

Large Group Opener

Opening Game

What You Need

Little Jesus Figurines

Several

HOST: "Hey, everybody! Welcome to [your environment name]. I am so glad you're here today. This month we have a brand-new theme: Game Plan: Growing Stronger in Faith Every Day. Can you say that with me?"

KIDS: "Game Plan: Growing Stronger in Faith Every Day!"

HOST: "Awesome! Every good team has a game plan. A soccer team has a plan. A band has a practice plan. And if you're following Jesus, guess what? There's a game plan you can follow to get to know God too!"

"This month we're going to look at four parts of a Game Plan to help you get to know God better—talking about God, praying to God, hearing from God, and living for God. Today we're going to look at the first part of that Game Plan! Talking about God!"

"Our Bottom Line today is: **[Bottom Line]** Practice talking about God. Let's say that together!"

KIDS: **[Bottom Line]** "Practice talking about God."

HOST: "Great! Today's true story from the Bible is all about that. And in this true story from the Bible, Jesus' parents actually lost Jesus! That's wild! So, to get us ready, we're going to play a game called 'Find Jesus!'

SLIDE: "Find Jesus!"

"Here's how it works. We've hidden little Jesus figures around the room. I'm going to create [designated number] of teams. Each team will line up in a relay. One person at a time will run out, search, and grab one mini-figure of Jesus. Then you run back and tag the next teammate. We'll keep going until the timer runs out, which I'm going to set for 60 seconds. The team with the most Jesus figures at the end, wins."

Choose the number of kids you want to play the game. Form a manageable number of kids on each team, like five or six. If you have a smaller group, you may want to have all of the kids team up and play. If you have a larger group, you may want to choose certain kids to team up and play the game.

"Each team line up behind the tape line (or cones) I've got set up here. Then, let's get ready! *(Pause as the kids get in their teams, and behind their tape lines/cones. Assist as needed.)*

"Alright, you guys ready? On your mark, get set, go!"

AUDIO: Upbeat music

Start the timer, smartphone, or countdown for 60 seconds, and start the game. After 60 seconds, stop the game.

HOST: "Freeze! Each team, count your Jesus figures. I'll go around to each team and find out how many you found."

Go around to each team and find out how many Jesus figures they found. Declare a winning team! (Optional: Allow each kid to take a Jesus figure home.)

HOST: "Wow, that was amazing. You searched hard, just like Mary and Joseph searched for Jesus in Jerusalem. In today's true story from the Bible, we'll see where they found Him, and why it matters for us. Jesus

12 min

Worship Option 1 (Amazing Music)

was only 12 years old, but He was already practicing talking about God. And we can do that too!"

Note: We've suggested worship songs below from Amazing Kids Worship and Orange Kids Music. We've created these songs to be developmentally appropriate for elementary and preteen kids, incorporating simple, direct language, fun dance movements, and upbeat, current arrangements.

We've chosen these specific songs that amplify our teaching content for this month. We recommend that you use these songs as scripted below, or combined with other popular worship songs that your kids know and love. Be sure to share the links to these songs with parents so they can stream them at home or in the car! Songs can be purchased at store.thinkorange.com or for free with APlay.

1 min

Worship Opener

What You Need

No supplies needed

WORSHIP LEADER: "Hey, everyone! Who is ready to worship today? Worship is one of the ways we practice talking about God. We sing to Him and tell Him how much we love Him.

3 min

Every Move I Make | Worship Song

What You Need

No supplies needed

WORSHIP LEADER: "Our first song is a song we're going to sing all month: 'Every Move I Make' As you sing, think about the words you're singing as you remind yourself that Jesus is with you, every step you take. Stand up and let's sing this out!

3 min

Build My Life | Worship Song

What You Need

No supplies needed

"Our next song is called 'Build My Life.' This song is about how God is worthy of every song we sing, all the praise we bring and every breath we breath. Because of who He is and all that He's done, God is the only one worthy of our honor and praise. So let's sing this out together.

5 min

Memory Verse

What You Need

No supplies needed

WORSHIP LEADER: "Great job, everyone! Before we get started in our Bible Story today, let's practice our Memory Verse!

SLIDE: Memory Verse

WORSHIP LEADER: "The verse from the Bible that we're going to try to get into our heads and hearts this month is all about training. Athletes

train their bodies to get stronger, but in this verse from the Bible, Paul reminds us that training to follow God is even more valuable; it helps us now and forever.

"Let's look at the screen and say it together.

KIDS AND WORSHIP LEADER: *Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come.* —1 Timothy 4:8 NIV

"Now we're going to train like athletes while we say our Memory Verse. I'll call out an exercise, and we'll say the verse while we do it. (Demonstrate each exercise as you lead the kids to say the Memory Verse.)

