remind them of Sasha's feathers. The feather can remind them of the presence of God and His saints, or it can help them to remember to share their light with others.

9. Optional craft project: Decorate a bookmark blank with a small icon and feathers, and/or other craft supplies.

10. Review students' responses on the whiteboard.

11. Close with prayer: *Our Father*.

Thank you for using Sasha and the Dragon in your lesson plans. I pray that it is edifying for your soul and the souls of your students. Pray for me, as well!