

SITE LEADER'S GUIDE

Welcome to



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THIS VBS KIT INCLUDES

DIRECTOR'S GUIDE

In the Director's Guide you will find everything you need to know about creating your own VBS experience. You will find resources for understanding the Site Model, as well as tools for planning, implementation, and follow-up. Creative suggestions have been provided to help you take VBS into other contexts.

LEADER'S GUIDE

The Leader's Guide is the go-to resource for all volunteers. This guide will provide volunteer leaders with everything they need to know about their roles and responsibilities, volunteer policies, VBS timelines, supply lists, curriculum for the daily activities, ideas for the Family Remember & Celebrate Event, and more!

THE BIG GOD STORY FLIPBOOK

This easy-to-print booklet can be given to children for use during their small group times. The booklet will serve as a fun and interactive tool to help children remember their VBS experiences.

REPRODUCIBLE RESOURCES PACK

The following reproducible documents are provided to aid you in creating the best VBS experience possible:

- Child Registration Form
- Site Leader Commitment and Application
- General Volunteer Application
- Supply Lists
- The Big God Story VBS Images for Storytelling
- Incident Report
- Daily Sign-in Sheets
- FAQ's
- Daily Take Home Papers
- Reimbursement Form
- Evaluations
- Follow-up Suggestions for Leaders
- Next Steps for Parents
- Salvation Path for Kids

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS PACK

The following templates are included to create the basics of your promotional campaign:

- Promotional Cards
- Posters
- Site Welcome Banners
- T-Shirts
- A Digital Slide
- The Big God Story VBS Logo
- Thank-you Notes

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

The Big God Story video

To purchase The Big God Story storybook visit:

<http://www.davidccook.com/catalog/Detail.cfm?sn=106521>

THE VISION

As VBS Leaders, you'll quickly find that you're not *just* the Game Leader, or just the Craft Leader, but rather you're a full-fledged minister of God's grace in your own community, and you've assumed all of the responsibility and joy that follows! This is no small task. Take courage: you're not alone. Remember, the call is not to be perfect. The call is to be the loving hands and feet of Jesus! As you prepare to share the Gospel with your neighbors, you will most likely have moments when the task seems too big and the risk seems too great.

In those moments pray that God will open your eyes to the work He's already doing in your neighborhood and in your own heart. It's no mistake that He has called you to this place, at this time!

THE OPPORTUNITY

- To be ministers of God's grace in our own communities (Ephesians 4:11-13).
- To create a safe and loving environment for kids in our communities so that they can come to an understanding of who Jesus is.
- To live out the gospel in word and deed amongst our neighbors.

WHY WE GO

- To be the church together in our neighborhoods. When we embody love for God in our love for our neighbors, people begin to see a broader picture of who God is.
- To meet both the physical and spiritual needs of people in our communities.
- Because the Lord commissions us to go (Matthew 28:18-20). We desire to be disciples, hearing the Word and following through in action.
- We have been given much, and to whom much has been given, much is required (Luke 12:48b).

HOW WE GO

Intentionally: We will be intentional in prayer and in building relationships.

Humbly: We go humbly as servants, modeling after Jesus who came to serve not to be served. In humility we also recognize that the Holy Spirit goes before, with, and behind us.

Prepared: We will work diligently and in unity to create environments where children and families will feel known, cared for, and loved.

THE BIG GOD STORY VBS WEEK OVERVIEW

SCOPE & SEQUENCE

DAY	PONDER POINT	BIBLE LESSON	REMEMBER VERSE	CREATE
1	“The Big Plan”: <i>God Is Redeemer</i>	Adam and Eve— relationship broken and redemption promised (Genesis 2–3)	Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6	Backpacks
2	“The Big Family”: <i>God Is a Covenant Keeper</i>	Abraham and God’s people— redemption comes through the family line (Genesis 12, 15)	The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. 2 Peter 3:9	Preschool: Family Portrait Elementary: Family Tree
3	“The Big Purpose”: <i>God Is in Control</i>	Joshua and the Promised Land— God’s redemptive purpose (Joshua 1–4)	Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9	Beaded Bracelet
4	“The Big Promise”: <i>Jesus Is the Promise</i>	Jesus the Redeemer—His birth, life, death, and resurrection (Luke 2; Matthew 21, 26–28)	For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16	Christmas Ornaments
5	“The Big News”: <i>Jesus Is the Good News</i>	Peter and the early Church— the good news of redemption spreads (Acts 2, 4, 8)	But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8	Picture Frames

SCHEDULE: ELEMENTS AND BREAKDOWN

Sites that are hosting 40 or fewer children should have no problem running this schedule straight through with all children doing the same activities at the same time. If a site has enough physical space, it's even possible that groups as big as 100 children can do everything together. However, if there is a larger group of children and the site cannot accommodate everyone being in the same area at the same time, Site Leaders should ask their Site Shepherd for suggestions on how to do rotations.

