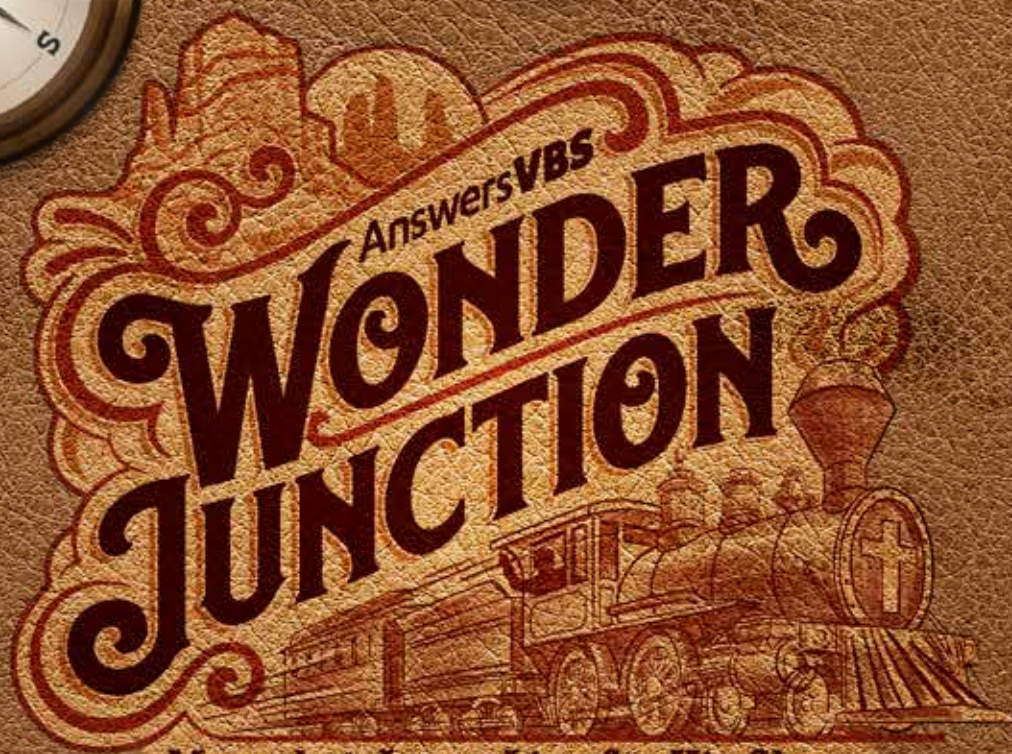


HIGH POINT BIBLE TIME
PRE-PRIMARY



Marvel at Jesus. Live for His Glory

**TEACHER
GUIDE**

COURSE OVERVIEW

Theme Verse: Psalm 113:3

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	
	The Wonder of His Birth	The Wonder of His Childhood	The Wonder of His Ministry Years	The Wonder of His Death & Resurrection	The Wonder of His Return	
Title	Jesus Is Born	Jesus at the Temple	Jesus Does Wondrous Things	Jesus Dies and Lives Again	Jesus Is Coming Back	
Bible Passages	Matthew 1–2; Luke 2	Luke 2:39–52	Selections from the book of Mark	Select verses; Matthew 27–28	Select verses; Matthew 25:14–29	
Lesson Focus	The baby King's birth was a wonder. What amazing happenings surrounded it?	The young King's childhood was a wonder. What was he like as a child and teen?	The grown-up King's ministry years were a wonder. What astonishing things occurred?	The risen King's death and resurrection were a wonder. How were they like no other?	The return of the King of kings will be a wonder. What should we be doing in the meantime?	
Apologetics Content	Is Jesus the most important person ever born?	Is Jesus God or man—or both?	Has anyone else had the power to raise himself from the dead?	Was Jesus completely dead?	How will Jesus return?	
Gold Mine Memory Time	John 1:14	Luke 2:52	John 21:25	John 20:31	Matthew 6:10	
Names of Jesus	Creator, Immanuel	Carpenter	Almighty	Savior	King of Kings	
Animal Pals	Tiny the Cougar Kitten	Junior the Wolf Pup	Mighty the Bison	Champ the Grizzly Bear	Mission the Horse	
Exploration Stations	Discovery Center	Creation Rubbings	Family Fun	Power over Sickness/Sight	Lacing Card Crosses	Double It!
	Wet Touch Table	Wash the Babies	Family Trip	Power over Nature	Easter Eggs	Time Well Spent
	Dry Touch Table	Christmas Fun	Build-It-Yourself Woodworking	Power over Death	Snakes in the Sand	Coming in the Clouds
	Dramatic Play	Old West Dress-Up	Old West Dress-Up	Old West Dress-Up	Old West Dress-Up	Old West Dress-Up
	Coloring Corner	John 1:14	Luke 2:52	John 21:25	John 20:31	Matthew 6:10
Carpenter Joe's Science	Star of Wonder Cone in a Cornfield	Lasso Lesson Layers upon Layers	Weather the Storm Power Play	Riding the Rails Pushy Plates	Spread the Word Marvelous Magnetism	
Carpenter Joe's Crafts	Christmas Crèche Ticket to Ride Ornament	Covered Wagon Conversations Mini Horseshoes Game	Praise Journal Names of Jesus Print	Spikes Cross Magnet Sunset Silhouette	Money Pouch Wonder Junction Bank	
Gallopin' Gabe's Games	Happy Birthday, Jesus! Christmas Parachute Games Nativity Hunt	Baby, Boy, Man Where, Oh Where Did You Go? Jesus Is God!	Lazarus Lives! Name Game Run to the Store	Sleeping Bear Sad News, Glad News Run, Die, and Rise Again	Sheriff Says Western Animal Antics East to West	
Sweet Sadie's Snacks	Gold Nuggets Biscuit Baby	Carpenter Scraps Wolf Puppy Chow	Mini Flapjacks Loaves & Fish	Light & Dark Breadstick Rattler	Pizza Wheels Apple Wheels	
Cool Contests	Guess the Gold Coins	Spirit of the West Day	Old West Dress-Up Day	Names of Jesus Challenge	Mission Money Mania	



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Pre-Primary Teacher Guide

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HANDY HELPS

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.

