

# MARTIN LUTHER

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## **Martin Luther**

A two-part biography with ideas for a full programme

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- Translation:** Lizanne McKee.
- Publisher:** Child Evangelism Fellowship of Germany • Am Eichelsberg 3 • 35236 Breidenbach • Germany  
Tel: +49 6465 9283 • Orders: +49 6465 9283-30 • E-mail: [versand@keb-de.org](mailto:versand@keb-de.org)  
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# Martin Luther

## Suggested programme - part 1

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Song:	Choose a suitable song to sing together.
Welcome/prayer	
Knight games:	Choose from the examples given.
Song:	Choose a suitable song to sing together.
Role play:	School in the Middle Ages (script provided).
Lesson:	Martin Luther - part 1.
Song:	Choose a suitable song to sing together.
Review game:	Printing a book.
Song:	Choose a suitable song to sing together.
Memory verse:	Romans 1:17.
Song:	Choose a suitable song to sing together.
Craft activity:	Choose from the suggestions given.
Carry-over activity:	Quiet Time book (see explanation given).

## Suggested programme - part 2

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Song:	Choose a suitable song to sing together.
Welcome/prayer	
Knight games:	Choose from the examples given.
Song:	Choose a suitable song to sing together.
Role play:	Fear of God's punishment (script provided).
Memory verse:	Review Romans 1:17.
Song:	Choose a suitable song to sing together.
Lesson:	Martin Luther - part 2.
Song:	Choose a suitable song to sing together.
Role play part 2:	The two monks appear again.
Review game:	Translation work.
Craft activity:	Choose from the suggestions given or finish the projects from lesson 1. Use this time to talk about the Quiet Time book.
Song:	Choose a suitable song to sing together.

## Suggested songs

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If they are available in your language, you could use some of the hymns written by Martin Luther.

## Decorations

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Use decorations to give the room a Middle Age theme—for example, objects such as pewter plates and cups; candlesticks and lanterns instead of electric lights. (You may prefer to use battery-operated “candles”.) You could also use pictures of Martin Luther or something related to the theme.

## Knight games

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*Note: The suggested games are sufficient for both lessons.*

Divide the children into two teams. The teams choose their “knight” for each game. Some games can also be played as one team. After each game make a note of the winners.

### ***Fencing***

You will need:

- 2 long-handled brushes (eg radiator brushes)
- Some flour
- Some water

Instructions: Two knights take a long brush, which has been lightly moistened and dipped in flour. It should be held in the left hand. (A left-hander should hold it in his right hand!) Who will be the first to “strike” his opponent?

### ***Stick fight***

You will need:

- 2 empty wooden crates (or plastic boxes)
- 1 wooden board
- 2 pool noodles

Instructions: Place the wooden board on the crates to create a bench. Both knights stand on the bench and try to knock each other off with the pool noodle. Who can stay up the longest?

### ***Jousting (relay game, particularly suited to outdoors)***

You will need:

- 2 stick horses
- 2 broom handles with a nail
- 1 washing line and clothes pegs
- Several balloons in two different colours

Preparation: Blow up the balloons and hang an equal number of balloons in each colour on the washing line. There should be enough balloons so that each child has the opportunity to burst one. Hammer a nail into the bottom end of each brush handle, with the point

downwards. You may also want to stick a cardboard rosette on at the hand area.

Instructions: Each team stands in a row, one behind the other. Whoever is at the front gets the horse and the lance. At the command "go", the knights "ride" to the washing line and burst a balloon in their colour with their lance. They immediately ride back and give the horse and the lance to the next player in their team. The team which is the first to burst all the balloons in its colour is the winner.

### ***Gallows bowling***

You will need:

- If playing outdoors: either a branch that sticks out or a slatted frame as a gallows  
If playing indoors: a suitable ceiling beam or hook
- A rope
- A ball knotted from fabric
- 9 bowling pins or wooden boards the same size (only if playing outdoors)
- An old table or a wooden board on two workbenches

Preparation: Tie the ball onto the rope and attach the rope to the branch, the "gallows" or the ceiling hook. Set up the table with the bowling pins a short distance away. The rope needs to be long enough to reach the bowling pins.

Instructions: Each team has three turns per round to try to knock over the nine bowling pins. Count the number of knocked-over bowling pins after each round.

### ***Tug of war***

You will need:

- A thick rope
- Masking tape or chalk to mark the centre line

Instructions: The two teams play against each other. Which team can pull the other one over the line first?

### ***Archery***

You will need:

- A plastic archery set with a target and arrows with suction cups on the end

Instructions: Two knights play against each other. Each knight has three turns. Who can score the most points?

## Background information

### Overview of Luther's life

10 Nov 1483	Birth in Eisleben.
Until 1501	Childhood and schooling in Mansfeld, Magdeburg and Eisenach.
1501	Martin becomes a student at the University of Erfurt.
1505	Martin finds himself in a terrible storm and promises to become a monk. He enters the Erfurt Augustine Eremitic monastery.
1510–1511	Martin travels with another monk to Rome.
1511	Martin is moved to Wittenberg.
1513–1516/18	Luther holds lectures at the university on the Psalms and the Book of Romans. From studying the Bible he realises that no-one can get to Heaven by his own efforts. God gives the gift of forgiveness and eternal life to each one who acknowledges his sins and believes in Jesus Christ.
1517	Luther writes the <i>95 Theses</i> (31 October—Beginning of the Reformation).
1518	Martin is tried by Cardinal Cajetan in Augsburg.
1521	Luther refuses to withdraw his writings when he is brought before the Parliament in Worms. The Emperor accuses him of heresy. At the command of Prince Friedrich of Saxony he is abducted to Wartburg Castle. He lives there incognito as Junker Jörg and translates the New Testament into German in 11 weeks.
1525	Martin marries the former nun Katharina von Bora and lives with her in the former Wittenberg Augustine monastery (Luther House today), which the prince gives him. The Luthers have six children, one of whom (a girl) dies at the age of 13.
18 Feb 1546	Martin Luther dies in Eisleben.

### Aim of the lesson

Through this lesson the children are encouraged to believe in God's grace and the authority of the Bible.

At the same time, they will recognise that God steers history.

The lesson reveals the problems of religiosity in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and shows the changes which are still having an impact today. God caused His Word to become accessible to the people of Europe. They didn't have to live in fear and terror of Him.

