



YEAR 1

The Big Story

A SONday'SCOOL® Curriculum

SCRIPTURE UNION USA



The Big Story

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PrimeTime is a faith-based program geared to children ages 6–12. The program is designed to provide a safe, welcoming environment for children during the critical after-school hours, and to offer those children an opportunity to know and follow the Lord Jesus. The **PrimeTime** curriculum was developed jointly by Scripture Union and The Salvation Army. *The Big Story* represents Year One of the curriculum. Year Two, *Following Jesus*, and Year Three, *Heroes of the Faith*, will be available in coming months.



Scripture Union is an interdenominational mission organization whose vision is that children, young people, and their families will know God's love, follow Jesus, and meet God daily in His Word. For more information, write P.O. Box 987 #1, Valley Forge, PA 19482; call 1-800-621-LAMP (5267); or visit www.scriptureunion.org.



SONday'SCOOL is a ministry outreach of The Salvation Army. Its mission is to intervene in the lives of children at risk, to offer them a safe place where they can learn to feel good about themselves and be good to others, to break the cycle of despair and share the hope of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. For more information, write HopeShare, P.O. Box C-635, West Nyack, NY 10994; call 1-800-YOU-CARE (968-2273); or visit www.hopeshare.org.



To order **SONday'SCOOL** materials—such as **My SONday'SCOOL Bible**, **SONday'SCOOL Songs**, and **SONday'SCOOL SuperHeroes Trading Cards**—call 1-800-334-4431; fax 1-909-795-6136; or write to Duden Enterprises, 2025 Park Ave., Suite 4, Redlands, CA 92373.



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Introduction

Purpose

The overall purpose of *PrimeTime* is to provide a safe environment where children can receive the love and attention they need from caring adults and where they can learn about God and develop a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. *PrimeTime* is a tool for evangelism, reaching out to children who may not regularly attend church and introducing them to a life of Christian discipleship.

Yearly Schedule

PrimeTime offers 40 weeks of programming, corresponding to a typical school-year schedule. However, it can be adapted to fit any schedule. Sessions for holidays and special days have been placed in the final section of this book and can be inserted at appropriate points during the year.

This curriculum is designed for a once-a-week program. If you have an after-school program that is in session two or more days a week, it is suggested that you earmark one of those days for *PrimeTime*—time devoted to learning about God and His Word. One possible use of the extension activities presented at the end of each session in this book is during other days of the week, as reminders of *PrimeTime* learning.

Each session in the curriculum builds on earlier sessions, so it's suggested that you use them in order as far as possible. On the other hand, keep in mind that personal schedules and family circumstances may prevent some children from attending every week. Further, you will always want to feel free to welcome new children into the program at any time during the year. Review of the previous session occurs naturally during Check-In Time. This will help to keep children who haven't been attending regularly from feeling left out.

Daily Schedule

Following is a typical daily schedule for *PrimeTime*:

Snack Time

Have a snack ready for children to eat when they arrive. Most children are very hungry after school.

Try to make the snack as nutritious as possible. You may have children in your program who don't get nutritious meals at home.

Game Time

Start Game Time as soon as some children have finished their snack, even though others may still be arriving. Each child who enters will immediately recognize an atmosphere of fun and excitement, something she or he will want to be part of. Include some active games to give children the opportunity to burn off energy that has built up during the school day. However, you may then want to move gradually toward more quiet games to help children prepare to worship God and learn more about Him. Also, try to play down the competitive aspects of a game—and play up the fun.

Ideas for extension activities are presented at the end of each session in this book. These relate directly to the topic for the day and can be used during Game Time, at the beginning or end of your time with the children. Additional game ideas appear on pages x–xii of this book.

Praise Time

This time of worship should emphasize songs that are related to the day's topic—although it's never a bad idea to revisit some favorite songs the children especially enjoy. In each session, there's a listing of one or more songs from the **SONday'SCOOL Songs** CD and Songbook that fit the theme particularly well. (For information on ordering **SONday'SCOOL Songs**, see page iii.) Be sure to make Praise Time an active experience, with plenty of movement.

Check-In Time

One purpose of this time is to “check in” with children, to see how they’re doing and get a sense of what’s on their minds. This works especially well if Check-In Time can be done in small groups, and if each child is part of the same group with the same leader each week.

A second purpose of this time is to review what children learned in last week’s session. Be sure this is done in an inclusive way that makes new children or occasional visitors feel that they are part of things.

During this time, you may want to challenge children to recite the previous session’s Key Verse from memory. You might reward Bible memorization by giving small prizes. As far as possible, try to give prizes with spiritual meaning. **SONday’SCHOOL SuperHeroes** Trading Cards are very popular prizes and have lasting value; for ordering information, see page iii.

Then introduce the day’s topic by raising the discussion question provided.

Prime Time

This is the main teaching time in each session.

Talk Time

Talk Time offers an opportunity to discuss and apply the day’s learning. Discussion questions and activities are provided for each session. One way to approach this time is by having children return to the small groups they met with during Check-In Time.

Game Time

End each session with more fun games. If some children leave earlier than others, continue play until all children are gone for the day.

How Children Learn

The **PrimeTime** curriculum is based on the theory of **multiple intelligences**. The idea is that different children are intelligent in different ways. They bring different strengths to the learning process. Teaching materials need to be tailored to match these different strengths.

Word Smart—ability to understand and use words effectively, both orally and in writing

Logic Smart—ability to use numbers effectively or to reason well

Body Smart—ability to use one’s body to express ideas and feelings or to make things with one’s hands

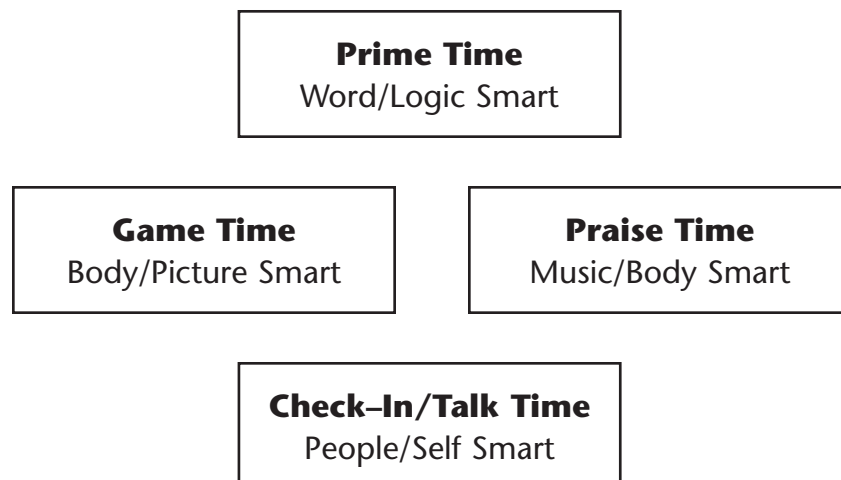
Picture Smart—ability to perceive the visual/spatial world well (color, lines, shapes)

Music Smart—ability to perceive, appreciate, and express music

People Smart—ability to perceive and make distinctions in the intentions, motivations, and feelings of other people

Self Smart—Self-knowledge and the ability to act based on that knowledge

Here’s how these intelligences—these “ways of being smart”—are addressed within each **PrimeTime** session.



Using the Curriculum

Feel free to use this curriculum as you would a recipe book. Some leaders will want to follow it step-by-step. Others may use it as a general guide, adding their own creativity.

It is strongly recommended that you read over the curriculum for each session well in advance. You'll find a list of materials you're likely to need, an explanation of the Bible background for that day's learning, and some hints on how to prepare for the session. Of course, there's no better preparation than prayer, and that should be at the top of your list. But reviewing all of the activities for the session will let you know what's coming.

The overall organization for this year's curriculum, *The Big Story*, is chronological—from Genesis to Revelation. It can be used to provide something of an overview of the Bible and the foundational truths of the Christian faith. At the same time, stories about Jesus appear throughout the year. If you wish to emphasize the chronological organization, a good way to do that is by creating a timeline for the room where your program meets. For each Bible theme, you can use banner paper to make a new section of the timeline, with appropriate wording.

