

Companion Guide
to accompany the video program

Jesus for kids

This guide is adapted from a curriculum from Channel 4 Learning Ltd.

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Companion Guide to *Jesus for Kids*

Program 1 - The First Christmas

Learning Outcomes

TO REFLECT upon why Christmas is a special time.

TO INTRODUCE the time, the place and the characters associated with the birth of Jesus.

TO ESTABLISH that Christmas is one of the two most important holidays in the Christian year (the other being Easter).

TO EXPLORE the experiences associated with new beginnings, such as the birth of Jesus or events in the children's own lives.

TO LISTEN and respond to the story of The First Christmas and retell it in their own words.

Program Outline

The first program begins with Mary as a young woman living in Israel. Mary is given the news by the Angel Gabriel that she is to become the mother of the Son of God. The program explores the feelings felt by Mary and Joseph upon hearing this news. The program then goes on to outline the main events leading up to the birth of Jesus, including the difficult journey taken by Mary and Joseph, the visitors to the birth and the efforts made by King Herod to destroy Jesus. The program ends with Mary, Joseph and Jesus traveling to Egypt to begin a new life.

Key Vocabulary Words to Cover

Mary, Nazareth, Bethlehem, angel, Joseph, messenger, Herod, shepherd, Jesus, wise, special, stable, God, journey, carpenter, holy.

Before the Program

To introduce the five programs, talk about how the Bible is a very special book. Explain that it is a collection of important true stories and that some of these stories chronicle the life and teachings of Jesus. Ask the children what stories about Jesus they know already. Ask them what they think the story of The First Christmas is about. It may be a good idea to have a children's Bible and a nativity scene to illustrate the story.

Follow-up Activities

MAKE a display of things associated with Christmas, such as Christmas cards, a Christmas tree and decorations.

LOOK at the way that Christmas is celebrated in other parts of the world.

USE an Advent calendar or candle in the classroom.

DISCUSS the symbolism of candles at Christmas. Why is light important to Christians? (It symbolizes the light and truth of Jesus and his teachings.)

VISIT your local church nativity display.

BRING into the classroom photographs and other items received by parents in celebration of their child's birth.

CREATE a stable scene.

Program 2 - Jesus the Storyteller

Learning Outcomes

TO ESTABLISH the role played by the story in the teachings and messages of Jesus.

TO INTRODUCE the role of the disciples.

TO ILLUSTRATE how Jesus regarded everyone as his neighbor, including those considered to be outcasts at the time.

Program Outline

The program begins by introducing the role of the disciples and the way in which Jesus taught people about God. The program focuses on two stories—The Good Samaritan and The Prodigal Son. The Good Samaritan encourages us to care for and respect all those in our community regardless of who they are. Through The Prodigal Son, Jesus teaches us that no matter how far we drift away, God is eager to welcome us back. Jesus also conveys the message that we should adopt a similar approach to those who offend us.

Key Vocabulary Words to Cover

Disciple, Samaritan, neighbor, Jerusalem, Jericho, priest, Jew, teacher, famine, forgive, storyteller, Israel, temple.

Before the Program

Introduce the program by showing the children a map of Israel and where it is located in the world. Explain that Jesus had twelve special friends who helped him with his work and that they were known as disciples. When Jesus taught people or answered their questions, he often told a story. These stories were concerned with ordinary life and aimed at helping us to understand about the Kingdom of God. You may wish to describe these stories as parables.

Follow up Activities

INVITE a “real” storyteller into the classroom. In preparation for this visit, the children could list the stories they like most and remember best.

LIST people in the community who help them.

SOME PEOPLE are voluntary workers in the community. Can the children think of any? In what ways can the children help others?

ASK THE CHILDREN to draw a picture of their neighbor. Older children could devise a questionnaire to be used with their neighbor.

RETELL the story of The Prodigal Son. Ask the children to imagine that they were the son returning home. Is there a present they could bring with them to try to make the angry brother happy again?

Program 3 - Jesus the Miracle Worker

Learning Outcomes

TO REINFORCE understanding of the role of the disciples.

TO UNDERSTAND the meaning of the word “miracle.”

TO RECOGNIZE that Jesus performed miracles in order to show God’s love for his people.

TO SHOW that Jesus performed some miracles to show that he had power over God’s created world.

TO INTRODUCE to the children the idea that Jesus was the Son of God.

Program Outline

The program begins with the return of the disciples, anxious to share with Jesus the work they had done for him. They set off for a quiet place to rest but were confronted with crowds eager to listen to Jesus. Despite his tiredness, Jesus did not want to turn them away. By the end of the day there was no food to share with everyone. The program then focuses on the miracle of the loaves and fishes and Jesus’ walking on the water. The program concludes with Peter’s realizing that if he trusts completely in Jesus, he can do anything. Peter finally acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God.

