



ISLANDER ASSEMBLY



LEADER GUIDE

Leading a Child to Christ

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.” Romans 1:16

VBS presents an ideal opportunity to share the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ with all attending. Every leader and team member should be ready to clearly present the gospel and counsel those wanting to learn more. Children are usually soft-hearted toward things of the Lord, and some will be interested in becoming a follower of Christ. Be ready, because eternal matters matter most!

BEFORE

- **Pray.** Salvation is God's work, not ours. We cannot bring about salvation for anyone. We need to ask God to prepare the children and open their hearts to him.
- **Be prepared.** Learn more about presenting the gospel and counseling a child about salvation.

DURING

The gospel will be presented during the lesson time. Opportunities may arise, however, to share with a child one-on-one or with a small group of children. If so, keep the following in mind:

- Becoming a child of God involves repenting of one's sin and having faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Repentance involves understanding what sin is (disobeying God's commands) and desiring to turn from that sin.
- You can use *How Can I Become a Child of God?* to explain the plan of salvation. Along with this, use your Bible. Children need to see and hear God's Word, so have your Bible opened and marked ahead of time with the appropriate scriptures.
- Avoid abstract phrases like “asking Jesus into your heart.” Instead, use terminology like “becoming a child of God.” Most children still think in concrete terms and need examples that are easy to understand.
- If a child indicates an interest to know more after hearing the gospel presentation, ask questions (such as one or more of the following) that require more than a “yes” or “no” answer:
 - » What do you want to talk to me about?
 - » Do you know what sin is?
 - » Can you think of a specific sin (wrong) you have done? Are you bothered by your sin?

These questions are important. A child who cannot verbalize a sin or does not seem to be repentant about being a sinner may not fully understand his need for a Savior. In this situation, you might list a child-oriented example of sin and ask him to notice any time he catches himself sinning over the next few days. Give him *How Can I Become a Child of God?* Pray with him, then send him on his way. Check back a day or two later, if possible.

- » Why did Jesus come to earth? Why did Jesus need to die? Why did Jesus rise again?
- » Why do you want Jesus to be your Savior?
- » Why should God let you into his family? (Make sure the

child understands that salvation is not based on what he does, but is a gracious gift of God through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus.)

- Pray for discernment while listening to a child's answers.
- When a child seems to have a basic understanding of salvation (belief in Jesus' death and resurrection, admission of and repentance from sin, and a desire to follow the Lord), encourage him to talk to his parents about what it means to become a child of God (if they are followers of Christ). Encourage a child who comes from a non-Christian home to verbalize his understanding to the Lord through prayer. There is no one prayer that should be prayed. Encourage him to ask the Lord to forgive him and help him know he is a child of God.
- Let him see in your words and your face that you are excited that he wants to become a child of God! Read Luke 15:10 to him.
- Some children may not want to make decisions but may want to learn more, to be assured of salvation, or to confess sin. Read Romans 10:9–10 and John 10:28–29 with children who are seeking assurance of their salvation. Encourage them to ask the Lord to help them know they are his children. If a child wants to confess sin, read 1 John 1:9 with him and encourage him to ask the Lord to help him know he is forgiven when he repents.

AFTER

- Review what it means to be a child of God.
 - » How long does God keep his children? (Hebrews 13:5b, John 10:28–29)
 - » Can anything separate God from his children? (Romans 8:38–39)
 - » What happens when God's children sin? (1 John 1:9)
 - » What do children of God believe? (Romans 10:9)
- Explain that Jesus loves his children and wants to spend time with them. Discuss practical ways to grow as a child of God. Provide him with *Growing Up in God's Family*, and share the following:
 - » Read your Bible, and obey what you read. You can start your Bible reading with the short Bible study you will receive the last day of VBS. (Make sure he has a Bible at home, and if not, provide one. Write his name, the date, and the occasion [VBS] on the presentation page.)
 - » Pray every day. Prayer is talking to God.
 - » Go to a church that believes and teaches the Bible as the Word of God.
 - » Tell others about Jesus. Tell your friends, family, and neighbors how they can become children of God.
- Fill out a Decision Card. Turn in to the VBS director.
- Stay in touch with the child through postcards, visits, or phone calls. Invite him to upcoming church events.

ASSEMBLY GUIDE

Course Overview

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
God is ...	GR+8	ALL+MY+T	RUE+LEARN-N	E+MAN+YOU+L	TRUSTY-Y+WORD-D+THEE
Lighthouse Lesson Focus	God is GREAT! He is the one and only God, the awe-inspiring Creator.	God is ALMIGHTY! He is all knowing, all powerful, and all present.	God is RULER! He is the majestic king who is holy and perfect.	God is EMMANUEL! He is the loving and good Savior who came to earth.	God is TRUSTWORTHY! He is our rock. We should praise, thank, worship, adore, and live for him.
Medallion of the Day	Number 1	Letter O	Crown	Heart	Diamond
Bible Passages	Paul in a City of False Gods Acts 17:16–34	Jonah and God Almighty Book of Jonah Psalm 139	Isaiah's Vision of God Isaiah 6:1–3 Psalm 8	God Comes to Earth (Gospel Presentation) Select Scriptures	David Trusts God 1 Samuel 17
Treasured Verses	Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. Psalm 145:3	Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me? Jeremiah 32:27	And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" Isaiah 6:3	But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8	Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:5–6
Apologetics Focus	There's only one God as revealed in the Bible. You can't make up a god of your choosing.	Nothing is too hard for God.	God is the same in the Old Testament as he is in the New Testament. He was and is and always will be in charge.	God is three-in-one—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Even though there is mystery to this, God is knowable.	God is bigger and greater than our unanswered questions. We can trust him.
Animal Pals	Camo the Chameleon	Flip the Flapjack Octopus	Clark the Great White Shark	Jam the Immortal Jellyfish	Trusty the Macaw
Deep Sea Science	Rainbow Water Mystery Color	Can Crushing Diving Octopus	Diaper Duty Shark Float	Lava Lamps Sea Snakes	Salty or Fresh? Jewel Treasures
Deep Sea Crafts	Tropical Tree Glass Gem Magnets	Shell Necklace Splash Octopus	Wind Chime Great White Game	Mini Diorama Gospel Sand Art	God's Attributes Rock Seek and Find Treasure
Ride the Tide Games	Island Ambush Island Olympics	Fish Out of Water Sharks and Minnows	Glory Corners Tropical Relays	Triple Play Take Heart	Buccaneer Barriers What's the Treasure?
Tropical Treats	One and Only Bread Seascape Snacks	Pail of Whales Omni Os	Shark Teeth Moon and Star Sammies	Heart Melts Jolly Jellyfish	Hidden Treasure Treats Treasure Maps
Cool Contests	Swedish Fish Guessing Game	Team Cheers	Dress-Up Day	God of Wonder Challenge	Mission Money Mania



