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Sub-titles can help children with reading!

A literacy expert said recently that parents who are too busy to read to their children should let them watch television - but only with the sub-titles on!

Jim Trelease, author of the best-selling Read-Aloud Handbook, said *"Parents of children over the age of eight should turn off the sound so that their child can only understand their favourite programme by reading the text on screen"*. For younger children the sound should be left on so that the child can see the words he/she hears. Reluctant readers may also find it helpful to watch television with the sound down and sub-titles on!

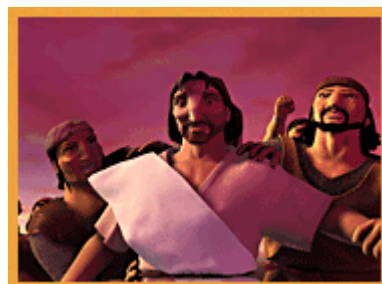
"We don't want any child to miss the exciting adventures of Macky and Portia, and the Bible stories in each episode, so we include sub-titles in English and several other languages spoken by the UK's ethnic communities on all our Friends and Heroes DVDs," said Alison Dorricott, Executive Producer. *"It's great to know that our subtitles may also help children as they learn to read."*

In DVD 14, the first exciting adventure of Friends and Heroes Series 3 released on 12 December 2008, Macky and Portia are on the move - from Jerusalem to Rome - the first century centre of power, culture and intrigue!



Episode 27, *Gladiator School*, finds Macky, who is still a prisoner of the Romans, learning to be a gladiator - a role he really doesn't relish. Can he win an obstacle race and gain his freedom? The stories of Amos speaking out and John the Baptist illustrate the themes of speaking out against unfairness and cheating.

In *Schools Out*, Episode 28, Macky is still practising in gladiator school where he is expected to fight... and kill. Worried about what will happen to Macky, Portia enlists the help of a quiet and rather timid Roman Senator called Antonius.



The theme of standing firm is explored through the stories of **King David and Three Soldiers** and **Jesus speaking in Jerusalem**.

Each episode lasts twenty-five minutes and every DVD also includes fun extras such as quizzes and stills from each story.

Free lesson material with Friends and Heroes DVDs...

Series 1 and Series 2 packs, each with 13 episodes, are now available. Created for Schools and Church use, these packs include seven DVDs for Series 1 and six for Series 2 plus a special Public Display Licence voucher, which when completed and returned gives FREE access to all the specially created lesson plans based on the Bible stories in the programmes.

The Schools' Lessons are fully linked to all the UK's National Curriculum Guidelines for RE at the equivalent of England's Key Stage 2. There are 13 lessons for Series 1 and 26 for Series 2, each one based on a Bible story in the related programme. Several hundred schools are already using the lesson material and one teacher recently said *"At school the kids are desperate to see the next episode each time one ends."*



The Bible lessons were created by experienced Sunday School teachers and each lesson includes craft activities and games; questions to help explore the theme more deeply; creative prayer materials and printable resources - enough content for a lesson lasting around an hour. In addition there is an original fun activity with each lesson for children to take home!

The lessons are completely FREE to those organisations which have a Friends and Heroes Public Display Licence making them very cost-effective with six months teaching material, including over six hours of video, for just £90!

Friends and Heroes individual DVDs, each costing £15, can be purchased from many Christian Bookshops or direct from www.friendsandheroes.com

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Background material:

http://www.futurelab.org.uk/resources/documents/event_presentations/beyond_blackboard/da_vid_buckingham_transcript.pdf

To arrange interviews with members of the production team contact:

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Additional information about Friends and Heroes can be found on the following websites: www.friendsandheroes.com www.friendsandheroes.tv