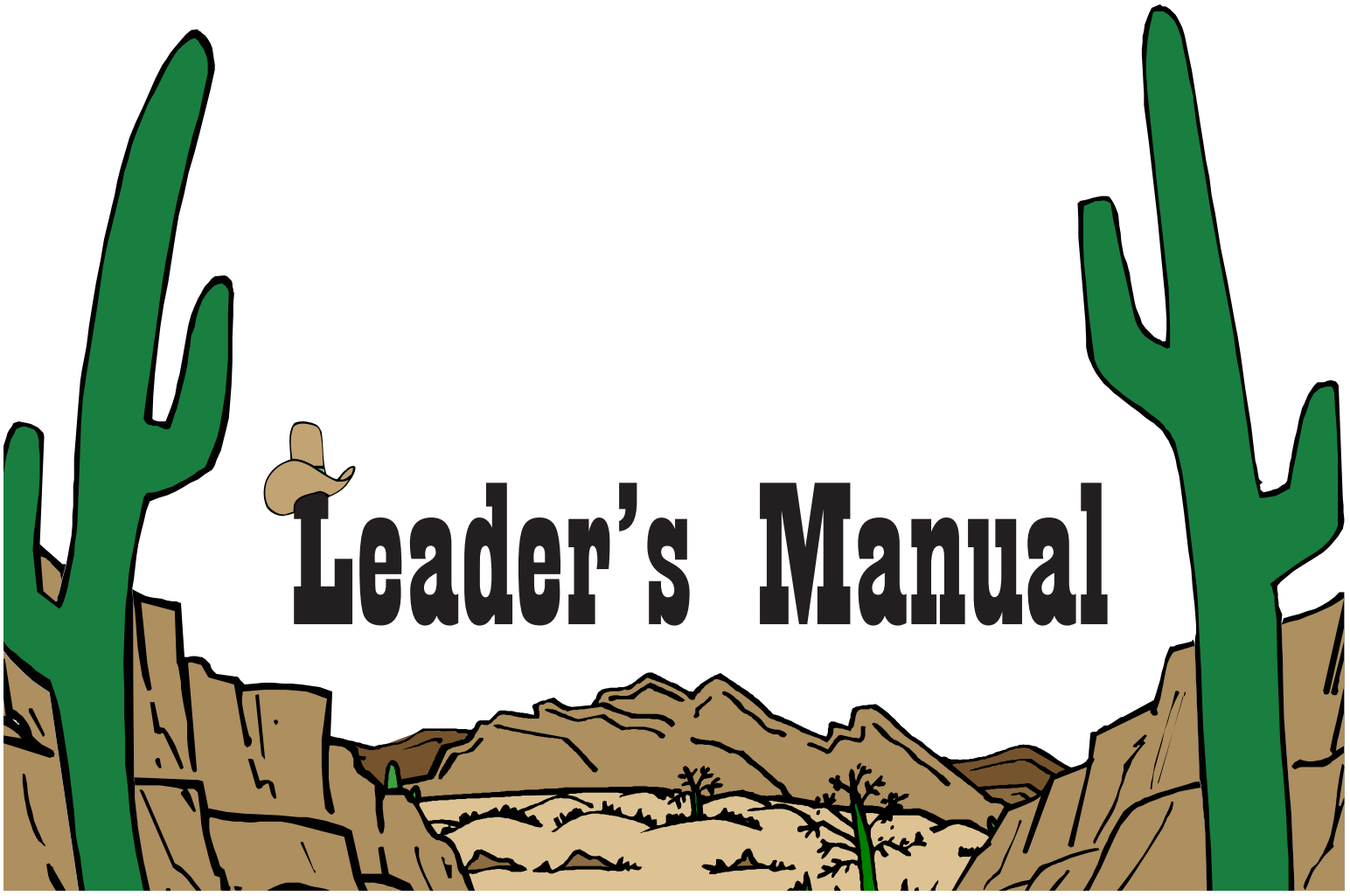
Sheriff's Hacienda

An evangelistic VBS from The Children Count



Leader's Manual

Sheriff's Hacienda

An evangelistic VBS

Welcome to the "Sheriff's Hacienda"!
Are you ready to put on your cowboy hat and kick up yer boots for some real rip-roarin' fun? You guessed it! It's time to decorate your church with a cowboy theme, put some balloon cacti on the walls, and turn up the speakers with country music. Everyone will get in the "cowboy" mood with the new country-western tunes that help them learn each lesson. The steps to the songs will be easy to learn with line-dancing or folk dancing, Western-American style!
This vacation Bible school has an evangelistic focus. Your students will learn stories from the life of Jesus Christ each day in an exciting way with play dough. Over the week they will discover God's ultimate plan for salvation with five key Bible verses from the book of Romans (known in some countries and denominations as the "Roman's Road"). Each lesson is supported with a super-fun drama/skit that will kick-off each day of your VBS with laughter. Dress up your three actors to play the coyote, eagle, and jackrabbit and give them extra time getting to know the students before and after your VBS. (Everyone will love Coyote Bill, Eaglebert, and Sheriff Justy by the end of the week!)
Decoration will be easy with bales of hay or straw, cacti everywhere, red checkered table clothes, burlap, bandanas, hanging paper lanterns, cowboy hats and of course a jail at the front of your church! You can make decorating even easier by picking up our Cactus Canyon scenery backdrop for your church's stage. (Or of course, you can download it off our website and have it printed in your city!) For extra fun, don't forget to set up a general store (old-western style) where everyone from your church can pick up some candy or even lunch after your VBS.
The kids will enjoy being herded into the "Class in the Corral" where they will vote on the topic of the day, enjoy working through puzzles in their handouts, and learn the memory verse with a fun game. They head out of the corral with the lesson on a brand-new bracelet. It won't be hard to share what they have learned each day with their parents and friends since it will be on their wrists! From there, they head over to "Canyon Crafts" where they will get sticky making a new craft to take home each day. The "Old West Games" will also be a favorite because children always love competition. Each team will be easy to spot with their brightly colored bandanas. No one will forget to stop by the "Hacienda Restaurant" either for some juicy or prickly cowboy snacks.

This brand-new VBS was written by the creative team at "The Children Count" and, as always, is available completely free to download, print, and use. We have written this VBS, complete with songs, actions to songs, crafts, snacks, hand-outs, and more, so that YOU can reach children in your community. Take this opportunity to evangelize because people need to hear the gospel! How can they, if someone doesn't put on a VBS? *"And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"*
Romans 10:14b
We are praying for you and your whole team. Have a good time. God is with you.
Yeehaw,
Kristina Krauss





Theme Verse

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
Romans 5:8





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Overview

Lesson



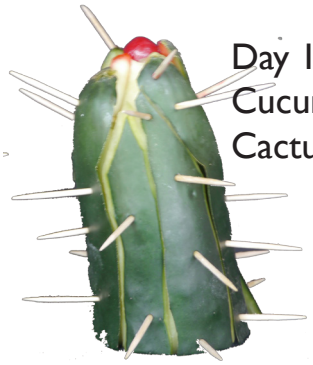




Lesson 1

Wanted

Matthew is Called



Day 1 Snack:
Cucumber
Cactus

Verse

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
Romans 3:23



Day 1 Craft:
Boot

Lesson 2

Jailed

Woman is Caught in Adultery



Day 2 Snack:
Cupcakes
with Cacti

Verse

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
Romans 6:23

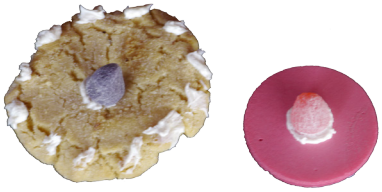
Day 2 Craft:
Lantern



Lesson 3
Bailed

Jesus Dies on the Cross

Day 3: Snack:
Cookie Cowboy Hats



Verse

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
Romans 5:8

Day 3 Craft:
Molded
Plaster of Paris



Lesson 4
Branded

Zacchaeus Climbs a Tree

Day 4 Snack:
"S'mores" on a Stick



Verse

"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."
Romans 10:9

Day 3 Craft:
Cowboy Tie
(Bolo style)



Lesson 5
Deputized

The Disciples Become
Fishers of Men

Day 5 Snack:
"Trail Mix"



Verse

"And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"
Romans 10:14b

Day 5 Craft:
Wall Hanging



How to Use this Material



How to Invite

Many churches really get excited as they start inviting the community to their Vacation Bible School. One idea is to have a parade down a main street with all your teachers dressed up as cowboys, passing out invitations, or giving away candy. Some churches even make up different floats (decorated vehicles) to drive in the parade!

The most obvious way to invite is to put up posters around the community at local grocery stores or in the metro, inviting people to your VBS. You can also stand in public areas and hand out flyers.

For the purpose of inviting, we have created a full-color invitation poster (11 x 17 inches), a two-color invitation poster (11 x 17 inches), and small flyers (5.5 x 8.5 inches). These are available to download from our website and print or to purchase already printed (in Spanish).

Don't forget to include an invitation campaign for your own church body, letting everyone know that a special program is coming soon. You could also hand out five flyers to each family in your church and ask them to invite their neighbors to the VBS.

The main logo, artwork, and clipart are available on the website for you to make other invitation tools like postcards, invitation banners, printed T-shirts, or door hangers.

Go all out! Kids need to hear the good news, and your VBS is a perfect place for that to happen.

Check out our Promo Pack!



Getting Volunteers

We recommend you recruit volunteers specifically for each job you will need for your VBS. For example, you will be needing three actors who are willing to not only act silly on stage every week, but are also willing to wander around your VBS and hug children all day long. This requires a different set of skills than the person you will recruit to run your Hacienda Restaurant.

Start running promotion for your VBS months in advance, making the whole church excited about the upcoming program. However, when it comes to actually recruiting each person, we recommend you list out the jobs you need and think of people you know that would be good for each job. Then approach each person with a specific job opportunity. One idea is to have them sign up on a list that has all the jobs, letting others can see who has signed up to help. You could also start with men who you know will say, "Yes," so that men can see that there will be other men participating, and will be encouraged to get involved. Choose people based on their gifts and skills in any given department.

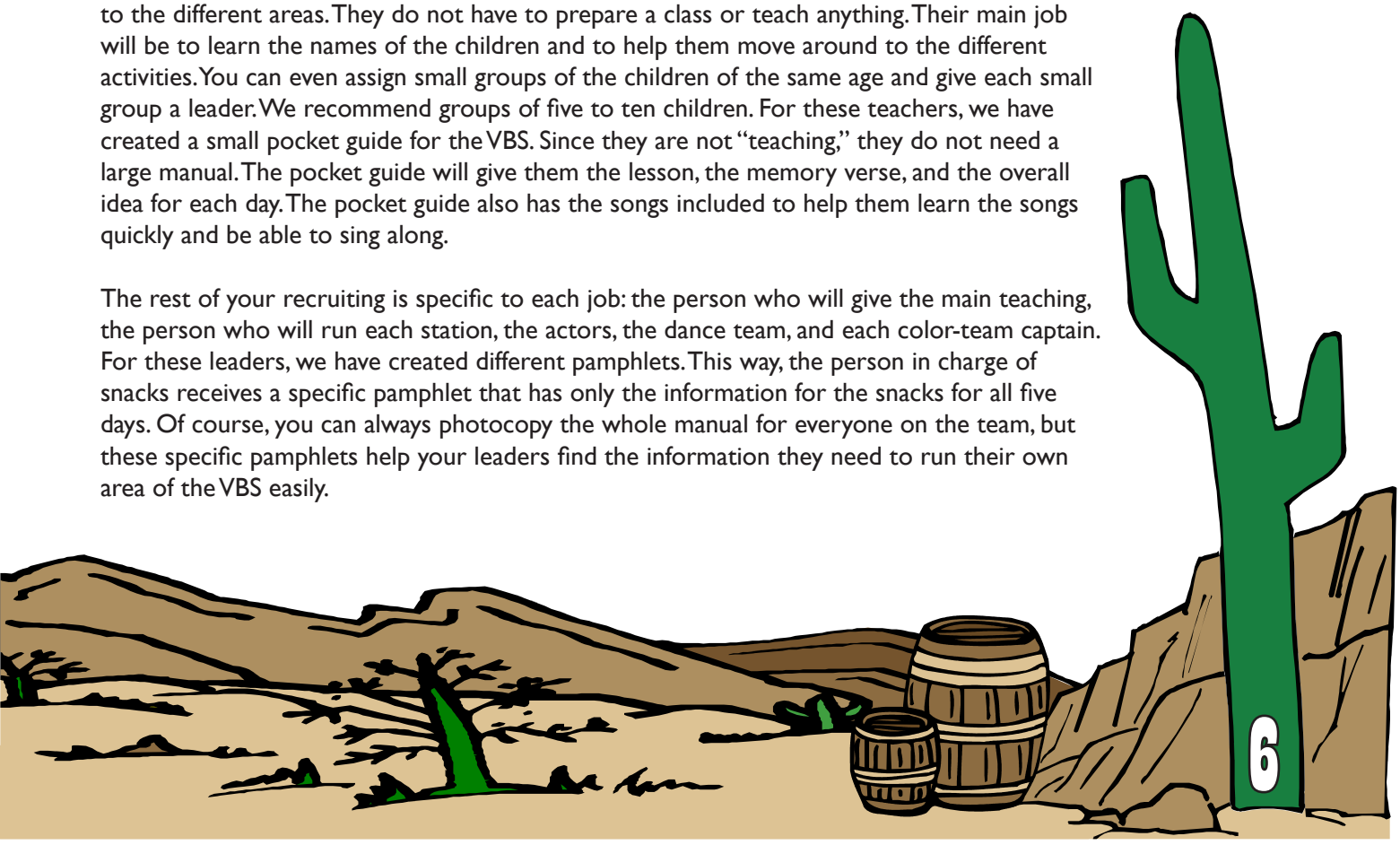


Some people may not be used to helping in children's ministry, but when you approach them about a specific job, they are willing to sign up. Participating in a VBS is a great way to show people in your church how much fun it can be to work in children's ministry! Not all children's ministry workers are teachers. We need the whole Body of Christ to get involved in raising up the next generation!