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Assembly Guide

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Handy Helps

Fun in the Sun

What is it about a tropical island that is so captivating—the beach, sunny skies, sparkling water, and awesome resorts? Or how about the beauty, sunsets, island animals, and glittering stars? It certainly is a special place on earth.

On *Mystery Island*, prepare to be thrilled from the top of your sun-drenched head to the tip of your sandy toes as we explore an intriguing and mysterious tropical paradise while tracking down the one true God.

Day 1: God is GREAT!—As we stop in Acts 17 and find a city full of idols, we'll hunt for clues about our great God and discover we must have the right view of him. We can't make up a god of our own choosing.

Day 2: God is ALMIGHTY!—Our mighty God knows everything, is everywhere, and has the power to do anything. As we study the account of Jonah, we'll oooohhh and aaahhh as we focus on the three big Os of God—his omniscience, his omnipotence, and his omnipresence.

Day 3: God is RULER!—We'll check in with Isaiah and realize God is not like us. Our minds will be blown away by his vastness, beauty, and holiness.

Day 4: God is EMMANUEL!—God is high and mighty, Lord of all creation. And yet, he also came to earth (Emmanuel means “God with us”) and desires a relationship with the people he has made. He is good and he loves us.

Day 5: God is TRUSTWORTHY!—With the account of David, we'll learn that God is great, God is good, and God is perfect in all things, so we can trust him with our lives. He is our rock.

From the minute our islanders arrive at *Mystery Island*, they'll find fun waiting to happen. The day begins at the **Islander Assembly**, a supercharged opening complete with entertaining welcomes, rockin' songs, a mission moment, and prayer. Then we're off to four fun rotation sites:

Lighthouse Lessons, the teaching time. Here, islanders will track down truths about the one true God and discover he is a priceless treasure.

Tropical Treats, the snack spot. Islanders will enjoy island eatables at this yummy stop.

Ride the Tide Games, the recreation location. At this location, islanders attempt fun surf and sand challenges.

Deep Sea Science and Crafts, the science, craft, music, mission, and memory verse spot. This location features a wide array of activities to choose from: electrifying science experiments to explore, creative crafts to invent, high-energy songs to sing, fun memory verse games to play, or mission time to investigate (for those who want to spend more time than is given during the Assembly).

After finishing the day's rotations, everyone heads back to the **Islander Assembly** for the closing 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 features two siblings who are invited to an island treasure hunt as part of their inheritance from a rich uncle. In the midst of their search, much mystery, intrigue, adventure, and humor occur, and valuable lessons are learned.

So grab your beach tote, and let's head out for some fun in the sun at *Mystery Island*!

Our Goal

We are so thankful for how God has chosen to use the Answers VBS programs over the past years! 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?

Our primary goal has always been 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 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, we combine a biblically rich VBS 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 teaching. But it's also crucial that the most exciting book in the world not come across as boring or irrelevant. 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. We're praying for you!

Your Role

Your role as music coordinator, mission coordinator, and/or drama director is outlined in the following pages. This is *your* guide. Read it carefully and prayerfully, using our suggestions combined with the ideas the Holy Spirit brings to your mind. Then get ready! God is about to use you and your church to impact lives!

Music Coordinator

- Learn all music and motions for the songs (see the *Seashore Songs* DVD for help)
- Help plan and run the daily assemblies, including standing up front and enthusiastically leading the music
- Train others to learn songs and motions so they can also help lead music
- Help plan and run the Fin-tastic Finale closing program

Mission Coordinator

- Choose a mission project or projects for all ages
- Arrange all details related to presenting the mission project during VBS week

- Act as the presenter of the mission information the week of VBS
- Deliver the mission collection to the appropriate parties after VBS is over

Drama Director

- Choose actors for the drama and prepare folders for each with copies of the scripts
- Organize a rehearsal schedule
- Run the drama practices and oversee all aspects of the production (lighting, sound, costumes, props, etc.)
- Provide direction for the design of the set
- Oversee the production of the dramas during the week of VBS
- Help plan and run the closing program

Frequently Asked Questions

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

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.

Islanders: The kids at VBS. Islanders are put in groups named after tropical islands (e.g., Puerto Rico, Bora Bora, Fiji).

Group Guides: Adults who guide the islanders from place to place during VBS. No teaching is required for this position.

Lighthouse Keepers: Teachers at the Lighthouse Lesson time.

