Daniel 5

Ages 11-14

Daniel: The Code Breaker



When King Belshazzar received a message he could not understand, the queen suggested he call Daniel. With the Lord's help, Daniel explained the message.

Like Belshazzar we may occasionally get caught up in something wrong. We might even see the "writing on the wall" warning us that things are about to change. When this happens, true ideas from the Word can shine a light on what we've done, just as the queen called Daniel (representing conscience) to shed light on the message.

To illustrate the importance of accurately interpreting messages, students will wrap a strip of paper around a pencil or marker and write a message on it. When unwrapped, the message will be impossible to read. Students then try to decode others' messages by finding a pencil or marker with the same diameter—similar to the way in which we must align ourselves with the Lord to truly understand His Word.

1. Can you read words in a foreign language? Have you ever read words in a language with different symbols or letters? What if someone told you a message in different symbols that was crucial to your survival?
2. Belshazzar received a message in a foreign language he couldn't read. Sometimes the message of the Word is hard to "read" too. For example. on the surface the Daniel stories may not seem either Divine or relevant—yet hidden within it is a message about our salvation.
3. We're going to write and interpret coded messages. Give students a strip of paper, two pencils or a pencil and a marker, tape, and a copy of *Pig Pen Code* (p. 8).
4. Tape one end of the paper strip to one end of a pencil or pen so the strip lies *diagonally* across the pencil. Wind the remainder of the paper tightly around the pencil and secure the other end with tape.
5. Write a message in Pig Pen code *horizontally* along the pencil on the strip of paper. (See picture on p. 2.)
6. Take the strip of paper off the pencil and give to another student to read. How clear was the message?

Materials Needed

strips of paper; tape; assorted pens, pencils and markers; copies of *Pig Pen Code* p. 2.

Prepare in Advance

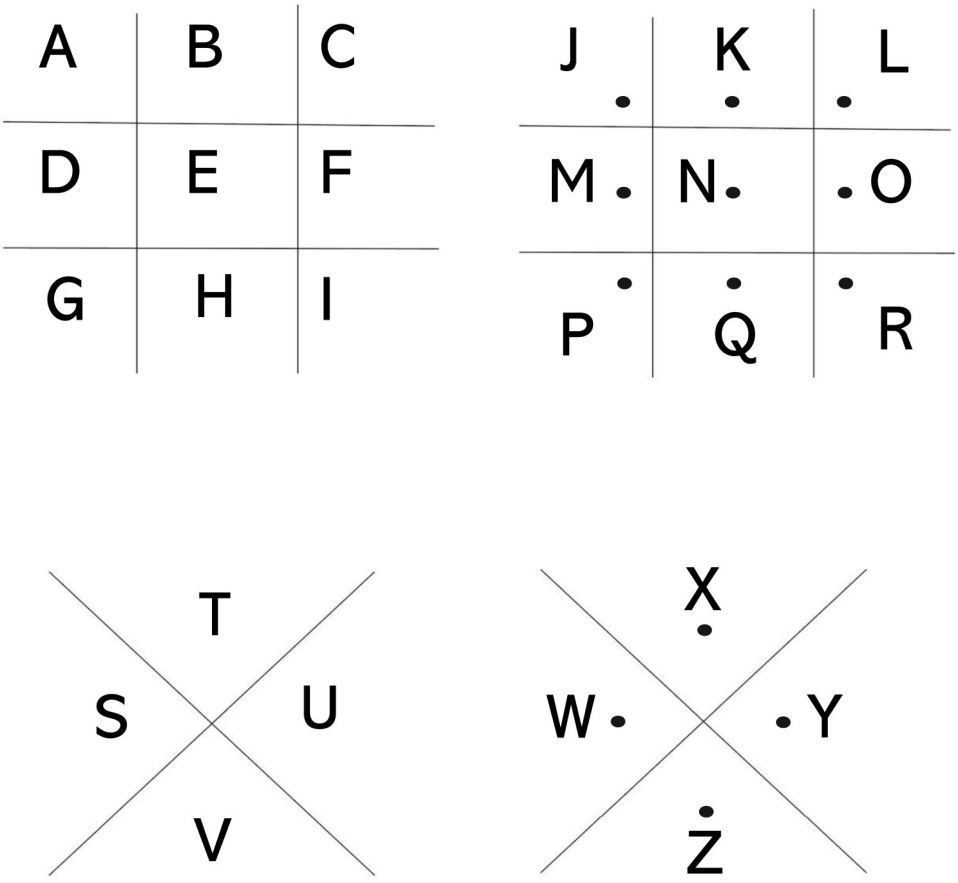
Gather supplies. Cut paper into strips. Make copies of *Pig Pen Code* p. 2.

New Church Concept
The Word's Message

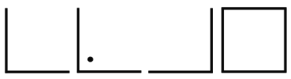
The obscurity in which natural people live gives rise to either truth or falsity. When people allow themselves to be enlightened by the Word from the Lord, their obscurity is turned into brightness, for the internal path is opened and so influx and communication from the Lord by way of heaven takes place. But when people do not allow themselves to be enlightened by the Word from the Lord, but by their own intelligence, their obscurity is turned into darkness and so into falsity, for the internal path is closed and no influx and communication from the Lord takes place. See *Arcana Coelestia* 3870.22

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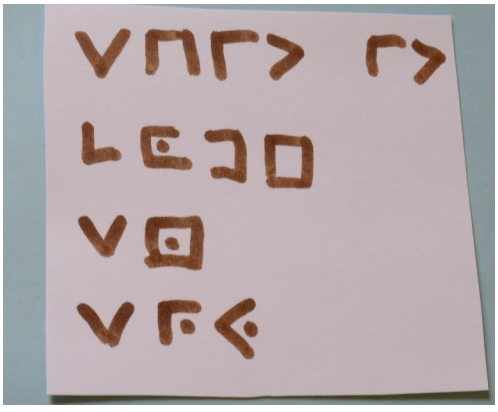
Pig Pen Code



In the Pig Pen code, the symbols for each letter consist of the part of the grid in which the letter is found. So the word “code” looks like this:



Here is a longer sample to decipher:



Wrap a pencil diagonally and write a message horizontally.



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