Kings and queens, knights, and stone castles . . . no theme catches the imagination of kids quite like medieval. So keep that in mind as you use your creativity, along with the ideas in this section, to set up your Learn-a-Lot Chamber (classroom). Remember that creating a fun and exciting environment helps children learn better, remember more, and leave with happy memories.

The Learn-a-Lot Chamber features a castle wall backdrop to serve as the focal point for the teaching. The adjacent walls have large solid-colored panels that are used to display the posters from each of the previous day's teaching. On the stage, in front of the backdrop, is a high-back armchair with a large Bible, pieces of the armor of God, and a large easel displaying the Truth or Error game board.

**Key Decorating Elements**

**Castle Wall Backdrop**

Your backdrop should be made out of a rigid material such as foam board or corrugated cardboard. To paint the castle wall pattern, use one of the methods described on page 9, or cover with “flagstone” or “rock wall” patterned roll paper. Check party supply stores and websites (www.shindigz.com) for patterned backgrounds or scene setters. Add an archway to the center to serve as a display area for the daily resource posters. Then add a stained glass window on one side of the archway and the theme verse poster, mounted on colored poster board, on the other. See the
Teacher Resource CD-ROM for various window design clip art images. If you are using corrugated cardboard, apply one coat of paint to the back of the backdrop to minimize curling. Your backdrop should be braced from behind with wooden supports (jacks) and weighted down with bags of sand or rock salt. If necessary, you can further secure it by running thin strands of wire to the ceiling. Check YouTube.com/AnswersVBS for how-to videos on building a jack.

Learn-a-Lot Chamber Sign

Your Learn-a-Lot Chamber sign should be large enough to span the center section of your backdrop. A clip art image of the sign is available on the Teacher Resource CD-ROM. Use an overhead projector to enlarge and transfer the image onto a rigid material such as foam board or corrugated cardboard, then paint the sign with bright colors, such as yellow letters on a vivid purple background.

NOTE: The Learn-a-Lot Chamber sign should not be confused with the Learn-a-Lot Chamber rotation sign (11-1-020) that was included with your Super Starter kit. Although you can use the rotation sign on your backdrop, it is better suited as a door sign or hallway directional sign because of its smaller, poster size.

Poster Display Panels

Four large colored panels on the walls adjacent to the backdrop are used to display the resource posters from each of the previous day’s teaching. At the end of each day, the posters and lesson title strips are transferred from the backdrop to a colored panel. Use roll paper or purchase inexpensive rectangular plastic tablecloths for this purpose. To dress them up, cut them into banner shapes. You will only need four panels because the last day’s posters will remain on the backdrop.

Resource Posters and Lesson Title Strips

Contained in the Teacher Resource Pack are the daily teaching, overview, and memory verse posters. These are important visuals for the kids and should be mounted in an organized fashion. Lesson title strips for each day’s lesson can also be found on the Teacher Resource CD-ROM. They should be printed, mounted on poster board, and then displayed above the corresponding daily resource posters.

Other Props and Decorations

In front of your castle wall backdrop, place a high-back armchair and a Bible. You’ll also need a large easel for the Truth or Error gameboard and a small easel to prop up pieces of the armor of God. An armor of God playset (26-1-049) can be purchased from the Answers VBS Resource Catalog. You can further decorate your room and backdrop with items such as artificial trees and plants, floor candelabras, and wall torches made from paper towel tubes and colored tissue paper.

Clip Art Images

Don’t forget to check the Teacher Resource CD-ROM for clip art images, including the Learn-a-Lot Chamber sign. These are an important part of your decorations. Use an overhead projector to enlarge and transfer the images onto paper, poster board, or rigid materials such as corrugated cardboard.

HOW TO ENLARGE AND TRANSFER CLIP ART
1. Photocopy the clip art onto transparencies.
2. Place roll paper or a rigid material against a wall.
3. Using an overhead projector to enlarge the clip art, shine the image onto the paper or rigid material, adjusting it as necessary for the size desired.
4. Trace the image outlines onto the paper or rigid material.
5. Paint the image and cut out.
There are a number of ways to paint a faux brick or block wall pattern. Here are three methods.