- Round 1: Jog in place
- Round 2: Jumping jacks
- Round 3: Squats
- Round 4: Arm circles

Repeat the verse during each exercise, slowing it down or speeding it up for fun.

"Great job! You just trained your body AND your spirit. Let's try saying the Memory Verse one last time with no screen, and see if you can remember it!

Let kids try to recite the verse without looking. Assure them that if they didn't get it right, it just means they need more practice—they'll get it.

"Just like we practiced the verse with exercise, we can practice talking about God in our everyday lives. The more we practice, the easier it will get."

8 min

Worship Option 2 (Orange Kids Music)

Note: We've suggested worship songs below from Amazing Kids Worship and Orange Kids Music. We've created these songs to be developmentally appropriate for elementary and preteen kids, incorporating simple, direct language, fun dance movements, and upbeat, current arrangements.

We've chosen these specific songs that amplify our teaching content for this month. We recommend that you use these songs as scripted below, or combined with other popular worship songs that your kids know and love. Be sure to share the links to these songs with parents so they can stream them at home or in the car! Songs can be purchased at store.thinkorange.com or for free with APlay.

2 min

Worship Opener

WORSHIP LEADER: "Stand up and sing this out with me!"

What You Need

No supplies needed

3 min

My Life for You | Worship Song**What You Need**

No supplies needed

3 min

Everything to Me | Worship Song**What You Need**

No supplies needed

24 min

Bible Story (Video)

12 min

StoryLab Bible Story | Video**What You Need**

No supplies needed

12 min

So and So Show Bible Story | Video**What You Need**

No supplies needed

38 min

Bible Story (Live)

"Awesome! God really is everything to us. Now, let's keep going with another song called 'My Life for You.' This song is all about choosing to live for God everywhere we go. Let's give it our all!

WORSHIP LEADER: "I love worshipping with you! Let's sing one more song together."

3 min

Introduction

What You Need

No supplies needed

On one side of the stage, please include a small table where Storyteller can read their Bible from, and three chairs on the other side of the stage to represent the temple. Please place the prop box where it's accessible to Storyteller.

STORYTELLER: "Welcome, everybody! Happy New Year! I'm so glad you're here today!"

"This month we're talking all about God's Game Plan for us! It's a Game Plan we can follow to help us get to know God better! This week we're going to look at one part of that Game Plan—talking about God! Our true story from the Bible is all about that!"

"But before we dive into that true story from the Bible, let me tell you something amazing we've been doing this year. We're going through the key stories of the Bible! By the end of the school year, we'll have looked at the key stories of the Bible from cover to cover!"

"Why are we going through the key stories of the Bible? Well, part of the reason God gave us the Bible is so we could know Him! He wants to be our close, close friend. So as we go through the Bible this year, our intention is to learn more about God!"

5 min

GOD'S BIG STORY OPENER (OPTIONAL)

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER: "We're going to go through God's Big Story in the Bible together so we can learn about God! (Gesture to slide.)

SLIDE: God's Big Story

"Let me catch you up on where we've been in God's Big Story so far!"

"You might remember that, in the beginning, God created everything. He made the world, the animals, people ... everything! God made the first people for the same reason He made all people—to be His close, close friends. But sadly, the first people God made chose to turn away from Him and sin. God wanted people to be close to Him, but they couldn't anymore. Pain, sickness, and death entered the world too."

"But God didn't want to leave things that way. So He put His rescue plan in motion right from the start!"

"God was going to rescue everything through a family! God chose a man named Abraham and promised that his family would bless the whole world. Abraham had a great-grandson named Joseph, who became a leader in Egypt and saved his family—God's people. Over time, God's people grew but were enslaved by a new Pharaoh. 'Help us!' they cried out to God. God freed His people and brought them to the super-nice home He had designed for them, the Promised Land.

"Some time after God's people were settled in the Promised Land, they asked for a king like the other nations around them. God gave them a king, and then many more kings (and one queen) followed. Sadly, after a long time of turning away from Him, God allowed His nation to be split in two—into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Prophets spoke for God saying, 'Come back to Me!' But the northern kingdom of Israel was destroyed, and the southern kingdom of Judah was taken captive. Oh no! After years in exile, some of God's people returned to rebuild their homeland, while others stayed in foreign lands.

"During that sad time, God kept sending messages to His people about the Rescuer He had promised long ago. 'God's Rescuer is going to come like this!' the prophets said. But for years and years, nothing happened.

"And then it did! God sent Jesus, the Rescuer we needed, just like He promised! While Jesus was on earth, He showed us who God is because He is God!

"And that's where we are in God's Big Story!"

5 min

SETTING UP THE STORY

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER: "We're picking up in our journey through the Bible a few years after Jesus was born. It's a story in the Bible when Jesus was not much older than you!"

