



A 52-Week Bible Journey – Just For Kids!

Ages 4–6

Explore

Bible Stories



52 Bible Lessons for Ages 4–6



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	Unit Title	Scripture	Application	Memory Verse
Unit 1	The Bible Teaches Me About God's Creation	Genesis 1:1-13 (<i>world</i>) Genesis 1:14-19 (<i>sun, moon, stars</i>) Genesis 1:20-25 (<i>birds, fish, animals</i>) Genesis 1:26-31 (<i>people</i>)	Thank God for His good creation.	Genesis 1:1, 31 "In the beginning God created the sky and the earth. God looked at everything he had made, and it was very good."
Unit 2	The Bible Teaches Me That God Keeps His Promises	Genesis 6:9-7:24 (<i>Noah</i>) Genesis 8:1-9:17 (<i>flood</i>) Genesis 12:1-9 (<i>Abram moves</i>) Genesis 17:1-8, 15-19; 21:1-7 (<i>Isaac born</i>)	Worship God because He keeps His promises.	Isaiah 38:7 "The Lord will do what he says." Psalms 145:21 "I will praise the Lord. Let everyone praise his holy name forever."
Unit 3	The Bible Teaches Me About God's Care	Exodus 2:1-10 (<i>baby Moses</i>) Exodus 12:31-42; 13:17-22 (<i>pillar of cloud, fire</i>) Exodus 14-15:21 (<i>Red Sea</i>) Exodus 15:22-27; 16:1-36; 17:1-7; Numbers 11:7-9 (<i>desert wanderings</i>) Exodus 19, 20 (<i>Ten Commandments</i>)	Thank God for His care.	1 Peter 5:7 "Give all your worries to him, because he cares for you."
Unit 4	The Bible Teaches Me About Baby Jesus	Luke 1:26-38; 46-55; 2:1-7 (<i>Mary, angel</i>) Luke 2:1-7 (<i>Jesus' birth</i>) Luke 2:8-20 (<i>shepherds</i>) Matthew 2:1-12 (<i>wise men</i>) Luke 2:41-52 (<i>Jesus at age 12</i>)	Celebrate Jesus' birth.	Luke 2:21 "He was named Jesus. This name had been given by the angel."
Unit 5	The Bible Teaches Me to Be a Friend Like Jesus	Mark 10:13-16 (<i>Jesus and children</i>) Luke 10:38-42; John 11:1-5, 33-35, 38, 39 (<i>Mary, Martha, Lazarus</i>) John 4:5-9, 27-30, 39, 40 (<i>Samaritan woman</i>) Luke 19:1-10 (<i>Zacchaeus</i>)	Be a friend to someone.	John 15:12 "Love each other as I have loved you."
Unit 6	The Bible Teaches Me to Follow Jesus	Luke 11:1-4; Matthew 6:5-13 (<i>model prayer</i>) Luke 12:13-21 (<i>rich fool</i>) Luke 10:25-37 (<i>Good Samaritan</i>) Luke 17:11-19 (<i>ten lepers</i>)	Follow Jesus by praying, sharing, helping, and thanking.	2 John 9 "A person must continue to follow only the teaching of Christ."