Keep in mind that the primary purpose of the *PrimeTime* program is to offer children an opportunity to enter into relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and to help them grow in that relationship. Anything you do that helps to make that happen is just what you should be doing.

More Game Ideas

Active Outdoor Games

Freeze Tag. When children are tagged by It, they must freeze in place until someone who is not It touches them. Then they are free to run again.

Sardines. A game of hide-and-seek where one person hides and the rest try to find him or her. As each player finds the hiding person, that player joins the hider—and anyone else who has already found the hider. Eventually you'll have the whole group hiding together like a pack of sardines.

I Spy. Choose a location to be home and one person to be It. Everyone else hides, and It counts to 50 or another number of your choice. If It sees someone in hiding, she or he yells, “I spy . . . [the child’s name].” That child must try to beat It back home. If that child loses the race home, he or she ends up a prisoner. If the child wins the race, she or he becomes It.

Kickball. Played like baseball, only with a large rubber ball that is kicked instead of hit with a bat. The ball is pitched to the kicker by rolling it on the ground.

Dodgeball. Divide the group into two teams. Set up a playing field and divide it in half. Using soft rubber balls, players try to hit players on the other team. If a ball is caught, the player who threw it is out of the game. If a ball is bobbled and dropped, the player who drops it is out of the game. Play until one team has lost all its players. Make sure children aim for arms and legs, not the head.

Cranes and Crows. Divide the group in two and have the teams line up facing each other. Designate a safe zone for each team directly behind them at some distance. Name one team “Cranes” and the other “Crows.” Then yell out either “Cranes” or “Crows.” The children on that team must run to their safe zone without getting caught by the other team.

Ultimate Frisbee. Played like football with two teams, except instead of using a football you use a Frisbee. Once the Frisbee is caught, the player must stop and throw the Frisbee to another teammate.

Active Indoor Games

Balloon Volleyball. Divide the group into two teams. Set up a small playing field and have players sit in alternating rows by team. The team that has the last row on each side has that end as their goal. The object of the game is for each team to hit the balloon over the heads of the other team’s last row to score a goal. To make it more challenging, use more than one balloon at a time.

Warmer, Colder. Have a child leave the room. As a group, hide an object in the room. When the child comes back into the room, say, “warmer, warmer” when she or he gets closer

to the object, and “colder, colder” when he or she gets farther away from the object. Eventually the child should find the object.

Who Am I? Put a picture of a famous person on each person’s back, so they can’t see who it is. They must ask “Yes” and “No” questions of other players to find out who the celebrity is.

Fruit Salad Upset. Have the group sit in a circle. Give each child a name of a fruit, such as apple, orange, peach, and pear. Choose one child to sit in the center of the circle and one person to be the caller. The caller calls out a fruit. Anyone with that name must get up and run to another open space in the circle. Meanwhile the person sitting in the middle tries to steal a space in the circle. Whoever doesn’t get a space in the circle ends up in the middle. Continue calling out names of fruit.

Quiet Games

“I’m Thinking of . . . ” A child secretly chooses an object in the room and says to everyone, “I’m thinking of something that is . . . [color of the object].” The rest of the group must guess what the object is.

Wink. Prepare enough small slips of paper for everyone. Mark one paper with an X. Have children sit in a circle. Give each one a slip of paper. Whoever gets the X is It. Everyone else’s job is to figure out who’s It. It must wink at people without getting caught. If another player sees It wink at him or her, he or she must say, “I’ve been winked,” and step out of the game. The other players meanwhile are trying to figure out who is It. If they guess incorrectly, *they’re* out of the game.

Fictionary. One player looks up an unknown word in the dictionary and says the word out loud, then writes the definition for the word on a sheet of paper. Other players must write their own definition for the word. Their goal is to stump other people into thinking their definition is the right one. Collect the definitions and read them out loud. Have children vote on the one they think is correct.

Week #1

Welcome to *PrimeTime!*

Session Goal

Children will want to become involved in *PrimeTime*.

Session Description

Carnival-style games and activities create a welcoming, fun atmosphere. Parents or other caregivers, as well as children, can be invited to participate.

As You Prepare

1. Post *PrimeTime* promotional flyers at locations throughout the neighborhood: stores, libraries, schools—wherever you can get permission to put one up. You may also want to go door to door distributing flyers. As you meet children, or encounter a family with children, also give out **SONday'SCOOL SuperHeroes** Trading Cards, one to a child. Tell children that if they come to *PrimeTime* they can win more cards, and also trade for more. (For more ideas on recruiting children, see the *PrimeTime* Start-Up Manual.)
2. Decorate the room to look like a carnival, with balloons, streamers, and banners for each game.
3. Set up each carnival game as described on pages 3–4.
4. Prepare refreshments so they are ready to serve. In some communities, a carnival midway-style popcorn popper can be rented at a reasonable price.



- promotional flyers
- **SONday'SCOOL SuperHeroes** Trading Cards
- room decorations: balloons, streamers, banners
- game materials and prizes as suggested (pages 3–4)
- refreshments: popcorn, cookies, lemonade
- CD player and CD's of upbeat music
- name tags
- markers
- registration forms
- pens

As Children Arrive

1. Have some fun music playing to create a carnival atmosphere.
2. Welcome each child—and accompanying adult—and give each one a name tag.
3. You may prefer to wait until a substantial crowd arrives before starting the carnival games, or allow children to begin playing the games as soon as they get there.

Carnival Games

You may decide to do the carnival games one at a time or have them all going on at the same time. Also, you may want to allow each child to play each game only once, or several times. Be prepared to give a prize to each winner. **SONday'SCOOL SuperHeroes** Trading Cards make great prizes.

Wrapping Up

1. After children have had time to play all the carnival games, offer everyone some refreshments.
2. Introduce your leaders and helpers and talk about **PrimeTime**. Here's a possible script:

We hope you had fun today at our carnival. You may be wondering what *PrimeTime* is all about. It's a fun kids' club being held here after school during this whole school year.

We'll be playing games, singing songs, and learning lots of new things about ourselves and God. *PrimeTime* is great! We hope you'll join us.
3. Talk about the dates and times of the program and any other important details, such as transportation (if provided). Answer any questions parents or children may have.
4. Try to sign up children for the program while they are there, rather than hoping they will come back next time. Make sure a registration form is filled out for each child. (See the **PrimeTime** Start-Up Manual for a sample registration card.)

Carnival Games

Fish Pond

Preparation: Using masking tape, drape a bed sheet across a doorway to create a sight barrier between the children and the prize giver. Place one prize inside each small paper bag. Tie a clothespin to the end of the fishing rod line.

Play: Players “cast” the fishing rod line over the bed sheet as if they were fishing. The prize giver behind the sheet clothespins one of the paper bags to the line, then throws it back over the sheet. The child gets to keep the prize inside the bag.



- bed sheet
- masking tape
- small paper bags
- small prizes
- fishing rod and line
- spring-operated clothespin

Cookie Walk

Preparation: Print numbers 1 through 12 in large print on blank sheets of paper (one number per paper). Place the papers in a circle on the floor, number side up. Write the same numbers on small slips of paper and place them in the paper bag.

Play: Have one child stand on each sheet of paper. When the music starts playing, children are to walk clockwise around the circle. When the music stops, each child should stand on the nearest open paper (only one child per paper). Ask a child to draw a number from the paper bag without looking. Whoever is standing on that number wins a cookie. Return the number to the paper bag and play more rounds. You may want to limit how many cookies each child can win.



- blank sheets of paper
- marker
- paper bag
- small slips of paper
- music CD and CD player
- cookies

Beanbag Toss

Preparation: Cut four or five holes in the cardboard. The holes must be large enough for the beanbags to fit through. If you have mostly younger children, make the holes fairly large. Lean the cardboard up against a wall. Lay a strip of masking tape on the floor three to five feet from, and parallel to, the cardboard.

Play: Invite children to stand behind the masking tape line and try to throw the beanbags through the holes in the cardboard. If a child gets three in a row, she or he wins a small prize.



- three beanbags
- a large piece of cardboard
- a knife
- masking tape
- small prizes

(Continued on page 4)

Bowling for Prizes

Preparation: Set up pins in the proper formation for bowling. Lay a strip of masking tape on the floor about 10 feet from, and parallel to, the bowling pins.