PRESCHOOL SCHEDULE:

Prayer and Preparation Time: 60 min

This is one of the most important parts of your day as the volunteer teams gather together to pray. The Site Leader will lead this time. If necessary, this time should also be used for talking through the day's activities and answering any questions.

Registration and Check-In: 20 min

Volunteers can take this opportunity to greet each child and parent, introducing them to kids and leaders. This portion of the day sets the tone for the site. Prior to parents leaving, the Registration Leader will make sure all of the appropriate paperwork has been filled out for each child. Each site will be provided with a registration packet that will include registration and liability release forms and sign-in sheets for each day of VBS. All of the children in attendance must have a completed registration form signed by their parent or legal guardian. All of the parents/guardians sign their children in upon arrival and sign them out for dismissal. All sites should have a table designated for registration.

Anticipate: 20 min

This is an energizing time for parents and kids to start engaging with the material that will be presented in the lesson. It's intentionally designed to spark curiosity and cultivate a sense of awe and wonder about God. Encourage parents to stay and participate in this time if they are dropping off their children.

Connect//Games: 10 min

The Connect Games are designed for kids to have fun and connect with the leaders and other kids at VBS. Use this time to be silly and help new kids feel comfortable by inviting them to participate.

Connect//Small Groups: 15 min

VBS small groups are designed for kids to laugh, play, and form new relationships in a smaller setting. Each day, children will engage in traditions and answer fun questions within their small group. All leaders, even if they're functioning in other roles, can lead small groups. Each leader should have a group of five to seven children. Sites might consider dividing the groups by age when possible. Consider grouping ages five to six, seven to nine, and ten to twelve. However, at smaller sites or sites where ages are not so evenly divided, it can actually be a fun environment to have kids of varying ages learning and playing together.

Snack Break: 15 min

Snack Break is a time to find some shade and take a break. Spend some time eating together and building relationships with one another. The spontaneous conversations can be some of the best conversations all week. Depending on the budget, snacks can be handled in different ways. You might consider providing a small snack on the first day and then asking parents to send their children with their own personal snacks the following days. This ensures that children with special dietary needs or restrictions are getting an appropriate snack, and it can also keep costs down. Another option to consider is actually asking parents to bring something to share with the group. For example, one parent might bring two dozen juice boxes and another parent might provide a big box of cheese crackers. If the church won't be providing a daily snack, Site Leaders should make use of one of these options instead of feeling pressured to front the cost and provide the snacks themselves.

Announcements: 5 min

During announcements, kids will hear about the mission project, daily traditions, instructions on Dress-Up Days, and the special Family Remember & Celebrate Event.

Celebrate//Large Group: 20 min

Storytelling and Worship Time is a time set aside for kids to connect with God and others as they experience The Big God Story. If a site has a Worship Leader, this would be the time where he would lead the children in worship through music. Deciding whether a site will have a time of singing isn't merely a matter of having or not having a leader to function in that role, but also a matter of whether or not the particular children at that site would be ready to participate in singing. For unchurched kids, singing and dancing in a big group is probably something to which they are unaccustomed. If a site is going to have a time of worship, it might be best, at least at the beginning of the week, to keep the songs light and fun.

Respond//Small Groups: 10 min

Respond is a time for children to engage in relationship, reflect on the lesson, and consider how God might want to transform their lives. During Respond, help kids have spiritual conversations, reflect on God in their lives, and explore what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus.

Create: 15 min

This is a time designated for children to work individually or together to create a physical expression or remembrance of what they've learned during their time together.

Game Time: 20 min

Game Time is a great way to close out the activities of the day. Through play, kids are able to have fun as they continue to build relationships with the other children and families in their community. If parents arrive early, invite them to join in the fun.

Bless and Dismiss: 10 min

Close your time together each day with a blessing. A blessing can be a portion of Scripture, a prayer of commission, or a word of encouragement. Invite parents to join you if they arrive early. During dismissal remember to:

- Have parents sign their children out.
- Hand out the Daily Take Home papers.
- Build relationships and get to know the parents.
- Remind everyone to come dressed for the next day's theme.
- Remind kids to bring their money for the Missions Project.
- Remind everyone about the Family Remember & Celebrate Event at the end of the week.

Team Debrief: 30 min

Team Debrief is a time for the site's team to talk about the day. Site Leaders should allow time for storytelling, affirmation, prayer, celebration, and planning for the next day. It's important for Site Leaders to be intentional with this time to build community within the team and to thank God for what He is doing at the site.

ELEMENTARY SCHEDULE:

Prayer and Preparation Time: 60 min

This is one of the most important parts of your day as the volunteer teams gather together to pray. The Site Leader will lead this time. If necessary, this time should also be used for talking through the day's activities and answering any questions.