## Content

Martin Luther had a strict upbringing and only knew God as a judge who punishes. He experienced first-hand the fear of hell, death and the devil which the church conveyed at that time and finally as a monk he took much upon himself to try to earn God's grace.

With the help of his abbot, who recognised Martin's talent, he made a career in the church and eventually taught at Wittenberg University. From his studies in the Book of Romans God gave him the crucial knowledge for his own salvation and ultimately for the Reformation—God is a gracious God. Luther's life was changed.

The flourishing business of paying for indulgences made Martin Luther angry. With his *95 Theses* he wanted to get rid of the scandals in the church.

The Pope wasn't happy with this attack on his authority and excommunicated him from the church. The German Emperor tried to persuade Martin to withdraw his writings for in the meantime Martin had gained many followers. He didn't succeed! For Martin the Bible was God's Word and the final authority, not the law of the church.

Martin was accused of heresy and now he feared for his life. Yet his provincial prince protected him and allowed him to be taken to Wartburg Castle.

There he translated the New Testament into the German language in only 11 weeks. This became the basis for a single German language. (Prior to this different dialects were spoken in Germany, but there was no single language understood by everyone.)

There Martin suffered from massive attacks from the devil, which isn't surprising. Yet no-one can stop whatever God has planned.

Within a few months Martin's writings were influencing all of Europe. The leadership of the Roman Catholic church, however, resisted the renewal of their church and it came to a split in the church.

## Tips for story-telling

To make the lesson exciting, slip into Martin's role in various places, or be the strict teacher or the Emperor. Perhaps you can borrow a Monk's habit or sew a simple one.

Use a stick (for the teacher) and a copy of the letter of indulgence.



# Lesson

## Part 1



### Flashcard 1

“Commutare (= Latin for ‘to change’): Commuto, commutas, commutat, commutamus, commutatis, commutant.”

Martin correctly recited a Latin verb in all its forms, but the teacher just said roughly, “Sit!”

Already at the age of five Martin and his classmates in the school in Mansfeld learned to read, write and speak Latin. (Today this area is Saxony-Anhalt in the East of Germany). At that time, about 500 years ago, Latin was the world language, just like English is today.

Martin’s fingers still hurt as he thought back to yesterday when he made a mistake reciting verb forms. The teacher was very strict and walked up and down with his stick. (*Demonstrate this as you teach.*) Anytime someone wasn’t paying attention, or made a mistake saying their vocabulary, or even made the slightest noise—“bang” (*hit a table with the stick*)—they were given a big whack on their fingers with the stick. That really hurt. Although Martin was a very good pupil, he too had to take a lot of beatings with the stick.

Then they had to learn excerpts from the calendar of saints by heart. When Martin was born on 10 November 1483 he was even given the name of the saint for that date.

Martin’s father was a very hard-working man and he wanted Martin to receive a good education. In order to do that, though, Martin had to leave home when he was only 14. His father brought him to the monastery school in Magdeburg (today the provincial capital of Saxony-Anhalt).

He had to earn his food by singing on the street. But Martin didn’t mind that at all, because he was a very good singer and he really enjoyed it. The monk who taught them in the monastery school also told him something which he had heard ever since he was little:

“God sees all your sins. You must be obedient, otherwise you will be punished by fire in hell.” (*Walk up and down again with the stick.*) In those days even the children were afraid of God.

Martin sometimes thought about home. He missed his brothers and sisters and his mum and dad, even though his parents were very strict. Once he had taken a nut out of a bowl without asking first. He had to bend over and his mum smacked him several times on the behind.

It was not at all easy for the children—imagine being beaten for the slightest thing—but that was normal in those days.

At this point in our story Martin was already 21 years old and was studying at one of the best universities at that time in Germany—in Erfurt. His father wanted him to become a good lawyer and have a great life with the money he would earn, but sometimes Martin thought about becoming a monk.

## Flashcard 2

Martin had visited his parents and now he had to walk the long way back to the university. (*Build up some tension in the lesson.*) It got darker and darker, a storm was brewing. Black clouds. “Boom!” Thunder roared and lightning flashed in the sky. The storm was getting closer and closer! A deafening crash—everything around Martin was bright and he was hurled to the ground by the force of the lightning. The lightning struck the ground right beside him, but he was unharmed! Martin was afraid and cried, “Saint Anna! Protect me! If you protect me, I will become a monk!” Still shivering with fear he walked on and arrived safe and sound in Erfurt. “Knock, knock, knock.” Just two weeks later Martin was standing in front of the gate of the Augustine Monastery in Erfurt so he could keep his promise. Martin could stay in the guesthouse, but he still needed one thing—his father’s permission. Without that the abbot wouldn’t admit him.

His father was horrified. “I’ve spent a lot of money on you and have great hopes for you! You’re supposed to become a hard-working lawyer. Now you want to give up your studies and go into the monastery?! No, under no circumstances!” His father didn’t want that. Then something happened to change his mind.

There was an outbreak of plague and two of Martin’s brothers died. “Is God punishing me because I’m not allowing Martin to become a monk?” his father wondered. Reluctantly he gave his permission.

Martin had to get up at 3 o’clock in the morning to pray. He had to work hard and live in a cold cell which was never heated. The monks begged in the city for food and money. But Martin found monastery life interesting and after a trial year he wanted to stay in the monastery for ever. Martin had to promise never to marry, to live in poverty and to obey the laws of the monastery, the church and the Pope. Now his only possessions were his monk’s habit and a Latin Bible.

He put up with all of this in order to earn God’s love.

“God is a strict judge. One day when we die we will have to stand before Him. It’s only through good deeds, much prayer and by giving away a lot of money that you can maybe escape hell.” This is what Martin had learned and felt with beatings.

That was the teaching of the church at that time and everyone believed it. The people couldn’t check it in the Bible for themselves, for many ordinary and poor people couldn’t read Latin. All church services were held in Latin and the Bible was only in the Latin language.

Although Martin prayed, fasted and worked more eagerly than all other monks, he didn’t have any peace. Just the opposite, in fact—he became more and more confused. He could never know if he had done enough. Martin no longer had any joy in life. He walked up and down in his cell: “As a sinful person, how can I ever please such a strict judge as God?”

