Large Group Leader Guide

Today's Suggested Schedule

Prelude: Setting the tone for the experience

See the Getting Ready pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the Prelude folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing time for fun interaction

1. Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

- → Opener
- → Worship ("Silent Night" from Silent Night (The King Is Born) and "Extra, Extra [It's Christmas Time]" from Extra, Extra It's Christmas Time single)
- → Bible Story (sections about God's Big Story are included as optional)
- → Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

- Bible Story Review: Promise Relay (K-1st grade), Unbox the Greatest Gift (2nd-3rd grade), Bible Story Extension (4th-5th Grade)
- Application Activity: Trust Moves (K-1st grade), God's Plan (2nd-3rd grade), Take a Snapshot (4th-5th Grade)
- Memory Verse Activity: Verse Ornaments (K-1st grade), Verse Postcard (2nd-3rd grade), Verses to Take with You (4th-5th Grade)
- 4. Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- → Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)
- → Devotionals for Kids
- → Parent Cue App and ParentCue.org





Today's Bible Story

Gabriel Visits Mary Luke 1:5-66

Bottom Line

God always had a plan to send Jesus.

Memory Verse

"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2:11 NIrV



Inclusive Pro Tips

Loud sounds, bright lights, and large groups can be overwhelming or overstimulating for some children. To create a more inclusive large group experience, consider offering adaptive tools like noise-canceling headphones, sunglasses, sensory-friendly items, or access to modified spaces.

K5 Large Group

December — Week 2

25 MINUTES

Story

10 MINUTES

Worship

AUDIO: Play high-energy music as kids enter.

SLIDE: Theme

Optional Video: Theme Loop

→ Host enters.

Optional Video: Countdown
Optional Video: Theme Intro
Optional Video: Theme Loop

① Opener

HOST: "Hello, friends! Merry early Christmas! Welcome to *[Name of environment]*! This month is extra-special because we're celebrating something amazing. We're discovering how Christmas is all about celebrating Jesus, God's greatest gift to us.

"Extra! Extra! Read all about it! God sent Jesus because He loves you so much!

"Today, we're kicking things off with a super-fun Group Competition! Do you know what makes a competition exciting? It's not just about winning; it's about doing our best and having fun together. And that's a little bit like Christmas—it's about coming together and celebrating the most incredible gift we've ever received. I'm going to create four teams for this game!

Depending on your group size and how many kids you want to compete, create four teams. Assign each team to a wrapping station.

"Okay, great! We've got our teams! Here's how our Group Competition will work. As you see in front of you, each team will have its own station with everything it needs to wrap a Christmas gift.

"We're going to see which team can wrap their gift the fastest. But remember, we need to be excited and quick, but we also want to do our best work—just as God gave us His best when He sent Jesus. When you're done wrapping, tie a ribbon around your gift, stick the bow on top, and hold your gift up! The first group with a finished gift—and I will judge if a gift is finished—wins!

K5

Large Group

December — Week 2

25 MINUTES

Story

10 MINUTES

Worship

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.

"Alright, let's get ready, get set, go!

AUDIO: Upbeat Christmas-themed music

→ Start the game, comment on the action, and declare a winner.

"Great, great job, you guys! You are phenomenal gift wrappers! I would be delighted to get a gift wrapped by you!
"Just like we put effort into wrapping these gifts, God's gift to us in sending Jesus was full of purpose. He always had a plan to send Jesus, and let's celebrate that today—starting with worship! Let's worship the God who planned for a long, long time to rescue you!"

② Worship

→ Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

WORSHIP LEADER: "Hello, everyone! It's a special time of year, and we're going to celebrate with some songs that remind us of the first Christmas when God gave us the greatest gift ever— Jesus! God loves us so much that He gave us Jesus! Are you ready to sing and celebrate together?

"Let's start with a song called 'Silent Night.'

AUDIO: "Silent Night (*The King Is Born*)" / track 1 from Silent Night (*The King Is Born*)

WORSHIP LEADER: "Great singing and dancing, everyone!

SLIDE: Memory Verse

WORSHIP LEADER: "Before we sing our last song, let's read our Memory Verse together and learn some simple motions. This is part of what the angel declared to the shepherds on the night Jesus was born! It's great, great news! This message is recorded in the Bible in Luke chapter 2, verse 11.

