

LIGHTHOUSE LESSONS

# TODDLER

TEACHER GUIDE



# TODDLER

# 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	
Medallion	Number 1	Letter O	Crown	Heart	Diamond	
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, good Savior who came to earth.	God is TRUSTWORTHY! He is our rock. We should praise, thank, worship, adore, and live for him.	
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. Psalm 145:3	Behold, I am the LORD . . . Is anything too hard for me? Jeremiah 32:27	Holy, holy, holy is the LORD. Isaiah 6:3	While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8	Trust in the LORD with all your heart. Proverbs 3:5	
Animal Pals	Camo the Chameleon	Flip the Flapjack Octopus	Clark the Great White Shark	Jam the Immortal Jellyfish	Trusty the Macaw	
Apologetics Focus	There's only one God as revealed in the Bible. You can't make up a god of your own 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.	
Exploration Stations	Discovery Center	Mystery Box	Mystery of the Missing Objects	I Spy a Crown	Play Creche	Sling It
	Touch Table Water	Ocean Animals	Play Boats and Jonah	Fish in the Sea	Fishing Fun	Sink or Float
	Touch Table Sand	One and Only God	Hidden Shells	Sand Castles	Crosses Memory Match	Cookie Cutters
	Dramatic Play	Beach Fun	Beach Fun	Beach Fun	Beach Fun	Beach Fun
	Coloring Corner	Psalm 145:3	Jeremiah 32:27	Isaiah 6:3	Romans 5:8	Proverbs 3:5
Deep Sea Science	Rainbow Water	Can Crushing	Diaper Duty	Lava Lamps	Salty or Fresh?	
	Mystery Color	Diving Octopus	Shark Float	Sea Snakes	Jewel Treasures	
Deep Sea Crafts	Tropical Tree	Disappearing Jonah	Wind Chime	Lei Cross	God's Attributes Treasure Chest	
	Number 1 Fun	The Os Have It	Cool Crown	Work of Art Heart	Under-the-Sea Scene	
Ride the Tide Games	Chameleon Fun Run	Octopus Explorations	Parachute Paradise	Fill the Bucket	Treasure Hunt	
	One Time	Octopus Tag	Bubble Fun	Jumping Jellyfish	Listen to the Leader	
Tropical Treats	Number 1 String Cheese	Mini Flapjacks	King's Crowns	Apple Inner Tubes	Macaw Bites	
	Seascape Snacks	Omni Os Cereal	Shark Teeth	Sandy Stars	Hidden Treasure Treats	
Cool Contests	Swedish Fish Guessing Game	Team Cheers	Dress-Up Day	God of Wonder Challenge	Mission Money Mania	



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# Handy Helps

## Fun in the Sun

What is it about a tropical island that makes it 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!**—In 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.

Toddlers and young preschoolers then head back to their room to experience their own special schedule which includes Exploration Stations, Lesson Time, Song Time, and Memory Verse/Review Time. They also enjoy snacks, games, and crafts.

Next, 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 as they solve clues and learn valuable lessons.

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-charts, irresistible fun. In a day and age when content sometimes suffers, it's critically important to us not to sacrifice rich content. 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 the teacher is outlined in the following pages and includes planning and preparing lessons, enthusiastically engaging in teaching the lessons, and praying over all aspects of your job. Read this guide

carefully and prayerfully, using our suggestions combined with the ideas the Holy Spirit brings to your mind.

Get ready! Get set! Get excited! God is about to use you and your church to impact lives.

## 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](http://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. Note that toddlers don't rotate around as the older kids do but stay with their same leaders the whole day.

**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.

**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:** 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 Toddler Teaching Tips

1. Psalm 145:1 tells us to extol the Lord. “Extol” means to “enthusiastically praise.” Speak with awe, amazement, excitement, and joy when talking about the Lord. Your enthusiasm will be contagious!
  2. Pray and study God’s Word. This is your most important preparation.
  3. Show love. Warmly greet each child every day, and always be ready with smiles, kind words, and appropriate hugs. (Make sure to be aware of your church’s appropriate touching policies.)
  4. Read through all your lesson plans well in advance, and become familiar with the Digital Resources. Begin to pray and plan, and continue to pray during and after VBS. God has given you the awesome privilege of building the foundation of his Word into the lives of these little children. Walk worthy!
- In this guide:
- » Teaching Tips are marked with a ★.
  - » Materials for each activity are listed next to the activity.
  - » The “teacher says” portion is bolded.
5. Think safety. Read the Child Safety Precautions file on the Digital Resources for more information.
  6. Have parents fill out detailed forms. See the Digital Resources for a registration form. The more information you have, the better care you can give.
  7. Keep decorations out of the way so no one gets hurt. Do not have strings or cords around in which children may become entangled. Be careful of heavy decorations or toys that can fall on a child.
  8. Maintain a low child-to-adult ratio for this age group, such as 4:1. Lots of help is important to ensure proper care, safety, and love!
  9. Be careful of choking hazards associated with toys, craft materials, and Exploration Station materials. Keep things big and chunky. Items should be bigger than a toddler’s mouth to avoid choking.
  10. Modify the Exploration Stations as your situation warrants. Use as suggested or incorporate one or more ideas into the Lesson Time instead, so you can do the activities with the whole group at one time.
  11. Keep most activities in a self-contained room. Outdoor play time should be in a well-defined space so no one strays. Check with parents to see if you may use sunscreen on their child. Limit the time you are outside, or place your play area in the shade.
  12. Keep extra supplies on hand, such as diapers, swim-mies, tissues, and safe snacks.
  13. When walking from place to place, consider using double or triple strollers (2-year-olds), or have the children hold onto a rope (3–4-year-olds).
  14. Hands-on, sensory activities are important to accommodate these little tikes with their short attention spans. Involve them and their senses!
  15. Toddlers and young preschoolers may or may not sit during lesson time. If they sit, it won’t be for long! Keep the lesson moving, and keep *them* moving!
  16. Use simple words over and over. This age likes repetition, so repeat the Bible verse and the song words many times throughout the VBS day.
  17. Use your Bible as you teach the lessons. Bookmark the verses ahead of time. Through your facial expressions and your actions, show the importance of the Scriptures.
  18. Follow your church’s check-in and check-out procedures for this age group. Be careful to whom you dismiss a child. Release only to that child’s authorized individuals.
  19. Use brown lunch bags labeled with the child’s name to send everything home each day.
  20. At the end of each day, clean the toys and items used by the children. Wash linens. Wipe down tables and other areas of use. Empty trash cans and diaper pails. Set up for the next day.

# Age-Level Characteristics

Kids are awesome! Each one is unique and is a special creation from the hand of our amazing Creator. With all their uniqueness, however, they also share some common characteristics. That doesn't mean every child always exhibits the following characteristics at the suggested age, but these guidelines can be a benchmark to use when looking at characteristics of children as a whole. It can be helpful to see how God has wired different age groups and can be used to help us be more effective in teaching and interacting with them.

First, you'll see characteristics of children in general and then characteristics of toddlers (ages 2–4 years) specifically.

## Characteristics of Children

Children have some common characteristics.

- They are born sinners.
- God has given each a conscience, and they (generally) want good to win over evil.
- God has shown himself to all children through his creation, making it obvious to all that there is a Creator.
- Children enjoy active learning—moving around, seeing things, touching things, smelling and hearing things, and being involved.
- Children need to be loved, encouraged, and praised.
- Children are rapidly growing and changing.
- Children trust the adults who are responsible for them.
- Children can get discouraged with criticism and failure.
- Children are eager to learn and are curious about the world and about God.

## Characteristics of Toddlers

### Physical Characteristics

Toddlers are active! They're on the move, running, climbing, and exploring. They're beginning to perform simple tasks, like using scissors. They can easily get hurt as they are rapidly developing physical skills but don't have wisdom to know when to stop running, climbing, etc.

### Takeaways for Us

- Keep toddlers moving. Engage them actively as much as possible. Have them do motions to songs and actions to Bible accounts.
- Supervise them carefully.

- Provide chunky, nontoxic supplies.
- Intersperse periods of sitting with something active.

## Emotional/Social Characteristics

Toddlers want to do things by themselves, such as picking out their clothes and dressing themselves. They like imaginative, dramatic play. They're testing their powers and saying "no" a lot. They often want to please adults and try to mimic their behaviors. They're affectionate toward others. Toddlers are fearful of things that are loud and out of the ordinary.

### Takeaways for Us

- Let toddlers be helpers. Give them simple one-step jobs to do, and have them help pick up things and straighten the room at the end of the lesson. Let them know they've done a good job.
- Be consistently present all week; establish routines and stick with them.
- Be consistent in discipline. Let your "yes" be "yes" and your "no" be "no."
- Give them opportunities to dress up and play imaginatively.
- Adults—don't dress in elaborate costumes that may seem unfamiliar and scary.
- Be careful to walk worthy—act and speak in godly ways. Little eyes are watching and will want to imitate you!

## Spiritual/Mental Characteristics

Toddlers are curious and want to touch, smell, feel, see, and experience their world. They have short attention spans and learn/communicate in short sentences. They understand short and simple directions. They believe what you say. Their attitude toward God and others is in the process of being formed during these years.