Lighthouse Lessons: Rotation site where Bible and apologetics teaching occurs.

Islander Assembly: Spot where everyone joins together for the opening and closing assemblies.

Deep Sea Science and Crafts: Rotation site where kids make crafts, perform science experiments, sing songs, learn memory verses, and explore missions around the world.

Tropical Treats: Indoor or outdoor site where island eatables are served.

Ride the Tide Games: Indoor or outdoor site (outdoor is preferred) to dive into surf and sand games.

Treasured Verses: Daily memory verses.

Animal Pals: Friendly animal mascots used to emphasize the key point of each day's lesson.

Creature Feature: Daily time during the opening or closing assembly when we marvel together at God's design of various thematic animals.

Toddlers: 2–4 year olds.

Pre-Primaries: 4–6 year olds, or kids who are age 4 through those who have completed kindergarten.

Primaries: 6–9 year olds, or kids who have completed grades 1–3.

Juniors: 9–12 year olds, or kids who have completed grades 4–6.

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

Find [these items](#) in your kit. Find [these items](#) in your digital resources.

Assemblies

Daily Assemblies

One of the most exciting parts of *Mystery Island* is the opening and closing assembly time. Each day begins and ends with an assembly of all classes and includes an array of activities. (See below.) The assemblies can be led by the VBS director, children's pastor, music coordinator, drama director, a volunteer, or a combination of these.

Assembly Activities

Welcome

Welcoming everyone to VBS is the first thing we do at *Mystery Island*. And to start us off each day, we have a silly pirate intro and/or a special video illustrating a majestic Scripture passage. (The Scripture video can be used at any point in your opening or closing assemblies.)

Seashore Songs

Kids love to sing, and kids love song motions. That's why we do both at *Mystery Island*. The *Seashore Songs* CD features fun songs that reinforce the spiritual theme. See the Music Leader Set (either contemporary or traditional) that is included with a Super Starter Kit for a Music CD (stereo, split-track, instrumental-only versions of each song), Hand Motions DVD, and DVD-ROM (featuring lyric videos, HD versions of the hand motions videos, presentation images, and PDFs of the song lyrics). Sheet music, student CDs, and songbooks are also available.

Additionally, included in the Super Starter Kit is a Memory Verse Songs Leader Set. This features each of the main memory verses set to fun, upbeat music by Seeds Family Worship (contemporary) or Majesty Music (traditional). Singing Scripture is an easy and exciting way to encourage your kids to memorize their Bible verses!

Mission Moment

During the opening assembly, the VBS mission project is highlighted. Collecting money for *The Great Treasure Hunt* in partnership with Children's Hunger Fund allows the children to contribute to the physical needs of children around the world, giving them an opportunity to hear the gospel. See the Mission Moment section for more information and the Digital Resources for videos and printable handouts.

An expanded version of this section is also featured in the science and craft guide. Some churches may want to have a separate mission time and only announce the total collected during the assembly time. Be sure to check with your director to find out when this will be done.

Creature Feature

During the closing assembly (or opening assembly if that works better for you), kids learn about each day's animal pal. See the Creature Feature section for information.

Drama

Because each day's drama segment is part of a continuing week-long story, it is one of the most anticipated events of VBS. The dramas are presented in the closing assembly each day. For information about the dramas, including set design and construction and each day's script, see the Drama section.

As an [alternative](#), [shorter skits](#) for each day using fewer people are also offered on the Digital Resources, or a video version of the drama can be purchased and played.

Treasure Hunts/Cool Contests

Not only do kids love to sing, but they also love a contest. That's why *Mystery Island* has treasure hunts and contests each day to keep excitement running high. Contest results are presented daily during the closing assembly. See the Cool Contests section for more information.

Announcements

Announcements can be made toward the end of each opening and closing assembly and should include information about the next day's contests and a reminder to bring mission money.

Prayer

Ask for God's protection and blessing on your day during the opening assembly. At the end of the closing assembly, thank God for a good day at VBS.

WOW! Thought

Just before everyone is dismissed to go home, take a minute to share a mind-blowing thought about God.

Find [these items](#) in your kit. Find [these items](#) in your digital resources.

Tip Corner

- Use class signs to identify where each class should sit. Sign posts can be made and reused each year.
- Play VBS music before and after each assembly to enhance the atmosphere.
- In preparation for VBS, have some (or all) of your leaders learn the song motions.
- To add variety, wear something thematic, or use a ukulele to lead a song if you know of someone who has access to one.



Daily Assembly Scripts

For your assembly leader, a detailed program for each assembly, including all scripted segments, is provided beginning on page 14. These include the welcomes, Mission Moments, songs, and Creature Features. These scripts are also available on the Digital Resources.

Order of Program Forms

So that your assembly leader and production crew are on the same page, blank, reproducible “order of program” forms are provided for the opening and closing assemblies on the Digital Resources. Before each assembly, insert the songs of your choice and your notes. Then photocopy the completed form and distribute to your production crew.

Find [these items](#) in your kit. Find [these items](#) in your digital resources.

Seashore Songs

Kids love to sing, and kids love song motions. That's why we do both at *Mystery Island*. *Seashore Songs* features fun songs that reinforce the spiritual theme. We have provided a variety of songs to go along with each day's teaching; however, feel free to choose the songs that work best for your children. You can use all of the songs throughout the week or just choose a few to repeat every day so the kids can learn them. You may also want to begin teaching the songs to your children a

few weeks before VBS begins. Use your Sunday school, children's church, or Wednesday evening programs to familiarize them with the VBS music. Hand out CDs of the music or encourage parents to download the audio files from answersbookstore.com and play them for the children in the car and at home.