Play: Children are to stand behind the masking tape line and roll the ball at the pins. They get two rolls to knock over all the pins and win a prize. Just for fun—and especially if the game seems too easy—modify the game to include crazy bowling rules such as: roll the ball between your legs; turn your back to the pins and roll the ball between your legs; sing a song while you roll the ball; and so on.



materials

- a child's set of bowling ball and pins (or make a set with soft drink cans and a tennis ball)
- masking tape
- small prizes

Other Possible Carnival Activities

Face painting

Relay races

Pin the tail on the donkey

Break a piñata

Name that tune

Clothespin drop (into a bottle)

Pie-eating contest

Tug-of-war

Water balloon toss

Week #2

Off to a Great Start!

Session Goal

Children will feel that they are welcome at *PrimeTime* and that they matter to God.

Key Verse

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me. Don’t keep them away. The kingdom of heaven belongs to people like them.” (Matthew 19:14)

Session Description

Children are introduced to each other and to the program through an icebreaker game and a Bible story.

Bible Background

Matthew 19:13–15

As Jesus was teaching and responding to one more of the Pharisees’ arrogant challenges, some people brought their children to Him, hoping He would touch the children and pray for them. A pesky introduction? That’s what the Twelve thought. But not Jesus. “Let the children come,” He said. In *The Message*, part of His rebuke to His disciples is expressed this way, in Mark’s version of the story: “These children are at the very center of life in the kingdom.” Love for children and ministry to them was at the heart of Jesus’ purpose. What *you* are doing, as you reach out to children who don’t know Him, brings joy to His heart!

All children are precious to God, who knows and loves each one. This session provides an excellent opportunity to let children know they are loved by God and welcome at



- “Meet me!” handout (page 10)
- posterboard
- marker
- CD player and CD’s of songs about God’s love
- *optional: SONday’SCHOOL Songs* CD and lyrics book
- balls (one per team of four or five children)
- pencils
- Bibles
- *optional: NEST Entertainment video Treasures in Heaven*
- masking tape



Every child should feel included, valued, and safe at *PrimeTime*.

PrimeTime—especially children who may not feel that way elsewhere.

As You Prepare

1. Spend time in prayer, asking the Lord to:
 - Help you make the most of this opportunity to show God's love.
 - Help you speak and act in the Spirit of Christ.
 - Help the children see something of Jesus in you.
2. Read Matthew 19:13–15 and consider what these verses mean to you and what they will mean to the children in the program.
3. Talk with your leaders and helpers about the rules for **PrimeTime** and the consequences if the rules are broken. Be sure your workers take a positive approach in establishing and enforcing the rules. (See the **PrimeTime** Start-Up Manual for information on positive discipline.)
4. Photocopy the “Meet me!” handout (one copy per child).
5. Using a marker, write the Key Verse in the center of a sheet of posterboard.
6. As the session begins, everyone will be focused on you. You set the tone for participation. Be ready to join enthusiastically in doing the things you ask the children to do, and to encourage all workers and children to do the same.

Praise Time

Play several children's praise songs, especially songs about God's love, and encourage children to sing along. The **SONday'SCOOL Songs** CD and lyrics book contain several appropriate songs; take a look at #21, “No Matter What,” and #13, “The Power of Love.”



idea

If you don't have enough children to divide them into teams, do this activity with the entire group together. If you don't have enough workers, one adult can oversee two or three teams for this activity.

Check-In Time

1. Divide children into teams of four to five, with a leader or helper for each team.
2. Begin by asking children to introduce themselves and share three things about themselves (for example, who is in their family, something they like to do, and a favorite food).

3. Play a simple name game to help everyone learn each other's names. Have the children sit in a circle. Gently roll a ball to a child and have the child say his or her name. Then she or he rolls the ball to another child, and that child says his or her name.
4. Once everyone has had a chance to say her or his name, make things a little more interesting by having children say the name of the child they are rolling the ball to, or say one thing they have learned about that child.

Prime Time

Getting Started

1. Bring all the children together.
2. Distribute a "Meet me!" handout (page 10) and a pencil to each child. Have them write their own name at the top of the sheet. Then give them about five minutes to go around the room, finding children who can honestly answer "yes" to a statement in one of the squares on the handout. They should sign their name in that square. The goal is to fill every square on the handout with a person's signature. Each child should sign only one square on each person's handout.
3. When everyone has finished, have children count the squares that have been filled on their handouts. This isn't a competition. It's just a great way for children to get to know one another—and to see how many other children they're getting to know! Collect the sheets to give back to children when they're ready to leave for the day.
4. Say: **Welcome to *PrimeTime*. We are so glad you came. If you hadn't been here, there might have been more squares that didn't get signed on each paper. Each one of you matters so much to us and to God.**
5. Talk a little about ***PrimeTime*** and what children can expect during each session.

Digging In

1. Ask: **How do you suppose I know that you matter to God?**



idea

If many of the children are nonreaders, read the statement in each square out loud and have children raise their hands if the statement applies to them.

video

Treasures in Heaven, in the NEST Entertainment series of Animated Stories from the New Testament, presents this intimate scene. Play Chapter 4, starting at 7:19 and stopping at 8:44. (Note that in the video Jesus says “Suffer the little children to come”; explain that that means “Let the little children come.”) To order, call 1 (800) 488–6900 or visit www.nestfamily.com.

2. Explain: **Over 2,000 years ago, God came and lived on Earth in the form of a man named Jesus. We are going to be learning a lot about Jesus. Jesus really loved children. Let me show you how I know that.**
3. Give each child a Bible. Talk briefly about the fact that the Bible is a book that tells people all about God. Explain how to look up verses in the Bible. Show children how to find Matthew 19:13–14. Invite a couple of children to read these verses out loud.
4. Ask: **What does this story tell you about how Jesus treated children? How do you think Jesus felt about children?**
5. Read Matthew 19:14–15a aloud. Invite everyone to imagine how it would have felt to be one of those children. How would it feel when the disciples wanted to send the children away? What about when Jesus said to let the children come? Encourage everyone to think of one word to describe how she or he would have felt.

Wrapping Up

1. Say: **Children are very special to Jesus. In fact, every single person in the world is very special to Him. At PrimeTime, we want you to know that you matter to us and you matter to God. We’ll be spending time getting to know Jesus as well as each other in the weeks ahead.**
2. Hold up the posterboard with the Key Verse on it. Explain that the Scripture reference means that this verse is in the book of Matthew, the nineteenth chapter, and it is verse 14. You may want to have children repeat the verse and the reference with you several times until they can say it without looking. Then have each child sign his or her name on the posterboard around the Key Verse.
3. Hang the posterboard with the Key Verse in a prominent place in the room in preparation for next week’s session. You might challenge the children to come next week with the verse memorized.
4. End by saying a prayer of thanks to Jesus for caring about each child in the room.

idea

Be prepared to award a small prize next week to each child who has memorized the Key Verse. A **SONday'SCOOL SuperHeroes** Trading Card makes a great prize!

Talk Time





Focus: The rules for *PrimeTime*.

1. Talk about the importance of having rules for *PrimeTime* so that everyone feels loved and respected.
2. Then use the word RULES to outline and talk about program rules. You may want to post these rules in a prominent place in the room as an ongoing reminder.
 - Respect everyone.
 - Use only good words.
 - Listen when others are speaking.
 - Enjoy yourself and help others to enjoy themselves, too.
 - Sit, unless it's time to move around.
3. Talk through each rule. Then briefly explain the consequences of not following these rules.
4. End on a positive note. Explain that you are setting rules because you care about each person and want them all to be safe. Encourage children to take their "Meet me!" hand-outs home to show to their families.



You are setting rules in order to keep everyone safe and to help everyone have a good time—because everyone matters to you and to God! Always talk about rules in a positive way.

Meet me!

I have a brother.	I have a sister.	I love school.	I am the oldest child in my family.	I own a dog.
 I love pizza.	I love chocolate.	I love birthdays.	I like to play sports.	I like to read.
I like to smile.	I like to watch TV.	 I'm left-handed.	I have brown eyes.	I love music.
 I love cats.	I like to sleep in.	I like snakes.	I have a best friend.	 I'm glad to be at PrimeTime .

