



# preschool Crew Leader Guide



# What's a Crew Leader for Preschoolers?

If you've been asked to be a Crew Leader for preschoolers, you've met two important qualifications: You love the Lord, and you love children.

During Roar, you'll visit different activities with a group of three to five children. *You're not in charge of preparing or teaching activities; your role is to love, encourage, and enjoy the children in your Crew.* The following guidelines will help you be the most awesome Crew Leader.

## A Crew Leader for preschoolers is...

- a friend and helper,
- someone who helps children complete activities,
- someone who gets down on the floor to interact with children,
- someone who encourages kids, and
- someone who supports the Little Paws Preschool staff.

## Use these helpful tips:

- Learn the names of the children in your Crew, and call children by name often.
- Help children work at their own pace. You'll have 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds in your Crew. You'll probably notice big differences in motor skills (such as cutting and coloring) between older and younger children. Encourage 5-year-olds to help younger children when possible.
- Look into preschoolers' eyes when you speak to them. You may need to kneel or sit on the floor to do this.
- Empower children by offering them choices. Ask "Would you like to make a craft or play with blocks?" Don't ask "What do you want to do?" or children may decide they want to do activities that are unavailable or inappropriate.





# Here's What You'll Do

- **Arrive at least 20 minutes early each day.** Report to the Little Paws Preschool area on Day 1 and the Sing & Play Roar area on Days 2 through 5, and be ready to greet children who arrive early. Your welcoming presence will bring smiles to anxious faces! (Besides, the Preschool Director may have some special instructions for you.)
- **Greet each child by name and with a warm smile.** Help children put on their name badges each day.
- **Sit with the children in your Crew during group activities.** Keep your Crew members together, and help them participate in the activities at Sing & Play Roar and Hungry Herd Café.
- **Accompany children to preschool stations.** If necessary, read the instructions at each station, and help children complete the activities. Distribute supplies as needed.
- **Always make sure all children are accounted for before leaving the room!** Be sure children hold hands or a rope as you rotate between stations. Never grab, pinch, or pull children as you travel. Remember to use kind, gentle, positive words. If a child lags behind, remind him or her to stay with the Crew. You might want to walk behind your Crew so you can keep all the children in view and avoid traveling too fast.
- **Help children think about how we can see what God is doing all around us.** Talk about how fun it is to see the amazing things God has made or the way God shows his love to us. (Those are called God Sightings®!)
- **Help children with their Bible Memory Buddies.** Every day, children receive an adorable Bible Memory Buddy card. You'll help them slide the Buddies onto their Roar Carabiners to wear during VBS, and then they'll get to take their entire collection home at the end of the week.
- **Repeat the daily Bible Point often.** Every activity at Roar focuses on one simple, memorable Bible truth called the Bible Point. The more children hear or say the

Bible Point, the more likely they are to remember it and apply it to their lives. Kids will be listening for the Bible Point so they can respond by punching a fist into the air and saying, "God is good!"

- **Keep track of your Crew members' name badges and Buddies.** Put these in a Crew bag, and keep the bag in a convenient place in your classroom or church at the end of the day. Send them home with the children at the end of the week.
- **Help children collect their Bible Activity Sheets, Sciency-Fun Gizmos™, and crafts after Closing Circle.** Children will take these home at the end of each day.
- **Report any potential discipline problems to the Preschool Director.** He or she will help you handle the problems appropriately.
- **Release children only to a designated parent or caregiver.** If an unfamiliar adult comes to pick up a child, refer the adult to the Preschool Director.
- **Assist the Preschool Director with cleanup and preparation for your next meeting.**



# What Do I Do at Each Station?



**Sing & Play Roar** is where kids worship by singing upbeat action songs. Your job at Sing & Play Roar is to

- greet your Crew members in your designated seating area.
- follow the motions and sing out loud.