Note: Original purchasers of these music products (CDs, DVDs, and songbooks) are given limited permission to copy up to 25% of the total number of copies needed.

Music Leader Set

Included in each Super Starter Kit is a Music Leader Set, either contemporary (11-8-059) or traditional (11-8-060; music produced by Majesty Music). These sets are also available for purchase separately. The Music Leader Set features a Leader Music CD, Music Resource DVD-ROM, and Leader DVD.

Leader Music CD

This music CD features stereo, split-track, and instrumental-only versions of the songs.



Contemporary Songs

Theme Song: "Mystery Island" (2:25)
Day 1 Song: "Great Is the Lord" (2:20)
Day 2 Song: "Mighty, Mighty" (2:11)
Day 3 Song: "King over Everything" (2:27)
Day 4 Song: "God with Us" (3:16)
Day 5 Song: "Jump" (2:16)
Any Day Song: "Holy, Holy, Holy" (2:50)
Any Day Song: "King of Kings" (3:13)

Traditional Songs

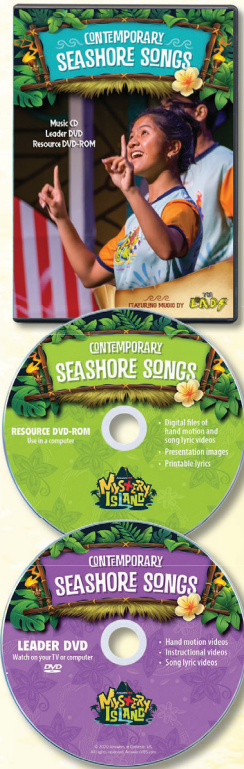
Theme Song: "Mystery Island" (1:39)
Day 1 Song: "Great Are You, Lord" (1:45)
Day 2 Song: "He Is Almighty" (1:45)
Day 3 Song: "Bow the Knee" (1:57)
Day 4 Song: "A Promise Kept" (2:18)
Day 5 Song: "My God Is a Righteous God" (1:55)
Any Day Song: "Holy, Holy, Holy" (2:52)

Music Resource DVD-ROM

This DVD-ROM features song lyric videos, hand motion videos, presentation images of the songs, and a document of the lyrics.

Leader DVD

This DVD features song lyric videos and hand motion videos. The contemporary DVD features bonus instructional videos of the motions for each song. Leaders can use these videos to learn the motions themselves before leading the kids at VBS.



Additional Music Aids



Sheet Music

The Super Starter Kit includes a sheet music book for your chosen music track. This book includes the lyrics and the accompaniment for each song. This book can also be purchased separately. (Contemporary—11-8-065; Traditional—11-8-066)

Student CDs

Audio CDs of the full-track songs are sold in packs of 10. These can be distributed with the songbooks to the children and their parents before or during VBS to help with learning the songs. They make great rewards and souvenirs of VBS, as well. The memory verse and the theme songs are together on one student CD. (Contemporary—11-8-061; Traditional—11-8-062)

Songbook

A sample songbook is also included in the Super Starter Kit. These are for sale in packs of 10 and can be distributed to the children or parents before or during VBS to help with learning the lyrics to the songs. (Contemporary—11-8-067; Traditional—11-8-068)



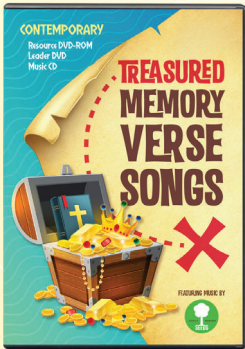
Student Hand Motion DVDs

The hand motion DVD is available for purchase individually. These DVDs can be distributed to children who would like to take them home to watch long after VBS is over. (Contemporary—11-8-055; Traditional—11-8-142)

Digital Downloads

Lead sheets, chord charts, and audio files of each contemporary music song are available to purchase and download from answersbookstore.com. Hand motion videos and song lyric videos are also available to purchase and download.

Memory Verse Songs



Encourage your kids to learn their memory verses the easy way—by singing them! We offer fun songs for each of the memory verses from *Mystery Island*.

The contemporary Memory Verse Music Leader Set (Music CD, Leader DVD, Resource DVD-ROM), featuring songs produced by Seeds Family Worship, is

available in the contemporary Super Starter Kit and is also available for purchase separately (11-8-069). You can purchase student CDs (11-8-061) in packs of 10, as well.

The traditional Memory Verse Music Leader Set (Music CD, Resource DVD-ROM), featuring songs produced by Majesty Music, is available in the traditional Super Starter Kit and is also available for purchase separately (11-8-063). You can purchase student CDs (11-8-062) in packs of 10, as well.

Theme Verse/Day 1 Song: “Psalm 145:1–3—Unsearchable”
Day 2 Song: “Jeremiah 32:27—Is Anything Too Hard for Me?”

Day 3 Song: “Isaiah 6:3—Holy”

Day 4 Song: “Romans 5:8—Christ Died for Us”

Day 5 Song: “Proverbs 3:5–6—Trust”

Extra Song: “Psalm 145:8–10—You O Lord”

Find [these items](#) in your kit. Find [these items](#) in your digital resources.

WOW! Treasure Hunts and Cool Contests

Wow! Hopefully, that's what everyone will be saying as we discover thoughts to treasure about God in our daily treasure hunts. This is a super important component in this year's VBS, so make sure you do it. The kids at the test churches loved this and really got into it!

Decide who will be in charge of preparing and hiding the treasure chests each day—possibly the director, the assembly leader, or someone else designated by the director. The assembly leader will be responsible for explaining how it works to the kids, as is written in the daily assembly scripts. Here are the details.

