

Elementary

BIG BOOK

of Bible Games



Fun games help kids connect
Bible truths to their lives!

Reproducible

Elementary

BIG BOOK

of Bible Games



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BIG BOOK OF BIBLE GAMES FOR ELEMENTARY KIDS

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How to Use This Book

If you are a teacher or a small-group leader in any children's program (Sunday school, children's worship, evening, midweek, etc.):

1. Read "Games Overview" (pp. 8–9) and "Game Leader Ideas" (p. 10) to get an understanding of the purpose and goals of *Big Book of Bible Games for Elementary Kids*.
2. Look at the contents and then skim through this book to get an idea of the kinds of games that are provided.
3. As you prepare a lesson, use the contents and the indexes to choose games in this book that will complement your students' understanding of the lesson. Copy game pages for your own ease of use in leading games.

If you are the children's pastor:

1. Follow the directions in numbers 1 and 2 above.
2. At the beginning of each quarter, refer to the scope and sequence of the curriculum used in your children's ministry programs. Use the contents and the indexes in this book to find games that will enrich students' understanding of the lessons. At least one week prior to a lesson, copy the needed pages and provide them to teachers and small-group leaders.
3. Consider providing a copy of *Big Book of Bible Games for Elementary Kids* for each classroom as a general resource for teachers.

Games Overview

Games are a great way for kids to have fun—and learn! *Big Book of Bible Games for Elementary Kids* is your one-stop resource for all the games you'll likely ever need for elementary kids in grades 1 through 6. Here's a quick overview of the book's three sections:

1. Bible Learning Games

There are three types of games in this section. First, Bible skills games and activities help students learn basic Bible skills, such as locating Bible references, listing Bible books in order, and identifying Bible divisions. Second, Bible story review games are fun games that can be used with any Bible story. These games help children remember important facts or concepts of Bible stories. Third, Bible verse memory games also may be used with any Scripture passage. These easy-to-play games can be used anytime to help children remember life-changing Bible truths.

2. Life Application Games

The second section has tons of games organized under 17 topics designed to give quick game options for Bible lessons. Scripture passages are included with each game. Also provided are discussion questions with practical tie-ins to kids' lives. Many games include options for adapting for younger or older kids, a fresh twist on a familiar game, or how to play an indoor game outside.

3. Recreational Games

When you just want kids to just have fun, we have you covered! There are in- and outdoor games, large group games, and water games. These games are great for special events or programs, camps, or any fun-filled event. Let the games begin!



Leading Games Step-by-Step:

1. Energy-Level Indicator

Low: Mostly staying in seats with little movement

Medium: Some walking or movement

High: Lots of running, movement, and noise



2. Location Indicator

In: Games that need walls, electricity, or furnishings

Out: Games that need outdoor settings, such as water games or games that need a larger area

In/Out: Games that could work either way; Options or Game Tips give info for making the switch from one to the other



3. Materials

Common supplies are listed without the quantity needed, but unique or specific items do include the number you'll need. Optional activity materials are not listed in the materials lists.

4. Preparation

This section tells you what you'll need to do before kids arrive, if anything. Preparations that take a minute or less are not included. Measuring playing areas, setting up obstacle courses, or writing on index cards are examples of preparation you may need to do. Sketches of game layouts are provided to make your game prep quick and easy.

5. Lead the Game

The numbered steps allow you to lead games with ease! Bold print is used for things you can say to kids or for questions you can ask kids. Sketches show what the game looks like while playing.

6. Options and Game Tips

Many games have options for adapting the game for a variety of situations. But if you don't see an option, and you need an option, be creative—and try your own idea! Game Tips will help you handle situations that may come up while playing games. These tips will help you become a better game leader.

7. Discussion Questions

See "Leading a Good Discussion" on page 11 for tips on asking the discussion questions included with the Life Application Games in this book.