**Exploration Stations** allow preschoolers to ease into their day by choosing from a variety of hands-on activities. Your job during Exploration Stations is to

- let children freely move from one center to the next. Some children may spend the entire 15 minutes at one area, while others will move through all of them. That's okay! Each activity helps preschoolers learn through play.
- explain the activity instructions to preschoolers—you'll find instructions at each station.



**Bible Adventures & Missions** is where kids experience the Bible story. Kids also learn about Operation Kid-to-Kid in this station. Your job at Bible Adventures is to

- listen carefully to hear how Crew Leaders should help out that day.
- encourage Crew members to participate.
- share your own discoveries during discussion times and your excitement during each wild Bible adventure.



**KidVid™ Cinema** is where kids watch a daily video of real kids living in the African country of Zambia who have seen God's goodness in their lives. Your job at KidVid Cinema is to

- encourage kids to tune in and watch the video.
- lead your Crew in participating in the activities before and after the video.
- lead kids in discussion when it's called for. (Expect surprising insights and answers from kids.)

In KidVid Cinema, kids will discuss real-life examples of when life changes or is unfair, scary, sad, and good. Don't worry! Each of these is handled in a kid-appropriate way. The kids in your Crew may share very real experiences with you. Don't feel like you have to have all the answers! Use the Bible Points to reassure kids that even through the hardest times in life...God is good.

If a child brings up a serious issue, such as indicators of neglect, abuse, or violence they've experienced, say "Thank you for telling me about that. It's very important, and we need to talk about it with our VBS Director [or Children's Minister if he or she isn't the VBS Director] to give you a chance to say everything you need to say—and help you with your feelings." Involve the appropriate person at your church who can follow through with necessary steps after the conversation, as there is not only a moral but a legal obligation to report circumstances where a child might be in danger.



**Hungry Herd Café** is where Crews come for a tasty snack. Your job at Hungry Herd Café is to

- gather your Crew in a designated area.
- help your Crew listen as the Hungry Herd Café Leader explains the snack.
- help kids clean hands before eating.
- lead kids in discussing how the snack connects to the day's Bible verse by following a helpful handout.
- help kids clean up your area before leaving.



**Games** is where kids play team-building games. Your job at Games is to

- listen carefully to the instructions so you can help your Crew members follow them.
- participate in each activity, and cheer on your Crew members as they participate.

**Craft & Play** is a fun time full of sensory activities where kids can be creative, get a little messy, and lock in what they're learning each day at Roar. Your job at Craft & Play is to

- help keep messes to a minimum while still allowing kids to have fun with the art supplies.
- listen carefully to the instructions and remind your Crew of what to do as needed.
- ask preschoolers why they decided to create projects the way they did, and affirm their creativity.
- mark your Crew members' projects with their names and set them in a designated area until the end of the day.

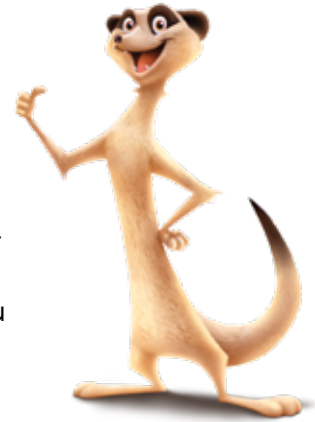


**Closing Circle** is where kids experience an exciting review of the day's lesson. Your role at Closing Circle is to

- sit with your Crew and participate in reviewing each day's Bible Point, Bible story, and Bible verse actions.
- give each child a Watch for God Wristband on Day 1.
- make sure each child leaves with his or her craft, Bible Activity Pages, and Jambo sticker.
- collect Crew members' name badges and Bible Memory Buddies and store them in your Crew bag.
- make sure children are picked up by a person designated to do so.

# Crews Are Cool!

Crews are small groups of preschoolers who participate together at Roar each day. Each Crew consists of up to five children and one Crew Leader. Because you are shepherding a small group, you can give each preschooler lots of attention, and discipline issues will decrease. Use the developmental information below to guide you as you work with preschoolers at VBS.