- Before VBS, make or buy treasure chests (11-8-079). If you have a large VBS, it helps to have three different colors of treasure chests for the different age groups—one color for Juniors, another for Primaries, and another for Pre-Primaries. (Toddlers do not officially participate in the treasure hunts.) If you have a small VBS, everyone can use the same color. Check [YouTube.com/AnswersVBS](https://www.youtube.com/AnswersVBS) for how to make treasure chests.
- The number of treasure chests needed depends on the number of classes in your VBS. Small VBS programs that plan to have all kids use the same treasure chests need four. Larger VBS programs who are dividing each age group into a different color will need 12 (4 per age group times 3 age groups). Very large VBS programs may want to divide it even more so no more than 6 groups are using any one treasure chest.
- Check the Digital Resources for the daily [WOW! Treasure Hunt Cards](#). Print, cut in half, fold, and put them in the treasure chests so there's enough for each group to have their own card. For example, if you have two Junior groups, two Primary, and two Pre-Primary, making six groups total, then print three copies of the **DAY 1 WOW! TREASURE HUNT CARD 1**, cut the copies in half so there are now six (for the six groups), fold them, and put them in a treasure chest. Do the same to fill the second treasure chest with **DAY 1 WOW! TREASURE HUNT CARD 2**, the third chest with **CARD 3**, and the fourth with **CARD 4**.
- Hide the treasure chests around the inside and outside of the building. Make sure they are in spots where children pass by. Hide the Junior treasure chests in more challenging spots than the Pre-Primary ones, but don't make any of them too challenging since the islanders don't have lots of time in between rotations to find them.
- Each day, all the groups try to find their four treasure chests while moving from rotation to rotation.
- Upon finding a treasure chest, the group opens it and takes out the treasured thought. They put the lid back on the treasure chest and move away from it so other groups can get theirs.

- The group guide tells the kids they must be quiet, listening, and participating at each spot to receive the 1,000 points each time. Group guides may want to have them sit down briefly.
- Group guides read the treasured thought (conveying awe and excitement about God as they do) and then briefly comment/discuss.
- Group guides then mark 1,000 points on their Islander Team Roster for each one completed. (For instance, if they find all four, they will get 4,000 points that day.)
- The treasure chests will be hidden in different spots each day, so someone needs to collect them at the end of the day, throw away any old treasure hunts, put in the new ones for the next day, and rehide. The test churches hid them each morning since some needed to be hidden outside and they didn't want them sitting out all night in case of bad weather.
- It's important to instruct group guides to be enthusiastic about the treasured thoughts in the treasure chests. Their attitude toward God will be contagious!
- These treasure hunts are part of the bigger group contests suggested every year where the kids get points for learning their memory verse and bonus memory verse, being at VBS, participating in the contests, and so forth. See below for more information and check out a sample Islander [Team Roster](#) on the Digital Resources.

Other Contest Info

- Send home the student guide daily and encourage the kids to do the Go and Do sections. Each Go and Do a person does is worth 1,000 points. They do not have to bring these back. Just take their word for it.
- Our test churches include the Pre-Primaries in the contests, but they don't keep score for that age group because they don't really understand or care about the points, but just enjoy the fun of everything.
- Besides doing the WOW! Treasure Hunts during VBS and the Go and Do sections on their student guides at home, other things the islanders can receive points for are being at VBS, learning their memory verses and bonus memory verses, and participating in the daily contest. The daily contests are as follows.

DAY 1—SWEDISH FISH® GUESSING GAME

Prepare a see-through jar with Swedish Fish®. Count how many are in it and write the number on a piece of masking tape. Put the tape on the inside of the lid and put the lid on the jar. Place the jar, some slips of paper for kids to write their guesses on, some pens, and a small

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sand pail somewhere near your assembly area. At any point in the day when they are passing by, each child can write their guess on a slip of paper, with their name, and put it in the sand pail. Have an adult figure out who is closest, and award the jar to that person during the closing assembly or at the next day's opening assembly.

DAY 2—TEAM CHEERS

To excite team spirit, each team comes up with a team cheer, song, motion, or sign. Or, they can each wear something depicting their group. For example, if a group's name is Christmas Island, everyone wears red and green on Day 2. Or for the Florida Keys, each person hangs a key somewhere on himself.

DAY 3—DRESS-UP DAY

Today, islanders dress up in any tropical island or beachy attire. No swimsuits please.

DAY 4—GOD OF WONDER CHALLENGE

Run copies of the [God of Wonder Challenge](#), and pass one out to each child to be completed at home. This is an important and fun exercise that led to great conversations with kids at our test churches.

DAY 5—MISSION MONEY MANIA

Bring in your final mission money today. Double points for anyone who brings in any amount.

Suggested Prizes

If you are interested in giving out prizes for any of the contests or for anything else, here is a list of prizes available from [answersbookstore.com](#).

- Tubular bandanas (11-8-152; 11-8-153; 11-8-154; 11-8-155; 11-8-156)
- Wristbands (11-8-083)
- Stickers (11-8-088)
- Puzzles (11-8-094)
- Water bottles (11-8-081)
- Pencils (11-8-085)
- Carabiners (11-8-082)
- Pens (11-8-086)
- Puffy stickers (11-8-143)
- Child dive vests (11-8-144)
- Notepads (11-8-146)

- Scratch art (11-8-147)
- Snorkel masks (11-8-148)
- Squishy beach balls (11-8-149)
- Flying disks (11-8-157)

You can also check online retailers, such as Oriental Trading Company ([orientaltrading.com](#)) and Rhode Island Novelties ([rinovalty.com](#)), for inexpensive bulk prizes, and local discount retailers that sell bulk individually wrapped candy or other edible treats. Some prize possibilities include: sunglasses, sand pails, squirt guns, seashells, stuffed animal sea creatures, surfboard key chains, swim goggles, leis, beach balls, mini beach balls, bucket hats, visors, hibiscus flowers, folding fans, pool toys, beach totes, tropical bubble bottles, glow sticks, coconut cups with straws, neon water bottles, Sour Skittles®, Hershey's® Nuggets, Swedish Fish®, and chocolate coins.