Placing Teachers

We recommend you recruit a whole bunch of helpers for your VBS to travel with the children to the different areas. They do not have to prepare a class or teach anything. Their main job will be to learn the names of the children and to help them move around to the different activities. You can even assign small groups of the children of the same age and give each small group a leader. We recommend groups of five to ten children. For these teachers, we have created a small pocket guide for the VBS. Since they are not "teaching," they do not need a large manual. The pocket guide will give them the lesson, the memory verse, and the overall idea for each day. The pocket guide also has the songs included to help them learn the songs quickly and be able to sing along.

The rest of your recruiting is specific to each job: the person who will give the main teaching, the person who will run each station, the actors, the dance team, and each color-team captain. For these leaders, we have created different pamphlets. This way, the person in charge of snacks receives a specific pamphlet that has only the information for the snacks for all five days. Of course, you can always photocopy the whole manual for everyone on the team, but these specific pamphlets help your leaders find the information they need to run their own area of the VBS easily.

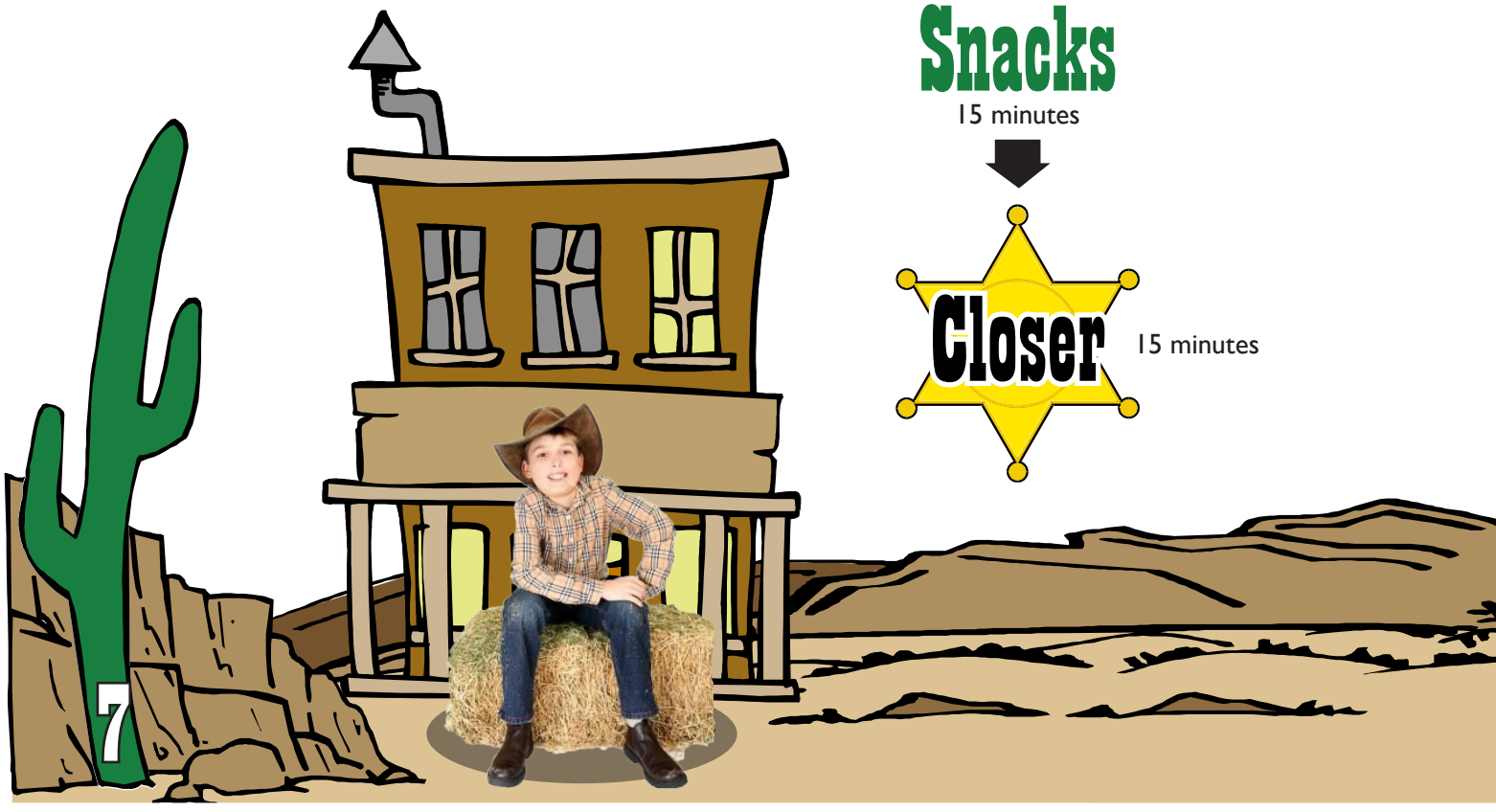


A Rotation VBS

This VBS is written to be used with a rotation schedule with three stations. This means that you break your group up into three groups, and those groups rotate through the three provided stations. Each station lasts thirty minutes, and each station is repeated three times so that each group goes to each station once each day.

You can divide your group up however you want, but we recommend you split them up by ages. This means that each group will NOT be the same size. However, it will make it easier for the staff to do each station for a specific age-group each rotation. You can use whatever age separations you normally use or use what we have set up for our student books.
Our student books for VBS (loose student pages this year) are divided into these three age-groups:
"Preschool" 4-6 years old
"Elementary" 7-9 years old
"Pre-Teen" 10-12 years old
We recommend that you use your adolescents (13+ years) as young helpers for your VBS. You can also provide a nursery department if you choose for 1-3 year-olds.





Opener

MUSIC	DRAMA	SPEAKING	SPEAKING/PLAY DOUGH	PRAYER
12	8	7	13	5

Open up your VBS with some fun music with actions. We recommend you prepare a group of young people who can practice ahead of time and learn all the actions to the songs. Have them dress cowboy style, and you will have yourself a really fun kick-off every day.
Our DVD package comes with the CD of music, the DVD with videos of how to do the actions, and a booklet with all the words to the songs. The words to the songs are also in the teacher's pocket guide, making it easy to give the songs to everyone on your whole dance team. All the music and dance videos are available online, allowing you to learn the songs and to use them regardless of what country you are in.

After the music is finished, the drama/skit follows, creating lots of laughter. You can plan ahead the three actors who will play the parts of the sheriff, the coyote, and the eagle and have them practice for each day's drama. Many churches get really involved with the costumes, making the whole VBS more fun.

After the drama is the main teaching. Your students are still all together in your main room. You want to start sharing with them the principles, and then half way through the lesson, it's time to pass out play dough! That's right. This year we have written the lessons so that your students will enjoy playing with play dough right there in your main room! Prepare several large batches of play dough ahead of time, and then separate the dough into small balls, one for each child. Place each small ball in a small plastic bag. This will make it very easy and quick to pass out all the play dough. As you tell the Bible story, they will make shapes with their hands to represent different parts of the story. At the end of each story, you will want to collect all the play dough in the same bags as quickly as possible. Prepare some ushers ahead of time, or have all your leaders ready to help you collect all the play dough. The final part of the main lesson is the prayer time. This is done best with some soft music playing in the background, and with no play dough left in the room. You can use "Amazing Grace" from our CD with a country twang.
That wraps up the morning session. The timing for this opening session could be 12 minutes for music, 8 minutes for the drama, 7 minutes for speaking, 13 minutes for speaking with play dough, and 5 minutes for prayer. When you are finished, play some peppy music as the children move to get into their teams.





Four bandana colors for four teams

Teams

Competition can be a really fun part of your VBS, but it is totally optional. In order to keep the groups even, divide each age group into four groups. Bandanas are an easy way to show which team each child belongs to. For example, you could have the blue team, red team, yellow team, and green team. Give each team a fun, creative name. Each age group would then have children who were a part of each of the four color teams. Likewise, each of the four teams would have some children from all ages included.

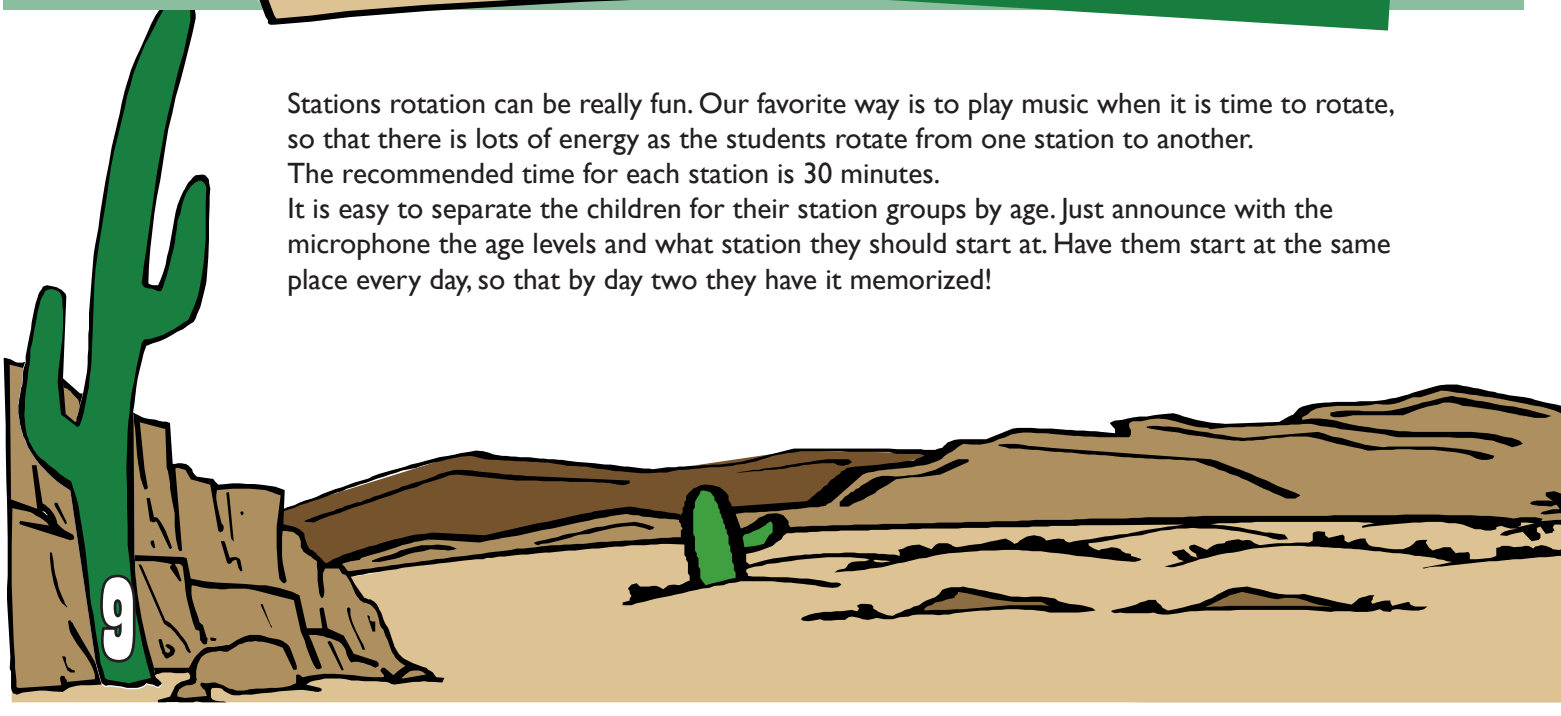
Assign a captain for each team to lead their team time. Each day after the opening session, they can take 5-10 minutes to prepare a "cheer" for their team or a cool march. They can pray together and talk about strategies to win. We recommend that you have these team meetings in your main room, separated into the four corners of the room, allowing each team to hear each other practice. It will create more energy. This time only needs to last 5-10 minutes before blowing a whistle or playing music to tell them to head to their stations.
Then again at the end of the day, have the four team leaders up on stage for the closing ceremony. Allow them to present team cheers then announce which team is ahead in points.

The easiest area to assign points is the "Old West Games." But you can also have teachers take notes of which students are very well behaved, help clean up, are kind to others, or who help the younger students. These children can be awarded extra points to help their team get ahead.

Prepare some sort of reward for the team that wins at the end of the week!

Stations

Stations rotation can be really fun. Our favorite way is to play music when it is time to rotate, so that there is lots of energy as the students rotate from one station to another.
The recommended time for each station is 30 minutes.
It is easy to separate the children for their station groups by age. Just announce with the microphone the age levels and what station they should start at. Have them start at the same place every day, so that by day two they have it memorized!

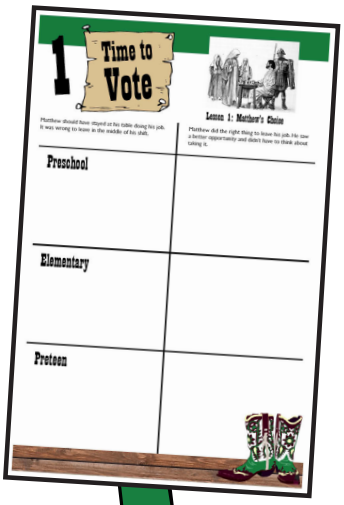


Class in the Corral



Decorate Your Station
Decoration for this station would be really fun if you actually had the class in a fenced area with the sign above saying "Class in a Corral." Put some hay on the ground or bring in some hay bales for seating.