- **We're 3 years old.** We've just learned how to play together, and we're still learning how to share and take turns. It may be a little hard for us to change from one activity to the next, so give us plenty of warning ahead of time. We're generally happy and sometimes even silly, but we may be a little shy about trying new things. We enjoy playing games that involve moving and jumping around, but we may tire more quickly than our older playmates.



- **We're 4 years old.** We're full of imagination and excitement. We love to use our imaginations in make-believe play and art activities. We like to use loud voices and big movements. You may need to remind us to play quietly at Little Paws Preschool. We enjoy listening to Bible Adventures and answering interesting questions such as "What's your favorite animal that God made in our world?"



- **We're 5 years old.** We love to help our Crew Leaders and our other leaders. If you notice us helping, please tell us thank you. We're proud of the things we can do, but we're also sensitive. Other children may hurt our feelings by blurting out reactions to things we do. We're improving in our coordination. We can cut with scissors and color between the lines. We're also pretty good at throwing and catching balls.





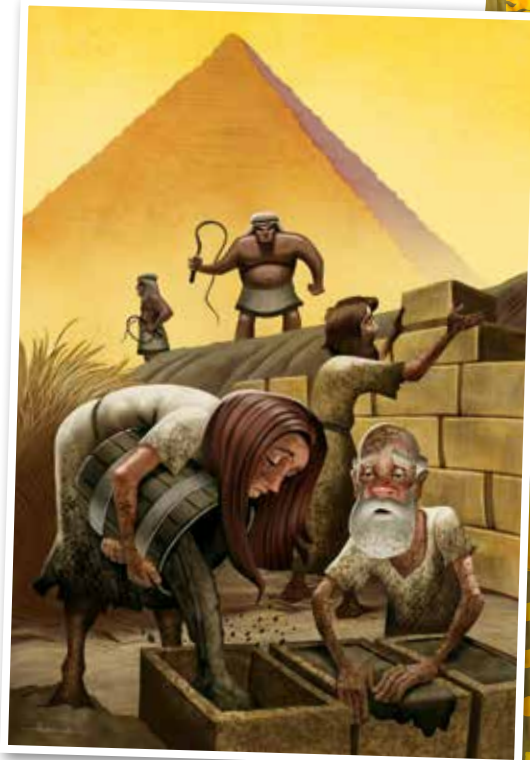
# Day 1

**Bible Story:** The Israelites are slaves for the Egyptians. (Exodus 1; 5; 6)

**Key Verse:** “The Lord is good, a strong refuge when trouble comes.” (Nahum 1:7)

## Consider This...

- The Israelites had identified themselves as God’s people since God initiated his covenant with Abram—centuries before! Yet this story finds God’s chosen people surviving as subjugated slaves.
- More than 400 years *before* this story, Joseph’s family moved to Egypt and stayed there for three generations. During Joseph’s life, Pharaoh looked favorably on Joseph and his family.
- Moses’ mother placed her baby in a basket, or *tebah* in Hebrew. This word is used only in reference to Moses’ basket and the ark built by Noah!
- Raised in Pharaoh’s courts, Moses had the advantage of a higher education. Acts 7 tells us that Moses “was powerful in both speech and action.” In spite of this, he still hesitated when God commanded him to lead the Israelites and speak to Pharaoh.
- Brick makers had a dirty, demanding job. Builders required *millions* of bricks, so brick makers had daily quotas to meet. Each brick measured approximately 13 inches long, 6 inches wide, and 6 inches thick. Chopped straw acted as an acid and held the bricks together.



## Why It Matters...

The Israelites understood injustice, as they struggled to endure backbreaking labor and suppression at the hands of the Egyptians. After all, weren’t *they* God’s chosen people? Hadn’t God made a covenant with *their* ancestors? The Israelites definitely had reason to cry out “Hey, this isn’t fair!” Today, how many times do kids proclaim *their* protest at life’s injustices?

When someone gets away with rule-breaking...it’s not fair.

When someone has less homework...it’s not fair.

When hard times come to one child and not another...it’s not fair.

