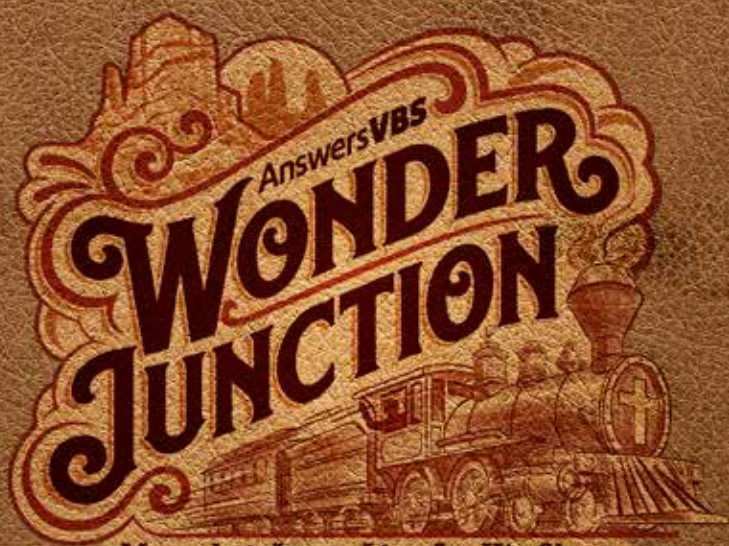


HELPER HANDBOOK



Marvel at Jesus. Live for His Glory

**HELPER
HANDBOOK**

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Helper Handbook

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For more information, write:

Answers in Genesis

PO Box 510, Hebron, KY 41048

Project Coordinator: Stacia McKeever

Writers: Randy & Barb Witt, Amy Quinn

Editors: Linda Moore and Sarah Zornes

Cover Design & Interior Layout: Diane King

Illustrations: Paul Agner

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Printed in China.

CONTENTS

Yee-Haw!	4
Frequently Asked Questions	5
Terms to Know.	5
Staff Devotions	
Devotion 1: Treasure Jesus	7
Devotion 2: Follow Jesus	8
Devotion 3: Worship Jesus	9
Devotion 4: Believe Jesus	10
Devotion 5: Share Jesus	11
Top 20 Tips When Working with Children	13
Age-Level Characteristics	15
Tips for Managing a Group of Kids	21
Child Safety Precautions	24
Leading a Child to Christ	25
Daily Overviews	
Day 1 Overview	27
Day 2 Overview	28
Day 3 Overview	29
Day 4 Overview	30
Day 5 Overview	31
Memory Verses	
ESV Memory Verses	32
KJV Memory Verses	33
Terrific Trivia Tidbits	34
Knee-Slappin' Sillies	38
Two-Minute Tips	40

YEE-HAW!

Howdy, partners!

Look to your left—do you see the cattle over yonder stampeding across the plains? Look to your right—can your eyes make out the sun-covered buttes of the desert? Look behind you—the brand-new transcontinental railroad is rumbling along the tracks! From the Badlands of South Dakota to the high peaks of the Rockies, there is wonder to be discovered everywhere we turn in the Old West!

Join us as we gallop through the wonder-filled West, where our friends at Wonder Junction will teach us about the grandest wonder of all—Jesus Christ. Each day, we'll dig deeper into who this awe-inspiring Jesus is, answering questions such as:

- What amazing things happened surrounding Jesus' birth?
- What was Jesus like as a child and teen?
- What wonders occurred during Jesus' ministry years?
- How were Jesus' death and resurrection like no other?
- What should we be doing as we wait for Jesus' return?

Wonder and amazement await us each day at Wonder Junction, where kids will gather at the **All Aboard Assembly**, a high-energy beginning that includes wacky intros, lively songs, a mission moment, and prayer.

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

High Point Bible Time, where God's Word is taught in creative, hands-on ways.