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Creature Features

During the assemblies each day, we'll share a Creature Feature to highlight the incredible design features of five amazing animals the Creator has made. These are written into the closing assembly but can also be done during the opening assembly—your choice!

Day 1: Chameleon

Today, we'll meet the chameleon, a colorful lizard found mainly in Africa and Madagascar, but in some other places as well. God designed the chameleon with incredible eyes that each work independently, allowing it to look in two different directions at once, and giving it a virtual 360 degree view. No other animal has this ability.

Perhaps what we think of most about the chameleon, however, is that its skin changes color. We will be reminded that although chameleons change, God never changes. His character is the same forever, which is just one of the countless traits that make him great!



Day 4: Immortal Jellyfish

Have you ever seen a jellyfish? How about a jellyfish that's only about the size of an adult's pinky fingernail? That's the immortal jellyfish, an intriguing creation from God. This amazing animal is called "immortal" because it has the incredible ability to live forever if not attacked or diseased. When it becomes an adult, it reverts back to the infant stage—over and over again. It doesn't die of old age!

Of course, this is an awesome reminder that our souls are immortal and we can live with God forever someday if we admit, believe, and forever receive the Lord.



Day 2: Flapjack Octopus

Time to meet the flapjack octopus, a cute animal that lives deep in the ocean in darkness. God gave the flapjack octopus many design features for survival in the mysterious deep, including the ability to flatten like a pancake to appear less threatening to its prey—hence, the name "flapjack octopus."

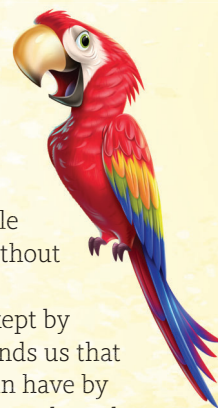
As we go about our day and learn how God is all present, all powerful, and all knowing, the flapjack octopus reminds us that there is nowhere we can be where God is not. From the highest mountain to the deepest ocean, God is there and knows everything that's going on. God truly is almighty!



Day 5: Macaw

Isn't it cool that God made the bright-colored, king-sized parrot called the macaw? God gave macaws many special features, such as beaks that are designed to crack open hard nuts and seeds, and streamlined bodies that enable them to fly through the dense forests without running into trees.

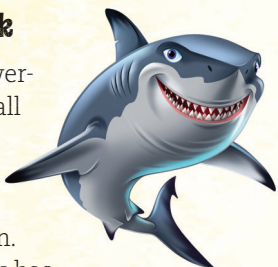
Parrots are also known to have been kept by pirates as trusted pets. Our macaw reminds us that the most trustworthy relationship we can have by far is not with a pet or with a person, but with God. Although relationships with pets and people can be special, God is the greatest, most trustworthy and ever-faithful friend any who believe and call on his name can ever have.



Day 3: Great White Shark

Today's animal pal is the powerful great white shark, found in all major oceans of the world. The great white has God-given design features that help it to thrive well in the post-fall ocean.

Because the great white shark has such a commanding presence, it is nicknamed the king of the sea, or ruler of the sea. But the great white reminds us that there is a King of the universe who is infinitely greater than the king of the sea. The King of the universe made the king of the sea, after all. God is in charge and is the holy ruler of all!



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Mission Moment

The mission emphasis to your VBS program provides an amazing opportunity for children to participate in giving to ministries that share the gospel. **Check with your director to see when she wants to feature the Mission Moment—either during the assembly time or during one of the rotations.** The craft guide contains additional activity ideas.

This year, we've partnered with Children's Hunger Fund to provide food and the hope of the gospel to hungry children in the US and across the globe. *The Great Treasure Hunt* is a fun and meaningful addition to your VBS program, teaching kids about poverty around the world, and empowering them to make a difference.

The Great Treasure Hunt



Your kids will explore five different countries on *The Great Treasure Hunt*, discovering that everyone is a treasure to God. They'll also learn about children living in poverty around the world and ways to make a difference.

As your students explore Haiti, Guatemala, Nepal, Romania, and the US, they'll hear the stories of boys and girls whose lives have been touched by poverty. These children have no guarantee of meals, shelter, or an education. They need help. And they need the hope that only comes from salvation in Jesus Christ.

The good news is you and your kids have the power to make a difference!

The Bible says that giving generously to the poor is really giving generously to God himself (Proverbs 19:17). Teach your VBS class the great joy that comes from sacrificing for the sake of Jesus and his gospel.

The Great Treasure Hunt

During the Mission Moment, a long-time treasure hunter, Walter, will take your group on a treasure hunt. He'll show them tools used in searching for treasure and explain how those tools relate to our own spiritual journey. Walter has traveled the world and met people who are a treasure to God, and each day he'll introduce your kids to one of them.

Rally your kids to help with *The Great Treasure Hunt*. Your mission is to collect coins to fill Children's Hunger Fund Coin Paks and help provide meals for children in need—children like those that Walter introduces.