**Method 1**

Step 1—Paint the entire surface a medium color (gray or tan) and let dry completely.

Step 2—Mark horizontal lines, as needed, to create straight rows. You can use a chalk line or a pencil.

Step 3—Dip a large rectangular sponge in a light color and carefully “stamp” a block pattern over the entire surface, leaving a ½-inch space between “blocks” for the mortar lines.

Step 4—(This step is optional, however, the more you do, the more realistic your wall will look.) After the “blocks” have dried, finish with some variations, highlights, and shadows. Along the bottom and right sides of each block, paint a thin dark line and along the top and left sides, paint a thin white line. A few dabs of a darker shade, here and there, onto the block faces will add some additional texture.

**Method 2**

Step 1—Using a large flat tray, pour some black paint on one side and white paint on the other.

Step 2—Load both colors onto a roller, being careful not to mix the colors too much.

Step 3—Roll the colors onto your surface in one consistent direction. To avoid creating a monotone gray surface, avoid rolling the same area too many times. You should see a textured, stone-like appearance with some areas whiter, blacker, and grayer. Add more paint to your roller as needed, remembering not to over mix the two colors in your tray.

Step 4—After the mottled base coat has dried completely, freehand some black mortar lines, here and there, with a small paintbrush.

Step 5—Finish with some variations, highlights, and shadows to individual blocks, as desired.

(Although we suggest using black and white, other color combinations, like brown and tan, are possible as well.)

**Method 3** (A combination of Methods 1 & 2)

Step 1—Paint the base coat using the technique described in Method 2.

Step 2—Use a rectangular sponge to “stamp” small groupings of bricks in random locations instead of stamping bricks over the entire surface. For variety and texture, use lighter and darker shades for some of the bricks.

Check [http://mrmcgroovys.com/how-do-you-paint-that-cool-brick-pattern-on-the-castle/] and other websites for additional ideas.

Check out Pinterest.com/AnswersVBS for colorful photos of decorations from our test churches!
Costume Considerations

A medieval fun theme begs for the wearing of cool costumes!
Watch a favorite medieval-era movie for costume ideas, then check out the simple directions below.

Guys

Wear black pants and shoes as a base. (Brown can also work.) Put together one of the following for the top.

1. For a peasant look, wear a long-sleeved, puffy white shirt either alone or with a suede vest over it. Add a small leather pouch or a ring of large keys attached to a belt. Hint: Check out a thrift store to buy a puffy-sleeved shirt that’s a couple sizes too big for you. Believe it or not, ones with lace work, too!

2. Make a simple tunic with a strip of rectangular material that will go from your shoulders to your knees. (Old bedsheets, tablecloths, or oversized T-shirts with the arms and neck cut out can be used for this. Solid-colored material is best.) Fold it in half and cut a hole for the head. Put it on and belt it with a leather belt or belts. Or crisscross belts to make a belted X across it. The puffy white shirt looks good under the tunic.

3. For a knight look, wear a silver or gray long-sleeved T-shirt, silk pajamas, or silver material as a base. Make a tunic as suggested above out of gray material and add a red felt cross emblem hot-glued onto the front. To make a headpiece, buy silver material that has the look of chain mail. Sew into a round tube. Put the tube over your head and wear bunched around your neck. (Or use a gray or black hoodie or a gray ski mask with the face part cut out.)

4. Another option for a shiny knight look is to buy bright silver sun reflectors at the dollar store and cut them to make tunics and other accessories.

5. For a king/prince look, buy or make a crown and a cape. Royal purple or red look particularly good. Old bedsheets or tablecloths can work for this. Once again, this can go over a base of black pants, black T-shirt, and black shoes.