Game Leader Ideas

Creating a Playing Area

Before leading a game, give yourself plenty of time to set up the game area. You might not have much space in your classroom for a game area, so consider alternatives: outdoors, a gym, or a vacant area of the building from which sound will not carry to disturb other programs. Once you have chosen the area, plan what you will need:

- Will you need to move furniture?
- Will you need to mark boundaries? Use chalk or rope outdoors; yarn or masking tape works indoors. (Remove masking tape from carpets after games.)
- How much space will you need? Carefully review the game procedures to plan what amount and shape of space will be needed.

From time to time, take stock of your classroom area. Is it time to remove that large table or unused bookshelf? Should the chairs be rearranged or the rug put in a different place? Small changes in arrangement can result in more usable space.

Forming Groups or Teams

To keep students' interest high and to keep cliques from forming, use a variety of ways to determine teams or groups:

- Group teams by clothing color or other clothing features (wearing a sweater, wearing sneakers, etc.).
- Place equal numbers of two colors of paper squares in a bag. Kids shake the bag and draw out a square to determine teams.
- Group teams by birthday month (for two teams, January through June and July through December); adjust as needed to make numbers even.
- Group teams by the alphabetical order of kids' first or last names.

- Group teams by telling students to stand on one foot: those standing on a right foot form one team; those standing on a left foot form the other team.

After playing a round or two of a game, announce that the person on each team who is wearing the most (color), should rotate to another team. Then play the game again. As you repeat this rotation process, vary the method of rotation.

Leading the Game

Explain rules clearly and simply. It can be helpful to write the rules on the board. Make sure you explain rules step-by-step. Offer a practice round. When playing a game for the first time with your group, play it a few times just for practice. Students will learn the game's structure and rules best by actually playing the game.

Dealing with Competition

For younger kids (and for some older ones), competition can make a game uncomfortable—especially for the losers. If your group is made up primarily of younger kids, consider making a game more cooperative than competitive. You could give a special job to a child who is out, have the winning team serve a snack to the losing team, or rotate players so no one remains on the winning or losing team.

Guiding Conversation

Using guided conversation turns a game activity into discovery learning. Make use of the discussion questions provided in this book. You might ask the winning team to answer a question. You might discuss a few questions between the rounds of a game or ask questions at the beginning of the round, inviting answers when the round is over.

Leading a Good Discussion

A good discussion requires leaders to listen as much as—or more than—they speak. However, encouraging others to speak up can be difficult. The following questions are commonly asked about leading a good discussion.

How do I keep the discussion on track?

Use the discussion questions provided with the Life Application Games to focus on kids' personal experiences. When Bible truths relate to daily life, interest in the discussion will grow.

How do I get the discussion back on track?

If significant interest is shown in the new topic and it has real value, then you might decide to stay with the new issue. Otherwise, use questions to bring attention back to the original topic. Move on to a new question, restate your question, or rephrase it if students did not understand what you asked.

If an outside interruption catches the group's attention, acknowledge it as matter-of-factly as possible, and then restate the question being discussed. You may also want to summarize some of the key points already made in the discussion.

What do I do when no one says anything or when kids give “pat” answers?

If you've asked a thought-provoking question, assume that kids need at least a few moments to think. Be silent for a bit (no more than 20 to 30 seconds), then repeat or rephrase the question. If there is still no response, give an answer to the question and move on.

If silence is a recurring problem, evaluate the questions you ask. Are they too vague? Too easy? Too hard? Do they require knowledge that students don't have? Are the answers too obvious?

If the questions are fine, evaluate your response to what students say. Are you unwilling to accept answers if they differ from what you consider to be the correct responses? Do you tend to always improve the students' answers? Work to create a climate of openness and trust.

Finally, add some variety to your approach in asking questions:

- Have students write their answers on paper. This allows kids time to organize their thoughts. Then invite students to read what they wrote.
- Divide the class into smaller groups. You may ask all groups the same questions or assign different questions to each group. Invite volunteers from the groups to share the answers with everyone.

The same suggestions apply when students are giving only “pat” or simple answers.