	Unit Title	Scripture	Application	Memory Verse
Unit 7	The Bible Teaches Me About Jesus' Power	<p>Luke 7:11-17 (<i>raising of the widow's son</i>)</p> <p>John 6:1-13 (<i>feeding 5,000</i>)</p> <p>Mark 4:35-41 (<i>stopping a storm</i>)</p> <p>Matthew 14:22-33 (<i>walking on water</i>)</p> <p>Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43 (<i>healing eyes</i>)</p>	Tell someone what Jesus did to show He is powerful.	Matthew 28:18, 19 "Jesus came to them and said, 'All power in heaven and on earth is given to me. So go and make followers.'"
Unit 8	The Bible Teaches Me That Jesus Is the Son of God	<p>Matthew 21:1-11 (<i>triumphal entry</i>)</p> <p>Matthew 26-28 (<i>Jesus' death, resurrection</i>)</p> <p>John 20:19-31 (<i>appearing to disciples</i>)</p> <p>John 21:1-14 (<i>miraculous catch</i>)</p>	Celebrate Jesus because He is the Son of God.	John 20:31 "These are written so that you can believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."
Unit 9	The Bible Teaches Me About the Church	<p>Acts 1:6-9; 2:1-14, 22-24, 36-41 (<i>ascension, Pentecost</i>)</p> <p>Acts 3:1-16 (<i>Peter and John</i>)</p> <p>Acts 8:26-40 (<i>Philip and Ethiopian</i>)</p> <p>Acts 9:1-31 (<i>Saul</i>)</p>	Tell the good news about Jesus.	Mark 16:20 "The followers went everywhere in the world and told the Good News to people. And the Lord helped them."
Unit 10	The Bible Teaches Me to Do Right	<p>Joshua 6:1-20 (<i>Joshua obeys</i>)</p> <p>Ruth 1, 2 (<i>Ruth shows kindness</i>)</p> <p>1 Samuel 3:1-21 (<i>Samuel serves God</i>)</p> <p>1 Samuel 18:1-4; 20 (<i>selected verses</i>); 2 Samuel 9 (<i>David, Jonathan</i>)</p>	Choose to do what is right.	Joshua 24:24 "We will serve the Lord our God. We will obey him."
Unit 11	The Bible Teaches Me That God Is Powerful	<p>1 Kings 17:1-6 (<i>Elijah, ravens</i>)</p> <p>1 Kings 17:7-16 (<i>Elijah, widow</i>)</p> <p>1 Kings 18:16-39 (<i>Elijah, prophets of Baal</i>)</p> <p>2 Kings 4:8-37 (<i>Elisha, boy raised</i>)</p> <p>2 Kings 5:1-15 (<i>Naaman</i>)</p>	Worship God because He is powerful.	Psalm 9:1 "I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart. I will tell all the miracles you have done."
Unit 12	The Bible Teaches Me That God Hears My Prayer	<p>1 Kings 1:28-48; 3:1-15 (<i>Solomon</i>)</p> <p>2 Kings 20:1-11; Isaiah 38:1-20 (<i>Hezekiah</i>)</p> <p>2 Chronicles 33:1-20 (<i>Manasseh</i>)</p> <p>2 Chronicles 20:1-21 (<i>Jehoshaphat</i>)</p>	Pray to God (for help to do right, for healing, when you're sorry, to thank Him).	Psalm 105:1 "Give thanks to the Lord and pray to him."

Introduction

Basic Supplies You Will Need

clear tape
construction paper
clear adhesive covering
crayons
colored pencils
drawing paper
envelopes
glue sticks
markers
masking tape
moist towelettes
newspaper
paper plates
paper lunch bags
paper punch
pencils
resealable bags
reusable adhesive
scissors
stapler and staples
stickers (assorted)

Several lessons suggest activities that involve playing children's worship CDs or cassettes. Ask parents or Sunday school teachers what songs their children enjoy. Have CDs or cassettes and a player ready to use as needed for activities or when there is extra time for singing.

Children ages 4 to 6 years old use all five senses to explore and discover information. Children at this age are wiggly, noisy, touchy, animated beings. Teaching them according to the way God made them can be a challenge. The goal of each lesson in *Explore Bible Stories* is to direct the children's energy and curiosity to that teachable moment when their minds say, "We love and want to follow God!"

Each unit in the curriculum features four or five Bible stories that teach a specific lesson about God, Jesus, or the church. Half of the units are from the Old Testament and half are from the New Testament, with units for Christmas and Easter. Feel free to rearrange units to meet your needs. Plan to use Unit 4 near Christmas to celebrate Jesus' birth and Unit 8 near Easter to celebrate Jesus' resurrection.

