

# HELPER

Handbook

Answers **VBS**

# OPERATION

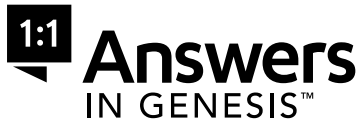
# ARCTIC



Exploring the Coolest  
Book on the Planet

# HELPER

Handbook





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*Helper Handbook*

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# CONTENTS

Let's Warm Up! .....	4
Our Goal .....	5
Frequently Asked Questions .....	5
Terms to Know .....	6
Staff Devotions .....	7
Devotion 1 Book of Books .....	7
Devotion 2 Incredible Impact .....	9
Devotion 3 Bedrock Base .....	10
Devotion 4 Letter of Love .....	11
Devotion 5 Exciting to Explore .....	13
Top 20 Tips When Working with Children .....	15
Age-Level Characteristics .....	17
Child Safety Precautions .....	23
Leading a Child to Christ .....	24
VBS Daily Overviews .....	27
Day 1 Overview .....	27
Day 2 Overview .....	28
Day 3 Overview .....	29
Day 4 Overview .....	30
Day 5 Overview .....	31
Memory Verses .....	32
KJV Memory Verses .....	32
Bonus Memory Verses .....	33
Terrific Trivia Tidbits .....	34
Frosty Fun .....	38
Two-Minute Tips .....	40

# LET'S WARM UP!

*Beyond thrilling! Exciting to explore! Breathtakingly beautiful! Full of treasure!* Words that describe the Arctic for sure, a fascinating region like no other in the world. But go back and read those words again—they can also be used to describe the coolest book on the planet—the Bible. It's mind-blowing to think that the God who made the universe wrote us a book—a book that is *beyond thrilling, exciting to explore, beautiful, and full of treasure*. Now if that isn't worthy of our attention, what is? We here at Answers VBS can hardly contain our excitement as we launch the newest VBS—*Operation Arctic*. Get ready for the thrill of exploring this one-of-a-kind treasure as we build on the following BIBLE acronym each day:

**B Book of Books**—The first day, we'll discover there's just no book like it, unique in so many ways!

**I Incredible Impact**—The second day, we'll explore the impact the Bible's teachings have had upon our world!

**B Bedrock Base**—The third day, we'll see there's no shifting sand here—we've got the Rock of God's Word to base our lives on!

**L Letter of Love**—The fourth day, we'll encounter the best love letter ever, written to us by God Himself!

**E Exciting to Explore**—The fifth day, we'll be challenged to learn it, love it, and live it!

Our explorers will begin warming up to the Word from the very first minute they arrive at *Operation Arctic*. The mission begins at **Snowfall Station** with the Opening Assembly, a high-energy opening with entertaining welcomes, rockin' songs, a mission moment, and prayer.

Then we're off to four fun rotation sites:

- **Treasure Point**, the Bible lesson location. Here, explorers discover what a gem God's Word is as they learn important Bible truths in fun and creative ways.
- **Klondike Corner**, the snack spot. Explorers won't want to pass up the cool treats that are waiting to melt in their mouths.
- **Glacier Gap**, the recreation location. At this spot, explorers discover that preparation is "snow" easy and games are filled with chills and thrills.
- **Discovery Pass**, the science, craft, music, mission, and memory verse spot. This location features a wide array of activities to choose from: science experiments, crafts, songs to sing, memory verse games to play, and a mission time (for those who want to spend more time than is given during the Assembly).

After finishing the day's rotations, everyone heads back to **Snowfall Station** for the Closing Assembly that includes more singing, a Creature Feature, contest results, and the greatly anticipated daily drama, which is a highlight of the kids' day. The drama

begins in the city with a high-powered executive who is fed up with the rat race. He decides to move to the wilderness for a quieter, simpler existence. Little does he realize all that's in store—missing treasure, goofy bad guys, unexpected visitors, and plenty of action!

Sound fun? Then let's plunge on in to this cold *world* and God's wonderful *Word*! It promises to be a flurry of fun and excitement at *Operation Arctic*! Let's go!