PrimeTime Extensions

Use these extension ideas during Game Time. If your program runs five days a week, you may choose to use one of or more of these activities on a different day. As opportunity arises, talk about how the activity relates to the idea that God—and everyone at *PrimeTime*—cares about each child.

The Get to Know You Scramble

Give each child a sheet of paper to sit on, and have all the children but one sit in a circle. Have the remaining child sit in the center of the circle. The child in the center should shout out a description that might fit children sitting in the circle. For example, “Everyone who likes to play basketball!” or “Everyone who likes to eat pizza!”

Every child who fits the description must stand up and run to another open space (marked by a sheet of paper). The other children should remain seated. Meanwhile, the child in the middle should try to steal an open space, leaving a new person in the middle. Play several rounds.



- sheets of paper (one for each child)

The Name Game

Give each child a blank sheet of paper and a pencil. They should write their first name vertically along the left-hand side of the page. Then, for each letter in their name, they should try to think of as many words as possible to describe themselves. Give children about five minutes to do this.



- sheets of paper (one for each child)
- pencils

Then have children break into teams and share their answers. There are no winners, since children’s names include different numbers of letters. If a child has a very short first name, you might suggest that he or she include his or her last name as well.

“About Me” Books

Fold and staple several sheets of paper together to form small booklets. Have each child create a book “About Me” by drawing pictures or writing on each page. They could include information about their families, their interests, events that have happened in their lives, etc. Then have children share what they wrote.

To make the books even fancier, take a Polaroid photo of each child and glue it on the book cover. Instead of stapling the books together, lace them together with colorful yarn.



- sheets of paper (several for each child)
- stapler or yarn
- pencils
- crayons or markers

(Continued on page 12)

“I Like” Charades

Play a simple game of charades by having each child act out something she or he likes to do—without saying a word. The other children must guess at the activity. Children could also act out *things* they like, such as dogs, ice cream, or Christmas.

To make it even more challenging, have children act out the names of their favorite movies, TV shows, or songs.

Show and Tell “About Us”

Invite children to bring a show-and-tell item from home and a baby photo of themselves. Encourage each child to talk about the item. Post the baby photos, and invite children to guess who the person is in each photo.

Week #3

Who Is God?

Session Goal

Children will learn that God is great and God is good.

Key Verse

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
(Genesis 1:1)

Session Description

Children hunt for objects God created, act out part of the creation story, and learn about the character of God.

Bible Background

Genesis 1:1–25

The Bible begins with God. No one created God; God has always existed. If any other being or power were great enough to have created God, that being or power would *be* God. The Bible tells us that God created all things. God spoke and they came into being.

Although we cannot see God and certainly will never fully understand God, we can discover some things about Him from what He has made. The immensity of our universe and the infinite detail of the microscopic world speak of God's greatness, intelligence, creativity, and power. God's holy Word, and our own experience as believers, teach us that God is also good, loving, and kind. That's what this session is all about.



- a variety of objects God made (such as rocks, flowers, leaves)
- magazine pictures of things God made (such as animals of all kinds, mountains, sun, clouds, bodies of water)
- small slips of paper
- pen or pencil
- cellophane tape
- posterboard
- markers
- *optional*: "God made many things" handout (page 18), ½-inch three-ring binders or folders, colored crayons or markers, pencils
- CD player and CD's of songs that describe God
- *optional*: **SONday'SCOOL Songs** CD and lyrics book
- *optional*: name tags
- Bible
- chart paper
- masking tape

As You Prepare

1. For your own Bible study and preparation, look up verses that talk about the character qualities of God. Use a concordance to help you search for words such as love, faithfulness, merciful, righteous, justice, and kindness.
2. Read Genesis 1:1–25 so you are fully familiar with the events of the creation story.
3. Write words or phrases that describe God on small slips of paper and tape them to the back of the natural objects and magazine pictures you have collected. Here are some examples:

loving	kind
wise	strong
powerful	invisible
fair	lives forever
always with us	holy (without sin)
faithful	has always been
made the world	made people
knows everything	

Make sure you have at least two objects or pictures per child. Hide them around the room. If you have a large group of children, it's OK to put the same word or phrase on more than one item; but try to think of as many different words and phrases as possible.

4. Write the Key Verse on a sheet of posterboard.
5. *Optional:* Photocopy the “God made many things” hand-out (one copy per child).

Praise Time

Teach some songs that describe God. On the **SONday'SCOOL Songs** CD, the following songs are particularly fitting: #17, “Wonder of Wonderful”; #22, “Celebrate God’s Goodness!”; and #8, “Above Everything Else.”

Check-In Time

1. Divide the class into teams. Give each child a name tag, if the children are still learning each other’s names.



Check-In Time provides an opportunity to “check in” with children, to find out how they are feeling and if anything in particular is on their minds. This is most easily done in teams.

2. Review last week's topic. As you do, make sure that children who were not present last week don't feel left out. One way to do this is to call for volunteers to tell everyone what happened in the last session. Remind children that they learned that every one of them matters to God, and that Jesus especially loves children.
3. *Optional:* Have children recite last week's Key Verse from memory. *Be sure to cover up the verse on the posterboard.* Award prizes for memorization.
4. Ask: **What are some words you would use to describe God?**

Prime Time

Getting Started

1. Gather the children and say: **Today we're going to learn about a really BIG subject. We're going to learn about God. We'll start with a treasure hunt, because finding out about God is like finding a very rich treasure.**

Some natural objects are hidden around the room. *Natural* objects are things not made by people. Some of the things that are hidden are the actual objects themselves, and others are magazine pictures of things people didn't make. I want you to find two objects each and then come back and sit down. There is a word or group of words on the back of each object. Be sure you don't tell or show anyone those words yet. Ready? Go!

2. If there are extra objects left after each child has found two, ask for volunteers to find them as well. When all children have returned and are seated, ask each child to quickly tell about the objects found. They shouldn't say the words on the back yet.

Digging In

1. Say: **The objects you have in your hands and the things shown in the pictures were not made by people. Who do you think made these objects?** Allow several children to respond. They may or may not mention God.



idea

Again, a **SONday'SCOOL SuperHeroes** Trading Card makes a popular prize!



thought

Finding out about God is like finding a very rich treasure.



idea

If you have a large group, you might ask just a few volunteers to tell what they have found.



idea

If there's time, ask children for some of the words they used to describe God during Check-In Time.



idea

If there's time, and if children are able, have them write the words themselves.

2. Say: **The Bible tells us who made these things, and other things like them. Listen as I read the story to you.** Read the story of creation found in Genesis 1:1–25. As you read about each thing God created, encourage children to act out that thing. Stars and moon will be challenging; birds and animals will be fun. Allow children to use hand motions for such things as light, land, oceans, and trees.

3. Say: **The Bible tells us that all these wonderful things in our world are not here by accident. They were made by God. But who is God? What is God like?**

4. Say: **The Bible says that even before the world began, God was already there. Nobody made God. God has always been. And God will be forever. We can't see God with our eyes, but God is real. Let's find out more about God.**

I'd like you to look at the word or group of words on the back of your objects and tell us all what the words are. These are words that describe God.

As children share their words, write them on a sheet of chart paper. After each word or group of words is shared, talk briefly about what the words mean. (You will need to keep this list posted for "God Bingo," an extension activity; see page 19.)

5. Hold up the posterboard with the Key Verse. Tell children that these words come from the very first verse in the Bible: from the book of Genesis, the first chapter and the first verse. Have children say the Key Verse with you several times, until they have it memorized. Challenge children to review the verse at home so they can say it to you from memory next week. Hang the Key Verse posterboard in a prominent place.

Wrapping Up

1. Say: **When I look at all the words we've written, I think we can try to sum up what God is like in one sentence: God is *great* (flex your biceps) and God is *good* (give yourself a hug).** Have children repeat the statement and the motions with you several times.

2. If necessary, talk about the meaning of great (strong, mighty, powerful) and good (kind, loving, caring): **We can tell God is *great* because God made the whole world, and God holds the whole world together. But God is also *good*. God is someone who knows us and loves us, and someone we can get to know and love.**

**idea**

If you meet more than once a week, repeat the statement and the motions with children every day.