6. For a jester look, make or buy full, pajama-style pants that have elastic around the ankles and waist. Bright, crazy-patterned material is good. Couple these with a coordinating, bright-colored, solid T-shirt and jester hat. You can buy jester hats online or at costume shops, or look online to learn how to make one.

Gals

1. For a peasant look, long, solid-colored skirts and plain white blouses work. These are easy to find at thrift stores. Top it with a vest or shawl.

2. For a queen/princess look, some styles of old prom gowns can work as period costumes. Crushed velvet or satin are popular fabrics. Consider adding ribbon or gold rickrack to dress them up. Or make a wide fabric belt and crisscross gold ribbon on it. If the dress is too long, duct tape the hem at the desired length.

3. Sandals, ballet flats, or black flats all work for shoes.

4. Garland wreaths or tiaras work in the hair.

5. Gold jewelry and large, fake gemstone rings and necklaces work for added flair.

Kids

1. Use ideas from above as possibilities, adjusting to kid sizes.

2. For tunics, use old pillowcases with the sides slit and a hole cut out for the head.

3. To make knight helmets, spray paint either fast food chicken buckets or empty milk jugs with a metallic spray paint. Cut them so the face of the child will mostly show, with the exception of a section that hangs down between their eyes, as the helmets of old were designed.

4. To make crowns, check the craft guide on Day 1 for instructions.

5. To make capes, use material or one side of an old adult-sized T-shirt that is cut into a shape reminiscent of the shape of the side of a lamp shade, except longer. Put velcro up at the top for easy open and closure.

6. Ask around to gather children’s princess and knight/armor of God costumes. Armor of God playsets (26-1-049) are also available for purchase from answersbookstore.com.
Today’s Lesson at a Glance

• Introduce It!
  Knight Time—Breastplate

• Teach It!
  Part 1: King Josiah
  Part 2: Knight Time—Shoes
  Part 3: Truth or Error Game

• Apply It!
  Part 1: Victory Verse
  Part 2: Go and Do

Preparing for the Lesson

• Read 2 Kings 22–23 and Ephesians 6:10–18 several times.
• Read this lesson several times and prepare the materials.
• Pray.

Lesson Materials

FROM TEACHER RESOURCE PACK
□ Memory verse poster
□ Daily overview poster
□ King Josiah poster
□ Truth or Error game board

FROM TEACHER RESOURCE CD-ROM
□ King Josiah scripts
□ Truth or Error cards and teaching explanations

OTHER MATERIALS
□ Bible or children’s Bible
□ Medieval costumes for teachers
□ Blue plastic tablecloth
□ Armor of God demonstration pieces
□ Props for King Josiah account (see page 29)
□ Large nametags with string (see page 29)
□ Dry-erase board or chalkboard
□ Optional: Student guides and supplies (see page 33)
□ Optional: Day 3 Armor of God card, 1 per child
Devotion 3
Obey Truth

The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever. (Psalm 119:160)

Tolerance. It’s a word we hear a lot today . . . usually coming from those who are intolerant of any standard of truth (except their own, of course).

When Josiah became king of the nation of Israel in 640 BC, the people had been practicing “tolerance” for idol worship, child-killing, and all types of sexually immoral behavior for years, neglecting the truth in the Book of the Law that had been handed down to them.

King Josiah was twenty-six years old when he first read the words of the Lord. After reading the Scriptures (perhaps part of Deuteronomy), he immediately repented, realizing that he held truth in his hands and hadn’t been obeying it. Josiah also shared the truth of the Book of the Law with his people and set about making reforms (being intolerant of tolerance) based on what he’d read. He burned the altars to idols, tore down the place where children were sacrificed to false gods, and rid the temple of priests who were leading the people astray. With his new-found knowledge of the truth, Josiah acted righteously, no longer tolerating the views of those opposing the standard given in God’s Word (2 Kings 22–23).

When we make “tolerance” our standard, we set ourselves up as gods, determining on our own which views and practices are acceptable and which are not. And we find ourselves in a morass of morality. Are those who tolerate one view any more right than those who tolerate an opposing view? Who determines which actions to tolerate and which to forbid (if any)?

