



Explaining 'hope' to children

Even though we may have a clear sense, as adults, of what we mean by 'hope'- it is quite a difficult concept for children to grasp. Hopefully (!), some of the following ideas and language might help.

Two kinds of hope

The word 'hope' is used in two different ways.

The first is when we really want something to happen. It is a verb...

"I hope that it snows this weekend so we can go sledging."

"I hope we get to go on holiday this year."

"Let's hope that the schools and shops open up again soon."



But there is a second, slightly different way, of talking about 'hope'. It is a noun.

Hope is a strong, firm belief that life can and will be better. It is a confidence that things will be OK and that our future is much brighter. The Bible talks about 'hope' in this way a lot!

'You will feel safe because there is hope. You will look around and rest in safety.' (Job 11:18)

'I wait patiently for God to save me. Only he gives me hope.' (Psalm 62:5)

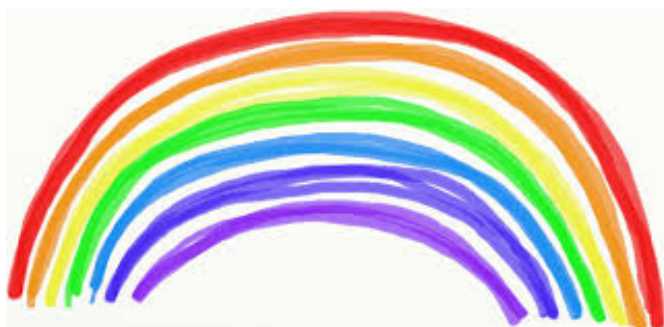
'God has great mercy, and because of his mercy he gave us a new life. He gave us a living hope because Jesus Christ rose from death.' (1 Peter 1:3)

Throughout the Bible, God is constantly making promises to His people, assuring them that He loves them, that He is with them and that even though things might not seem to be going well, He is still a good God and He is still in control. As well as promising us that He is with us, God promises that there is a better life ahead for everyone who follows Jesus - because one day, we will be with God in heaven. We can rely on this promise... so it gives us hope!

For Christians, our 'hope' is based on God and His promises. It's about God being with us now **and** about us being in heaven with God in the future, for ever.

Heroes Of Hope are people who know this hope for themselves and who share it with others.

The first rainbow



Many children will be familiar with using the rainbow as a symbol of hope.

You may want to use the familiar story of Noah, the flood and God's first rainbow to help the children understand how, when things seem difficult and times are tough, God gives us hope. He makes promises to us which can help us when we are struggling.



Rainbow Of Hope Craft

A colourful craft to help explain hope - and a reminder that God was the first person to draw a rainbow and display it for everyone to see!

Even when things are difficult, we can rely on God to love us and be with us. He promises us that He will never leave us and that He has a brighter future for us in heaven.

The craft, which is a variation on the one in the image, can be produced as a one-sided picture or a two-sided hanging mobile. If you want to do a two-sided craft, you will need to cut out four clouds and colour-in/cut-out two rainbows.

Materials

- ★ White Card
- ★ Coloured card or paper would be great - but isn't essential
- ★ Glue
- ★ Sellotape
- ★ Crayons, coloured pencils or felt-tip pens
- ★ A marker or felt tip pen
- ★ String