What's Unique About *Explore Bible Stories*?

The lessons are designed to actively involve children in the learning process and make Bible stories come alive.

Suggestions are given for simple story props and ways to involve children in the story. Consider the arrangement of your classroom. If necessary, remove a table or other furniture to provide a larger storytelling area. Be ready to help children "travel" with Bible people, "march" with an army, and "fish" in a sea.

The lessons can be used with multiple leaders or when teaching alone.

This book has been designed to allow you as much flexibility as possible. You will want to purchase a book for each teacher or helper. All workers need to be aware of the activities, rhymes, songs, Bible story, and Bible Words for each lesson. The pages are perforated for easy use.

A brief planning session is all you need for team teaching. Determine who will teach the various parts of the lessons. Each leader can then plan and prepare his or her own section. Other leaders help the assigned leader.

If you teach alone, the four-step lesson plan will help you stay on track. There will be times when you will need extra hands. Consider involving parents whenever possible.

The materials are easy to file and reuse.

Set up a filing system in which to keep your materials. You will need 12 folders, one for each unit. Label these with unit titles. Or, if you prefer, use one folder for each lesson. Label these folders with the unit and lesson titles. As you prepare lessons, store any reproduced material in the appropriate folder. When the lesson has been taught, put the originals and any leftover materials back in the folder, along with an evaluation of that lesson. If children have enjoyed a particular song or rhyme used during the unit, note the title and lesson number on the front of your folder. This will be helpful for future use.

Reproducible pages follow each lesson plan.

Bible story visuals, craft patterns, and make-and-do activities are all printed on reproducible pages. No extra purchases are required.

Use the pages provided to create visuals you will use year after year. Enlarge pages when copying them so the visuals will be most effective for your classroom size. Copying on card stock and using clear adhesive covering can add durability to visuals. Recruit a volunteer who enjoys art to color and help you prepare Bible story visuals and other teaching activity aids.

Photocopy make-and-do activities so you will have enough for guests as well as regular attendees. Suggestions are given in the lessons for activities that may need to be precut, especially for younger children. Again, copying on card stock can add durability for many of the children's hands-on projects.

How Is *Explore Bible Stories* Organized?

Each lesson involves the children in activities that help the children accomplish the unit and lesson aims. The amount of time needed to complete each activity will vary according to the age of the children in the class and the number of children doing the activity at one time.

Unit Introductory Pages

These pages give the teachers more specific information to help them understand and prepare for the unit. They contain the unit Bible Words and unit aim. The section, “Why Teach This Unit to 4- to 6-Year-Olds?” will help teachers focus further on why these important lessons should be taught.

The pages often include ideas for unit visuals, songs, and special unit projects. Each teacher or helper working during a unit should read these pages.

Four-step Lesson Plan

Four steps guide children from an introduction to the application of the Bible story:

▼ 1 What Is This Story About? ▲

The two activities in this section involve children in exploring some aspect of the day’s theme or Bible story. You can do one or both activities as time allows. Or offer the activities as learning centers at the same time, allowing children choices.

▼ 2 What Does the Bible Say? ▲

Here the Bible story is presented in a way 4- to 6-year-olds can understand. Suggestions for visuals and participatory action are included with each story. This step also includes a story review activity and a Bible memory activity.

▼ 3 What Does This Mean to Me? ▲

In this section, the children make a direct connection between the emphasis of the Bible story and their own lives. They discover that although the Bible events took place many years ago, these events still teach important lessons to us today.

▼ 4 What Can I Do to Please God? ▲

This last section will provide an opportunity for each child to respond to the lesson. The step often suggests a song, a prayer, or another activity that allows you and your children to express thankfulness and worship to God.

The Bible Teaches Me About God's Creation

Lessons 1-4

1 God Made the World

Genesis 1:1-13

2 God Made the Sun, Moon, and Stars

Genesis 1:14-19

3 God Made the Birds, Fish, and Animals

Genesis 1:20-25

4 God Made People

Genesis 1:26-31

Unit Aim

Thank God for His good creation.