With the belt of truth firmly buckled around our waist, the question then becomes, What do I do about that truth? Do I obey God’s Word, putting on the breastplate of righteousness? Do I share the truth of God’s Word with others, putting on the shoes of the gospel of peace? King Josiah did both. May the Lord use young Josiah’s example to encourage our hearts in the battle for truth.

May we say with the psalmist, “For Your lovingkindness is before my eyes, and I have walked in Your truth” (Psalm 26:3).
Introduce It!

Knight Time — Breastplate (5 minutes)

Start by practicing a few quick training drills for the knights and maidens. Every knight must learn to safely and quickly cross an alligator-infested moat. Place a blue plastic tablecloth on the floor to act as the moat. Have the kids line up on one side of the moat.

On your command, they need to cross the moat by jumping over it (who can get over it without touching the moat?), hopping over it on one foot, taking one giant step over it, and finally, jumping over and back, over and back as fast as they can. Get their hearts pumping! After a few minutes, have everyone sit down, then say:

Is everyone’s heart pumping nice and strong after those training drills? Good! Today we’re going to talk about our hearts and how to protect them.

The knights knew it was important to protect their hearts and other vital organs from harm during battle. So they wore a special piece of armor called a breastplate. The breastplate covered the knight from his neck down to at least his waist.

Put a breastplate on yourself or have a child demonstrate.

In a similar way, the next piece of armor, called the breastplate of righteousness, also protects us in battle. Tell the person sitting next to you what word you hear in the word RIGHTeousness. Yes, the word right. When you put this piece of armor on, which we can nickname the breastplate of right, it helps you to do right. When you live RIGHTeously, you’re living like Jesus did. You’re obeying the King’s commands.

Now let me ask you a question. Was there ever a time when you knew the right thing to do but didn’t want to do it, and you thought, “I wonder if I can get away with doing this?” Take responses, or share a time you did so.

Well, God doesn’t want you to think, “What can I get away with?” That doesn’t show love for God. That’s actually how the Enemy wants you to think! God says that if we love Him, we will obey His commands. A good soldier follows the commands of his king and leader. In fact, if you feel like you need to hide your actions, you’re not wearing the breastplate. If you feel sad or ashamed of your actions, you’re not wearing the breastplate.

Instead, when you wear the breastplate you’re thinking, “I love God and want to please Him, so what does the Bible tell me to do?” Keep reading God’s Word to learn to do right in God’s sight. Hold up the daily overview poster. Let’s say that together: Do right in God’s sight!

Now let’s take a look at a king in the Bible who chose to do right for God.

Teach It!

Part 1: King Josiah (15–20 minutes)

Divide the class into four groups. Each group should have at least three children, but there can be as many as ten or more in a group if necessary. Each group will act out one section of the King Josiah Bible account. (If you have a very small class, divide into two groups and have each group do two sections instead of one. Or, one of the teachers can be the narrator throughout if you don’t have enough kids for that part.)
Give each group one section of the drama script and have them read it, deciding who is doing what. One person needs to be the narrator (unless the teacher is doing it) and the others need to be select parts, which are listed. There are three or four main parts per section. Other ideas are listed if there are more kids. Provide a few props or offer some props that all can use. Allow five minutes for the groups to read their sections and decide on a plan of action. Then begin sharing the four sections in order with the kids acting it out.

Possible props: paper crowns for those playing King Josiah or wicked kings, simple costumes, a throne for King Josiah (high-back chair with material over it), a scroll for the Book of the Law, a messy area to represent the temple (possibly with papers, clothes, photocopied pictures of idols strewn around)

**Scene 1: Josiah is crowned king**

Three or more parts: Narrator, wicked king or kings (including King Amon), Josiah, crowd (if extra kids)

**Narrator:** At the time this account begins, which was about 700 years before Jesus came, a nation called Israel, which was God’s chosen people, was ruled by wicked kings. (The wicked king or kings may want to laugh wickedly.)

