



DIRECTOR GUIDE

***TO MAKE YOUR JOB AS VBS DIRECTOR
EASIER, MAKE SURE YOU***

- read the *Director Guide* completely.
- check out the Resource DVD-ROM thoroughly.
- spread out all the materials that came in your kit.
- browse the other leader and teacher guides to become familiar with all aspects of this VBS.

COURSE

Day 1

Day 2

Title	B Book of Books	I Incredible Impact
Bible Passages	The Bible is One-of-a-Kind (Selected Verses)	Saul's Life is Transformed (Acts 9:1–22)
Lesson Focus	The Bible is the coolest book on the planet, unique in so many ways.	The Bible's message has had an incredible impact on the earth.
Bible Gem	All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. 2 Timothy 3:16	Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105
Animal Pal	Blizzard the Polar Bear	Snowball the Arctic Hare
Apologetics Focus	Did you know the Bible isn't like any other "religious" book?	Did you know the Bible's teachings have positively influenced cultures around the world?
Discovery Pass Science and Crafts	Experiment: It's S'now Unique! Main Craft: Icebreaker Fishing 	Experiment: Slip and Grip Main Craft: Northern Lightscape 
Glacier Gap Games	Welcome to the Arctic Silly Snowmen	Snowball Fight Mad/Glad Game
Klondike Corner Snacks	Scripture Scrolls Snowflake Cookies (Psalm 119:18) 	Snow Ball Butterflies Tundra Transformers (Psalm 19:7) 
Cool Contests	Frosted Food Fun	Chilly Cheers

OVERVIEW

Day 3

B

Bedrock Base

The Wise Man Builds His House on the Rock (Matthew 7:24–29)

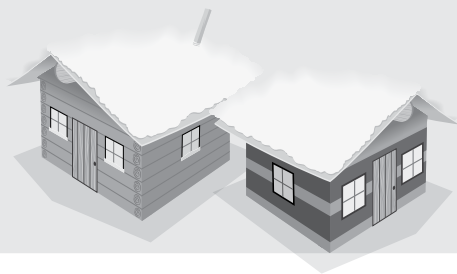
The Bible is the bedrock foundation to build our lives on.

Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock. Matthew 7:24

Spike the Narwhal

Did you know science, history, and fulfilled prophecies confirm the Bible?

Experiment: Solid Ground
Main Craft: Lil' Log Cabin



Battle for the Base
Make It or Break It

Day 4

L

Letter of Love

The Gospel is a Message with Love (Selected Verses)

The Bible has a thrilling theme running throughout its pages.

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

Shaggy the Musk Ox

Did you know the earth didn't start out with polar ice caps?

Experiment: H2Ohhh!
Main Craft: "White as Snow" Globe



Circle Up
Finding Your Way

Day 5

E

Exciting to Explore

Mary Loves to Soak in God's Words (Luke 10:38–42)

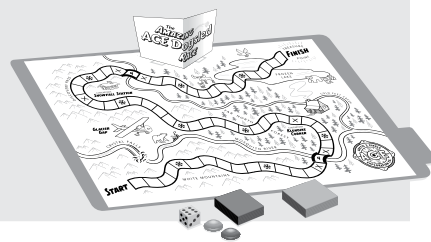
The Bible is exciting to explore. Let's learn it, love it, live it!

I rejoice at Your word as one who finds great treasure. Psalm 119:162

Dash the Siberian Husky

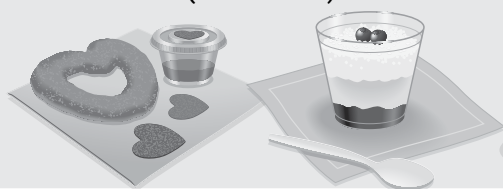
Did you know we need the Holy Spirit to help us understand the Bible?

Experiment: Arctic Exploration
Main Craft: Amazing ACE Dog Sled Race



Iditarod Race
Broom Hockey

Happy Hearts
Ocean Jammers
(Psalm 19:8)



Polar Dress-Up Day

Gold Nuggets
Snow S'Mores
(Psalm 19:10)



Bible Books Challenge

Treasure Treats
Husky Puppy Chow
(Psalm 19:11)



Mission Money Mania

OPERATION ARCTIC

Answers VBS

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Director Guide

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LET'S WARM UP!