Why Teach This Unit to 4- to 6-Year-Olds?

The focus of this unit will be to plant in the heart of your students the seed of faith in God as the creator and sustainer of all matter and, most importantly, human life. As the teacher of this unit, your job will be to direct your students to the Bible for the truth concerning the creation of all things upon the earth and in the universe.

You will experience the joy of seeing your students filled with the same delight King David expressed in Psalm 19:1, when he wrote, "The heavens tell the glory of God. And the skies announce what his hands have made." David was gifted at expressing his awe at the power of God to create this wonderful place called Earth and the universe surrounding it. As you teach this unit, your students will begin to see the might power of God. They will learn how and why things were created. They will join King David in praising the creator God for His wonderful works: "May the glory of the Lord be forever. May the Lord enjoy what he has made" (Psalm 104:31).

Unit Bible Words

"In the beginning God created the sky and the earth. God looked at everything he had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:1, 31).

Unit Visual: Creation Week Boxes

Cover and label six shoeboxes with lids. Number labels for the boxes are provided on page 31. These boxes will represent the six days of creation week; they will be used for all four lessons in this unit. Boxes for each lesson and items needed to fill the boxes are listed below. All items should fit inside the boxes.

Lesson 1: creation boxes for Days 1–3; flashlight; balloon (clear or light blue); 2 baby food-size jars filled with water (one labeled “Clouds” and the other “Seas and Oceans”); clear plastic bag filled with soil and small rocks; small plant; packet of seeds

Lesson 2: creation boxes for Days 1–4; yellow tennis ball; white Ping-Pong™ ball; small string of clear Christmas lights that blink

Lesson 3: creation boxes for Days 1–6; string; pictures or toy figures of birds, a whale, fish, and a variety of animals

Lesson 4: creation boxes for Days 1–6; 2 pink and 2 blue chenille wires (twisted into the shape of 2 stick people); wide, colorful ribbon to wrap around stacked boxes

Unit Song

Creation Week

(Tune: “Are You Sleeping?”)



On the first day, on the first day,
It was dark; it was dark.
Then God spoke a word; then God spoke a word.
He said, “Light!” He said, “Light!”



On the second day, on the second day,
Water above; water below.
Then God spoke again; then God spoke again.
Sky did show; sky did show.



On the third day, on the third day,
God made land; God made land.
Water filled the seas; water filled the seas.
Plants did grow; plants did grow.



On the fourth day, on the fourth day,
Two large lights, two large lights.
The sun ruled the day; the moon ruled the night.
Stars did shine; stars did shine.



On the fifth day, on the fifth day,
Fish did swim; fish did swim.
Birds flew in the sky; birds flew in the sky.
God blessed them; God blessed them.



On the sixth day, on the sixth day,
Animals were made; animals were made.
Then God made man and woman;
God made man and woman.
Very good! Very good!

Lesson Aims

- Explore God's creation.
- Name items God made on days 1–3.
- Describe what is special about an item God made.
- Thank God for His good creation.

▼ 1. What Is This Story About? ▲

Goop!

Pour cornstarch into a pan. Add a few drops of food coloring to water (optional). Add colored water, a little at a time, to the cornstarch until the mixture is like pudding.

This is Goop! Touch it. How does it feel? Yes, it is soft and smooth. Try to make a ball using Goop. What happens? Yes, it runs between your fingers. Keep trying. Can you make anything with Goop?

Encourage each child to try picking up and holding the Goop. Allow time for exploring this interesting mixture.

Gather as much Goop as you can in your hands. **It is hard for us to make something with Goop, but it wasn't hard for God to make the world. Have a helper read aloud Genesis 1:1-3. The Bible tells us that God created the sky and the earth. Our God is powerful. We call Him "The Creator." A creator is someone who starts with nothing and makes something new. What is your favorite thing God created? Name other things that God created. When you see "(something a child named)," what do you want to say to our creator?** Take a moment to pray, thanking God for the wonderful things He created.