Leading a Child to Christ

One of the greatest privileges of serving in children's ministry is to help guide children to become members of God's family. Pray and ask God to prepare the kids you know to understand and receive the good news about Jesus. Ask God to give you the sensitivity and wisdom to communicate effectively and to be aware as opportunities occur.

When talking with children about salvation, use words and phrases they understand; never assume kids understand a concept just because they can repeat certain words. Avoid symbolic terms that will confuse literal-minded thinkers. As you watch and pray, you will see kids developing relationships with God.

Here are some questions you can ask and things you can discuss with a child who is interested in accepting Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Encourage the child to look up and read the Bible verses along with you.

Read John 3:16. **Why did God send Jesus to earth?** (God loved us so much that He wants us to have eternal life with Him.)

First John 3:1 says that God wants us to be His children. But sin, doing wrong, separates us from God. Read Romans 6:23. **What do you think should happen to us when we sin?** (die) **But what is God's gift to us?** (eternal life in Jesus)

Jesus willingly died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. Read 1 Corinthians 15:3. **But Jesus didn't stay in the tomb. After three days, He came back to life! Jesus died so that we can live forever in heaven with Him.**

Are you sorry for the wrong things that you've done? If you are, what should you do? Read 1 John 1:9. **Our sins are wiped away when we're truly sorry for what we've done and when we turn to God.**

Read Ephesians 2:8. **How are we saved?** (by God's grace, through faith) **Christian faith is a life-long adventure here on earth. With Jesus as Lord of our lives, we build a life of submitting to God, following Jesus, and keeping in step with the Spirit.**

At this point, continue to talk with the child about accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior. Include what your church teaches about how this happens. If you have any questions about salvation, talk with your pastor or children's ministry leader.

God wants every person to accept the free gift of eternal life that He's offering. What do you need to do about this?

Bible Learning Games

Bible Skills



Bible Ball Toss

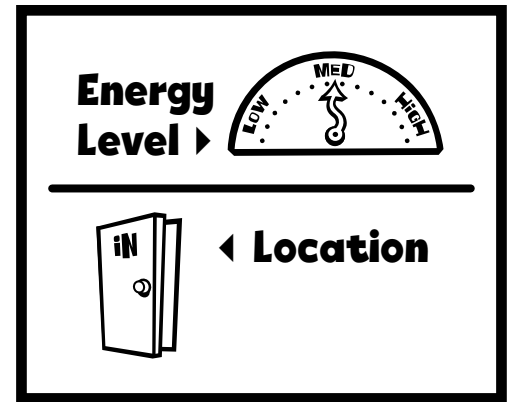
Bible Skill ▶ Put Bible Books in Order

Materials

Bibles, ball

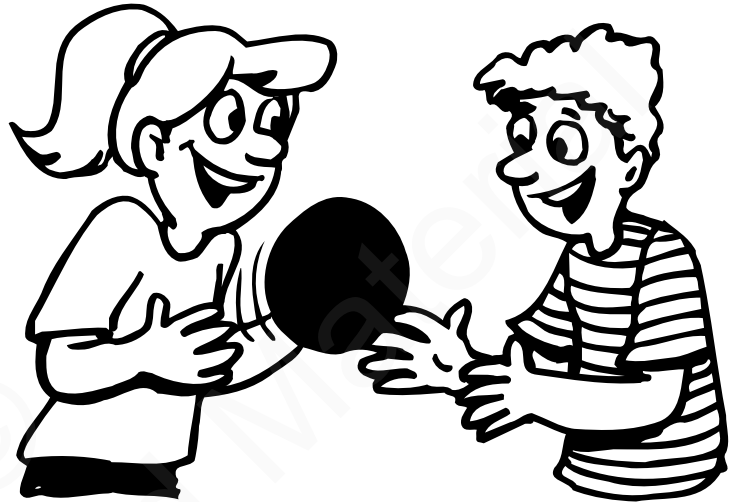
Preparation

Make copies of the contents page from a Bible (1 per student).