Beyond thrilling! Exciting to explore! Breathtakingly beautiful! Full of treasure! Words that describe the Arctic for sure, a fascinating region like no other in the world. But go back and read those words again—they can also be used to describe the coolest book on the planet—the Bible. It's mind-blowing to think that the God who made the universe wrote us a book—a book that is *beyond thrilling, exciting to explore, beautiful, and full of treasure*. Now if that isn't worthy of our attention, what is? We here at Answers VBS can hardly contain our excitement as we launch the newest VBS—*Operation Arctic*. Get ready for the thrill of exploring this one-of-a-kind treasure as we build on the following BIBLE acronym each day:

B Book of Books—The first day, we'll discover there's just no book like it, unique in so many ways!

I Incredible Impact—The second day, we'll explore the impact the Bible's teachings have had upon our world!

B Bedrock Base—The third day, we'll see there's no shifting sand here—we've got the Rock of God's Word to base our lives on!

L Letter of Love—The fourth day, we'll encounter the best love letter ever, written to us by God Himself!

E Exciting to Explore—The fifth day, we'll be challenged to learn it, love it, and live it!

Our explorers will begin warming up to the Word from the very first minute they arrive at *Operation Arctic*. The mission begins at **Snowfall Station** with the Opening Assembly, a high-energy opening with entertaining welcomes, rockin' songs, a mission moment, and prayer.

Then we're off to four fun rotation sites:

- **Treasure Point**, the Bible lesson location. Here, explorers discover what a gem God's Word is as they learn important Bible truths in fun and creative ways.
- **Klondike Corner**, the snack spot. Explorers won't want to pass up the cool treats that are waiting to melt in their mouths.
- **Glacier Gap**, the recreation location. At this spot, explorers discover that preparation is "snow" easy and games are filled with chills and thrills.
- **Discovery Pass**, the science, craft, music, mission, and memory verse spot. This location features a wide array

of activities to choose from: science experiments, crafts, songs to sing, memory verse games to play, and a mission time (for those who want to spend more time than is given during the Assembly).

After finishing the day's rotations, everyone heads back to **Snowfall Station** for the Closing Assembly that includes more singing, a Creature Feature, contest results, and the greatly anticipated daily drama, which is a highlight of the kids' day. The drama begins in the city with a high-powered executive who is fed up with the rat race. He decides to move to the wilderness for a quieter, simpler existence. Little does he realize all that's in store—missing treasure, goofy bad guys, unexpected visitors, and plenty of action!

Sound fun? Then let's plunge on in to this cold *world* and God's wonderful *Word*! It promises to be a flurry of fun and excitement at *Operation Arctic*! Let's go!

OUR GOAL

It's been ten years since Answers in Genesis entered the world of VBS, and we are so thankful for how God has chosen to use these programs! But why did we decide to embark on such an undertaking in the first place, and why are we still at it, by God's grace, ten years later?

Our primary goal has remained the same all these years—to bring God glory by boldly and unashamedly proclaiming Him to a strategic group—young people! From both a biblical and statistical point of view, young people are a big deal! They're not only awesome—we love 'em!—but they're also dearly cherished by our Lord and tend to be soft-hearted toward spiritual things. Researchers generally agree most people become Christians when they're children, so it's apparent this age group is a huge mission field!

Children are loved by their Creator. Jesus said not to hinder the children but to let them come to Him (Luke 18:16). We want children to come to Christ and not be hindered in any way from doing so. To that end, our philosophy has always been to combine a biblically rich VBS loaded with substance with off-the-chart, irresistible fun. In a day and age when content sometimes suffers, it's critically important to us not to sacrifice rich content at the expense of fun. But it's also crucial that the most exciting Book in the world doesn't come across as irrelevant or dry. We want to reflect our creative, inspiring, joy-giving God who made laughter and fun!

So why do we do it? We want kids around the world to hear about and personally meet our awesome God and to understand how they can receive eternal life through repentance and faith in Christ Jesus. We believe VBS is a great way to introduce them to God, as it is one of the biggest outreaches of the year for most churches.

