

— TRUTH TALKS IN THE KEEP —

PRE-PRIMARY



TEACHER GUIDE



Course Overview

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Title/Bible Content	The Two Kingdoms	The Belt	The Breastplate and Shoes	The Shield and Helmet	The Sword and Prayer
Bible Passages	Creator King and Prince of Darkness Various Verses; Ephesians 6:10-14	Savior King Genesis 1-3; Gospels; Ephesians 6:10-14	King Josiah 2 Kings 22-23; Ephesians 6:14-15	King Solomon 1 Kings 2-11; Ephesians 6:16-17a	King of Kings vs. Prince of the Air Matthew 4:1-11; Ephesians 6:17-18a
Lesson Focus	We're in a battle between two kingdoms.	Each child of the King needs to fasten on the belt of truth.	Put on the breastplate of righteousness and the shoes of peace.	Take the shield of faith and the helmet of salvation.	Take the sword of the Spirit and pray.
Apologetics Content	Absolute truth is true for <i>all</i> people, for <i>all</i> times, for <i>all</i> circumstances.	Build a biblical worldview to stand strong in the truth.	Put on what's right (Jesus' righteousness), then do right.	Guard against false teachings and temptations.	Be ready to give an answer for the hope that is in you.
Veritas Verses	Ephesians 6:11	Ephesians 6:14	Ephesians 6:14-15	Ephesians 6:16	Ephesians 6:17-18a
Rhyme Time	Of two, only one is true!	Decide your side!	Do right in God's sight!	Win against sin!	Train your brain!
Animal Pals	Winifred ("Winnie") the Warhorse	Wily the Fox	Grimwald the Dragon	Byron the Ironclad Beetle	Skye the Peregrine Falcon
Exploration Stations	Discovery Center	Kingdom Cards	Strength Exercises	Obedience Drawing	Glitter Play Dough
	Touch Table Wet	Smart Heart Bookmarks			
	Touch Table Dry	Make It Clean!	Snakes and Fruit	Icy Treasure	Keep Out!
	Dramatic Play	Bible Truth Colors			
	Coloring Corner	Two Kingdoms Sandcastles	Nativity	Find the Treasure	Solomon's Robe
Kieran's Science in the Courtyard	Inside the Castle	Inside the Castle	Inside the Castle	Inside the Castle	Inside the Castle
Kieran's Crafts in the Courtyard	Ephesians 6:11	Ephesians 6:14	Ephesians 6:14-15	Ephesians 6:16	Ephesians 6:17-18a
Griffin's Games on the Green	What's Up? Light and Dark	Newton's Cradle Goin' in Circles	Force Field Pom-Pom Launcher	Spring Thing Balloon Jousting	Tests of Strength Battering Ram
Tessa's Treats in the Town	Kingdom Crown Juggling Balls	Suncatcher Cross	King Josiah Puppet Theater Dragon Sock Puppet	Faith Shield Wordless Book	Train Your Brain Card Caddy Mini Sword
Cool Contests	Capture the Flag Jumping Jesters	Bucket Brigade Belt Bonanza	Dragon Dash Royal Games of Skill	Defend the Castle Hat Stack	Knights' Obstacle Course Sword Tag
	Kingdom Cookies Be Strong Barbells	King's Cups Fox Faces	Dragon Munchies	Mini Pizza Shields Cracker Shields	Moat Floats Banana Swords
	Guess the Cannonballs	Team Tournaments	Royal Dress-Up Day	Design a Helmet	Mission Money Mania

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Pre-Primary Teacher Guide

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Handy Helps

Huzzah!

Hooray! It's time to charge into medieval times—a world brimming with breathtaking castles, regal kings and queens, fire-breathing dragons and brave knights, and epic battles.

Amid the pages of *Keepers of the Kingdom: Standing Strong in Today's Battle for Truth*, your knights will learn how to be part of God's kingdom and wear the armor of God. Our Royal Majesty's kingdom is under attack, and we must prepare for battle!

Day 1: The Two Kingdoms—We will discover there are just two kingdoms—the kingdom of light versus the kingdom of darkness. One is ruled by the good King, Creator God. The other is ruled by the enemy, Satan.

Day 2: The Belt—We must decide our side. Those who become citizens of God's good kingdom need to wear the armor of God daily, starting with the belt of truth that helps us have an unshakable trust in God's Word, along with helping us live as truthful people.

Day 3: The Breastplate and Shoes—The breastplate helps God's children put on Christ's righteousness and grow in right living. The shoes show us we can be at peace with God, which helps us stand firm in our Christian convictions and share Jesus with others.

Day 4: The Shield and Helmet—The shield and helmet protect us from the enemy's attacks—wrong thinking, discouragement, and deception. We will learn to discern!

Day 5: The Sword and Prayer—The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, which helps us train our brains to know, memorize, love, and obey God's Word. And as we battle, we must pray!

Excitement and adventure await from the first minute of each day when kids meet in traveling troupes. The troupes gather at the **Apprentices' Assembly in the Great Hall**, a high-energy beginning that includes wacky intros, lively songs, a missions moment, and prayer.

Then they're off to rotate through five fun sites:

Truth Talks in the Keep, where God's Word is taught in hands-on ways.

Kieran's Science and Crafts in the Courtyard, where kids are bedazzled making special craft and science creations of their own.

Tessa's Treats in the Town, where kids can feast on tantalizing treats and eats.

Griffin's Games on the Green, where there are plenty of old-world games with new fun twists.

Minerva's Missions, Music, and Memory Verses at the Manor, where kids can sing songs, learn their memory

verses with fun games, or go in-depth with the mission moment featuring Children's Hunger Fund and the Wild Brothers.

Finally, everyone heads back to the **Apprentices' Assembly in the Great Hall** for the closing, where there's more singing, contest results, and the highly anticipated daily drama. This is situated in the royal chambers and features some regal (and not so regal) characters who are engaged in a classic battle between good and evil.

So prepare to step back in time, embark on the journey, and partake in one royally fun time!

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 softhearted 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, and 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, we don't want 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 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 Royal Trainer is outlined in the following pages. This is *your* guide. Read it carefully and prayerfully, using our suggestions combined with the ideas the Holy Spirit brings to your mind.

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

ROYAL TRAINER

Best fit for this job: Someone who enjoys teaching children and does the following:

- Plans and prepares the daily lessons for VBS
- Enthusiastically engages in delivery of the lessons during VBS week
- Prays over all aspects of this job

Frequently Asked Questions

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

Terms to Know

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

Traveling Troupes: Groups of children (individual classes) named after people of the Middle Ages, such as Jesters, Bakers, or Troubadours.

Troupe Leaders: Group leaders who lead the traveling troupes from place to place during VBS. No teaching is required of this position.

Truth Talks in the Keep: Bible and apologetics lesson time in the most fortified part of the castle—the keep.