Materials

1-lb. box of cornstarch
1 quart of water
oblong cake pan
stirring spoon
food coloring (optional)
paper towels or moist towelettes for cleaning hands
Bible

Air Is Everywhere!

Blow up one balloon. **What am I doing? What is making the balloon get bigger each time I blow into it? Yes, I am blowing air into the balloon. Let's look in the Bible and find out who made air.** Read aloud Genesis 1:6-8. **The Bible tells us that God made air. He created it on the second day of creation week.** Blow up and tie several balloons; use them to demonstrate different qualities of air. **What is stretching and filling up this balloon? Air takes up space. Hold this balloon. Is it heavy? No, it is light in weight because air is light in weight.** Toss a balloon in the air. Let the children hit it to keep it floating.

Help the children discover that air has no color, no smell, and no sound. Ask them to blow on their hands. **Can you see the air you feel on your hands? Air has no color. Sniff some air. Does it smell? Air has no smell of its own, but it carries the smell of other things.** Hold an inflated balloon up to your mouth. Ask a child to place two hands on the balloon. Begin speaking. **Can you "feel" me speaking? The sound from my voice made the air move. Air has no sound of its own, but it does carry the sounds made by people, animals, and other things.**

Air can be warm, hot, or cold. Air is very useful, but the most important thing about air is that we need air to live. Our creator made air because He

Materials

balloons of different shapes and sizes
Bible

Teaching Tip

Be aware of latex allergies or children's sensitivities when using balloon activities.

knew plants, animals, and people would need it. All living things need air. Take a deep breath of air and say, “Thank you God for creating air.” Save the balloons for the closing prayer time.

▼ 2. What Does the Bible Say? ▲

Bible Story: What a Powerful Creator!

Begin with the Days 1–3 boxes empty and the items for each day in a bag. Show your Bible.

The Bible tells us how God created our world. I like to think about what it was like before God made the world. Let’s close our eyes. What do you see? I can’t see anything. No colors. No shapes. That is what it was like before God created our world. Tell children to open their eyes. **Listen to what the Bible says about this.** Read Genesis 1:2. **The earth was empty. There was nothing to see. There was no light, just darkness.**

Now cover your ears with your hands and watch me. Mouth words to the children. Tell children to uncover their ears. **There was no sound until God spoke. Listen to what the Bible says.** Read Genesis 1:3. **The Bible tells us that God’s voice is powerful. He spoke the word “light” and “light” appeared.** Demonstrate with a flashlight. Have the children say, “Let there be light.” Quickly, turn on the flashlight. **When God made light, He gave it a name. He called it “day” and He called the darkness “night.”** Demonstrate by turning the flashlight on and off as the children say “day” and “night.” **This was the end of the first day of creation week and God said what He had made was good.** Show the Day 1 box and put the flashlight in it. Close the lid. Teach the first verse of the song “Creation Week,” page 14.

God wasn’t finished. Show the Day 2 box. **On the second day, God spoke again. This time God said, “Let there be something to divide the waters.” Again, something wonderful happened—God created air.** Blow up a balloon and tie it. **He put the air between the waters above and the waters below.** Ask a child to hold the balloon so you can hold the “Clouds” jar above it and the “Seas and Oceans” jar below it. **We call the waters above the air “clouds” because we get rain from clouds. We call the waters below the air “seas and oceans.” God called the air “sky.” That was the end of the second day of creation week and God said it was good.** Put these items in the box. Close the lid. Teach the second verse of the song “Creation Week.”