We pray you will find that every prayer prayed, every minute invested, every dollar spent, and every word spoken will bring God glory as you reach kids for Christ. Just remember—VBS is worth it! May God richly bless your VBS.

YOUR ROLE

As director of VBS, you are someone who possesses vision, organizational and people skills, and a heart for children. The following are your responsibilities.

- Oversee the entire VBS (read through the *Director Guide* and other manuals for further information)
- Work with the church staff on VBS-related issues such as goals, dates, and budget
- Recruit, organize, and oversee the entire VBS staff
- Run training workshops
- Coordinate the closing program
- Establish effective follow-up
- Pray over all aspects of this job before, during, and after VBS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The content of *Operation Arctic* may be new to you. For a list of helpful articles on the topics covered in this VBS program, please visit AnswersVBS.com/oafaq.

TERMS TO KNOW

Throughout the VBS curriculum, various terms will be used. Here's a list of some of the most common terms to know.

- **Explorers:** Children at VBS. Explorers will be put in teams named after animals they may see on an Arctic exploration (e.g., polar bears, beluga whales, snowy owls, harp seals, caribou).
- **Guides:** Team leaders who lead the teams from place to place during VBS. No teaching is required of this position.
- **Exploration Leaders:** Teachers at the Treasure Point Lesson Time.
- **Treasure Point:** Rotation site where Bible and apologetics teaching occurs.
- **Snowfall Station:** Spot where everyone joins together for the opening and closing assemblies.
- **Discovery Pass:** Rotation site where crafts are made, science experiments are performed, music is sung, memory verses are learned, and missions around the world are explored.
- **Klondike Corner:** Indoor or outdoor site where snacks are served.
- **Glacier Gap:** Indoor or outdoor site (outdoor is preferred) for game time.
- **Bible Gem:** Daily memory verse.
- **Animal Pals:** Friendly animal mascots used to emphasize the key point of each day's lesson.
- **Creature Feature:** Daily time during the closing assembly when we marvel together at God's design of various Arctic animals.
- **Toddlers:** Ages 2–4 years.
- **Pre-Primaries:** Ages 4–6 years, or age 4 through children who have completed Kindergarten.
- **Primaries:** Ages 6–9 years, or children who have completed grades 1–3.
- **Juniors:** Ages 9–12 years, or children who have completed grades 4–6.

For multi-age K–6th teams, we recommend using the material for the Primaries.

TOP 20 TIPS FOR THE VBS DIRECTOR

Whether you're a first-time recruit or a seasoned director, here are some tips just for you.

1. Pray and study God's Word. "We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4). You *will* be busy, so keep in mind that the busier you get, the more you need to pray and study! God will multiply your time if you give Him your best.
2. Read through the various guides thoroughly and early. Become familiar with the Resource DVD-ROM, which contains clip art, logos, printable and customizable versions of the forms mentioned throughout this guide, and more. If you're a first-time director, ask previous directors and VBS veterans what's been done in the past. It helps to receive counsel! At the same time, don't be afraid to try something new.
3. Check out the web address listed on page 8 for great articles on the teaching at *Operation Arctic*. This is a good resource for you and a good reference for volunteers or parents who have questions.
4. Many hands make light work. Be careful not to overextend yourself. Delegate areas of responsibility to people and allow them the joy of serving, even if it is not quite how you would do it.
5. Build a team spirit within your own family so VBS will not seem like just *your* project, but theirs, too. Include them in discussions and preparations.
6. When working with people, there most likely will be conflicts. Resolve conflict with prayer and gentle answers based on principles from God's Word. "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverbs 15:1).
7. Have a backup plan in case the weather turns nasty and you need to be inside all day.
8. Have fun. Directing your VBS should be a joy for you. At the same time, though, remember you are in a spiritual battle with an enemy who will try to throw darts your way. "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks" (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18).
9. Label file folders or electronic file folders with different areas of VBS, and use these to file ideas and suggestions.
10. Help your church catch the significance of this event by sharing that VBS is a huge, God-given opportunity to reach many with the gospel of Christ.
11. Get enough sleep and exercise.
12. Make people feel loved, appreciated, and needed.
13. Communicate well. Make announcements, require attendance at the training workshops, send emails, and keep everyone informed.
14. Be enthusiastic! Your excitement is contagious and makes others want to be in on the fun.
15. When deciding on the ages to include in your VBS, keep in mind that this VBS is written to appeal to not only young children but also older elementary kids. It has real answers from God's Word for real issues all kids face.
16. Be the *director*. Don't commit to teaching or any other VBS leadership role during VBS week. Stay as free as possible to greet, encourage, and troubleshoot.
17. Carry a cell phone or walkie-talkie with you during VBS week so you can be reached throughout the building.
18. Prepare two containers for each team guide. See page 36 for more information.
19. Soon after VBS is over, survey your staff so you can make improvements for next year.
20. Keep a list of answered prayers and praises. Share your list with others. Continue praying, even after VBS is finished, for God to grow the seeds He planted and to bring more fruit over the next months. "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase" (1 Corinthians 3:6).