"This is part of what the angel said:



Story

10 MINUTES

Worship

Note: We're so excited to be going through key stories of the Bible this year and learning more about its Author—God! It's God's Big Story! But to provide you with flexibility as you experience God's Big Story in your own unique setting, there's more than one way to use the following script!

If you want to follow "God's Big Story," read the following script straight through. Each week will build on the previous ones. But, if your church wants to teach a Large Group session without connecting it to what has come before, two sections in the script below are optional—"God's Big Story Opener" and "God's Big Story Closer." (Or if you're joining us at some point throughout the year, you can opt out of the God's Big Story part and just join us as we journey through the rest of the story of Scripture!) We're going to go through the Bible as we teach throughout the year, but whether or not you share God's Big Story each week is up to you!

Whatever way you decide to use the following, know that we're praying diligently for you—we're asking God to help kids see and believe that He loves them, He invented them, and He wants to be their closest Friend. Forever. It's an honor to get to know God with you through the Bible this year!

"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:11 NIrV).

"What great news! Jesus had been born! Let me teach you some motions that might help you remember the verse. You guys repeat the motions after me:

"Today in the town of David" – Point straight down with both hands like you're marking right now.

"a Savior" – Spread your arms wide like you're about to hug. "has been born" – Rock your arms like you're holding a baby. "to you." – Point to a friend or the group.

"He is the Messiah," – Pretend like you're putting on a crown with your hands.

"the Lord." - Point both hands up to the sky.

"Luke 2:11" – Open the palms of your hands together like you're opening a Bible.

"Let's all try that together!

→ Repeat the Memory Verse with the motions several times.

"Great job! This season, we can remember that God sent His Son, Jesus, to us. Isn't that amazing? It's great, great news! This next song is talking about how we can share that great news with everyone!

AUDIO: "Extra, Extra (It's Christmas Time)" / track from Extra, Extra (It's Christmas Time) Single

"Great job, everyone! It's so fun to celebrate what God did for us at Christmas! Let's go ahead and sit down and hear our true story from the Bible today!"

3 Bible Story

SLIDE: Theme Background

→ Storyteller enters as Worship Leaders exit.

INTRODUCTION



Story

10 MINUTES

Worship

→ Make sure all of the costumes are up on the clothesline. The Storyteller will carry their Bible with them as they read the characters from the story.

STORYTELLER: "We're getting closer and closer to Christmas! Merry Christmas, everyone! Can you feel the joy in the air? That's because this season we celebrate that God gave us the greatest gift—Jesus! Whether or not the world knows it, Jesus is the reason for all of this joy!

"And God was working on His plan to give us the great gift of Jesus for a long, long time—that's what we're going to look at today! [Bottom Line] God always had a plan to send Jesus.

"Before we dive into the true story from the Bible we're going to look at today, let me tell you about something amazing we're doing this year. We're going through the key stories of the Bible from cover to cover!

"Why? Well, God really, really wants us to know Him! He is God, and He could have remained a mystery, but He wants us to know who He is. And part of the reason He gave us the Bible is so we can know who He is.

"So that's why we're going through the Bible. We're going to learn about God!"

GOD'S BIG STORY OPENER (OPTIONAL)

STORYTELLER: "We're going to go through God's Big Story in the Bible together! *(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!



Story

10 MINUTES

Worship

"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. God's people cried out to God—'Help us!' they said—and God heard them! 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. 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!' God told His prophets to share. But for years and years, nothing happened.

"But that long, long time was about to come to an end. God was about to show the world what He was working on for centuries—His plan to rescue all of us.

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

SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "Today, we're continuing our journey through the Bible. And today is our first time in the New Testament—this week's true story is in the book of Luke.

→ Hold up the Bible and turn to the New Testament, making sure the kids can see what you're doing.

"God had been planning His great rescue for a long, long time.

→ Point out the big chunk of the Bible that is the Old Testament as you say the next words.



Story

10 MINUTES

Worship

"Ever since the Garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve fell under that curse of sin, and the whole world couldn't be close to God anymore, God promised that He was going to rescue us so we could be close to Him.

"And at just the right time, after years and years and years, something amazing happened!

SILENT TREATMENT

STORYTELLER: "To start our story today, God's people were living in part of the Promised Land, but they were ruled by the Romans. God's people tried to follow Him while under Roman rule.

"In this time, there was a priest named Zechariah, and his wife was named Elizabeth.

→ Point to the Zechariah and Elizabeth costumes on the clothesline.

