



WEEK
TWO
DECEMBER 2023

LARGE GROUP
3-5 YEAR
-OLDS
STAGE

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

BIBLE STORY

Jesus is born.

JESUS IS BORN
LUKE 2:1-7

MEMORY VERSE

"God loved the world so much
that he gave his only Son."

JOHN 3:16, GNT

KEY QUESTION

How do we know
God loves us?

BOTTOM LINE

God gave us Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

God loves me.

PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Offer one or more of these activities as preschoolers arrive.

Who Lives in the Stable?

Building Tracks

Where Was Jesus Born?

LARGE GROUP

20
MIN

WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

"Silent Night," and "Happy Birthday Jesus"

Bible Story

Prayer

SMALL GROUP

25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Offer as many of these activities as your time, facilities, resources, and leadership allow.

Memory Verse Train

Christmas Story Bag

Draw the Story

Is This the Right Place?

Scripture Wrapped Manger

Journal and Prayer

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Going Home

Memory Verse Card

Parent Cue Card (*print or email*)

Parent Cue App



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10 MINUTES

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LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE CHILDREN'S HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE WORSHIP, BIBLE STORY, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

WORSHIP

WHAT YOU NEED: "Memory Verse Card" from Week One in Bible; instruments or music player; this month's worship song, "Silent Night," included in your monthly files; and "Happy Birthday, Jesus," available on OrangeKidsMusic.com; Optional Dance Moves Videos for "Silent Night," available in the Media Package if you subscribe or from OrangeKidsMusic.com, and "Happy Birthday, Jesus," available from OrangeKidsMusic.com

Worship Leader enters.

WORSHIP LEADER: "Hello, friends! My name is [your name]. Can you guess what time it is? I'll give you a BIG hint. We'll sing and dance and say, 'Thank You, God!' That's right, it's time for worship! It's my favorite thing to do! Can you tell me what we're celebrating all month long?"

CHILDREN AND WORSHIP LEADER: "Christmas!"

WORSHIP LEADER: "That's right! At Christmas, we celebrate the best gift ever—Jesus, God's Son. We know that God loves us because God gave us Jesus!
How do we know God loves us?"

CHILDREN AND WORSHIP LEADER: **"God gave us Jesus."**

WORSHIP LEADER: "Yes, **God gave us Jesus.** So stand up and sing!"

Lead children in singing "Silent Night," this month's worship song.

WORSHIP LEADER: "Tell me, **how do we know God loves us?"**

CHILDREN AND WORSHIP LEADER: **"God gave us Jesus."**

WORSHIP LEADER: "That's right! **God gave us Jesus!** The Bible teaches us that 'God (flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down) loved the world (cross arms over chest) so much (pull hands away from each other) that he gave his only Son,' (rock arms like a baby) John 3:16. (Open hands like a book.) Let's say our memory verse together with the motions.

Lead children to say the memory verse with the motions.

"Great job, friends! We know God loves us so much because God sent us Jesus! Let's sing about that together.



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10 MINUTES

Lead children in singing "Happy Birthday Jesus."

"I'm so glad to know that **God loves me** because **God gave us Jesus**. [Transition] And now it's time to turn around, sit down, and shake the wiggles out (*wiggle hands*) so we can hear (*cup hands behind ears*) what the story's all about!"

Host enters as Worship Leader exits.

INTRO SKETCH

WHAT YOU NEED: Shiny decorations such as tinsel garland, jewel stickers, and mini ornaments; fun Christmas apparel, train whistle, and cardboard train costume from Week One

NOTE: The Host will wear fun Christmas attire with train costume and use a train whistle all month.

Preset the Christmas train in the center of storytelling area.

Host enters, wearing a Christmas attire and cardboard train.

HOST: (*Move arms like a train.*) "Chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga (*pull hand down*) choo-choo!"

