

INTRODUCTION



Welcome to what we are certain will be an exciting year of learning and worship for both you and the children who attend Children's Church.

The focus of this material is to provide for an extended Sunday school learning experience as well as a worship experience for children in preschool through upper elementary. By using this material, the concepts and lessons learned in the Sunday school hour can be reinforced and extended through the use of activities, games, and crafts that are different from those used in the Sunday school lesson.

This curriculum provides Bible study, Bible memory activities, Music activities, Puppet skits, Prayer time, Snacks, Crafts, Games, and more. It gives you, the leader, the flexibility of choosing the activities that fit the time you have for your program. If you have a 30-minute, 60-minute, or 90-minute program (or another variation), you can effectively use the time to lead the children in meaningful worship.

Included in this kit you will find the following:

- **Leader's Guide** (with music CD in front cover pocket)
- **Craft Book**
- **Snacks and Games Book**
- **Puppet Skits Book**
- **Park Patrol Training Book**
- **Two Puppets**

The pages of these books are reproducible for use with the Noah's Park® Children's Church program. You may need to reproduce additional pages of the Leader's Guide to give to several leaders. The craft pages need to be

reproduced (usually one page for each child—either preschool or elementary). Because of this feature, you don't have to worry about running low on material. Just reproduce extras as your program grows.

This curriculum emphasizes the involvement of the children. There are two Bible Stories provided for each lesson—one for preschool children and one for kindergarten through third grade. You may choose to keep all the children together for the Bible Story. In that case, we suggest that you use the Elementary Bible Story. If you so desire, you can use the Preschool Bible Story with preschool through kindergarten or first grade.

PARK PATROL

Children in fourth, fifth, or sixth grade can participate in the program as the "Park Patrol." Through this participation, these older elementary children will be learning about service as they assist the leader. By using the *Park Patrol Training Book* as the basis for preparing the students to be effective helpers, they can feel confident as they assist with the program. By using the Park Patrol, you will find that you do not need as many adult leaders to teach and guide the children.

This program will work equally well for small or large churches. Because you can combine these age groups for worship, you can have an effective, meaningful worship time for any number of children.

A CLOSER LOOK

To help you understand the curriculum, let's take a look at each section.



INTRODUCTION

As you look at the Table of Contents, you will notice that the material is divided into twelve units. Most units take four weeks to complete; some take five. The units correspond basically to the months of the year. However, some units might take one full calendar month and one more week. So don't think in terms of months, but rather units.

This is especially important if you rotate your Children's Church leadership. Ask for volunteers to consider teaching for one unit. That way they will be able to help the children focus on the unit theme and can emphasize it consistently through the teaching of it.

Turn now to the first lesson of the first unit. You will notice the unit theme at the top of the page. This is the emphasis of all the lessons in the unit. In the special box on the left side of the page, you will see an outline of what is included in the lesson with suggested times. This can help you as you plan for the time schedule you have in your program. Do not feel that you are required to do every activity. We suggest that you select activities from each of the areas, however, in order to reach the different types of learners in your group. By having a Bible Story, puppet skit, time of singing, games or crafts, you are appealing to children who need to learn by listening, moving, doing, etc.

DISCOVERY TRAILS

The first section is Discovery Trails. We include a Teacher Feature that you can use to begin your session. This is designed to help the children begin thinking about the unit theme and help prepare them for the Bible Story to follow. The Teacher Feature may be a story, an activity, or

an object lesson. Sometimes the children just listen, but often they participate more actively.

Following the Teacher Feature, we suggest that you divide up your group of children into preschool and elementary ages. If you have sufficient space, it would be best to have a separate area for the two groups as you teach the Bible Stories. Use the Preschool Bible Story for your preschoolers. If you have a small group of children, or if you just choose to keep the children in one larger group, use the Elementary Bible Story to teach the lesson.

Bring all the children back together following the Bible Stories. At this point, we suggest that you use the Noah's Park Puppets. The puppet skits are written to reinforce the unit theme and the Bible story. It's a fun way for the children to begin moving toward the next part of the worship session.

We offer a Bible Memory section. You will notice that we do not give you a specific Bible verse to use. You may choose to use a Bible memory verse that the children studied in Sunday school or you may choose to select a verse that emphasizes or reinforces the Bible Story. We provide an activity to help the children quickly and easily learn the Bible memory verse.

WORSHIP TRAILS

Now we move into Worship Trails. At this point, you can have the children involved in a time of Singing Praises to Jesus. We suggest that you use the songs on the CD included with the program. The songs are all original music written specifically for the program. Each song on the

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CD correlates with one unit. You can use other favorite songs that help to emphasize the theme as you have the time in your program.