"Zechariah and Elizabeth faithfully served God ... but they had no children. They believed they were way past the age that they COULD have children.

> Stand behind the Zechariah costume.

"One day, Zechariah was chosen to enter the temple and burn incense before God, while his group of priests was serving. As Zechariah stood before the altar, the angel Gabriel appeared before him!

> Stand behind the Gabriel costume.

"The angel said to Zechariah:

→ Open the Bible to Luke 1:13-17 (NIrV) and read.

"Do not be afraid, Zechariah. Your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will have a child. It will be a boy, and you must call him John. He will be a joy and delight to you. His birth will make many people very glad. He will be important in the sight of the Lord ... He will prepare the way for the Lord."

Stand behind the Zechariah costume.

"This was a lot for Zechariah to take in. He asked the angel how he could be sure this was true. How could he and Elizabeth have



Story

10 MINUTES

Worship

a baby in their old age?

> Stand behind the Gabriel costume.

"The angel said to Zechariah:

→ Open the Bible to Luke 1:19-20 (NIrV) and read.

"I am Gabriel. I serve God. I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. And now you will have to be silent. You will not be able to speak until after John is born. That's because you did not believe my words. They will come true at the time God has chosen."

Stand behind the Zechariah costume.

"Zechariah came out of the temple, and the other priests tried to find out why he had been in there so long. But just like the angel said, Zechariah couldn't speak. He could only try to tell them by gesturing with his hands.

"And get this—just like the angel had said, Elizabeth became pregnant even though she was old!

→ Stand behind the Elizabeth costume.

MARY'S BIG NEWS

STORYTELLER: "In the town of Nazareth, Elizabeth's relative Mary was about to receive amazing news too.

→ Stand behind the Mary costume.

"The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary ...

> Stand behind the Gabriel costume.

"... and he told her some really big news. He said:

→ Open the Bible to Luke 1:28 (NIrV) and read.

"The Lord has blessed you in a special way. He is with you."

→ Stand behind the Mary costume.

"Mary was quite shocked to be visited by an angel!

> Stand behind the Gabriel costume.



Story

10 MINUTES

Worship

"But Gabriel told her not to worry. He said:

→ Open the Bible to Luke 1:30-32 (NIrV) and read.

"Do not be afraid, Mary. God is very pleased with you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You must call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God."

> Stand behind the Mary costume.

"Mary asked how this would happen.

> Stand behind the Gabriel costume.

"Gabriel responded:

→ Open the Bible to Luke 1:35-37 (NIrV) and read.

"The Holy Spirit will come to you. The power of the Most High God will cover you. So the holy one that is born will be called the Son of God. Your relative Elizabeth will have a child even though she is old. People thought she could not have children. But she has been pregnant for six months now. That's because what God says will always come true."

> Stand behind the Mary costume.

"Mary chose to trust God. She said:

→ Open the Bible to Luke 1:38 (NIrV) and read.

"I serve the Lord . . . May it happen to me just as you said it would."

"Then the angel Gabriel left her.

MARY AND ELIZABETH

STORYTELLER: "Mary then hurried to the hill country of Judea to visit her Elizabeth.

> Stand behind the Elizabeth costume.

"When Mary greeted Elizabeth, the baby inside Elizabeth JUMPED!



Story

10 MINUTES

Worship

"Elizabeth said to Mary:

→ Open the Bible to Luke 1:42-45 (NIrV) and read.

"God has blessed you more than other women. And blessed is the child you will have! But why is God so kind to me? Why has the mother of my Lord come to me? As soon as I heard the sound of your voice, the baby inside me jumped for joy. You are a woman God has blessed. You have believed that the Lord would keep his promises to you!"

→ Stand behind the Mary costume.

"Mary knew that God had blessed her in a special way. She stayed with Elizabeth for three months ... and then she went home.

> Stand behind the Elizabeth costume.

"Soon after that, it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby! When the baby was born, all of Zechariah and Elizabeth's relatives and neighbors came to celebrate. They were going to name the baby Zechariah, after his dad ... but Elizabeth said he must be called John.

→ Stand behind the Zechariah costume.

"Zechariah still wasn't able to speak. So he gestured for something to write on, and then he wrote: 'His name is John.' Right away, Zechariah could speak again! And right away, he praised God!

→ Move away from the clothesline and walk to the front of the stage.