Talk Time

Option #1 Focus: Who God is.

1. Answer any questions children may have about God. Be sure to emphasize that children should feel free to ask any question at all. If children ask questions you don't know how to answer, that's OK. It's good for children to realize that God is so great and so good that no one can understand everything about Him.

If you need help getting this discussion started, ask: **If you could ask God just one question, what would you ask?**

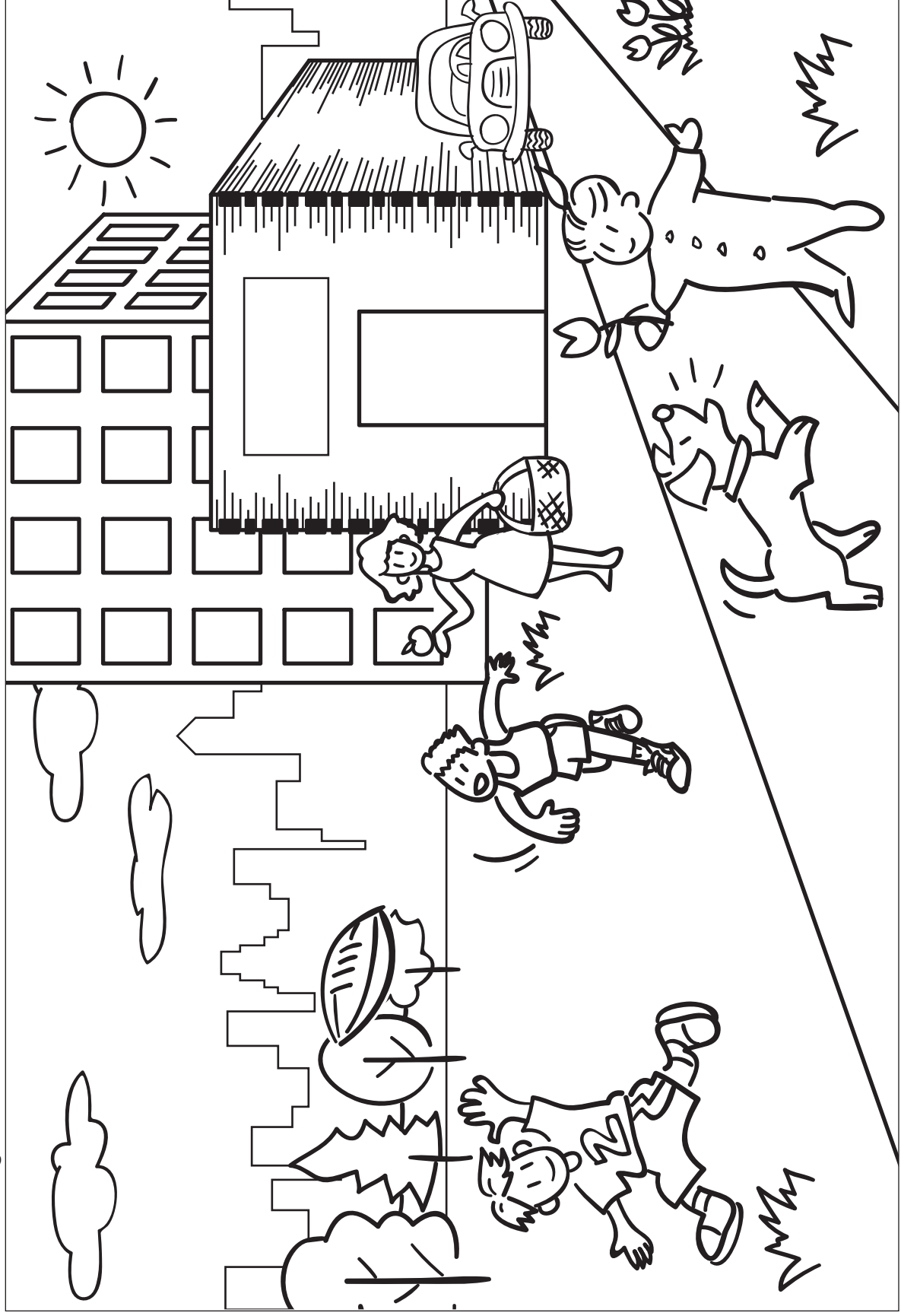
2. Close with a "popcorn" prayer. Start with the phrase, "Thank you, God, for making . . ." Encourage each child to say one or more things God made that they are thankful for. For example: sunshine, a brother or sister, dogs, food, or their own legs that allow them to run fast.

Option #2 Focus: Children start their own Big Story journals that they will add to throughout the year.

1. Give each child a copy of the "God made many things" handout (page 18) along with crayons or markers. Explain that they are to color only the things God made, not the things people made. For example, that means they can color the skin and hair of the people in the picture, but not their clothes.
2. Distribute three-ring binders or folders for the Big Story journal. Invite children to decorate the cover of the journal any way they like. Be sure they include their name on the cover as well as the title: "The Big Story." The "God made many things" handout is the first page of the journal. Store the journals for the children to use each week. They can be taken home after the last session of **PrimeTime**.

God made many things.

Color the things God made.



PrimeTime Extensions

These extension ideas can be used during Game Time at the beginning or end of the program day, or on another day of the week. Before each activity, remind children that **God is great** (flex your biceps) and **God is good** (give yourself a hug). After each activity, talk about what children have just experienced and how that relates to the week's learning goal.

God Bingo

Give each child a blank Bingo card and a sheet of paper. From the chart paper list of words describing God, have children fill in the squares on their card, writing one word or phrase in each square. They should use each word or phrase only once on the card. Rip the sheet of paper into small pieces that will cover a Bingo square.

Write each word or phrase describing God on a slip of paper and put the slips in a small paper bag. Once all the children have their Bingo cards set up, begin drawing slips from the bag. Talk about each word or phrase, asking children for their definitions and explanations. Then each child who has that word on her or his Bingo card should cover it with a blank piece of paper.

The first child to get all squares covered in a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal row is the winner of that round. You may or may not want to award prizes. Play as many rounds as time allows.



- list of words describing God (See page 16.)
- Bingo cards (one for each child)
- pencils
- sheets of paper (one for each child)
- slips of paper
- pen
- paper bag

Pictures of God

Give each child a blank sheet of paper and colored markers or paints and brushes. Ask them to draw or paint a picture of God. They may want to create a picture that shows God doing something or one that just shows what they think God looks like. There is no right answer here. If you have several older children, you might also ask them to write a description of God, a poem about God, or one question they would ask God if they could. Post the art productions as a "Pictures of God" exhibit.



- sheets of paper (one for each child)
- colored markers or paints and brushes
- pencils
- masking tape

Creation Slide Show

Divide the group into teams of five or six. Each team is to make a human slide show of the creation story, with each slide representing a day of creation. Teams are to act out each slide by freezing into positions that describe that day of creation as you read its description from the Bible.

(Continued on page 20)

For example, the first slide would start as you read verse 3, then verse 4 of Genesis 1. Team members would move into positions representing light and darkness, and freeze in those positions. The next slide would cover verses 6–8, and so on.

Children will enjoy seeing the different ways different teams come up with to represent the various aspects of creation. *Be sure to stop with verse 25; the creation of humans will be treated later in the program.*

Visiting Nature

Take a field trip to visit your local zoo, park, or nature area. Explore all the wonderful things God has created there. If a field trip isn't feasible, have children draw things God has made or write about them.

Week #4

Who Is Jesus?

Session Goal

Children will learn that Jesus is a person who was both God and a human being.

Key Verse

In the beginning, the Word was already there. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)

Session Description

Children learn who Jesus is by playing a word game and hearing the story of one of Jesus' miracles.

Bible Background

Mark 6:45–51

Jesus was God from the beginning (John 1:1), but He was also fully human. He faced the whole range of emotions and temptations we do (Hebrews 4:15). It's very likely that you could have passed Him on the street without realizing He was God, because He probably looked much the same as other men His age in that part of the world at that particular time.