Key Vocabulary Words to Cover

Galilee, shepherd, master, crowd, gale, miracle, trust, faith, Peter, Andrew, prayer.

Before the Program

Remind the children about the role of Jesus and his disciples in teaching about the Kingdom of God. Explain what we mean by a miracle and relate this to special things that have happened to someone they know, even such as the birth of a new baby. Explain to them that in this program Jesus performs two special miracles to show God’s love and power in the world.

Follow-up Activities

IF THE CHILDREN had to share a packed lunch with another person, which items could they do without? Which items would they find hard to share?

DO OBSERVATIONAL drawings of loaves and fish.

MAKE bread in the classroom—perhaps invite a baker.

LIST different people the children trust and why.

DISCUSS times someone has shared with the children and how they felt about it.

Program 4 - Jesus the Healer

Learning Outcomes

TO RECOGNIZE that Jesus performed individual miracles that made sick people well again.
TO SHOW that Jesus cared for all kinds of people, even those treated by others as outcasts.
TO ACKNOWLEDGE that Jesus' healing powers brought him fame and popularity.
TO UNDERSTAND that Jesus passed on his powers to his disciples, so that after his death, they could carry on healing people themselves.

Program Outline

This program continues to develop the role of Jesus as a miracle worker. In this program, Jesus heals not just his friend's family but also those deemed to be outcast in the society in which he lived. For example, he healed people suffering from leprosy. Through his healing, Jesus reinforces the importance of trust and faith in God. At the conclusion of the program, we are told how Jesus passed on his healing powers to his disciples so that they would be able to continue his work after his death.

Key Vocabulary Words to Cover

Jesus, Capernaum, Simon, Peter, Sabbath, synagogue, Andrew, leprosy, sick, disease, infection, healed, faith, Jairus, belief, peace, mourning.

Before the Program

Discuss the work of Jesus as a miracle worker that was shown in the previous program. Ask the children to think of other ways in which Jesus could help people, such as healing the sick. To help them to put this into context, encourage them to think about the ways in which we heal sick people today. Remind them of some of the places they have learned about so far in the Holy Land, and show these on a map.

Follow up Activities

LIST those people in the community who help to heal us or take care of us when we are ill.
ASK THE CHILDREN to role play some of the people whom Jesus healed for the rest of the class.

LIST diseases or illnesses that they may have had or heard of.

DEVELOP the idea of an outcast, ask the children to talk about what it feels like to be left out of a game or not invited to a party. Role play some of these scenarios.

DESIGN "get well" cards—perhaps these could be delivered to a local hospital.

Program 5 - The First Easter

Learning Outcomes

TO THINK about why Easter is a special time.

TO UNDERSTAND that Easter is one of the two most important days of the Christian year.

TO INTRODUCE the time, the place and the characters associated with the death and resurrection of Jesus.

TO UNDERSTAND that Jesus suffered for others.

TO RECOGNIZE the importance of the Resurrection to Christians and the way in which this is symbolic of new beginnings.

Program Outline

The program begins with the arrest and persecution of Jesus. It charts his difficult and painful journey to Golgotha, the place of execution. Towards the end of the journey, many people stopped berating Jesus and began to remember all the good things he had done. The crucifixion is shown in some detail. Then Jesus is given a proper burial by two of his friends. His body is placed in a tomb with a large stone rolled over the entrance. Then there is a discovery of the empty tomb and Jesus' final farewell to those closest to him before joining his father in heaven. It ends with Jesus' instructing his disciples to go out into the world to continue to spread the good news about the Kingdom of God.

Key Vocabulary Words to Cover

Arrest, Jesus, Pilate, crown, thorns, prisoners, cross, Golgotha, Simon, forgive, heaven, spirit, tomb, Sabbath, Easter, dead, risen.

Before the Program

Remind the children of all things they have learned so far, highlighting all the people Jesus helped. However, in spite of this, some people were not happy about the way Jesus taught others about the Kingdom of God. They did not want to believe that he was the Son of God. The chief priests wanted to kill Jesus. Jesus knew that this was going to happen and had warned all his disciples about it. Tell the children about ways in which people were punished at that time, but explain that Jesus was prepared to go through the ordeal and give his life freely for the sake of others.

Follow up Activities

INVESTIGATE symbols associated with Easter, such as the cross and eggs.

MAKE a mobile of Easter symbols.

EXPLORE your church to find examples of stained-glass windows, paintings or sculptures which show the events leading up to the crucifixion.

MAKE simple versions of stained-glass windows. Using the outline of a window on stiff card, the children cut out their own design, paste pieces of cellophane or tissue paper onto the back and display it on the window.

INVESTIGATE how many types of crosses the children can find.

LOOK at the ways in which Easter is celebrated in different countries.

DISCUSS the meaning of death and life after death.