### Takeaways for Us

- Involve toddlers' senses in learning! The more they can touch, smell, see, taste, and feel, the better!
- Give clear, simple directions.
- Keep activities and lessons short. Toddlers' attention spans are only a few minutes long before they need to switch to something new, so keep it moving!
- Be careful to speak accurately and truthfully.
- Show care and respect for your Bible, and help them see your love for it and for the Lord.

# Toddler Schedule

When working with this age group, flexibility is key. In some cases, they are dropped off early and picked up late by parents who have VBS responsibilities. It may be important to revamp the schedule as necessary by removing some activities and allowing for more rest and free play.

Be aware that young ones get tired as the day wears on, even more so as the week wears on. The schedule may work fine at the beginning of the day or week, but toward the end, less is often better.

## Exploration Station Time

There are four Exploration Stations: Discovery Center, Touch Table, Dramatic Play, and Coloring Corner. (There are two Touch Table options—a water and/or a sand touch table.) These stations should be set up at the end of the room opposite where the lesson time is held or in an adjoining room. See the Exploration Stations Supply List on the back cover for a list of all the supplies needed each day.

Note: If stations aren't possible, simply choose one or more of the station activities to incorporate somewhere in your day as a whole group activity.

Children may rotate together through each station every few minutes, or they may independently move from one station to another, which is what our test churches do. They don't need to do every station each day. Send the coloring page home daily, colored or uncolored. Also, many of these stations are big hits and can be repeated other days.

Post the signs with each station's name. Consider posting the directions and teaching tie-in for each station as well, so the guides will be able to share the main point with the kids. (See Digital Resources.) Check the decorating section for more specifics on setting up the Dramatic Play area to look like a beach area and the Coloring Corner to look like an under-the-sea area. For the touch table, use a small wading pool or a large, clear, under-the-bed storage container. Place it on a plastic tarp or tablecloth to catch the spills.

## Bible Learning Time

The Bible Learning Time is divided into three sections:

- Lesson Time
- Song Time
- Memory Verse and Review Time

The lesson time works well with a two-person team. One person serves as Teacher One and the other as Teacher Two or the Teaching Assistant. The lesson can also be taught alone. If team teaching, decide ahead of time who will do what. If teaching alone, find someone (group guide, staff person, etc.) to help any time you might need an extra set of hands (puppet pal time especially).

Check the Resource Catalog for a fun T-shirt and hat to wear while you teach! Add a lei or sun visor for added fun.

Below is a sample schedule with descriptions of each time period. Check with your director for a copy of your specific schedule and room assignment.

## Sample Schedule

### Based on a 3-hour VBS

Note: This schedule reflects a 30-minute period before VBS begins to accommodate VBS parents' schedules.

8:30–9:00	Arrival/Free Play Morning VBS Program—Breakfast Snack
9:00–9:15	Islander Assembly—Opening
9:15–9:40	Exploration Stations (Session 1)
9:40–10:05	Lesson Time, Song Time, Memory Verse/ Review Time
10:05–10:30	Ride the Tide Games
10:30–10:45	Deep Sea Crafts (Session 1)
10:45–11:00	Exploration Stations (Session 2)
11:00–11:20	Tropical Treats and Rest Time
11:20–11:35	Deep Sea Crafts (Session 2)
11:35–11:55	Islander Assembly—Closing
11:55–Noon	Return to Room/Dismissal

<b>Arrival</b>	In some cases, children in this age group will arrive earlier than the rest of VBS children. Therefore, make sure you're there early, as well! Be ready to greet your little ones with smiles, hugs, and love. Follow your church's check-in procedures and safety precautions.
<b>Free Play</b>	Provide inviting toys ready for free play. Help them become familiar with their VBS space.
<b>Tropical Treats Breakfast Snack</b>	If you are running a morning VBS, offer a small snack. This helps them get used to their setting as they focus on food rather than being dropped off at the nursery! See page 19 for ideas.
<b>Islander Assembly—Opening</b>	Walk the children to the opening assembly. Request to be seated in the front on small chairs or in a special spot so the children can see. Plan to leave before or during the last song so you are back in your room before the other children leave.
<b>Exploration Stations (Session 1)</b>	Allow the children to explore the stations or participate in free play during this time. See the Digital Resources for patterns.
<b>Lesson Time, Song Time, Memory Verse/Review Time</b>	This is the heart of the day. If some of the other activities need to go, make sure this one <i>does</i> happen! Present the lesson early before fatigue sets in. At the same time, if you notice the kids are especially antsy or tired, remain flexible and switch activities. You can come back later to finish the lesson, or you can break it up and finish it the next day.
<b>Ride the Tide Games</b>	Play inside or outside. Just spend time playing! Young children learn as they explore their world. See page 13 for game ideas.
<b>Deep Sea Crafts (Session 1)</b>	Toddlers and young preschoolers need simple crafts. Gluing sensory items (cotton balls, fabric, sandpaper, etc.) onto papers, attaching stickers, and coloring are always a hit. See page 16 for craft specifics.
<b>Exploration Stations (Session 2)</b>	Allow the children to continue exploring the stations.
<b>Tropical Treats and Rest Time</b>	Make sure all snacks are bite-sized and not choking hazards. Be alert to any allergies children may have. See page 19 for ideas.
<b>Deep Sea Crafts (Session 2)</b>	If the children seem up for it, try a second craft before heading out to the closing assembly.
<b>Islander Assembly—Closing</b>	Take them to the closing assembly, once again sitting close to the front. Leave five minutes early so they are back in their room when VBS is dismissed. Follow your church's safe dismissal procedures.

# Memory Verse Songs

We have partnered with Seeds Family Worship (contemporary, ESV, 11-8-069) and Majesty Music (traditional, KJV, 11-8-063) to create songs for each of the memory verses. They feature the full verses. (Pre-Primaries and Toddlers are taught condensed versions of these verses.) Singing Scripture is an excellent way for children to learn their Bible verses easily. If you choose to use these songs, you can use them (either video or audio) during the memory verse time in each lesson. The Leader Pack comes with

the purchase of a Super Starter Kit and can also be purchased separately. You can also purchase and download the songs individually from our online store for use on a handheld device (answersbookstore.com). Student CDs in packs of 10 are available if you would like each student to have a copy of the songs (11-8-061 or 11-8-062). The option you choose will determine which type of media device you use to play it.

## Student Extras

Check with your VBS director, and choose one or more of these fun optional materials to give to your students so they can take home a review of the daily lesson content.

**Simple Songs:** The songs referenced throughout this guide that are for Pre-Primaries and Toddlers are available on the Digital Resources (you'll need to upload them to an MP3 player) and on a separate *Simple Songs for Kids* CD (11-8-141) that you can play in a CD player. You may want to purchase one of the CDs for each child. Downloads of the songs can also be purchased from AnswersVBS.com.

**Student Guides:** These age-appropriate guides feature a lesson review on the front of each daily take-home paper, as well as the memory verse, verse review game suggestion, and "Go and Do" section on the back that parallels the Memory Verse/Review Time part of the lesson. You can either go over these during class time or send them home with the students to be completed with a parent or caretaker, which is what our test churches do. The student guides are available in packs of 10.

- Toddler ESV (11-8-074)
- Toddler KJV (11-8-135)

**Trail Guides:** These fun interactive booklets feature the daily memory verses, animal pals, stickers, and a place to stamp (11-8-093) for attendance. They can receive them at any time during the first day (our test churches use them as the kids first arrive), and you can review them with the kids during the Memory Verse/Review Time section of the lesson. These are available in packs of 10.

- Pre-Primary/Toddler ESV (11-8-090)
- Pre-Primary/Toddler KJV (11-8-138)

**Treasure Maps:** These maps feature the daily sticker medallions and are available in packs of 10. They can be passed out at the end of the Bible lesson time or at the end of the day.

- Treasure Maps—ESV 11-8-078; KJV 11-8-140

**Bookmarks:** These are available in packs of 10 and can be passed out at the end of class or at the end of the day.

- Gospel (11-8-076)—Day 4
- Attributes of God (11-8-077)—Day 5

## Special Needs

The *Special Needs Teacher Supplement* (11-8-053) can help you accommodate and modify these lessons for those who need it, either in your regular classroom or in a self-contained classroom.

## Tips for Managing a Group of Kids

Kids are fun, and kids have energy! Whether you are a group guide, a classroom teacher, or an assistant, be prepared to confidently lead them with attention getters, proactive tips, and classroom control ideas. Check the Digital Resources and the *Helper Handbook* for specifics.

# Decorating Decisions

A colorful and engaging environment helps children learn better, remember more, and leave with happy memories. So be creative, and use the tools and ideas in this section to capture the imagination of the kids with your classroom decorations.



## Key Decorating Elements

To serve as a focal point for the teaching, the *Mystery Island* classroom backdrop features a tropical island scene. Mounted on the walls adjacent to the backdrop are the teaching, memory verse, and animal pal posters.

### Lighthouse

Use 2x2 boards and corrugated cardboard to create a simple three-sided lighthouse. Begin with the base, making a tapered frame where the top and bottom are square but the bottom is slightly larger than the top. Then cover three sides with corrugated cardboard painted white with horizontal black and red stripes.

Next, make the light section. Cut two corrugated cardboard squares with dimensions identical to the top of the base and four 2x2 pieces tall enough to accommodate the lantern. The 2x2s will serve as upright corner posts with the cardboard squares attached to them top and bottom. Paint the corner posts black and the underside of the top cardboard square yellow, red, or black. Wrap three sides of the light section with clear cellophane, then place it on

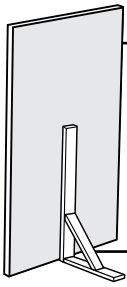
top of the base. For a lantern, use a large oatmeal container painted yellow, or a real flashing light.