Lead the Game

1. It's easier to find places in the Bible when we know the order of the books. Let's practice saying the books of the Bible in order.
2. Distribute copies of the Bible contents page for students to review.
3. Have kids stand in a circle. Toss a ball to a student and say, "Genesis." The student who catches the ball says, "Exodus," then tosses the ball to another student. Continue tossing the ball and saying the names of the books of the Bible in order until all the books have been named. Keep playing the game as time permits.



Options

1. For younger kids, limit the number of books named, gradually adding more books as students are able to recall them.
2. For older students, form more than one circle, and have circles compete to see which circle of kids can say the names of Bible books in a specific division of the Bible, such as the Minor Prophets.

Game Tip

If some kids are unfamiliar with the books of the Bible, ask students to take turns reading aloud the names, referring to the Bible contents page. As students say the names, print the Bible book names in order on a large sheet of paper. Display the paper where all students can see it.

Book Guess

Bible Skill ▶ Identify and Spell Books

Materials

Bibles, whiteboard and dry-erase marker
(or large sheet of paper and marker)

Lead the Game

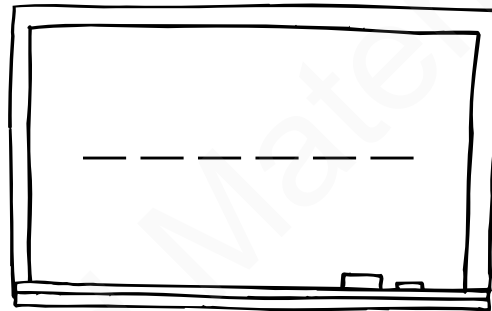
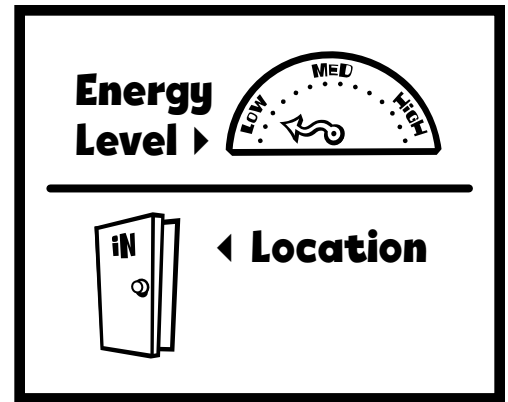
1. Lead students to play a game similar to Hangman. On the board or a large sheet of paper, draw blank lines for each letter of a Bible book.
2. Students are to guess letters of the alphabet. Print correct letters on the appropriate blank lines. Print incorrect letters to the side of the blank lines, and print one letter of the word *Bible*. Kids try to guess and find the correct book in their Bibles before the word Bible is completed. The student who correctly guesses the word secretly chooses a different book of the Bible and draws lines for other kids to guess. Continue playing the game as time permits.

Game Tip

If playing this game with only a specific section of the Bible, introduce the game by making a comment such as: **Today we're going to play a game to find out more about the second group of books in the Old Testament part of the Bible.** These books are called the books of History because they tell the history of how God brought Abraham's descendants back to their homeland many years after Abraham died. These books also tell about how the people obeyed God and disobeyed Him. Referring to the contents page in their Bibles, kids can take turns reading aloud the names of the books of History: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther. Students could also find each book in their Bibles.

Today we're going to play a game to find out more about the second group of books in the Old Testament part of the Bible. These books are called the books of History because they tell the history of how God brought Abraham's descendants back to their homeland many years after Abraham died. These books also tell about how the people obeyed God and disobeyed Him. Referring to the contents page in their Bibles, kids can take turns reading aloud the names of the books of History: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther. Students could also find each book in their Bibles.

Referring to the contents page in their Bibles, kids can take turns reading aloud the names of the books of History: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther. Students could also find each book in their Bibles.



