

AnswersVBS

MYSTERY ISLAND

Tracking Down the One True God

HELPER

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1:1 Answers
IN GENESIS®

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Helper Handbook

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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!

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.

Staff Devotions

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*)

Devotion 2

God Is Almighty

Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away, but you are the same, and your years have no end. Psalm 102:25–27

Almighty (Genesis 35:11); Beautiful (Psalm 27:4); Comforter (Isaiah 66:13); Defender (Psalm 68:5); Everywhere (omnipresent, Psalm 139:7–12); Father (Matthew 6:9); Great (Psalm 48:1); Healer (Malachi 4:2); Incomprehensible (Romans 11:33); Just (Deuteronomy 32:4); Kind (Ephesians 2:7); Love (1 John 4:8); Mighty (Psalm 50:1); Never-ending (Isaiah 9:6); Omnipotent (all-powerful, Jeremiah 32:27); Provider (Genesis 22:9–14); Quiet (1 Kings 19:11–13); Righteous (Psalm 7:17); Sovereign (Psalm 97); Trinity (Matthew 3:16–17); Unparalleled (Jeremiah 10:7); Victor (1 Chronicles 29:11); Wonderful (Isaiah 9:6); Excellent (Psalm 150:2); Yes (2 Corinthians 1:20); Zealous (Isaiah 9:7).

The Great I AM.

These are just a few of the many attributes of our one true God. In fact, someone once said that because God is

infinite, his attributes are infinite. Imagine spending all of eternity discovering more and more about our amazing Creator, only to find out you still haven't uncovered everything about him and need the rest of eternity to find out even more reasons to love him!

Today, you have the great privilege of imparting a deeper understanding of the one true God to your students, focusing on his omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience. As with every other aspect of the one true God, Satan twists these into lies. One we're all familiar with is the lie of “Mother Nature.”

Think about it.

The one true God is omnipresent—he is present everywhere in the universe all the time (Psalm 139:7–12). He is not part of his creation; but he sees it all, all the time (Deuteronomy