Finally, construct a roof for the lighthouse. Cut four identical corrugated cardboard triangles with bases that match the length and width of the light section. Then paint them yellow, red, or black, and attach their bases to each side of the light section with their points meeting at the top.

### Seascape

The seascape panel can be made from corrugated cardboard or foam insulation board. The size of the panel is determined by the amount of classroom space that you have.

Take the panel, and draw a straight pencil line across the middle. This will be your horizon line with the sky above and the ocean below. Paint the sky a solid “sky blue” color, but for the sea, use two shades (lighter and darker) of greenish-blue ocean colors, using a two-color painting method. For this technique, use a single standard size roller and pick up the lighter and darker shades at the same time (both colors on the roller, side-by-side). You’ll



Prop up your set, and any free-standing decorations, with wooden jacks made from 2x4, 2x3, or 2x2 boards. Smaller decorations will need smaller jacks and larger decorations will need larger ones. If necessary, jacks can be weighted down with bags of sand or road salt.

get some minor mixing of colors in the two paint trays as a result, but it's not a problem. Then use a generally horizontal stroke to blend, but not totally mix, the colors. Two tones on the roller will result in lighter and darker areas of color. After the ocean colors, add a few reflective white patches on the sea using a light horizontal stroke with a brush. Paint the horizon line white to provide contrast between the sky and the sea, and then, create some clouds by sponging some white onto the sky.

You can display your panel in a variety of ways. It can be hung from a pipe and drape (or PVC pipe frame) system, hung from the ceiling, mounted directly to a wall with mounting putty, or simply propped against a wall.

## Treasure Chest

Because a treasure chest is used daily in the teaching, you will need to have one on your set. Simply spray paint a large Styrofoam cooler brown. Then add strips of black duct tape for straps and gold thumbtacks for rivets. Have beaded necklaces hanging out of it.



## Other Props, Tips, and Misc. Ideas

- Place a rug or raised platform in front of your backdrop to create a stage effect.
- Palm trees are a perfect accent piece. See [How to Make a Pair of Palm Trees](#) and clip art images on the Digital Resources.
- Add painted cardboard rocks, wave swirls, sand dunes, and tufts of grass.

### 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, if necessary, and cut out.

- Add two or three seagulls to your ocean scene. See the Digital Resources for clip art images. Use fishing line to hang them from the ceiling.
- Add a thin (½-in.) black border to your painted props. This helps them stand out better and makes the colors appear more vibrant.
- Because corrugated cardboard tends to curl when only one side is painted, first apply a quick single coat of paint to the back.
- Lay beach towels on the floor for the kids to sit on.

## Classroom Scene Setter

As a quick and easy alternative to creating your own classroom backdrop, a scene setter is available for purchase (11-8-126) from the Resource Catalog. Simply mount it to cardboard or foam insulation sheets, using clear packing tape or staples, or attach it directly to the wall with sticky tack or mounting putty. Another alternative for easy cleanup and wall protection is to apply strips of painter's tape to the wall, then put double-sided tape over the painter's tape, and attach the scene setter to the double-sided tape. Mavalus® tape also works well.



## Resource Posters

Contained in the Teacher Resource Kit are the teaching, memory verse, and animal pal posters. These are important visuals for the islanders and should be displayed in an organized fashion on a wall (or walls) adjacent to the backdrop.

## Puppet Stage

Because a puppet is used daily in the Toddler classrooms, you will need a puppet stage. Use the front of the lighthouse for this purpose by cutting a small puppet door that opens. If you are using a scene setter, make one out of a large cardboard box or a tri-fold display board. Cut out a rectangular hole in the box or display board, cover the hole with fabric, and then paint or decorate the outside.

**Check out [Pinterest.com/AnswersVBS](https://www.pinterest.com/AnswersVBS) for colorful photos of decorations from our test churches!**  
**Visit [YouTube.com/AnswersVBS](https://www.youtube.com/AnswersVBS) for how-to decorating videos!**

# Exploration Stations

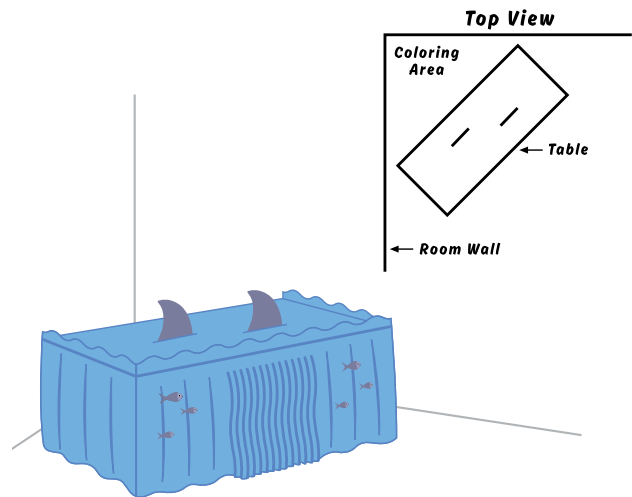
Toddler classes will also enjoy Exploration Stations, which will include a dramatic play area, touch tables, a discovery center, and a coloring corner. Further information about these areas can be found on page 23, but check below for details on how to make the dramatic play area and coloring corner.

## Dramatic Play Area

The dramatic play area simulates a tropical island beach. Begin by covering the wall with a tropical beach scene setter, or create your own scene with light blue (sky), medium blue (ocean), and tan (sand) roll paper. Then, add “beachy” props, such as beach chairs, beach umbrellas (with a sturdy base), beach towels, beach balls, sand toys, stuffed animal beach animals, tropical shirts and leis, and a picnic basket with play food. You can take it a step further by adding a thematic snack bar or souvenir shop where the kids can play “store” or “restaurant.”

## Coloring Corner

Set up an “under-the-sea” coloring corner by decorating a table for kids to sit under or crawl through as they color and learn their memory verses. Drape the top and sides of a rectangular table with blue plastic tablecloths and make a series of vertical cuts for an opening. Then decorate with fish, shark dorsal fins, and a wave border around the rim of the table. Solid blue bulletin board borders look like waves and can be found at teacher stores or online sources, like Oriental Trading Company.



# Ride the Tide Games

Playing is what this age group does best! While they're playing, they're learning. These games are an important part of the teaching process because they help to cement the lessons into the kids' minds in a fun way.

Consider having an outdoor playtime if you have a good space for it. It's nice to break up the day and have a new location to explore. The outdoor location should be enclosed so no one wanders off. If you don't have a safe area, use tarped hay bales or snow fencing to create one. Ask church families to bring in plastic slides, big wheel riding toys, and other age-appropriate outdoor equipment.

Make sure they're labeled so they can easily be returned after VBS.

You may also want to consider having wading pools with a small amount of water for outdoor playtime. (Supervise carefully.) Make sure parents are notified ahead of time to bring swim floats, a swimsuit, a towel, and extra clothes for their child. Ask if it's okay to put sunscreen on their child, and apply it at least 10 minutes before going outside. If possible, place the pools in a shady area.

For game time, use the following suggestions or other games from the game guide. Any of these ideas may be repeated throughout the week as time allows.

## Thematic Game Ideas

### Day 1

#### Chameleon Fun Run

Place various solid-colored objects around the playing area such as toy hoops, small flags, papers, balls, orange cones, etc. Anything solid-colored and safe for play can work. Don't place objects that are the same color (all the red objects, for instance) next to each other, but scatter them around the playing area.

Share the teaching tie-in first, then call out a color and have the kids run to an object that is the color you called. Play as time allows.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

Our animal pal today is a kind of lizard called a chameleon. God made chameleons so they can change colors. We change, too, as we grow up, but we don't change colors, do we? But you know who never changes? God! He's always the same. You can count on him.

#### One Time

No pre-prep is needed. Before playing, share the teaching tie-in, then have them do the following directions one time each. Adapt to fit your situation.

- Run around the perimeter of your space *one* time.
- Do *one* jumping jack.
- Find *one* person whose name is \_\_\_ and give her/him *one* high five.

- Sing *one* verse of "Jesus Loves Me" while walking around in a circle.
- Run and find *one* thing that is yellow.
- Lie down and stay still for *one* long second.
- Sing "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" *one* time while doing the motions. God made all those parts of your body!
- Hop over to *one* person and say hi.
- Take *one* giant step forward and *one* giant step backward.
- Jump up and down for *one* minute.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

Today we're hearing about a man named Paul who went to a place called Athens. The people of Athens believed in many gods, but Paul told them there is only one God. Let's put up *one* finger and say, "There's only one God!" [Do so](#). Let's see if we can do some things *one* time to remind us there's only *one* God.

### Day 2

#### Octopus Explorations

Before class, gather items to make eight simple stations to explore, such as running through a sprinkler, jumping over pool noodles, dancing through toy hoops on the ground, wading through a baby pool, scooping sand into a pail, squeezing water sponges, bouncing a beach ball, and lying down on a beach towel.

Share the teaching tie-in first, then explain what they can do at each of the eight stations and give them time to explore. At this age, it may be best to allow them to have free exploration time to enjoy each activity at their leisure.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

Today's animal pal is Flip the flapjack octopus. Did you know God made octopuses with eight arms? Let's count to eight together. *Do so.* These arms help the octopus get its food, swim, and even fight off other animals. I'm sure glad God made the octopus! Let's think of the octopus while we explore eight different stations.