Gallop in' Gabe's Games, the rambunctious 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!

YOUR ROLE

Your role as the Truth Teacher 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.

Truth Teacher

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 *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.

TOP 20 PRE-PRIMARY TEACHING TIPS

1. Pray and study God's Word. That is your most important preparation. God has entrusted you with the awesome privilege of opening his Word and sharing it daily with the children, so be well prepared. Acts 6:4—"We will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."
2. Read through all your lesson plans well in advance and become familiar with the resources at . 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 group guides to help man the Exploration Stations each day. Post the directions and Teaching Tie-Ins at each station every 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 suitcase 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 in Old West period clothes such as a vest and cowboy hat or a prairie costume. You can also wear the T-shirt, hat, and vest available from the Resource Catalog. 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, like a small stuffed animal in each pocket of a vest. Teach in a way that makes you feel comfortable.
11. Think safety. Read the Child Safety Precautions file at 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. 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 even 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, give thanks in all circumstances" (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—Teach the kids that when a teacher says something, they should reply with something else. Practice the following ideas so kids know your expectations for responding:

- **Teacher:** Gotta go
Kids: Buffalo
- **Teacher:** Better shake
Kids: Rattlesnake
- **Teacher:** Chugga, chugga, chugga, chugga
Kids: Choo choo
- **Teacher:** Crisscross (as they sit and cross legs)
Kids: Big trail boss
- **Teacher:** Jesus loves me
Kids: This I know
Teacher: For the Bible
Kids: Tells me so

Train's a Comin'—Make the sound of an oncoming train. Start softly and slowly with the sound (chugga-chugga-choo-choo) while making circles with your arms as wheels. Gradually get louder and faster as the train approaches, then reverse the motions and sounds to finish with everyone sitting quietly.

Horse Gallop—Check online for how to use finger snaps and claps to make it sound like a horse galloping. Begin slowly, then speed up.

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 count down from five to one. By the count of one, kids should be completely quiet.

Soft Talk—Start talking about something important very softly or in a whisper. Kids will often quiet down 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 . . .—For lining up, call out fun categories, such as the following:

- "If you are wearing green like a cactus, line up. Now, if you're wearing brown like a grizzly bear, 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 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, such as 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 is 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 is 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, touching, 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 becoming confident in physical activities like jumping, hopping on one foot, and walking backward. 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 responsibilities.

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 more wiggly 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.

HIGH POINT BIBLE TIME

As we open God's Word in our lesson time, we will look at Jesus' life through a lens of awe and wonder. It will be the high point of our day.

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 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.

Exploration Station Time

There are five stations to choose from: Discovery Center, Wet Touch Table, Dry Touch Table, Dramatic Play, and Coloring Corner. See the Exploration Stations supply list on the back cover for supplies needed each day. 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. Post the signs with each station's name. Leave copies of the directions and Teaching Tie-Ins at each station for group guides to reinforce.

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. The children don't need to do every station each day, although the coloring page should be sent home daily—colored or uncolored.

For the Touch Tables, use small wading pools or large, clear, under-the-bed storage containers partially filled

with water or other materials. Place them on a plastic tarp or tablecloth to catch the spills.

Check the Decorating Decisions section for more specifics on setting up the Dramatic Play area to look like an Old West clapboard house interior and the Coloring Corner to look like a train.

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 and apologetics information.

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 suitcase with the lid flipped up. Have the puppet appear from behind the lid.

Check the Decorating Decisions section for more specifics on decorating.

MEMORY VERSE SONGS

We have partnered with Seeds Kids 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 (either

video or audio), use them during the memory verse time in each lesson. The Music Leader Download comes with the purchase of a Super Starter Kit and can also be purchased separately. Student CDs in packs of 10 are available if you would like each student to have a copy of the songs (1220610 or 1220620).

SPECIAL NEEDS

The *Special Needs Teacher Supplement* (1220530) 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	All Aboard Assembly—Opening (Everyone together)		
9:20–10:00	High Point Bible Time	Carpenter Joe’s Science and Crafts	Gallopin’ Gabe’s Games and Sweet Sadie’s Snacks
10:05–10:45	Gallopin’ Gabe’s Games and Sweet Sadie’s Snacks	High Point Bible Time	Carpenter Joe’s Science and Crafts
10:50–11:30	Carpenter Joe’s Science and Crafts	Gallopin’ Gabe’s Games and Sweet Sadie’s Snacks	High Point Bible Time
11:35–Noon	All Aboard Assembly—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 Download (you’ll need to upload them to an MP3 player) and on a separate *Simple Songs for Kids* CD (1221410) 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 group guides to pass out at the end of the day. Then have the guides 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 (1220730)
- Pre-Primary KJV (1221340)

All Aboard 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 group guides can go over them during snack time. These are available in packs of 10.

- Pre-Primary/Toddler ESV (1220900)
- Pre-Primary/Toddler KJV (1221380)

Wonder Junction Map and Sticker Sets: Use these sticker sets as a fun review of each day.