We also offer a Share and Prayer time. Here's an activity specifically designed to help your children worship God through prayer. Many times the children will be making something that they will take home. This will help them to remember the importance of prayer in their daily lives as well as assist them in this time of worship.

WILDLIFE TRAILS



Wildlife Trails offers the children a chance to move and create. This section of the lesson includes Snack Shack, Campsite Capers, and Cozy Cave Crafts.

We offer a snack suggestion (Snack Shack) to correlate with each week's lesson. You can use these snack suggestions or others of your own choosing. All the children can have their snack time together or you can separate them into preschool and elementary groups at this time.

As you begin the Campsite Capers (Games) and Cozy Cave Crafts (Crafts) notice that there are options for preschool and elementary. These activities are designed with age-appropriate activities for each of these groups.

HAPPY TRAILS



Happy Trails gives you a chance to gather all the children back together into one large group and wrap up your session. Everyone can help

with cleanup and then have a time of review just prior to leaving. We give suggestions for Closing Activities as well as Overtime Activities. During the time at the close of your session while you wait for parents to pick up the children, we give suggestions to help you extend the session.

The Park Patrollers are your assistants. Take time before beginning your year of Children's Church to train the children. Using the *Park Patrol Training Book* will help these kids become confident helpers as they assist with the movement of the younger kids, help with the snack time, games, crafts, puppets, etc. Be sure to make assignments for the kids so that they know what is expected of them and when it's their turn to help if you use them on a rotating basis. You will find that they are learning a great deal from the Bible Stories, puppet skits, prayer time, etc. as they listen and help.

Refer to the *Craft Book*, *Puppet Skits Book*, and *Snacks and Games Book* for more information about supplies and preparation.

As the children leave your session, they will be taking home a craft that they have made. Included with many of the crafts is a "HomeLink" to help parents extend the learning even further. Be sure to send it home with the children if it is not already attached to the craft project in some way.

Now that you have made it through this introduction, you're ready to begin!

Lesson: We Can Trust God's Plan in Creation

Choose from the options listed below to follow Adventure Trails that lead to Jesus:

DISCOVERY TRAILS

TEACHER FEATURE (5 min.)

Planning a Batch of Cookies

BIBLE STORY (10 min.)

Trusting God's Plan for Creation (Elem.)

God Made Day and Night (Preschool)

NOAH'S PARK PUPPETS (5 min.)

Shooting Stars

BIBLE MEMORY (5 min.)

Created Shapes

WORSHIP TRAILS

SINGING PRAISES TO JESUS (10 min.)

SHARE AND PRAYER (5 min.)

Prayer Stars

WILDLIFE TRAILS

SNACK SHACK (5 min.)

Star Cookies

CAMPSITE CAPERS (15 min.)

The Creator Said (Elementary)

Daytime and Nighttime Toss (Preschool)

COZY CAVE CRAFTS (15 min.)

Heavenly Mobile (Elementary)

Creation Quilt—Square 1 (Preschool)

HAPPY TRAILS

CLOSING ACTIVITIES (5 min.)

OVERTIME ACTIVITIES (as needed)

help us? (It would have a recipe.) **Well, I have a cookbook! Let's see if it has a recipe for some good cookies.**

Let the children search the cookbook for a cookie recipe (or picture). Read aloud some ingredients, such as sugar, chocolate, raisins, etc., for several recipes. Guide the children to understand that the recipe will help you make some yummy cookies.

What do you think we would need to do to actually make the cookies? Let the children suggest ideas. Work with children to make a reasonable plan. These might include reading the recipe, making a grocery list, shopping, and following the recipe. Help the children understand that making a plan is important.

Do you think we have a good plan to make some delicious cookies to fill the cookie jar? We do have a good plan. In fact, it's a plan we should trust to work for us.

When God created everything, do you think He had a plan? Yes, He did! We can trust God's plan in creation even more than we trust our plan for making cookies! Let's learn more about God's plan in creation.

At this time, ask the Park Patrol to lead the preschool children to the area for their Bible story. The preschoolers will rejoin the elementary-age kids after the Bible story for more large-group activities.

ELEMENTARY BIBLE STORY

Trusting God's Plan for Creation

(Genesis 1:1-31; Psalm 111:2, 7)

Supplies: Bible, poster board, marker, scissors, string or yarn

Preparation: Cut large circles from poster board. Label them *sun*, *moon*, *earth*, *planet* (make several), and *stars* (make several). Attach string or yarn to each so it easily hangs around a child's neck.