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "As we wrap this up, remember that God's plan to send Jesus wasn't random; it was perfect and powerful, and straight from Him. He had planned to send Jesus for a long, long time.

"Through Zechariah, Elizabeth, and Mary, we see that God keeps His promises! He will work through situations that seem impossible, but they aren't impossible for Him. He had promised



Story

10 MINUTES

Worship

that He would rescue His people, and He made a way where it seemed like there was no way!

"And, this is absolutely amazing. Our rescue was so important to God that He sent us His very own Son as our Rescuer. What a great, great gift!

STORYTELLER: "Jesus, God's Son Himself, came to rescue us so we could be close to God again. That's what makes Christmas such good news."

"The story of Jesus' birth is one that we can carry in our hearts all year long. God loves us so much that He sent us Jesus!

"God always had a plan to send Jesus ... and He did!

"That's our Bottom Line for today.

SLIDE: Bottom Line

[Bottom Line] "God always had a plan to send Jesus. Say that with me."

→ Host enters and joins in.

STORYTELLER, HOST, and KIDS: [Bottom Line] "God always had a plan to send Jesus."

GOD'S BIG STORY CLOSER (OPTIONAL)

STORYTELLER: "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 right up here on this picture of God's Big Story, 'The Birth of Jesus.' (*Gesture to slide.*) This is such an important part in God's Big Story!

"This week, we talked about some important figures in God's great rescue plan—Zechariah, Elizabeth, and Mary! And God wanted to make it clear that He, and only He, was behind this great rescue. A couple who was too old had a baby? A young girl was going to have a baby who would be God's Son? Only God can do that! That seems impossible for us, but it's not impossible for God! For years and years and years, God had worked on this great rescue plan. But God wasn't just going to rescue us, He



Story

10 MINUTES

Worship

was going to send a Rescuer—His very own Son. God loves you so much that He gave you the greatest gift, your Rescuer, Jesus. Merry Christmas, God sent you Jesus!

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

SLIDE: Week 2 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.

"This week we talked about some of the people God did amazing things through in His great rescue plan—Zechariah, Elizabeth, and Mary. This picture is of the angel Gabriel coming to visit Mary to deliver the news that she was going to have Jesus, God's very own Son! Amazing!"

WHAT'S OUR PART IN THE STORY?

STORYTELLER: "Wow. God loves you so very much that He worked for years and years and years to bring about His great rescue.

"This Christmas, remember God's love. Remember that He didn't let anything get in His way to send you the gift of Jesus. An old couple having a child, a young girl having God's Son—that's impossible for us, but not for Him! God was making it very clear that He was the One behind the first Christmas. And nothing was going to stand in His way to send you your Rescuer.

"When we celebrate Christmas, we're not just celebrating a holiday. We're celebrating the faithful love of God that came to us through Jesus.

"God loves you. He loves you so very much. That's why **[Bottom Line]** God always had a plan to send Jesus.

"This Christmas, every time you see a decoration, remember God's great love for you. The whole world is having a party because God gave us the greatest gift!

"Let's pray and ask God to help us see His great love and celebrate the gift of Jesus this Christmas."



Story

10 MINUTES

Worship

3 Prayer

STORYTELLER or HOST: "Dear God, thank You for loving us so much that You sent Jesus to be our Rescuer. This Christmas, help us to see Your great love for us in the amazing gift of Jesus. 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

Optional Video: Theme Loop



Getting Ready: Opener

What You Need

☐ Host
☐ 4 rolls of Christmas-themed
wrapping paper (one for each
team)
☐ 4 pairs of child-friendly scissors
(one pair for each team)
4 rolls of tape (one for each team)
4 sets of ribbon (one for each
team)
4 small bows (one for each team)
4 bows (one for each team)
Music and Sound Effects
☐ Upbeat music to use as kids enter
the room
☐ Upbeat Christmas-themed music
to use as kids play the game
Large Group Visuals
☐ Theme Slide
☐ Memory Verse Slide
Optional Videos

What You Do:

- Download the slides or optional videos and have them ready to use. If you do not have screen capabilities, you have Orange's permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.
- Refer to week 1 to confirm that your church has appropriate licensing to perform or play music and sound effects in your kids' environments.
- 3. Before the kids arrive, set up four stations on stage with a roll of wrapping paper, a pair of scissors, a roll of tape, ribbon, a bow, and a small box.