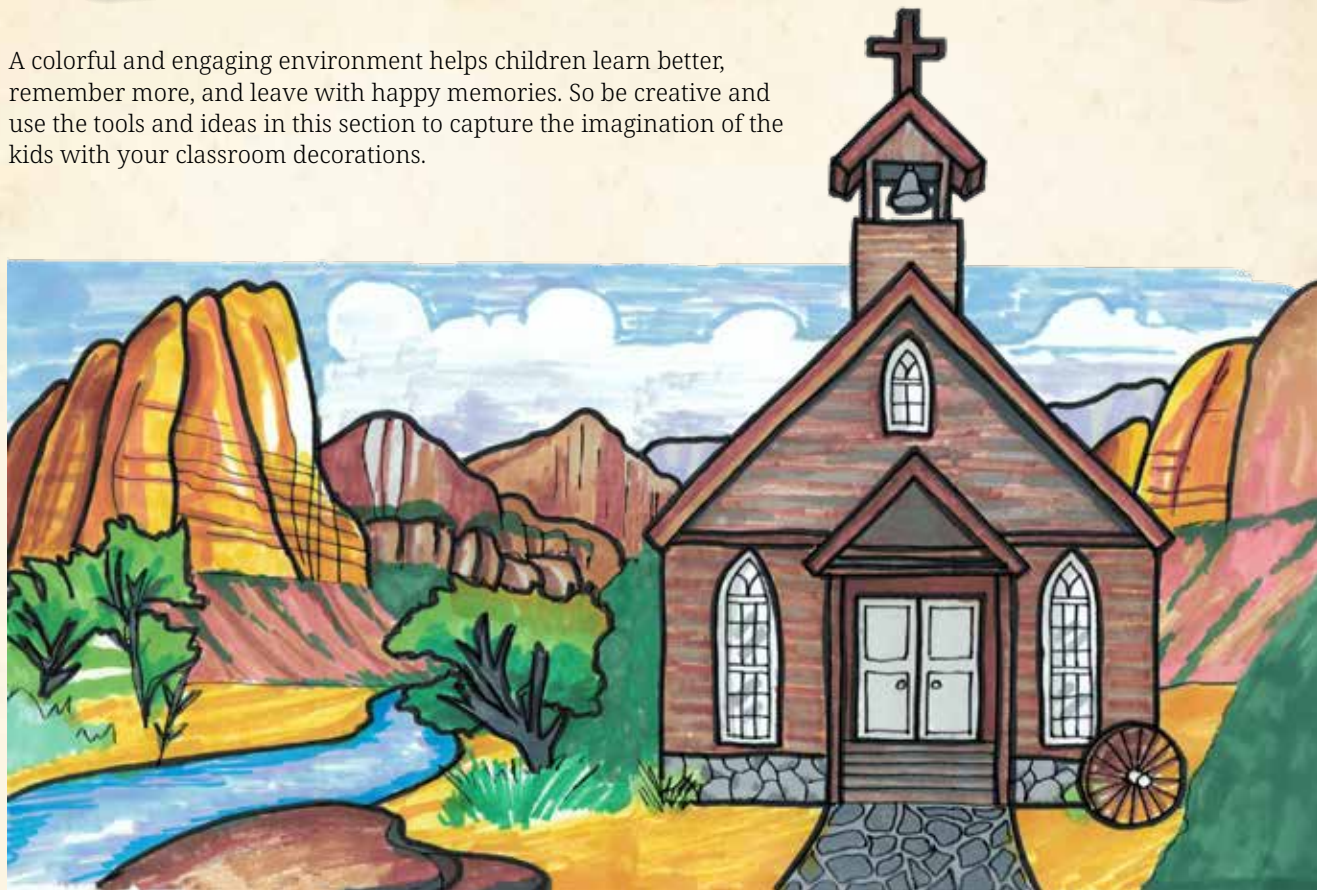
- 1220780, pack of 10

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 (1220760)—Day 4 or 5
- Names of Jesus (1220770)—Day 5

DECORATING DECISIONS

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



KEY DECORATING ELEMENTS

High Point Chapel

To serve as a focal point for the teaching, the *Wonder Junction* classroom backdrop features an Old West country chapel in a southwestern desert setting. You can create your own artwork or see the [Resource Download](#) for clip art images of the chapel scene. Use an overhead projector to enlarge and transfer the images onto corrugated cardboard sheets, foam insulation board, or roll paper, then prop them up or mount them on a wall. You can feature the entire scene or keep it simple with just the chapel against a background of sky blue roll paper or plastic tablecloths.

HOW TO ENLARGE AND TRANSFER CLIP ART

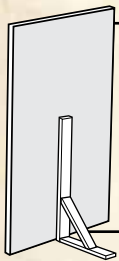
1. Photocopy the clip art onto transparencies.
2. Place roll paper or a rigid material against a wall.
3. Using an overhead projector to enlarge the clip art, shine the image onto the paper or rigid material, adjusting it as necessary for the size desired.
4. Trace the image outlines onto the paper or rigid material.
5. Paint the image, if necessary, and cut out.

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



Classroom Scene Setter

As a quick and easy alternative to making your own classroom backdrop, a scene setter is available for purchase (1221260) from the Resource Catalog. Simply mount the panels onto a rigid material using double-sided carpet tape, clear packing tape, or staples, then prop them up with wooden supports (jacks). Or you can attach them directly to a wall with mounting putty, Mavalus tape, or double-sided tape on top of painter's tape.



Prop up your set, and any freestanding decorations, with wooden jacks made from 2 x 4, 2 x 3, or 2 x 2 boards, according to the size of your decorations. If necessary, jacks can be weighted down with bags of sand or road salt.

Resource Posters

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

Other Props, Tips & Miscellaneous Ideas

- Place a rug, or raised platform, in front of your backdrop to create a stage effect.
- Faux wood crates made from boxes, cardboard wagon wheels, coils of hemp rope, metal lanterns, and stuffed burlap sacks can be set around in groupings to fill empty spaces.
- Painted cardboard clouds, rocks, and tufts of grass can add a nice touch.
- Kids love animals, so be sure to include some in your decorating. See the [Resource Download](#) for clip art images or use a variety of stuffed animals.
- Add a thin (½-inch) black border to your painted props. This helps them stand out better and makes the colors appear more vibrant.
- Because corrugated cardboard tends to curl when only one side is painted, first apply a quick single coat of paint to the back.
- Don't forget to dress the part with Old West attire.

Puppet Stage

Because puppets are used daily in the Primary, Pre-Primary, and Toddler classrooms, you will need a puppet stage. Use the chapel for this purpose by cutting a small opening in one of the windows or doors or have the puppet appear from behind an outcropping of rocks. You can also make a freestanding puppet stage out of a large cardboard box or a trifold display board. Cut out a rectangular hole in the box or display board, cover the hole with fabric, and then paint or decorate the outside.