Royal Trainers: Teachers of the Truth Talks.

Kieran's Science and Crafts in the Courtyard: Rotation site where crafts are made and science experiments are explored.

Tessa's Treats in the Town: Indoor or outdoor location where snacks are served.

Griffin's Games on the Green: Indoor or outdoor site (outdoor is preferred) for recreation time.

Minerva's Missions, Music, and Memory Verses at the Manor: Rotation sites where kids can spend additional time learning songs, memory verses, and missions.

Veritas Verse: Daily memory verse. (*Veritas*, a good medieval word, means “truth is mighty and will prevail” and “true, trustworthy.”)

Animal Pals: Our friendly animal mascots that remind us of the main themes of each day.

Toddlers: 2–4-year-olds.

Pre-Primaries: 4–6-year-olds, or children ages 4 through those who have completed kindergarten.

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

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

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

Top 20 Pre-Primary Teaching Tips

1. Ephesians 6:10–18 teaches us about a real battle between two kingdoms. Take seriously the need to pray and study God's Word as you prepare amid this battle. God has entrusted you with the awesome privilege of opening his Word and sharing it daily with the children. Walk worthy!
2. Read through all your lesson plans well in advance and become familiar with the resources on the Resource USB or AnswersVBS.com. Begin to pray and plan now, then continue to pray during and after VBS.
3. In this guide:
 - » Teaching Tips are marked with a ✖.
 - » Materials for each activity are listed next to the activity.
 - » The "teacher says" portion is bold.
4. You may want to assign the task of gathering supplies for all the teachers to one person, or have the teachers divide up the supply list, with each being responsible for multiples of certain items. It's also helpful to get all the supplies ready in a box or bag ahead of time rather than gathering them day-by-day the week of VBS.
5. See Decorating Decisions for a picture and description of the teaching set. Also, when setting up the room, you may want to clear away tables and chairs, depending on the room size and number of children expected.
6. Modify the Exploration Stations as your situation warrants. Use as suggested or incorporate one or more ideas into the lesson time instead, doing it with the whole group at one time.
7. Ask troupe leaders to help man the exploration stations each day. Post the directions and teaching tie-ins at each station each day as an easy reference for your helpers.
8. A puppet is used daily at some point during the lesson. It may also be used to welcome the children, sing a song, or review a memory verse. The puppet can come up from a puppet stage if there are two of you to do the puppet skit. If working alone, the puppet can come up from behind a trunk with the lid flipped up.
9. Attend the Teacher Workshop and the Gospel Workshop. Be prepared to share the good news of salvation!
10. Dress as if you are living during medieval times. At least one day, wear medieval era clothing, depicting either royal or peasant attire. Check Costume Considerations for ideas. Take on a persona to bring lessons to life. Some teachers enjoy making up a fun name, adopting an accent, or adding something new to their "costume" each day. Teach in a way that makes you feel comfortable.
11. Think safety. Read the Child Safety Precautions file on the Resource USB or at AnswersVBS.com for more information.
12. Have Bible passages from the lessons bookmarked ahead of time, and use your Bible throughout as noted. Show through your facial expressions and your actions the importance of the Scriptures.
13. Children will be at various levels of spiritual comprehension. Pray for the Lord to take the message and do with it as he wills: plant seeds, bring to salvation, or strengthen and grow those who are already believers.
14. Call the children by name as you interact with them. Name tags help with this.
15. Show love. All children, regardless of age or appearance, need to be loved. Greet them warmly each day and always be ready with smiles, encouraging words, and appropriate hugs. (Make sure to be aware of your church's appropriate touching policies.)
16. Be all there. Try to leave behind whatever is currently going on in your life and focus your attention on the children under your care.
17. Notice the good. Children want attention and will sometimes resort to acting up in an effort to receive attention, even if it is negative attention. Be proactive by noticing and praising the things they do right. Be an encourager.
18. Children generally rise to the level expected of them, so challenge them to work on memory verses and complete their take-home student guides.
19. Use brown lunch bags labeled with the child's name to send everything home each day.
20. Have fun! Teaching should be a joy for you. "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks" (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18).

Tips for Managing a Group of Kids

Kids are fun, and kids have energy! Prepare to confidently lead them using the following strategies.

ATTENTION-GETTERS

Call and Response—The teacher will teach the kids that when she says something, they should reply with something else. Practice the following ideas so they know your expectations for responding to them.

- **Teacher:** Huzzah!
Kids: Hooray!
- **Teacher:** Hooray!
Kids: Huzzah!
- **Teacher:** Jeepers creepers!
Kids: We are the keepers!
- **Teacher:** Good morning!
Kids: Good “knight!”
- **Teacher:** Turkey leg, turkey leg
Kids: Can I get a roasted egg?
- **Teacher:** Keepers (clap, clap)
Kids: Of the Kingdom (clap, clap)

Rhythm Claps—The teacher claps a little rhythm and the kids clap the exact rhythm back. Vary the clapping patterns.

Countdown—Hold up five fingers and start to count down from five to one. By the count of one, they need to be completely quiet.

Soft Talk—Start talking about something important very softly or in a whisper. They will often get quiet to hear what you are saying. Or say, “If you can hear me, clap once.” Continue softly with other commands.

Flash the Lights—This is a good signal to listen up.

LINING UP TO WALK THROUGH THE BUILDING

If You . . .—Say different categories for lining up in fun ways, such as the following:

- “If you’re wearing red, line up. Now, if you’re wearing blue, line up.”
- “If your birthday is during the summer, line up. Now, if your birthday is during the school year, line up.”
- “If you have a dog, line up. Now, if you have a cat, line up. Now, if you have no pets, line up.”
- “If your first name starts with A–L, line up. Now, if your first name starts with M–Z, line up.”
- “If you are quiet, line up.”

PROACTIVE TIPS

Be Prepared—One of the best ways to ward off discipline problems is to be prepared. Think through and organize

your day, leaving no downtime. Keep things moving! This takes more effort on your part, but it’s worth it.

Active Participation—Keeping kids actively engaged in the lesson is perhaps the best thing you can do to keep the class from getting rowdy. The lessons are written to be creative, fun, and full of active participation. Play the games, act out the Bible accounts, and do the other ideas listed. Occupy kids’ minds and attention with good stuff!

Helpers—Involve the kids. Let them be helpers. Some kids just want to feel needed, so giving them a responsibility is a way to show you trust them. Try putting them in charge of a simple task like helping others learn memory verses, passing out papers, or holding a poster for the teacher. Sometimes a simple task can keep them busy and make them feel important!

Use Humor—Kids of all ages love to laugh! Have fun together. If you see a situation is getting tense or a child getting upset for some reason, try thinking of a way to lighten the mood with humor.

CALMING ROWDINESS

Don’t Yell—Kids may respond at first if someone yells, but they eventually dismiss it. Try some of these other ideas instead.