## ***OUR GOAL***

It's been ten years since Answers in Genesis entered the world of VBS, and we are so thankful for how God has chosen to use these programs! But why did we decide to embark on such an undertaking in the first place, and why are we still at it, by God's grace, ten years later?

Our primary goal has remained the same all these years—to bring God glory by boldly and unashamedly proclaiming Him to a strategic group—young people! From both a biblical and statistical point of view, young people are a big deal! They're not only awesome—we love 'em!—but they're also dearly cherished by our Lord and tend to be soft-hearted toward spiritual things. Researchers generally agree most people become Christians when they're children, so it's apparent this age group is a huge mission field!

Children are loved by their Creator. Jesus said not to hinder the children but to let them come to Him (Luke 18:16). We want children to come to Christ and not be hindered in any way from doing so. To that end, our philosophy has always been to combine a biblically rich VBS loaded with substance with off-the-chart, irresistible fun. In a day and age when content sometimes suffers, it's critically important to us not to sacrifice rich content at the expense of fun. But it's also crucial that the most exciting Book in the world doesn't come across as irrelevant or dry. We want to reflect our creative, inspiring, joy-giving God who made laughter and fun!

So why do we do it? We want kids around the world to hear about and personally meet our awesome God and to understand how they can receive eternal life through repentance and faith in Christ Jesus. We believe VBS is a great way to introduce them to God, as it is one of the biggest outreaches of the year for most churches.

We pray you will find that every prayer prayed, every minute invested, every dollar spent, and every word spoken will bring God glory as you reach kids for Christ. Just remember—VBS is worth it! May God richly bless your VBS.

## ***FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS***

The content of *Operation Arctic* may be new to you. For a list of helpful articles on the topics covered in this VBS program, please visit [AnswersVBS.com/oafaq](http://AnswersVBS.com/oafaq).

# TERMS TO KNOW

Throughout the VBS curriculum, various terms will be used. Here's a list of some of the most common terms to know.

- **Explorers:** Children at VBS. Explorers will be put in teams named after animals they may see on an Arctic exploration (e.g., polar bears, beluga whales, snowy owls, harp seals, caribou).
- **Guides:** Team leaders who lead the teams from place to place during VBS. No teaching is required of this position.
- **Exploration Leaders:** Teachers at the Treasure Point Lesson Time.
- **Treasure Point:** Rotation site where Bible and apologetics teaching occurs.
- **Snowfall Station:** Spot where everyone joins together for the opening and closing assemblies.
- **Discovery Pass:** Rotation site where crafts are made, science experiments are performed, music is sung, memory verses are learned, and missions around the world are explored.
- **Klondike Corner:** Indoor or outdoor site where snacks are served.
- **Glacier Gap:** Indoor or outdoor site (outdoor is preferred) for game time.
- **Bible Gem:** Daily memory verse.
- **Animal Pals:** Friendly animal mascots used to emphasize the key point of each day's lesson.
- **Creature Feature:** Daily time during the closing assembly when we marvel together at God's design of various Arctic animals.
- **Toddlers:** Ages 2–4 years.
- **Pre-Primaries:** Ages 4–6 years, or age 4 through children who have completed Kindergarten.
- **Primaries:** Ages 6–9 years, or children who have completed grades 1–3.
- **Juniors:** Ages 9–12 years, or children who have completed grades 4–6.

For multi-age K–6th teams, we recommend using the material for the Primaries.

# STAFF DEVOTIONS

## DEVOTION 1 BOOK OF BOOKS

*“I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings and will not be ashamed.” Psalm 119:46*

During the early spring of 1524, a young priest slipped away from London and, without the king’s leave, made his way to the European continent. He was never to see his homeland again, and for the next eleven years his life was an elaborate hide-and-seek as he was pursued, at one time, by four government agents. His crime and his life’s ambition were one and the same: to translate the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek and present it, printed and bound, so that even the boy who drove the plough could understand God’s Word.