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 set up the dramatic play area and coloring corner.

Old West Dress-Up

Your Old West dress-up area should resemble the inside of a house in the Old West. First, designate a corner of your room, then cover the walls with brown roll paper, wood grain plastic tablecloths, or a wood wall scene setter. On one wall, add a fireplace or a potbellied stove made from cardboard boxes painted black. On the other wall, add a window or two. Windows can be made by hanging squares of blue roll paper or poster board,

framing them with curtains or white or brown scalloped bulletin board trim (available at teacher supply stores or online) and adding grids made from strips of white poster board. In the center of your house, add a child's table and chairs with place settings, a centerpiece, and play food. Finish the room with various props such as an old-fashioned broom, a faux rug, stuffed burlap sacks, a wooden cradle, baskets, and a good supply of dress-up clothes.

Train Coloring Corner

In another corner of your room, fashion a train from large boxes, then paint or wrap the engine and railcars in a variety of fun colors. Add a set of tracks at each end with colored masking tape. Position the train so that it encloses an area with table and chairs for the children to spend time coloring and learning their memory verses.




WONDER JUNCTION LINGO

OLD WEST

Yea or neigh	Yes or no	Get a wiggle on	Hurry up
Necessary	Outhouse	Apple-pie order	In top shape
Poppycock or skittles!	Nonsense	Higgledy-piggledy	In confusion
Togs	Clothing	Granger	Farmer
Right as rain	Fine	Hither and yon	Here and there
Tuckered out	Tired	Lickety-split	Fast
Shindig or hoedown	Party or celebration	Heap	A whole lot
Hobble your lip	Be quiet	On the fence	Undecided
Yarn	A story	Do-si-do on over	Come on over
Grand	Beautiful, excellent	Poppet	Term of endearment
Fetch	Bring	Stumped	Confused
Pony up or fork it over	Pay it out	Dude	An Easterner, someone in fancy clothes rather than work clothes
Trounce	Beat	Calaboose	Jail
Small fry	Children		
Hightail it	Leave quickly		

FOOD

Cackleberries	Eggs	Goober peas	Peanuts
Skunk eggs	Onions	Wet your whistle	Drink something
Mysteries	Sausages	Snatch	A snack
Sinkers	Biscuits	Grub or chuck	Food
Cookie	Camp cook	Soft tack	Bread
Slapjacks	Pancakes	Brown gargle	Coffee



DAY 1

THE WONDER OF HIS BIRTH

BIBLE PASSAGES

Jesus Is Born
Matthew 1–2; Luke 2

LESSON FOCUS

The baby King's birth was a wonder. What amazing happenings surrounded it?

APOLOGETICS CONTENT

Is Jesus the most important person ever born?

MEMORY VERSE

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. John 1:14

NAMES OF JESUS

Creator, Immanuel

ANIMAL PAL

Tiny the Cougar Kitten

Today's Exploration Stations

- Discovery Center: Creation Rubbings
- Wet Touch Table: Wash the Babies
- Dry Touch Table: Christmas Fun
- Dramatic Play: Old West Dress-Up
- Coloring Corner: John 1:14

Today's Lesson at a Glance

INTRODUCE IT!

- Wonder Junction Train Depot and Chapel

TEACH IT!

- Part 1: Wonder of Jesus' Birth
- Part 2: Puppet Pal—Jesus Is a Treasure
- Part 3: Animal Pal Review

APPLY IT!

- Part 1: Gold Mine Memory Time
- Part 2: Go and Do
- Song 1: "Go Tell It on the Mountain"
- Song 2: "Twinkle, Twinkle, Jesus' Star"

Preparing for the Lesson

- Read Matthew 1–2 and Luke 2 several times.
- Read this lesson several times and prepare the materials.
- For more information on Jesus' birth, visit AnswersVBS.com/wonderfaq.
- Pray.



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 new-born child to my heart, embrace him with undying faith, exulting that he is mine and I am his.
In him thou hast given me so much that heaven can give no more.

—Arthur Bennett, *The Valley of Vision*
(The Banner of Truth Trust, 2005), 16.

EXPLORATION STATIONS

Discovery Center: Creation Rubbings

MATERIALS

- Variety of creation-oriented items such as leaves, thin bark, flattened flowers and clovers, craft feathers, fun foam sun and stars, fabric with a reptile texture, etc.
- Crayons
- White paper; at least 1 piece per child
- Optional: parchment paper and heavy books

PREP

Remove wrappers from the crayons. Gather the creation supplies. These can be items like fun foam creation shapes, or they can be real items. To use real items, flatten them ahead of time between two pieces of parchment paper placed beneath a heavy book for a few days.

DIRECTIONS

Students put the items under the paper. Show them how to rub their crayons sideways over the paper to get the creation impressions. Write their names on their papers when they're done.

TEACHING TIE-IN

The Bible tells us Jesus is the Creator! He made leaves, and bark, and flowers, and animals, and the sun, moon, stars, and people! Jesus and his creation are a wonder!

Wet Touch Table: Wash the Babies

MATERIALS

- Touch table with tarp underneath
- Water
- Waterproof dolls and baby bath supplies such as plastic cups, play soap or baby bath, bath toys, washcloths and towels

PREP

Partially fill the touch table with water. Add the items into the touch table.

DIRECTIONS

Students enjoy giving the babies a bath.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Do you think Jesus ever needed a bath when he was a baby? [Pause for responses](#). Jesus got dirty just like we do, because he was a person like us. We all were babies at one time, and so was Jesus! But there's one big difference. He was the most special baby ever born because he is also God!

Dry Touch Table: Christmas Fun

MATERIALS

- Touch table with tarp underneath

- Generic filler (crinkle shred or Easter grass—red and green would be fun today)
- Plastic, safe Christmas items such as plastic nativity pieces, nonbreakable ornaments, Christmas cookie cutters, etc.

