

CHILDREN'S LESSON for worship, classroom, Sunday School assembly, Camp, VBS, etc. Feel free to revise per your audience.

Sounds like

muh·tree·**owsh**·kuh

Russian Matryoshka Dolls **Also called Nesting Dolls or Staking Dolls**

Children, have you ever seen a wonderful little toy that you like so much that you cannot help but reach out and touch it? But before you can touch it with your hand an adult suddenly says, “Don’t touch that! It is not a toy, it is a decoration.”

Today, we are going to look at little Russian stacking dolls called Matryoshka Dolls. They are both decorations and toys.

Matryoshka is the Russian word for “little matron.” A matron is a woman at the age of being a mother—so you could also call them “little mother dolls.”

Matryoshka Dolls have been around for more than 100 years.

Matryoshka Dolls are carved out of wood and then painted to look like:

- (1) Peasant girls whose dresses are decorated with flowers in bright colors.
- (2) Or, the Christmas theme is common with dolls leading to the Virgin Mary and then Jesus. If one can find Christmas stacking dolls, they could be put on the table at dinner time and the children could take them apart each night during Advent as they memorize and recite Bible passages that prophesy the Lord’s birth (for example Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; Genesis 3:15) and only open the second last doll on Christmas Day as Matthew 1:18-25 is read. Then the Apostles’ Creed can be recited and the family confesses together, *“I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary.”*

Wooden Matryoshka Dolls are a symbol of Russia, specifically, the important role mother and family play in Russian culture.

The stacked dolls represent a mother carrying a child in her womb. The child is born, grows up to be a mother herself, that is, a mother who carries the next generation of Russians in her womb.

It is a beautiful picture of life. We all begin life in the warmth, safety and love of our mothers' womb. Mothers can often be seen gently rubbing their tummy and a loving smile comes to their face as they think about their baby. Matryoshka dolls are an excellent Pro-Life symbol.

We remember in our prayers our Christian brothers and sisters in Russia who use these dolls in their households, who love Jesus like we do, and who meet together in homes to worship our loving God. Our God Who sent His Son Jesus to be our Savior. More pastors are needed in Russia to visit the Christians in their homes and bring them the Good News of Jesus. We will continue to pray for them. They promise to pray for us as well.

Today you are coloring Matryoshka Dolls. Why are the dolls always painted with such bright, beautiful colors? Because mothers having children is a beautiful picture of how every child is a gift from God. You are a gift from God. It makes us happy. It fills us with joy. Thanks be to God!

[Close with Prayer]

[Coloring Sheet of Matryoshka Dolls is attached]

ADDENDUM

The world's largest Matryoshka ever made had 51 pieces. Imagine if you had stacking dolls that began with you; then your mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and back to the very person first in history. This would be one very huge Matryoshka with a lot more than 51 pieces.

Who would be the first doll on the outside of the stack? Eve.

The stacking dolls would go on and on until one baby would be born that was unlike any other baby in the history of the world—Jesus.

Pastor Timothy Quill
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Russian Matryoshka Doll