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Connect//Games: 15 min for Elementary

The Connect Games are designed for kids to have fun and connect with the leaders and other kids at VBS. Use this time to be silly and help new kids feel comfortable by inviting them to participate.

Connect//Small Groups: 10 min

VBS small groups are designed for kids to laugh, play, and form new relationships in a smaller setting. Each day, children will engage in traditions and answer fun questions within their small group. All leaders, even if they're functioning in other roles, can lead small groups. Each leader should have a group of five to seven children. Sites might consider dividing the groups by age when possible. Consider grouping ages five to six, seven to nine, and ten to twelve.

However, at smaller sites or sites where ages are not so evenly divided, it can actually be a fun environment to have kids of varying ages learning and playing together.

Announcements: 5 min

During announcements, kids will hear about the mission project, daily traditions, instructions on Dress-Up Days, and the special Family Remember & Celebrate Event.

Celebrate//Large Group: 20 min

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Respond//Small Groups: 15 min

Respond is a time for children to engage in relationship, reflect on the lesson, and consider how God might want to transform their lives. During Respond, help kids have spiritual conversations, reflect on God in their lives, and explore what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus.

Snack Break: 10 min

Snack Break is a time to find some shade and take a break. Spend some time eating together and building relationships with one another. The spontaneous conversations can be some of the best conversations all week. Depending on the budget, snacks can be handled in different ways. You might consider providing a small snack on the first day and then asking parents to send their children with their own personal snacks the following days. This ensures that children with special dietary needs or restrictions are getting an appropriate snack, and it can also keep costs down. Another option to consider is actually asking parents to bring something to share with the group. For example, one parent might bring two dozen juice boxes and another parent might provide a big box of cheese crackers. If the church won't be providing a daily snack, Site Leaders should make use of one of these options instead of feeling pressured to front the cost and provide the snacks themselves.

Create: 20 min

This is a time designated for children to work individually or together to create a physical expression or remembrance of what they've learned during their time together.

Bible Learning Games: 15 min

These games are a fun and interactive time to learn the Remember Verse for each day.

Game Time: 20 min

Game Time is a great way to close out the activities of the day. Through play, kids are able to have fun as they continue to build relationships with the other children and families in their community. If parents arrive early, invite them to join in the fun.

Bless and Dismiss: 10 min

Close your time together each day with a blessing. A blessing can be a portion of Scripture, a prayer of commission, or a word of encouragement. Invite parents to join you if they arrive early. During dismissal remember to:

- Have parents sign their children out.
- Hand out the Daily Take Home papers.
- Build relationships and get to know the parents.
- Remind everyone to come dressed for the next day's theme.
- Remind kids to bring their money for the Missions Project.
- Remind everyone about the Family Remember & Celebrate Event at the end of the week.

Team Debrief: 30 min

Team Debrief is a time for the site's team to talk about the day. Site Leaders should allow time for storytelling, affirmation, prayer, celebration, and planning for the next day. It's important for Site Leaders to be intentional with this time to build community within the team and to thank God for what He is doing at the site.

VOLUNTEER POLICIES

While serving as a VBS volunteer, there are several policies that must be followed. Below is a suggested list of those requirements, though your church staff may include additional policies.

1. All volunteers must complete a VBS Volunteer Application. With the application, you may be asked to each contribute a registration fee to help make this experience free to all the children.
2. Wear your VBS T-shirt and a name tag every day. If sites are participating in theme days, dress up according to each day's theme.
3. To interact with children, dress comfortably and casually while remaining modest.
4. After being checked in, a child may never leave the group or site without adult supervision.
5. Children must be picked up by a parent/guardian each day from their site in order for you to release them.
6. Only women can take children to the restrooms. Also, give "side hugs" as opposed to full frontal hugs with a child. You should never find yourself alone with a child in a room. Also be cautious about having children sit on your lap. These rules must be strictly enforced for the safety of all leaders and kids.
7. In the event that a child is injured, there will be a first aid kit located at each site. The first aid kit will include ice packs, bandages, and antiseptic wipes. Should a serious injury occur



**Preschool VBS Curriculum
Day by Day**

DAY 1

THE PONDER POINT: “THE BIG PLAN”: *GOD IS REDEEMER*

REMEMBER VERSE: Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6

BIBLE LESSON: Adam and Eve—relationship broken & redemption promised (Genesis 2–3)

THEME FOR THE DAY: Big Welcome Day

ACTIVITY	TIME	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Prayer and Preparation Time	60 min	Site Leader
Registration and Check-In	20 min	Registration Leader
Anticipate	20 min	Anticipate/Create Leader
Connect//Games	10 min	Game Leader
Connect//Small Groups	15 min	All Leaders
Snack Break	15 min	All Leaders
Announcements	5 min	Storyteller
Celebrate//Large Group	20 min	Storyteller (and optional Worship Leader)
Respond//Small Groups	10 min	All Leaders
Create	15 min	Anticipate/Create Leader
Game Time	20 min	Game Leader
Lunch*	20 min	All Leaders
Bless and Dismiss	10 min	Storyteller
Team Debrief	30 min	Site Leader

*We have added this as an option to keep to the 3 hour timeline. As always, it’s up to your individual site to adjust timing if you’d rather shorten the length of time for your preschoolers. If you choose not to have lunch together, your time will end just after 11:30am.