When your VBS children earn coins for their Coin Paks, they make it possible for Children's Hunger Fund to fill Food Paks. A Children's Hunger Fund Food Pak is a box of up to 20 pounds of nutritious food that can feed a family for up to a week. In a Food Pak, a meal costs just 25¢! A dollar can provide four meals for hungry children.

The Food Paks are provided to partner churches in the US and around the world who deliver them to homes of families in need. Along with food delivery, relationships are built and the gospel is shared.

The following items are available on the Digital Resources.

- [Daily videos](#)
- [Daily scripts and activities](#)
- [Printable Prayer Journals](#), featuring true stories about hungry children living in poverty and prayer prompts that will help your kids connect with the needs of suffering children
- [Printable "Map of the World" activity sheet](#), featuring locations of the children from the daily videos
- Printable and [digital banner artwork](#)
- [PowerPoint® images](#) to help your kids track their fundraising progress
- Printable fold-up [Coin Pak bank](#) for collecting coins
- [Donation Submission Form](#) to accompany your donation to CHF at the end of your VBS program

Purchasing Items

Included in your starter kit is a sample of the sturdy [pop-up Coin Pak bank](#) made for your kids to use as they collect quarters for meals. Check with your director for this sample. After VBS, these will be fun souvenirs that can be kept as reminders to always care for the needs of others. Coin Paks are available for purchase from Children's Hunger Fund. (See below.)

Find [these items](#) in your kit. Find [these items](#) in your digital resources.

Also available for purchase are beautiful handmade bracelets from Uganda. The beads on these bracelets are rolled by hand out of magazine paper by Ugandan men and women who have been trained and given fair-wage employment through one of our trusted ministry partners in Africa. A limited number of these bracelets are available for purchase to give as prizes and souvenirs for your kids or thank-you gifts for your volunteers.

To order Coin Paks or bracelets, please visit ChildrensHungerFund.org/AnswersVBS. To place an order over the phone, call Children's Hunger Fund at 800-708-7589.

For questions regarding your Mission Moment resources, please call 800-708-7589 or email VBS@ChildrensHungerFund.org.

Orders must be received 14 days prior to your VBS date. Available while supplies last.

Collecting Donations

Give children their own Coin Pak bank for collecting donations. Work with your director to set up a fun area (e.g., treasure boxes) for kids to deposit their money each day as they begin VBS. Encourage your kids in the weeks leading up to VBS to save their money and then begin collecting the first day. Or, plan on passing out the Coin Paks on Day 1 and begin collecting on Day 2.

Once you've totaled your donations, please make out a check to Children's Hunger Fund and indicate "The Great Treasure Hunt" in the memo area, and fill out the [Donation Submission Form](#). Send your check with the form to:

Children's Hunger Fund
Attn: The Great Treasure Hunt
DEPT LA 24373
Pasadena, CA 91185-4373

Learn more about the gospel-centered mercy ministry of Children's Hunger Fund at ChildrensHungerFund.org.

Tracking Your Progress

To help your kids maintain their excitement, announce how many meals they provided each day. Check with your director to find out when to do this: either during a special mission rotation or during the opening or closing assembly.

Here are fun ways to help your kids see their progress as they fundraise.

1. Show your progress with *The Great Treasure Hunt Daily Count PowerPoint slides*. Update the slides with the total number of meals raised each day.
2. Make your own goal tracker and update it throughout the week. Create or print an empty thermometer and put five equally spaced marks on it. Each day, fill in the thermometer up to the next mark and write the total number of meals raised so far on the corresponding line.
3. Consider having a contest between boys and girls, or between teams, to see which group can bring in the most money. ([Printable "teams" and "daily count" artwork are on the Digital Resources.](#))

NOTE ON COUNTING COINS: It may be helpful to recruit two or three adult volunteers to count and/or roll the coins at the end of each day. Some banks provide coin counting services, but they may require several days to do so. Check ahead with your local bank.

Daily Assembly Scripts

Day 1: Islander Opening Assembly

Welcome (5 minutes with video)

This year, we've developed beautiful Scripture videos for each day. These can be used at any point in your opening or closing assemblies but are written in at the beginning of each day and are found in the Assembly folder in the Digital Resources.

SHOW: [Day 1 Scripture video](#)

SUPPLIES FOR DAY 1 WELCOME: Modest pirate costume to be used all week

Person 1: Ahoy, kids! Welcome to *Mystery Island*, where we'll be tracking down the one true God!

Person 2: Sneak out in a pirate costume and try to scare Person 1. It doesn't work.

Person 1: Yo ho ho, good try, Captain Crispy. But you're not scary.

Person 2: Aarr! (said with disappointment)

Person 1: Now if you want a scary pirate, then we need to talk about the scariest of all.

Person 2: Long John Silver?

Person 1: No. *Blackbeard*.

Person 2: Blackbeard? I'd have to be called *No Beard*. But was Blackbeard really someone's name?

Person 1: Well, we're not sure of his real name, but it was probably Edward Thatch. This guy grew up in England in a wealthy family, but he veered off course in his life and became a pirate—the scariest pirate *ever*. He'd put slow-burning fuses in his hair when he went into battle that would give off smoke and sparks. It made him look terrifying! And he'd tie ribbons into his huge beard that was said to go almost up to his eyes.

Person 2: Shiver me timbers, he must have scared a lot of people!

Person 1: Yeah, he did, but he was only a pirate for two years, and then he was captured. You know, Blackbeard thought he needed silver and gold, but you know what he really needed, Captain Crispy?

Person 2: Some Jolly Pirate donuts?

Person 1: No—he really needed God. Pirates come in all shapes and sizes, but they all need the same thing, just like each of us—the one, true God. This week at *Mystery Island*, we'll be discovering who the one true God is and what he's like. Today, we'll be blown away to find out how great he is! Now, let's sing our theme song!