By the constitutions of Oxford of 1408, it was illegal—on pain of death—to read the scriptures in English without a bishop’s license. To reinforce this, in April 1519, one woman and six men were burned to death at Coventry for teaching their children the Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles’ Creed in English.

William Tyndale was born in Gloucestershire, England, studied at Oxford, and later Cambridge, and spent two years teaching the children of Sir John and Lady Walsh in their small manor house at Little Sodbury. Here he began to translate the New Testament, and by the time he arrived on the continent it was complete. The first ever printed New Testaments in English were smuggled back into

England early in 1526. Though the bishops burned the Bibles and often their owners, the Word of God became an unstoppable force across the land—England had the Bible in the vernacular at last.

(Excerpted with permission from *Travel with William Tyndale* [Day One Publications] by Brian H. Edwards. See [answersingenesis.org/articles/am/v2/n4/tyndale-and-english-bible](http://answersingenesis.org/articles/am/v2/n4/tyndale-and-english-bible).)

**What drove William Tyndale to risk life and limb so that his fellow Englishmen could read the Bible in their own language? He knew the Bible was the “Book of books.” No other book—or person—held the keys to eternal life. No other book laid out the prescription for godly living. No other book contained the true history of the universe and explained why the world is the way it is. No other book was God’s written revelation to mankind.**

Sadly, however, the English-speakers of Tyndale’s time lacked even a rudimentary knowledge of what the Scriptures actually said. Investigations by a reforming bishop in Tyndale’s hometown of Gloucestershire revealed the following about the ignorance of the ministers in the area.



Of the unsatisfactory clergy in 1551, nine did not know how many commandments there were, 33 did not know where they appeared in the Bible (the gospel of St Matthew was a favourite guess) and 168 could not repeat them. Concerning the [Apostles'] Creed, 10 could not repeat it and 216 were unable to prove it; a large number of these said that they were perfectly satisfied that it was right because the king and Mother Church said so. Most extraordinary of all, perhaps, were the results of the Lord's Prayer part of the examination: 39 did not know where it appeared in the Bible, 34 did not know who was its author, and 10 actually proved unable to recite it. (David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography* [Yale University Press, 1994], p. 78.)

**Lest we come down too harshly on these clergymen of 400 years ago, let's ask ourselves how well we know the Book of books. Are we ardent students of the Word of God, mining jewels from its depths, or do we have a more casual relationship with the life-giving book, merely admiring the sparkle from afar? Consider this: how much are you willing to risk to bring the Word of God to the children in your care?**

**Today, as we study the uniqueness of this God-breathed collection of books, let's meditate on the words of the psalmist who realized that the Bible was set apart from all other books—it is the Word of God.**

Forever, O LORD,  
Your word is settled in heaven.  
Your faithfulness endures to all generations;  
You established the earth, and it abides.  
They continue this day according to Your ordinances,  
For all are Your servants.  
Unless Your law had been my delight,  
I would then have perished in my affliction.  
I will never forget Your precepts,  
For by them You have given me life.  
I am Yours, save me;  
For I have sought Your precepts.  
The wicked wait for me to destroy me,  
But I will consider Your testimonies.  
I have seen the consummation of all perfection,  
But Your commandment is exceedingly broad.

Psalm 119:89–96

## DEVOTION 2

# INCREDIBLE IMPACT

*“Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing causes them to stumble.” Psalm 119:165*

Biographer David Daniell writes of the incredible impact William Tyndale’s translation of the Bible into English has had even until today.

William Tyndale gave us our English Bible. The sages assembled by King James to prepare the Authorised Version of 1611, so often praised for unlikely corporate inspiration, took over Tyndale’s work. Nine-tenths of the Authorised Version’s New Testament is Tyndale’s. The same is true of the first half of the Old Testament, which is as far as he was able to get before he was executed outside Brussels in 1536. (David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography* [Yale University Press, 1994], p. 1.)