"I'll need three volunteers to help me tell this story—one person will be Jesus, one will be Mary, and the other Joseph. Our actors won't do any talking, only some motioning. If you would like to do some acting, raise your hand!"

Choose two male volunteers and one female volunteer from the kids who are raising their hands, and direct them to come on stage. Give each kid actor a robe to put on. Put the "Jesus" nametag on the actor

playing Jesus. Put the "Joseph" nametag on the actor playing Joseph. Put the "Mary" nametag on the actor playing Mary.

"Great! Actors, I'll direct you on what to do as we go throughout the story. All three of you stand over here near the table for a little bit.

"Now I need two adult volunteers to do some acting, but not speaking. Are there any Small Group Leaders who want to act? Raise your hand if you do!

Choose two adult male volunteers from the volunteers who are raising their hands, and direct them to come on stage. Give each adult actor a robe to put on. Give both adult actors a nametag that says "Teacher."

"Okay, great. You two adult actors can sit over here in these chairs. This will be our temple here later in the story. I'll tell you what to do when it's your turn!" (Move back over to the three kid actors.)

"Great! Now that our actors are ready, let's get started with our true story from the Bible.

"Today's story is about a time when Jesus' parents, Joseph and Mary, thought they had lost Him. Imagine that, losing the Son of God! But the truth is, Jesus wasn't lost at all. He was right where He needed to be. Let's find out what happened."

5 min

JESUS' FAMILY LOST HIM

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER: "Every year, Jesus and His family traveled to Jerusalem for a big celebration called the Passover. It was a time for God's people to remember how He had rescued them from Egypt.

"This year, Jesus was 12 years old. That's only a little older than some of you. Let's pretend we're getting ready for a trip. Shout out one thing you'd pack in your bag.

Take quick answers.

"Great choices! Well, Mary, Joseph, and Jesus packed up too. Joseph, Mary, and Jesus actors, let's march like we're walking to Jerusalem. You can follow me!

Lead the actors around the stage for a little bit. Stop after a little while. Stop away from the 'temple.'

"They traveled together with a huge group of family and friends. While they were there, they ate a special meal called Passover, where they remembered how God had rescued their people from Egypt. Actors, can you sit down right where you are and pretend to eat? (Pause while the actors do.)

"Great! You can stand up again! Now, Jesus actor, come sit over here in this empty chair next to the 'teachers.' Now back to our story.

"After the festival ended, Mary and Joseph started heading home. Joseph and Mary actors, follow me, and we'll walk around for a bit pretending we are headed home.

Lead the actors around the stage for a little bit. Stop after a little while, still away from the 'temple.'

"Joseph and Mary thought Jesus was with them on their journey home. But when they looked around ... He was not there. Joseph and Mary, put your hands over your eyes, and pretend to look around.

"They searched among their friends. No Jesus. They searched among their family. Still no Jesus. Can you all help me call out, 'Jesus, where are You?'"

KIDS:"Jesus, where are You?"

STORYTELLER: "Good! Mary and Joseph hurried back to Jerusalem to search.

"Mary and Joseph actors, keep pretending to look around while we continue this part of the story.

"They searched for one day ... Kids, say: 'Day one!'

KIDS: "Day one!"

"They searched for two days ... Kids, say: 'Day two!'

KIDS: "Day two!"

STORYTELLER: "They searched for three days, Kids, say: 'Day three!'

KIDS: "Day three!"

STORYTELLER: "Three days! That's a long time to be looking.

"Finally, after three days, they found Him. Mary and Joseph actors, let's come over here to the 'temple.'

5 min

JESUS WAS IN HIS FATHER'S HOUSE

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER: "Where was Jesus? The Bible tells us:

Open the Bible to Luke 2:46 (NIV) and read.

After three days, they found him in the temple courtyard. He was sitting with the teachers. He was listening to them and asking them questions.

"Teacher actors and the Jesus actor at the temple, pretend to be talking and asking questions. (Pause while the actors "act.") You can continue to pretend while I continue on in our story.

"Jesus was right in His Father's house, having conversations about God. Imagine a 12-year-old asking questions and sharing answers that amazed grown-ups. Everyone who heard Jesus was amazed.

"Let's all say, 'Wow!'"

KIDS: "Wow!"

STORYTELLER: "When Jesus' parents saw Him, they asked about where He had been. His mother said:

Open the Bible to Luke 2:48 (NIV) and read.

"Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been worried about you. We have been looking for you everywhere."

And Jesus replied:

Open the Bible to Luke 2:49 (NIV) and read.

"Why were you looking for me? Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"

"Jesus wasn't lost. He knew exactly where He needed to be: in His Father's house, practicing talking about God."

STORYTELLER: "Now, Jesus wasn't being disrespectful. He wasn't ignoring His parents. He was showing that God's mission came first. But He also honored His parents. The Bible tells us:

Open the Bible to Luke 2:51 (NIV) and read.