Separate Kids—Separate kids who misbehave around each other but encourage problem-solving when possible. “What are some things we could do to help you and ___ get along?”

Give Choices—Avoid power struggles by giving choices. If a child is resistant to doing something you’ve asked, try your command another way. “You can either sit with the rest of the group and listen or sit with ___ (leader’s name) at the back of the room.”

Praise in Public, Correct in Private—If someone does need correction, be careful not to embarrass him in front of his peers. If you need to talk to a child about a misbehavior, pull him aside while the rest of the group are distracted. Kids will be less defensive if they don’t feel they have to “save face” in front of their peers—and if they feel you really care and aren’t just coming down on them.

Know Church Policies—Know your church’s policy for severe behavior issues. Do you take the child to your VBS director? Do you alert the child’s parents? Do you involve other staff members? Be prepared.

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 general characteristics of children and then specific characteristics of Pre-Primaries (ages 4–6).

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 God.

Characteristics of Pre-Primaries

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Pre-Primaries are active and more confident in physical activities like jumping, hopping on one foot, and walking backwards. They love to be moving. They're improving in hand-eye coordination. They're rapidly growing and may need rest after active play.

Takeaways for Us

Pre-Primaries like to play hard, so keep them moving with short, simple games and activities. They may need to sit and rest for a brief time afterward.

EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Pre-Primaries are less fearful than Toddlers but still often exhibit common fears, such as fear of dogs and the dark. They can have emotional extremes and are testing

others to see who can be controlled. They want to please adults and want praise. They will often mimic adults' behaviors. They like imaginative play. Pre-Primaries can handle small tasks and levels of responsibility.

Takeaways for Us

- Let them be helpers. Give them simple 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.
- Give them opportunities to dress up and play imaginatively.
- Be consistent in discipline. Let your "yes" be "yes" and your "no" be "no."
- Be careful to walk worthy—act and speak in godly ways. Little eyes are watching and will want to imitate you!

SPIRITUAL/MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

Pre-Primaries talk a lot and ask a lot of questions, including questions about God. They understand that sin is disobeying God's commands. They need a lot of guidance in tasks but can also follow a simple series of directions. They have an attention span of approximately five minutes. They enjoy doing new things and hearing stories and songs. They're not always able to tell the difference between reality and fantasy. They're developing attitudes toward right and wrong and can do basic memory work.

Takeaways for Us

- In downtime, give them time to ask questions and be ready to patiently answer. But while you are teaching, be careful you don't get so wrapped up in letting them talk that the lesson doesn't happen!
- Vary activities often. The longer an activity goes, the wigglier they'll become!
- When engaged in pretend activities, name them as such (e.g., "Let's pretend to be explorers!"). At the same time, point out often that God's Word is not pretend but true.
- Repetition in songs and stories works well and is enjoyed by Pre-Primaries.
- Sing the memory verse songs with them. They will be able to learn at least parts of the verses by the end of the week.
- Use visuals.
- Teach them about sin and asking God for forgiveness.
- Show interest in each child, helping them know you care.
- 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.

Truth Talks in the Keep

Our Bible lessons, the Truth Talks, take place in the keep, which is the part of a medieval castle that is the strongest, most fortified spot. As we open God's Word in our keep, we will learn how to stand strong and be fortified in the Lord.

The lesson time is written as a 35–40 minute period, divided into two segments: Exploration Stations (15–20 minutes) and Lesson Time (15–20 minutes). You can either keep your group together for the stations and lesson time or divide the group in two, with each half switching places after 15–20 minutes.

If stations aren't possible, simply choose one or more of the station activities to incorporate into your lesson time as a whole group activity, rather than having a separate area for them.

Exploration Station Time

There are five stations to choose from: Discovery Center, Touch Table Wet, Touch Table Dry, Dramatic Play, and Coloring Corner. These stations can be in the same room as the lesson time or in an adjoining room. If both the stations and the lesson time are in the same room, set them up in opposite ends of the room.

When the children enter the stations room, you may want to have them first sit while you briefly explain each station and teaching tie-in. Then the children may rotate in small groups through each station every few minutes, or they may independently move from one to another, which is what our test churches do. It's good to photocopy the directions and teaching tie-ins for each station and leave them at the appropriate stations for troupe leaders to reinforce. The children don't need to do every station each day. Send the coloring page home daily, colored or uncolored.

See the Exploration Stations supply list on the back cover for a list of the supplies needed each day. Post

the signs with each station's name. For the Touch Table Wet, use a small wading pool or large, clear, under-the-bed storage container partially filled with water or other materials. Place it on a plastic tarp or tablecloth to catch the spills. Do the same for the Touch Table Dry except substitute the dry materials listed in place of the water.

Check the Decorating Decisions section for more specifics on setting up the Dramatic Play area to look like the inside of a castle and the Coloring Corner to look like a royal pavilion.

Lesson Time

The lesson time is divided into three sections:

Introduce It! (5 minutes or less): This is a time to begin the lesson in an interesting way.

Teach It! (10–15 minutes): This deepens the lesson, with costumed teachers sharing the Bible account.

Apply It! (Remaining time): This is the memory verse review and practical application time.

Ideas are given within the lessons to adapt the activities to your time period. There are many possibilities. Because of the content-rich lessons, a little extra time is great if you can swing it! But if not, there are lots of options, so you may want to shorten or skip some activities.

The lesson format is written for a two-person team. One person serves as Teacher One and the other as Teacher Two or the Teaching Assistant. The format also works if teaching alone. If team teaching, decide ahead of time who will teach what. If teaching alone, either find someone to help with the daily puppet script or work the puppet yourself, using a trunk with the lid flipped up. Have the puppet appear from behind the lid.

Check the Decorating Decisions section for specifics on decorating the Keep.

Memory Verse Songs

We have partnered with Seeds Family Worship and Majesty Music 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 easily learn their Bible verses. If you choose to use these songs, we suggest using them (either video or audio) during the memory verse time in each lesson. The Music USB 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 (AnswersVBS.com). Student CDs in packs of 10 are available if you would like each student to have a copy of the songs (12-0-061 or 12-0-062). The option you choose will determine which type of media device you use to play it.

Special Needs

The *Special Needs Teacher Supplement* (12-0-053) can help you accommodate and modify these lessons for those who need it, either in your regular classroom or in a self-contained classroom.

Sample Schedule

Below is a sample schedule of a typical day at VBS. Check with your director for a copy of the schedule and room assignment for your VBS.