ARCTIC A TO Z

- A** Alaska, Aleut, antlers, Arctic Circle, Arctic fox, Arctic Ocean, Arctic tern, Arctic woolly bear caterpillar, Aurora Borealis
- B** Balto, beluga whale, blizzard, blubber, boat, boots, burrow, bush pilot
- C** calving, camouflage, Canada, caribou, chill, Chukchi, coat, cold, crystal, cub
- D** daylight, den, Denmark, diamonds, dogsled
- E** eagle, earmuffs, elk, ermine, explorer
- F** Faroe Islands, feathers, Finland, fireplace, fjord, flannel, fleece, flurry, forest, freeze, frost, frostbite, frosty, frozen, fur
- G** glacier, gloves, goggles, Greenland, grizzly bear, gyrfalcon
- H** harp seal, harpoon, hibernate, hockey, hot chocolate, hunting, husky, hypothermia
- I** ice, Ice Age, ice cap, ice core, ice crystal, ice fishing, ice hotel, ice sheet, iceberg, icebreaker ship, Iceland, icicle, icy, Iditarod, igloo, Inuit
- J** jaeger
- K** kayak, kicksledding
- L** Land of the Midnight Sun, lemming, lichen, log cabin, long johns
- M** melt, migration, mining, mittens, moose, mukluk, musher, musk ox
- N** narwhal, North Pole, North Star, Northern Lights, Northwest Passage, Norway
- O** oil, orca, outpost
- P** pack ice, parka, permafrost, pinecone, polar, polar bear, ptarmigan, puffin
- Q** qiviut, quilt
- R** reindeer, reindeer meat, research bases, Russia
- S** salmon, salt water, Sami people, scarf, scrimshaw, scientist, seafood, seal, shelter, shiver, skate, skis, sled, sledge, slippery, snow, snowball, snowboard, snowflake, snowmobile, snowshoes, snowstorm, snowy owl, submarine, sweater, Sweden
- T** temperature, thaw, toboggan, tundra
- U** underfur, Ursa Major
- V** Vikings, vole
- W** walrus, weather, weather balloon, whale, wind, wind chill, whiteout, winter, wolf, wood frog, woolly mammoth
- XYZ** “X-treme,” Yellowcoat, Yukon, zero degrees, zooplankton