## Flashcard 3

Martin talked about it with his friend and counsellor Johannes von Staupitz. He encouraged him. “Martin, don’t always look only on sin. Look



Saint Anna was considered the protector of the mountain people, to which Martin’s father belonged.



to Jesus Christ who died on the cross for your sins! God isn't angry with you; you are angry with God! You're exaggerating! You're confessing sins that aren't sins at all. You're fasting too much; you're sleeping too little. That isn't good. You're an intelligent young man! I want you to study theology and become a priest."

Now Martin would learn much more about God. "Perhaps I will find out then how I can make the strict and almighty God show grace towards me," he thought.

At the university Martin got to know all the writings of the theologians and philosophers who have ever lived, but his favourite book was the Bible.

Johannes von Staupitz was now the leader of all the Augustine monasteries in Germany. One day he sent Martin to Rome to speak with the Pope about the rules of the Augustines. Martin travelled for several weeks with a companion. They went on foot over the Alps from one monastery to the next, until they eventually arrived in Italy.

Martin was able to carry out his assignment but didn't get to see the Pope. The two monks visited Rome and crawled up the 28 steps of the "Holy Stairs", in order to get a reduction in the punishment for sins from God. Martin wondered about the fact that the priests in Rome simply read out their Masses, not even very seriously, as he would do it. He saw the riches of the church and marvelled at the building site for the new St Peter's Basilica (cathedral).

Martin was now 30 years old and Johannes von Staupitz wanted him to become a professor at the university in Wittenberg. Frederick the Wise—the Prince of Saxony, a God-fearing man—had made Wittenberg his capital and founded the university. Many of the professors belonged to the Augustines and lived in the Augustine Monastery in Wittenberg. There Martin was given a room in the tower. He could read, study and prepare his classes in peace there.

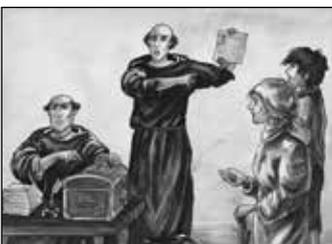
The students enjoyed listening to him when he talked about the Psalms. At last a man who knew the Bible! Many theologians at that time studied numerous other writings, but hardly knew the Bible! Martin spoke out of conviction. He taught God's Word after he had carefully studied it. Soon Martin had many friends. Also, because he was now a pastor in Wittenberg, he was allowed to hold services there.

#### **Flashcard 4**

Martin was shocked to learn that the people from his church in Wittenberg were travelling to Magdeburg to buy letters of indulgence.

He had been noticing for a while that not so many people were coming to him anymore to confess their sins. Now he knew why! They were buying letters from the church so that they wouldn't be punished for their sins!

The church was making a business out of it, for the Pope needed the money to pay for the new St Peter's Basilica (cathedral). As well as that the Archbishop of Brandenburg was in debt. Martin talked agitatedly with his friend Philip about it. (*Hold up the letter of indulgence as you speak.*)



"It's incomprehensible! Listen to this (*read out the letter*): 'In the authority of all the saints, and in compassion towards thee, I absolve thee from all sins and misdeeds, and remit all punishment for ten days.' It gets even worse—now people can even buy letters of indulgence for the sins of dead people! Do you know what the monk Johann Tetzel tells the people: 'When the money clinks in the box, the soul flies up to Heaven.' What a huge lie! And worst of all—people are buying letters of indulgence for sins they haven't yet committed. Now it doesn't matter what they do—after all, they have a letter of indulgence. They don't feel sorry for their sins anymore! Can you imagine that, esteemed friend?" (That is the way people talked in those days.)

Martin was upset. "The church must change this. Poor people are spending all that's left of their money for a piece of paper. Jesus Christ has already paid the price and God forgives anyone who genuinely feels sorry for their sins and asks for forgiveness!"

Then Martin wrote down exactly what needed to be changed in this trade with letters of indulgence. In the end it was 95 statements (sentences). One of the statements, for example, was: "Every Christian who feels truly sorry for his sins and repents, receives full forgiveness from punishment and guilt without the need for a letter of indulgence." Or: "The real true treasure of the church is the most holy Gospel of God's glory and grace."

On 31 October 1517 Martin nailed these 95 statements to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. That's where people could put up notices of events, as well as documents for discussion.

He also sent the 95 statements to his superiors. He wanted to talk to them about them and hear their opinions.

The statements got into the hands of printers and they were enthusiastic about them: "That's unbelievable! Everyone needs to know about this! No more exploiting (cheating) the people. God is a gracious Father and not a strict judge like the church claims."

They got the statements printed and distributed them so that they became known in the whole land and even abroad. That is how 31 October became Reformation Day. It was the Saturday before All Saints Day and the day of the well-known Festival of Indulgence in Wittenberg.

### **Flashcard 5**

Some years before Martin Luther wrote these statements Johannes Gutenberg had invented a new method of printing using interchangeable lead letters. Now you could print several copies of a piece of writing, instead of rewriting it by hand.

So God had already prepared the way for Martin's knowledge to be shared in the entire known world of that time! God didn't want people to live in fear and terror of Him! God wanted people to experience the truth.

Ordinary farmers and citizens, his students and friends were on Martin's side. But what do you think the church would say about it?

*(If you are telling the story in two parts, finish here.)*



## Part 2

The Pope and the bishops were outraged at Martin's writings. How could a simple monk dare to question the church!

Yet Martin was certain—God's Word counts more than what the Pope says.



### Flashcard 6

Martin's next project was to study the Book of Romans. To help with this he took the Bible in the original Greek language and the Latin translation. Philip Melancthon had taught him Greek during his studies. "The just shall live by faith ..." (Romans 1:17). He translated these words slowly word for word. (*Repeat the verse thoughtfully.*) Martin thought about it for a long time! "How can a person be just before God?!" One day God showed Martin the answer. "That's it! Saved by faith! If I believe in Jesus Christ, He forgives my sins. He already paid for my sins on the cross. I don't have to work for it anymore! I am just before God, through faith in Jesus Christ!"

At last Martin had the answer to his question, "How do I receive a God of grace?" It wasn't easy for him, though, to put aside things which had become habits. That was painful. He wanted to remain a faithful, obedient Augustine monk!

But this knowledge of God's grace changed Martin's life. Now he was sure that he was saved from his sins. Now he **knew** that God had forgiven him and that he would go to Heaven.

*Application for unsaved child:*

Do you know that too?

Perhaps you are the same as Martin was. You think that you have to strive hard to get to Heaven. But doing good and going to church, praying and reading the Bible isn't enough. Why? Because, in spite of all this, we always do many things and have many thoughts that don't please God. Yet Martin realised, "I don't need to despair. I can trust God to forgive me because Jesus died for my sins too on the cross."