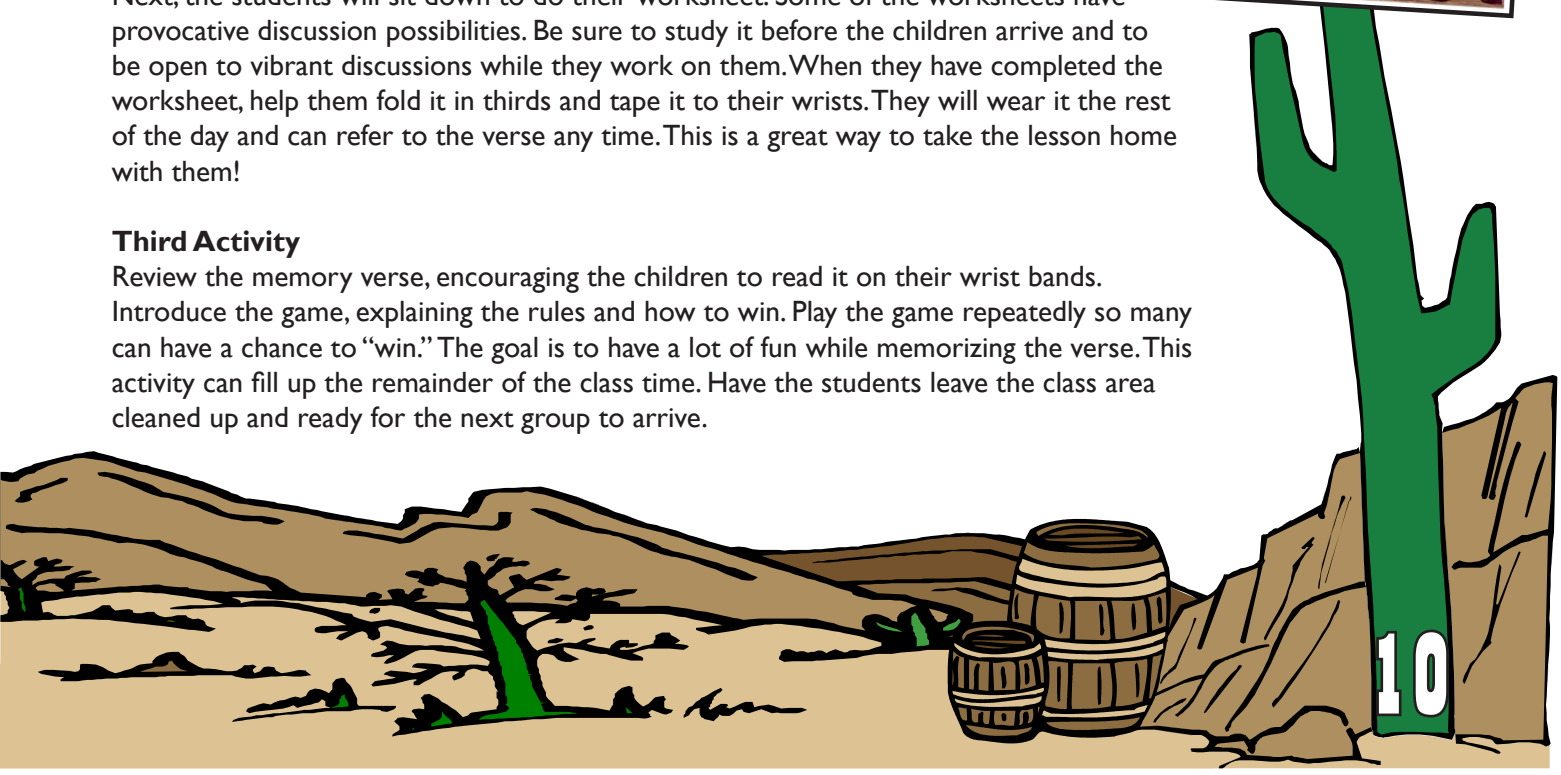
Pre-class Preparation
Before children arrive, hang up the voting poster for the day. Prepare a blank sheet of paper and tape to be able to cover the area where each age group voted on their opinion of the Bible story. The goal is to let each group decide for themselves and not be influenced by votes from earlier groups. Have pencils or crayons ready for students to work on their worksheets. Prepare any supplies that will be needed for the memory verse game that you plan to use. It would enhance the fun for the students if you plan for some prizes for winners occasionally.



First Activity
When students come in, gather them around the voting charts and introduce the question and the two possible choices. Allow a few minutes of discussion about the Bible story and what it would feel like to be there. Discuss what choices the students would have made. Each child will sign the chart in the section for their age group, selecting what they would have done or what opinion they would have had if they were there when the story happened. (They can also use stickers for voting if you choose.) You can give the finished chart to the VBS leader to show the children how everyone voted and which choice won the most votes for the day. This could be a part of the closing group time to reinforce the Bible story and make it personal.

Second Activity
Next, the students will sit down to do their worksheet. Some of the worksheets have provocative discussion possibilities. Be sure to study it before the children arrive and to be open to vibrant discussions while they work on them. When they have completed the worksheet, help them fold it in thirds and tape it to their wrists. They will wear it the rest of the day and can refer to the verse any time. This is a great way to take the lesson home with them!

Third Activity
Review the memory verse, encouraging the children to read it on their wrist bands. Introduce the game, explaining the rules and how to win. Play the game repeatedly so many can have a chance to "win." The goal is to have a lot of fun while memorizing the verse. This activity can fill up the remainder of the class time. Have the students leave the class area cleaned up and ready for the next group to arrive.



Canyon Crafts

Crafts are a fun part of any VBS. We have chosen some crafts and prepared craft kits available in Mexico, Guatemala, and Venezuela. You can still purchase from other countries, but international shipping costs from Mexico to your country may make it more cost-productive for you to create the crafts in your country instead. We have provided the designs and patterns for all our crafts online, allowing you to download and prepare your crafts ahead of time for your VBS.
Be sure to let the children get messy and to show them lots of love!

Old West Games

This will be a favorite station with two games provided each day for lots of fun. Don't forget to keep track of which color bandana wins during each rotation to announce at the closing ceremony of each day. Have fun!

Extra Idea



Horse Snack

Horses are loved by all children. These are special decorations on the top of cupcakes, however, they could stand alone as a fun snack.
Start with wafer cookies and use frosting to attach the head and neck as shown. Use a piping bag or a plastic bag with a tiny hole in the corner to squeeze frosting onto the cookie. Swirl a mane and tail onto the cookie with white frosting. The nose, eyes, and ears are chocolate frosting. If the finished horse is being pushed onto a cupcake, some sprinkles add a fancy touch.

Extra games



Sack Race

If you can find big sacks (like flour sacks, potato sacks, gunny sacks, etc.), a sack race is lots of fun.



Balloon Stampede

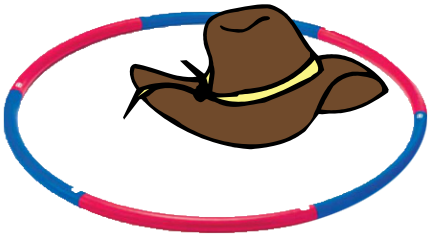
Fill your play area with balloons. Then set the children loose on a balloon-popping stampede. Fill the balloons with prizes such as cowboy stickers and temporary tattoos prior to inflating. Once the stampede is over, kids can go back and collect the prizes.



Balloon Stomp

Tie a balloon on the ankle of each child. Their goal is to try to pop the other children's balloons without getting their own balloon popped. The winner is the person who still has a balloon tied to his/her foot.

Cowboy Hat in the Ring Toss



Place a hula hoop on the ground. Have your little cowboys line up behind a line and try to toss their hats into the ring. (Or have a few hats available for the game.) Award a prize to players who land their cowboy hats inside the hula hoop. You can also draw a large bull's-eye target on the lawn and have the player whose hat lands closest to the bull's-eye win the game.



Photo Shoot Ideas





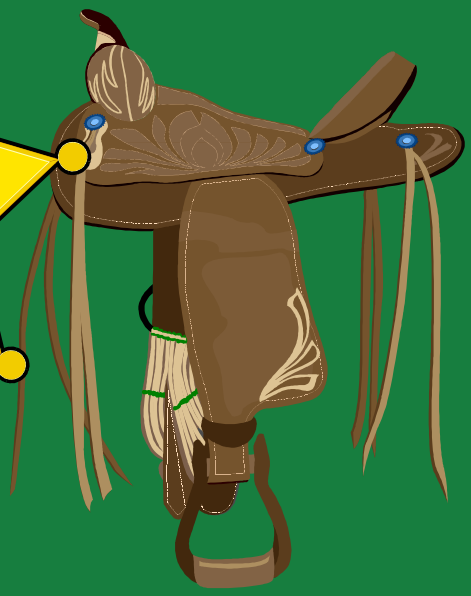




Let's have a photo opportunity for children and parents! You can make this VBS a special occasion that they will remember for years.



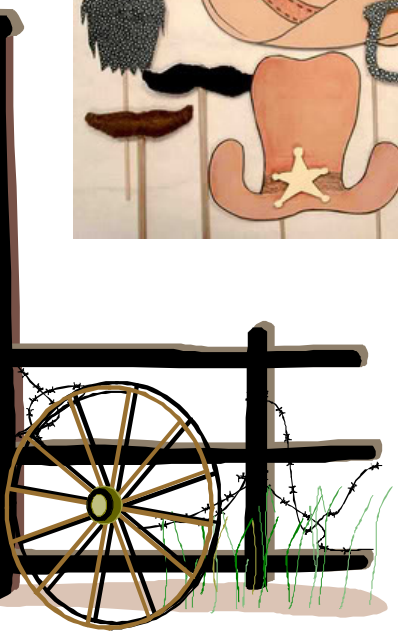
Yes, girls do look cute with a mustache!

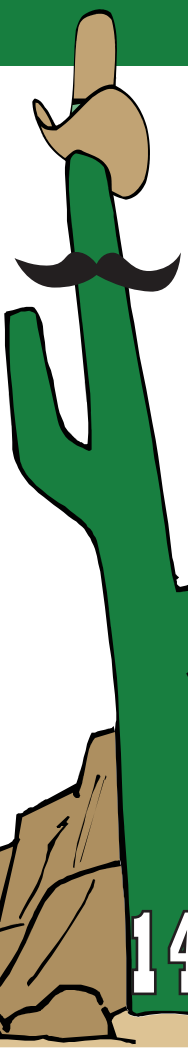


These are on a stick, ready to use as drama props or perfect for your photo booth.







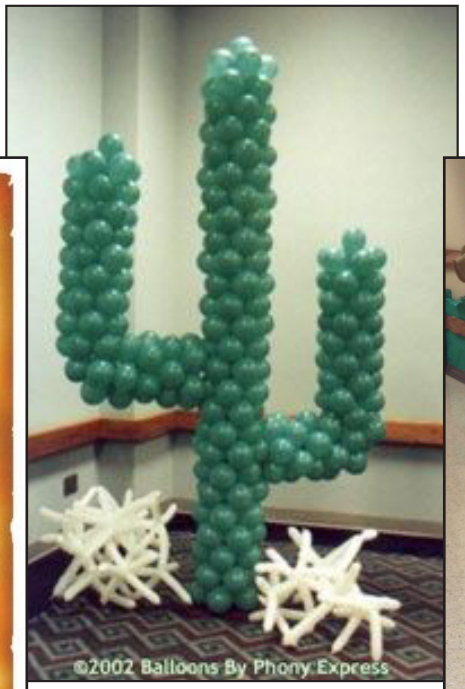


Decoration Ideas



Welc

Set the atmosphere of excitement for your VBS with a huge decoration made from balloons.
Follow the colors and arrangement as shown in the picture.
Does it look like it will take a lot of hot air? Perhaps when you have your teacher's meeting you can have each volunteer blow up some balloons to help and also set a tone of decorating to the fullest. They will catch your enthusiasm and decorate their own area in the same manner.







come!

The theme for day two is jailed. Be ready with this idea.

Western-style direction signs add to the fun, the anticipation, and the cowboy atmosphere.



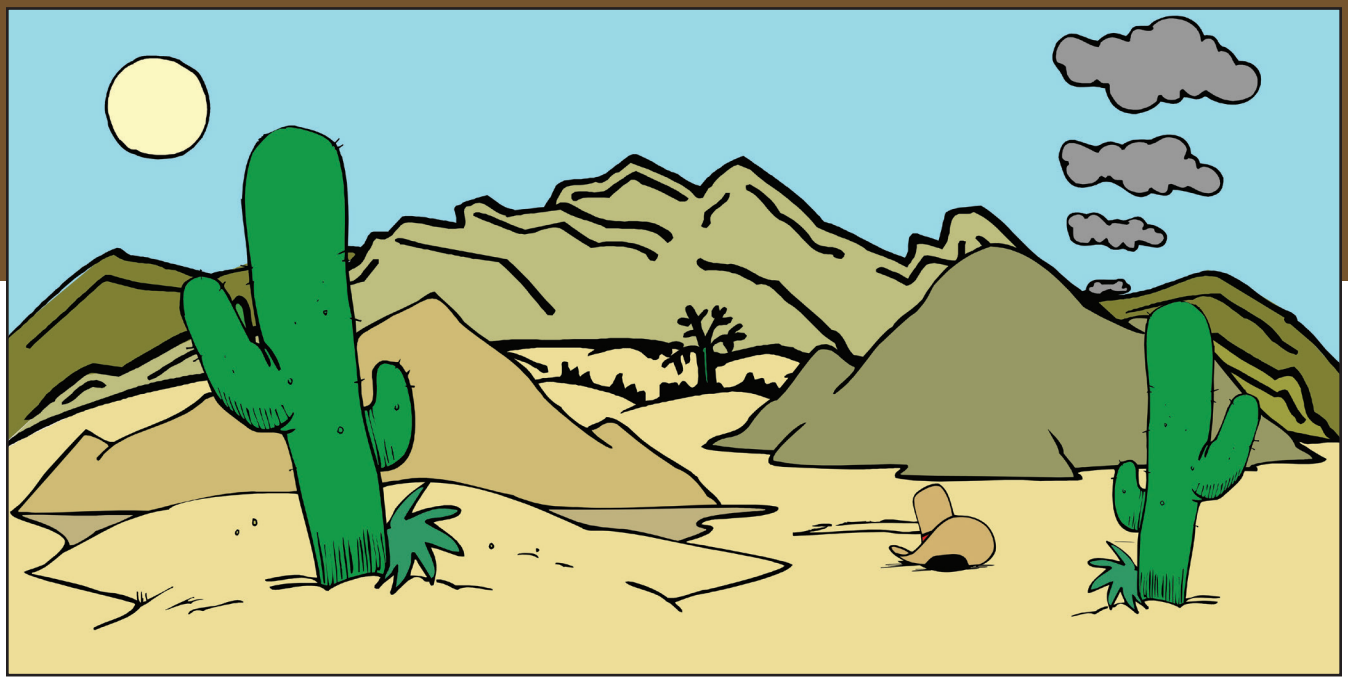






Use inexpensive paper to turn your hallway or classroom into a western farm so your students can imagine horses running towards them at any time.