God wasn’t finished creating. Hold up Day 3 box. **On the third day, God spoke again. “Let there be dry land.”** Show bag of soil and the rocks. **Another wonderful thing happened. The water moved and the dry land appeared. God named the dry land “earth” and the water “seas.” Then God spoke again. “Let there be plants.”** Show the plant. **All over the dry land and even in the seas, plants appeared. There were all kinds of plants. There were trees. There were flowers. There were vegetables and fruits. There was even seaweed. In every plant God put seeds so more plants would grow.** Show the seeds. Briefly discuss planting a seed. **That ended the third day of creation week and God said it was good.** Put the items in the box. Close the lid. Teach the third verse of the song “Creation Week.”

Do you think God is finished creating? No! In the next lesson, we will find out what God created next.

Materials

Bible
creation boxes for Days 1–3
(see p. 14)
flashlight
2 baby food-size jars filled with
water (one labeled “Clouds”
and the other “Seas and
Oceans”)
small balloon (clear or light
blue)
clear plastic bag filled with soil
and small rocks; small plant;
packet of seeds (All items
must fit inside the creation
boxes.)
Creation Week song, p. 14

Story Review: Who Is Our Creator?

Place the filled and closed boxes in front of you. **Who is the creator of our earth? Yes, the creator is God. These boxes hold things God made on the first three days of creation week.**

Hold the Day 1 box. **Let's see if you remember what our creator made on the first day?** After the children respond, open the box and see if they are correct. Praise and encourage their efforts. Repeat this activity with the Day 2 and Day 3 boxes. **What did God say at the end of each day? Yes, He said, "This is good."** Ask the children to share why they think each thing God created is good.

You probably have made things with modeling dough. Pass out modeling dough and let the children play with it. **What do you like to make with modeling dough? Where do you get your ideas?** Ask each child to make something. **Do you like what you made? Why? Why not? I get excited when I am making something for the first time. I wonder what it will look like. I wonder if others will like it too. Do you think God got excited about the new world He was making? What did He say at the end of each day? Yes, He said, "This is good."** Put each modeling dough project on a paper plate and label it "Made by (child's name)." Display the projects in the classroom.

Do you like the things God created on the first three days? I do too. Let's thank God for what He created. Hand out the items in the boxes and ask each child holding an item to pray and thank God for creating it. If you have more children than items, share. When the children are finished praying, ask them to return the items to the correct boxes. Give help as needed.

Bible Memory: Ready . . . Set . . . Action!

Practice saying the Bible Words, Genesis 1:1, 31, using the following hand motions:

"In the beginning (Hold up one finger.)

God created (Pretend you are forming a ball with your hands.)

the sky (Wave, pointing finger back and forth above your head.)

and the earth. (Stomp your feet on the floor.)

God looked at everything he had made, (Place one hand above your eyes; look side to side.)

and it was very good." (Clap on the syllables of each word.)

Genesis 1:1 and 31 (Place your two hands together to form a book.)

Show on your face how you feel when you think about the sky and the earth God created. Show on your face how God felt. We should always be thankful for the things God created for us.

Materials

creation boxes for Days 1–3
modeling dough
paper plates
marker

Provide a place where children can work with modeling dough.

Materials

none

Bible Words

"In the beginning God created the sky and the earth. God looked at everything he had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:1, 31).

▼ 3. What Does This Mean to Me? ▲

Planting Plants

Gather the children around a display of seeds, fruits, and nuts.

We are going to look at an apple to see what is special inside. Do you remember on what day of creation week God made these? Yes, it was the third day. After God made land, He made plants. He said every plant would have a seed and some would have fruit with seed inside. Explore an apple. Do you know what's inside this apple? Let's cut it open. What do you see? Which part do we eat? How many seeds did God put in this apple? If I plant an apple seed, what will grow? Yes, another apple tree. God said that every seed would grow more of the same kind of plant.

Lead the children in discovering the rest of the seeds, fruits, and nuts. Allow the children taste what they want. (Be aware of allergies.) Ask questions about where the plants grow, how they grow, how they taste, how they feel, what colors they are, who eats them, and so on. Discuss how some seeds can be eaten and some cannot.