PREP

Put the filler in the table along with the Christmas items.

DIRECTIONS

Students play with the Christmas items.

TEACHING TIE-IN

When do we use these items? [Christmas](#). Right, at Christmas! But what does Christmas have to do with Jesus? [Pause for responses](#). We celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas time. People all over the world celebrate the birth of Jesus because it's a wonder that God came down to earth in the form of a person, Jesus! God actually had skin and elbows and fingerprints!

Dramatic Play: Old West Dress-Up

MATERIALS

This station can be as simple or elaborate as you like. Leave it set up all week. Add in new items each day. Choose from the following or add in your own ideas. Make sure all items are safe for young children.

- Clapboard house interior backdrop as listed in [Decorating Decisions](#)
- Old West house items (e.g., small wooden table and chairs, barrels, baskets, lanterns, play food [eggs, cheese, bread, etc.], stick horses, tin plates, bowls, cooking utensils, broom, blankets, play tools, family Bible—note: it could get damaged)
- Old West dress-up items (e.g., bandanas, boots, cowboy hats, flannel shirts, pioneer bonnets, dresses, aprons, vests [see toddler crafts for vest instructions])
- Day 1 items: baby cradle, baby dolls, and old-fashioned baby supplies

PREP

Set up the area to look like the inside of an Old Western house. Add some Old West house items, dress-up items, and Day 1 items.

Vests can be made from bolts of felt (from the fabric store) or, for a more inexpensive version, from large brown grocery sacks. Ask your local grocery store to donate the sacks. Cut a neck hole in the "bottom" of the sack and armholes on the sides. Cut down the middle front from the neck hole to the top of the sack. Make sure to not cut the back of the sack.

DIRECTIONS

Dress up and pretend to be living in the Old West. Have some dolls to play with today to coordinate with the teaching.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Jesus came to earth as a baby. Do any of you have little baby brothers or sisters? *Pause for responses.* What are things you need to do to take care of them? *Pause for responses.* Jesus had to be fed and rocked and cared for, too, even though he was God! What a wonder!

Coloring Corner: John 1:14

MATERIALS

- Day 1 Memory Verse Coloring Sheet
- Decorating supplies to make a train as listed in Decorating Decisions
- Markers or crayons in a small galvanized bucket
- Optional supplies: glue sticks, stickers, and items to glue onto the coloring sheet (e.g., cotton balls, pom-poms, feathers, sand paper, and tissue paper)

PREP

Set up the Old West train decorations. Print the **MEMORY VERSE COLORING SHEET**, 1 per child. Gather the decorating supplies and set them out to use all week.

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

- Campfire Reading**—Make a fake campfire with seating around it. Place a basket or pail nearby with a variety of children's books, including children's picture Bibles and accurate books about creation, Jesus, and the Old West.
- Old West Animals**—Borrow or buy stuffed or plastic animals and free play with them. See a possible list on the Old West A to Z page in the Director Guide.
- Flannel Board Fun**—Provide a flannel board with people and items from each day's Bible lesson, along with animals and Old West items.

- Panning for Gold**—Place a wading pool with a tarp underneath on the floor. Add play sand, gold coins, and other trinkets. Have kids "pan for gold" using sand sifter/sieve beach toys.
- Weigh the Gold**—Gather various gold and silver items, such as play coins, painted rocks, jewelry, etc., along with a pan balance (available online or at teacher stores or search online for "how to make a balance scale"). Kids have fun weighing items and trying to get them to balance.
- Texture Trays**—Provide various textures for kids to trace words or pictures with their fingers. Use key words of Bible concepts they're learning about. Possible textures include shaving cream or hair gel in zippered baggies (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 feature a station with it all week, adding thematic supplies (e.g., cookie cutters and plastic toys) that have to do with the day's teaching, such as nature items on Day 1 (Jesus is Creator); construction items on Day 2 (Jesus is a carpenter); boats, fish, and storm/weather items on Day 3 (Jesus is Almighty); hearts and crosses on Day 4 (Jesus is Savior); and crowns on Day 5 (Jesus is King of kings).

PLAY DOUGH RECIPE

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 c. flour | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 t. oil |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ½ c. salt | <input type="checkbox"/> Food coloring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 c. warm water | <input type="checkbox"/> Optional: glitter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 t. cream of tartar | |

Mix the first five ingredients in a saucepan. After blended, mix in food coloring. Stir over low to medium heat until the dough is formed and is no longer sticky. Remove from the pan and knead until smooth, adding the glitter if using it. After it has cooled, store in an air-tight container.

- Wonder Junction Poster
- Bible
- Old West costumes for teachers
- Mounting putty or tape for posters
- Optional: train whistle
- Baby doll



- ★ A shortened, one-person script is available to download.
- ★ Think of fun names for yourselves: Cactus Kate, Cowboy Joe, Prospector Pete, Rattlesnake Rachel, or Doc Henry.
- ★ 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 daily which parts of the lesson each of you will be responsible for.
- ★ The mounting putty is listed just once in the supply list but will be used whenever you hang up posters. Hang them up as you talk, or just hold them up while teaching and hang them up after class.

- Wonder-Filled Birth Poster
- 4 sheets of copy paper and tape
- Props: white robe (or something white), shepherd staff, stuffed toy sheep, wise man gift, large star

INTRODUCE IT!

Wonder Junction Train Depot and Chapel (5 minutes)

At the start of each day's lesson, you will introduce the kids to different places in Wonder Junction. Today, it's the train depot and chapel.

Prep: Prepare your costumes. Bookmark all the Scripture verses used in today's lesson. Hide the baby doll so it is still partially visible. Remember to hide it again for the next group coming in.

Teacher 1: Well howdy, y'all! It sure is good to meet ya. I'm ___, and this here is ___. This week, we're going to pretend we're living in the Old West. When you think Old West, you've gotta think cowboys, and horses, and gold mines, and old towns like this. Show the **WONDER JUNCTION POSTER**.