Cut a fringe on the edge of the green paper to simulate grass. Roll and crinkle brown paper to form the fence wood and tape or staple it to the wall. Any extra hats, ropes, horse shoes, horse bridles, and buckets add a little touch of reality to the decoration.



Decorate your stage with this HUGE (5 x 2.5 meter) backdrop.

Extra Idea

Decorate your snack table with a big western cactus.
Start with a large watermelon, cutting off the end so it can stand and remain stable on a plate or platter. Toothpicks stuck into the melon give the appearance of cactus spines. The arms are cucumbers attached with skewers or toothpicks. Decorate the tips with fresh flowers or imitation flowers. Surround the gigantic cactus with fruit kabobs made with fruit that is seasonally available in your area. In the picture the skewers have watermelon, pineapple, strawberries, and grapes, but you can use any fruits or vegetables that your students enjoy.



Lesson 1

Wanted

Matthew is Called

Drama/Skit



Coyote Bill: Oooo I am so excited, just so excited! I could just howl! How far away is he, how far?
Eaglebert: About two kilometers away.
Coyote Bill: Does he look angry?
Eaglebert: Not yet.
Coyote Bill: I wish I could have seen his face when he saw what we did to the hacienda general store.
Eaglebert: Well, just don't howl again. I think we may have gotten away with our prank, but we don't need you howling again.
Coyote Bill: I won't. He doesn't suspect a thing, not a thing.
Eaglebert: Are you sure the butter on the door knobs and the water in the bucket and the bag of powdered sugar was enough?
Coyote Bill: Oh sure, oh sure. It's not like he told the sheriff about us trying to steal from him. He told us we should go turn ourselves in. Ha! Turn ourselves in? We are [swinging arms wide like a bird] wild and free…
Eaglebert: Fine, as long as we don't get caught.
Coyote Bill: How would we get caught? I can outrun that jackrabbit any day of the week.
Eaglebert: Outrun him? [Hits Bill on the back of the head] You can't outrun the sheriff. We just have to make sure nobody on the hacienda saw us.
Coyote Bill: Maybe later we can head into town to see what we did.
Eaglebert: Hold on a second. Sheriff Justy is hanging up a new wanted poster.
Coyote Bill: Who is on it? Maybe we can go get him and earn us some reward money.
Eaglebert: I can see the bottom of the wanted poster; oh the reward is not very big. It is just twenty.
Coyote Bill: Twenty? What kind of idiot is going to be thrown into jail with a bounty of twenty on their heads?



Eaglebert: Um, Bill?
Coyote Bill: Who is it? Who are the idiots?
Eaglebert: It's us.
Coyote Bill: Ha, that's funny! I thought you just said it was us.
Eaglebert: It *is* us Bill!
Coyote Bill: What! How did he know? I thought we were silent and there was nobody watching.
Eaglebert: I don't know, but they have a wanted poster up with a picture that is definitely you. I think I look nobler and perhaps a bit bigger than they drew me, though. [Adjusting hair and standing up taller.]
Coyote Bill: That is so frustrating! I could just, I could just howl.
Eaglebert: No, don't howl!
Coyote Bill: Hoooowwwwwwwllllll!
Eaglebert: I wish you hadn't done that.
Coyote Bill: Why?
Eaglebert: [Hits Coyote Bill on the back of the head.] They heard you and they are coming for us. Let's get out of here!

Main Lesson



Matthew 9:9-13

You are wanted.
Your name is on the poster, and people are out looking for you.
But why? Because you were caught red handed.
You have been caught in sin. "What?" you may ask.
YES. God can see everything. He knows when you lie to your parents or steal a candy or hide from your teacher at school. God sees everything.

Raise your hand if you believe in the Bible. Wow, that's good!
Now raise your hand if you believe in Jesus. Wow, great!
Did you know that the Bible says that ALL have sinned? That's right. Both you and I have sinned. Also, Jesus said that we all have sinned!

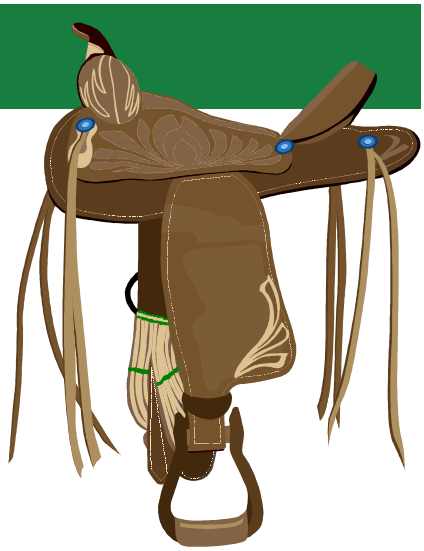
Verse

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
Romans 3:23

So if you are going to believe the Bible, you have to believe today's key verse, too: *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* Romans 3:23
God is perfect. He never does anything wrong. But the Bible says that we fall short all the time. We have all messed up. We have all sinned.

But that isn't the end of the story. God knows that we are all sinners, but He still wants to talk to us, use us for His glory, and have a friendship with us.
Today's Bible story is about a sinner who Jesus knew had messed up. Jesus knew he had sinned. But Jesus stopped and talked to him anyway. Jesus called him anyway.
How many of you would you like God to stop and talk to you, even though you have messed up? Great! Me, too!

Let's get out some play dough for today's Bible story!



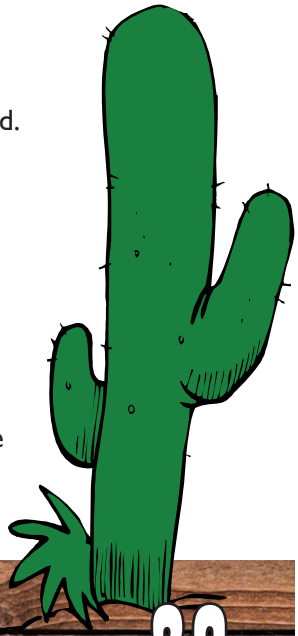
The Bible says that Jesus was walking along and He saw a tax collector named Matthew.
Divide your play dough into three balls. With two play dough balls, let's make a table and chair for Matthew to work at. (Give the students time to make the table and chair while sharing about tax collectors.)
Back in the day, the tax collectors were known for taking a cut of people's money. Since they were taking people's money for the government, many took a little extra. They were basically stealing from the people all the time. It was so bad that people understood the words "tax collector" to automatically mean "sinner"! Can you imagine your job being identical to "sinner" because so many in your work lied or cheated or stole? Okay, now let's make Matthew out of play dough and set him down on the chair. (Give them a little time to finish Matthew.)

Okay. You can smash those, and now let's make a coin box and some coins. I bet you can imagine a job where people automatically assume you lie or steal because there is probably a profession in your country that is similar. Do you have people in your country who take bribes? Do people pay to have someone lie for them? This was the life of Matthew. He was a known sinner. Tax collectors took people's money and put it in a box to turn into the government. Only, they usually didn't turn over all the money.



You can smash the money, and now let's make Jesus with all your play dough. He was walking by and saw Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. Jesus said to Matthew, "Follow me."
Immediately Matthew got up, left his post, and followed Jesus!
Now let's make a table and chair again with our play dough, only this time, let's leave them empty! Matthew was no longer at his post but left everything to follow Jesus!

Now let's make a plate, fork, knife, and spoon. Later, Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, and the Bible says that there were many other tax collectors and sinners there to have dinner with them. The religious leaders asked the disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"
Jesus responded, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick."
Did you know you were sick? I bet you feel just fine!
When Jesus said, "The sick are the ones who need a doctor," He was saying that sinners are the ones who need a Savior. If you think you are perfect and don't need any help, then you are on your own. Jesus came to help those who recognize that they are not perfect and *do* need the help.
(Collect the play dough from the students.)

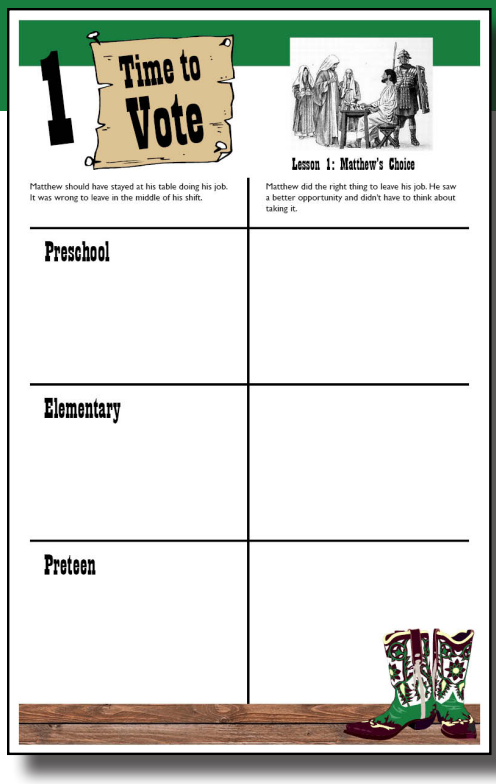


You and I are on the wanted poster. We are caught in sin. The Bible says that ALL of us have sinned. But that is not the end of the story! Jesus is still looking for you! He knows that you are a sinner, but wants a relationship with you anyway. In fact, He came to earth for sinners!
How many of you would like to have Jesus as your friend? That's wonderful! Let's pray together.

"Thank you Jesus for coming to earth for us sinners. I admit to you right now that I am a sinner. I have made mistakes. Thank you for being willing to talk to me and for being my friend. I believe in you. Amen."

Just like today's drama/skit, you and I are also on the wanted poster. But that is not the end of the story. Tomorrow we will see more of the drama and learn more about God.

Class in the Corral



Voting

What do you think?
* Matthew should have stayed at his table, doing his job. It was wrong to leave in the middle of his shift.

* Matthew did the right thing to leave his job. He saw a better opportunity and didn't have to think about taking it.



Handouts

Do the puzzles.
Fold the sheet into a wrist band.
Tape it to each child's wrist.

Answers: Circle all except Jesus. Encourage a discussion about the superhero who might be imagined to be sinless since he's not a real person but an imaginary figure. Discuss the fact that Jesus is not imaginary but is real, and His sinlessness is also real. If the superhero was real, he'd sin just like we do even when we do our best to be good all of the time.
Encourage the students to have fun drawing a very bad guy in the wanted poster.
Accept all answers, allowing the students to have fun with the reward and the crime.
Some possible answers: Gave the dog some of my chips, woke me up too early, blew my head off, etc. Possible rewards: $1,000,000, 2 packages of chips, a mommy hug, a free pass to get out of doing chores.



Memory Verse Time

As each team member repeats their memory verse correctly, have them choose a space on the Tic-Tac-Toe board and mark it with their team's symbol or sit or stand there. The first team to get Tic-Tac-Toe wins.
To play without a game board, line up three rows of three chairs in the center of your classroom to use as your Tic-Tac-Toe board. If you don't use chairs in your classroom, you can place paper plates or paper on the floor to use as your Tic-Tac-Toe board.

Old West Games



Watermelon Seed Spitting Contest

Divide the kids by their team colors. Make a line on the floor with a string or tape for all the kids to stand on. Give each child a piece of watermelon and have them collect the seeds. Have each team take turns spitting the seeds. Mark who spit the furthest seed to see which team wins.





Rope the Pony

Make two pony heads on broomsticks or poles and stick them into the ground or bales of hay. Create two lassos out of hula hoops and ropes by tying a rope to a hula hoop. Divide your group into color teams and have the children take turns trying to lasso the pony.

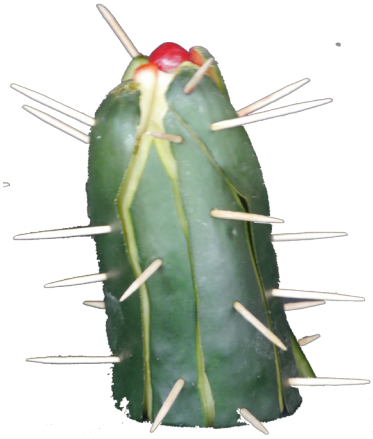
Canyon Crafts

Day 1 Craft: Boot



1. Punch out the boots and give one to each child to color.
2. Glue on the spur piece.
3. Allow children to decorate the boot with sequins.
4. Have children write their name in glue and cover it in glitter.

The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 represent the five days of your VBS. Keep these boots on the wall to decorate your VBS, and have each student mark or put a sticker on the numbers for the days they attend!



Day 1 Snack: Cucumber Cactus



Today's snack is an adorable cactus made from a cucumber! First, cut the cucumber in half and then add a bunch of toothpicks, sticking out on all sides. This makes a prickly cactus like those that the cowboys avoided. Make one for each child, or slice the cucumbers lengthwise and have several children share a "cactus." The cucumber is peeled and the toothpicks are holding up the green outside and the lengthwise slices inside. Have chili pepper and lime available for spicing up their cacti.

Lesson 2

Jailed

Woman is Caught in Adultery



Drama/Skit

Eaglebert: Hey, Bill, I think we lost them.
Coyote Bill: Boy howdy, Eaglebert, we did everything but leave the hacienda. We are [swinging arms wide like a bird] wild and free…
Eaglebert: Okay, Bill, I am going to go take a look from the top of this hill.
Coyote Bill: I will wait here while you go have a look.
Eaglebert: [Looks over the top of something then ducks back down immediately] Bill! They found us!
Coyote Bill: Oh no!
Sheriff Justy: [Walking confidently onto the stage] Howdy there, boys.
Eaglebert: Howdy, Sheriff Justy, how are you doing this fine day?
Coyote Bill: Howdy, [gulp] Sheriff.
Sheriff Justy: I think you boys need to come with me now.
Eaglebert: Where we going sheriff?
Sheriff Justy: To Jail. You boys have to answer for some things you have done.
Coyote Bill: To jail? All we did was pull a little prank on the...
Eaglebert: [twists Bill's nose to make him stop talking] Yeah, just an innocent little prank.
Sheriff Justy: That's not what I hear. I have great hearing [pointing at his big ears].
Coyote Bill: Well, how long are we going to jail for?
Sheriff Justy: Until you pay for all you did. You two have done a lot, too.
Eaglebert: Hey, Sheriff?
Sheriff Justy: Yeah?
Eaglebert: Is there any way that you know of that we can pay for everything we have done from jail?
Sheriff Justy: None that I can think of.