Gospel Puzzles

Bible Skill ▶ Locate References: New Testament

Materials

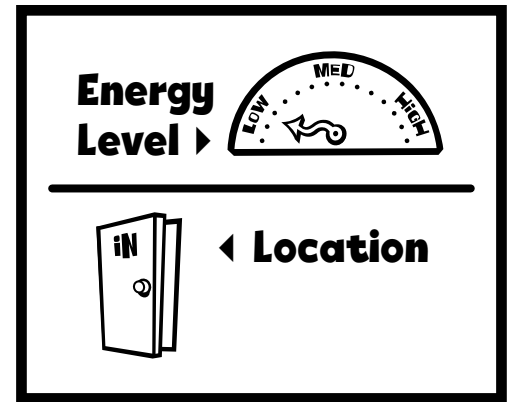
Bibles; index cards; blue, red, purple, and green markers; scissors

Preparation

Print, in the colors indicated, the following references on separate index cards: blue—Matthew 21:1–3; Mark 11:1–3; Luke 19:28–31; red—Mark 11:4–6; Luke 19:32–34; purple—Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9–10; Luke 19:38; John 12:13; green—Matthew 21:15–16; Mark 11:18; Luke 19:39–40. Cut each card into two puzzle pieces as shown in the sketch.

Lead the Game

1. Count the number of students present. Ask kids to close their eyes while you hide puzzle pieces, making sure to hide one piece for each student. Use all the cards of one color before using another color. You can participate in this activity if you have an uneven number of players. Each student should find a hidden puzzle piece and then find the student holding the matching puzzle piece. Kids can then turn to the Bible verses.
2. Invite kids to read their Bible verses aloud. **In what section of the Bible are these verses found? (the Gospels) What is similar about all the (blue) passages? (They tell what Jesus told His disciples to do.) How are the (blue) passages different from each other? Each gospel tells the story of Jesus' life in a slightly different way. The people who wrote these books included different information about the same events. When we read the different accounts of each event, we get a better idea of everything that happened.**
3. Repeat the activity as time permits, hiding different puzzle pieces or hiding the same pieces again.



Mixed-Up Books

Bible Skill ▶ Identify Bible Divisions:
New Testament

Materials

Bibles, index cards, marker, masking tape

Preparation

Print the names of the books of the New Testament on index cards, one name per card. On separate cards, print the names of the main divisions of New Testament books (Gospels, History, Letters, Prophecy). Make at least two sets of cards or one set of book and main division cards for every ten students. Tear masking tape into 3" strips, making at least 56 strips of tape. Place strips on a table or chair where they can be easily removed by kids.

Lead the Game

1. Mix up the book cards you prepared. One at a time, hold up the cards. Students are to tell which division each book is part of. **All the stories in the Bible—from Adam and Eve to the very end—fit together to show us God's**

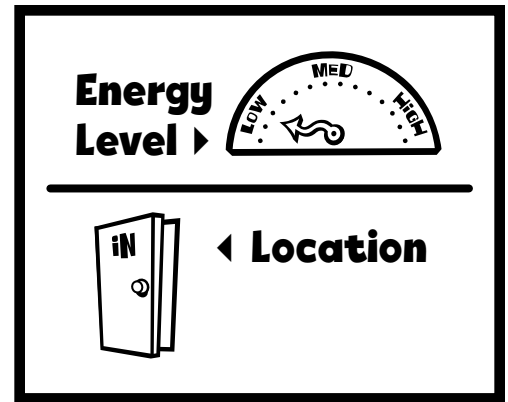


great plan for the world and for our own lives. In the New Testament part of the Bible, we read about the coming of the Savior whom God promised to send. We also read about all the great things that happened after God kept His promise.

2. Divide the class into at least two teams of no more than ten students each. Teams are to line up in single-file lines at the opposite side of the classroom from where the masking-tape strips are. Place a set of mixed-up book cards facedown in a pile on the floor next to the first student on each team. Tape a set of main division cards on the wall across from each team, near the masking-tape strips. Leave room under each division card for book cards to be taped.
3. At your signal, the first student in each line takes a book card, runs to the division cards, grabs a piece of tape, and tapes the book card to the wall below the correct division card. Students then return to their teams and tag the next students in line. Play continues until all the cards are on the wall under the correct category.

Game Tip

If your students are not familiar with the New Testament divisions, go over this before playing the game.



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