**As a result, the whole nation was not doing right. They were not obeying God’s commands.** (The crowd pretends to be angry.)

And the temple, called the house of the Lord, was falling apart. The people quit caring about God, so they quit caring about His house. (The crowd points and laughs at the temple.)

Then wicked King Amon died. (King Amon does so. Perhaps have the crowd carry him off.)

At that point in 640 BC, his young son, Josiah, became king. (The crowd crowns Josiah king.)

**Josiah:** I was just eight years old when I became king. Can you imagine being a king when you’re eight? Pretty cool, huh?

**Narrator:** The Bible records that Josiah did what was right in the sight of the Lord. He didn’t turn aside to the right or the left, but stayed on God’s good path.

**Josiah:** Even though I was younger than you, I decided I wanted to be a good king and follow the King of kings. It was a choice I made in my mind to always follow Him and do what He said.

**Scene 2: Josiah orders that the house of the Lord be cleaned and restored, and the Book of the Law is found**

Four or more parts: Narrator, King Josiah, Shaphan (the king’s scribe), Hilkiah (the high priest), servants (if extra kids)

**Narrator:** A number of years went by, and King Josiah continued to live RIGHTeously. At one point, he decided on a project.

**Josiah:** Hmm, the temple is in bad shape. We need to get it repaired.
Narrator: King Josiah sent his scribe, Shaphan, to the house of the Lord with these instructions:

Josiah: Go up to Hilkiah the high priest and have him count the money the people have given for the house of the Lord. Give it to the carpenters and builders so they can buy wood and stone to repair all the damages.

Shaphan the Scribe: Very well, good king. It shall be done. (Shaphan and servants go off.)

Narrator: So off went Shaphan and other faithful servants to God’s house. When they got there, Shaphan found Hilkiah the priest. Hilkiah said:

Hilkiah: I’ve found the Book of the Law, God’s Word! Take it and read it! (Pass an imaginary book.)

Narrator: This was quite exciting—a real treasure! It was especially exciting because the people didn’t have their own copy of God’s Word back then and copies were rare. So Shaphan and the servants took the precious words from God back to King Josiah. (Do so.)

Scene 3: Josiah hears the Book of the Law and sends his team to Huldah, the prophetess

Four or more parts: Narrator, King Josiah, Shaphan, Huldah, servants (if extra kids)

Narrator: When they got back home, Shaphan read to King Josiah from God’s Word. When King Josiah heard it, he tore his clothes and wept, showing how terribly upset he was.

Josiah: Pretend to tear a shirt and cry, then say: Our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book and done what is written in here. They have not lived right!

Narrator: You see, Josiah realized that everything they needed to know about how to live righteously was in God’s Word, but they hadn’t been reading it. It was a scary and horrible feeling to know God’s Word had just been sitting there, not being used.

Josiah: Shaphan, go and ask Huldah the prophetess what is to be done. (Shaphan and servants go off.)

Narrator: So, Shaphan and the others went off to Huldah the prophetess. She said:

Huldah: Those who have not followed and obeyed God’s Word will be very sorry. But as for you, King Josiah, you genuinely care to do right and obey God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. God knows that, and God will not let you see all the trouble that will come on this place. Your life will be peaceful, and the trouble will come after you’ve died.

Scene 4: Josiah reads the Word and makes a commitment, along with the rest of the people

Four or more parts: Narrator, King Josiah, the crowd (at least two)

Narrator: King Josiah gathered all his kingdom at the house of the Lord. All the people were there, both great and small. And King Josiah said:

Josiah: I am going to read in your hearing all the words of the Book of the Law which has been found in the house of the Lord. (Pretend to silently do so.)

Narrator: So King Josiah read the Book of the Law. When he finished, he stood by a pillar and said:
Day 3: Obey Truth

Josiah: I am making a promise, a covenant, before the Lord, to follow God and to obey His commandments with all my heart and all my soul and to do everything written in this book.