### Octopus Tag

No pre-prep is needed. Before playing, share the teaching tie-in, then play the game. To play, kids run around the playing area while the leader (who is pretending to be an octopus) tries to tag them. If tagged, they have to give the leader a high five, but can continue playing. Play as time allows.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

Let's jump up and down eight times while we count to eight. *Do so.* Now let's touch our toes eight times while we count to eight. *Do so.* Did you know God made the octopus with eight arms? God gave them all those arms to help them catch food, swim, and even get away from their enemies. Let's try to stay away from our octopus leader while we play Octopus Tag.

## Day 3

### Parachute Paradise

Before class, gather a sheet or parachute and one or more play fish or sea creatures.

Share the teaching tie-in first, then begin. Have everyone grab onto the outer edge of the parachute and lead them in imitating various island noises as they wave the parachute. For example, kids can caw loudly like a macaw, blub like a fish, whoosh like the wind, hiss like a snake, or squeal like a dolphin. They can also practice being the island wind by waving the parachute quickly and then slowly. To finish parachute time, toss one or more play fish or sea creatures into the middle of the parachute and let the kids have fun bouncing it around.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

Today we're talking about how God is the ruler of everything. He's in charge of the wind and the sea. He's in charge of all the animals. He's the king of everything. Let's have fun making some noises we might hear on an island that remind us of all the things God has made.

### Bubble Fun

Before class, gather supplies to make a bubble station. You can make your own solution with a ratio of 3 c. water to 1 c. dish soap and ½ c. light corn syrup, or you can buy pre-made bubble solution. You will need bubble wands as well. Share the teaching tie-in first, then blow bubbles up toward heaven as suggested in the teaching tie-in. Next, encourage the kids to try various challenges with the bubbles such as blowing the biggest bubble, not getting touched by bubbles blown by a leader, not letting a bubble hit the ground, blowing a bubble through an upright toy hoop, hitting a target with a bubble, etc. This will be fun exploration!

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

We're going to play with bubbles today! When we first start, let's blow some bubbles up toward heaven and say, "God is king!" to remind us he's the ruler over all. Here we go!

## Day 4

### Fill the Bucket

Before class, collect two buckets and lots of small plastic cups (one per player). Fill one bucket with water. Share the teaching tie-in first, then play the game. Kids work together to transfer water from one bucket to the second bucket, which is approximately 20 feet away. They can only use their cups to do so. If you have lots of kids, you may want to divide into two teams and use extra buckets.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

We have been having so much fun on our island this week, haven't we? And today we learned that God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus. We can never count how much God loves us, just like we can't count how much water is in the ocean. God's love for us is so big and huge! He's a great and loving God. Let's remember that as we play this game with water. We can't count the drops, but there are lots!

### Jumping Jellyfish

Before class, gather enough toy hoops to have one per child. (Or, you can use pieces of paper instead if necessary.) Also, gather something with which to play music. Set up the toy hoops on the ground in a large circle.

Share the teaching tie-in first, then have the players each stand inside a toy hoop. Begin to play the music, and have the kids jump from hoop to hoop as long as the music is playing. As soon as it stops, players must freeze in place until the music starts again. Play as time allows.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

Today's animal pal is Jam the immortal jellyfish. Immortal means to live forever. Did you know we

can live forever with God if we trust in his Son Jesus and say that we are sorry for disobeying him (sinning)? [Take responses](#). I hope you trust in God! Let's remember that as we try to be jumping jellyfish.

## Day 5

### Treasure Hunt

Scatter various items throughout the playing area such as plastic or rubber ocean animals, small balls, water toys, sand pails, etc. Also gather a large container the kids can put their "treasures" in, and place it in the middle of the playing area.

Share the teaching tie-in first, then play the game. Players look for hidden treasures in the grass, which they place in the large container. Play as time allows.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

What's something you own that you love? [Take responses](#). Things we love can be treasures to us. Well, today we're talking about someone who is greater than any treasure on earth. Who do you think is the greatest treasure of all? [Take answers](#). Yes, God! In our game today, we're going to search

for treasures hidden in the grass, but remember, there's no treasure that compares with God!

### Listen to the Leader

There's no pre-prep needed for this game. Share the teaching tie-in first, then play the game. It is like an island-themed Follow the Leader. As you move about, act out various island animals (turtles, sharks, fish, stingrays, birds, monkeys, etc.) or activities (swimming, surfing, snorkeling, relaxing in the sun, etc.), and have the players imitate the action. Play as time allows.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

Our animal pal today is Trusty the macaw. A macaw is a bird called a parrot. Parrots were considered trusty friends of pirates. It's nice to have pet friends, but did you know the Bible tells us God can be our forever trusty friend, better than any other friend we can ever have?

We're going to play a game to remind us of that. In this game you'll be copying motions the leader does, because parrots like to copy what others are doing. Here we go!

# Deep Sea Crafts

Simple. Simple. Simple. Young children need simple crafts that are fun to touch and explore. More pre-prep needs to take place so the children are left with decorating, attaching stickers, and gluing. This hands-on fun time helps kids really connect with what they're learning.

As with all other items used with the toddlers and young preschoolers, watch carefully that items are not choking hazards and that all items are nontoxic. Use

chunky crayons. Remember to put names on all crafts as children work on them.

Plan two craft times a day, but be prepared to skip one or both if the children need more rest time. Some of the crafts follow the "big kids" craft time but are simplified for this level.

Decide who will be in charge of preparing the craft materials (craft leaders, toddler teachers, or someone else). Whatever ideas you choose, have fun and use the crafts to reinforce the big themes of the week.

## Thematic Craft Ideas

### Day 1

#### Session 1—Tropical Tree

For this craft, follow the directions and picture for the Pre-Primary version of the Day 1 main craft found in the Craft Guide.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

Have you ever seen a palm tree? [Take responses](#). Guess who made every single tree in the whole wide world? Yes, God did! God is very great! We're going to enjoy talking about our great God this week at *Mystery Island*!

#### Session 2—Number 1 Fun

Gather the following supplies for each child: [Number 1 pattern](#), pair of scissors, washable stamp pads, and wet wipes.

Ahead of time, photocopy and cut the pattern on the dotted lines, one per child.

During class, the toddlers press their thumb or finger on the washable stamp pad then put their fingerprints all over the **NUMBER 1 PATTERN**. Use the wet wipes for clean up.



#### TEACHING TIE-IN

What number do we have here? [Take responses](#). Yes, the number 1. Did you know you are the only one with those exact fingerprints? Nobody is like you! And just like there's only one you, there's only one

God. There aren't lots of different gods—there's only one. You can learn about him in the Bible.

### Day 2

#### Session 1—Disappearing Jonah

Gather the following supplies for each child: one paper plate, markers, wiggle eye, [Jonah pattern](#), and glue stick. The leader will also need a pair of scissors, tape, and paper fasteners.



Ahead of time, cut the paper plate so it has a wide pie-shaped wedge cut out. The opening will act as the fish's mouth. Tape the cut-out wedge to the end of the fish to act as its tail. Photocopy and cut out the **JONAH PATTERN**. Position Jonah correctly behind the fish and attach with a paper fastener so Jonah looks like he's being swallowed any time he goes by the fish's mouth.

During class, toddlers color the fish body (if using a light colored plate) and glue on the wiggle eye. Then color Jonah.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

What kind of animal is this? [Take responses](#). Yes, a fish. And who do you think the man is that's being swallowed by the fish? [Take responses](#). His name is Jonah. Jonah tried to run away and hide from God, but a big fish came and swallowed him up. Can you hide from God? [Take responses](#). No, you can't hide. Even if you're deep in the ocean, in the belly of a big fish, God knows exactly where you are and is

**Check [Pinterest.com/AnswersVBS](https://www.pinterest.com/AnswersVBS) for colorful photos of the toddler crafts!**

there with you. Isn't it great to know God is with you wherever you go?

### Session 2—The Os Have It

Gather the following for each child: [The Os Have It Craft pattern](#), and dot art containers or washable markers.

Ahead of time, photocopy the **THE OS HAVE IT CRAFT PATTERN**, one per child.

During class, toddlers apply dot art to the O-shape, or they color on it with washable markers.



#### TEACHING TIE-IN

What letter do these dot art circles remind you of? [Take responses](#). Yes, the letter O. And what big letter is on our paper? [Take responses](#). Yes, the letter O again! The letter O can remind us of the word *omni*, which means all. God knows all, is all over the place, and has all power.

## Day 3

### Session 1—Wind Chime

For this craft, follow the directions for the Day 3 main craft, substituting chenille stems for cording and wire, as noted in the Tip Corner. This will alter the main directions slightly.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

Who makes the wind blow? [Take responses](#), then have them say, "God does!" with you. [Continue on in like manner](#). Who makes the snow fall? God does! Who knows when a coconut falls off a tree? God does! Who knows when a grain of sand gets moved? God does! Who knows when a crab hides in the sand? God does! He's the one in charge. He's the king of everything!



### Session 2—Cool Crown

Gather the following: [Cool Crown pattern](#), one per child, yellow card stock, markers, stick-on jewels or fun foam shapes, and tape or a stapler.