TOP 20 TIPS WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN

"Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'" Matthew 19:13–14

1. Show love. All children, regardless of age or appearance, need to be loved. Greet them warmly each day, and always be ready with smiles, giggles, encouraging words, and appropriate hugs. (Make sure all staff are aware of your church's appropriate touching policies.)
2. Learn names. It makes children feel important and loved to be called by their name. Make sure visible name tags are always on each child.
3. Keep it moving. Children have short attention spans.
4. Use active learning. The more children can actively be involved in the learning process, the more they will retain.
5. Be all there! Try to leave behind whatever is currently going on in your life and focus your attention on the children under your care during VBS. Listen to them and care for them.
6. Eliminate down time. Find activities to do when you have a few free minutes so all time is being used in a fun and productive way. Practice memory verses, share Terrific Trivia Tidbits and jokes (pages 10–12), play impromptu review games, or ask fun conversation starters.
7. Think safety. Read the Child Safety Precautions page. Ensure there are always at least two unrelated adults with the children at all times.
8. Be thematic. Children love costumes, fun cheers, songs, and anything that goes with the theme. Be ready to wear a Bible character costume or winter gear, such as a winter scarf, ski goggles, or clothes in wintry palettes like white and bright blue. Get them enthused and excited about participating in the daily contests.
9. Walk worthy. Be an example in both word and deed. Children need to see authentic Christianity, so make sure you are walking the walk and not just talking the talk.
10. Notice the good. Children want attention and will sometimes act up in an effort to receive attention, even if it is negative attention. Be proactive by noticing and praising the things they do right. Be an encourager.
11. Be aware of age-level characteristics. With younger children, activities need to be hands-on, concrete, short, and simple. Older children love to talk and are processing and questioning information. Be ready to give an answer for the hope that is within you.
12. Challenge them. Children generally rise to the level expected of them, so challenge them to learn their memory verses and song lyrics. At the same time, encourage in them a true love for the Lord and His Word.
13. Pray. Before, during, and after VBS, be a faithful prayer warrior for the children in your care.
14. Be organized. Read through all training information, ask questions, and faithfully prepare any materials for which you are responsible.
15. Be a team player. Children do not need to hear negative words from their leaders. If you are frustrated or upset, take it to the Lord, but do not complain or get angry in front of the children.
16. Remember to take bathroom breaks. The younger the children, the more important this is!
17. Maintain order. Children like order! Think through potential trouble spots in your day and decide on a firm, loving discipline strategy. Ask for help from experienced individuals.
18. Build team spirit. Work as a team rather than allowing cliques to develop. Everyone should be an important member of the team.
19. Use guided conversation. Be alert and ready to turn conversations to spiritual matters. Build upon what the children are learning throughout the VBS day.
20. Be prepared to lead a child to Christ. Attend the Gospel Presentation Workshop to be equipped should God give you the awesome opportunity to talk to a child about Christ.

WHAT'S ON THE RESOURCE DVD-ROM?

Assembly Resources
Assembly Order of Program
Assembly Scripts
Cool Contests
Creature Feature Presentation Images
Assembly Welcome Presentation Image
Children's Hunger Fund Mission Moment
Banner_Logo
Banner_Meals
Children_Photos
Child Slides
Daily Total_Slides
Journals
Logo
Posters
Promo Video
Coin Pak
Daily Markers
Map Activity
Reply Device
Snowmobile
Team Icons
Daily Scripts
Clip Art and Logos
Clip Art (black-and-white)
Clip Art (color)
Logos
Decorations

Director—Helps and Forms
Attendance Chart
Award—Participation
Award—Visitor
Budget Worksheet
Caretaker Handbook (Sample)
Child Safety Precautions
Coloring Pages
Concession Stand Menu—Sample
Countdown Calendar
Course Overview
Daily Schedules
Decision Card
Director's Evaluation (submit by email)
Director's Evaluation
Job Descriptions
Jokes
Leadership Chart
Leading a Child to Christ (KJV)
Leading a Child to Christ
Lesson Time Room Schedule
Memory Verses
Memory Verses (KJV)
News Release
Operation Arctic Skits
Prayer List
Room Assignments
Scavenger Hunts
Schedule
Staff Devotions KJV
Staff Devotions

Team Guide Responsibilities
Team Placement
Team Roster
Top 20 Tips for Working with Children (KJV)
Top 20 Tips for Working with Children
VBS Crew Chart
Word Puzzles
Workshop Invitation—Gospel
Workshop Invitation—Teacher
Workshop Invitation—Volunteer
Director—Registration Forms
Nursery Letter to Parents (sample)
Registration Confirmation
Registration Form—Child
Registration Form—Nursery
Registration Form—Volunteer
Worker Pledge (KJV)
Worker Pledge
Drama
Scripts
Set Art
Sound Effects
Polar Party
Coloring Contest Page
Face Painting Reference Chart
Games

Grizzly Bear Backdrop
Invitation
Igloo Photo Spot Backdrop
Igloo Golf Backdrop
Ticket
Presentation Images
Backgrounds
Daily Overviews
Fun Phrases
Memory Verses (KJV, NKJV, Blank)
Teaching Illustrations
Terrific Trivia
Supply Lists
Craft and Science Patterns
Craft Supply List
Experiments Supply List
Game Supply List
Games Pattern (Books of the Bible)
Junior Supply List
Mission Supply List
Pre-Primary Supply List
Primary Supply List
Snack Patterns
Snack Supply List
Toddler Supply List

