



WEEK
FIVE
DECEMBER 2023

LARGE GROUP
3-5 YEAR
-OLDS
STAGE

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

BIBLE STORY

The wise men go to see Jesus,
God's Son.

THE WISE MEN
MATTHEW 2:1-2, 9-11

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.

Star Projector
Track Shapes
It's a Wrap!

LARGE GROUP

20
MIN

WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

"Silent Night," and "Jesus Is"

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.

Order of the Train
Pass the Train
Gift Finders
Line Up the Story
Wise Men Pop-Up
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 "Jesus Is," available on OrangeKidsMusic.com; Optional Dance Moves Video for "Silent Night," available in the Media Package if you subscribe or from OrangeKidsMusic.com, and "Jesus Is," available from OrangeKidsMusic.com

Worship Leader enters.

WORSHIP LEADER: "Friends, I'm SO excited to see you today! My name is [your name]. I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas. Christmas is when we celebrate Jesus' birthday. God gave us Jesus because God loves us! **How do we know God loves us?**"

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

WORSHIP LEADER: "You've got it! Now stand up on your feet, and let's sing all about it!"

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

"God loves me. God loves you, too! And He showed us just how much He loves us when He 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.

"Yes, God loves you and God loves me. And we celebrate Jesus' birthday on Christmas. Stand up and sing this out with me.

Lead children in singing "Jesus Is."

"What an awesome song. We can sing and dance and say, 'Thank You, God, for sending us Your only Son, Jesus!' One more time, **how do we know God loves us?**"

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



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WORSHIP LEADER: "God loves us SO much that He gave us Jesus! That's why Christmas is such a big celebration! Thanks for worshipping with me today. **[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: Heart stickers; resealable plastic bags; gift box or bag; and train whistle, train costume, and fun Christmas sweater, headband, or necklace from previous weeks

Host enters as Worship Leader exits.

HOST: "Hi, friends! Welcome to [your environment's name or story time]! My name is [your name]. I hope everyone had a merry Christmas. I had such a great time giving people gifts that I want to give more gifts.

"When I blow my train whistle (*hold up train whistle*), I want you to move your arms like this (*move arms like a train, bending at elbows and moving in a circle*) and say, 'Chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga, chugga-chugga (*pull hand down*) choo-choo!' Let's practice. Ready?"

Blow train whistle.

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

HOST: "Great job! Now each time we do that, I'll go to each small group to give you a small gift. Ready?"

Blow train whistle and move to first small group.

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

HOST: "Here you go, [small group's name]!"

Give a bag of heart stickers to the Small Group Leader.

"I see another small group that I need to visit."

Blow train whistle and move to next small group.

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

HOST: "Here you go, [small group's name]!"

Give a bag of heart stickers to the Small Group Leader. Repeat until each small group has a bag of stickers.

"Today, our Bible story is about some people who traveled a long, long way to give gifts to someone very special. I can't wait for you to hear it!"



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Storyteller enters as Host exits.

STORY

WHAT YOU NEED: "Wise Men" Activity Page; cardstock; cardboard box; brightly colored butcher paper in a variety of colors, or paint and paintbrushes; construction paper; tinsel garland; scissors; packaging tape; utility knife; Bible; three wrapped gift boxes or gift bags; and items from previous weeks (*train whistle, train engineer costume, Christmas story train engine and "Mary and Angel," "Joseph and Mary on Donkey," "Baby Jesus," "Shepherd and Sheep," and "Birthday Cake" train cars*); *Optional Story Images* and cardstock

Preset the Christmas Story train in the storytelling area.

Storyteller enters, carrying a Bible, as Host exits.

STORYTELLER: "Hello, friends! 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 is going to help us learn one more part of the true story of Christmas! Are you ready 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!"

STORYTELLER: "Christmas is when we celebrate that Jesus was born. God loves us so much, **God gave us Jesus!**
Walk to the "Wise Men" train car.

(Option: Display Story Image W5 01)

"Now there were people called wise men who lived very far away. They were waiting for Jesus to be born because they knew Jesus was God's Son.

(Option: Display Story Image W5 02)

"After Jesus was born, God put a special star in the sky to show the wise men the way to Jesus so that they could celebrate Him.

(Option: Display Story Image W5 03)

"The wise men knew they could follow the star to get to Jesus. It was a long journey, but they finally got there! The wise men were SO happy to see Jesus.

(Option: Display Story Image W5 04)

"As soon as they saw him, they gave Jesus gifts and worshipped Him.

Pull wrapped gifts from train car and place on top of flap.



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(Option: Display Story Image W5 05)

"They wanted to show how special Jesus is. And we know Jesus is special because Jesus is God's Son! God loves us so much that God gave us Jesus!

"Wow! What an amazing story! Do you think we could start at the beginning and look at the whole Christmas story train? I think we can!