Today's Bible story supports this view. Even though the Twelve had seen Jesus do some amazing things, they couldn't believe their eyes when He came out to their boat in the middle of the Sea of Galilee—*walking on the water!* That just isn't something you expect a human being to do. The disciples didn't realize that this One they were getting to know as Master and Lord and Friend had spoken the seas into existence, back before the beginning of time.



- "Jesus Name Game" handout (page 27)
- pencils
- "Jesus was a human being" handout (page 28)
- tub made of plastic or metal
- a variety of objects that will sink in water
- a variety of objects that will float on water
- sheets of blank paper
- marker
- posterboard
- CD player and CD's with songs about Jesus
- *optional*: SONday'SCOOL Songs CD and lyrics book
- *optional*: name tags
- masking tape
- Bibles
- *optional*: Big Story journals started in Week #3

On the other hand, because we can't see Jesus now—even though He is always near—it's sometimes easier for us to think of Him as God than to remember that He was also human. But an awareness of Jesus' humanity is important because it reminds us of how well He understands us, and because it makes it possible for us to accept His life as an example of how we ought to live. Likewise, the children you teach may be more ready to think of Jesus as God—to accept Him as a superhero—than to think of Him as someone who was Himself once a child. This session should help get that idea across.

As You Prepare

1. For your own Bible study and preparation, look up verses that talk about or demonstrate the fact that Jesus is God. Here are some possibilities.
 - Jesus has always existed: John 1:1, John 8:58, 1 John 1:1, 1 John 2:13–14.
 - Jesus is present everywhere: Matthew 28:20, Matthew 18:20. (However, when He was on Earth in a human body—before His resurrection, at least—He was restricted to being in one place at a time.)
 - Jesus knows everything: John 16:30, John 2:25.
 - Jesus is all-powerful: Revelation 1:8, Matthew 28:18.
 - Jesus forgave sins, which only God can do: Mark 2:5–7, Luke 7:48–50.
 - Jesus can grant eternal life: John 11:25–26, 1 John 5:11–12.
 - Jesus is one with God: John 10:30, John 14:9, John 8:19.
 - Jesus is God: Philippians 2:6, Romans 9:5.
2. Read Mark 6:45–51 so the story of Jesus walking on the water becomes real to you.
3. Photocopy the “Jesus Name Game” and “Jesus was a human being” handouts (one per child).
4. Fill a plastic or metal tub with water, and gather several items that will float and several that will sink. For example: a rock, a toy boat, a rubber duck, a paper clip, a coin, a wooden craft stick, an empty jar or bottle, a can of vegetables, a bar of soap, an ice cube, etc.

- Using a marker, write each word in the Key Verse on a separate sheet of blank paper. Also write the Key Verse on a sheet of posterboard.

Praise Time

Introduce some songs about Jesus. On the **SONday'SCOOL Songs** CD, consider #19, "Jump for Jesus"; #25, "Jesus Is Alive"; and #16, "Tell the World About Jesus."

Check-In Time

- Give each child a name tag, if the children—or you—are still learning names.
- Review last week's topic: God is great and God is good. Again, make sure any new children don't feel left out.
- Optional:* Cover up last week's Key Verse on the posterboard and have children recite it from memory. Award prizes for memorization.
- Introduce the idea of superheroes. Some children may be very familiar with the concept and may offer examples such as Spiderman or Batman. Be sure children understand that there are female superheroes as well as male—but also that these superheroes are "make-believe," not real. Then ask: **If you could be a superhero, what kinds of super powers would you like to have?**

Prime Time

Getting Started

- Say: **Today we're going to learn about a *real* superhero. But first let's play a game.**
- Give each child a pencil and a copy of the "Jesus Name Game" handout. Name five categories, one at a time, starting with foods and including cities or states, things found in a school, animals, pieces of clothing—whatever comes to mind. Children are to write the categories along the top of the handout, one per column.

Call attention to the name printed top-to-bottom at left: JESUS. On "Go," children are to try to fill in the blanks below each category with words that start with each letter



Give children name tags, if necessary.



The **SONday'SCOOL SuperHeroes** Trading Cards make the concept very clear—and include female superheroes as well as male.



If you have mostly younger children, play the game together as a group and have children call out their ideas.

of Jesus' name. For example, for foods, children might write: Jellybeans, Eggs, Sandwich, Uncooked cookie dough (you may need to get creative with the U), and Spaghetti. Silly answers—as well as serious ones—are OK!

3. Say: **We've been focusing on the word Jesus. Jesus is the superhero we're talking about today. But Jesus isn't like the make-believe superheroes we read about in comics or see in movies or on TV. He was a real person who lived 2,000 years ago—and He is also God.**

The Bible says, "In the beginning, the Word was already there. The Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1) The Word is Jesus, just like in our game. Last week we talked about the fact that even before the world began, God was already there. Well, Jesus was there then, too. But Jesus also came and lived on Earth as a human being. Some of the things Jesus did when He was here help us to believe that He is God.

Digging In

1. Say: **In just a few minutes, we're going to look at a story about one of the amazing things Jesus did while He lived here on Earth. But first I want to play one more game. It's called "Will It Float?"**

Call attention to the tub of water. As you hold up each floatable or sinkable object, ask: **Do you think this will float? Or do you think it will sink?** Then place the object in the water to get the final answer. Be sure as many children as possible have a chance to express their guesses as to what will float and what will sink.

2. Then ask: **What about people? Can they float? Can *you* float?** Depending on their beach or pool experiences, some children will know that humans can float on the top of the water—although some of us seem to find it much easier than others!

Say: **Suppose you tried to *walk* on the top of the water. What would happen then?** Most children will recognize that if they tried to walk on water, they would sink in.

3. Say: **Well, here's an amazing story about something Jesus did out in the middle of a lake.** Share the story of Jesus walking on the water from Mark 6:45–51. Give children time to react to the story. You might ask *why* Jesus walked on the water. Perhaps He thought the disciples were afraid and wanted to encourage them; after all, the wind was blowing against them, and the disciples had to row hard. Perhaps Jesus wanted to show His disciples that He had power over the wind and the waves.
4. Say: **Jesus did many amazing things while He was here on Earth. Besides walking on water, He healed a lot of sick people and even brought some dead people back to life. After Jesus died, He came back to life Himself. And He is *still* doing amazing things—because He is God. Jesus is the greatest superhero of all! We will be learning much more about Jesus here at *PrimeTime*.**



Jesus is the greatest superhero of all!

Wrapping Up

1. Give each sheet of paper containing one of the words in the Key Verse to a child. Have the children stand in order holding the papers so the whole group can read the verse. Repeat the verse over and over, each time having one child turn her or his word over so it can't be seen. Eventually the group will have the verse memorized.
2. Hang the posterboard with the Key Verse in a prominent place. Challenge children to review this verse over the week so they can recite it from memory next time you get together.
3. Say: **Jesus is God. But when He lived here on Earth, He was also a human being. He had feelings just like you and I do, so He understands how you and I feel. During Talk Time today, we'll be looking at some of the feelings Jesus experienced while He lived on Earth.**



Children may need some help with interpreting the verses and the pictures. For example, John 11:35 says that “Jesus sobbed”; some children may not be familiar with this word.

Talk Time

Focus: Jesus’ humanity.

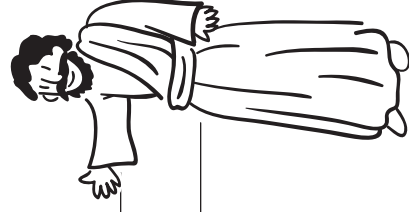
1. Give each child a copy of the “Jesus was a human being” handout, a pencil, and a Bible. Offering assistance as needed, have children look up the following verses: John 11:35; Mark 11:12; Matthew 21:12–13; John 19:28; John 4:6.

After each verse is read aloud, ask children how they think Jesus was feeling. Then have them identify the picture on the handout that shows that feeling and write the Bible reference and the feeling underneath the picture. If children are keeping Big Story journals (see Talk Time in Week #3), encourage them to add this page to their journals.

Key: John 11:35—sad (lower right); Mark 11:12—hungry (upper right); Matthew 21:12–13—angry (upper left); John 19:28—thirsty (lower left); and John 4:6—tired (center).