REGISTRATION AND CHECK-IN

Registration Leader: 20 min

Volunteers can take this opportunity to greet each child and parent, introducing them to kids and leaders. This portion of the day sets the tone for the site. Prior to parents leaving, the Registration Leader will make sure the appropriate paperwork has been filled out for each child. Each site will be provided with a registration packet that will include registration and liability release forms and sign-in sheets for each day of VBS. All of the children in attendance must have a completed registration form signed by their parent or legal guardian. Parents/guardians must sign their children in upon arrival and sign them out for dismissal. Each site should have a table designated for registration.

Materials: child registration forms, daily sign-in sheets, name tags (shipping labels), markers

Relate: Registration on this first day is especially important. The dress-up theme for today is a “Big Welcome” and that’s just what you want to make sure happens. Make sure everyone gets a big welcome! In the days to come the children will prepare for the day’s theme before arriving. But since today is the first day, everyone will be using the giant name tags to dress-up. While parents are filling out paperwork, ask the children to take the name tags (the shipping labels, the smaller normal name tags will be used the other days) and write their names on them. Encourage them to write big! They can also decorate them as time allows.

ANTICIPATE: CRAZY CRITTERS

Anticipate/Create Leader: 20 min

This is an energizing time for parents and kids to start engaging with the material that will be presented in the lesson. It’s intentionally designed to spark curiosity and cultivate a sense of awe and wonder about God. Encourage parents to stay and participate in this time if they’re dropping off their children.

Materials: Build an Animal printed pages, construction paper, glue, washable markers, scissors

Prepare: Before children arrive, cut out the animal shapes. Prepare a work area where children will be able to explore and create at their own pace. They’ll be using the materials to create animals. They might create a real animal using a full set of shapes for one animal, or they might create a new animal using pieces of different sets.

SUGGESTION: IF CHILDREN FINISH THE ANTICIPATE ACTIVITY EARLY, DESIGNATE ONE LEADER TO ENGAGE THEM IN A SIMPLE GAME LIKE SIMON SAYS OR DUCK-DUCK-GOOSE UNTIL THE REST OF THE GROUP IS FINISHED. FOR TODAY, ADJUST ANY EXTRA GAMES TO BE ANIMAL THEMED. FOR EXAMPLE IN SIMON SAYS HAVE THE KIDS MAKE ANIMAL SOUNDS AND MOVEMENTS AND IN DUCK-DUCK-GOOSE CHANGE THE WORDS TO BE LION-LION-ROAR OR DOG-DOG-BARK.

Relate: As the kids arrive and check in today, welcome them and direct them toward the Anticipate activity. This is primarily a chance for kids to meet and engage with one another as they participate in some side-by-side fun. Encourage leaders who aren't assisting with registration and check-in to take these first few moments to introduce themselves to the kids and families, making sure everyone is welcomed and feels the excitement!

Today we're going to hear about how God created everything, and how He has a plan for all of His creation! He was super creative when He made all of the animals and plants and stars and planets, and especially each of us! I don't know about you, but some of my favorite parts of God's creation are the animals. Let me hear what some of your favorite animals are. Have the kids take a few seconds to shout out their favorite animals. Well, right now we are going to create some animals out of these supplies! Be ready to share about your animal with some of your new friends later.

Let the children know they can use any of the supplies in their creations. Encourage them to be creative and have fun. Ask open-ended questions throughout the Anticipate time. **What kind of animal are you making? What is its name? Where does your animal live? Does your animal have a favorite food?**

CONNECT//GAMES: GOOD TO MEET YA!

Game Leader: 10 min

The Connect Games are designed for children to have fun while engaging with others. Use this time to be silly and help new kids feel comfortable by inviting them to participate.

Materials: none

Relate: Gather the kids together in a group. Explain that you are going to call out several things that the children might or might not have done before. (See activities below.) Designate two sides of the game area, a "Yes" and a "No" side. Everyone who has done the said activity should go to the "Yes" side while everyone who has not done the activity should go to the "No" side. Ask the kids to move quickly; decide if running is appropriate for your space and group. Once children have moved to the appropriate sides, take a second to recognize each group, and then ask them to move back toward the middle of the area. Upon meeting in the middle they must shake the hand of at least one person from the opposite side. (If there are lots of kids on one side and only a few on the other, the few kids will have to shake lots of hands.) When they shake hands, they should say, "Hello, my name is (child's name) ... Good to meet ya!" in their best exaggerated southern drawl. Remember this is a time to be silly. Before beginning, go around and shake the hands of as many of the kids as possible, giving them your best "Good to meet ya!".

