

# HELPER

## Handbook

Answers **VBS**

THE GREAT

Jungle

JOURNEY

An Epic Cruise from  
Genesis to Revelation

**THE GREAT**  
**Jungle**  
**JOURNEY**  
AnswersVBS

**HELPER**  
**HANDBOOK**

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# It's a Jungle Out There!

*Listen!* Can you hear a howler monkey screeching and insects buzzing? *Look!* Do you see a sloth hanging from a tree and a jaguar crouching, ready to pounce? *Smell!* Is that the aroma of tropical flowers wafting through the air? *Touch!* Do you feel soft grass under your feet and gentle rain on your skin? *Taste!* Is that delicious milk from a coconut and exotic spices from the rainforest?

Join us in a world of wonder that will delight our senses while captivating our hearts and minds at *The Great Jungle Journey: An Epic Cruise from Genesis to Revelation*. We will cruise through jungle rivers, making stops at seven ports of call along the way—each starting with a C. These represent seven key biblical events—the 7 C's of History.

**Day 1: Creation**—Our first C takes us back to the beginning of time and the creation of the universe when it was all good. Did the universe start with a big bang, or did God create it?

**Day 2: Corruption and Catastrophe**—Next, Adam sinned, which affected his descendants, who were so wicked that God sent a global flood as judgment for their sin.

**Day 3: Confusion**—The fourth C checks out the events that began at the tower of Babel. Can this be where all the people groups originated from?

**Day 4: Christ and the Cross**—At these stops, we realize once again that man is sinful and needs a Savior. Hallelujah, God provides one in his Son!

**Day 5: Consummation**—The last C shows the thrilling conclusion to history when all goes back to very good

again, and—best news ever—God wins against sin and Satan.

Excitement and adventure await from the first minute of each day when kids meet in travel groups. The groups gather at the **Jungle Jam Assembly**, a high-energy beginning that includes wacky intros, lively songs, a Mission Moment, and prayer.

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

**Rain or Shine Bible Time**, where God's Word is taught in creative, hands-on ways.

**Tree-mendous Science and Crafts**, where kids make jazzy jungle crafts and explore God's amazing world with science experiments.

**Canopy Café Snacks**, where travelers go bananas, munching on tropical treats and eats.

**Rainforest Recreation**, where kids rumble in the jungle with some wet and wild games.

**Travelers' Missions, Music, and Memory Verses**, where kids sing songs, learn their memory verses with fun games, or go in-depth with the Mission Moment featuring Children's Hunger Fund.

Finally, everyone heads back to the **Jungle Jam Assembly** for the closing, where there's more singing, contest results, and the highly anticipated daily drama. This follows a jungle river cruise that plans to make stops at different ports of call but faces a catastrophe that affects the plan, resulting in lots of unexpected rainforest adventures.

Prepare to swing into the fun as we head out on our jungle river cruise. See you in the rainforest!

## **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!

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

The content of *The Great Jungle Journey* may be new to you. For a list of helpful articles on the topics covered in this VBS program, please visit [AnswersVBS.com/junglefaq](http://AnswersVBS.com/junglefaq).

# Terms to Know

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

**Travel Groups/Travelers:** Groups of children (individual classes) named after jungle animals, such as Bengal Tigers, Butterflies, Toucans, or Howler Monkeys.

**Group Guides:** Group leaders who lead the travelers from place to place during VBS. No teaching is required of this position.

**Rain or Shine Bible Time:** Bible and apologetics lesson time in the jungle.

**River Guides:** Teachers of the Rain or Shine Bible Time.

**Tree-mendous Science and Crafts:** Rotation site where crafts are made and science experiments are explored.

**Canopy Café Snacks:** Indoor or outdoor location where snacks are served.

**Rainforest Recreation:** Indoor or outdoor site (outdoor is preferred) for recreation time.

**Travelers' Missions, Music, and Memory Verses:** Rotation sites where kids can spend additional time learning songs, memory verses, and missions.

**Memory Verse:** Daily Bible verse to learn.

**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 travel groups, we recommend using the material for the Primaries.

# Staff Devotions

## Devotion 1: God Is the Good Creator

*The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made. Psalm 145:9*

For a few moments, imagine yourself strolling through a section of the garden of Eden. This beautiful abundance of flora and fauna was just declared by the Creator to be “very good.” The creation was a manifestation of the goodness of the Creator. In your mind’s eye, how does this original paradise reflect the goodness of God?

Do the flowers fill the air with glorious fragrances? Do the serpents hanging from the trees fill you with delight at their bright colors and silky smooth skin? Do you gently stroke the thick fur of the large bear to your right? Do you gasp in awe at the towering sauropod as he lumbers past?

Contrast this with the view that Carl Sagan held about God and his creation:

“If God is omnipotent and omniscient, why didn’t he start the universe out in the first place so it would come out the way he wants? Why is he constantly repairing and complaining? No, there’s one thing the Bible makes clear: The biblical God is a sloppy manufacturer. He’s not good at design, he’s not good at execution. He’d be out of business if there was any competition” (Carl Sagan, *Contact* [New York: Pocket Books, Simon & Schuster, 1985]).

In Sagan’s Eden, the flowers God created prick you with thorns when you bend over to inhale their fragrance. The serpent slithering past your feet inspires a fearful shriek. The lion creeping up behind the lamb suddenly

takes a bite out of it. And the dinosaurs are nowhere to be seen because they died out millions of years ago.

What important factor did Carl Sagan fail to take into account? *He believed that the world we live in today is the world God originally created. He didn’t understand that we now live in a fallen world—a world that has been corrupted with sin. His view has been colored by the belief that the world is millions of years old and that the fossil record—filled with evidence of death, disease, suffering, and thorns—is a record of the way things have been for the past several million years.*

Carl Sagan isn’t alone in viewing the Creator this way. Media mogul Ted Turner and even Charles Darwin himself are just a few of the many who can’t comprehend the goodness of God because of what they see today.

Although all of creation shouts, “There is a God!” (Romans 1:20), it has been marred with our sin.

Read Psalm 33:5. In what ways do you see the love of God still reflected in his creation?

In what ways do you see the effects of our sin?

Think about how you represent the all-good Creator to those in your care. For example, are the “design features” you share with your children reflective of a good God or a fallen creation?

As you present today’s C, do so in a way that emphasizes the goodness of

God. His original creation was complete and “very good.” It was full of life, peace, and joy. He provided light for us to see by (day 1), air for us to breathe (day 2), vegetation for us to eat (day 3), majestic arrays of stars to study before bed (day 4), abundant fauna for us to enjoy (days 5–6), and a creation for us to care for. He created for his glory.

Read Psalm 107:1, 15, and 119:68, as well as this Puritan prayer about the infinite goodness of the Creator.

King of glory, divine majesty,  
Every perfection adorns thy nature  
and sustains thy throne;  
The heavens and earth are thine,  
The world is thine and its fullness.

Thy power created the universe  
from nothing;

Thy wisdom has managed all its  
multiple concerns,

Presiding over nations, families,  
individuals.

Thy goodness is boundless;

All creatures wait on thee;

Are supplied by thee;

Are satisfied in thee.

How precious are the thoughts of thy  
mercy and grace!

How excellent thy lovingkindness that  
draws men to thee!

—Arthur Bennett, *The Valley of Vision*  
(Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth  
Trust, 2005), 216.