Help the children plant grass seeds. Give each child a plastic cup and print each child's name on the bottom. Help each child fill his cup with soil. Then sprinkle grass seed on top and water. Give each child a cup label from page 33 to color. Read the words on the label. Help tape the label to the side of the cup. Tell the children how to care for their seeds so they will grow.

What did you learn today about the plants God created? Why do you think God created plants? Why did God put a seed in each plant? What are you going to do to take care of the seeds you planted? Let's thank God for creating plants. Pray with the children.

Materials

variety of seeds, apple and other whole fruits, nuts
tools for cutting fruit and cracking nuts
potting soil
rye grass seed
source for water
1 clear plastic 9-oz. cup per child
permanent marker
1 copy per child of the cup label from p. 33
clear tape

▼ 4. What Can I Do to Please God? ▲

Popping Praises

God used His great power to create the world for us. The whole earth is full of good things God made. Who remembers something God made on the first three days? Print the responses on the balloons. Repeat until the children run out of ideas or you run out of balloons.

Here's a balloon that says "air." Why do we need air? Here is a balloon that says "light." Why did God create light? Continue with each balloon. **Let's say, "Thank You, God, for making air and light. They are good!"** Pop the balloon. Ask an adult helper to quickly pick up the pieces and discard them.

God is pleased when we say thank You.

Repeat this activity with each balloon. After the last balloon has been popped, form a prayer circle. Ask for volunteers to pray and thank God for His good creations.