Jesus died for you too and He didn't stay in the grave but He lives today. You can ask Him to forgive you too.

Now that Martin knew he was saved, he became a happy and free man. Before everything had been hard and meaningless because he never knew if God was gracious to him, but now God had shown him the truth.

Everyone should experience this for themselves! Martin taught his students about it and preached on it in his church. "You don't need to be afraid of God. He loves you because you are His children. You don't need to earn His grace through religious practices and good deeds. You only need to believe."

Some of his colleagues contradicted him: "But the church teaches something different."

“Then the church is mistaken. That is what the Bible says and what the Bible says counts.”

“Don’t let the Pope hear that,” his friends warned. “That won’t please him.”

The Pope branded Martin as a heretic—someone who dares to attack the authority of the church. Three years after Martin wrote the 95 statements the Pope sent an official “letter” to Martin.

Martin read the so-called “Papal bull”. (*Hold up the letter and pretend to read it.*)

It was a long letter, warning Martin that he had 60 days to withdraw his statements. He should confess that the only truth is what is written in the law books of the (catholic) church, otherwise he would be cut off from the church and regarded as a heretic. That would be a great shame.

Martin went outside the city with a group of students and burned first of all the law books of the church and then the Pope’s letter. His friends feared for him. “Now Martin has separated himself completely from the Pope and the church,” they said. “He is putting his life on the line for the new faith.”

Martin was convinced. “God’s Word must be the standard for the church’s teachings.”

The teaching on God’s grace, about which Martin was now preaching, quickly became known and loved all over Germany. The people were set free from their great fear of God’s punishment and they knew His grace. At last they understood that Jesus had long ago paid on the cross for their guilt. He took their punishment. Martin wrote several books about it, which were passed on from one person to the next and eagerly read. Then a fierce argument broke out—is Luther right or the Pope? The Emperor wanted to make the final decision.

One day Martin received news. “I have been summoned to the Parliament in Worms! May God stand by me!” On 16 April 1521 he rode to Worms under the protection of the Emperor. The people along the street cheered him on!

### **Flashcard 7**

All the powerful men of the German kingdom of that time were assembled at the Parliament! Martin hoped that he could explain his writings there. The big hall of the Bishop’s palace was full to bursting. At that time the church and the state were not separate. The Bishops did not only have power in the church, but also in politics. So the church was important to the Emperor.

The Emperor asked Martin, “Doctor Martinus Luther, is that you?” “Yes.” “Are these writings yours?” “Yes, as long as nothing has been added or removed.” “Do you withdraw these writings?” Martin was supposed to answer that everything he had written was not true! “Give me 24 hours to think about it!” Martin was given this time and he prayed about it. His decision was unchanged.

The next day the Emperor asked again: “Doctor Martinus Luther, do you withdraw your writings?”



"If you cannot prove from the Bible that I am wrong, I will not withdraw anything. I don't believe the Pope and the Bishops, for they have often been wrong and contradicted themselves. God's Word has convinced me and my conscience tells me that it is the truth. I will not withdraw anything. So help me God. Amen!"

A murmuring sound went through the crowd. The Emperor made his final judgement: Martin was found guilty of heresy. Now he had no rights and no protection anymore. Anyone could take him prisoner, rob him or kill him, if they wanted.

Yet for Martin the truth of the Bible was more important, even if it would cost him his life.

*Application for saved child:*

How important is the Bible to you? Many people today despise it and don't believe that it is still valid. Don't allow yourself to be influenced by this kind of thinking. The Bible is and always will be God's holy Word. You can lean on His Word, just like Martin who did not withdraw his writings.



### **Flashcard 8**

Martin set off from Worms for home. Then suddenly—a troop of horsemen rode up to him. They had their faces covered with their hoods. They threw a sack over Martin's head and kidnapped him. Martin wasn't afraid, for he knew that it was a plan that Friedrich the Wise, Martin's provincial prince, had thought up. He wanted to protect Martin from his enemies. So he allowed himself to be taken away to Wartburg Castle. No-one knew about it—only the captain of the castle knew. Martin lived at Wartburg Castle for almost a year. He let his beard and his hair grow and called himself Junker Jörg.

Martin sat alone in his room in the castle and thought things over. He thought about his friends in Wittenberg. He remembered the words of his friend Philip Melanchthon. "Dear Brother Martin, you know Greek. Why don't you translate the New Testament into our language? Then we will have it printed and send it across the whole land. That way everyone can become convinced that you are right!" "Yes, that's exactly what I'll do!"



### **Flashcard 9**

So Martin began his audacious project of translating the New Testament into a language the people would understand. At that time it was forbidden to translate parts of the Bible without the permission of the church. The Bible was only in the Latin language which, of course, the ordinary people couldn't understand!

The loneliness in his room was difficult to cope with. Sometimes he was really afraid and he was terribly sad. The devil made his life difficult, for he doesn't want people to recognise the truth; he doesn't want people to understand that you can't buy your way into Heaven.

But God helped Martin. God was with him and no-one could stop this

work, because God wanted the light to penetrate the great darkness of that time! God wanted the people to know that the Gospel is a happy message, not a threatening message.

So Luther worked day and night and in only 11 weeks he had translated the entire New Testament into the German language. "I am using ink to fight the devil," Martin once said, meaning his Bible translation.

In 1522 the "September Testament" appeared—Martin Luther's translation of the New Testament. The printing meant that it could soon be read everywhere! At last, a Bible in German! In only a few months 5,000 copies were sold!

Of course, it was a different kind of German to what is spoken today, but this Bible translation was the basis for a single German language.

Luther was criticised that it wasn't a literal translation (word for word). If he had, it would perhaps have sounded like this: "Not fear! Behold I you bring tidings of joy great!" Luther's answer was, "Nobody speaks like that."

In the meantime many believed that Luther was dead. Only his closest friends knew where he was. Philip was enthusiastic about Martin's suggestions of changes for the church and many of Martin's other admirers were too. With their help many changes came about, not only in Wittenberg. The church service was changed, the pictures of saints were torn out of the church and priests got married. Almost a year passed and the "Reformation" (from the Latin word "reformare" = change around) was in full swing, even though Martin was still living in secret. But his findings changed and freed many people.