Ahead of time, photocopy the **COOL CROWN PATTERN**, cut out, and tape the two pieces together so each child has one long piece of crown.

During class, kids color and sticker the crown. Once finished decorating, tape or staple the crown together to fit each child's head.



#### TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at these cool crowns. Who usually wears a crown? [Take responses](#). Right, a king or queen or prince or princess. Let's think about kings. There are a lot of people who have been kings, but people who are kings only get to rule over some people and some things. And they are only king for awhile, not forever.

God is a different kind of king. He rules over the sea, the heavens, the earth, the animals, and all people—forever. He's the king of everything, and he is in charge.

## Day 4

### Session 1—Lei Cross

For this craft, follow the directions and picture for the Pre-Primary version of the Day 4 main craft.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

Today, you're making a cross. Does anybody know anything about what happened on a cross? [Take responses](#). [Share about Jesus and why he died on the cross](#).

### Session 2—Work of Art Heart

Note: This is pictured using Model Magic®, but you can also make the hearts out of play dough, clay, or salt dough. If making salt dough, be aware of anyone with a gluten allergy who can't be around flour.

Gather the following: Model Magic® or your chosen compound, heart cookie cutters, parchment paper, play rolling pins (can be clean, cylindrical plastic jars), colorful Sharpies®, and (optional) ribbon (or yarn) and straws.

Ahead of time, decide if you want to make this a hanging craft. If so, cut the straws into 2-inch pieces and the ribbon or yarn into 10-inch pieces.

During class, give each child a little bit of Model Magic® or your chosen compound. Let them flatten it with a rolling pin and then use the cookie cutter to make it into a heart shape. Decorate as desired with the Sharpies®. If making it a hanging craft, use the straw piece to make a hole for hanging and thread the ribbon or yarn through the hole. Place on the parchment paper to firm up. Leaders, write each child's name on the parchment next to the heart, and send home at the end of the day.



#### TEACHING TIE-IN

When you look at a heart, what does it remind you of? [Take responses](#). Can you think of someone who loves you? [Take responses](#). Guess who loves you the

most? [Pause for responses](#). God! God loves you and sent his Son Jesus for you.

## Day 5

### Session 1—God’s Attributes Treasure Chest

For this craft, follow the directions and picture for the Pre-Primary Day 5 main craft.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at our little treasure chest. Isn’t it great? Did you know God is the greatest treasure? Let’s read some of our cards that go on our treasure chest and think about our great God! [Do so](#).

### Session 2—Under-the-Sea Scene

*Gather the following supplies per child:* one half sheet of bright blue card stock, one strip of sand paper to fit the half sheet of card stock, green crinkle shreds for seaweed, stickers or fun foam stickers of ocean animals, and one glue stick.

*Ahead of time,* cut the card stock and the sand paper.

During class, have the kids glue the sand paper to the top of the blue card stock to represent the sandy beach. The ocean is now



below the sandy beach. Next, glue on several strands of green crinkle shred for seaweed. Finally, add some ocean animal stickers or fun foam pieces. Put each child’s name on the back.

#### TEACHING TIE-IN

When we look at the great big ocean, it reminds us that God is amazing. I’m going to remind us of some other things we learned about God this week at *Mystery Island*, and you can repeat them back to me. God is great! [They repeat that, then continue on in like manner with the following](#). God is mighty! God is always with us! God knows everything! God is powerful! God is good! God is loving! God can be trusted!

# Tropical Treats

Yum! Snacks are always a hit. With this age group, it is especially important to check about allergies, since the kids may not be able to communicate about such things. Make sure everything is safe and in bite-sized pieces.

Decide who is preparing the snacks—teachers or the snack team—and decide if you are serving one or two snacks. You may want to serve smaller portions of the “big kid” snacks assuming they are safe for toddlers.

And of course, remember to pray before eating.

## Thematic Snack Ideas

### Day 1

#### Number 1 String Cheese

Buy pull apart string cheese that is in stick form, resembling a number 1.

##### TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at our cheese snack. What number does it remind you of? [Take responses](#). Yes, it looks like the number 1. Let's put up one finger. [Do so](#). Today, we're talking about how there's only one God—the God of the Bible. If you want to know about the one true God, go to the Bible for answers.

Let's thank God for being the one true God and for this yummy cheese snack.

#### Seascape Snacks

See Day 1 in the snack guide for directions, but make a smaller portion by not filling the cups as full.

##### TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at our snack that looks like the sea! Who made the sea and all the animals that live there? [Take responses](#). Yes, God did! Have you ever been to the sea (ocean)? [Take responses](#). Can you imagine making that from nothing? [Pause for responses](#). Well, that's what God did. He made *everything* from *nothing*. Wow!

Let's thank God for being the maker of the sea and all things, and then let's eat our Seascape Snacks!

### Day 2

#### Mini Flapjacks

Gather a flapjack mix and the ingredients that are listed on the box. Prepare the mix. Making sure to keep away from children, heat a skillet or griddle and coat with pan spray, butter, or oil. Drop the mix onto the hot surface one tablespoon at a time. Cook on the first side until small bubbles start to form or until they are golden brown on the underside. Flip and repeat. Serve several mini flapjacks per child, with or without syrup. The kids can pick them up and eat them if you aren't using syrup.

##### TEACHING TIE-IN

Today we're having mini flapjacks. Mini means “little” and flapjacks mean “pancakes.” The words “mini flapjacks” remind me of our animal pal today. Does anyone know who our animal pal is? [Take responses](#). Yes, it's Flip the flapjack octopus. A flapjack octopus is a mini octopus that lives deep, deep down in the bottom of the ocean where it's very dark. But even if we can't see them, God can! God knows where everyone and everything is, and God is right there with them! God is right here with you, too. He's always with you!

Let's thank God that he's always with us, and for these mini flapjacks, and then let's eat.

#### Omni Os Cereal

Choose a dry cereal in the shape of Os and serve.

##### TEACHING TIE-IN

What letter of the alphabet does our snack look like? [Take responses](#). Yes, it looks like the letter O. Let's make an O with our fingers. [Do so](#). An O reminds me of a big word that has to do with God. The word is *omni*. Let's say that together. [Do so](#). Omni means “all.” Let's point all around. [Do so](#). God is omnipresent—all present. He is with everyone all the time. Now let's make strong man muscles. [Do so](#). God is omnipotent—all powerful. Nothing is too hard for God to do. Now let's point to our brains. [Do so](#). God is also omniscient—all knowing. He knows everything—even the future! God is almighty!

Let's thank God for being so mighty, and then let's eat our tasty Omni Os.

### Day 3

#### King's Crowns

Serve each child a small iced vanilla cake donut that has colorful sprinkles (representing jewels) on it. As usual, share the Teaching Tie-In before eating.

## TEACHING TIE-IN

This reminds me of a crown. Who wears a crown?

**Take responses.** Yes, a king. Can you think of someone who is a king? **Take responses,** and share that God is the ultimate king. He is the king over the land, the sea, the sky—absolutely everything. He is the King of kings.

Let's thank God our king for the crown snack, and then we'll eat!

## Shark Teeth

See Day 3 in the snack guide for directions, but serve a smaller portion.

## TEACHING TIE-IN

Look at our snack. We're pretending they're shark teeth because our animal pal today is Clark the \_\_\_\_\_. **Take responses.** Yes, the shark! The great white shark. Great white sharks are called the king of the sea, but God is the king of everything—the sea, the land, the sky, and absolutely everything. God is the ruler and he is in charge.

Let's thank God our king for the Shark Teeth snack, and then we'll eat!

## Day 4

### Apple Inner Tubes

Use an apple corer to cut the middle out of an apple, then slice horizontally to make apples into inner tube rings. Serve two or three per child.

## TEACHING TIE-IN

Have any of you ever been in an inner tube in the water? **Take responses.** What shape is an inner tube? **Take responses.** Yes, a circle. And what shape are our apple inner tubes? **Take responses.** Yes, they're circles! Does a circle ever end? **Take responses.** No, it goes round and round, and on and on. And guess what? God's love for you never ends, either. It goes on and on! God the Father loves you so much he sent his Son, Jesus!

Let's thank God for his love and for this treat, and then we'll eat.

## Sandy Stars

Gather a tube of sugar cookie dough, a bag of white chocolate chips, and a box of graham crackers. Slice the dough into circles, cut them into star shapes using a cookie cutter, and bake according to package directions. Crush the graham crackers like fine sand using either a zippered baggie or a food processor. Melt the chocolate chips in a small bowl over simmering water in a saucepan.

Next, dip the top side of the cookies in the white chocolate and then in the graham cracker crumbs. Place on

parchment paper to dry. (You may want to put them in the fridge to speed up the process.)

## TEACHING TIE-IN

Today we're eating Sandy Stars. God is so big and so great that he made everything from the farthest stars to the tiniest bugs. Have you ever stood outside at night and looked at the stars? **Take responses.** It's amazing to think that the maker of the stars also made you and loves you. He loves you so much he sent his Son, Jesus, to die for you.

Let's thank God for being such a loving and caring God, and then let's eat our Sandy Stars.

## Day 5

### Macaw Bites

For a super simple idea, just cut up banana slices and call them Macaw Banana Bites.