Time	Group One	Group Two	Group Three
9:00–9:15	Apprentices' Assembly in the Great Hall—Opening (Everyone together)		
9:20–10:00	Truth Talks in the Keep	Kieran's Science and Crafts in the Courtyard	Griffin's Games on the Green and Tessa's Treats in the Town
10:05–10:45	Griffin's Games on the Green and Tessa's Treats in the Town	Truth Talks in the Keep	Kieran's Science and Crafts in the Courtyard
10:50–11:30	Kieran's Science and Crafts in the Courtyard	Griffin's Games on the Green and Tessa's Treats in the Town	Truth Talks in the Keep
11:35–Noon	Apprentices' Assembly in the Great Hall—Closing (Everyone together)		

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.

Also, decide with your director when it will work best to give out the various items: during lesson time, during snack time (a good time to review!), or at the end of the day (a good time to pass out bookmarks, student guides, and other items that need to make it home safely).

Simple Songs: The songs referenced throughout this guide that are for Pre-Primaries and Toddlers are available on the Resource USB (you'll need to upload them to an MP3 player) and on a separate *Simple Songs for Kids* CD (12-0-141) that you can play in a CD player. You may want to purchase a CD for each child.

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 Apply It! 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. This is what our test churches do. If you send the guides home, motivate the kids to do them because they are full of good information. Give them to the troupe leaders to pass out at the end of the day. Then have the leaders check with the kids the following day to see how they did and make a big deal about their hard work. The student guides are available in packs of 10.

- Pre-Primary ESV (12-0-073)
- Pre-Primary KJV (12-0-134)

Royal Adventure Guides: These fun, interactive booklets feature the daily memory verses, animal pals, stickers, and a place to stamp (12-0-093) for attendance. Check with your VBS director to find out when to give these to the kids. They can receive them at any time during the first day. You can review them with the kids during the Apply It! section of the lesson if you have time, or troupe leaders can go over them during snack time. These are available in packs of 10.

- Pre-Primary/Toddler ESV (12-0-090)
- Pre-Primary/Toddler KJV (12-0-138)

Armor of God Sticker Sets: Use these sticker sets as a fun review of each armor piece.

- 12-0-078, pack of 10

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 (12-0-076)—Day 2
- Armor of God (12-0-077)—Any day

Decorating Decisions

Kings, queens, knights, and stone castles . . . no theme catches the imagination of kids quite like medieval. So keep that in mind as you use your creativity, along with the ideas in this section, to set up your Truth Talks in the Keep (classroom). Remember that creating a fun and exciting

environment helps children learn better, remember more, and leave with happy memories.

Truth Talks in the Keep (the keep being the strongest part of the castle) features a castle wall backdrop to serve as the focal point for the teaching. The adjacent walls can have large solid-colored panels that are used to display the posters from each of the previous day's teaching.



Key Decorating Elements

CASTLE WALL BACKDROP

Your backdrop should be made out of a rigid material such as foam board or corrugated cardboard. Check party supply stores and websites for patterned backgrounds or scene setters for castle walls or make your own. Check the *Director Guide* for details on how to paint castle walls. Add a stained glass window or an archer's window on one side of the wall and a banner or coat-of-arms on the other side. See the Resource USB for various banner and window design clip art images. Consider making a turret on one or both sides as well. If you are using corrugated cardboard, apply one coat of paint to the back of the backdrop to minimize curling. Your backdrop should be braced from behind with wooden supports (jacks) and weighted down with bags of sand or rock salt. If necessary, you can further secure it by running thin strands of wire to the ceiling. Check YouTube.com/AnswersVBS for how-to videos on building a jack.

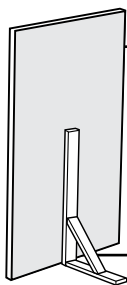
TRUTH TALKS SIGN

A Truth Talks in the Keep sign can span the center section of your backdrop. A clip art image of the sign is available on the Resource USB. Use an overhead projector to enlarge and transfer the image onto a rigid material such as foam board or corrugated cardboard, then paint the sign with bright colors, such as yellow letters on a vivid purple background.

NOTE: The Truth Talks sign should not be confused with the Truth Talks rotation sign (12-0-020). Although you can use the rotation sign on your backdrop, it is better suited as a door sign or hallway directional sign because of its size.

POSTER DISPLAY PANELS

Four large colored panels on the walls adjacent to the backdrop are used to display the resource posters from each of the previous day's teaching. At the end of each



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.

day, the posters are transferred from the backdrop to a colored panel. Use roll paper or purchase inexpensive rectangular plastic tablecloths for this purpose. To dress them up, cut them into banner shapes. You will only need four panels because the last day's posters will remain on the backdrop.

RESOURCE POSTERS

Contained in the Teacher Resource Pack are the daily teaching, animal pal, and memory verse posters. These are important visuals for the kids and should be mounted in an organized fashion.

OTHER PROPS AND DECORATIONS

Embellish the area in front of your castle wall backdrop with various items, such as a high-back chair; a large, old-fashioned Bible on a stand; artificial trees, plants, and vines; floor candelabras and fake flickering candles; tapestry rugs; wall torches made from paper towel tubes and colored tissue paper; a treasure chest; and assorted castle animals like mice and cats. As you search for items, think of items made from wrought iron, dark wood, silk fabrics, velvets, and gold/silver. You may want to prop up pieces of the armor against your treasure chest. An armor of God playset (26-1-049) can be purchased from AnswersVBS.com.

CLIP ART IMAGES

Don't forget to check the Resource USB for clip art images. These are an important part of your decorations. Use an overhead projector to enlarge and transfer the images onto paper, poster board, or rigid materials such as corrugated cardboard.

CLASSROOM SCENE SETTER

A castle keep scene setter is available for purchase (12-0-126) from the resource catalog. Simply mount the panels to cardboard or foam insulation sheets using double-sided carpet tape, clear packing tape, or staples and prop it up with wooden supports (jacks). Or, you can attach it directly to the wall with mounting putty or Mavalus tape.

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.

PUPPET STAGE

The stained glass window or archer's window in the castle backdrop can be cut so that it swings open for a puppet stage. Make sure it's big enough for the puppet to fit through and cover the hole from the inside with fabric. Puppets are used daily in the Pre-Primary rooms.



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

Exploration Stations

Pre-Primary classes enjoy Exploration Stations which include a dramatic play area, a touch table with water, a touch table with dry materials, a discovery center, and a coloring corner. Further information about these stations can be found in the lessons, but check below for details on how to make an Inside the Castle Dramatic Play Area and a Royal Pavilion Coloring Corner.

INSIDE THE CASTLE DRAMATIC PLAY AREA

Your Inside the Castle dramatic play area should, naturally, resemble the inside of a castle. Begin by designating a corner of the room and deciding how large of an area to decorate. Next, cover the walls with “flagstone” or “stone wall” patterned background (“scene setter”) paper. Decorate with swags of sheer material or crepe paper.