"Hi, friends! Welcome to [your environment's name or story time]! My name is [your name]. Do you like my train? I put some fancy decoration on like these. (*Describe and point to decorations.*) It's so sparkly and fancy!"

"My train looks very fancy now! I think it's time for a TRAIN RIDE!"

Blow the train whistle.

"Wait! I don't know where I'm going yet. Hmm . . . where should I go in this super-fancy train? (*Pause to think.*) I know! I can drive to a sparkly big castle! Or I can go to a super-fancy dinner! OR . . . I can drive to meet someone super important! (*Pause.*) THAT'S IT! I can drive this fancy train to meet someone super important at a sparkly castle to eat a super-fancy dinner! It's the best idea ever!"

"Today, our Bible story is about someone REALLY important. Let's see if they go somewhere fancy. See you later!"

Blow the train whistle.

Storyteller enters as Host exits.



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10 MINUTES

STORY

WHAT YOU NEED: "Joseph and Mary on Donkey," "Baby Jesus," and "Animal Faces" Activity Pages; cardstock; sound effects; cardboard boxes; brightly colored butcher paper or wrapping paper in a variety of colors; construction paper; jumbo craft sticks; scissors; packaging tape; utility knife; glue; Bible; and train whistle, train engineer costume, Christmas story train engine, and "Mary and Angel" train car from Week One; *Optional Story Images* and cardstock

Preset the Christmas story train in the storytelling area.

Storyteller enters dressed like a train engineer and carrying a train whistle and Bible.

STORYTELLER: "Hello, friends! Merry almost Christmas! I'm [your name], and I can't wait to tell you a true story from the Bible.

Open Bible for children to see, then set it down.

"And our Christmas train will help us learn all about the true story of Christmas! Are you ready for a story? (*Listen for response.*) Fantastic! When I blow my whistle, I want everyone to say, 'ALL ABOARD!' Get ready!"

Blow train whistle.

CHILDREN AND STORYTELLER: "ALL ABOARD!"

Kneel next to the "Angel and Mary" train car.

STORYTELLER: "The true story of Christmas begins with a young girl named Mary.

Point to Mary in the picture on the train car.

(*Option: Display Story Image W2 01*)

"God sent an angel (*point to angel*) to tell Mary a very important message. The angel told Mary that she would have a baby and the baby would be named. . . (*cup hand to ear to encourage children to respond*) Yes! Jesus!"

"Not long after that, Mary and Joseph . . .

Lift the flap on the "Joseph and Mary" train car to reveal Joseph.

"Had to travel to a town called Bethlehem. What kind of animal do you think Mary rode to Bethlehem? (*Listen for responses.*) Those are some great guesses! Mary may have ridden . . .

Lift the flap to reveal Mary on a donkey.

"A donkey.

(*Option: Display Story Image W2 02*)



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10 MINUTES

Make the ASL sign for "donkey." Hold thumb next to forehead and flap fingers up and down twice.

"Can you do the sign for donkey (*make the ASL sign for donkey*) and say, 'Hee-haw'?"

CHILDREN AND STORYTELLER: (*Make the ASL sign for donkey.*) "Hee-haw! Hee-haw!"

STORYTELLER: "Good job! Now when Mary and Joseph got to Bethlehem, they needed to find a place to stay. And fast! Baby Jesus was about to be born!"

"Now tell me, is Jesus being born a little bit special or a BIG WHOLE LOT of special? (*Listen for response.*) YES! Jesus being born is a BIG WHOLE LOT of special, because Jesus is God's Son! So where did Joseph and Mary stay? (*Pause.*)

"Did they stay somewhere fancy, like a giant castle? (*Pause.*) Or somewhere not so fancy, like a stable where animals live? (*Pause.*) Yes, Mary and Joseph stayed in a stable where animals live.

(*Option: Display Story Image W2 03*)

Play "Chickens" sound effect. Pull chicken cutout from "Baby Jesus" train car and slide craft stick into slit.