Teacher—Decorating Helps	
Teacher—Junior	
Patterns	Day 1 How the Bible Came to Be sheets
	Day 2 Play acting name tags
	Day 2 Freeze, Freeze, Frozen cards
	Day 3 Station title cards
	Day 3 Station intro/conclusion cards
	Day 4 Cross pattern
	Day 4 Letters “A” and “B”
	Day 5 Play acting name tags
	Day 5 Learn It! Love It! Live It! Tips page
	Day 5 Distraction Concentration Cards
	Small group discussion sheets
Coloring Sheets	
Teacher—Primary	
Patterns	Day 1 How the Bible Came to Be sheet
	Day 2 Play acting name tags
	Day 2 Freeze, Freeze, Frozen cards
	Day 3 Station title cards
	Day 3 Station intro/conclusion cards
	Day 3 Mini Bibles pattern
	Day 4 Cross pattern
	Day 4 Letters “A” and “B”
	Day 5 Play acting name tags
	Day 5 Learn It! Love It! Live It! Tips page
	Day 5 Distraction Concentration cards
Small group discussion sheets	
Coloring Sheets	
Puppet Scripts	

Teacher—Pre-Primary	
Patterns	Day 1 How the Bible Came to Be drawings
	Day 2 Butterfly and Caterpillar Pictures
	Day 2 Pictures of an Arctic Hare
	Day 4 Cross pattern
	Day 5 Mini Bibles
Coloring Sheets	
Exploration Stations Overview	
Puppet Scripts	
Teacher—Toddler	
Patterns	Day 2 Butterfly and Caterpillar Pictures
	Day 2 Pictures of an Arctic Hare
	Day 3 Mini Bibles
	Day 4 Cross pattern
	Day 5 Mini Bible pattern
Child Safety Precautions	
Coloring Sheets	
Exploration Stations Overview	
Puppet Scripts	
Nursery Registration Form	
Nursery Letter to Parents (sample)	
Teacher—Simple Songs (Songs for Pre-Primary and Toddler Teachers)	