On one wall, set up a royal throne by mounting a purple plastic tablecloth with a large gold crown icon behind a

high-back armchair. Then add a large fireplace and stained glass windows to the other wall. (See the Resource USB for clip art images.) In the center of the room, add a wooden child’s table and chairs. On the table, place a wooden bowl or tray with plastic food items along with plastic plates and chalices. Finish the room with various props and toys such as an old-fashioned broom and stick horses. And, of course, don’t forget a good supply of medieval dress-up clothes.

ROYAL PAVILION COLORING CORNER

Make a royal pavilion for the children to sit in as they spend time coloring and learning their memory verses. Use a pop-up dining tent with colorful pennants around the exterior. Or you could attach a hula hoop near the ceiling and put tulle or netting over it, flowing down and out from the hoop to the floor. Put a low table inside with the coloring sheets and supplies.



Costume Considerations

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

Guys

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

1. For a peasant look, wear a long-sleeved, puffy white shirt either alone or with a suede vest over it. Add a small leather pouch or a ring of large keys attached to a belt. Hint: Check out a thrift store to buy a puffy-sleeved shirt that's a couple sizes too big for you. Believe it or not, ones with lace work, too!
2. Make a simple tunic with a strip of rectangular material that will go from your shoulders to your knees. (Old bedsheets, tablecloths, or oversized T-shirts with the arms and neck cut out can be used for this. Solid-colored material is best.) Fold it in half and cut a hole for the head. Put it on and belt it with a leather belt or belts. Or crisscross belts to make a belted X across it. The puffy white shirt looks good under the tunic.
3. For a knight look, wear a silver or gray long-sleeved T-shirt, silk pajamas, or silver material as a base. Make a tunic as suggested above out of gray material and add a red felt cross emblem hot-glued onto the front. To make a headpiece, buy silver material that has the look of chain mail. Sew into a round tube. Put the tube over your head and wear bunched around your neck. (Or use a gray or black hoodie or a gray ski mask with the face part cut out.)
4. Another option for a shiny knight look is to buy bright silver sun reflectors at the dollar store and cut them to make tunics and other accessories.
5. For a king/prince look, buy or make a crown and a cape. Royal purple or red look particularly good. Old bedsheets or tablecloths can work for this. Once again, this can go over a base of black pants, black T-shirt, and black shoes.
6. For a jester look, make or buy full pajama-style pants that have elastic around the ankles and waist. Bright, crazy-patterned material is good. Couple these with a coordinating, bright-colored, solid T-shirt and jester hat. You can buy jester hats online or at costume shops, or look online to learn how to make one.

Gals

1. For a peasant look, wear a long, solid-colored skirt and plain white blouse. These are easy to find at thrift stores. Top it with a vest or shawl.
2. For a queen/princess look, some styles of old prom gowns can work as period costumes. Crushed velvet or satin are popular fabrics. Consider adding ribbon or gold rickrack to dress them up. Or make a wide fabric belt and crisscross gold ribbon on it. If the dress is too long, duct tape the hem at the desired length.
3. Sandals, ballet flats, or black flats all work for shoes.
4. Garland wreaths or tiaras work in the hair.
5. Gold jewelry and large, fake gemstone rings and necklaces can add flair.

Kids

1. Use ideas from above as possibilities, adjusting to kid sizes.
2. For tunics, use old pillowcases with the sides slit and a hole cut out for the head.
3. To make knight helmets, spray-paint either fast-food chicken buckets or empty milk jugs with a metallic spray paint. Cut them so the face of the child will mostly show, with the exception of a section that hangs down between their eyes, as the helmets of old were designed.
4. To make crowns, check the *Craft Guide* on Day 1 for instructions.
5. Ask around to gather children's princess and knight/armor of God costumes. Armor of God playsets (26-1-049) are also available for purchase from AnswersVBS.com.

— DAY 1 —

The Two Kingdoms

BIBLE PASSAGES

Creator King and Prince of Darkness
Various Verses; Ephesians 6:10–14

APOLOGETICS CONTENT

Absolute truth is true for *all* people, for *all* times, for *all* circumstances.

VERITAS VERSE

Put on the whole armor of God. Ephesians 6:11

RHYME TIME

Of two, only one is true!

LESSON FOCUS

We're in a battle between two kingdoms—
God's good kingdom that is based on truth and
the enemy's bad kingdom that is based on lies.

ANIMAL PAL

Winifred ("Winnie") the Warhorse

Today's Exploration Stations

- Discovery Center: Kingdom Cards
- Touch Table Wet: Make It Clean!
- Touch Table Dry: Two Kingdoms Sandcastles
- Dramatic Play: Inside the Castle
- Coloring Corner: Ephesians 6:11

Today's Lesson at a Glance

INTRODUCE IT!

- Which Side of the Keep?

TEACH IT!

- Part 1: Two Kingdoms Contrasted
- Part 2: Puppet Pal—The Battle's On
- Part 3: Animal Pal Review

APPLY IT!

- Part 1: Veritas Verse
- Part 2: Go and Do
- Song 1: "I'm in the Lord's Army"
- Song 2: "The Kingdom Keepers"

Preparing for the Lesson

- Read Ephesians 6:10–18 several times.
- Read this lesson several times and prepare the materials.
- For more information on absolute truth and the two kingdoms, visit AnswersVBS.com/keeperfaq.
- Pray.

Devotion 1: The Two Kingdoms

Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. Psalm 51:6

When Pilate questioned Jesus about the charges the Jews were leveling at him, Jesus replied, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”

Can you hear the cynicism and sarcasm in Pilate’s voice as he asks dismissively, “What is truth?” and hands over Jesus to the Jews for crucifixion (John 18:37–38)?

Throughout the ages, people have echoed Pilate’s question, in sincerity as well as skepticism. In fact, the battle over truth is as ancient as the original sin. Take a look at the lies Satan told himself and those who rebelled with him against their Creator:

“How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn!
How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!
You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven;
above the stars of God I will set my throne on high;
I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north;
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will make myself like the Most High**” (Isaiah 14:12–14, emphasis added).

Satan knew the truth—that there is none in heaven like the Creator God—but he exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and in the process became the father of lies (John 8:44). His first temptation of Adam and Eve was a continuation on the theme. He introduced error into God’s words (“Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” Genesis 3:1) and then blatantly lied about what God had said (“You will not surely die,” Genesis 3:4).

For the past six thousand years, we’ve been floundering, trying to find our own way and denying that truth comes from God and his infallible Word. Thankfully, God has called his children into his kingdom through the sacrifice of his Son. In his infinite grace, God has given us the armor we need to stand strong in this battle for truth and boldly serve our Creator.

This week as we examine the pieces of armor God has provided, ask yourself this: Where am I in the battle? Am I asking “what is truth?” along with Pilate, or do I know the difference between truth and error based on God’s Word?

“Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment” (Proverbs 12:19).