Coyote Bill: Aw, come on! It isn't fair! [Flailing arms about and accidentally whacking Eaglebert.]
Eaglebert: Ooof, quit flailing your paws, Bill. Yeah, Sheriff Justy, what about justice?
Sheriff Justy: Hey look, guys. You know the laws of the hacienda. You knew 'em and you broke 'em.
Coyote Bill: Do you really need to put handcuffs on us?
Sheriff Justy: Well, I think we will have plenty of time to talk later when we get in front of the judge.
Coyote Bill: Oh no, the judge is just. We will never get away with anything we did Eaglebert!
Eaglebert: [Putting his hand over Bill's mouth] Shut up, Bill.
Coyote Bill: [Muffled] He already knows about the stealing, the pranks, hitting my little sister, and disobeying my mom. How I wrecked my brother's kite and blamed it on my other brother.
Eaglebert: Shut up, Bill!
Coyote Bill: Like he doesn't already know about how you went fishing without a permit and hunted without a permit and you were panning for gold without a permit and you were digging through the hacienda's trash. They don't even give permits for that.
Sheriff Justy: Don't forget the pick-pocketing and borrowing tools and "forgetting" to return them and all those lies.
Eaglebert: Oh, I guess it doesn't matter, Bill. Even if you open your big mouth and tell everything we have done the judge already knows it.
Sheriff Justy: Come on, boys, let's go.
Sheriff Justy: [Trips over his own feet and falls down. Gets up and looks around to see if anyone noticed.]

Main Lesson



John 8:1-11

You were wanted.
Your name was on the poster, and people were out looking for you.
But now you are in JAIL! That's right, you are actually locked up! But you don't feel like you are in jail, do you? You can stretch around, and it seems that you are still free.

You or your friends might not see your jail cell, but God can. In fact, your friends might be in their own jail cell!
Our key verse from the Bible today is, *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* Romans 6:23
Do you remember the lesson from yesterday? We all have sinned, every single one of us!
Well, there is an actual punishment for that sin, just like in today's drama/skit, where Eaglebert and Coyote Bill were caught for their prank and put into jail.
Do your parents have punishments at your home? For example, if you don't finish your homework, you don't get to play with your friends. That would be a normal punishment.
Well, God has a punishment, too. It's a punishment for all who have sinned. But God is also very merciful and doesn't always give us what we deserve.

Let's get out the play dough for today's Bible story!

Verse

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
Romans 6:23



Jesus was teaching in the courtyard of the church with a lot of people around him. Let's make a whole crowd of people with our play dough. While all those people were around them, some religious leaders brought in a woman who had been caught in adultery, a bad sin. They made her stand in front of the whole crowd.
Now let's make the woman.
How do you think she felt about having her sin broadcasted out-loud to a big crowd? That would have been very embarrassing, wouldn't it? Now bend your woman down, as though she was very embarrassed and ashamed. Now give her a sad face.
They asked Jesus what to do. They told everyone of her sin and that the law said they should kill her. That's right; the common punishment for her sin was death! They had all picked up rocks and planned on throwing those rocks at her until she died!

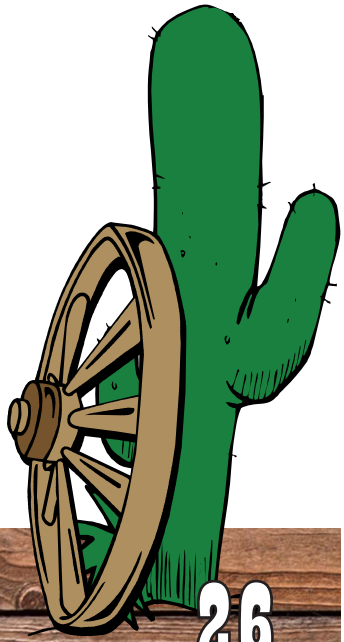
(Now let's make some stones like the ones they were going to throw at her.)
The Bible says:
"But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, 'Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.' Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground."

Now let's make Jesus with our play dough.
"At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?'
'No one, sir,' she said.
'Then neither do I condemn you,' Jesus declared. 'Go now and leave your life of sin.'"
(Collect the play dough from the students.)

Jesus had mercy on this woman and did not punish her with what her sin deserved. We too can receive mercy from Jesus, and not receive the punishment for our sins, though it is a punishment that we deserve.
Would you like that?
Let's pray.
"Jesus, I admit that I am a sinner and that I deserve your punishment. But I ask for your mercy, just like the woman to whom you showed mercy. Please forgive me for my wrong doings, and have mercy on me. Thank you."

Just like in today's drama/skit, you and I have also been caught and thrown into jail. But that is not the end of the story. Tomorrow we will see more of the drama and learn more about God.





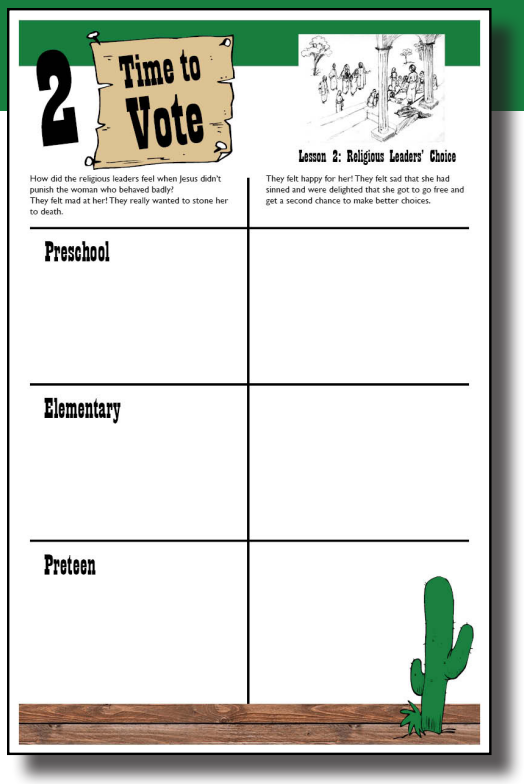
Class in the Corral

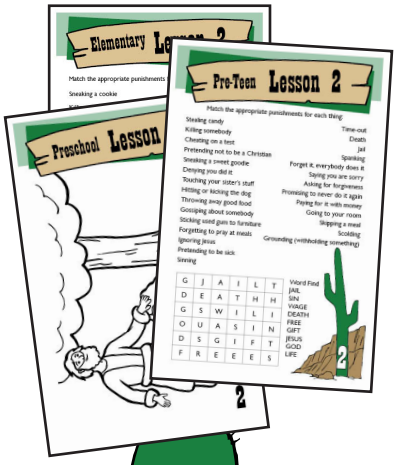
Voting

How did the religious leaders feel when Jesus didn't punish the woman who behaved badly?

* They felt mad at her! They really wanted to stone her to death.

* They felt happy for her! They felt sad that she had sinned and were delighted that she got to go free and to get a second chance to make better choices.





Handouts

Workbook Time:
Do the puzzles.
Fold the sheet into a wrist band.
Tape it to each child's wrist. They will use it in the game.

Answers:
Allow the different punishments to open a discussion and make the lesson more interesting and applicable to present-day life for the students.

Talk about the things we think we can get away with because, "Everybody does it," but that can still be wrong.

Talk about the reasons that parents want children to learn to do the right thing while they are young. It is love that motivates them to reinforce their teaching with punishment if the child isn't learning the important things in life.

G	J	A	I	L	T
D	E	A	T	H	H
G	S	W	I	L	I
O	U	A	S	I	N
D	S	G	I	F	T
F	R	E	E	E	S

Memory Verse Time

The students pair up and try to read the memory verse upside down on their partner's wrist. Next, they cover a word on the wristband and try to read the verse, remembering the covered word. Then they cover several words and repeat. The students repeat the process, covering different words each time. At the end, see who can say the whole verse with all of it covered. You can also write the memory verse on a board. Erase the verse a word at a time, each time asking the children to repeat the verse.



Old West Games

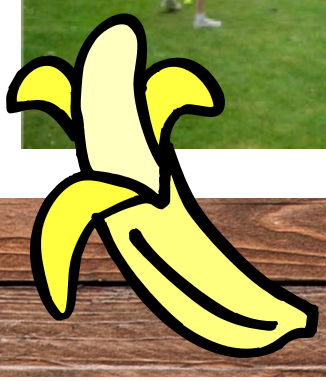
Wheel Barrow Race

Divide the children into their color teams and have them pick a partner. Have one child lie on the ground on their stomach while the other child grabs their ankles and lifts their legs in the air. (This is the wheel barrow position.) The pairs of children race one another to the finish line.



Inside or Outside Banana Olympics (Relay Race)



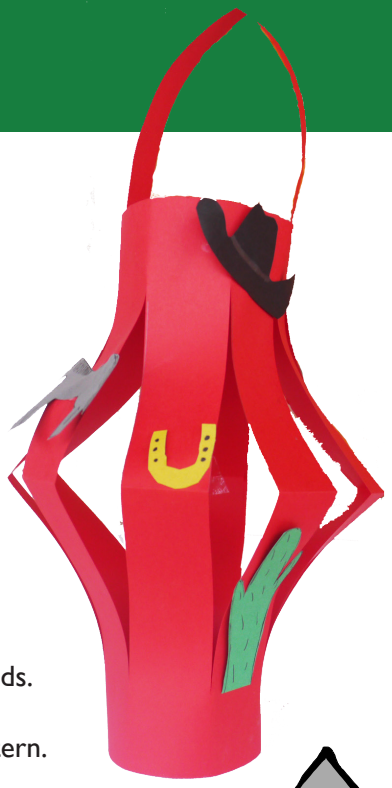


Divide your class into their color teams. Give each team a banana. Using the ideas below choose one of the races or use them all.

1. Place the banana between the knees and hop to the finish line and back.
2. Two teammates toss the banana back and forth down to the finish line and back.
3. Children put the banana under their armpit and hop on one leg down and back, one person at a time.
4. Each player has a banana tied to a string that is tied around their waist. Use the banana to roll a ball to the finish line. (Pictured here.)

Canyon Crafts

Day 2 Craft: Lantern



1. Tear off the thin strip at the end of the paper. This is the handle; set it aside.
2. Allow the children to color their lantern as they would like.
3. Fold along the center line.
4. Tear along the perforated lines.
5. Tape the ends together, keeping the folded line in the center of the paper so it bends.
6. Glue or tape the handle onto the lantern.
7. Punch out the paper horse, cactus, horseshoe, and hat and glue them onto the lantern.



Day 2 Snack: Cupcakes with Cacti

Today your students will enjoy a delicious cupcake with a cactus on top, with or without frosting. The cactus is made of green jelly beans and sliced green jelly candy. You can also make the cactus with green grapes held together with toothpicks. A red candy on top adds interest. You can bake cupcakes or you can go to your local bakery and pick up some easy muffins, as shown in the picture.



Lesson 3

Bailed

Jesus Dies on the Cross



Drama/Skit

Sheriff Justy: Hey, you two, wake up!
Eaglebert: What? What is it, Sheriff? [Sleepily waking up.]
Coyote Bill: [Jumps up from lying down] Yeah, what is it? Did you get lonely and want to hear another story?
Sheriff Justy: Oh, no, please, not another story. I came because you have an offer.
Eaglebert: An offer? Hey, Bill, do you have any friends who would visit you here?
Coyote Bill: Um, let me think… Nope.
Eaglebert: Me neither.
Coyote Bill: Who is it, Sheriff?
Sheriff Justy: A man with an offer.
Eaglebert: What kind of offer? Like a job offer?
Sheriff Justy: Yeah, it is a little like that.
Coyote Bill: Aw, we don't need a job, do we, Eaglebert? We are [swinging arms wide like a bird] wild and free.
Sheriff Justy: You don't look very free in here, you know. Maybe you should listen to him.
Eaglebert: Hey Bill, we haven't ever had a visitor; maybe we should hear the offer.
Sheriff Justy: I took him up on his offer a while back. Best offer I ever got.
Eaglebert: You hear that, Bill? Let's hear him out.
Coyote Bill: Well, I don't know.
Eaglebert: [Hits Bill on the back of the head]
Coyote Bill: I guess we could listen.
Eaglebert: Yeah, go ahead, Sheriff, bring him in here.
Sheriff Justy: Not here, fellas, you have to go to him at the main house of the hacienda.

Eaglebert: You mean we get to go outside? What if we run away?
Sheriff Justy: You don't get it, do you? He has already bailed you out of here. You are free to go. He put himself on the line for you.
Coyote Bill: [Talking very excitedly] I was thinking we were the idiots for getting caught. Now look who is the idiot. What if we don't go up there and listen to his offer?
Eaglebert: Oh, it will be so great to be out of here. I can feel the wind under my wings already. Let's go.
Coyote Bill: To the main house? Or back to our hideout?
Eaglebert: Well, how would he find us if we didn't come up to the house? Or go to the trial? What would he tell the judge?
Sheriff Justy: What do you mean, "What would he tell the judge"? He is the judge. He already knows what all you have done, and he will know if you don't come. He has a good offer for you.
Eaglebert: The judge bailed us out? Well, that puts a twist in our plans to escape, doesn't it?
Coyote Bill: Yes, I suppose it does. I guess we should go hear his offer. [Flinches, expecting a hit to the head but Eaglebert doesn't notice.]

Main Lesson



You were wanted. You were put into jail.
People were out looking for you. You were caught and thrown in jail.
But now you have been BAILED out! That's right; someone has offered to pay to set you free!
But, you don't feel like you have been freed yet, do you? You can still remember your sins, lies, and mistakes.