Carpenter Joe's Science and Crafts, where kids get their hands dirty as

they make crafts and explore God's world through science experiments.

Sweet Sadie's Snacks, where kids munch on some downright tasty home-cooked vittles.

Gallopin' Gabe's Games, the ram-bunctious rec time where kids might just get plumb tuckered out.

Miss Millie's Missions, Music, and Memory Verses, where kids sing songs, learn their memory verses, or go in-depth with the mission moment featuring Children's Hunger Fund.

Finally, everyone is rounded up to head back to the **All Aboard Assembly** for the closing, where there's more singing, contest results, and the highly anticipated daily drama that highlights the shenanigans of two bumbling bandits who are transformed after learning about the *wonderful* life of Jesus Christ.

So dust off your boots, grab your bandana, and get ready for a rootin' tootin' good ol' time at Wonder Junction!

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 *Wonder Junction* may be new to you. For a list of helpful articles on the topics covered in this VBS program, please visit AnswersVBS.com/wonderfaq.

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.

Partners (as in, "Howdy, partners!"): Groups of children (individual classes) named after Old West people, such as Miners, Ranchers, Blacksmiths, and Homesteaders.

Group Guides: Group leaders who guide the partners from place to place during VBS. No teaching is required of this position.

High Point Bible Time: Bible and apologetics lesson time happening at the High Point Chapel.

Truth Teachers: Teachers of the High Point Bible Time.

Carpenter Joe's Science and Crafts: Rotation site where crafts are made and science experiments are explored.

Sweet Sadie's Snacks: Indoor or outdoor location where snacks are served.

Gallopin' Gabe's Games: Indoor or outdoor site (outdoor is preferred) for recreation time.

Miss Millie's Missions, Music, and Memory Verses: Rotation site where kids can spend additional time learning songs and memory verses and hearing about missions.

Gold Mine Memory Time: Time to learn and practice the daily Bible verse.

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 I: TREASURE JESUS

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14

Imagine your young daughter comes to you one day after finishing her chores and making the daily bread. She says, "Dear parents, as you know, our people have been promised a savior for hundreds of years. Even from the beginning, Yahweh has promised that he would send one to save his people from their sins. Today, an angel told me I would bear the Promised One! Mom, Dad—our Savior is coming! And it's true what our prophet Isaiah said over 700 years ago—I have known no man, yet I am with child."

Would you think she was crazy? Would you call to mind all the promises from the Law and the Prophets you've been taught since your childhood, mulling over each one, waiting to see if more than this one spoken by Isaiah would come to pass through your daughter and her child? Would you tick each one off your mental checklist?

- He was the child of a woman (Genesis 3:15). Check.
- Micah said he would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). Check.
- Solomon said kings would worship him (Psalm 72:10–11). Check.
- Hosea said he would be called out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1). Check.

Is it really possible that one child could fulfill all these promises? Was your daughter telling the truth those many months ago? Could this child,

whose name means "the Lord saves," really be the promised one?

Those shepherds who came to visit the baby, wanting to see the Savior that had been born to us, Christ the Lord—did they really know what they were talking about? Is it our Savior? . . . This is our Savior!

As you read the passages revealing the events surrounding the birth of Christ for the umpteenth time, meditate on the events that set his birth apart from all others—the fulfillment of prophecy, the worship of shepherds and kings, the lowly manger cradling the King of kings. As you share the good news of the Creator who stepped into history as a baby, make sure your children know that this was no ordinary baby. This is Immanuel, God with us.

May we pray as the Puritans did:

O God, take me in spirit to the watchful shepherds, and enlarge my mind;

Let me hear good tidings of great joy, and hearing, believe, rejoice, praise, adore,

My conscience bathed in an ocean of repose, my eyes uplifted to a reconciled Father;

Place me with ox, ass, camel, goat, to look with them upon my redeemer's face,

And in him account myself delivered from sin;

Let me with Simeon clasp the newborn child to my heart, embrace