Exploration Stations

Discovery Center: Kingdom Cards

MATERIALS

- ☐ Kingdom Cards
- ☐ Piece of poster board
- ☐ Dark marker
- ☐ Light colored marker or colored pencil

PREP

Print the card patterns on white cardstock and cut apart. Draw smiley faces lightly on the back of the good cards and frowney faces on the back of the bad cards. Draw a thick dark line down the middle of the poster board to divide it in half. Write at the top of the left side “Good Kingdom” with a smiley face. Write at the top of the right side “Bad Kingdom” with a frowney face.

DIRECTIONS

Students put the cards either on the “Good Kingdom” side or the “Bad Kingdom” side. When done, flip over each card to see if they are in the right spots using the smiley or frowney faces for self checking.

TEACHING TIE-IN

There are two kingdoms, aren’t there? But of the two, only one is true. God is the ruler of the true, good kingdom. If we’re part of God’s family, we’re part of that kingdom.

Touch Table Wet: Make It Clean!

MATERIALS

- ☐ Touch table with tarp underneath
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Baby shampoo or bubble bath
- ☐ Extras: bath toys, plastic dishes, washcloths, dish scrubbers

PREP

Partially fill the touch table with water. Make suds with baby shampoo or bubble bath. Add the extras.

DIRECTIONS

Wash the toys and dishes to make them clean.

TEACHING TIE-IN

We don’t want anything dirty or bad on our dishes or toys, so we clean them. The enemy’s kingdom is full of bad things like lying and being mean. But God’s kingdom is clean and pure; it doesn’t have anything bad in it.

Touch Table Dry: Two Kingdoms Sandcastles

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)
- ☐ Water spray bottle for wetting down sand
- ☐ Extras: small buckets, shovels, cups, scoops, LEGOS
- ☐ Printed pictures of simple sandcastles
- ☐ Wet wipes for cleanup

PREP

Cover the floor under the touch table with a tarp or plastic tablecloth. Put the play sand in the table and spray it with water to add moisture. Place the extras into the sand for children to use. Post pictures of sandcastles for inspiration.

DIRECTIONS

Help the children copy some of the picture ideas to build their own sandcastle. Or you could direct two groups to each build one.

TEACHING TIE-IN

The Bible says there are two kingdoms—a good kingdom of light and truth and a bad kingdom of darkness and lies. Who’s the leader of the good kingdom? [God](#). Who’s the leader of the bad kingdom? [The enemy, Satan](#).

Dramatic Play: Inside the Castle

MATERIALS

Choose from any of the following, depending on your situation. These will be used all week.

- ☐ Backdrop supplies as listed in Decorating Decisions
- ☐ Little table, chairs, “throne” (see Prep)
- ☐ Small rocking chair
- ☐ Baskets, wooden bowls
- ☐ Silver plastic cups or plastic transparent cups
- ☐ Play food (e.g., eggs, bread, cheese, fruit)
- ☐ Costumes (e.g., crowns, play armor sets, princess dresses)
- ☐ Small broom and pail
- ☐ Stick horses (check online for directions for how to make “pool noodle horses” if you want to jazz up pool noodles)
- ☐ Crate or large basket

PREP

Set up the castle with the castle stone wall, the table and chairs, supplies, and costumes. Make the throne by putting a piece of foam core or plywood on the back of the chair and draping it with a piece of satin, velvet, or other shiny material. (Or just use a high-back chair and cover with material.) Put the costumes in a crate or large basket.

Note: Make play armor sets from simple items: foam plates for shields, spray-painted fast-food chicken buckets

for helmets, old ties for belts, and vests for breastplates. Other costume ideas include crowns or tiaras (see *Craft Guide* for crown ideas), princess dresses found at garage sales, or tunics made from old pillowcases that have the sides slit and an opening cut for the head. Play armor sets are also sold in the Resource Catalog (26-1-049).

DIRECTIONS

Dress up and pretend to be knights, servants, kings, and queens using the play items.

TEACHING TIE-IN

It's fun to play kings and queens, isn't it? Did you know Jesus, who is God, is called the King of kings? He's by far the greatest King ever. There's no other king like him!

Note: You may want to put out only part of the supplies today and add new ones each day.

Royal Pavilion Coloring Corner: Ephesians 6:11

MATERIALS

- ☐ [Day 1 Memory Verse Coloring Sheet](#)
- ☐ Decorating supplies as listed in Decorating Decisions
- ☐ Markers or crayons in a wooden bowl or metal pail
- ☐ Optional: additional supplies to add to the sheets, including glue sticks

PREP

Print the coloring sheet, 1 per child. Make or gather the decorating supplies and set them up. These will be used all week. Gather additional supplies to glue on if you'd like, such as foil for the knight's outfit or a piece of a feather added to his helmet.

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

- ☐ **Castle Building**—Assemble various supplies that kids can use to build castles. This can be on a small scale (building blocks, cereal boxes, etc.) or on a larger scale (appliance boxes, copy paper boxes, cardboard tubes, etc.) You can also make “bricks” out of lunch bags by stuffing them with newspaper, then folding down/flattening the opened end, and taping them shut.
- ☐ **Canopy Reading**—Make a colorful canopy/tent using a sheet draped over a table. Put a basket inside with a variety of children's books, including children's picture Bibles, books about knights, castles, and the armor of God. Also include books with accurate accounts of dragons, such as *When Dragons Hearts Were Good*.
- ☐ **Puppet or Marionette Theater**—Puppets and marionettes were popular in medieval times, so have a play station featuring these items.
- ☐ **Play Figurines and Castles**—Borrow or buy play plastic figurines of knights, kings, queens, horses, etc. Also, see if anyone has a play castle (big or small) that can be borrowed. Or buy pop up castles or large cardboard versions online or at a teacher supply store.
- ☐ **Flannel Board Fun**—Provide a flannel board with people and items from each day's Bible lesson, along with animals and items from medieval times.
- ☐ **Texture Trays**—Provide various textures on which and in which the kids can trace words or pictures of key Bible concepts they learn about. Possible textures include shaving cream or hair gel in zippered baggies that are duct-taped shut, burlap, trays of salt, thick fleece, magic slates, or chalkboard 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 that have to do with the day's teaching. See play dough recipe on the Day 4 Exploration Station page.

- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Medieval costumes for teachers
- ☐ Mounting putty or tape for hanging things
- ☐ Painter's or masking tape

✦ Think of fun names for yourselves: Princess Katherine the Curly-Haired, Lady Betty of Boston, Crispin of the Woods, Gwendolyn the Glad, Albert the Silly, etc.

✦ The Bible is listed just once daily in the supply list but is used throughout, so keep it handy and marked to the correct passages ahead of time.

✦ Be familiar with the lesson, but don't memorize it. Place it on a clipboard to use as a reference.

✦ If working as co-teachers, decide which parts of the lesson each of you will be responsible for teaching. Plan to both dress in costumes.