2. Explain: **Even though Jesus is God, Jesus also experienced life as a human being. He had all the same feelings we have. So He understands how you are feeling.** Talk about the fact that because Jesus is still alive, He not only knows our feelings, but He can help us feel better.
3. Answer any questions children may have about Jesus.
4. Close by praying together. Pray specifically to Jesus, asking Him to help each child deal with the problems they are facing and the way those problems make them feel. Tell children that they can talk to Jesus like this every day, any time of day. Talking to God or to Jesus like this is called praying.

Jesus Name Game



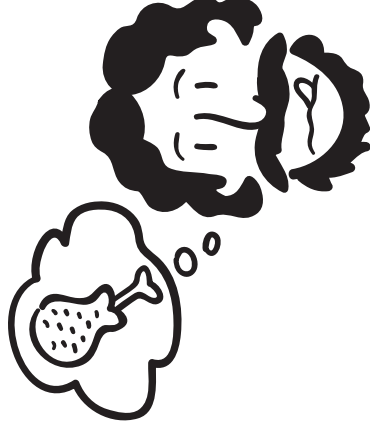
Category	FOODS				
J					
E					
S					
U					
S					

Jesus was a human being.



Bible verse: _____

Feeling: _____



Bible verse: _____

Feeling: _____



Bible verse: _____

Feeling: _____



Bible verse: _____

Feeling: _____



Bible verse: _____

Feeling: _____

PrimeTime Extensions

These extension ideas can be used at the beginning or end of the program day or on another day of the week. Before, during, or after each activity, remind children that **Jesus is God, but He was also a human being.**

Jesus Trivia

Set up a Jesus Trivia game. Divide the group into two teams, and have team members line up. Give each player a Bible, and review how to look up Bible verses. All answers must be found in the Bible. (Be sensitive toward children who have difficulty reading.

Make sure they're not put on the spot. You might pair children up, placing non-readers or poor readers with good readers.)

Ask the first player on team number 1 a question related to Jesus. Give the player the Bible reference (book, chapter, and verse) and a set amount of time to find the answer. For example, you might ask, "Where was Jesus born?" and give Matthew 2:1 as the reference.

If the player does not find the answer in the allotted time, the question goes to the first player on team number 2. If that player does not succeed, tell the answer and move on to another question with the second player on team number 1—and so on. Give a point for each correct answer.



- Bibles

Jesus on TV

Divide the group into teams of three or four. If possible, ask a leader or a helper to work with each team. Assign each team the story of one of Jesus' miracles. For example: Jesus walks on water (Mark 6:45–51); Jesus feeds the five thousand (John 6:5–13); Jesus heals a blind man (Mark 10:46–52); Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead (John 11:17–44).

Each team should read through their verses, then come up with a way to tell the story as if it were a TV show. They will tell the story using stick puppets inside a cardboard television set.



- Bibles
- drawing paper
- colored markers or crayons
- scissors
- cellophane tape or glue sticks
- craft sticks
- cardboard box
- knife

Stick puppets are very simple to make. Children can draw the characters on paper, color them with crayons or markers, and tape or glue them to craft sticks. To make the TV set, cut out a large hole in the side of a cardboard box to create the screen. Add dials and buttons to make the TV look real. The opposite side should be open so the children can reach in and move their puppets.

Be sure to give each team an opportunity to present their TV production to the rest of the group.

(Continued on page 30)

Jesus in the Movies

Pop some popcorn and show children a video of Jesus' life. Select a video that is geared to children and not too long. After the video, talk about the story. Give children time to share their impressions and ask questions.



materials

- video of Jesus' life
- VCR or DVD player
- TV or LCD projector and screen
- popcorn

Week #5

God Created People

Session Goal

Children will realize that God created them and is pleased with His creation.

Key Verse

How you made me is amazing and wonderful. I praise you for that. (Psalm 139:14)

Session Description

Children participate in an active game that points up the differences among people and hear the story of the creation of the first human beings.

Bible Background

Genesis 1–2

The first chapter of Genesis tells us that human beings, male and female, were made by God in the likeness of God. The second chapter describes the attention and care God gave to the creation of each of our first parents—forming a man out of the dust of the ground and breathing life into him, then forming the woman out of one of the man’s ribs and bringing her to the man. What a gracious reminder that each human being is *uniquely* made and loved by God! No two are exactly alike. Even identical twins have their own personalities, their own likes and dislikes.

Children may never have thought about the fact that they were created by God. Their parents gave them birth, of course, but God gave each of them a unique identity and personality. What the psalmist wrote about himself is true



- posterboard
- marker
- CD player and CD’s with songs about God the creator
- *optional*: SONday’SCHOOL Songs CD and lyrics book
- Bible
- *optional*: Polaroid camera
- masking tape
- *optional*: paper plates, markers
- *optional*: “God made me” handout (page 37), pencils and crayons or colored markers, Big Story journals started in Week #3



Each human being is uniquely made and loved by God.

for each of them: “You put me together inside my mother’s body.” (Psalm 139:13)

There may be children in your group who think their birth was a mistake or an accident. Be sure children understand that there is no such thing as a mistake or an accident in God’s creation. God created each of them—and is pleased with what He created.

As You Prepare

1. For your own Bible study and lesson preparation, read the first 18 verses of Psalm 139 and personalize the passage as an expression from you to God. Meditate on this psalm each day as you prepare for this session. Also spend time each day praying for the children in your group. Thank God for each child—by name—and for His wonderfully unique creation of that child.
2. Read the accounts of the creation of Adam and Eve found in Genesis 1 and 2. For now, don’t pay too much attention to those trees—that will come later. Just focus on God’s creation of humankind.
3. Write the Key Verse on a sheet of posterboard.
4. *Optional:* Photocopy the “God made me” handout.

Praise Time

Play and teach some songs about God the creator. “Praise the Lord in Heaven” (#1) and “Father, I Trust You” (#14) on the **SONday’SCHOOL Songs** CD speak directly to this theme.

Check-In Time

1. Review last week’s topic: Jesus is God, but He was also a human being. *Optional:* Have children recite the Key Verse from last week from memory. Be sure to cover up the verse on the posterboard. Award prizes for memorization.
2. Ask: **What’s one thing you really like about yourself? It could be something about the way you look, your personality, or maybe something that you’re good at.**



If there’s time, you might ask children to name two or three things.

3. Say: **Wow! You really are a great bunch of people!**

There are so many things to like about each one of you. And do you know what else? From what you have been saying, it seems that all the people in this room are really different from each other. Let's learn more about that.

Prime Time

Getting Started

1. Have everyone stand together in the center of the room. Then ask children to go to opposite sides of the room based on categories you give them. Encourage leaders and helpers to participate as well. Here are some examples:

- a. All the boys go to one side of the room.
- b. All the girls go to the other side of the room.
- a. People with brown or green eyes go to one side of the room.
- b. People with blue or hazel eyes go to the other side of the room.
- a. People who are right-handed go to one side of the room.
- b. People who are left-handed go to the other side of the room.
- a. People who like onions on hamburgers go to one side of the room.
- b. People who don't like onions on hamburgers go to the other side of the room.
- a. People who like to play soccer go to one side of the room.
- b. People who don't like to play soccer go to the other side of the room.
- a. People who like to get up early go to one side of the room.
- b. People who like to sleep in go to the other side of the room.

Use as many categories as you have time for. Make this a fun game, with children running from one side of the



idea

Focus on categories that will highlight the uniqueness of each person in a *positive* way.



God made each person different from all the rest.

room to the other. After each category, have children look to see who is standing with them on their side of the room.

2. When you've run out of ideas—or the children have run out of energy—have them sit down together. Say: **If we played this game much longer, you would probably find that there wasn't one person who was *always* standing on the same side of the room as you. That's because no two people are exactly alike. Each one of us, in some way, is different from everyone else.**

You might think that people just *happen* to be different from one another, but that's really not true. The Bible says that God created every person who has ever lived on Earth. And He made each one different from all the rest. Let me tell you the story of how it all started.

Digging In

1. Tell the story of the creation of Adam and Eve found in Genesis 1 and 2. Concentrate on the following verses: Genesis 1:26–27, 31; Genesis 2:7–8, 15, 18, 21–22. Explain as necessary and be prepared to answer questions. Emphasize these ideas:

- When the Bible says God made man, it means God made the first human beings.
- God made both the man and the woman “in His likeness”—to be like God.
- God made the man out of the dust of the ground, and God made the woman out of a rib taken from the man.