Through Moses, God reassured his people that he hadn’t forgotten them. His mighty plans were still at work! At VBS today, you can be “Moses,” sharing the hopeful news that God is still good, even in the midst of circumstances that don’t seem just.

**Bible Point:**

**When life is unfair...God is good!**



# Day 1

Bible Point: **When life is unfair...God is good!**

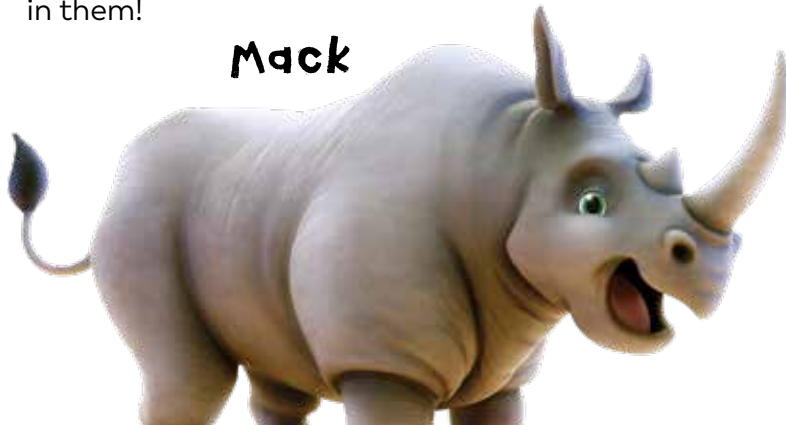
## God Sightings®

Every day at Roar, kids and leaders will share evidence they've seen of God. We call these *God Sightings*, and they're an easy, practical, and powerful way to help kids realize that God is still active in our everyday lives. The more you incorporate God Sightings into your conversations with kids, the more they'll "get it."

Today help preschoolers share about unfair things they've experienced and simple ways God can bring good things from unfair things. Here are a few examples:

- Talk about how friends who take toys away can learn to share.
- Share Bible verses that show how God can bring good things out of unfair things—such as many of the stories of Jesus healing people of afflictions.
- Point out positive ways preschoolers help their friends play fair. Those are ways God's goodness can show up in them!

**Mack**



## Savanna Survival Tips From Your Director



### PAWS HERE!

- On this first day at Roar, meet your Crew in the Little Paws Preschool area.
- Smile and introduce yourself.
- Be sure to learn and use the names of the kids in your Crew. Be sure they know your name, too.
- When Station Leaders ask you to "circle up with your Crew," that means to make a tight knee-to-knee circle for discussions. It's an easy way to help little ones focus in for a short time.



### PAWS HERE!

A God Sighting is not "I see God in that tree." A God Sighting is "I see God's creativity and power because only God can make a tree." God Sightings are seeing things that God has created, allowed, provided, done, or revealed to us.



# Day 2

**Bible Story:** God sends plagues on Egypt. (Exodus 7:14–12:32)

**Key Verse:** “Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me.” (Psalm 23:4)

## Consider This...

- God’s displays of power—plagues and miraculous signs—didn’t just make life miserable for the Egyptians. These demonstrations also countered symbols of power in Egyptian culture. Some scholars suggest that God targeted things such as frogs, cows, and the sun to display God’s power over Egyptian gods that often had similar physical manifestations.
- Scripture is unclear whether the Israelites suffered the plagues along with the Egyptians. Exodus specifically states that God spared his people from the plagues of livestock, hail, and darkness, and he gave the Israelites instructions for how to prepare themselves and their homes for Passover. It is evident that the Israelites saw firsthand the frightening and awesome power of God’s signs against Egypt.
- A plague of locusts would devastate an agricultural community, when you consider that a locust can eat its weight each day! Locust swarms are formidable, and even one square mile of a swarm can contain more than 100 *million* hungry insects!
- In a bit of prophetic foreshadowing, the spotless lamb (or kid) took the place of the firstborn son, protecting him from the plague of death. Similarly, Jesus became *our* spotless lamb, sacrificing his life and allowing his blood to be shed for *our* protection and life.