- ☐ Good Kingdom/Bad Kingdom Poster
- ☐ Two Kingdoms Contrasted Cards



✦ Mounting putty or tape is listed just once daily in the supply list, but use it throughout as needed.

Introduce It!

WHICH SIDE OF THE KEEP? (5 minutes)

Prep: Prepare your costumes. Put down the tape line.

Teacher 1: Greetings, one and all! I'm ___, the trainer here in the strongest part of the castle, the keep. We'll meet here every day to learn about kings, kingdoms, and some special armor we need to put on as we battle for the greatest King, God.

Teacher 2: Good morrow! I'm ___, and I'm excited to open God's Word, the Bible. But first, let's line up on this middle line. *Do so.* I'm going to give you two choices. You should go to either this side of the keep, or that side, depending on which choice you like best.

Read through the following choices and have the kids move to one side of the tape according to their preference.

- Would you rather eat vegetables or eat ice cream?
- Would you rather walk really slow or walk really fast?
- Would you rather celebrate your birthday or forget your birthday?
- Would you rather own a big animal or own a small animal?
- Would you rather talk really loud or talk really soft?
- Would you rather run around or stand still?

Teacher 1: Okay, let's sit back down quietly. *Do so.* Now, you may have noticed that your choices were something we call opposites. Slow and fast are opposites. *Move slowly and then quickly to illustrate as you say this.* Talking loudly and talking softly are opposites. *Do so to illustrate.*

Teacher 2: But did you know there are two *kingdoms* that are opposites? One is all things good, and one is all things bad. Let's see what the Bible has to say about this.

Teach It!

PART 1: TWO KINGDOMS CONTRASTED (5–10 minutes)

Prep: Cut the GOOD KINGDOM/BAD KINGDOM POSTER in half and put each section up.

Share the two cards for each contrast below and have the kids decide which one goes with the good kingdom and which with the bad kingdom. Tack the cards up under the appropriate posters. (You may want to have the pictures posted apart from each other with the kids moving to the good kingdom when you talk about the good kingdom, then to the bad kingdom when you talk about that.) To make it easier, you can always share the good kingdom card first, then the bad kingdom card or, to make it a little more challenging, sometimes say the bad kingdom card first, followed by the good kingdom card.

- The ruler of this kingdom is God. Ask which poster they think it goes under and put it under the **GOOD KINGDOM POSTER**. The ruler of this kingdom is our enemy, Satan. This enemy is not our friend. Put this under the **BAD KINGDOM POSTER**.
- This ruler is for us. **GOD—GOOD KINGDOM POSTER**. This ruler is against us. **THE ENEMY—BAD KINGDOM POSTER**.
- This ruler loves us. **GOD—GOOD KINGDOM POSTER**. This ruler hates us. **THE ENEMY—BAD KINGDOM POSTER**.
- This ruler is kind. **GOD—GOOD KINGDOM POSTER**. This ruler is mean. **THE ENEMY—BAD KINGDOM POSTER**.
- This ruler is all-powerful. **GOD—GOOD KINGDOM POSTER**. This ruler isn't as powerful as God. **THE ENEMY—BAD KINGDOM POSTER**.

- This ruler always tells the truth. **GOD—GOOD KINGDOM POSTER**. This ruler lies. **THE ENEMY—BAD KINGDOM POSTER**.
- This ruler always keeps his promises. **GOD—GOOD KINGDOM POSTER**. This ruler breaks his promises. **THE ENEMY—BAD KINGDOM POSTER**.

Teacher 1: As you can see, God is the amazing King and Ruler of the good kingdom! The enemy, Satan, is not! Let's talk a little more about that with our puppet now.

PART 2: PUPPET PAL—THE BATTLE'S ON (5 minutes or less)

Prep: Tape one **SCRIPT** inside the puppet stage and attach the other to a clipboard for reference. Make the mini sword. (See the *Craft Guide* for an example.)

Each day, the puppet pal will teach part of the lesson or reinforce what the kids just heard. It's always a favorite, so try to include it even if you have to cut something else.

Decide which of you will be the puppet and figure out when you need to leave the previous teaching so you will be positioned in time for the start of the puppet pal time.

If you don't have a teaching assistant or co-teacher, enlist someone (a troupe leader or other volunteer) ahead of time to work the puppet each day. If you're alone, have the puppet come up from behind a trunk with the lid flipped up, or just stand and work the puppet. (It's fine if your lips move. No need to be a ventriloquist.)

You can either use a boy or a girl puppet. It is written as a boy (Christian), but it can instead be a girl named Christy. 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 behind the puppet stage. (See *Decorating Decisions*.) 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.

Teacher: Our puppet's name is Christian (or Christy if a girl). Let's all call for him (her) together. Do so.

Puppet: Come up waving a mini sword as if pretending to sword-fight someone.

Teacher: Hi there, Christian. What're you doing?

Puppet: Oh, I'm pretending to be King Arthur.

Teacher: Was he the boy who pulled a sword out of a stone?

Puppet: Yes! I read how he grew up and became a great king who fought enemies in England.

Teacher: I know that story. King Arthur and his knights of the round table lived in a kingdom called Camelot.

Puppet: Yep! The good kingdom fought against the bad kingdoms. King Arthur and his knights were really brave! One knight even killed a dragon! Pretend to stab a roaring dragon.

Teacher: That's exciting! But you know King Arthur's just a pretend story, right?

Puppet: I know.

Teacher: But did you know in real life there really are two kingdoms—God's good kingdom and the enemy's bad kingdom?

Puppet: What do you mean? Stop sword fighting.

- ☐ Good Kingdom/Bad Kingdom Poster
- ☐ Day 1 Rhyme Time Poster
- ☐ 2 copies of Day 1 Puppet Script
- ☐ Boy or girl puppet and puppet stage
- ☐ Clipboard
- ☐ Mini sword (large craft stick covered in foil)

✦ The puppet can be dressed in a small VBS T-shirt. To make a small T-shirt, photocopy, cut out, and laminate a color copy of the logo and tape it to a baby-sized T-shirt.

✦ If you want to get snazzy, use a quick musical introduction and exit when it's time for the puppet to come and go.

Teacher: Well, the Bible tells us how everything used to be all good. There was only one kingdom.

Puppet: What happened?

Teacher: Well, we'll hear more about this tomorrow, but basically, an enemy named Satan came along and got the first man to disobey God's command (sin), which messed up the good kingdom on earth. So now we have two kingdoms. The good one is ruled by God, and the bad one is led by the enemy, Satan. [Point to the GOOD KINGDOM/BAD KINGDOM POSTERS](#) you used earlier.

Puppet: And they're in a battle?

Teacher: Yep. You're pretending just now, but there's a real battle going on out there. You can't see it, but it's really happening.

Puppet: Oh! Should I be scared?