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC RESOURCE DVD-ROM

Video Resources

Hand Motion Videos

Hand Motion Instructional Videos

Song Lyric Videos

Song Resources

Song Lyrics

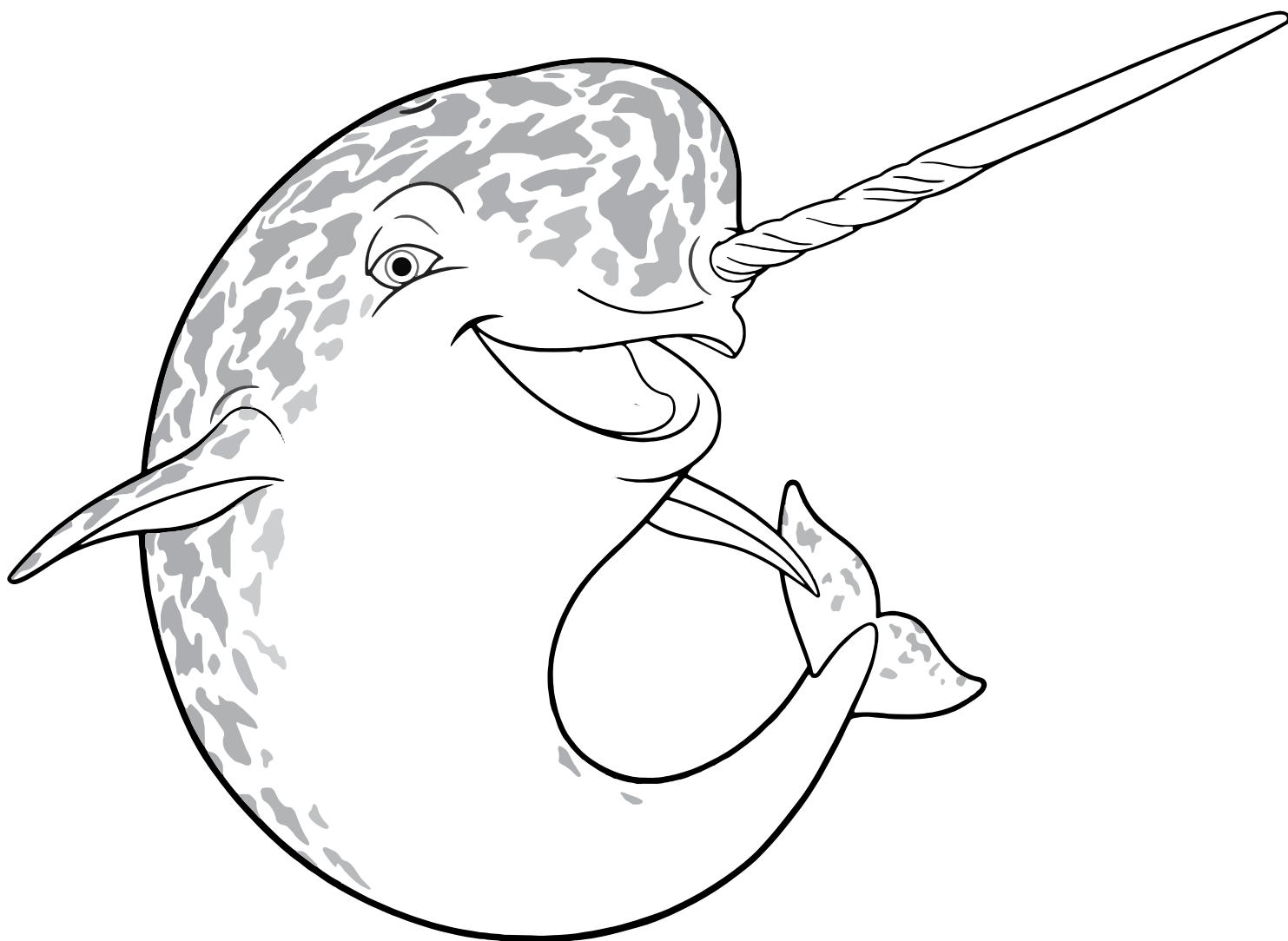
Presentation Images of Songs

Clip Art and Logos

Clip Art (black-and-white)

Clip Art (color)

Logos



START ON SOLID GROUND

"Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper." Psalm 1:1–3

To ensure that your VBS stays on track and you're keeping first things first, work on deepening your relationship with the Lord before, during, and after VBS. As director, your commitment to continual growth in your personal relationship with the Lord is vital. This comes as you depend upon the Lord and eagerly follow after Him. Daily prayer and Bible study provide fuel for your growth. The Lord tells us that "He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Encourage your staff to regularly spend time fellowshiping with the Lord through prayer and reading His Word.

Take seriously the responsibility of finding a prayer coordinator to head up a VBS prayer ministry. Copy the following

page for your prayer coordinator and encourage him to put together a combination of ideas that suits your situation.

Devotions for each VBS day have also been provided. You may want to read through these together or encourage your staff to read them on their own. Copies of the devotions can also be found on the Resource DVD-ROM in the *Helper Handbook* (item 11-5-007) and in the teacher guides for each age group.



PRAYING FOR YOUR VBS

Praying that the Lord will use this VBS program for His purposes is vital. Apart from Him, we can do nothing. As you launch your prayer ministry, choose from the following ideas.

TOP 10 TIPS FOR A VBS PRAYER MINISTRY

"When God plans a great work, He first sets His people to prayer." Charles Spurgeon

1. Find prayer warriors. Enlist people who are willing to pray consistently for VBS. Send each of them a list of VBS prayer requests for which they can regularly be praying. See the prayer calendar sample on the DVD-ROM for ideas.
2. Set up an email prayer loop. Use your church's email prayer loop—or create your own—to pass along VBS requests.
3. Gather your VBS crew to pray. Pray at meetings and encourage them to pray on their own. Have each draw a name of a fellow crew member to pray for and with.
4. Hold a weekly prayer meeting devoted to VBS. Pray over that week's praises and prayer requests.
5. Encourage your team leaders to pray through the names on their class lists before, during, and after VBS.
6. Hold a dedication service. Encourage the pastoral staff to include a time of prayer during the church service the Sunday before VBS.
7. Print maps and prayer request sheets and encourage your church family to walk the premises and pray over every area of the building and grounds.
8. Pass out "Praying for You" postcards (item 11-5-028) to willing and trustworthy church members with instructions to write a quick note to a child, letting him know someone is praying for him. Collect the postcards the week before VBS begins, and have church staff address and mail them.
9. People who may not be able to make it to VBS can help by praying during the VBS hours from work, home, or wherever they are.
10. When VBS is over, continue to encourage your church family to pray for the children who came to VBS. Ask God to continue to work in their hearts and minds.