In the Bible God tells us about the beginning of everything—in Genesis and other Bible books, like Psalms. Show the children Genesis 1 and Psalm 111. Hold your Bible open to Genesis 1 as

DISCOVERY TRAILS

TEACHER FEATURE

Planning a Batch of Cookies

Supplies: Empty cookie jar and cookbook with recipes for cookies

Show the children an empty cookie jar. **What should be inside this?** (Cookies!) **How could we make some cookies for the cookie jar?** Let the children tell their ideas. **How would a cookbook**

you tell the story so the children know the story comes from God's Word.

God made the heavens and the earth. He had a plan, and He put our earth and everything in the universe in its place. One thing God made with a plan was our solar system. Ask for volunteers to wear the sun, earth, and planet signs. Have the sun stand in the center of the room, with earth and the other planets "rotating" in a circle around him or her. Have the other children give them room to move. If your room is not large enough for this demonstration, so much the better; it will reinforce God's careful planning.

Are our planets bumping into each other? Are they making perfect orbits? We didn't plan a very careful a solar system. But God made the planets good and planned them to not bump into each other. Aren't you glad that earth isn't bumping into Saturn or rotating too near the hot sun? We can trust God's plan in creation. Have the solar system children remove their signs and let all be seated.

When God made the earth, darkness was everywhere. It was completely dark, like when you close your eyes in a dark room at night. Ask the children to close their eyes and "see" the darkness for a moment. **But God didn't plan for all of creation to be dark. He said, "Let there be light," and there was light! God called the light "day" and He called the dark "night." This is God's plan for daytime and nighttime. God made both good. That shows we can trust God's plan in creation.**

Ask more volunteers to wear the sun, moon, and star signs. **God made the sun and put it exactly where He planned in the sky so it would light the day.** Place the "sun" on one side of you. **He made the moon and stars and put them in their place to light the night.** Place the "moon" and "stars" on the other side of you. **It's because of God's plan in creation that the sun, moon, and stars work perfectly to give us light. It's a plan we can trust.**

Day and night are good for us. And God planned the right amount of each. Have the children wearing signs crouch down. As you take answers for the next question, have either the sun or

the moon and stars spring up if it's an activity that happens during their time of day or night.

What are some things you like to do? Take answers from children. If it's usually a nighttime activity, like sleep, stargaze, or have a sleepover, the moon and stars should stand up. If it's normally a daytime activity, such as go to school, eat, or play, the sun should stand up. If it's an activity that could happen in either day or night, such as watching TV or praying, all the sign-wearers should stand up. Encourage the children to watch carefully and make sure the proper signs are standing up.

Take the signs and have all the children be seated. **God had a great plan when He created our universe. The Psalms praise God for making creation so wonderful. One says this: "Great are the works of the Lord!" Let's say that together. "Great are the works of the Lord!" We can trust God's plan in creation.**

Discuss these questions to make sure the children understood the main points of the Bible story: **Who had a plan for creation?** (God.) **What things were part of God's plan?** (The solar system, light and darkness, sun, moon, stars, etc.) **Why can we trust God's plan in creation?** (Because everything God made is so good.)

PRESCHOOL BIBLE STORY

God Made Day and Night

(Genesis 1:1-31; Psalm 111:2, 7)

Supplies: Bible, completed preschool craft (*Craft Book*, p. RC-8), flannel board

Preparation: Make a large-sized preschool craft from page RC-8 of the Noah's Park *Craft Book*.

Show the children where Genesis 1 is in your Bible. **Our story today comes from the very beginning of the Bible, from the Book of Genesis.** Keep your Bible open as you tell the story.

Cover your eyes with your hands. What do you see? (Nothing.) **The Bible tells us this is how the world looked at the very beginning. But God had a plan.** Put the black square from the prepared craft on your flannel board.

God said, "Let there be light!" And there was light. Tell the children to open their eyes. **God**



called the light "day." Put the white rectangle over half of the black square.

But God's plan was for there to be more than day. God knew the world also needed a little darkness. Have the children cover their eyes, then uncover them. **God called the darkness "night."** Point to the dark fabric on the square.

God put lights in the sky. The lights help people know when it is day and when it is night. So God made two special lights. God put the big light in the sky for the day. Make a big circle above your head with your arms. Have the children copy your actions. **God called the big light the "sun." The sun shines in the day.** Put the sun figure on the white rectangle. **What do you do in the day?** Let the children give suggestions.

God put the little light in the sky for the night. Make a small circle with your hands. Hold your hands above your head. Have the children do the same. **God called the little light the "moon." The moon shines at night.** Put the moon figure on the black rectangle. **God also made some lights called stars. He put the stars with the moon in the night sky.** Add the star figures. **What do you do in the night?** Let the children offer some ideas.