Possible Questions:

Have you ever put your shirt on backwards?

Have you ever stubbed your toe?

Have you ever been on an airplane?

Have you ever been on a bus?

Have you ever put two different shoes on?

Have you ever jumped off of a diving board?

Have you ever eaten so much candy that your tummy hurt?

Have you ever had a pet?

CONNECT//SMALL GROUPS:

All Leaders: 15 min

VBS small groups are designed for children to laugh, play, and form new relationships in a smaller setting. Each day kids will engage in traditions and answer fun questions within their small group.

Materials: Rubber chicken

Prepare: Each leader will have a group of five to seven children. Site Leaders might consider dividing the small groups by age when possible.

Relate: As you're getting started today, take time to connect with the children in your small group. Find a place to sit in a circle. This time will be important for kids to get to know you as well as for you to know them. Be sure to begin by giving everyone a Big Welcome by name. Then, explain to the children that each day everyone in your small group will get a chance to pass around the rubber chicken and get to know each other a little better. If you'd like, your group can decide on a name for your chicken! There will be a Connect Question that you'll ask the kids each day. Pass the rubber chicken around the group and have each person answer the question.

Connect Question: Earlier today we had a chance to create some of our favorite animals. Take a moment and tell us about your creation. Is it a real animal or one you made up? What is your favorite thing about your animal?

After everyone answers the Connect Question, you can ask for prayer requests and pray together as a group.

SNACK BREAK:

All Leaders: 15 min

Snack Break is a time to find some shade and take a break. Spend some time eating together and building relationships with one another. These spontaneous conversations during Snack Break can be some of the best conversations all week.

Materials: cheese crackers (optional), juice boxes (optional)

Prepare: Depending on the budget, snacks can be handled in different ways. You might consider providing a small snack on the first day, and then asking parents to send their children with their own personal snacks the following days. This ensures that children with special dietary needs or restrictions are getting an appropriate snack, and it can also keep costs down. Another option to consider is actually asking parents to bring a grouping of something. For example, one parent might bring two dozen juice boxes and another parent might provide a big box of cheese crackers. If the church won't be providing a daily snack, Site Leaders should make use of one of these options instead of feeling pressured to front the cost and provide the snacks themselves.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Storyteller: 5 min

This is a time for children to hear about the missions project for the week and also hear about daily traditions and instructions on dress-up days. Kids can also be reminded about the Family Remember & Celebrate Event at the end of the week.

Missions Project: The Registration Leader can inform the Storyteller about what to announce, or the Registration Leader can do the announcement on his own.

Dress-up Days: (Tuesday) will be Big Hair Day! This can be interpreted as literal bigness, or simply big in style. Encourage them to be creative and have fun. Let them know that they'll get a chance to show off their big hair tomorrow!

Family Remember & Celebrate Event: Tell kids about the Family Event on Friday. Encourage them to invite their families!

CELEBRATE//LARGE GROUP:

Storyteller and optional Worship Leader: 20 min

Worship

*While worship at each site is optional, preschoolers engage through music and motions in their everyday lives and this is a great way to help them enter in to the large group time. One of the best things about preschoolers is that they are very forgiving. You don't have to have a great voice or be a brilliant dancer to lead little ones. If you have someone who is able and willing to be silly and have some fun with the kids, we highly recommend it

Prepare: Learn a few songs off of the CD provided for you by the church.

Relate: Engage the kids in worship through singing and dancing. Choose one or two songs to open with each day.

Mail Time

Each day children will receive mail in the mailbox you've been supplied with. Written on the mail is the week's Remember Verse from the Bible. It's important for children to associate the message written on the "mail" as words from the Bible, so be sure to have a Bible visible for reference.

Remember Verse: Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6

Materials: Bible, Remember Verse in an envelope

Prepare: Invite two children to come up front and help with MAIL TIME as Hider and Seeker.

Relate: The Hider retrieves the mail from the mailbox and hides it somewhere in the room while the Seeker closes her eyes. Meanwhile, the other children pay close attention to the hiding place. When the Hider is ready and returns to his seat, the Seeker attempts to find the mail using the Hot and Cold game. All the children can help the Seeker find the hidden mail by calling out "hot" or "cold" as clues. Once the Seeker finds the mail, the Host invites her to see what's inside. The Host reads the enclosed Remember Verse with the Seeker. Talk about the meaning of the verse while interacting with the children and other leaders onstage with you. Define any unfamiliar words for the children.