APlay

Get the most out of your curriculum with APlay! JoinAPlay.com is an all-in-one media organization and presentation tool. Experience all of your Orange Curriculum media assets, now pre-built and fully customizable. No more sorting through multiple download folders.

APlay is free with your curriculum subscription and packed with features to help your weekly experience run smoother. APlay gives you more time to focus on what truly matters — more ministry, less media management with Apple TV-based media solutions.

☐ Theme Loop

□ Countdown

☐ Theme Intro



Getting Ready: Worship

What You Need

☐ Worship Leader(s)

Music and Sound Effects

- ☐ "Silent Night" from Silent Night (The King Is Born)
- "Extra, Extra (It's Christmas Time)" from Extra, Extra (It's Christmas Time) single

Optional Videos

Available for Purchase

- □ "Silent Night" Dance Moves Video or Live Lyrics Video (available through Store.ThinkOrange.com)
- "Extra, Extra (It's Christmas Time)"
 Dance Moves Video or Live Lyrics
 Video (available through Store.
 ThinkOrange.com)

Store.ThinkOrange.com

What You Do:

Download all songs and have them ready to use. Note: Make sure your church has obtained licensing rights to play or perform music. You can obtain a license to perform worship music from Christian Copyright Licensing International (www.ccli.com). It covers over 200,000 worship songs for congregational singing. You are responsible for including the copyright information on all songs reproduced under the Church Copyright License (including song lyrics projected onscreen). This includes the song title, writer credit(s), copyright notice, and your church's CCLI license number. You can include this information on one of the lyric slides, or you can create a separate slide detailing this information, but the copyright information must appear at least once for each song you play or perform.

For example:

"Hallelujah" words and music by John Doe ©2000 Good Music Co.
CCLI License # 0000

Dance Moves Videos and Live Lyrics Videos are available for many Orange Kids Music songs. For more information, visit Store. Think Orange.com.



Getting Ready: Bible Story

What You Need

☐ Storyteller (female Storyteller, if
possible) Female helper (to stand behind the costumes, if your Storyteller is male—this could be the Host, if Host is female)
☐ Host
☐ Bible ☐ Clothesline that stretches across
the stage, with the four costumes and large nametags hanging on
the clothesline with clothespins (Note: The clothesline should be
hanging at neck height, so that
the Storyteller/helper can stand
behind each costume and look like
she's wearing it.)
☐ Zechariah costume: Long, biblical-style robe; nametag says
"ZECHARIAH"
☐ Elizabeth costume: Long dress
with long sleeves; nametag says "ELIZABETH"
☐ Angel costume: long, white tunic
or robe; nametag says "GABRIEL"
☐ Mary costume: long, simple dress with long sleeves; nametag says
"MARY"
Music and Sound Effects
☐ Upbeat music to use as kids exit the room

What You Do:

- Download the slides and have them ready to use. If you do not have screen capabilities, you have Orange's permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.
- 2. Confirm that your church has appropriate licensing to perform or play music and sound effects in your kids' environments (see above under Opener).

Large Group Visuals

☐ Theme Background Slice	le
☐ Bottom Line Slide	

$\hfill\square$ Theme Slide

Optional for God's Big Story

Ш	Clothesline and clothespins t	for the	timeline	ın your	room
	God's Big Story Slide				

- ☐ Week 2 Timeline Image Slide
- □ We recommend that you create a timeline in your Large Group room that you can add to throughout this curriculum year as we travel through the Bible. This can be a simple clothesline or a section of the wall where you can hang the printed Timeline Images in order, week by week. We'll provide a Timeline Image for each week of the curriculum. There are two versions of each Timeline Image—a slide and a print version. A digital God's Big Story poster is available as well in the Orange Store.

Optional Video

☐ Theme Loop



Getting Ready

Video Enhancements for Your Environment

Available in your media files and APlay.

Our Large Group scripts are interchangeable with these videos so you can plug and play the way you need to each week.

For 252 Kids (kindergarten through 3rd grade):

→ StoryLab: Invite elementary kids to engage with inquisitive young hosts as they explore core biblical truths and stories in a STEAMinspired setting.

For 252 Preteen (4th and 5th grade):

→ The So & So Show: Guide preteens to explore questions of faith through a YouTube-style show full of humor and lots of zany fun.

Additional environment enhancements including:

- → Motion graphics, including loops
- → Themed transitions
- → Countdown videos (30 seconds, 60 seconds, and 5 minutes)