## Why It Matters...

The children at your VBS may not face plagues of hail, darkness, or frogs, but they *do* live in a world of scary news headlines, hopeless environmental predictions, and even frightening nightmares. These fears can seem like plagues that overwhelm kids, blocking out the truth that God is *still* good. Some kids may wonder if God is even present when life gets scary. Today you’ll explore what kids are really afraid of and have the opportunity to reassure them that when we’re plagued by fear, our good God is still present and in control.

**Bible Point:**  
**When life is scary...God is good!**





# Day 2

Bible Point: *When life is scary...God is good!*

## God Sightings®

God Sightings are a great way to help kids see that God is active all around us. The more you incorporate God Sightings into your conversations with kids, the more they'll "get it."

Today help preschoolers understand that everyone faces scary times or has fears and that God is good even when things scare us. Here are a couple of examples:

- Share preschool-friendly examples of your own about how God has helped you face a fear or revealed to you that something you feared isn't so scary after all, such as becoming friends with someone you don't know.
- Keep watch for unique moments during the day to praise your Crew members for encouraging each other when they seem worried or scared. God's goodness can come from the encouraging words of friends!

Hooper

## Savanna Survival Tips From Your Director



## PAWS HERE!

- When you arrive on Days 2 through 5, go to the Sing & Play Roar area, and sit near the Crew sign that matches your assigned number or name. Wait to welcome your Crew members with a warm smile, and call children by name.
- It's possible that you'll have new children join your Crew. Be sure to welcome them warmly, and introduce them to their Crew members—and to yourself!
- Participate in God Sightings—you're the chief encourager! Have fun with your Crew members as you look for God in action each day.
- You may want to leave Hungry Herd Café with your Crew a few minutes early each day to allow time for a bathroom break.

# Day 3

**Bible Story:** The Israelites enter the wilderness. (Exodus 14–17)

**Key Verse:** “Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever.” (Psalm 106:1)

## Consider This...

- The Israelites had barely stepped one toe out of Egypt before they began worrying and wishing to return to the way things were...even when those ways included brutal slavery. In Exodus 14:11-12, God’s people make it sound as if Moses forced them out of Egypt: “What have you done to us? Why did you make us leave Egypt?”
- Prior to leaving Egypt, the Israelites would likely have not “seen” God’s presence. Once they began their exodus, God appeared as a visible pillar of cloud. The Israelites saw this as a pillar of light, and the Egyptians saw it as a pillar of darkness.
- Scientists estimate that a person can go about a week without water, although that depends on the surrounding temperature and the age and health of the person. The Israelites walked for three days without water, only to arrive at an unusable water source.
- Nothing on earth exactly replicates all the descriptions of manna. The Bible describes it as “grain of heaven” or “corn of heaven,” and some scholars think it sounds similar to liquid found on tamarisk trees or hammada plants. However, neither of these plants is available year-round.



## Why It Matters...

There’s no doubt about it—change is hard. When kids have to change schools, they likely long for the familiarity and routine of their old school. Sometimes friendships change and kids miss the easy laughter with a longtime buddy. And sometimes divorce causes home life to change, making kids wish they could return to life the way it was. How wonderful, then, that God’s Word is filled with promises and examples of God’s everlasting, enduring faithfulness. Today encourage kids that God’s goodness *never* changes! God is faithfully beside us, pouring out his love and strength every day.

## Bible Point:

**When life changes...God is good!**





# Day 3

Bible Point: **When life changes...God is good!**

## God Sightings®

Keep looking for evidence of God all around you. Throughout the day as your preschoolers navigate the changes in activities and the change that VBS brings to their day, point out how God is good in all the change. Here are a few examples:

- Praise kids for doing something different from what they usually do in a day by coming to VBS to learn about how God is good.
- Bring up the Operation Kid-to-Kid project and how everyone at Roar VBS will be a God Sighting for families in Zambia who experience a good change in their lives by being given food and medical visits they need to be healthy.
- Point out songs from Sing & Play Roar, such as “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms,” that show that while things in our lives change, God doesn’t. God is forever, and he’s forever good.