Some time later Professor Karlstadt took the matter into his own hands and stirred up the people. The movement was now out of control. Priests and monks were attacked. Men broke into churches and destroyed statues and pictures there.

When Martin learned about this, he decided to return to Wittenberg, even though it was very dangerous for him. In the meantime, however, the Reformation had influenced the whole country and it didn't make sense any more for Luther's opponents to kill him. His friends and followers would protect him. For a whole week he preached every day. "We must not fight for the Gospel with blood, but with ink." People should find the true way by means of God's written Word, not by violence. He succeeded in calming the people. Now Martin travelled through all of central Germany.

### **Flashcard 10**

"I want people to understand the Gospel properly." He also succeeded in helping the poor people with money from the church and in ensuring that young people were guaranteed a good education.

Three years later the farmers were outraged. They didn't want to be treated like slaves any longer when they were free in Jesus Christ. They demanded better living conditions and more rights.

They were so outraged that Martin could no longer stop them. The provincial princes demanded higher and higher taxes and levies from



them. Many of them couldn't pay and lost everything that they had. They believed that they could respond with violence, because the Bible says that everyone is equal and no-one should be oppressed. The farmers were disappointed that Martin didn't support them, but Martin knew that God doesn't like violence. It ended in war against the farmers and they had to admit defeat in the end.

In spite of what is known as the German Peasants' War, 1525 was an important year for Martin Luther. Many monks and nuns now realised that it isn't necessary to live unmarried in a convent in order to come closer to God. Martin himself was now no longer a monk. He helped the nuns, who had fled from a convent, to find husbands. He married one of them himself. Her name was Katharina von Bora. Now Martin was 42 years old and Katharina was only 24. Katharina was a good housewife and mother. She also helped Martin with his many tasks.



### **Flashcard 11**

Friedrich the Wise gave Martin the monastery in Wittenberg because there were no more monks there and the monastery was lying empty. There was soon some life in the monastery again! Martin and Katharina had six children and Martin's sister had died so they also took her six children into their home. There were also many students who lived with the Luthers, which helped Martin to pay the expenses of this big household. When they were all sitting at the table together, Martin loved to talk about what he had experienced and what he was convinced of. The students wrote it all down and it was summarised in a book which was later called *Martin Luther's Table Talk*.

In the meantime, as the result of Luther's writings, many things changed in the north of Germany and even in the Nordic countries. God placed gifted, faithful friends at Martin's side to make this possible. There was Philip Melancthon, for example, who was persuaded by the church to write a "statement of faith" for the new set of beliefs. Along with other friends of Luther he also wrote and organised many reforms. Christmas 1525 was the first time that a church service was celebrated in a form that Luther had prepared. The language was German (not Latin), there was a sermon where something from the Bible was explained and, for the first time, there were German hymns that everyone could sing together. Martin wrote these hymns himself and encouraged others to do so as well.



### **Flashcard 12**

Martin was getting older and was often ill. However, he continued to preach in many cities and taught at the university in Wittenberg.

One day Martin was called to the city of his birth. "I'm needed in Eisleben. I must leave today. Katharina, pack my things."

In Eisleben he was able to settle a quarrel, but Martin no longer had the strength to travel back to Wittenberg. On 18 February 1546 Martin died in Eisleben, the very place where he was born.

As he died, he quoted something that Jesus had said and prayed: "Into Your hands I commit my spirit. You have saved me, O Lord, my faithful God."

The day when Luther nailed the statements (or *Ninety-five Theses*) to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg—31 October 1517—was the beginning of the Reformation in all of Europe.

A great movement developed out of this which even the church could not stop, although they killed some of the people involved.

Eventually it came to a religious war. In the end the Roman Catholic Church had to accept the “new faith”. A new church grew out of this, which today is called the evangelical church. In the religious Peace of Augsburg (1555) it was agreed that each provincial prince at that time could choose the religion for his area. Later church and state were separated. Through Luther’s Bible translation many others also became motivated and the Bible is still today being translated into many languages of the world!

God used Martin Luther, His faithful servant, to make far-reaching changes in both faith and society—and the effects of these changes are still being felt today.

## Review time

### Review questions for part 1

1. What was the “world language” at the time of Luther—like English today? (Latin.)
2. How did Martin imagine God when he was a child? (As a strict judge who was to be feared.)
3. When did Martin decide to go into the monastery? (In a storm he promised that, if Saint Anna protected him, he would become a monk.)
4. How did Martin try to earn God’s love? (Through fasting, prayer, work and confession.)
5. Why did Martin go to Rome? (The leader of all the Augustine monasteries in Germany sent him to Rome to speak with the Pope about the rules of the Augustines.)
6. Which book of the Bible was Martin studying when he realised that God wanted to show His grace? (The Book of Romans.)
7. What is a letter of indulgence? (A letter from the church—when you bought one you supposedly got a reduction in punishment for sins, even for dead relatives too.)
8. What effects did a letter of indulgence have on the people’s behaviour? (They stopped coming to confession; they no longer felt sorry for their sins.)
9. Why is it not right to sell letters of indulgence? (Jesus Christ took the punishment for our sins on the cross; you cannot buy forgiveness, you can only receive it when you believe on Jesus as your Saviour.)
10. Which important invention helped majorly in the distribution of Luther’s *Ninety-five Theses* (95 statements)? (Printing with movable letters.)
11. Many people still believe today that you have to work your way into Heaven. How do they try to do that? (By donating money, praying, going to church, doing good, etc.)

### Review questions for part 2

1. How did the church and the Emperor react to Martin’s teaching? (The Pope was enraged and declared him a heretic; the Emperor wanted him to deny everything.)
2. What made Martin sure that he was right? (He read it in God’s Word, the Bible.)
3. How was Martin saved from his enemies? (His provincial prince arranged for him to be kidnapped and taken away to Wartburg Castle, where he lived there under the name of “Junker Jörg”.)
4. What amazing work did Luther complete while he was in hiding? (In only 11 weeks he translated the entire New Testament from Greek into German.)

5. Name one friend of Luther who played a big part in the Reformation. (Philip Melanchthon.)
6. Why was Martin's knowledge, as well as spreading it, so important? (At that time people believed what the church taught because no-one had a Bible of their own and they couldn't read it anyway.)
7. Where did Martin live with his family? (In the empty monastery in Wittenberg—the provincial prince gave it to him.)
8. How could Martin's knowledge lead to such a large movement with consequences that have lasted until today? (God had prepared the way—there were many men in other countries in Europe who thought the same way; God didn't want the people to live in fear and terror of Him.)
9. Finish the sentence. The Gospel isn't a threatening message, it's a \_\_\_\_\_. (Happy message.)
10. Through which Bible verse did God speak to Martin and answer his questions? (Romans 1:17—"The just shall live by faith.")