When God created each child in the room, He was very happy with the child He had made.

2. When you have finished telling the story, point out that after God made each of the things He placed on Earth, God looked at what He had made and saw that it was “good.” But after God made the man and the woman, He looked at them and saw that they were “very good.” God was very happy with the man and the woman He had made. And when God created each child in the room, He was very happy with the child He had made.
3. *Optional:* Take a Polaroid picture of each child and tape them up to create a “God Made People” exhibit. If you don't have access to a Polaroid camera, you could ask children to bring in photos of themselves.

Wrapping Up

1. Hold up the Key Verse so children can see it. Have them repeat the verse with you two or three times.
2. Then ask each child to stand up, one at a time. Have the group recite the verse again, replacing the word me with the name of the child who is standing.
3. Finish by having the whole group recite the verse together from memory. Post the verse, and challenge children to review it during the week so they can recite it from memory at the next session.

Talk Time

Option #1 Focus: Affirming the uniqueness and value of each child.

1. Have children sit in a circle. Give each child a paper plate and a marker. Each child is to write his or her name in the middle of the plate.
2. On “Go,” children pass their plates to the right. The person to the right is to write or draw one positive thing about the child whose name is on the plate. On “Go,” the plates are passed again, and the next person writes or draws something about the child whose name is on the plate. Offer assistance as needed. *Make sure children write or draw only positive things.*
3. Once the plates have gone all the way around the circle, give the owner of each plate a few minutes to review what people wrote or drew. Some children may need help with reading or interpreting the items on the plate.
4. Ask children if they believe all these nice things about themselves. Encourage children to believe that when God looks at each one of them, He is happy with what He has made. He loves them just as they are.
5. Close by praying for each child in the group by name, thanking God for the wonderful thing He made when He made them. If some children want to add to your prayers, encourage them to do so.

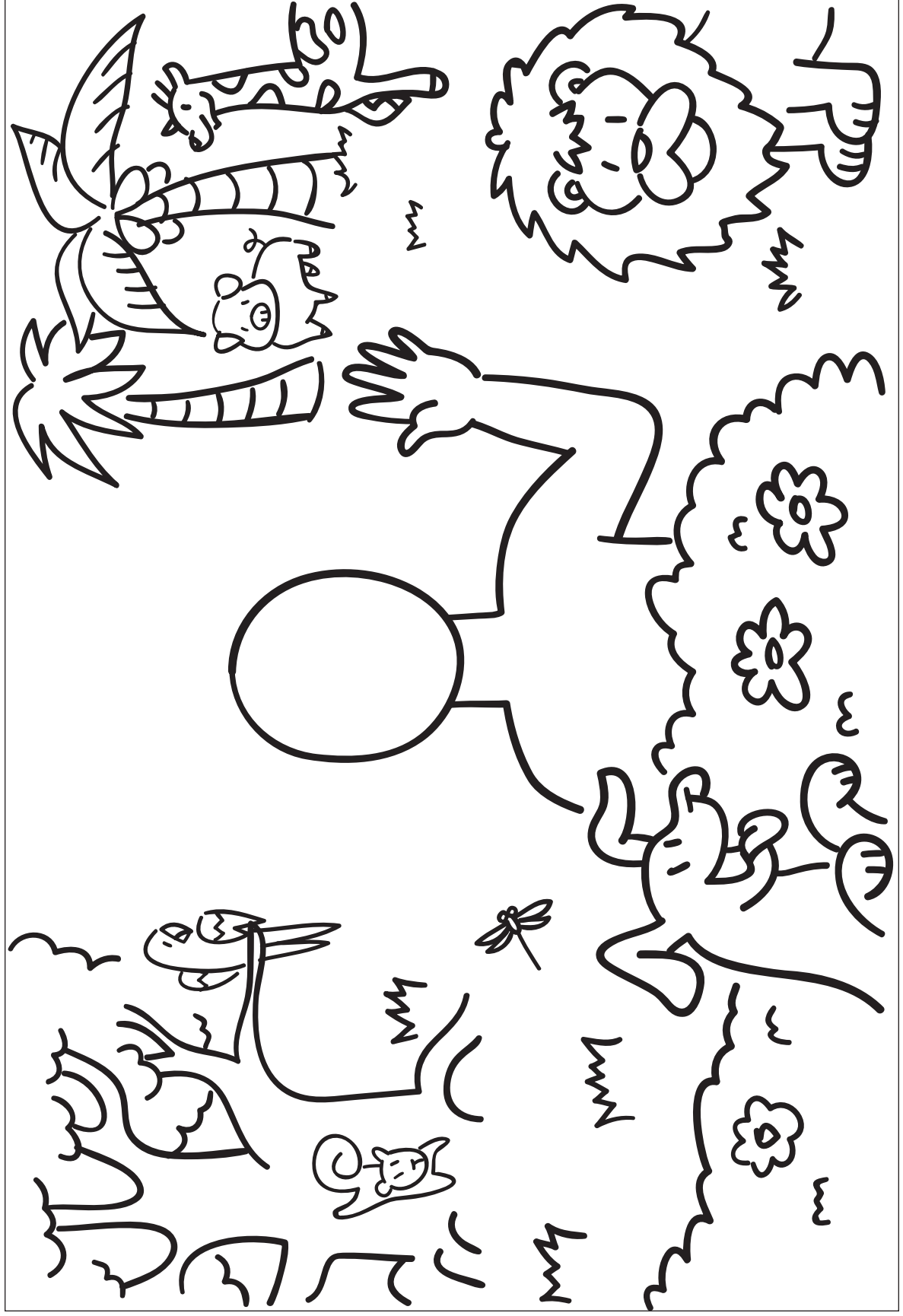


If children don't know each other well, have them write general things, such as “You have a nice smile” or “I’m really glad you’re here.”

Option #2 Focus: Children add to their Big Story journals.

1. Give each child a copy of the “God made me” handout. Explain that the garden shown in the picture stands for the garden where the first two human beings lived. The child is to put herself or himself in the picture by drawing his or her own face and hair. Then children can color the page and add it to their Big Story binder or folder.

God made me. God said, “That’s very good!”



PrimeTime Extensions

These extension ideas can be used during the program day or on another day of the week. Use the activities to remind children that **God made each person different from everyone else, and loves them just as they are.**

What's the Difference?

This game calls for sharp eyesight. Line children up in pairs facing each other. Have the children in each pair study each other for a few minutes, then turn their backs. Each person should then change three things about her or his appearance. The changes should be subtle, so the partner won't notice them *too* quickly. Then have the partners face each other and try to detect the changes.

Have children change partners and try the exercise again. Finish by talking about the wonderful differences in people.

Mirror Me!

Have children sit on the floor in pairs, facing each other. One partner is Number 1 and the other partner is the mirror. Whatever Number 1 does, the mirror must do. See how long the mirrors can mimic their partners without laughing. Then have partners switch roles. Afterward, talk about the fact that we sometimes try to be like others in ways that can cause us to lose track of who we are. We each need to be ourselves!

People Collages

Have children cut out a variety of faces from magazines and arrange and glue them on construction paper. Then add each child's collage to the "God Made People" exhibit. You'll end up with one big collage of faces representing the great variety of people God has created.



- old magazines
- scissors
- construction paper
- glue or glue sticks
- masking tape

Celebrity Interviews

Pair children up and have them find out as much as they can about each other by asking questions. (You may want to give them a series of suggested questions.) Then have each child pretend to be his or her partner and introduce herself or himself to the whole group. The child shouldn't mimic or make fun of the partner, but should try to act like the partner and share details learned from the interview.

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A People Scavenger Hunt

Go on a people scavenger hunt. Divide the group into teams, with at least one leader or helper assigned to each team. Give the teams a list of people they need to find and get signatures from—for example, a mother, a gas station attendant, a person with blue eyes. The team might walk around the neighborhood looking for these people or, if you don't think it will cause too much disruption, do their hunting at a nearby shopping mall. Be sure children stay with their leader at all times and are very respectful toward anyone they meet.