STAFF DEVOTIONS

DEVOTION 1 BOOK OF BOOKS

"I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings and will not be ashamed." Psalm 119:46

During the early spring of 1524, a young priest slipped away from London and, without the king's leave, made his way to the European continent. He was never to see his homeland again, and for the next eleven years his life was an elaborate hide-and-seek as he was pursued, at one time, by four government agents. His crime and his life's ambition were one and the same: to translate the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek and present it, printed and bound, so that even the boy who drove the plough could understand God's Word.

By the constitutions of Oxford of 1408, it was illegal—on pain of death—to read the scriptures in English without a bishop's license. To reinforce this, in April 1519, one woman and six men were burned to death at Coventry for teaching their children the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed in English.

William Tyndale was born in Gloucestershire, England, studied at Oxford, and later Cambridge, and spent two years teaching the children of Sir John and Lady Walsh in their small manor house at Little Sodbury. Here he began to translate the New Testament, and by the time he arrived on the continent it was complete. The first ever printed New Testaments in English were smuggled back into England early in 1526. Though the bishops burned the Bibles and often their owners, the Word of God became an unstoppable force across the land—England had the Bible in the vernacular at last.

(Excerpted with permission from *Travel with William Tyndale* [Day One Publications] by Brian H. Edwards. See answersingenesis.org/articles/am/v2/n4/tyndale-and-english-bible.)

What drove William Tyndale to risk life and limb so that his fellow Englishmen could read the Bible in their own language? He knew the Bible was the "Book of books." No other book—or person—held the keys to eternal life. No other book laid out the prescription for godly living. No other book contained the true history of the universe and explained why the world is the way it is. No other book was God's written revelation to mankind.

Sadly, however, the English-speakers of Tyndale's time lacked even a rudimentary knowledge of what the Scriptures actually said. Investigations by a reforming bishop in

Tyndale's hometown of Gloucestershire revealed the following about the ignorance of the ministers in the area.

Of the unsatisfactory clergy in 1551, nine did not know how many commandments there were, 33 did not know where they appeared in the Bible (the gospel of St Matthew was a favourite guess) and 168 could not repeat them. Concerning the [Apostles'] Creed, 10 could not repeat it and 216 were unable to prove it; a large number of these said that they were perfectly satisfied that it was right because the king and Mother Church said so. Most extraordinary of all, perhaps, were the results of the Lord's Prayer part of the examination: 39 did not know where it appeared in the Bible, 34 did not know who was its author, and 10 actually proved unable to recite it. (David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography* [Yale University Press, 1994], p. 78.)

Lest we come down too harshly on these clergymen of 400 years ago, let's ask ourselves how well we know the Book of books. Are we ardent students of the Word of God, mining jewels from its depths, or do we have a more casual relationship with the life-giving book, merely admiring the sparkle from afar? Consider this: how much are you willing to risk to bring the Word of God to the children in your care?

Today, as we study the uniqueness of this God-breathed collection of books, let's meditate on the words of the psalmist who realized that the Bible was set apart from all other books—it is the Word of God.

Forever, O LORD,
Your word is settled in heaven.
Your faithfulness endures to all generations;
You established the earth, and it abides.
They continue this day according to Your ordinances,
For all are Your servants.
Unless Your law had been my delight,
I would then have perished in my affliction.
I will never forget Your precepts,
For by them You have given me life.
I am Yours, save me;
For I have sought Your precepts.
The wicked wait for me to destroy me,
But I will consider Your testimonies.
I have seen the consummation of all perfection,
But Your commandment is exceedingly broad.

Psalm 119:89–96