God looked at the day and night. He looked at the sun, the moon, and the stars. God saw that they were all good. They were all a part of God's plan when He made the world.

Use the quilt square to review the Bible story. Beginning with the dark square, put each piece on the square asking, **What did God make?**

NOAH'S PARK PUPPETS

Shooting Stars

Signal the Park Patrol members who will perform today's puppet skit to get ready. You will find the puppet script and instructions in the Noah's Park *Puppet Skits Book* on page RP-7. Gather the children in front of your puppet stage, and begin when everyone is seated and ready.

BIBLE MEMORY

Created Shapes

Supplies: Poster board, marker, scissors, paper clips, Bible

Preparation: Select a Bible verse that connects with today's Bible story, or use the verse from today's Sunday school lesson. Cut poster board into large stars, crescent moons, and round earths so you have a shape for every three or four children. Make the shapes at least six inches across. (For sample shapes, see page RC-7 in the craft book. Print the Bible memory verse on one side of each shape. Cut all but one shape into five to eight puzzle pieces each. For older children, you may cut the shapes into more pieces. Clip puzzle pieces together.

Hold up the whole shape so the children can see it as you point to the words. Children should listen while you read the verse, pointing to each word as you say it. Ask the children to join you in saying the verse and reference. Repeat this several times.

Divide the children into small groups. Give each group a prepared verse puzzle and have them put it together. Park Patrol may help as needed.

When finished, ask each group to say the verse together and tell what shape its puzzle made.

Remembering this verse is a great way to honor God. Let's praise Him because we can trust His plan in creation.



SINGING PRAISES TO JESUS

Supplies: Noah's Park CD and CD player

Begin teaching the Unit 1 song, "In the Beginning," from the Noah's Park *Children's Church CD*. First, play the song while children listen, or project the words onto a wall with an overhead projector so children can read them. Invite the class to tell what the song is about. Then, replay the song and let children sing along. (See page R-247 for reproducible lyrics.) Discuss how the song's message relates to today's Bible lesson. As time permits, lead the children in other songs praising God.

SHARE AND PRAYER

Prayer Stars

Supplies: Paper, pencil, scissors

Preparation: Draw a large, six-pointed star on paper. Print the Bible memory verse or today's lesson title in the center. Print one day of the week inside each star point. Photocopy this Prayer Star for each child in your class.

We can trust God's plan in creation and thank Him for it. Ask for volunteers who would like to pray aloud to thank God for something in His creation. Have volunteers come to the front and face the class in the order each will pray. Ask the first child to begin and then each of the others in turn. Encourage the others who are listening to pray along in their hearts with the one who is praying aloud.

We can pray each day this week to thank God for His plan in creation. Park Patrol members should give each child a star and scissors. Have the kids cut out their stars on the outline.

Take your Prayer Star home and use it to help you pray. On each point, you can write one thing in creation that you are thankful to God for. Then thank God for making that thing. Color the star-point for each day that you pray. Have the children put their names on the back of their stars. Put them in a safe spot until the end of class.



The preschoolers and elementary children have separate activities for this part of the lesson. Use the Park Patrol or the Noah's Park puppets—or both—to help the children move to their separate areas.

SNACK SHACK

Star Cookies

See page RS-7 in the *Snacks and Games Book* for a lesson-related snack suggestion: Star Cookies. Use the Park Patrol to help give out snack supplies and clean up afterward. You might also want them to sit among the children to chat and help them make friends with one another.

CAMPSITE CAPERS

The Creator Said (Elementary)

Daytime and Nighttime Toss (Preschool)

Have your Park Patrol lead the children to an open area for today's game. The elementary game, "The Creator Said," is on page RS-7 in the *Snacks and Games Book*. The preschool game, "Daytime and Nighttime Toss," is on page RS-8 in the same book.

COZY CAVE CRAFTS

Heavenly Mobile (Elementary)

Creation Quilt—Square 1 (Preschool)

The elementary craft that supports today's lesson is a "Heavenly Mobile." Complete instructions are on page RC-7 in the *Craft Book*. The preschool craft project, "Creation Quilt—Square 1," is on RC-8 of the *Craft Book*.



CLOSING ACTIVITIES

A few minutes before class is over, have the children help straighten the room. Then gather them around to review the Bible memory verse and close in prayer. As children leave, be sure they take their crafts and remind them we can trust God's plan in creation.

OVERTIME ACTIVITIES

If you have extra time while waiting for parents to pick up their children, ask the Park Patrol to lead children in another round of "The Creator Said" game.