## Review games

### Part 1 - printing

Through the invention of printing God made sure that Martin's knowledge could quickly be spread in the entire known world of that time. Today we are going to "print" what Martin learned.

You will need:

- Raw medium-sized potatoes
- A sharp kitchen knife or cutting knife
- Watercolour or acrylic paint (if printing on paper) or textile or fabric paint (if printing on fabric)
- A large sheet of paper or an old bedsheet
- A pencil or chalk
- Drawing pins

Preparation:

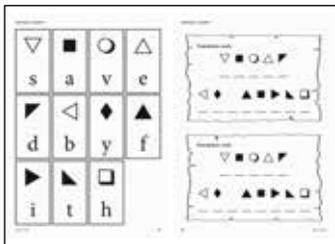
Cut the potatoes in half. Make a template for the letters you will need to spell out the message the children will print by typing "GOD IS GRACIOUS" using a large, bold font. Print out the sentence, then cut out the letters and place them as a mirror image onto the flat side of the potatoes. Using the sharp knife, cut around the letters to make a template. For the sentence "GOD IS GRACIOUS" you will need nine potato stamps. Place the potato letters in the correct order. Using a pencil or chalk, draw the letters on the paper or the bedsheet (to help the children to know where to "print" the letters).

The activity:

Divide the children into two teams. Each team chooses a colour. The teams take turns answering the questions. When a child answers a question



The picture here shows the German word for God—"Gott".



correctly he can paint a potato stamp with his team's colour and stamp this letter on the paper or the bedsheet. If the letter is used twice the child can stamp both places. The winner is the team with the most letters in their colour.

### Part 2 - translation

You will need:

- The template of the symbol cards
- The template of "Bible translation"
- Pens/pencils

Preparation:

Photocopy the templates for each team onto card and cut out the individual cards.

The activity:

Divide the children into two teams. The teams take turns answering questions. When a child answers a question correctly he can draw a card and transfer the corresponding translation onto his team's sheet. Which team can translate the sentence first?

## Carry-over activity: Quiet Time book

You will need:

- A devotional book for each child.  
*Every Day With God* and *Wonder Devotional Books* are available from your CEF® national office. If you need an address, contact CEF of Europe, Kilchzimmer, 4438 Langenbruck, Switzerland ([www.cefeurope.com](http://www.cefeurope.com)).

Instructions:

Give the children a book to take home after the first meeting. Encourage them to read a section each day.

Next time ask the children how they got on and encourage them to work through the Quiet Time book to the end, if they haven't already done so.



### Assembling the Bible verse

Cut the wordstrips out of the Bible along the dotted line. Stick some flocked paper onto the back of each one. (Template NOT included.)

## Memory verse

### "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17)

You will need:

- Two white T-shirts
- A textile marker
- A wooden cross
- The Bible verse visual

Preparation:

Hang a clean white T-shirt over the wooden cross. Write the word "sin" on the other T-shirt and draw several stains on it.

- Introduction: While Martin was studying in his tower room, he realised something very important. God spoke to him while he was poring over this verse. *(Place the verse on the flannelboard and read it with the children.)*
- Explanation: **Who is considered as just or righteous before God?** Is there a person in this world who is just before God without doing anything? No. Only someone who God has declared as just can be considered as just before Him. Anyone who believes that Jesus died for his sins is right before God, even if he often still thinks and does things that are sinful. *(Now take the dirty T-shirt and put it on a child who volunteers to take part. Explain as follows:)*  
 Jesus was completely righteous. *(Point to the clean T-shirt on the cross.)* There was nothing unclean, evil or bad in Him. He never ever sinned, in contrast to us all. *(Point to the dirty T-shirt.)*  
 When Jesus died on the cross He made our sin His sin. *(Take the clean T-shirt down and put the child's dirty T-shirt over the cross.)*  
 Each one who believes that Jesus took his sins on Himself receives the righteousness of Jesus from God. *(Now put the clean T-shirt on the child.)* Now God sees him as being just as righteous as Jesus.
- Repetition: **"the just"**—*Actions: the children stand up and run their hands down their T-shirt as if to show how clean (righteous) they are.*
- Explanation: **"shall live"**—It's obvious that all of us here are alive, not dead. But real life—the kind of life our verse speaks about—means that we know Jesus and that we have eternal life with God through His forgiveness, even when our body dies.
- Repetition: *Repeat the actions from the first part. Then add "shall live"—the children jump up and stretch their arms upwards.*
- Explanation: **What does faith mean?** *(Allow the children to answer.)* Faith means trusting God, relying on what He has said.
- Repetition: *Repeat the actions from the first and second parts. Then add "by faith"—the children kneel and fold their hands in prayer as they say these words.*

## Craft activity

### Bible cover

You will need:

- Left over fabric, not too thin
- Embroidery needles and embroidery yarn or tacking thread
- Rulers and pencils
- Scissors

Production:

The children trace the dimensions of their Bible onto the cloth (including the spine, the jacket and the edge). Then cut out the Bible cover and sew it together using simple stitches or quilting stitches. The front cover can be decorated using embroidery thread.

*(This idea is particularly suited to a two-day programme for girls nine years old and above.)*

### Bible book

You will need:

- A nice sheet of paper for each child
- Colouring pencils
- Bibles

Production:

Each child writes out his favourite story or verse from their Bible, decorates the page really nicely, and adds his name.

Photocopy the pages for each child and put them into a folder or sew them along the side with a gold thread to make a book. Create a nice title page ahead of time.

### Shield with crest

You will need:

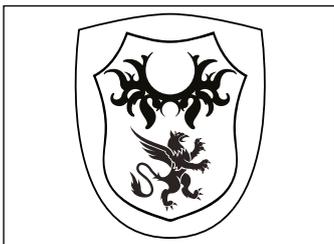
- A large piece of card for each child
- Enough coloured paper
- Sticky tape and scissors
- Colouring pencils or felt tip pens
- Small pieces of ribbon or thick strips of cardboard
- Stapler

Preparation:

Make a template for a shield.