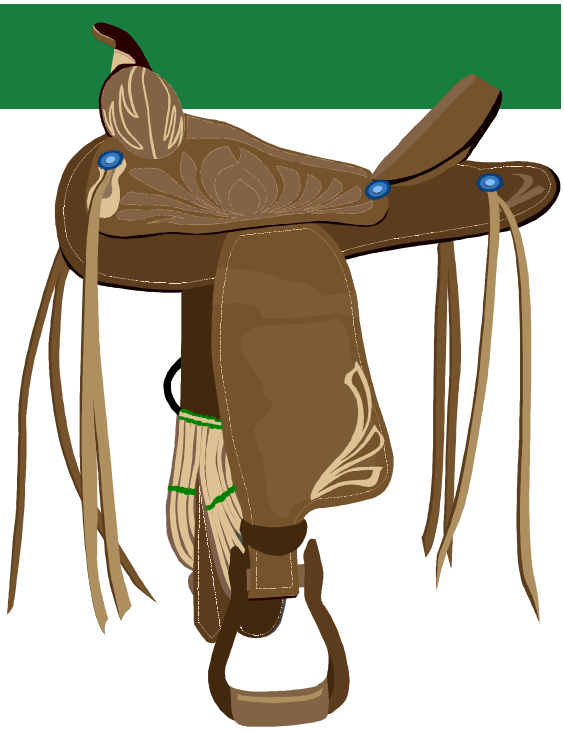
Matthew 26-27

John 21:1-8,19

Verse

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
Romans 5:8

You and your friends might still be in trouble for something you have done recently. In fact, you might be punished when you get home!
Our key verse from the Bible today is, *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* Romans 5:8
Do you remember the first lesson? We all have sinned, every single one of us!
Do you remember yesterday? We are all caught and put in jail.
Well, there is an actual payment that has been made for that sin. It is just like in today's drama/skit, where they were bailed out of jail and received an offer.
Have you ever had to restore a friendship by paying for something you broke or stole? That would be a normal payment to restore the relationship with people whose things we have damaged.
Well, God needs us to make a payment, too. All those who have sinned need to restore their relationship with God.



But God is very loving and has made a way for us to restore our relationship with Him.

Let's get out the play dough for today's Bible story!

Jesus got together with all his disciples, who were his closest friends, for a final dinner. With your play dough, make a loaf of bread and a plate. At that dinner were two men who would betray Jesus. After dinner, Judas betrayed Jesus by turning him over to the people who would kill Him on the cross. While they were judging Jesus in court, someone asked Peter if he was with Jesus. Peter said, "No," not once but three times! After Peter denied Jesus the third time, a rooster crowed, just as Jesus had predicted. (Make a rooster with your play dough.) Both of these two sinned by betraying Jesus. Those two sins required death, just like each of our sins.



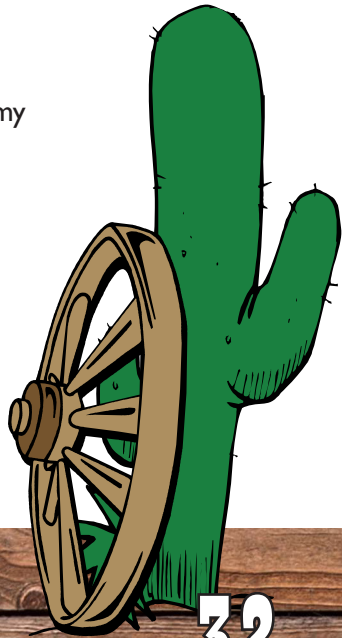
After Jesus was betrayed by these two men, a huge crowd gathered at his trial. They called for his execution. When Jesus died on the cross, He died so that we do not have to die for our own sins. (Now make a cross with your play dough.) His death was sufficient to forgive everyone their sins because he was perfect. Jesus changed how we have a relationship with God. Now, instead of trying to be perfect, we have to choose whether we want to accept his death for our sins. His death covers our imperfection!

Judas and Peter had both sinned. Judas chose not to accept the sacrifice of Jesus, but Peter chose to accept it. After Jesus died and rose from the dead, He appeared to the disciples. On the third time Peter saw Jesus, he was out fishing. (Now make a boat with your play dough) Jesus appeared on the shore, and the disciples knew right away that it was Him. Peter jumped out of the boat and swam to Jesus. Jesus forgave Peter for his sin and told him, "Follow me."
Who will you choose to copy? Will you be like Judas who chose to carry his own sin? Or will you choose to be like Peter who, after sinning, chose to return to Jesus and follow Him?
(Collect the play dough from the students.)

Jesus died for sins we have committed and has made a way for us to be restored to a relationship with God. We, too, can follow Jesus, and not receive the punishment for our sins that we deserve.
Would you like that?
Let's pray.
"Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross so I don't have to die for my own sins. Please forgive my sins. I will follow you. Thank you."

Just like today's drama/skit, you and I also have been bailed out of jail, and we have received an offer to be restored. But that is not the end of the story. Tomorrow we will see more of the drama and learn more about God.





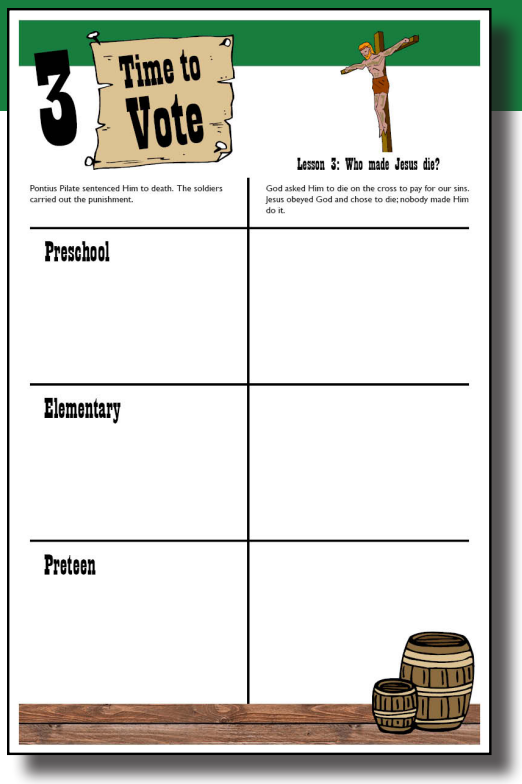
Class in the Corral

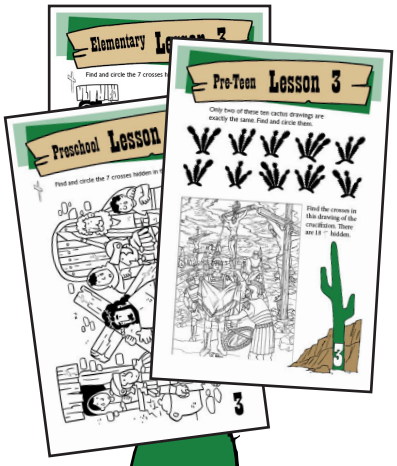
Voting

Who made Jesus die?

* Pontius Pilate sentenced Him to death. The soldiers carried out the punishment.

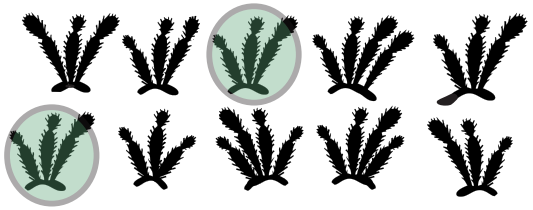
* God asked Him to die on the cross to pay for our sins. Jesus obeyed God and chose to die; nobody made him do it.





Handouts

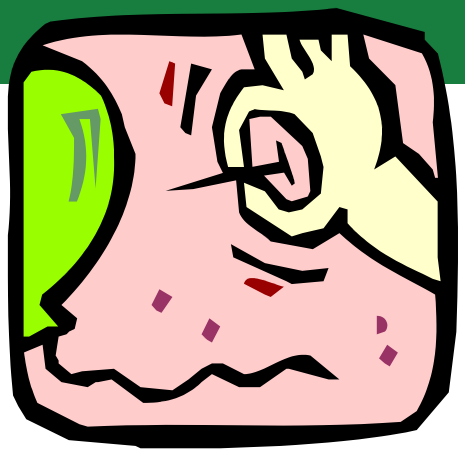
Workbook Time:
Do the puzzles.
Fold the sheet into a wrist band.
Tape it to each child's wrist.











Memory Verse Time

Inflate balloons, one balloon for each word of the memory verse. With a permanent marker, write one word of the memory verse on each balloon. Using clear packing tape, place the balloons to the wall in order (if time allows, children can take turns to do this). If you plan to put the balloons up during class, have the children read the verse as you put up the words. After all the balloons are in place, ask for volunteers to take turns popping any balloon (a "push pin" works well), followed by everyone saying the verse together each time a balloon is popped.

Old West Games



Tug o' War

You need a thick rope for this game with a large knot tied in each end. The rope needs to be thick enough that it will not burn the children's hands. Divide the children into their color teams. Have one team line up and grab one end of the rope; have another team do the same on the other end. Mark the middle of the rope with a line in the dirt. The children pull the rope as a team and try to pull the other team over the middle line. Repeat the tug o' war game with the other two teams. Then have the two winning teams compete against each other.



Three-Legged Race

Have the children divide into their color teams and pick a partner. The partners stand side by side. Using a long rag, tie their touching legs together. They have to run on their "three" legs to the finish line. Whichever team gets there first wins!

Canyon Crafts

Day 3 Craft: Molded Plaster of Paris



Make a plaque with the mold for each child in advance. The children can paint them in class.

1. Grease the mold with non-stick cooking spray or shoe polish.
2. Follow the directions on the bag of Plaster of Paris, mixing the powder and the water well.
3. Quickly put the plaster mixture into the mold and give it time to settle (approximately 5 minutes).
4. Remove the plaster from the mold then repeat the process for each child in your class.
5. For hanging plaques, add a wire hook before it dries completely.
6. Ask children ahead-of-time to bring old shirts and paint tools to class.

During class, children may paint their plaques with various colors.





Day 3 Snack: Cookie Cowboy Hats

Today your students can easily make their own cowboy hat snacks! They are just cookies with a gumdrop placed on top with frosting. Enjoy!





Lesson 4

Branded

Zacchaeus Climbs a Tree

Drama/Skit



Coyote Bill: Okay, the branding irons are in the fire just like he said.
Eaglebert: The cows he wants branded are waiting in the corral just like he said they would be.
Coyote Bill: So, all we have to do is follow his instructions?
Eaglebert: Yup, that *is* what he said.
Coyote Bill: We are free to come and go as we please until he has another task for us?
Eaglebert: Yup. It looks to me like this will be an easy task, too. Then we will be [swinging arms wide like a bird] wild and free…
Coyote Bill: We just take these branding irons and mark the new cows and then we are done for now?
Eaglebert: Yup, that is it.
Coyote Bill: Great! Let's get started.
Eaglebert: You know, I was thinking…
Coyote Bill: Yeah?
Eaglebert: You know how the shopkeeper for the hacienda store has that look about him like everything is in control?
Coyote Bill: Uh, no.
Eaglebert: Like when we stole from him. He didn't lose control or swear at us, or hit us or even turn us over to the sheriff?
Coyote Bill: Oh yeah.
Eaglebert: It is almost like he knew something we didn't.
Coyote Bill: Oh yeah, now that you mention it. There are a lot of people who know things I don't.
Eaglebert: You can say that again. You know who else was like that?
Coyote Bill: The stagecoach driver and the barber.
Eaglebert: And?
Coyote Bill: Uh, I can't think of anybody.
Eaglebert: What about Sheriff Justy?
Coyote Bill: Oh, yeah. Him too.
Eaglebert: [Holding up and looking at a branding iron] It is almost like you can tell who all in the hacienda has accepted the offer of the judge.

Coyote Bill: Do you think we are going to be like that, too?
Eaglebert: I don't know about you, but I haven't looked over my shoulder or felt jittery and nervous since we accepted the offer of the judge.
Coyote Bill: Oh yeah, me neither. How come?
Eaglebert: I'm not scared of getting caught.
Coyote Bill: Oh yeah.
Eaglebert: We spent so long looking over our shoulders, watching our backs, and running away from the sheriff.
Coyote Bill: We weren't as good at that as we thought.
Eaglebert: No, we sure weren't. We thought we were, but we were wrong.
Coyote Bill: Well, since we accepted the offer, we have nobody to run from or hide from.
Eaglebert: That is it! It is like they have been branded. Everybody who has accepted the judge's offer are not running or hiding.
Coyote Bill: Then we are like that! Maybe I should brand you with this. [Waving branding iron at Eaglebert.]
Eaglebert: We sure are. Put that thing down before you hurt yourself. Let's get this job done so we can go to town using the main street.
Coyote Bill: Main Street? We haven't walked down Main Street in years.
Eaglebert: Go get the first cow.

Main Lesson



Luke 19:1-10

You were wanted. You were caught and thrown into jail.
But then you were BAILED out!
And today we are learning about cows getting branded!
Ranchers mark their livestock with a brand so that if the cows wander off and somebody finds them, it will be easy to tell who owns each cow. You can't ask a cow to tell you where they live when they get lost, like a policeman or sheriff can ask a lost child where he lives. The Bible says that you were bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:20). That's just like the cattle on a ranch.
How much did you cost?
Remember in the lesson yesterday, that Jesus paid the price for our sins when He died on the cross. Then that is what you and I cost! Jesus' death was very painful. It wasn't a cheap price that He paid to redeem you.
What valuable thing has your family paid for? Perhaps a bicycle or car? Is it marked so that it can be examined and found to belong to your family? Yes. Every car has a special number marked on it that is registered to the owner. Sometimes people mark their bike with their name or a number. That way, if it is stolen, they can notify the authorities to them catch the thief.

These are examples of branding!

Let's get out the play dough for today's Bible story.

First make a cow with your play dough and mark it with your fingernail on its rump (just like a brand). With that brand, it is plain the cow belongs to you!
Do you remember in the Bible story on Tuesday? There was a crowd of people following Jesus and listening to everything He said. Yesterday we heard that there was also a huge crowd of people watching to see what would happen to Jesus when He was accused. Do you know what? There was always a crowd of people around Jesus. Now, make a little man with your play dough. His name is Zacchaeus, but we'll call him Zack. He lived in Jericho. Yes, that's the same city you heard about that Joshua marched

around and whose walls God made fall down. Jesus came into the city of Jericho and was going to pass through it when Zack heard about Him. Boy, did he want to see and hear Jesus! Wouldn't you? Now form a big tree with your play dough but leave a little bit of play dough separate.