AUDIO: Chicken (*provided*)

"What was that? What animal makes that sound? (*Pause.*) A chicken! That's right!"

Play "Sheep" sound effect. Pull sheep cutout from "Baby Jesus" train car and slide craft stick into slit.

AUDIO: Sheep (*provided*)

"I hear another animal! What animal makes that sound? (*Pause.*) Yes, that's a sheep!"

Play "Cow" sound effect. Pull cow cutout from "Baby Jesus" train car and slide craft stick into slit.

AUDIO: Cow (*provided*)

"What animal makes that sound? (*Pause.*) Yes, that's a cow!"

Play "Baby" sound effect.

AUDIO: Baby (*provided*)

"Wait. That's not an animal. What makes THAT sound? (*Pause.*) Aww, it's a baby!"



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10 MINUTES

"Baby Jesus was born!

(Option: Display Story Image W2 04)

"Mary wrapped Jesus in cloths and placed Him in a manger full of straw. Jesus, God's Son, had been born! **God gave us Jesus!**

"And that's how we know God loves us! **God gave us Jesus!** So when I ask you, '**How do we know God loves us?**', I want you to say, '**God gave us Jesus!**' Let's try it! **How do we know God loves us?**"

CHILDREN AND STORYTELLER: "God gave us Jesus!"

STORYTELLER: "Again! **How do we know God loves us?**"

CHILDREN AND STORYTELLER: "God gave us Jesus!"

STORYTELLER: "Yay! **God gave us Jesus!**" **[Transition]** Our story time is over (*pick up and close Bible*), but we're not through. Let's talk to God because God loves you!"

PRAYER

STORYTELLER: "Dear God, thank You for loving us so much that You gave us Jesus. Jesus is very special, because Jesus is Your Son! We love You, God. In Jesus' name, we pray, amen.

"Come back next time to hear more about the true story of Christmas. See you next time! Bye!"

Host enters as Storyteller exits, carrying train whistle and Bible.

OUTRO SKETCH

WHAT YOU NEED: Cardboard train from Intro

Host enters as Storyteller exits.

HOST: "Wow! Jesus wasn't born in a fancy place, but Jesus is the most special gift ever! Because Jesus is God's Son!

"I think I (*point to self*) got the story. Did you (*point to children*) get it? If you did, say, 'Got it!' Get it?" (*Cup one hand behind ear.*)

CHILDREN AND HOST: "Got it!"

HOST: (*Give two thumbs-up.*) "Good! I don't have to drive my train somewhere fancy for it to be special. So, ALL ABOARD!"

Blow train whistle.

[Transition] "And now it's time for more Bible fun. There's more to learn. Come on, everyone!"

Host dismisses small groups and exits.



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GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

Gather children for a Large Group time that includes interactive worship, the introductory sketch, and the Bible story. The Stage Script is written for those who gather their preschoolers together from multiple rooms and have a larger space on which to present the Bible story. If you are pulling your children to a rug on one side of your preschool space, you may benefit from using the Rug Script.

WORSHIP: INVITING PEOPLE TO RESPOND TO GOD (10 MINUTES)

A Worship Leader and live instruments are recommended to sing along with the music tracks. Encourage children to be active during worship by incorporating the appropriate hand motions.

STORY: COMMUNICATING GOD'S TRUTH IN ENGAGING WAYS (10 MINUTES)

Choose an adult or teenager who relates well to preschoolers to tell the Introductory Sketch. If possible, use the same person for an entire month, as the Host role stays the same each month.

Choose an engaging adult to tell the Bible story. This person should be able to command the attention of preschoolers and control the group through animated storytelling. These scripts are written to be "told" and not "read." Advanced preparation is necessary.