Teacher 2: And trains! Trains were a new invention back then. Point out where the train depot is on the poster. Come on! Let's take a ride on the train and head to the town of Wonder Junction! Have everyone get up and pretend to do so. Have them grab their luggage, get on board as you say, "All aboard!" and pretend to chug around the room. Blow the train whistle if you have one. Come to a screeching halt at Wonder Junction, ending in front of the chapel, where they sit down.

Teacher 1: Now here we are in Wonder Junction. Isn't it awesome? We'll be meeting right here each day at High Point Chapel, a mighty important building in our town. Point to the church on the **WONDER JUNCTION POSTER**.

Teacher 2: You know, it's a wonder to see the West with all its gold and beautiful land, don't you think? But you know what? We're going to be talking about something even more wonderful—the wonder of Jesus!

Teacher 1: Have y'all ever heard of Jesus before? Pause for nods. Let's first talk about the wonder of Jesus' birth. Being born has to do with babies. Look around the room. Can you find a baby doll? Have them point to it. Get the doll and hold it up.

Teacher 2: Now listen to this wonderful thought. Jesus, who is God, became a baby! Jesus creates babies because he's the Creator of all people! But then Jesus became a baby himself, the most special baby ever! There's never been such an important person born, and there never will be again.

Teacher 1: You mean Jesus, who is God and who lived in heaven, became a little baby who cries and spits up and needs to be fed and changed and cared for?

Teacher 2: Yes, siree! It's a wonder to think on, for sure. Let's talk about it more as we hear how he came to earth as a baby.

TEACH IT!

Part 1: Wonder of Jesus' Birth (10 minutes)

Prep: Think through your costumes/props ahead of time and have them ready to have the kids put on or hold at the right time. Cover each section of the **WONDER-FILLED BIRTH POSTER** with a sheet of copy paper.

Wonder 1: Angel

Teacher 1: The Bible tells us right here in the beginning (point to your open Bible at the book of Genesis) that God created the heavens and the earth. Jesus, who is God and God's Son, created everything with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit! Jesus made the birds (let's be a bird!), and the fish (let's be a fish!), and the horses (let's slap our legs to gallop like a horse), and people (let's say hi to each other!). But if we skip over to here (point to your open Bible at the book of Luke), we find out that at one point in time, Jesus the Creator came down from heaven to live in his creation. That is a wonder!

Teacher 2: Let's begin at the place when it's almost time for Jesus to be born. We'll need someone to help us out. Would anyone like to come up and be an angel? Choose someone and have them stand up front until the next direction.

Teacher 1: Angels came from heaven when God sent them to earth with special messages. Jesus' birth account starts with a visit from an angel. That doesn't happen every day, does it? We can see Jesus' birth is going to be different. Let's put a white robe (or something white) on the angel. Do so.

Teacher 2: The Bible tells us the angel's name was Gabriel. Address the angel. Angel, what's your name? Have the angel say "Gabriel." Everyone say, "Hi, Gabriel!" Do so.

Teacher 1: Read Luke 1:28. Angel, can you greet Mary? Do so.

Teacher 2: Well, this made Mary afraid. Can you imagine all of a sudden if an angel from heaven was in a room with you? Make a face to show how you might feel. Do so.

Teacher 1: The angel told Mary not to be afraid because God had chosen her to be Jesus' mother. Now, do angels normally come to our houses and announce that a family will have a baby? No! This doesn't normally happen. But it did for Jesus' birth, and it was a wonder! Uncover the **WONDER-FILLED BIRTH POSTER: ANGEL**.

Teacher 2: Everything happened just as the angel said.

Teacher 1: She married a man named Joseph, and they traveled to a city called Bethlehem because the government wanted to count all the people.

Teacher 2: While they were there, it was time to have baby Jesus. Because their family's home was filled with people, they were given an area in the lower level of the home that sometimes had animals in it. Let's make donkey and cow sounds. Do so.

Teacher 1: Mary had the baby and laid him in an animal's feeding stand, called a manger.

Teacher 2: This sure wasn't the nicest place for the King of the world to be born, was it? He could have been born in a palace or had fireworks or a big parade. But instead, he came quietly and was placed in a manger. Now think about how amazing it is that God himself came as a baby. God had fingernails! God had elbows! God had toes! What a wonder!

Wonder 2: Shepherd

Teacher 1: Let's have our angel sit down and have a shepherd come up now to hear the next thing that happened. Choose someone to be a shepherd. Give her the staff.

Teacher 2: Do you know what a shepherd does? Take responses. Shepherds take care of sheep. Give her the toy sheep. Taking care of sheep is hard work. The shepherd has to make sure there's plenty of grass and water for the sheep. Can you pretend to feed your sheep, Miss/Mr. Shepherd(ess)? Do so.

Teacher 1: And the shepherd has to make sure the sheep don't wander off or get eaten by wild animals. Shepherds can have some pretty exciting times! But I know for sure what I'm about to tell you is the most exciting thing that's ever happened to any shepherd. Let's make an excited face. Do so.

Teacher 2: The Bible tells us on the night Jesus was born, the shepherds, who were nearby, were watching over their sheep. Can you pretend you're watching over your sheep, Miss Shepherdess? Do so. Suddenly, they saw something that scared them. Look scared, Miss Shepherdess! Do so.

Teacher 1: What do you think it was? Take responses. Yes, it was an angel! The angel said not to be afraid because a Savior, Jesus, was born. Let's jump up and down and shout, "Hooray!" Do so.

Teacher 2: The angel told them they would go and find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

Teacher 1: Then guess what happened next? Uncover the **WONDER-FILLED BIRTH POSTER: SHEPHERDS**. A whole bunch of angels filled the sky, celebrating Jesus' birth! What a wonder! Everyone, pretend to look up and ooh and aah at a sky full of angels. Do so.