Crowd: Cheer, then say: Me, too! Me, too!

Narrator: And that’s exactly what King Josiah did. He chose to do right all the days of his life. He read God’s Word and obeyed God’s commands.

Teacher One: Hold up King Josiah poster. So you see how important reading God’s Word is to living right and wearing that breastplate of Righteousness. But it’s not just about reading God’s Word. We show our love for our King by obeying what we read in His Word. When you read something in God’s Word, God knows you know about it, and He wants you to do it. And He has given us His Holy Spirit to help us obey His commands. Let’s take a minute to think of as many commands as we can from the Bible. As they call them out, quickly record them on a dry-erase board or chalkboard.

Putting on the armor is all about loving God and showing our love through obedience to Him. We’re vulnerable to Satan’s attacks if we don’t obey. Let’s make a commitment right now to do right and obey what we learn in God’s Word, including these things and whatever you read from now on, day after day. Do so.

Part 2: Knight Time—Shoes (5 minutes)

Okay. Let’s make sure you remember the first two pieces of armor. The first is the belt of ______ (have everyone shout out the answer: truth) and the next is the breastplate of ______ (have everyone shout out the answer: righteousness).

Now I need you all to take off your shoes and throw them in a pile. After everyone has done so, say:

On the count of three, we’ll race to see who can get his shoes back on and sit quietly in less than one minute. One, two, three, go! Do so, then continue.

If a knight didn’t have any shoes on, or even if he didn’t have the right shoes on, he was in trouble. Can you imagine going into battle without any shoes on? Shoes help you move forward quickly and confidently.

So the next piece of armor will be shoes. These invisible shoes aren’t just any shoes. They’re shoes that help you be at peace with God. You used to be on the Enemy’s side, but now, if you’re a child of the King, you’re at peace with Him. These shoes also make you ready to go and share the good news about Jesus with others.

Part of doing right is sharing the good news with others. If you have your gospel shoes on, you can confidently go wherever He leads you and tell others about the Lord. Take a minute to think of one person you can share the good news with, and tell the person next to you who it is. Do so. Let’s pray and ask God to help you do this. Do so.

Part 3: Truth or Error Game (5 minutes)

You’ll probably only have time for a quick round today. See the directions under Day 1 for specifics on how to play the game.
Apply It!

In the remaining class time, complete one or more of the following ideas in class. These are also on the back of the Junior Student Guides and can be done at home with a parent or caretaker if you are out of time. If you send them home, motivate the kids to do them because they are full of good stuff! Have the troupe leaders check with the kids tomorrow to see how they did on them, and consider giving contest bonus points to the groups for their hard work.

Supplies for this section are not included in the supply list on the back cover since they will vary depending on the activities you choose, so decide what you will do and add them to your supply list accordingly.

Part 1: Victory Verse

Today’s Verse: Having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the . . . gospel of peace. Ephesians 6:14–15

Show the Day 3 Armor of God card with the Bible reference on the back. They will receive this collectible at the end of the day. Practice these verses several times using the memory verse poster as a reference, then try the following challenge.

Challenge: Put on a pair of shoes and jog for one minute while saying your verse. How many times did you say it correctly?

Tomorrow’s Verse: Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. Ephesians 6:16

Try the challenge again using tomorrow’s verse.

Part 2: Go and Do

1. One way to do right in God’s sight is to obey your mom and dad with a good attitude (Ephesians 6:1). What have they asked you to do that may be hard for you to obey right away and with a smile? Ask God to help you obey and commit yourself to doing it.

2. Act out the account of King Josiah (2 Kings 22–23). What do you admire about him?

3. Make a sign to put by your shoes in your closet that says “Shoes of Peace.” When you put your shoes on, think of people who need to hear about Jesus. Challenge yourself to tell someone this week.

4. Check AnswersVBS.com/KCKids for fun information!

Ask yourself this question: Have I told anyone about Jesus lately?