Production:

The children trace around the outline of the template onto their shield and then they use their imagination to create their own crest, with the help of the coloured paper and/or pencils. Using ribbon or cardboard make a handle for the shield and staple it to the back of the shield.



## Role play

### School in the Middle Ages (for the first part of the story)

*Cast: A strict teacher and a leader.*

*(A strict teacher comes in, wearing glasses and carrying a stick. The children are the school class. The leader has explained a few things in advance—that the children should stand up when the special guest comes in and be on their best behaviour. They should clearly answer, “Good morning, Sir!”)*

Teacher: Good morning.

Children: *(Together:)* Good morning, Sir!

Teacher: Sit down! So, let’s see who listened well during the last class.

*(Goes to a child and says:)* Preterite of “go”! Stand up when you’re speaking!

*(The teacher has to help out when the child doesn’t understand “preterite”:)* Past tense, you idiot!

Child: *(Stands up.)* I went; you went; he went ...

Teacher: Sit down!

*(Chooses another child.)* Conjugate “understand”!  
*(The child doesn’t answer.)* The various verb forms!  
Were you sleeping in the last class?

Stand up! Did no-one teach you any manners? Now, let me help you all remember: put your hand out!  
*(He takes a swing with the stick, but strikes to the side—someone else makes a slapping sound.)*

Child: I understand; you understand; he/she understands; we understand; you understand; they understand.

Teacher: Sit down!

*(Looks for a child who is not sitting straight.)* Sit straight!

*(The teacher goes to the front and is about to begin the lesson. The leader speaks to him.)*

Leader Excuse me, where on earth do you come from?

Teacher: What kind of a question is that?

Leader: Where are there still customs like that in use today?

Teacher: I come from the Middle Ages! There was still discipline and order in those days!

Leader: Aha. Then I won’t disturb you any longer!

*(Teacher leaves.)*

Leader: Wow, that was really hard. It’s good that we didn’t have to go to school in those days, isn’t it? Otherwise we would have had the same experience as poor Martin here.

*(Now you can go straight into part one of the lesson.)*

## Fear of God's punishment (part 2 of the lesson)

*Cast: Two monks and a leader.*

*(Two monks have their heads bowed in concentration and are humming eagerly. The leader comes in, yawning.)*

Leader: What are you two doing here? I heard a rumbling noise, so I thought I'll go and investigate!

*(Looks at the clock; looks shocked.)* What? It's only three o'clock in the morning! What on earth are you two doing here? And why are you dressed so strangely?

Monk 1: We're Augustine monks!

Monk 2: And we're just saying our morning prayers.

Leader: *(Speaks softly to the children.)* Imagine, they get up at three o'clock in the morning. Let's see if I can ask them some more questions. I don't meet monks very often.

*(To the monks:)* Can you tell me what life in the monastery is like? What do you do all day?

Monk 1: We study the writings of famous spiritual leaders!

Monk 2: We work hard. We confess our sins a lot.

Monk 1: *(Thoughtfully:)* ... and we still never know if it's enough!

Leader: What do you mean, "if it's enough?" If what is enough?

Monk 1: I mean if it's enough to pay for our sins. If God will accept us on Judgement Day.

Monk 2: That's why I went into the monastery. Perhaps God won't punish me so much because of it. Can we carry on now?

Leader: Yes, yes, I'm sorry. I didn't want to keep you back.

*(To the children:)* Now that's hard. They can never be sure if they will one day be with God. They work and work and pray and pray and still never know if it will be enough. Yes, that's how it was in the Middle Ages.

*(The two monks return at the end of the lesson. They are no longer restricted but set free and happy. They talk together excitedly and joyfully.)*

Monk 1: I'm so glad that God gave us Martin Luther. No more wondering and doubting. God is gracious to us!

Monk 2: At last we are free! We get into Heaven by believing in Jesus as our Saviour! He paid the punishment for us! *(They walk off.)*

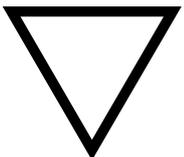
In the authority of  
all the saints, and in  
compassion towards thee,  
I absolve thee from all  
sins and misdeeds, and  
remit all punishment  
for ten days.