### PAWS HERE!

- Remind preschoolers that the stories they’re learning are from God’s Word—the Bible—and these stories are true!
- As the week goes on, take time to get to know new Crew members, and make them feel warmly welcomed into your Crew family.
- Be an example to your preschoolers of God’s patient, listening ears.
- If you have time between stations, talk about how exciting it is that you’re helping families in Zambia through Operation Kid-to-Kid!
- As the week progresses, preschoolers may get tired—or even more energetic! Remember to demonstrate God’s powerful love, kindness, gentleness, and patience with these little ones. They’re learning so much about God...from you!



Marge

## Savanna Survival Tips From Your Director

# Day 4

**Bible Story:** Jesus dies and comes back to life. (John 16–21)

**Key Verse:** “The Lord is close to the brokenhearted.” (Psalm 34:18)

## Consider This...

- There’s interesting symbolism to Jesus carrying his own cross outside the city. In Genesis 22, Isaac carried the wood that Abraham would use to sacrifice Isaac...until God provided the ram as a sacrifice. And Leviticus 16 commands the priests to take the sin offering outside the camp or city. Jesus—the Lamb of God—became *our* sin offering!
- Roman soldiers usually crucified only non-citizens, lower-class citizens, or those accused of high treason or desertion (in wartime). The accused died a shameful, disgraceful, and agonizing death.
- Continuing the shame and disgrace of crucifixion, soldiers usually tossed the body of the crucified person into a pit. And Jesus, being penniless, didn’t have the money to pay for a formal burial. Yet Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus—both members of the Sanhedrin—stepped in. They took Jesus’ body and prepared it for burial themselves.
- Scholars estimate that a typical stone that was rolled over the opening of a tomb cave weighed anywhere from 1 to 3 tons!
- Although we usually think of angels with halos and wings, most times angels appear in the Bible, people describe them as looking like men. When Mary saw two angels near the tomb, she didn’t even realize they were angels!



## Why It Matters...

On the surface, it may seem odd that we call Good Friday “good.” Yet without Jesus’ death, there would be no payment for sin. And there wouldn’t have been the triumphant, joyful resurrection!

Kids—and adults—find it hard to imagine *anything* good in the midst of sad times. What good can come from a loved one dying? How can a child find any good in a bully? And what’s so good about being left out or alone? God never promises that this life will be pain-free. But he *does* promise to be near when we’re hurting. And, more important, he showed that there’s always hope—always joy—to come. Use today’s experiences to give kids the strength to rely on God’s power in sadness and to look forward to the time “He will wipe every tear from their eyes” (Revelation 21:4).

**Bible Point:**

**When life is sad...God is good!**





# Day 4

Bible Point: **When life is sad...God is good!**

## Helping Children Follow Jesus

During the week, if you sense that a child might like to know more about what it means to believe in Jesus, give this simple explanation:

**God loves us so much that he sent his Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for us. Jesus died and took the punishment for all the wrong things we do. But Jesus is stronger than death, and he came back to life! Jesus wants to be our friend forever. If we ask him to, he'll take away the wrong things we've done and fill our lives with his love. Jesus will always be with us and will help us make the right choices. If we believe in Jesus and ask him to forgive us, someday we'll live with him forever in heaven.**

Be sure to share the news of the child's spiritual development with his or her parent(s).

## God Sightings®

Today help your Crew members think of God Sightings that show God can bring good even out of sad times. Here are a couple of examples:

- Highlight how though Jesus' death on the cross was sad, the story didn't end there and God brought amazing good to the world when Jesus came back to life and beat sin and death!
- Help kids identify times something sad has happened but there was good in it, too, such as God's love and goodness in people stepping up to help others after car accidents or natural disasters.