Or, for a different option, gather apples, white chocolate chips, sprinkles, and lollipop sticks. Cut each apple into eight wedges, removing all seeds. Insert a lollipop stick into each. Meanwhile, melt the chocolate by placing a small saucepan with one inch of water on the stove top. Turn the heat on medium. On top of the pan, place a small glass or metal bowl with the white chocolate chips in it, and melt the chocolate. Next, dip the apples in the melted chocolate and sprinkle with candy sprinkles. Place on parchment paper to cool and set.

## TEACHING TIE-IN

Do you know what a macaw is? **Take responses.** It's a bird. Macaws live on tropical islands, and they are known to have been trusty friends to pirates. Do you have any friends you love and trust? **Take responses.** Did you know that the friend you can trust more than anyone else in the world is God? He's the best friend anyone can ever have. He'll never leave you!

Let's thank God for being the most trusted friend we can have, and then we'll eat our Macaw Bites.

### Hidden Treasure Treats

See Day 5 in the snack guide for directions, but serve a smaller portion.

## TEACHING TIE-IN

What do you see hidden in the "sand"? **Take responses.** Yes, it's a pretend treasure chest. What might be in a treasure chest? **Take responses.** Can you think of any treasure that's worth more than God? **Take responses.** God is the greatest treasure by far!

Let's thank God for this food and for being the greatest treasure, and then we'll eat.

**Check Pinterest for colorful photos of the toddler snacks.**



# DAY 1

## GR+8

### GOD IS GREAT!

#### TODAY'S MEDALLION

Number 1

#### BIBLE PASSAGE

Paul in a City of False Gods

Acts 17:16–34

#### ANIMAL PAL

Camo the Chameleon

#### LESSON FOCUS

God is GREAT! He is the one and only God, the awe-inspiring Creator.

#### APOLOGETICS FOCUS

There's only one God as revealed in the Bible. You can't make up a god of your own choosing.

#### TREASURED VERSE

Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised. Psalm 145:3

#### Today's Exploration Stations

- Discovery Center: Mystery Box
- Touch Table Water: Ocean Animals
- Touch Table Sand: One and Only God
- Dramatic Play: Beach Fun
- Coloring Corner: Psalm 145:3

#### Today's Lesson at a Glance

##### LESSON TIME

- Part 1: Mystery Clue
- Part 2: Acts 17
- Part 3: Puppet Pal—One and Only God

##### SONG TIME

- Song 1: "Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah"
- Song 2: "Praise Him, Praise Him, All You Little Children"

##### MEMORY VERSE AND REVIEW TIME

- Part 1: Treasured Verses
- Part 2: Go and Do
- Wrap-Up Review

#### Preparing for the Lesson

- Read Acts 17:16–34 several times.
- Read this lesson several times and prepare the materials as outlined in the brown Pre-prep text.
- Visit [AnswersVBS.com/mifaq](http://AnswersVBS.com/mifaq) for more information on there being only one God—the God of the Bible.
- Pray.

# Devotion 1 God Is Great

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. Proverbs 9:10*

At *Mystery Island*, we're encouraging our kids to discover the one true God. But . . . how do we know the one true God even exists? It's a question that has crossed the mind of every believer at some point—sure, I believe in God, but how do I know the God I love and serve is truly the one true God?

Before we answer that question, let's go a bit further by asking another question: how can we know anything? How do we even know to question the surety of God's existence? Here's the answer: apart from the perfect, truthful, unchanging, eternal God of the Bible, "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3) and from whom come knowledge and understanding (Proverbs 9:10), we cannot know anything.

Think about it.

If, as some suggest, there is no god—no ultimate standard of truth and knowledge—and we are simply the product of random processes operating on chemicals over time, then the thoughts in our brains are nothing more than the product of random chemical interactions. How could we know anything?

If, as others suggest, our universe is ruled by a god who is not eternal (Mormonism, *History of the Church*, vol. 6, ch. 14, p. 305–6) or who is deceptive (Islam, *Koran* 3:54, 8:30), how could we be sure that what we know is true today will still be true tomorrow?

The one true God of the Bible has created each person in his image and given us the ability to think rationally, to question thoughtfully, to know truth fully. And he has revealed himself to everyone so that no one is without excuse (Romans 1:18–21). Those who deny his existence or seek to change him into a false version of himself are

willfully ignorant, suppressing the truth in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18).

We can know the one true God exists because we have the ability to know in the first place. And we can praise him that he freely gives wisdom to those who ask for it (James 1:5). This week, let's be quick to seek wisdom from the one true God as we teach our children to know the one true God and embrace him fully.

May we be thankful as the Puritans were, not only that we can know things, but also that the one true God has enabled us to know him.

Glorious God,

I bless thee that I know thee.

I once lived in the world, but was ignorant of its

Creator,

was partaker of thy providences, but knew not the Provider,

was blind while enjoying the sunlight,

was deaf to all things spiritual, with voices all around me,

understood many things, but had no knowledge of thy ways,

saw the world, but did not see Jesus only.

O happy day, when in thy love's sovereignty

thou didst look on me, and call me by grace.

Grant that I may always weep to the praise of mercy found,

and tell to others as long as I live,

that thou art a sin-pardoning God,

taking up the blasphemer and the ungodly,

and washing them from their deepest stain.

—(Excerpt from "The Great Discovery"  
in *The Valley of Vision*)

# Exploration Stations

## Discovery Center: Mystery Box

### MATERIALS

- ☐ Shoebox
- ☐ Piece of material, duct tape, and scissors
- ☐ Safe island items to put in the mystery box, such as a leaf, seashell, banana, toy boat, play fish or other ocean animals, piece of rope, flip flop, pool toy, swim goggles, sunglasses, lei, sand pail, sand shovel

### PRE-PREP

Cut a hole in the side of the box that is big enough for a child's hand to fit through. Duct tape a small piece of fabric inside to cover the hole, taping it just at the top so the kids can't see the items inside the box but can get their hands in and out.

### DIRECTIONS

The islanders take turns putting their hand in the box and picking one object. While it's still in the box, they feel the item and try to guess what it is, then pull it out and see if they guessed right.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

We've been pulling items out of our mystery box. All these things are found on tropical islands. God is the one who made the ocean, the plants, the birds, the lizards, and the ocean animals we find on tropical islands. God is so great!

## Touch Table Water: Ocean Animals

### MATERIALS

- ☐ Under-the-bed storage container, small wading pool, or "official" touch table
- ☐ Tarp or plastic tablecloth
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Plastic ocean animals

### PRE-PREP

Cover the floor under the touch table with a tarp or plastic tablecloth. This will be used all week. Put water in the table, along with the plastic ocean animals.

### DIRECTIONS

The islanders play with the animals in the water.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

God is great! He's the only one who can make animals, like these animals that live in the ocean. I'm going to pick up one animal from the water at a time, and we'll say, "God made this \_\_\_ (turtle, fish, or whatever it is)," and God is great!" Do so.

## Touch Table Sand: One and Only God

### MATERIALS

- ☐ Under-the-bed storage container, small wading pool, or "official" touch table
- ☐ Tarp or plastic tablecloth
- ☐ Play sand, available from hardware stores (make sure it's marked *play sand*, not *regular sand*)
- ☐ Wet wipes for cleanup
- ☐ Craft sticks
- ☐ Set of four flashcards on white card stock: #1, 1, one, only

### PRE-PREP

Cover the floor under the touch table with a tarp or plastic tablecloth. This will be used all week. Put the play sand in the table. Make the flashcards with the words or numbers on them.

### DIRECTIONS

The islanders look at each flashcard and then, using the craft sticks as a writing utensil, they try to write in the sand what it says on the card. If you have young toddlers, you may want to skip the flashcards and just have them make the number 1 with their fingertips.

### TEACHING TIE-IN

Let's see if you know what each card says. Go through each one and see if they know. Explain that all the words have to do with the number 1. Ask how many gods there are. Yes, there is only one true God. Some people try to make up other gods, but there's only one, and we can learn about him in the Bible. God wrote the Bible, and it's all about him!

## Dramatic Play: Beach Fun

This station, which will be a hit all week, can be as low-key or as elaborate as you'd like. There are a number of suggestions. Just choose what you would like to do. See Decorating Decisions for specifics on the suggestions below.

### MATERIALS

- ☐ Beach backdrop
- ☐ Low beach chairs or kids' fold-up beach chairs
- ☐ Beach towels
- ☐ Beach toys/sand toys
- ☐ Beach ball
- ☐ Stuffed animal beach animals
- ☐ Dress-up clothes (tropical shirts, leis, grass skirts, sunglasses, swim goggles)
- ☐ Picnic basket with play food
- ☐ Optional: snack shack to "sell" play food snacks
- ☐ Optional: souvenir shop to "sell" souvenirs

## PRE-PREP

- Put together the beach backdrop. This will be used all week. Check the Decorating Decisions for specifics.
- Decide what else you want to have in your center. Gather the supplies/props. These can be borrowed, made, or bought from thrift stores, garage sales, or online companies like Oriental Trading Company or Rhode Island Novelties. Our test churches found the dollar stores had what they needed for dress-up.
- Choose which items you want to put out. You may want to put out some today and save some back to add in as the week goes by. Doing so keeps this center fresh and full of discovery all week.

## DIRECTIONS

Pretend to be enjoying a day at the beach.

## TEACHING TIE-IN

We're heading to the beach today. Have you ever been to a beach? Isn't it amazing to think that God knows exactly how many grains of sand are on every beach, and how many drops of water are in all the oceans? Our God is great!