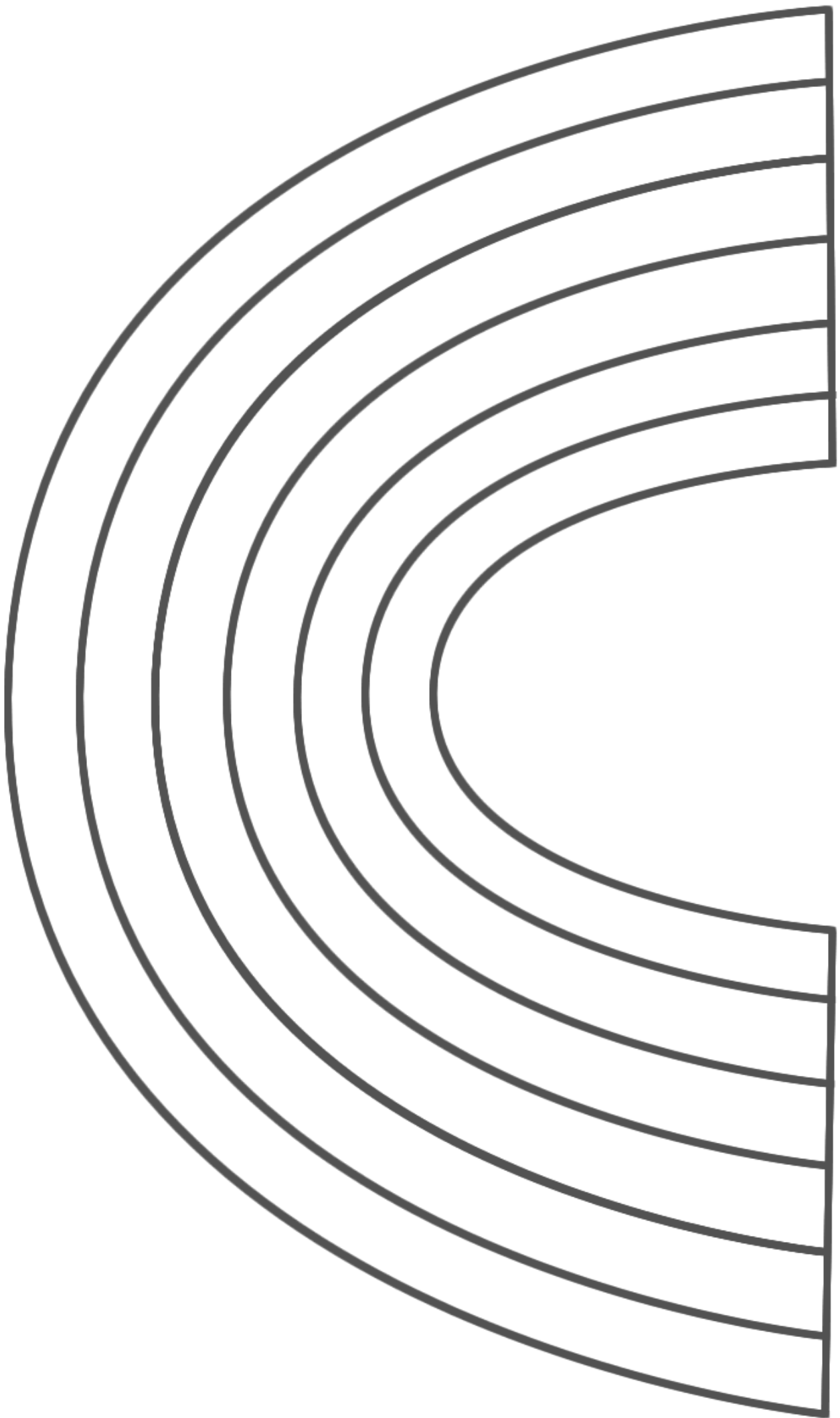
Preparation (older children could do this themselves):

- ★ Cut out eight large raindrops from the coloured paper or card - either freehand or using the template
- ★ Cut out two (or four) large cloud shapes - either freehand or using the template
- ★ Cut eight lengths of string (approx. 15cm/ 6 inches long)



Instructions

- ★ Colour-in the rainbow and cut it out (If you want to make a mobile, you'll need a two-sided rainbow or two rainbows cut out together, then coloured and stuck back-to-back.)
- ★ You may want to write 'Hope' across the rainbow.
- ★ Colour-in the clouds with some dark grey - to make them look like rain clouds.
- ★ Glue the clouds onto the bottom of the rainbow:
- ★ if you are doing a one-sided craft, glue the clouds to the bottom of the rainbow and sellotape four ends of string at the back of each cloud, to leave the strings hanging down
 - If you are doing a two-sided craft, sellotape four ends of string to the back of a cloud, then stick the other cloud, back-to-back. Repeat for the other pair of clouds and four new ends of string.
 - If you only have white cards, you may want to colour in the raindrops
- ★ Write the following eight words - one each - on one side of the raindrops: **When days are dark God's light shines through**
- ★ Glue or tape the raindrops, in order, to bottom ends of the string.
- ★ If you are producing a two-sided craft, turn everything over and write the words again, in order, on the blank sides of the raindrops.
- ★ Add string to the top for a mobile.



Hope