## Savanna Survival Tips From Your Director



**Zion**

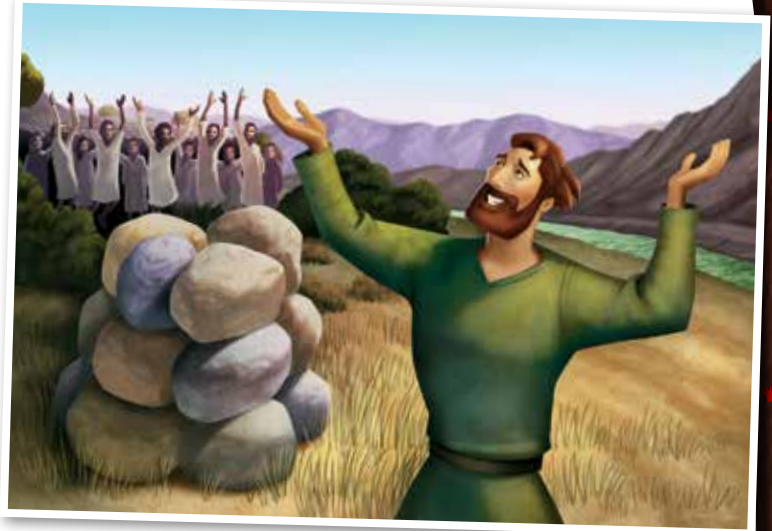
# Day 5

**Bible Story:** The Israelites build a memorial to remember God's goodness.  
(Joshua 3-4)

**Key Verse:** "Remember the Lord, who is great and glorious." (Nehemiah 4:14)

## Consider This...

- God tasked Joshua with finishing the job Moses had started—leading the Israelites into the land God had promised. While many battles still lay ahead, the Israelites could celebrate after such a long time wandering without a homeland.
- Immediately following the spies' return from Jericho, Joshua and his leaders prepared for a procession that would be holy and sacred while also awe-inspiring and unforgettable.
- The Ark of the Covenant contained reminders of God's provision, promise, and power: the stone tablets inscribed with God's law, a jar of manna, and Aaron's staff. The Ark acted as something like a portable sanctuary and was a representation of God's presence.
- The Bible shows that Jacob (Genesis 28:18-22; 31:45-46), Joshua (Joshua 24:26-27), and Samuel (1 Samuel 7:12) all used stones as symbols that memorialized God's hand in their lives.



## Why It Matters...

Like the Israelites, the kids at your VBS probably have reasons to celebrate. After all, God has poured out blessings such as health, friendships, food, safety, and loving families. Yet all too often we forget that these good things come from God, who gives them out of his goodness and love. Today will be an excellent opportunity to show kids what praise looks like, what it means to remember God's blessings, and how to pour out our thanks to our good, good God.

## Bible Point:

**When life is good...God is good!**





# Day 5

Bible Point: **When life is good...God is good!**

## God Sightings®

Today help your Crew members celebrate the good times in life *with* God. Here are a few examples:

- Talk about how we can acknowledge God's goodness in good times and invite God to celebrate with us, such as when we're doing something we love to do or celebrating a birthday.
- Share an example or two of good times in your life you thanked God for and attributed to him and his blessings.
- Tell each child why he or she is a God Sighting and reminds you that God is good.

## Thank You to You!

Thanks for all you've done to help preschoolers learn that God is good and God loves them!

Savanna



## Savanna Survival Tips From Your Director



## PAWS HERE!

- Find out if the kids in your Crew have age-appropriate Bibles or Christian music at home. Talk with your VBS Director about providing these basic resources for kids.
- Continue building friendships long after Roar is over. Work with preschoolers and parents to fill out the "All About My Crew" information on each Crew member. After VBS, you'll be able to send postcards and birthday cards and greet kids who attend your church.
- Give each child his or her Bible Memory Buddies and other fun goodies from Roar.
- Thank your Little Paws Preschool and VBS Directors for all they've done to demonstrate God's goodness to the kids in your community!

## All About My Crew

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_

Family members: \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite things: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_

Family members: \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite things: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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