Teacher 2: The shepherds hurried to Bethlehem to see the baby. Miss Shepherdess, can you run around the room as you pretend to hurry to Bethlehem? Do so or have everyone do so. When they got there, it was just as the angel said it would be. They found baby Jesus in the manger, and they worshipped him.



Teacher 1: Have any of you visited a newborn baby? *Pause for responses.* Was the baby in a hospital? *Pause for responses.* There certainly weren't angels and the baby wasn't in a manger, right? Does this sound like a normal birth? *Pause for responses.* No! Only Jesus' birth! What a wonder!

Wonder 3: Wise Men and a Special Star

Teacher 2: Our shepherd can sit down now, and we need a wise man to come up. *Choose someone and hand him a gift.*

Teacher 1: Jesus continued to have amazing things happen. When he was a little older, wise men with special gifts came to visit. Let's say hi to our wise man. *Do so.*

Teacher 2: The wise men came because they had been watching for a special star to appear. When they saw it, they followed it to find Jesus. Can you follow me around, Mr. Wise Man? *Hold up the star and walk around leading just the Wise Man (or everyone).* If you have time, you may want to weave around a bit. Then uncover the **WONDER-FILLED BIRTH POSTER: WISE MEN WITH GIFTS/SPECIAL STAR.**

Teacher 1: Wow! Jesus even had his own special star in the sky. Do you think there's ever been a special star for anyone else's birth? *Pause.* No! Only Jesus!

Teacher 2: The star led the wise men along until it stood over the house where Jesus was. When they saw the star, they were so, so happy! And they came into the house and saw Jesus and his mother, Mary. They worshipped Jesus and gave him expensive treasures—gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Teacher 1: That would be like rich, important people showing up at your house after you were born and giving you expensive gifts. How would you like that? *Pause for responses.*

Teacher 2: Have you noticed how Jesus' birth was different from the very beginning? His birth was not like any other person's birth ever. He had angels. He had shepherds. Later, he had wise men bringing gifts. He even had his own special star!

Teacher 1: Jesus' birth was so special because God himself came to earth and was born. His birth is what we celebrate every Christmas Day! No one else has a day like this that people all over the world celebrate. Only Jesus! What a wonder! Our wise man can sit down as we talk about one more wonder of Jesus' birth.

Wonder 4: Jesus Came!

Teacher 2: Maybe the most amazing wonder of all is Jesus wanting to come. Remember, he was in heaven in a beautiful, perfect place, and he left that for our world.

Teacher 1: *Uncover the WONDER-FILLED BIRTH POSTER: MANSION.* That might be like us leaving a nice home—like a mansion—to go to a dirty, smelly place. And not only that, but he is a king. Imagine a king with all his riches in a beautiful castle. The king gives all that up to become a poor person in a place where nobody knows he's the king.

Teacher 2: Jesus did that because he loves you and knows you need him. We'll hear more about that this week. *Move behind the puppet set while Teacher 1 finishes this section.*

Teacher 1: But let's end by cheering for Jesus and his amazing birth! *Do so.* There has never been a more important person born, and there never will be again. God himself came and is with us now. Jesus is called Immanuel, which means "God is with us!" If you ever feel scared or alone, remember—Jesus is always with his children who trust in him. Even though you can't see him, he's right here. Let's talk to our puppet pal about Jesus.

This can be a good time to sing one of the songs found at the end of today's lesson.

Part 2: Puppet Pal—Jesus Is a Treasure (5 minutes or less)

Prep: Tape one PUPPET SCRIPT inside the puppet stage and attach the other to a clipboard for reference. Dress the puppet in either a VBS T-shirt (see Teaching Tip in the sidebar) or in an Old West costume such as a mini vest and a little bandana. Tape the mini shovel to the puppet's hand.

★ Sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus.

★ Gospel Opportunity

- Prophecy Poster
- 2 copies of Day 1 Puppet Script
- Boy or girl puppet and puppet stage
- Clipboard
- Mini shovel and tape
- Optional: Old West costume for the puppet

★ Download from Answers VBS.

◆ Find in your teacher kit.

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 group guide or other volunteer) ahead of time to work the puppet each day. If you're alone, have the puppet come up from behind a suitcase with the lid flipped up or just stand and work the puppet. (It's fine if your lips move. No need to be a ventriloquist.)

You can use either a boy or a girl puppet named Sam (short for Samuel or Samantha). 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 in through the chapel window or from behind an outcropping of rocks. (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 Samuel (Samantha). He (she) likes to be called Sam for short. Let's all call for him (her) now. Do so.

Puppet: Come up acting dejected with a mini shovel taped to your hand.

Teacher: Hi there, Sam. Is something wrong? You seem a bit upset.

Puppet: Well, my friend was supposed to go digging for gold treasure with me today at the Wonder Junction Gold Mine, but now he's too busy.

Teacher: Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

Puppet: Yeah. He promised he'd come.

Teacher: Well, when people make promises, hopefully they keep them. But once in a while, they don't.

Puppet: That's terrible!

Teacher: Yes. But I have good news for you.

Puppet: What? Did you find some gold treasure?

Teacher: No, but in a way, I found a treasure much better than gold. I found the one person who always, always, always keeps his promises. He's a treasure.

Puppet: Goody! Who is he?

Teacher: Jesus. Jesus never fails. People in this world may let you down, but Jesus never will. He always keeps his promises.

Puppet: How do you know that?

Teacher: Well, you know how we talked about his birth today? All those things that happened when Jesus was born had been promised in the Bible long before they happened. Point to each one on the **PROPHECY POSTER** as you mention it. Jesus was born in a town called Bethlehem, just as the Bible promised. His mother laid him in a manger and named him Jesus, just as promised. Later, wise men followed a special star and came with gifts, just as the Bible promised. All these promises happened just as the Bible said they would.