Then he went back to Nazareth with them, and he obeyed them.

5 min

JESUS SETS THE EXAMPLE FOR US

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER: "Jesus went back with His parents and obeyed them.

"Actors, thank you so much for helping me tell the story! You can put your robes in the prop box and head back to your seats. Everyone, give them a round of applause!

Lead the applause as the actors head back to their seats. Then, continue the story.

"Jesus honored His heavenly Father and His earthly parents. He honored both! The Bible tells us that this happened as Jesus grew up:

Open the Bible to Luke 2:52 (NIV) and read.

Jesus became wiser and stronger. He also became more and more pleasing to God and to people.'

"As Jesus grew up, He grew in wisdom. He grew in strength. He grew in His relationship with God. So as He grew in His relationship with God, He talked about Him, and He talked to people who knew Him. He practiced talking about God.

"So what about us? Can we start practicing talking about God? Yes! We can practice talking about God at school, at home, with friends, even online. You will spend your whole life getting to know who God is, and the people around you who know Him can help you. A lot of people you know have been friends with God longer than you have, and they can teach you about Him. So ask them questions about God. Talk to them about Him.

5 min

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER: "So, Jesus showed us something so important in this story. He practiced talking about God. He showed us that you are never too young, never too small, never too early to start learning and talking about who God is. Talking about God is an important part in getting to know Him!

"So practice talking about God with people who know Him. You can practice in your Small Group. You can practice at home with your family. You can practice with your friends at school. You can practice talking about God anywhere.

"And the more you practice, the more your friendship with God will grow because you'll be getting to know Him better. And the more people hear you talk about God, they'll know you're His friend and maybe they'll want to be His friend too!

"That's our Bottom Line for this week!

SLIDE: Bottom Line

[Bottom Line] "Practice talking about God. Say that with me."

Host enters and joins in.

KIDS, STORYTELLER, AND HOST: **[Bottom Line]** "Practice talking about God."

5 min

GOD'S BIG STORY CLOSER (OPTIONAL)

What You Need

No supplies needed

HOST: "Let's take a look at the progress we made in God's Big Story this week!"

SLIDE: God's Big Story

"This week, we're up here in the part of this picture of God's Big Story—the picture that says, 'Jesus' Life.' In our story, Jesus isn't grown up yet, but He is still teaching us!"

"God worked for years and years to send us Jesus. And part of the reason God sent us Jesus is so Jesus would show us who God is. Jesus is God's Son, but He is also God Himself. So how He lived is how God would live. When someone wasn't living the best way, He taught them the best way. When someone was sick, He healed them. Jesus went around our broken world and said, 'This isn't the way it is in God's Kingdom, I'm going to fix it.' And there was something else that was super-important! As Jesus lived through our broken world, He never, ever sinned. He lived a perfect life. As we saw this week, even as a 12-year-old Boy, Jesus honored God and His parents. Later in His life, Jesus would give up that perfect life, paying for our sin, and breaking that awful curse we were under. Jesus' perfect life continued God's plan to rescue us all!"

"Let's put the next image on our timeline!"

SLIDE: Week 1 Timeline Image

If you're making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today's timeline image on the clothesline.

8 min

Closing

5 min

WHAT'S OUR PART IN THE STORY?

What You Need

No supplies needed

"This week we talked about Jesus at the temple when He was just a Boy!"

HOST: "Wow. Today we saw something amazing. Jesus was only 12 years old, but He amazed everyone with how He talked about God.

"He could have been playing or running around, but He chose to be in His Father's house. He chose to practice talking about God. He chose to find people who knew about God and talk to them and ask them questions to learn about God. You can do the same thing too!"

"The people in your life who know God can help you get to know Him better. So ask them questions about God. Ask them to show you in the Bible where to go for answers.

"Think about someone you know who knows Jesus. Maybe it's your Small Group leader. Maybe it's another friend. If you don't know many people who know Jesus, ask God to put more in your life who can help you know Him better. Practice talking about Him like Jesus did to other people. Make getting to know God an important part of your life, so ask people about Him!"

3 min

PRAYER

What You Need

No supplies needed

STORYTELLER or HOST: "Let's talk to the God who wants you to get to know Him better. Bow your heads and close your eyes.

"God, thank You for Jesus. Thank You that even as a Kid, Jesus showed us how important it is to talk about You. Help us to practice this week. Help us to find the people in our life who know You so we can learn more about You. We want to know You more. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Dismiss kids to their small groups.

AUDIO: Play high-energy music as the kids exit.

SLIDE: Theme

Kids

252 Kids And Preteen

January - Week 1

Optional Video: Theme Loop

Supplies

Opening Game

| | Quantity |
|---------------------------|----------|
| 1. Little Jesus Figurines | Several |