

Use “The Scene” to introduce “The Process of Preparation” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for March 27, 2016. The lesson is found on page 23 of *Young Teen Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

Every year about this time we see an invasion of brightly colored, sugary, squishy, vaguely chicken-shaped treats in our grocery store aisles. That’s right—the PEEPS are here. These days the marshmallow snacks come in various shapes, colors, and sizes and appear all-year round. But in the Easter season alone, Americans buy more than 700 million of the yummy bunnies and chicks.

The Peeps are here, and apparently they are here for a loooong time. Peeps have famously been involved in many experiments testing their endurance and their unique abilities to stand up to conditions that would leave other candies in a gooey mess in minutes. (For fun, look up the tests done a few years ago by science professors at Emory University.)

Peeps are known to have a two-year shelf life if left in their plastic-wrapped homes—longer than any other squishy goody this writer would care to try (not that I’m really hankering to try out a two-year-old Peep either, mind you). So what accounts for their long life? It must be something about the unique combination of sugar, corn syrup, preservatives, gelatin, and other elements—or perhaps it’s a magic spell cast by the Easter Bunny himself. In any case, it looks like our infatuation with Peeps, which began in 1953, has turned into a love affair for the ages. People love to eat them, play with them, and even involve them in art installations. And whatever is in them, somehow the people at Just Born Inc. (the company who has given birth to the candies now for 63 years) have landed on a concoction and a process that inspires consumers to keep choosing Peeps year after year.

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above news story to read. After all teens have had the opportunity to read the article, discuss it in this way:

What’s good about edible items having a long shelf life? What could potentially be bad about having a long shelf life?

Before food ever makes it to the market, it goes through lots of testing to see if it is safe for human consumption. But that testing doesn’t guarantee that the food is also good for you. Think about the way you go about choosing and making friends. What kinds of things might you do in that process to see if the person is good for you? What kinds of things might be a warning to you that a relationship is not good for you?

Preservatives are added in the process of making food to keep it from decaying on store shelves. What things have to be added to our relationships to keep them from breaking down?

Food—even candy—that has to be sold in stores has to be prepared in particular ways. Another situation that requires preparation is having relationships. Let’s see what God has to say about equipping ourselves to have healthy relationships.