Walk to "Angel and Mary" train car.

"The true story of Christmas begins with Mary.

Point to Mary on the train car.

"God sent an angel (*point to angel*) to tell Mary she would have a baby and the baby would be named . . .?"

Pause for children to respond.

CHILDREN AND STORYTELLER: "JESUS!"

STORYTELLER: "And we know Jesus is special because Jesus is God's Son!

Step to the "Joseph and Mary" train car.

"Later, Mary and Joseph (*point to Mary and Joseph*) went to a town called Bethlehem.

Step to the "Baby Jesus" train car.

"Mary and Joseph stayed in a stable where animals live because there were no rooms anywhere else. And that's where Baby Jesus was born—a stable!

Step to the "Shepherd and Sheep" train car.

"There were some shepherds out in a field taking care of their . . . ?"

Point to the sheep.

CHILDREN AND STORYTELLER: "SHEEP!"

STORYTELLER: "God sent an angel to tell the shepherds that Jesus had been born. The shepherds ran as fast as they could to find Baby Jesus!

"When the shepherds got to the stable, they saw Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus, just like the angels said they would. Step to the "Birthday Cake" train car and point to the birthday cake.

"Christmas is when we celebrate Jesus' birthday! Yay! Happy birthday, Jesus!

Step to the "Wise Men" train car.



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"Later, God sent a star to show some wise men where to find Jesus. When the wise men found Jesus, they worshipped Him and gave Him gifts.

"And that is the true story of Christmas. Christmas is when we celebrate that **God gave us Jesus!** And now that you know the true story of Christmas, when someone asks, '**How do we know God loves us?**', you can say, '**God gave us Jesus!**' **How do we know God loves us?**'"

CHILDREN AND STORYTELLER: "God gave us Jesus!"

STORYTELLER: "One more time! **How do we know God loves us?**'"

CHILDREN AND STORYTELLER: "God gave us Jesus!"

STORYTELLER: "Christmas is over, but knowing God loves us and gave us Jesus is something we can celebrate every day! **[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 the true story of Christmas. Help us celebrate Jesus like the wise men did. We don't have to wait for Christmas to celebrate that You love us and gave us Jesus. We can do that every day! We love You, God. In Jesus' name, we pray, amen.

"I'll see you next time. Bye!"

Host enters as Storyteller exits, carrying Bible.

OUTRO SKETCH

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

Host enters.

HOST: "Wow! The wise men saw the star and made a long trip to take gifts to Jesus. God loves us so much that God gave us Jesus. 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 hope your heart stickers remind you that God loves you. God loves us so much that God gave us Jesus! **[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
- "Jesus Is," available from OrangeKidsMusic.com

OPTIONAL VIDEOS (AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE):

- Dance Moves Music Video for "Silent Night," available in the Media Package if you subscribe or from OrangeKidsMusic.com
- Dance Moves Music Video for "Jesus Is," available from 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:

- Heart stickers
- Resealable plastic bags
- Gift box or bag to carry stickers
- Fun Christmas sweater, headband, or necklace; train whistle; and cardboard train costume from previous weeks

WHAT YOU DO:

- Fill a bag with heart stickers for each small group so that each child will get one heart sticker.
- Put bags inside gift box or bag.



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3. BIBLE STORY

WHAT YOU NEED:

- "Wise Men" Activity Page
- Cardstock
- Cardboard box – Recycle cardboard boxes of different shapes and sizes to make the "Wise Men" train car. If following our example on Pinterest (bit.ly/44U6BjS), use the following size:
 - Medium box, 15" x 12" x 10" (bit.ly/3w5uQfz)-one per Large Group
- Brightly colored butcher paper in a variety of colors
- Construction paper
- Tinsel garland
- Scissors
- Packaging tape
- Utility knife
- Wrapped gift boxes or gift bags—three per large group
- Bible
- Train whistle, train engineer costume, Christmas story train engine and "Mary and Angel," "Joseph and Mary," "Baby Jesus," "Shepherd and Sheep," and "Birthday Cake" train cars from previous weeks
- *Optional cardstock*

LARGE GROUP VISUALS:

- Story Image W5 01
- Story Image W5 02
- Story Image W5 03
- Story Image W5 04
- Story Image W5 05

WHAT YOU DO:

- Copy "Wise Men" on cardstock and cut off copying directions.
- To make the "Wise Men" 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 the prepared box with brightly colored butcher paper or paint.
 - *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.*
 - Tape "Shepherd and Sheep" picture onto the train car.
 - Place the wrapped gifts inside the train car.
- Cut small holes near the bottom of the short sides of the box.
- Cut a short section of tinsel and thread through the first hole to connect the train car with the "Birthday Cake" train car. Secure with packaging tape.
- *Option: Copy the Optional Story Images on cardstock or download them to display on a screen.*

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