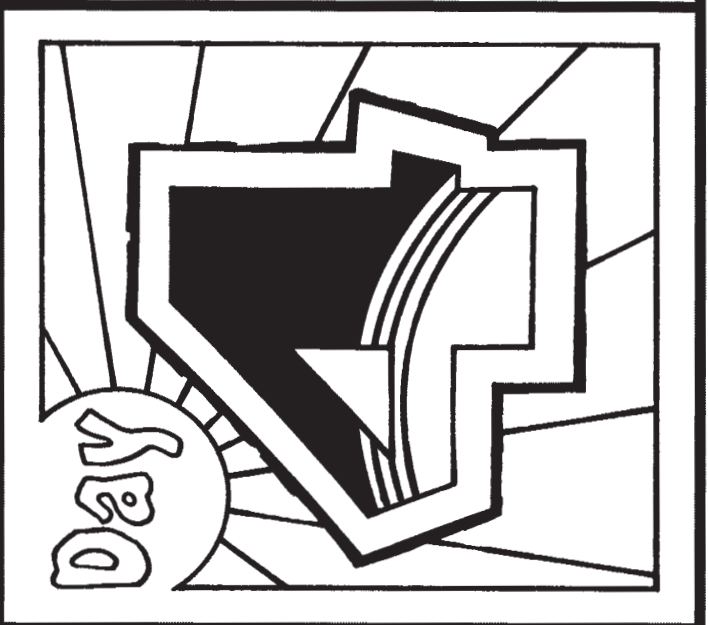
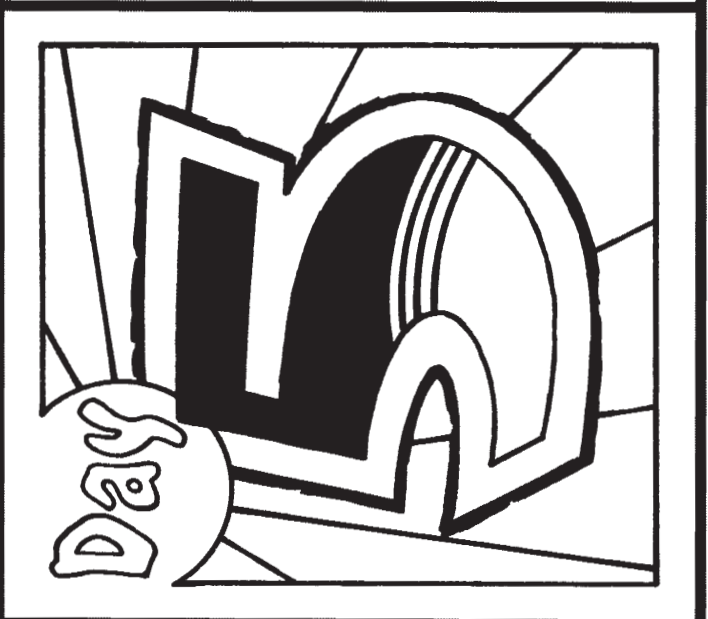
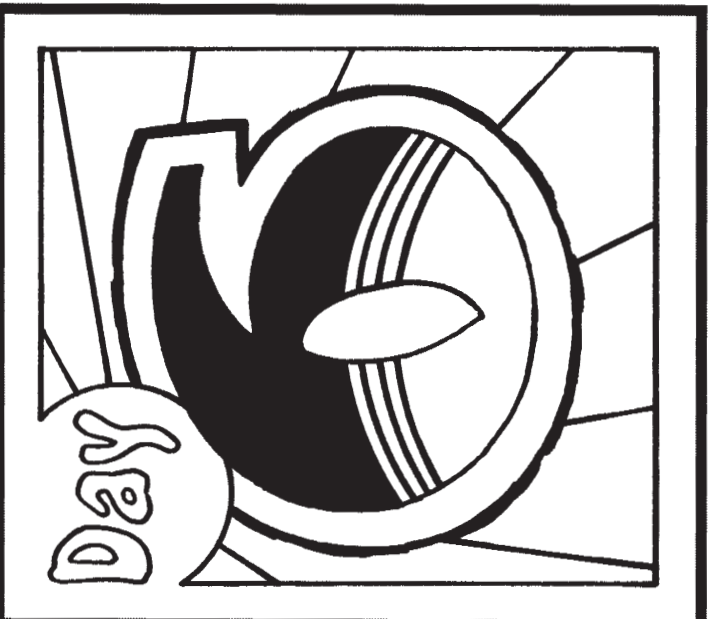
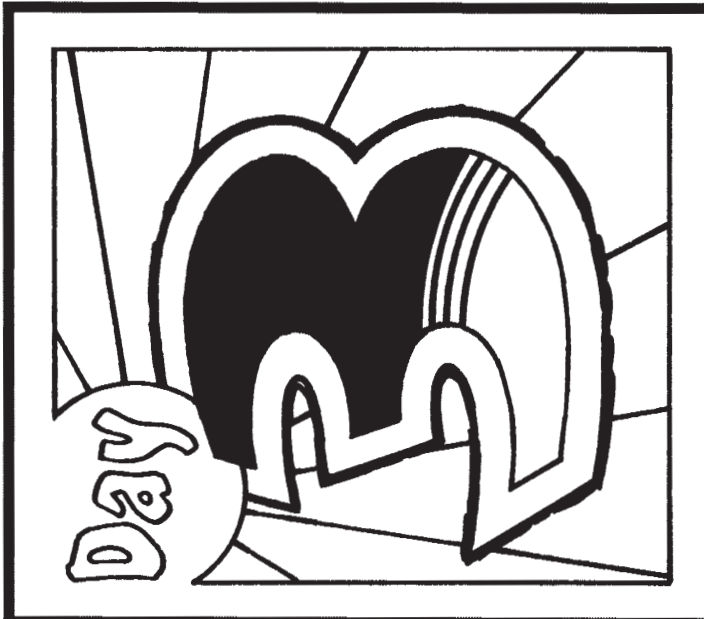
Materials


several balloons blown up and tied
permanent marker
something sharp for popping balloons

Teaching Tips

Special markers for writing on balloons are available at most party supply or craft stores.

Be sensitive to children who might be upset by sudden loud noises.





"I remember your ancient laws, O LORD, and I find comfort in them."

(Psalm 119:52)

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- decide to share, show love, be kind, and
- tell what is special about Jesus.

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- Culturally relevant, hands-on activities
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