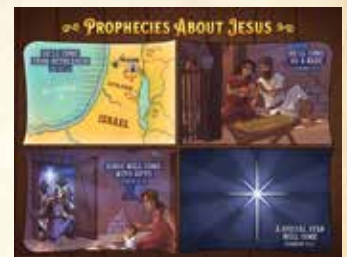
Puppet: Jesus even left the beauty of heaven to come to earth. He's a promise keeper. That's a much better treasure than finding gold.

Teacher: Jesus is a treasure because he loves us, and he's with us—Immanuel.

Puppet: Jesus really is a wonder, isn't he?

★ The puppet can be dressed in a small VBS T-shirt or a mini cowboy hat and little bandana. To make a small T-shirt, print, cut out, and laminate a color copy of the VBS 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: He's the treasure of all treasures—better than ___ mention some things and have them come up with several, too, like: Jesus is a better treasure than living in a castle, having all the toys in the world, etc. Always treasure Jesus, Sam.

Puppet: I will! Well, I think I'm going to try to dig up some gold treasure on my own now, but I'll remember—Jesus is our true treasure!

Teacher: Okay! Bye for now, Sam! See you tomorrow.

- Day 1 Animal Pal Poster
- Wonder Junction maps and Tiny stickers (1220780), 1 per person

★ If you don't have time to play the review game, skip to the Nugget of Truth question, ending with this important thought. Try to include it even if you must cut something else.



Part 3: Animal Pal Review (5 minutes or less)

Take a couple minutes to summarize the lesson today using the DAY 1 ANIMAL PAL POSTER, using any or all of the questions below. Pass out the Wonder Junction maps and Tiny stickers (available to purchase from AnswersVBS.com), one set per person. This week, children will add one animal pal each day as they learn about them. If you have a larger group, you don't need to put names on them—this saves time passing them out each day.

Let's take a look at our animal pal poster to remember what we talked about today. What kind of animal is our animal pal? **Cougar kitten.** Cougars are a kind of wild cat. If you lived out West in the olden days, you may have run into one! Now—what's our cougar's name? **Tiny.** What does a tiny baby cougar have to do with Jesus? Both of them were tiny and newborn. Tiny the Cougar reminds us of Jesus coming as a tiny baby. What *wonderful* things happened when Jesus was born? Answers will vary.

Continue reviewing with the following questions. Be sure to give the correct answer for any "no" questions. Have the kids meow like a cougar kitten if the answer is yes and pretend to sleep if it is no.

1. Yes or no: Jesus didn't start as a baby. He has always been alive. Yes—meow like a cougar kitten.
2. Yes or no: Jesus is Creator of the world. Yes—meow.
3. Yes or no: Jesus is not God. No—pretend to sleep like a cougar kitten. Jesus is God the Son.
4. Yes or no: Jesus' birth was just like everyone else's birth. No—pretend to sleep. He's the most important person to ever be born and his birth was the most special birth ever.
5. Yes or no: Jesus had angels, shepherds, wise men, and a special star involved with his birth. Yes—meow.
6. Yes or no: People all over the world celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas. Yes—meow.

Nugget of Truth

Ready for an important question? Yes or no: Should we always be in wonder when we think of Jesus? **Yes!** Jesus is amazing! He knows exactly how many hairs are on your head . . . right now! He knows what you'll be wearing 10 years from now on a Thursday! He knows how you'll be feeling tomorrow morning. You can talk to him. He is with everyone that trusts in him. Remember, his name Immanuel means "God is with us."

APPLY IT!

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

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 Guide. 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 included 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 any items to your supply list accordingly.

Part 1: Gold Mine Memory Time

Today's Verse: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. John 1:14

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



★ Download from Answers VBS.

◆ Find in your teacher kit.

Challenge: Move like a baby while saying the verse. First, roll over and over and over while saying it, then crawl around while saying it.

Tomorrow's Verse: And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor. Luke 2:52

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. Jesus is Creator of the universe. Go on a walk with a grown-up and find at least 10 things Jesus created. What a wonder!
2. Ask an adult who has taken care of babies (maybe even you!) what they needed to do to care for the babies. Isn't it a wonder to think of the care Jesus would have needed as a baby, yet now he cares for you and the entire universe?
3. Talk to God (pray) and thank him for sending his Son, Jesus, from heaven to earth as a person yet still God. Thank him for loving you that much. Thank him for understanding what you go through because he went through it too.

4. With someone's help, check AnswersVBS.com/wonderkids for more fun information!

Ask yourself this question: What amazes me about Jesus' birth?

Song 1: Go Tell It on the Mountain

CHORUS

Go tell it on the mountain
(Make a mountain shape with arms.)

Over the hills and everywhere
(Move hand up and down over hills.)

Go tell it on the mountain
(Make a mountain shape with arms.)

That Jesus Christ is born (Rock a baby.)

VERSE 1

While shepherds kept their watching
(Put flat hand above eyes as if searching.)

Over silent flocks by night (Put finger to
your lips and turn head back and forth.)

Behold throughout the heavens
(Raise arms up and open wide.)

There shone a holy light

(Raise one arm with hand open and
pull down.)

Repeat Chorus

VERSE 2

Down in a lowly manger (Bend down and
move hand back and forth.)

The humble Christ was born (Rock a baby.)
And God sent us salvation (Point up for

"God," to yourself for "us," and cross
hands over heart for "salvation.")

That blessed Christmas morn
(Clap four times with the beat.)

Repeat Chorus

Song 2: Twinkle, Twinkle, Jesus' Star

CHORUS

Twinkle, twinkle, Jesus' star
(Wiggle fingers above head.)

Wise men followed from a far
(Walk in place.)

Up above the world so high
(Make a big world with your arms.)

Like a diamond in the sky
(Put your loose fist up in the sky and

then flick one finger up to point to a pre-
tend diamond in the sky.)

Twinkle, twinkle, Jesus' star
(Wiggle fingers above head.)

Wise men followed from a far
(Walk in place.)

Repeat

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

- "Go Tell It on the Mountain" song
- "Twinkle, Twinkle, Jesus' Star" song
- MP3 download or *Simple Songs* CD (1221410)
- Device to play songs