Like you, Zack wasn't very tall so he had a problem. How could he see what Jesus looked like? How could he hear what Jesus said? There was a huge crowd of people surrounding Jesus all of the time. It was like going to see a big parade and getting there late. Wouldn't it be great if you could watch out of a second-story window above the street? Behind rows and rows of people, you can't see much of anything! Zack ran ahead along the road that Jesus would be coming down and spotted a tree and climbed up to get a much better view.

(Make a ball with the bit of play dough and form it into a head that you can put into your tree. Let Zack peek out from the branches and watch Jesus.)

Verse

"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."
Romans 10:9

When Jesus got to the tree, He stopped and looked up and said to the little man, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." Now put a big smile on Zack and take him out of that tree. Zack was very happy to welcome Jesus to his home.

In fact, he repented of his sins right there! He said to Jesus, "Look Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

Use your play dough and make one of your most treasured possessions. Imagine giving somebody four of them! That had to hurt! Zack was wealthy, so when he said he'd give away half of everything he owned to poor people, he wasn't talking about a small amount.

The people were outside of his house whispering and gossiping about Jesus visiting him. He was a sinner, a bad man, a cheater and a tax collector. Zack was a completely-changed man because of his visit with Jesus.

Make Zack with your play dough and put a happy face on him. Why did Jesus pick him, even when he was a little hidden by the branches of a tree?

Jesus told him, "The son of man came to seek and save the lost." Jesus explained that He wants to save everybody who knows they are lost and need saving. Zack accepted Jesus that day. His sudden generosity was proof that he had completely changed. It was like a brand on a cow; it showed that now he belonged to God. He hadn't been physically branded, but people could really see the difference. It was just like in the drama/skit, when Eaglebert and Coyote Bill could really see something different in others.

When you accept Jesus to pay for you and your sins, you become His. He will give you the Holy Spirit as proof that you belong to Him. The Holy Spirit will convict you of sin and help you to say you are sorry and to admit it when you do bad things. He will help you to live close to God and to grow as a Christian.

Now, make yourself with your play dough. We are going to pray, and if you choose to become a follower of Jesus like Zack did in the story today, you can put a cross "brand" on your play dough self to show that you belong to God.

(Collect the play dough from the students.)

How many of you would like to pray today to accept Jesus into your heart? Would you like to accept His death on the cross to pay for your wrong-doings? Raise your hand if you would like others to see that you are different and changed.

Let's pray.

"Lord God, I am not perfect and I need help. I want Jesus to come and seek me out like He did Zack. Jesus, will You come into my heart today? Jesus, I want to belong to YOU and to get help to follow You for the rest of my life. I choose to follow You."

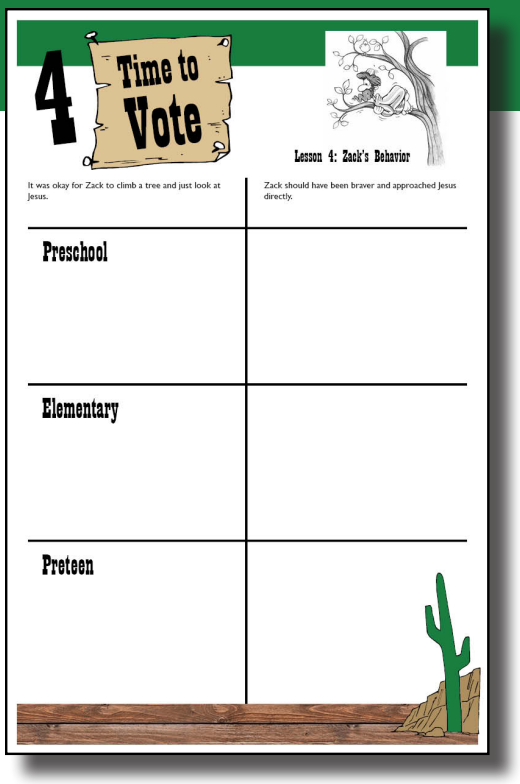
Class in the Corral

Voting

What do you think?

* It was okay for Zack to climb a tree and just look at Jesus.

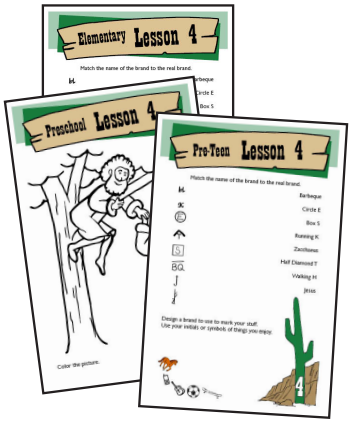
* Zack should have been braver and approached Jesus directly.

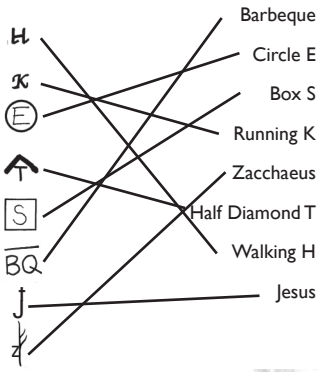




Handouts

Workbook Time:
Do the puzzles.
Fold the sheet into a wrist band.
Tape it to each child's wrist.





Help the students remember to keep their brand very simple so it can be made with a pipe-cleaner or could be formed with metal if it was a real one.



How to Read a Brand Chart

Rules:
1. Left to Right
2. Top to Bottom
3. Outside to Inside

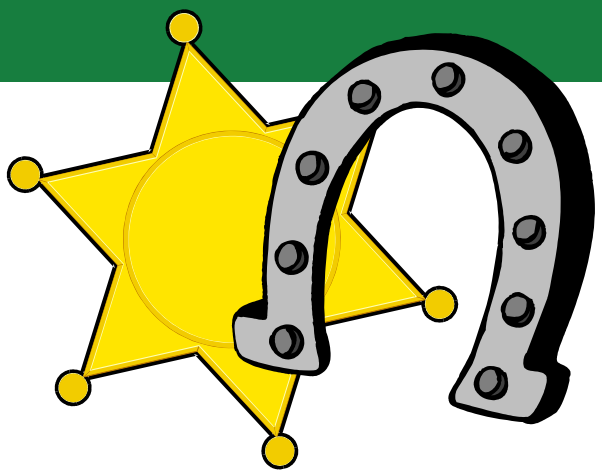
"R"	Quarter Circle R	Circle R
Tumbing R	Half Diamond R	Diamond R
Lazy R	Rafter R	Box R
Reverse R	Bar R	
Walking R		
Flying R		
Running R		

Ideas for children who don't know what to draw:
Skateboard, guitar (represents any music), cross (represents Christian beliefs), flower or tree (represents preference for outdoors), soccer ball (represents sports).

Extra Activity:
Form a brand out of a pipe cleaner. Remember to attach a handle. Dip the brand into paint, and allow the students to stamp their own brand design onto their student papers. They can take their brand home to mark any possession or book that they'd like (after asking for parental permission).



Memory Verse Time



Have the children sit in a circle on the floor. Write the verse on the board or on a piece of paper where the children can see it. Then have the children pass a horseshoe or a sheriff's star to the child next to them. Whoever is holding the horseshoe says the next word of the verse. To make things more difficult, allow the students to toss the horseshoe across the circle to any child to say the next word of the verse.

Old West Games



Blindfold Branding

Draw a large picture of a cow on a piece of paper. Cut out one paper horseshoe per child about the size of a brand that you would put on the cow. Draw a circle on the rump of the cow where the brand should go. Line the children up. During each child's turn, blindfold him, put tape on his horseshoe, and turn him in circles. Then point him in the direction of the cow and have him "brand" the cow. Whoever is the closest to the circle wins.



Bobbing for Apples

You will need a container large enough that a child can bend over and stick their face inside. Fill the container with water and drop in one apple per child. Each child takes a turn trying to get an apple out of the water using only their mouth, no hands! The children will have great fun; this does not need to be a competition.

Canyon Crafts





Day 4 Craft: Cowboy Tie (Bolo style)



1. Punch out the stars and give one to each child to color.
2. Glue or tape two pieces of straw to the back of the star, side by side.
3. Thread one end of the curly ribbon into a straw piece.
4. Thread the other end of the curly ribbon into the other straw piece.
5. Thread one bead onto both ends of the curly ribbon.
6. On each end of the curly ribbon, thread three beads.
7. On the last bead of each end of the ribbon, pull the ribbon up the side of the bead and thread it back through the other two beads.



Day 4 Snack: "S'mores" on a Stick



The cowboys would often sit around a fire at night chatting and sleeping. I bet they enjoyed the classic "s'more" snack by the campfire. Your students will enjoy this version of the "s'more" with marshmallows on a stick dipped in melted chocolate (a chocolate candy) then dipped in cookie crumbs. The stick could also be a plastic fork.

Lesson 5

Deputized

The Disciples Become Fishers of Men



Drama/Skit

Sheriff Justy: Hey there, gentlemen!
Eaglebert: Howdy, Sheriff.
Coyote Bill: Hey there!
Sheriff Justy: How is your day going?
Eaglebert: Okay, not great, but okay.
Coyote Bill: Yeah, it is an okay day.
Sheriff Justy: Okay? You do realize just a week ago I had found your hideout, and I was going to throw you into jail for more of your crimes than you could even remember yourself, right?
Eaglebert: Yeah, I remember.
Coyote Bill: We are doing better than that for sure.
Sheriff Justy: I guess so.
Eaglebert: You know, you never asked us if we had accepted the offer of the judge.
Sheriff Justy: [Laughing] Did you think I wouldn't be able to tell? I knew before you did that you were going to accept his offer. So did he.
Eaglebert: Yeah, well he only asked us to do that one job for him.
Coyote Bill: We keep thinking that maybe he would be asking us to do some more work for him.
Sheriff Justy: I have a new assignment from the judge for you.
Eaglebert: Oh, okay, what is it? We are ready and [swinging arms wide like a bird] wild and free…
Sheriff Justy: There is a pack of dogs that has been causing trouble on the south side of the hacienda.
Eaglebert: Would you like me to go find them with my finely-tuned sight?
Coyote Bill: Yeah, and my fine sense of smell?
Eaglebert: We are great hunters, you know.

Sheriff Justy: Yes, although we know exactly where they are and what they have been doing.
Eaglebert: Oh, well that does make it easier.
Coyote Bill: So what do you need us for?
Sheriff Justy: You can find them tonight under the outcropping of rock that looks like the big 'J'.
Coyote Bill: So what do you want us to do with them?
Sheriff Justy: I want you to take them an offer from the judge.
Eaglebert: Will they listen to the offer?
Sheriff Justy: Not if they are anything like you.
Eaglebert: Like us?
Sheriff Justy: When you robbed the Hacienda store, the shopkeeper made you an offer.
Coyote Bill: He said we should turn ourselves in.
Sheriff Justy: Yup, that was your first offer.
Eaglebert: Oh, that came from the judge?
Sheriff Justy: You sure don't catch on quick. Oh, here, you need these.
Eaglebert: Badges?
Coyote Bill: What are you trying to do, Sheriff?
Sheriff Justy: I need some deputies. The judge thought you might be interested in delivering offers to the fine people on this hacienda.
Coyote Bill: Will we get to arrest people?
Sheriff Justy: Sometimes. The judge is just looking to get the word out that he wants justice. You are part of that plan. I have a long list of people he has offers for. We will just find the right time to deliver it.

Main Lesson



Luke 5:1-11

You were wanted. You were put into jail. You were bailed out. You were branded.
Today we are talking about being deputized! That's right; Jesus has a job for you! "But, I'm not ready for this," you say? Well, Jesus has chosen to use *you*. There are many people who need to hear that Jesus is asking them to follow Him, too.
You probably have friends who believe that they have to be good enough for God. But that is not true. Do you remember the lesson? Jesus died for the sick, not the healthy. So as long as we think we are healthy and are trying to be good enough in our own strength, we are missing the whole point!
God doesn't want us to be good enough. He wants us to accept that we are sinners and to allow Jesus to pay the price for our sins.
Our key verse from the Bible today is, *"And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"* Romans 10:14b

So the question for you is this: how can your friends hear about Jesus unless you tell them? It is just like in today's drama/skit, where they were deputized to bring a message to the pack of dogs.
Have you ever had some good news you wanted to share with someone? You couldn't wait to let them know what had happened.

Verse

"And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"
Romans 10:14b

Well, God has given us some great news. We do not have to pay for our own sins; Jesus has offered to do that. So, how will your friends hear if you don't tell them?

Let's get out the play dough for today's Bible story!

One day, Jesus was standing by the Sea of Galilee, and a crowd was forming around Him to listen to the Word of God. (Let's make a crowd of people with our play dough.) As the crowd grew, Jesus wanted to make sure everyone could hear. He climbed into Peter's boat and pushed it out a little. Then he sat down and taught them from the boat. (Make a boat with your play dough and maybe some waves.)

When Jesus was done sharing with the people, He asked Peter to climb in and go fishing with Him. Peter had worked all night but climbed in the boat to fish, anyway. When the fishermen (including Peter) let down their nets, they were filled to the maximum and the nets started to break! Peter, James and John were amazed at their catch. (Now make some fish with your play dough.)
Peter dropped to his knees and said, "Go away from me Lord, I am a sinful man!" Instead of leaving them there, Jesus said, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." (Now make some people with your play dough.)

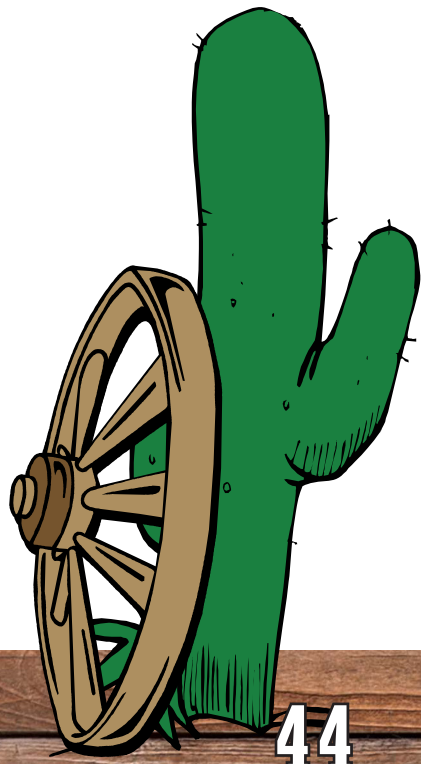
(Collect the play dough from the students.)