## Coloring Corner: Psalm 145:3

### MATERIALS

- ☐ Day 1 Memory Verse Coloring Sheet
- ☐ Under-the-sea decorating supplies (see Decorating Decisions)
- ☐ Markers or crayons
- ☐ Optional for marker and crayon storage: Sand pail
- ☐ Optional: Additional supplies to glue on, glue sticks, and stickers

## PRE-PREP

Make or gather the decorating supplies, and set them up. These will be used all week. Photocopy the **DAY 1 MEMORY VERSE COLORING SHEET**, one per child. Gather additional supplies to glue on to the coloring sheets if desired, such as cotton balls for "clouds" or blue cellophane pieces for "sky."

## DIRECTIONS

Color the sheet. Add additional supplies if desired.

## TEACHING TIE-IN

Practice saying the memory verse on the sheet. Discuss its meaning.

## Additional Exploration Station Ideas

**Live Animals**—Bring in an aquarium, a turtle, or a hermit crab, and talk about God's amazing design of each creature.

**Seashells by the Seashore**—Find a variety of seashells of different kinds, shapes, and sizes. Set up a station with the shells, and have the islanders complete different tasks such as sorting the shells into small, medium, and

big categories, sorting into like shell categories, making a line of shells going from smallest shell to biggest shell, making shell imprints by pressing the seashells into play dough or salt dough, doing a shell rubbing, tracing around a shell, and reading books about animals that live in seashells.

**A to Z Creation**—Have magnetic ABC letters attached to a cookie sheet. Teachers name something God made and the kids have to find the first letter of that item. For example, if the teacher says "angelfish," the child finds an A. Emphasize that Creator God made all these things.

**Boat Dock Book Nook**—Make an exciting spot for reading by bringing in a real boat (canoe, kayak, rowboat), a blow-up raft, or a play boat. Or, make your own play boat, using a large cardboard box fashioned into a boat shape with small children's chairs inside. You may want to even make it look like a pirate ship! Put children's picture Bibles and books with individual Bible accounts in the boat, and have kids go in to look at the books or be read to. You may also want to include some children's books about tropical islands or animals God has made. Answers in Genesis has several good ones for this theme.

**Texture Trays**—Provide various textures *on* which and *in* which the kids can trace words or pictures of key Bible items they will learn about, such as the daily medallions—#1, letter O, crown, heart, and diamond. Possible textures include shaving cream or hair gel in zippered baggies that are duct-taped shut (try coloring the hair gel bright yellow), burlap, trays of salt, thick fleece, magic slates, or chalkboards and chalk. Supervise carefully, and make sure they know not to put their hands in their mouths. You may want to put out different textures on different days. Provide wipes for cleanup.

**Play Dough**—Play dough is always a favorite, so you may want to feature a station with it all week, adding thematic supplies each day, such as island nature items to press into the play dough for Day 1 (palm leaves, shells, etc.), a cookie cutter O (God is omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent) for Day 2, play jewels to press into the play dough for Day 3, heart and cross cookie cutters for Day 4, and island cookie cutters (like a sun, palm trees, or flip flops) for Day 5. Note: Gluten-free play dough is available online from Amazon.

## How to Make Play Dough

2 c. flour	4 t. cream of tartar
½ c. salt	2 t. oil
2 c. warm water	Food coloring

Mix the first five ingredients in a saucepan, blending well. Stir over low to medium heat until the dough is formed and is no longer sticky. Remove from the pan, add the food coloring, and knead until smooth. After it has cooled, store in an airtight container.

# Lesson Time

## Part 1: Mystery Clue (5 minutes)

**Pre-prep:** Gather your tropical island costumes, which will be worn all week—the *Mystery Island* t-shirts and hats. You may want to add a lei around your neck or sun visor. Either buy a fake treasure chest or make one as directed on page 11, and put the Bible in it, bookmarked at Acts 17. Cut out and laminate the **DAY 1 LARGE MEDALLION** and put it on the **TREASURE MAP POSTER** at Chameleon Cave. Hang the posters. Cut out and post some number 1s of various colors and sizes around the room so they are visible.

**Teacher 1:** It's time for Lighthouse Lessons now. Let's gather around our treasure chest. Do so.

**Teacher 2:** First, we've hidden some number 1s around the room. Let's see if we can play *I Spy* to find any number 1s that are hidden. Do so. What do you think the number 1 has to do with God? Take responses, and help them along to realize God is number 1 (the best), and there's only one God.

**Teacher 1:** Point to the **TREASURE MAP POSTER**. Now look at our treasure map. Can you find a number 1? Pause for responses. Yes, it's at Chameleon Cave (on the medallion and on the cave itself). Today, we're going to find out God is the one and only God. There are no other gods. Let's put up our pointer finger and say, "There's only one true God!" Do so.

**Teacher 2:** What book do you think we should look in to find out what God is like? Take answers. Yes, the Bible! The Bible is our greatest treasure on earth. Because it is from God, the Bible always tells the truth, so we can trust the Bible to show us about God.

**Teacher 1:** Point to the **DAY 1 ANIMAL PAL POSTER**. Camo our chameleon is always changing, but the Bible tells us God doesn't change. He's always the same. Let's get the Bible out of our treasure chest and learn more about our wonderful, loving, kind God.

Pull your Bible from the treasure chest carefully and respectfully, and open to Acts 17. Then share Option 1, 2, or 3 below.

## Part 2: Acts 17 (10 minutes)

**Pre-prep:** Choose which option you will do for the telling of Acts 17, and prepare accordingly. Option 1 needs a Paul puppet, the **PAUL IN ATHENS SCRIPT—AUDIO VERSION**, found on the Digital Resources, and a player. Option 2 needs a Bible. Option 3 needs a willing actor in a Bible time costume and the **PAUL IN ATHENS SCRIPT** below, found on the Digital Resources. Any of the options can use the pictures of ancient Greece and Greek gods for visuals as you tell the account. Find pictures online, and make sure the Greek gods are modestly dressed.

### Option 1—Puppet Version of Passage

Cue the **PAUL IN ATHENS SCRIPT—AUDIO VERSION**, and play it for the islanders while working the Paul puppet.

### Option 2—Reading from the Bible

Open your Bible to Acts 17, and paraphrase the Acts 17:16–34 account. Read or tell it with emotion and interest. Or use a children's Bible to share the account.

### Option 3—Live Monologue

Find someone to play Paul. Learn the script below, then have him share the Acts account expressively as a first person narrative.

#### PAUL IN ATHENS SCRIPT

Grace and peace to you! I'm Paul, a servant of God here in ancient times. I've been traveling around, starting churches and telling people about our amazing God.

- ☐ **Treasure Map poster**, preferably laminated
- ☐ **Day 1 Large Medallion**, preferably laminated
- ☐ **Day 1 Animal Pal Poster**
- ☐ Bible or children's Bible
- ☐ Costumes for teachers
- ☐ Treasure chest
- ☐ Mounting putty or tape for hanging posters
- ☐ Number 1s for hiding around the room

★ Be familiar with the lesson, but don't memorize it. Place it on a clipboard to use as a reference. You may want to decorate the back of your clipboard (the side the kids will see as you hold it) with beachy stickers.

★ The Bible and mounting putty or tape are usually mentioned just once a day but are used throughout each day.



- ☐ **Paul in Athens Poster**
- ☐ Supplies for the Paul monologue (see Pre-prep)
- ☐ Optional: Pictures of ancient Greece and Greek gods

★ This is where you can show pictures of ancient Greece.

★ This is where you can show pictures of ancient Greek gods.



★ Gospel Opportunity

- ☐ Paul in Athens Poster
- ☐ Day 1 Animal Pal Poster
- ☐ Day 1 Puppet Script (2 copies)
- ☐ Puppet (girl or boy) in costume
- ☐ Clipboard
- ☐ Picture of a surfer

In my travels, I arrived in a beautiful city called Athens. As I walked around the city, I started to feel very upset. Have you ever felt upset? I felt upset because everywhere I went, I saw idols. Do you know what an idol is?

An idol is something that people make so they can worship it instead of God. It is a pretend god. The people here have made little idols out of wood, silver, and gold. They even have an altar that says, “To the unknown god.” But there’s only one true God—the God of the Bible.

Seeing all these false gods upset me, because I want everyone to know the one and only God. So I decided to tell people about the God of the Bible.

The teacher should hold up the **PAUL IN ATHENS POSTER**. Then one day, some people asked me to meet them. While I was there, I told them I had seen their idols, their false gods. I told them God is the maker of the whole world—he even made them—and he can’t be kept in a temple or as a statue they’ve made. And the awesome thing is, God wants to have a relationship with each of us. God sent his Son, Jesus, who lived and died and was raised from the dead, so we can have that relationship if we turn from our sins and trust him.

When I finished speaking, some of the people made fun of me. Has anyone ever made fun of you? It’s not kind! But some of them believed me and realized there really is only one God—the great and awesome Creator.

We can never know absolutely everything about God—he’s too big and great—but we can know him enough to have a relationship with him. This week, I hope you get to know God!

Thanks for having me in. Shalom!

### Part 3: Puppet Pal—One and Only God (5 minutes)

**Pre-prep:** See Decorating Decisions to set up the puppet stage. Tape one **PUPPET SCRIPT** inside the puppet stage and place the other on the clipboard. Dress the puppet in a mini VBS T-shirt, a tropical shirt, or a lei. You may want to add a visor or mini sunglasses. Find a picture of a surfer.