The Worship Leader/Storyteller should lead the large group in reciting the Remember Verse several times together using a variety of engaging methods. Using hand motions, different voices, varying the speed, and integrating characters are all great ways to help commit the Scripture to memory. For longer verses, approach the verse one section at a time, increasing what the children repeat back each time. It may be helpful to introduce some simple hand motions for the verse. If you do, include the Hider and Seeker in this time as helpers for demonstrating the hand motions. Having fun as children attempt to familiarize themselves with the verse will give context and make the Scripture more memorable. Treat this as a celebration—an exciting time of introducing your children to God's Word.

TBGS TREASURE

The Big God Story Treasure is a fun and interactive entrance point into God's story. Each day a new object which is connected to and sometimes used in THE BIG GOD STORY, is hidden in the treasure box. The Storyteller or Worship Leader will select a child volunteer to assist her with retrieving the item. Together as a group, the children will discover the identity of this object as they begin to ask questions from their observations and experiences.

Materials: Treasure Box, Day #1 item: plastic snake

Prepare: Invite a child volunteer to come up front and help the other kids discover the item in the treasure box.

Relate: Invite your child volunteer to “spy” on the item by peeking into The Big God Story Treasure Box. Have her whisper the identity of the item in your ear to ensure she knows what it is. Once you're sure the child knows the item, sit down facing the children. Lead the children in a form of the game 20 Questions. Children will guess what the object is by asking yes-or-no questions of your assistant (child). If the questioners or the questionee have trouble, ask some specific questions about color and shape to help guide them. (You may want to limit this time to four or five questions.) Once the children have finished guessing correctly, ask your assistant to retrieve the item from the Treasure Box and bring it to you. Thank your volunteer and encourage her to sit with her small group. Ask: **What did you find in the The Big God Story Treasure Box? Children will answer. Is this a real snake? That's right it's not! Let's find out what this item has to do with The Big God Story today. Do you know what time it is?** If you have kids from church in your group, they might be able to answer, but if not, direct them to repeat after you ... **It's time for The Big God Story!**

STORYTELLING

During this time, kids get to connect with God and others as they learn their Bible verse and experience The Big God Story through engaging Storytelling.

Scripture: Genesis 2–3; Adam and Eve—relationship broken & redemption promised

The Ponder Point: “The Big Plan”: *God Is Redeemer*

Materials: Bible, TBGS Image #1: Eden, twine, clothespins (2), rainbow yarn or crepe paper streamers in 5 colors, gold foil seal

Prepare Storytelling: Images from *The Big God Story* (written by Michelle Anthony, illustrated by Cory Godbey) will be used to create a storyboard throughout the week. At the end of the week, the kids will be able to look back on the storyboard and share The Big God Story as well as what they know about God.

Prepare by stringing your piece of twine between two secure objects. (The twine should be approximately 10 feet long. Allow for around 7 feet of space to hang the pictures.) Each day you will add another image to the twine. Use the clothespins to hang the images on the twine.

Additionally, to visually connect the parts of The Big God Story and the thread of redemption you will string your rainbow yarn or crepe paper streamers between the images. (The rainbow yarn and crepe paper should also be approximately 10 feet long.) You will attach the yarn to the images with the gold foil seals. If you have a larger group and are teaching in a larger space consider using the crepe paper option, instead of the rainbow yarn. The effect will be the same, but the crepe paper will have a bigger visual impact. If using the crepe paper, group several colorful streamers together to create a rainbow effect and drape them over the images. You can still use the gold foil seals to help secure them.

Storytelling:

Friends, I am so glad you all are here! This week we are going to have lots of fun as we learn about God and The Big God Story. We find The Big God Story in a special book called the Bible. (Hold up your Bible.) **During this time each day, we'll have the chance to hear parts of The Big God Story. It is the greatest story ever told! It's a story of adventure, excitement, and promise. It is all about God's love for us, and it is all true! But before we get started, let's take a moment to ask God to help us quiet our hearts and minds so we can hear what He wants to teach us today.** (Lead children in the Prayer of Release.)

The Prayer of Release is a time for children and leaders to pause and ask God to quiet their hearts and minds. Encourage kids and leaders to hold their hands out in front of their body as if releasing their worries and distractions. This posture of prayer helps prepare us to receive from the Holy Spirit.

The Big God Story begins before everyone and everything was created. (Open your Bible to Genesis to help the kids understand that, even when you're storytelling, the things you share are straight from the Bible.)