Jesus has asked us to share the good news that He died for sins and has made a way for us to be restored to a relationship with God. When we follow Jesus, we will become people who share the good news with our friends, family, and neighbors. Would you like that?
Let's pray.
"Jesus, thank you for giving me good news that I will share with my friends and family. I will obey you. I choose to share with others about you. Thank you for helping me."

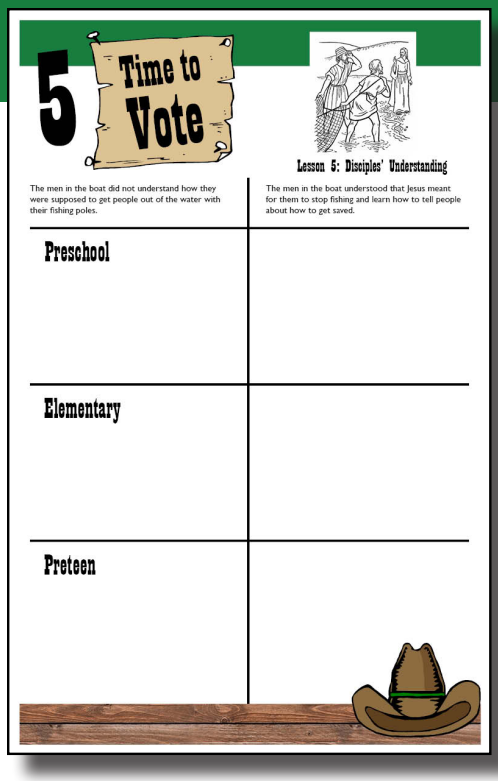
Just like in today's drama/skit, you and I have also been deputized! But that is not the end of the story. Jesus has asked us to be fishers of men. We have the good news to share with others.

Let's say all five of our verses together.

1. Romans 3:23 *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*
2. Romans 6:23 *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*
3. Romans 5:8 *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*
4. Romans 10:9 *"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."*
5. Romans 10:14b *"...And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"*



Class in the Corral



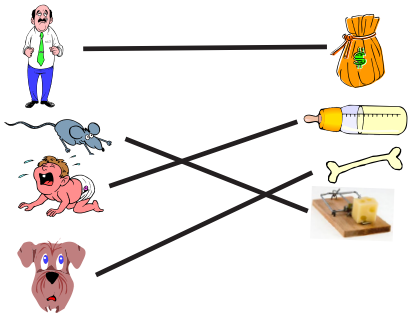
Voting

Did the disciples understand when Jesus said, "From now on, you will catch men"?

* The men in the boat did not understand how they were supposed to get people out of the water with their fishing poles.
* The men in the boat understood that Jesus meant for them to stop fishing and learn how to tell people about how to get saved.

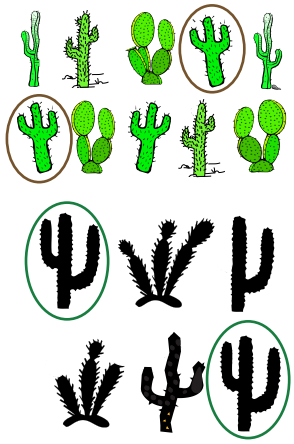
Handouts



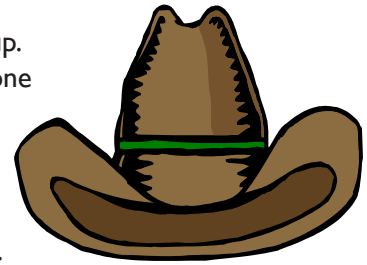


Possible Answers:
Mouse – cheese, peanut butter, trap, cat, cookies
Dog – bones, dog treat, another dog, leash
Man – money, cookies, new car, good job, pizza, boat
Baby – baby bottle, new toy, mommy, daddy, sibling
Cat – bowl of milk or food, mouse, catnip toy, fish, bird
Fish – fish hook, worm, fish food, cat, bear, net
Teenager – another teenager, pizza, music, cellphone, money

O	H	J	E	S	U	S
B	E	L	I	E	V	E
C	A	T	C	H	O	W
P	R	E	A	C	H	O
O	I	L	F	I	S	H
L	I	L	A	M	E	N



Possible Answers:
1. Sharing your testimony
2. Bringing them to church
3. Giving them a tract
4. Inviting them to youth group.
5. Introducing them to someone you trust to share their faith.

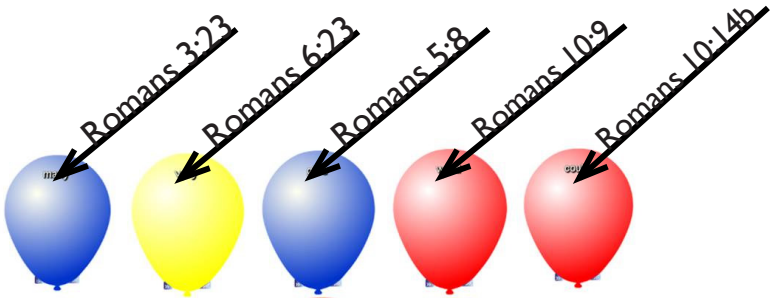




Optional Extra Idea:
Prepare a fishing pole from a stick with a clothes pin attached to a string.
Prepare a "fishing hole" by putting a sheet over something.
The students stand behind a line and toss out their fishing line.
A volunteer hiding behind the sheet attaches a "prize" or candy to the line using the clothes pin and then tugs on the line to indicate it's time to reel in the caught fish.
Cards with the words of the memory verse could be "caught" and then placed in the correct order. Fish can have paper clips to be "caught" with a magnet attached to the fishing string.

Memory Verse Time

Have the children line up back-to-back for a memory verse show-down! They count steps as they walk apart from each other, then turn and face each other and shoot (say the verse). The student who says the verse the fastest is the winner.



Review all the verses from the whole week with a balloon pop review game. Write the Bible reference on the balloon. Separate the students into their teams. Each team sends a student to the balloon that is stuck to the wall and he reads the reference. The team quotes the verse together and the student pops the balloon to see if they quoted it correctly. A slip of paper is on the wall under the balloon with the verse.

Old West Games



Leap Frog

Divide the children into color teams and line them up. The first person in line bends over like a frog. Then the second person puts their hands on the frog's back and leaps over. As soon as they are over, they bend down like a frog as well, continuing as each child leaps over the frogs making a full line of frogs. Keep going until one team reaches the finish line.



Round up the herd

Divide your group into color teams. For each team you will need two brooms or water noodles and six balloons, three of one color and three of another. Set two chairs at the other end of the room/hall. Each team member has to use the broom to sweep the "herd" of balloons to the other end of the room, around a chair and back to the next team member. Have a few spare balloons handy in case some pop!

Canyon Crafts

Day 5 Craft: Wall Hanging



1. Punch out the board pieces.
2. Glue the boards side by side and allow the glue to dry.
3. Punch out the hat, horse, cactus and horse shoe.
4. Glue the rope into place.
5. Glue the foam pieces where the child wants them.
6. Tear the edges of the printed sheet and glue it into place.



Day 5 Snack: "Trail Mix"



The cowboys out on the trail sometimes needed food that did not need cooking. We call that food "Trail Mix." Small pieces of fried tortillas or chips, small candies, and marshmallows make up the "Mix." Large marshmallows can be cut into small pieces and dredged in sugar or flour to keep them from sticking to each other. This is a fun snack when put into a small cup.



The Children Count

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www.TheChildrenCount.com

The Children Count



Preschool
4-6 years



Elementary
7-9 years



Pre-teen
10-12 years

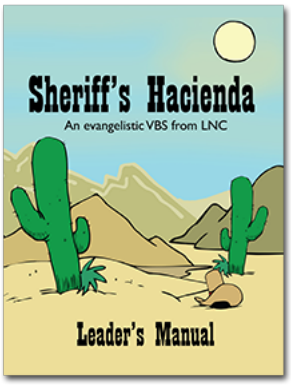


We are based in Mexico City, and our printshop carries all these products in Spanish. The English products are only available for download at this time.
If you would like to place a large order (for 100+ churches) contact us for a quote for English materials.
We are in Mexico:
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kristina@losninoscuentan.com

Super Pack for 75 kids
Everything you need for a VBS with 75 kids.



Leader's Manual
All VBS instructions are included in this book. Includes all lessons and activities and extra ideas.



Leader Pamphlets
Hand these to the directors of departments.



Craft Pack
Includes 4 crafts for 25 children.





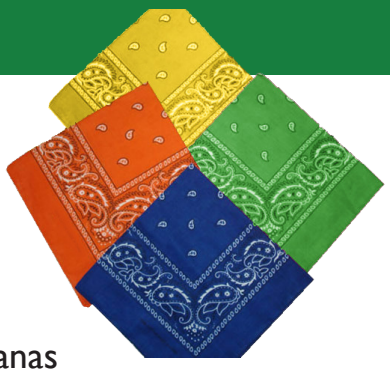
Promo Pack

Invite your neighborhood with 2 Color posters, 10 2-color posters, and 100 flyers.



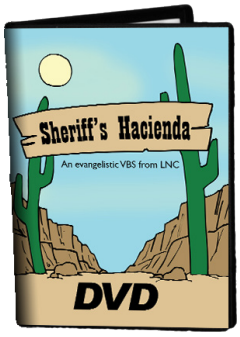
Color Poster

Get a few more of these to hang in your neighborhood.



Bandanas

Separate your children into four teams easily with four different colors.



DVD

Comes with a CD and a song chart booklet.

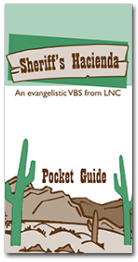


Voting Pack

Let the children vote on their opinions with these posters.



Straw Hat



Pocket Guide

Basic info for all leaders.



Certificate

Give each child a certificate in the closing ceremony.

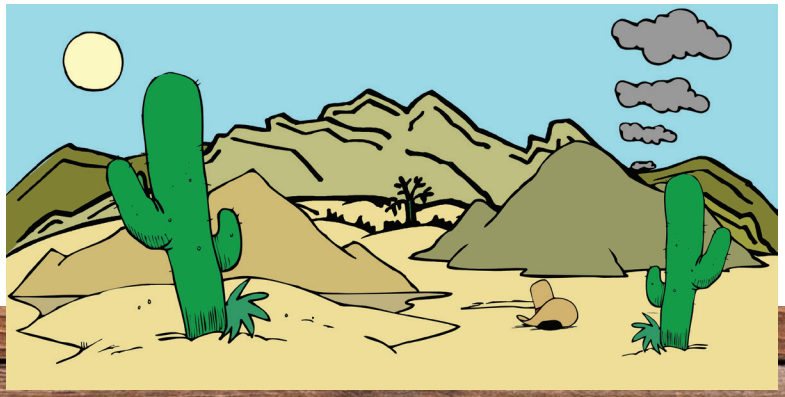


Campfire

Gather your class around a fun and safe paper campfire.

HUGE Backdrop

Decorate your stage with this 5 x 2.5 meter backdrop.





Plaster Mold

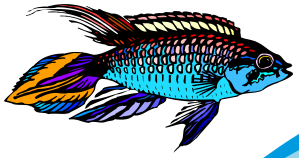
Make plaques with Plaster of Paris for the children to paint.

Like this VBS?

Try our new Sunday School program:

Submerge in the Word



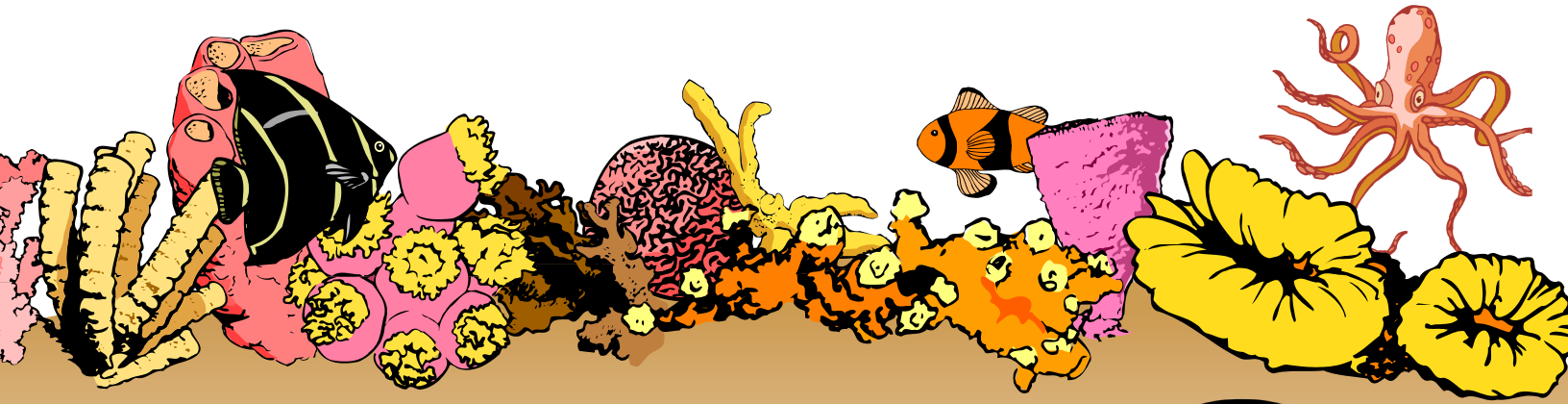


Be an example. 1 Timothy 4:12

This program offers six months of classes in two units for four age groups with lessons, verses, games, crafts, music, and fun activities with an underwater theme.

And it's all available FREE online at

www.TheChildrenCount.com/Submerge



13032
English Sheriff Manual

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