Teacher: Not at all—if you're on God's side—'cuz you win! Nobody can beat our all-powerful God! The enemy is not equal to God. He can't beat God!

Puppet: That's so good to know.

Teacher: And of those two kingdoms, only one is good. Only one is kind. Only one is true! Do you know which one?

Puppet: God's!

Teacher: Right! God is great, and God's kingdom is great!

Puppet: And like you said, of the two kingdoms, only one is true—God's!

Teacher: [Hold up the DAY 1 RHYME TIME POSTER](#). Yep! Let's say this together, "Of two, only one is true!" [Do so](#).

Puppet: Of two, only one is true. I want to remember that! Well, I've got to go now, so see you later.

Teacher: Bye, Christian! See you soon.

PART 3: ANIMAL PAL REVIEW

Take a couple minutes to summarize the lesson today using the [DAY 1 ANIMAL PAL POSTER](#). Pass out the Armor of God Sticker Sets (available to purchase from [AnswersVBS.com](#)), one set (child and armor stickers) per child. This week, children will add armor pieces as they learn about them. For now, have the children put their name on their papers and then return them to you.

Some knights rode on warhorses, like Winifred here. These horses were strong and didn't get tired easily during a battle. Winnie reminds us that we are in a battle between two kingdoms: God's good kingdom and Satan's bad kingdom. Just as these knights had to trust their horses to carry them faithfully through battle, we must trust in our Creator God, who made us and takes care of us.

With each question, have the kids whinny like a horse and shake their heads (manes) "yes" if the answer is true and shake their head "no" if it is false.

1. There are two kingdoms. (True—shake head "yes" and whinny.)
2. One kingdom is good, and one kingdom is bad. (True—shake head "yes" and whinny.)
3. There are lots of different rulers of the good kingdom. (False—shake head "no." Remind them there is only one ruler of the good kingdom—God.)
4. The good kingdom's book is the Bible, and it always tells the truth. (True—shake head "yes" and whinny.)
5. The bad kingdom is as powerful as the good kingdom. (False—shake head "no." Remind them that God is the most powerful, kind, loving Ruler of all. Nobody is his equal.)
6. God is kind and keeps his promises. The enemy is mean and doesn't keep his promises. (True—shake head "yes" and whinny.)



- ☐ Day 1 Animal Pal Poster
- ☐ Armor of God Sticker Sets (12-0-078)



✦ Gospel opportunity: The gospel will be shared in detail on day 2. Briefly explain what trusting in Jesus for salvation means.

Apply It!

In the remaining time, complete one or more of the following ideas in class. You won't have time to do them all, but these ideas are also on the back of the *Pre-Primary Student Guides*. Send the student guides home each day as a fun review and also encourage the kids to do the practical ideas (the Go and Do sections) that apply today's lesson to real life. They're important!

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

PART 1: VERITAS VERSE

Today's Verse: Put on the whole armor of God. Ephesians 6:11

Note: The word "veritas" means "truth is mighty and will prevail" or simply "true, trustworthy." It was a word used in the Middle Ages and is still used today. Share the meaning with the students so they know that every Bible verse is true, trustworthy, and mighty.

Practice the verse several times by playing the appropriate song from the Memory Verse music and using the **DAY 1 MEMORY VERSE POSTER** as a reference and the Memory Verse music if you have it.

Challenge: Say the verse while pretending to put on armor.

Tomorrow's Verse: Having fastened on the belt of truth. Ephesians 6:14.

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

PART 2: GO AND DO

1. God is the ruler of the good kingdom. How many good things can you think of? Tell him thank you for all good things.
2. Play a game of opposites. A grown-up says one word, then the child says the opposite. Examples: good, bad; laugh, cry; up, down; in, out; smile, frown; happy, sad; light, dark. What are the two opposite kingdoms you learned about in VBS? (God's good kingdom and the enemy's bad kingdom)
3. Tell someone about God—the ruler of the good kingdom. Is he good? Is he kind? Does he tell the truth? Does he keep his promises?
4. With someone's help, check AnswersVBS.com/keeperkids for more fun information!

Ask yourself this question: Which kingdom do I want to be part of?

SONG 1: I'M IN THE LORD'S ARMY (medieval style)

Explain the terms in the song and how a knight would have done these things. Or sing in the traditional way. Both versions are on the Simple Songs CD.

VERSE

I may never march to the castle keep

(March in place.)

Ride in the tournament

(Ride a horse, holding a spear in one hand.)

Shoot at the battlement

(Shoot an arrow from a bow.)

I may never sword fight the enemy

(Swing a sword.)

But I'm in the Lord's army

(Point to yourself and then to God.)

Yes, Sir

(Cross arm over chest in knight's salute.)

CHORUS

I'm in the Lord's army

(Point to yourself and then to God.)

Yes, Sir (Knight's salute.)

I'm in the Lord's army

(Point to yourself and then to God.)

Yes, Sir (Knight's salute.)

Repeat verse.

✦ The front page of each day's student guide is an overview of today's lesson. The back page matches this section.

- ☐ Theme and Day 1 Memory Verse Posters
- ☐ Optional: Student Guides and supplies
- ☐ Optional: Memory Verse music and player



✦ Put the Theme Memory Verse Poster up before class. Then each day, arrange that day's memory verse poster under the theme poster.

- ❑ “I’m in the Lord’s Army” song
- ❑ “The Kingdom Keepers” song
- ❑ MP3 download or Simple Songs CD (12-0-141)
- ❑ Device to play songs

Song 1: I’m in the Lord’s Army (traditional)

VERSE

I may never march in the infantry
 (March in place.)
 Ride in the cavalry (Ride a horse.)
 Shoot the artillery
 (Clap and shoot right hand forward.)
 I may never zoom o’er the enemy
 (Put arms out to fly.)
 But I’m in the Lord’s army—Yes, Sir
 (Salute.)

CHORUS

I’m in the Lord’s army
 (Point to yourself and then to God.)
 Yes, Sir (Salute.)
 I’m in the Lord’s army
 (Point to yourself and then to God.)
 Yes, Sir (Salute.)
 Repeat verse.

Song 2: THE KINGDOM KEEPERS (To the tune of “The Ants Go Marching”)

The kingdom keepers march for God,
 hurrah, hurrah
 (March in place, lift up hands on “hurrah.”)
 The kingdom keepers march for God,
 hurrah, hurrah
 (March in place, lift up hands on “hurrah.”)
 God gave us armor we will wear
 (Tap head, tap shoulders, tap waist,
 tap feet.)

Satan’s kingdom better beware
 (Fists up, fighting stance.)
 And we all go marching on
 (March in place.)
 For the Lord—who is strong—and has won
 (Point up, flex biceps, lift arms to make a
 V for victory.)
 Huzzah! Huzzah! Huzzah!
 (Shout and point up on each word.)
 Repeat, adding a fourth Huzzah! at the end.