In the very beginning there was no earth. No stars. No sun. No water. No animals. No people. But God was there, and God began to create. He spoke the whole universe into existence, from the tiniest bug, to the biggest whale. I wonder what is the biggest animal you've ever seen? (Allow a few children to respond.) **Well, God created everything from the dust of the ground to the stars in the sky. Then God formed a man from the dust and breathed life into him. God called him Adam. Adam was different from all the rest of creation. Adam was made in the image of God!**

(Take TBGS Image #1: Eden, and hang it on the twine with 2 of the clothespins.) **Adam lived in the most beautiful place.** (Point to the picture.) **It was a place called the garden of Eden. The garden had trees that were full of delicious things to eat. What are some things you might like to eat from a garden?** (Allow a few children to respond.) **That all sounds yummy! In the garden of Eden there was one tree that God told Adam not to eat from. Can you show me a number one with your hands? Good job! We don't really know what this tree looked like, but we know God did not want Adam to eat its fruit.** (Reference the picture.) **God had already given Adam so many beautiful trees full of fruit to eat. This was the only one that was off-limits. God said that the cost for disobeying and eating from the tree would be the ultimate cost. The cost was death.**

So the man lived in the garden and went to work taking care of the plants and the animals. But God knew that it wasn't good for Adam to be alone. So God created a woman called Eve. This must have been such a wonderful life for the first people, Adam and Eve. They had a beautiful, perfect garden to live in. They knew no pain, no sadness, no fear. The Bible says God even walked around in the garden with them!

But sadly, something happened that changed all of this. Show me your sad faces (wait for children to show you). One day a snake came to Eve and convinced her not to listen to God. Remember, God had said that if the people ate from the tree that was off-limits, they would die. They wouldn't be able to live with God in the garden forever. The snake lied and told Eve that it would actually be ok to eat from that tree. Wait! Where did we see a snake? That's right, in The Big God Story Treasure Box! So Eve ate some of the fruit and shared it with Adam. Adam and Eve knew right away that they had made the wrong choice, and they were ashamed. They tried to hide from God because they knew that they had done something wrong. That's called sin. The Bible says that everyone sins.

Sometimes we sin, but God is always perfect. There is no one or anything like Him. Everything He does is good and right. When Adam and Eve sinned, they disobeyed God's words and had to leave the beautiful garden where they walked and talked with Him. They must have been so sad as they walked away. God never stopped loving them. He had a plan to fix the broken relationship between His people and Himself. A plan to make everything right again!

God promised to send a Savior to come and redeem us. What does redeem mean? (Pause.) It's a pretty big word. To redeem means to buy something back. Or, to give something that you have so that you can get something else. Jesus gave His life for us, so that He could pay the price of our sin. That was God's plan all along. He sent the Redeemer to pay for our sin, by dying in our place. Who is the Redeemer? That's right: Jesus. God sent His Son Jesus to redeem us from sin! For the rest of this week, we will hear all about God's big plan and His promise to send the Redeemer.

This rainbow yarn can help us remember that promise. Let's see if we can see the promise of redemption in all the parts of The Big God Story we hear this week. (Hold up the rainbow yarn or crepe paper and secure one end of it to the image with the seal. Let the remainder of the yarn hang down, as it will be used in the coming days.) We will see God keeping His promise to send a Redeemer in every part of The Big God Story, but it didn't happen right away. God's people had to wait. And we have to wait till tomorrow to hear the next part of the story too!

RESPOND//SMALL GROUPS:

All Leaders: 10 min

Respond is a time for children to engage in relationship, reflect on the lesson, and consider how God might want to change their lives. During Respond, help kids to have spiritual conversations, reflect on who God is in their lives, and explore what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus.



**Elementary Curriculum
Day by Day**

DAY 1

THE PONDER POINT: “THE BIG PLAN”: *GOD IS REDEEMER*

REMEMBER VERSE: Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6

BIBLE LESSON: Adam and Eve—relationship broken & redemption promised (Genesis 2–3)

THEME FOR THE DAY: Big Welcome Day

ACTIVITY	TIME	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Prayer and Preparation Time	60 min	Site Leader
Registration and Check-In	20 min	Registration Leader
Anticipate	20 min	Anticipate/Create Leader
Connect//Games	15 min	Game Leader
Connect//Small Groups	10 min	All Leaders
Announcements	5 min	Storyteller
Celebrate//Large Group	20 min	Storyteller (and optional Worship Leader)
Respond//Small Groups	15 min	All Leaders
Snack	10 min	All Leaders
Create	20 min	Anticipate/Create Leader
Bible Learning Games	15 min	Game Leader
Game Time	20 min	Game Leader
Bless and Dismiss	10 min	Storyteller
Team Debrief	30 min	Site Leader

Dress-up Days: Tomorrow (Tuesday) will be Big Hair Day! This can be interpreted as literal bigness, or simply big in style. Encourage them to be creative and have fun. Let them know that they'll get a chance to show off their big hair tomorrow!

Family Remember & Celebrate Event: Tell kids about the Family Event on Friday. Encourage them to invite their families!