Each day, the puppet pal will be used to teach or reinforce the lesson. It’s always a favorite, so try to include it even if you have to cut something else.

If you don’t have a teaching assistant or co-teacher, enlist someone (a group guide or other volunteer) ahead of time to work the puppet each day. If you’re alone, have the puppet come up from behind a suitcase with the lid flipped up, or just stand and work the puppet.

You can use either a boy or a girl puppet. Use a consistent voice for the puppet all week. Speak clearly, and exaggerate words and expressions. For instance, draw out certain words for emphasis, or make an exaggerated action for things like groaning, turning its head, or sneezing. Use your free hand to do things with the puppet’s hands or arms. For example, if the puppet is “thinking,” put the puppet’s hand on its chin. When the puppet is talking, make sure the mouth is open. (This is the opposite of what people often do!) In other words, the mouth should be open on most syllables. You don’t have to open very wide, which will help you move the mouth faster and more naturally.

Your puppet should come out from inside the lighthouse. When the puppet is entering, hold your arm back and down, and have the puppet take three steps up, getting higher each time, until the puppet is out and visible. When exiting, turn the puppet toward you, and take three steps down until out of sight.

Each day, determine ahead of time who will be the puppet, and figure out when that person can get behind the puppet stage. Our test churches sometimes transitioned by having one teacher lead a song while the other teacher was getting in place.

**Teacher:** Boys and girls, that was cool to hear from Paul! Now let’s see if we can get our puppet pal, Sunny, to come out. On the count of three, let’s all call to him (her). Ready? 1, 2, 3—Sunny!

**Puppet:** [Come up](#). Aloha! Welcome to *Mystery Island*!

**Teacher:** Yeah, this is an awesome place. What do you like to do here?

**Puppet:** Well, one of my favorite things to do is to hang ten.

**Teacher:** Hang ten? What's that mean?

**Puppet:** Ever surfed before?

**Teacher:** Nope. But I know what a surfer looks like. [Show a picture of a surfer](#).

**Puppet:** Well, surfers like to have their 10 toes hang over the front of their surfboard while they're riding the waves. It's cool.

**Teacher:** [Pretend to surf](#). That would be amazing! But there's a different number I'm thinking about today besides 10.

**Puppet:** Oh yeah? What is it?

**Teacher:** One.

**Puppet:** [Say dramatically](#). The number 1. Numero uno. One and only. The big O. O-n-e.

**Teacher:** I think we get the idea. Number 1.

**Puppet:** It sure wouldn't work to hang one. Can you imagine having just my big toe hanging over a surfboard? [Flip over backwards and laugh uproariously](#).

**Teacher:** Sunny, I wasn't talking about toes.

**Puppet:** Well, then, what are you talking about?

**Teacher:** God.

**Puppet:** God? What does God have to do with the number one?

**Teacher:** Maybe the boys and girls out here can help us with that. Boys and girls, do you remember what the number 1 has to do with God? [Take answers](#).

**Puppet:** Oh, I get it. There's only one god.

**Teacher:** Yes! The Bible tells us that. It's the only perfect book in the world, written by God himself, so if the Bible says it, that settles it.

**Puppet:** What's God like?

**Teacher:** Well, first of all, he can never make a mistake. He's perfect.

**Puppet:** Wow, that's amazing!

**Teacher:** And he always tells the truth.

**Puppet:** My big brother doesn't always tell the truth. He said he's in fifth grade, and he's only in third!

**Teacher:** You can count on God to *always* tell the truth. And God *never* changes. Camo the chameleon changes colors a lot, doesn't he? [Point to the DAY 1 ANIMAL PAL POSTER](#).

**Puppet:** Yeah, I like to watch the chameleons that live on the island. They change colors.

**Teacher:** Well, when I say God doesn't change, I'm not talking about what he looks like, because God can't be seen now. But I do mean what God is *like* always stays the same. He is forever kind, good, loving, and perfect. That will never change. And he made everything and everyone. He's the Creator!

**Puppet:** He sounds great!

**Teacher:** God *is* great! He's amazing! He's wonderful! He's better than you can even imagine. He's more important than anybody else to know—*by far*—and I can't wait to share more about him with you this week!





- ☐ "Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah" song
  - ☐ "Praise Him, Praise Him, All You Little Children" song
  - ☐ MP3 or CD player
- Also available on Simple Songs CD (11-8-141)

**Puppet:** Thanks for sharing about the one true God. Now I'm going to go try to hang *ten*!

**Teacher:** You do that, Sunny, and we'll see you tomorrow! Boys and girls, as Sunny goes, I'd like to see what you remember from today so far. [Show the PAUL IN ATHENS POSTER](#). Here's a picture of Paul in Athens, telling the men about God. Why was Paul feeling upset? What did the people there believe? How many true gods are there? Take answers and review.

## Song Time

### Song 1: "Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah"

Before singing, explain that "hallelujah" means (basically) "Praise the Lord." In this song, one group stands and sings "Hallelujah" and the other group answers back "Praise ye the Lord." Traditionally, kids like singing as loud as they can.

#### VERSE

Hallelu, hallelu, hallelu, hallelujah  
(Half the kids stand up and sing.)  
Praise ye the Lord  
(Other half stands up and sings.)  
Hallelu, hallelu, hallelu, hallelujah  
(Half the kids stand up and sing.)  
Praise ye the Lord  
(Other half stands up and sings.)

#### CHORUS

Praise ye the Lord ("Praise ye" group stays standing and sings.)  
Hallelujah  
(“Hallelujah” group stands up and sings.)  
(Repeat those two lines two more times.)  
Praise ye the Lord  
(Everyone stands and sings together on the last one.)

### Song 2: "Praise Him, Praise Him, All You Little Children"

#### VERSE ONE

Praise him, praise him all you little children  
(Wave hands back and forth in the air.)  
God is love, God is love  
(Point to God, then your heart.)  
Praise him, praise him, all you little children (Repeat first motion.)  
God is love, God is love  
(Repeat second motion.)

#### VERSE TWO

Praise him, praise him all you little children  
(Wave hands back and forth in the air.)  
God is good, God is good  
(Pretend to blow kisses.)  
Praise him, praise him, all you little children (Repeat first motion.)  
God is good, God is good  
(Repeat second motion.)

#### VERSE THREE

Praise him, praise him all you little children  
(Wave hands back and forth in the air.)  
God is kind, God is kind (Make "kind" hands to symbolize someone giving something. To do so, put out left hand, palm up, then do the same with right hand.)  
Praise him, praise him, all you little children (Repeat first motion.)  
God is kind, God is kind  
(Repeat second motion.)

#### VERSE FOUR

Praise him, praise him all you little children  
(Wave hands back and forth in the air.)  
God is great, God is great  
(Make strong muscles.)  
Praise him, praise him, all you little children (Repeat first motion.)  
God is great, God is great  
(Repeat second motion.)

## Memory Verse and Review Time

In the remaining time, complete one or more of the following ideas in class. You won't have time to do them all most likely, but these ideas are also on the back of the Student Guides. Send the guides home each day as a fun review, and also encourage the islanders to do the practical ideas (Go and Do) with an adult.

Put a stamp in the Trail Guides, or do so as the islanders first arrive at VBS.

- ☐ Day 1 Student Guides, 1 per child
- ☐ Trail Guides, 1 per child
- ☐ Stamps for Trail Guides

## Part 1: Treasured Verses

**Pre-prep:** Cue the memory verse song. Hang up the **DAY 1 MEMORY VERSE POSTER** and the **THEME VERSE POSTER**. Make the footprint cutouts.

**Today's Verse:** Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised. Psalm 145:3

Practice the verse several times by playing the appropriate song from the Memory Verse CD and using the **DAY 1 MEMORY VERSE POSTER** as a reference. Then try the following Challenge.

**Challenge:** *Footprints in the Sand*—Make 10 footprint cutouts and put them down in a path. Jump from one to the next, saying a word from the verse as you step on each footprint.

**Tomorrow's Verse:** Behold, I am the LORD . . . Is anything too hard for me? Jeremiah 32:27

Try the Challenge again, this time with tomorrow's verse. You may also want to practice the week's theme verse, using the **THEME VERSE POSTER** as a reference.

## Part 2: Go and Do

- Have someone read Psalm 145:1–3, 8–9 to you. Did you hear at least three great things this psalm says about God?
- Talk to God (that's prayer!), and tell him how great he is and why you think so. Remember what you heard from Psalm 145!
- Ask an adult what the first thing is that comes to mind when thinking of God.
- With an adult, check [AnswersVBS.com/mikids](http://AnswersVBS.com/mikids) for more fun information!

Ask yourself this question: What words describe God?

## Wrap-Up Review

Do this quick and fun review. Have them stand up if the answer is yes and sit down if it's no.

- Is there only one God? (yes—stand up)
- Can God change? (no—sit down)
- Did God make you? (yes)
- Did God make all the world? (yes)
- Can God lie? (no)
- Is God great? (yes—review the verse once more: Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised.)

- **Theme Verse Poster** and **Day 1 Memory Verse Poster**
- Memory Verse Music CD and player
- Footprints in the Sand supplies—10 footprint cutouts (per group of 3–5) from card stock or construction paper (preferably laminated), plus extras if doing other verses

★ Another idea for learning memory verses is to make up motions that go with key words of the verse. This can be done with any verse, any day.