Song (3 minutes)

"Mystery Island"

Song (3 minutes)

Contemporary: "Great Is the Lord" / Traditional: "Great Are You, Lord"

Mission Moment (4 minutes)

SHOW: ["The Great Treasure Hunt" slide](#)

As we spend this week at *Mystery Island* seeking out more about who God is, we're also going to be learning about some of the greatest treasures he created—people!

Each day of VBS, we're going to meet a girl or boy in a different part of the world who is one of God's treasures.

We're teaming up with Children's Hunger Fund to help children like the ones you're going to meet, whose families don't have enough food to eat, and who don't know Jesus.

The best part? You get a chance to help them!

SHOW: ["The Great Treasure Hunt—Hennrick" slide](#)

Are you ready to get started? Great! Today, we're going to meet a little boy in the country of Haiti. His name is Hennrick.

SHOW: [Video 1—Hennrick](#)

Country: Haiti

Problem: Natural Disaster

Hennrick's family wasn't always poor. Before the earthquake, his life didn't look a whole lot different than yours. Now he's living in a tent, and he doesn't always know when he will get his next meal. But as you just saw, there is hope for Hennrick and his family! A pastor brought Hennrick's family a Food Pak from Children's Hunger Fund. He told them about Jesus and how much he loves them. Hennrick learned that he is very special to God.

Do you want to help kids like Hennrick? Pause for participation. Great! This week at VBS, we'll be going on a treasure hunt to collect coins in these Coin Paks [show Coin Pak]. Take this home today and tell your family and friends about Hennrick. Ask them to help you collect coins for meals. It only costs 25¢ to provide a nutritious meal for a hungry child.

These meals will be packed into a Children's Hunger Fund Food Pak, which is a box with about 20 pounds of nutritious food inside. That's enough to feed a family of four for about a week.

Each day this week, bring back any coins you've collected, and we'll count how many meals you've given

Find [these items](#) in your kit. Find [these items](#) in your digital resources.

so far. With your help, we can deliver hope to suffering families all over the world.

Announcements (time varies)

Announce any info pertinent to your situation. Today, you need to explain how the treasure hunts work so the kids can be looking for the treasure chests as they are rotating around the building. Check with your director for specific

details about how your VBS's treasure hunts are structured so you know what to say.

Prayer

Dismissal

Song (play as children leave)

C: "King of Kings" / T: "Holy, Holy, Holy" / Memory Verse
Song: "Psalm 145:1-3"

Day 1: Islander Closing Assembly

Song (3 minutes)

C: "Mighty Mighty" / T: "He Is Almighty"

Song (3 minutes)

"Mystery Island" / Memory Verse Song: "Psalm 145:1-3"

Creature Feature: Camo the Chameleon

(5 minutes)

PRESENTATION SLIDES

SHOW: Creature Feature title slide

It's Creature Feature time! Every day we'll be exploring a different animal that God has created. Let's get started!

SHOW: Camo the chameleon slide

Today's animal is Camo the chameleon. Have you ever seen a chameleon? Pause for responses.

SHOW: Chameleon eyes slide

Look this way. Point to the right. **Now look this way.** Point to the left. **Okay, now have one eye look to the right and the other look to the left.** Pause for a second. **Did you try it? It's impossible, right? Humans can't do that but chameleons can! God gave chameleons special eyes that can move in different directions at the same time. A chameleon can basically see 360 degrees around itself at any given moment. This trait helps the chameleon be able to hunt for tasty flies and alerts it if a hungry bird is near that might want the chameleon to be its next meal!**

SHOW: Chameleon tongue slide

Stick out your tongue as long as it goes. Do so. God gave the chameleon a long, sticky tongue. Chameleons' tongues are longer than the entire length of their bodies and are stored accordion-style inside their mouth. Imagine if your tongue was longer than your body!

Now, let's see how fast you can stick your tongue out and get it back in your mouth. On the count of three, let's do it. 1-2-3! Do so. A chameleon's tongue is so quick that it's able to accelerate from being still to moving five times faster than a fighter jet can take off.

This speed allows the chameleon to catch its food. The end of the tongue also has a sticky suction cup on it. God thought of everything when he gave the chameleon a special tongue to catch food.

SHOW: Small chameleon slide

Hold up your pinky finger. Demonstrate, and have them do so. **The smallest chameleon is smaller than your pinky finger.**

SHOW: Large chameleon slide

On the other hand, the largest is over two feet long! Demonstrate approximately how long two feet is.

That's a big difference, isn't it?

Have you ever wished you could be camouflaged and just blend in to your surroundings? God created chameleons with the amazing ability to change colors, which helps them blend in to their environment. Sometimes they switch colors to show their mood. For example, if they're a darker color, it lets other chameleons know they're angry. They also change color as a way of camouflaging themselves so that other animals don't eat them! God gave them a way to protect themselves in a most unusual way, didn't he?

SHOW: Chameleon toes slide

Wiggle your toes! Do so. God gave a chameleon five toes on each leg, but its toes aren't evenly spaced like ours are. Two toes are on one side of each foot and three are on the other side to form a V shape. This allows the chameleon to expertly grip tree branches and other plants without falling off! God thought of everything!

SHOW: Camo the chameleon slide

Camo our animal pal sure changes a lot, but God never changes. People change a lot, too, but God never changes. The Bible says God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Camo reminds us that even though animals and people may change in many ways, we have a God who is unchanging and whose character is the same day after day. God is always great, and God is always good!

Find [these items](#) in your kit. Find [these items](#) in your digital resources.