CELEBRATE//LARGE GROUP:

Storyteller and optional Worship Leader: 20 min

During this time, kids get to connect with God and others as they experience The Big God Story through engaging Storytelling.

Scripture: Genesis 2–3; Adam and Eve—relationship broken & redemption promised

The Ponder Point: “The Big Plan”: *God Is Redeemer*

Materials: Bibles, TBGS Image #1: Eden, Ponder Point strip #1: “The Big Plan”: *God Is Redeemer*, twine, clothespins (3), rainbow yarn or crepe paper streamers in 5 colors, gold foil seal, and music (optional)

Prepare Storytelling: Images from *The Big God Story* (written by Michelle Anthony, illustrated by Cory Godbey) storybook will be used to create a storyboard throughout the week. At the end of the week, the kids will be able to look back on the storyboard and share The Big God Story as well as what they know about God.

Prepare by stringing your piece of twine between two secure objects. (The twine should be approximately 10 feet long. Allow for around 7 feet of space to hang the pictures.) Each day you will add another image and the day's Ponder Point to the twine. Use the clothespins to hang the images and Ponder Point paper strips on the twine (2 clothespins for the images and 1 for the strips of paper).

Additionally, to visually connect the parts of The Big God Story and the thread of redemption you will string your rainbow yarn or crepe paper streamers between the images. (The rainbow yarn and crepe paper should also be approximately 10 feet long.) You will attach the yarn to the images with the gold foil seals. If you have a larger group and are teaching in a larger space consider using the crepe paper option, instead of the rainbow yarn. The effect will be the same, but the crepe paper will have a bigger visual impact. If using the crepe paper, group several colorful streamers together to create a rainbow effect and drape them over the images. You can still use the gold foil seals to help secure them.

Prepare Worship: If your site has a Worship Leader, consider leading the children in worship through music during Celebrate/Large Group. Deciding whether your site will have a time of singing isn't merely dependent upon whether or not you have a leader. You must take into consideration the group of kids at your particular site. Are they ready to participate in singing? For some unchurched children, singing and dancing in a big group is probably something they aren't used to doing.

If your site is going to have a time of worship through music, it might be best, at least at the beginning of the week, to keep the songs light and fun.

Storytelling:

Friends, I'm so glad you're here! This week we are going to have lots of fun as we learn about God and The Big God Story. We find The Big God Story in a special book called the Bible. (Hold up your Bible.) **During this time each day, we'll have the chance to hear different parts of The Big God Story. It is the greatest story ever told! It's a story of adventure, excitement, and promise. It's all about God's love for us, and it's all true! Before we get started, let's take a moment to ask God to help us quiet our hearts and minds so we can hear what He wants to teach us today.** (Lead children in the Prayer of Release.)

The Prayer of Release is a time for children and leaders to pause and ask God to quiet their hearts and minds. Encourage kids and leaders to hold their hands out in front of their body as if releasing their worries and distractions. This posture of prayer helps prepare us to receive from the Holy Spirit.

The Big God Story begins before everyone and everything was created. We read the beginning of The Big God Story in a part of the Bible called Genesis. (Open your Bible to Genesis to help the kids understand that, even when you're storytelling, the things you're sharing are straight from the Bible.)

In the very beginning there was no earth. No stars. No sun. No water. No animals. No people. But God was there, and God began to create. He spoke the whole universe into existence, from the tiniest bug, to the biggest whale. I wonder, what is the biggest animal you've ever seen? (Allow a few children to respond.) **Well, God created everything from the dust of the ground to the stars in the sky. Then God formed a man from the dust and breathed life into him ... and the man became a living being. God called him Adam. Adam was unique from all the rest of creation. Adam was made in the image of God!**

(Take TBGS Image #1: Eden, and hang it on the twine with 2 of the clothespins.) **Adam lived in the most beautiful place.** (Point to the picture.) **It was a place called the garden of Eden. The garden had trees that were full of delicious things to eat. What are some things you might like to eat from a garden?** (Allow a few children to respond.) **That all sounds yummy! In the garden of Eden there was one tree that God told Adam not to eat from. It was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We don't really know what this tree looked like, but we know God did not want Adam to eat its fruit.** (Reference the picture.) **God had already given Adam so many beautiful trees full of fruit to eat. This was the only one that was off-limits. God said that the cost for disobeying and eating from the tree would be the ultimate cost. The cost was death.**

So the man lived in the garden and went to work taking care of the plants and the animals. But God knew that it wasn't good for Adam to be alone. So God caused Adam to go into a deep sleep. Then God took one of Adam's ribs and created a woman called Eve. This must have been such a wonderful life for the first people, Adam and Eve. They had a beautiful, perfect garden to live in. They knew no pain, no sadness, no fear.