

Magnetic Personalities

By Julie Filby

Experiment with magnets to imagine the ways that people repel and attract one another. Jesus teaches love and respect for one another, even when attitudes and actions seem to repel.

For

Young Family

Season

Summer

Needed

At least 2 bar- or horseshoe-shaped magnets, index cards, pencils, bowl, water, metal paper clips, 12" square of cardboard, Bible

Activity Plan

1. Gather the family and begin with prayer:

Dear God, bless our time together today and every day. Amen.

2. Invite family members to experiment with the magnets to discover which ends of the magnets repel each other and which attract. You may want to talk about positive and negative charges, and how the opposite charges attract. Expand the fun by dropping paper clips in a bowl of water and using a magnet to draw them out. Lay some paper clips on the piece of cardboard and move a magnet underneath the cardboard to move the paper clips around.
3. Ask everyone to imagine that the magnets are people. What might you learn from the magnets about how people get along with one another?
4. Give each person an index card and a pencil. Ask each person to write a sentence or phrase about an argument that once kept him or her apart from another person. Be ready to help young children with spelling.
5. Take turns holding the index card between two magnets. Try to pass the cards around the table using only the magnets. Think about how God's love and forgiveness can help unite people when they have a disagreement. Discuss how choosing to respond with peace and cooperation—especially when another person seems to repel against you—can work in amazing ways, just as magnets do.
6. From your Bible or the following text, read aloud Matthew 5:14-16: [Jesus said,] "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Discuss how following Jesus' teaching might help your family attract other people to the ways of God's love.