1. WORSHIP

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Leader(s)
- Instruments or music player
- "Memory Verse Card" from Week One placed in Bible at John 3:16

MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS:

- This month's worship song, "Silent Night," included in your monthly files
- "Happy Birthday Jesus," available on OrangeKidsMusic.com

OPTIONAL VIDEOS (AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE):

- Dance Moves Music Video for "Silent Night," available in the Media Package if you subscribe or on OrangeKidsMusic.com
- Dance Moves Music Video for "Happy Birthday Jesus," available on OrangeKidsMusic.com

WHAT YOU DO:

- Download all songs (available on OrangeKidsMusic.com) and have them ready to use.

2. INTRO/OUTRO SKETCH

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Shiny decorations such as duct tape, tinsel garland, jewel stickers, and mini ornaments
- Items from Week One (fun Christmas attire, train whistle, and cardboard train costume)

WHAT YOU DO:

- Add shiny decorations to train costume.



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3. BIBLE STORY

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Joseph and Mary on Donkey," "Baby Jesus," and "Animal Faces" Activity Pages
 - New images will be added each week to the story train. Activity Pages for individual weeks can be found in each week's folder.
- Cardstock
- Cardboard boxes – Recycle cardboard boxes of different shapes and sizes to make two train cars. If following our example on Pinterest (bit.ly/44U6BjS), use the following size:
 - Medium boxes, 15" x 12" x 10" (bit.ly/3w5uQfz)-two per Large Group
- Brightly colored butcher paper or wrapping paper in a variety of colors
- Construction paper for train wheels and flaps
- Jumbo craft sticks—three per large group
- Tinsel garland
- Scissors
- Packaging tape
- Utility Knife
- Glue
- Bible
- Items from Week One: train whistle, train engineer costume, Christmas story train engine, and "Mary and Angel" train car
- *Optional cardstock*

MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS:

- Chicken
- Sheep
- Cow
- Baby

LARGE GROUP VISUALS:

- Story Image W2 01
- Story Image W2 02
- Story Image W2 03
- Story Image W2 04

WHAT YOU DO:

- Copy "Joseph and Mary on Donkey" and "Baby Jesus" on cardstock and cut off copying directions.
- Copy "Animal Faces" on cardstock and cut out.
- To make the "Joseph and Mary" train car:
 - Assemble one medium box and tape the top flaps shut.
 - Wrap with brightly colored paper.
 - *Option: If boxes do not have markings or if you use brown kraft paper, consider taping a large piece of construction paper behind Activity Page.*
 - Add wheels by cutting two circles out of construction paper and taping onto box near the bottom corners.
 - Tape "Joseph and Mary on Donkey" picture onto the train car.
 - Create a flap to cover Joseph on the picture by taping construction paper along the top front edge of the box. Once the flap is lifted it should rest on the top of the box.
 - Create a second flap to cover Mary and the donkey.
- To make the "Baby Jesus" train car:
 - Assemble one medium box. Tape one of the long top flaps in place. Tuck the other flaps inside and secure with tape or simply cut off the extra flaps.
 - Wrap with brightly colored paper.
 - In the top flap, cut three slits that are the width of the craft sticks.
 - Tape "Baby Jesus" picture onto the train car.
 - Glue animal face cutouts onto craft sticks and place inside train car.
- Cut a short section of tinsel and thread through the holes to connect the train cars with the "Angel and Mary" train car. Secure with packaging tape.
- Storyteller wears train engineer costume and carries train whistle and Bible.
- *NOTE: See previous weeks' Getting Ready for directions on building train engine and previous train cars. Save all train cars for the month.*
- *Option: Copy the Optional Story Images on cardstock or download them to display on a screen.*



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SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

WONDER, LOOK AT GOD'S STORY: First Look offers weekly introductory sketches and Bible stories on the DVD titled "Wonder, Look at God's Story." This DVD is available for purchase at OrangeStore.org or as part of your monthly Media Package.

FIRST LOOK PINTEREST PAGE

- Visit our Pinterest page to see craft samples and suggested supplies. bit.ly/FL_ChristmasTrain