Johannes Tetzel

**G O O D**

**I S R**

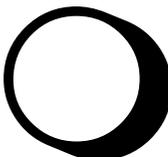
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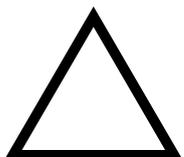
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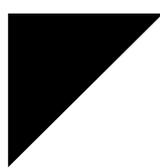
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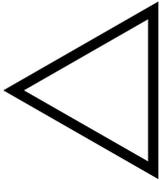
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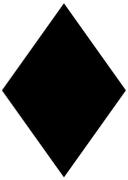
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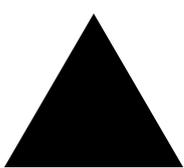
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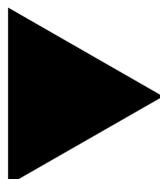
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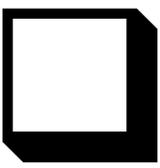
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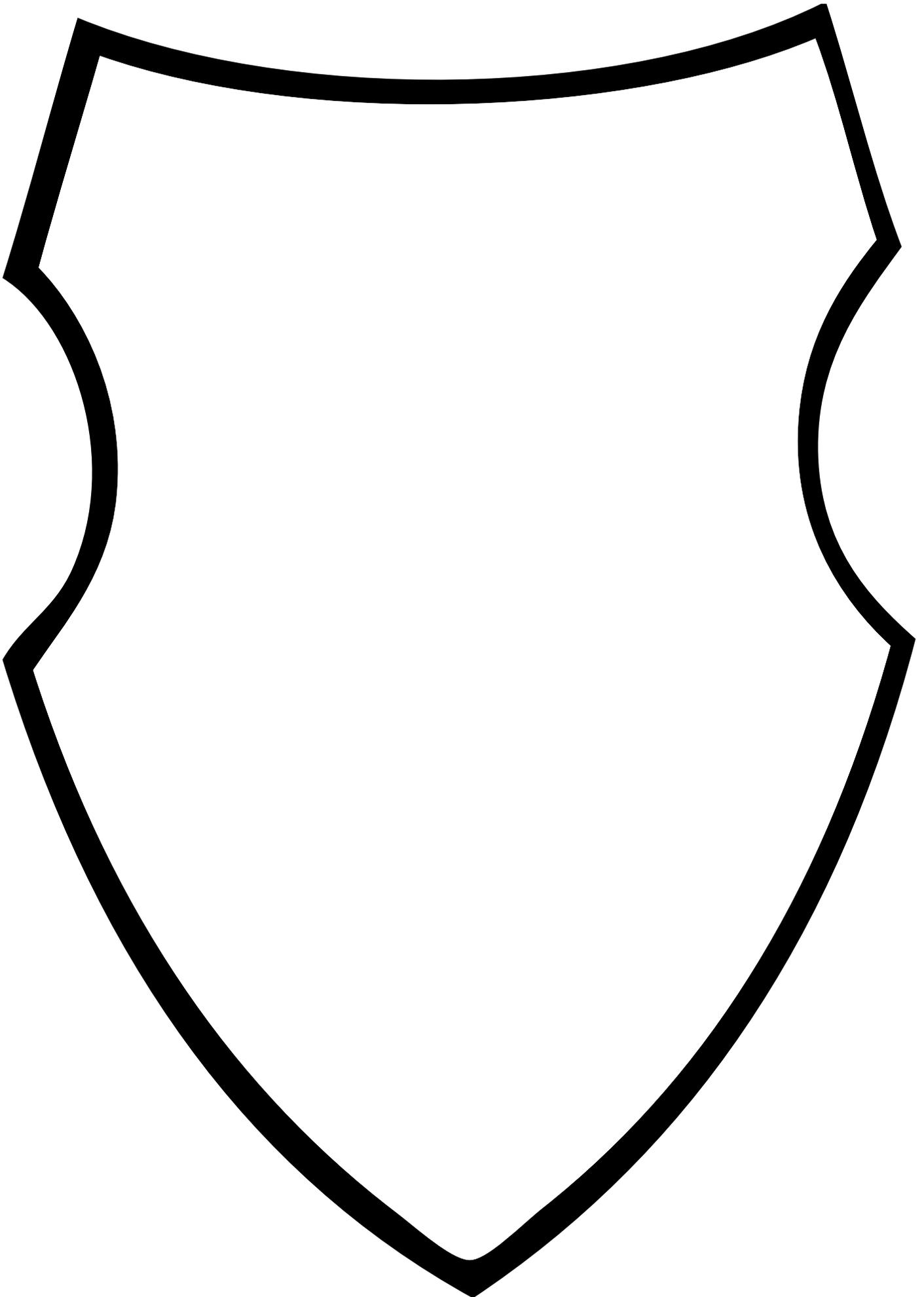
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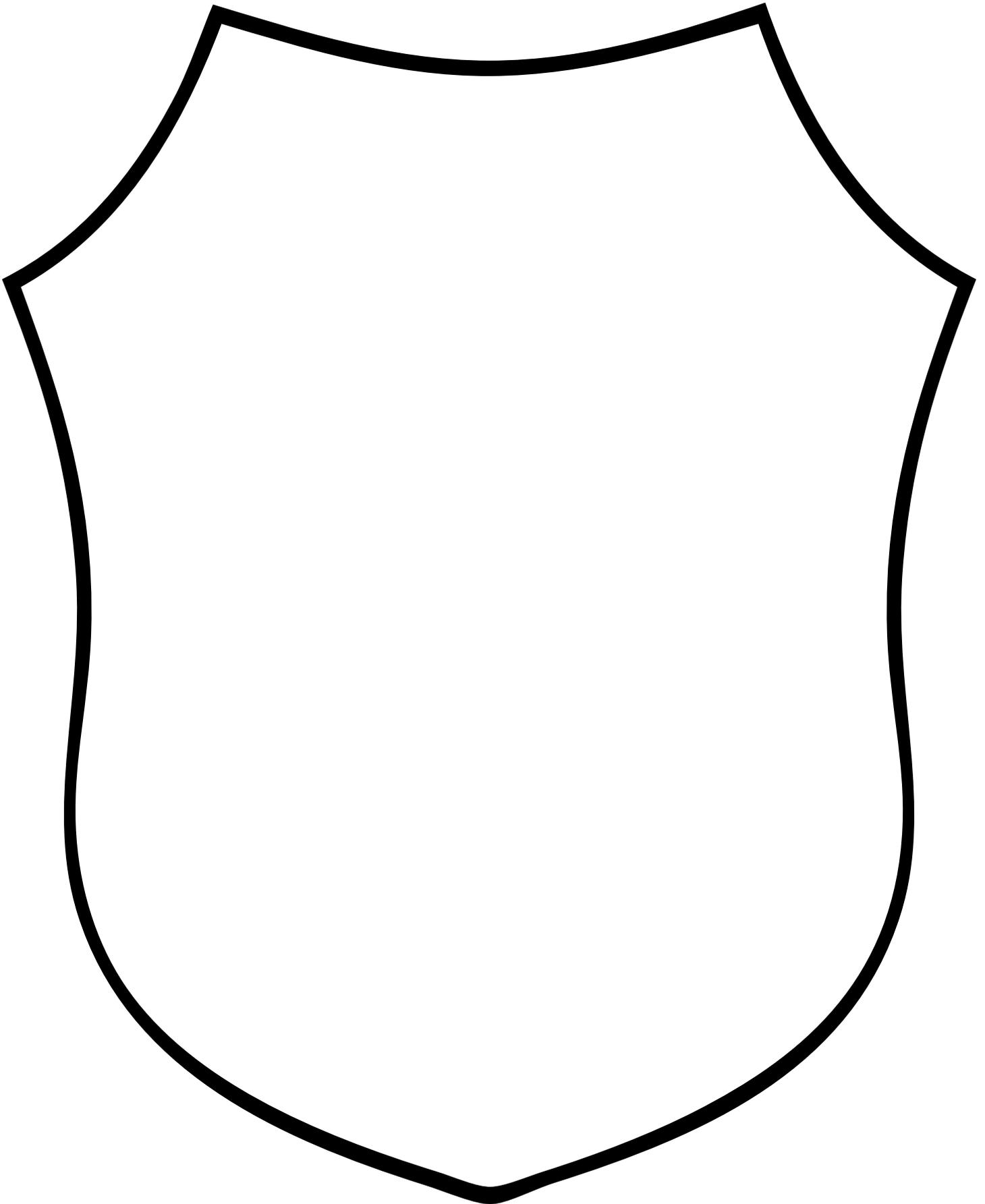
Translation work



Translation work







Shield with crest