William Tyndale was a most remarkable scholar and linguist, whose eight languages included skill in Greek and Hebrew far above the ordinary for an Englishman of the time—indeed, Hebrew was virtually unknown in England. His unsurpassed ability was to work as a translator with the sounds and rhythms as well as the senses of English, to create unforgettable words, phrases, paragraphs and chapters, and to do so in a way that, again unusually for the time, is still, even today, direct and living: newspaper headlines still quote Tyndale, though unknowingly, and he has reached more people than even Shakespeare. (Daniell, p. 2.)

**Some of the more common Tyndalian phrases that continue today include let**

**there be light, my brother’s keeper, in the land [of] Nod, men of renown, the imagination of man’s heart, every man’s hand against him, old and well stricken in age, turned into a pillar of salt, the fat of the land, unstable as water.**

In doing all this, he made a language for England. As used to be said with pride, the English rapidly became a People of the Book. To try to understand the literature, philosophy, art, politics and society of the centuries from the sixteenth to the early twentieth without knowledge of the Bible is to be crippled. (Daniell, p. 3.)

**Today, as we teach the children about the Bible’s incredible impact on people of every tongue and nation, let’s look for ways to show them how living and powerful the Word of God is (Hebrews 4:12) and how it connects to real life. Rather than a dusty book that has no relevance to today, the Bible’s true account of history provides us with the foundation for understanding our world today. Rocks, fossils, people groups—the origin of it all is explained by the Bible. As we understand that we can trust it to tell us the truth about earthly things, we are able to understand and trust its teachings about heavenly things (John 3:12).**

**With David, let’s meditate on the impact Scripture has in our lives.**

Blessed are the undefiled in the way,

Who walk in the law of the LORD!  
Blessed are those who keep His  
testimonies,  
Who seek Him with the whole  
heart!  
They also do no iniquity;  
They walk in His ways.  
You have commanded us  
To keep Your precepts diligently.  
Oh, that my ways were directed  
To keep Your statutes!

Then I would not be ashamed,  
When I look into all Your  
commandments.  
I will praise You with uprightness  
of heart,  
When I learn Your righteous  
judgments.  
I will keep Your statutes;  
Oh, do not forsake me utterly!  
Psalm 119:1–8

## **DEVOTION 3**

### **BEDROCK BASE**

*“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” John 17:17*

By the time of William Tyndale (c. 1494–1536), the Reformation was in full swing. The reformers were concerned that the church had fallen away from the authority on which it was built. In place of the Word of God, the words of men had been substituted.

To say that the Church in which Tyndale was brought up was corrupt and disgraceful is not a statement of blind prejudice but one of sad historical fact. The Church of Rome by the time of Tyndale was, and had been for centuries, rotten from the head downwards. Certainly this was admitted by some of the most influential men of the day, but they were voices crying in the wilderness and were themselves caught in the very trap of which they bitterly complained. Unlike the evangelical reformers, they had not effective answer to the sickness. (Brian H. Edwards, *God’s Outlaw* [England: Evangelical Press, 1998], p. 36.)

**The effective answer by the evangelical reformers was their encouragement to recognize and submit to the absolute**

authority of Scripture. Their battle cry was “*Sola Scriptura*—Scripture alone.”

Tyndale, in addition to translating the New Testament from the original Greek into English, and parts of the Old Testament from Hebrew into English, wrote several books challenging church leaders to examine their teachings. In each case, he used Scripture alone to point out their error and remind them of the truth. The most important and significant of these was *Obedience of a Christian Man*. Throughout this powerful book, Tyndale made it clear that Scripture was the ultimate authority.

Let God’s word try every man’s doctrine and whomsoever God’s word proveth unclean let him be taken for a leper. One scripture will help to declare another. And the circumstances, that is to say, the places that go before and after, will give light unto the middle text. And the open and manifest scriptures will ever improve the false and wrong exposition of the darker sentences. (*Works by Tyndale*, edited by Henry Walter for the Parker

Society [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press], p. 250.)

What about you? Is Scripture your bedrock base in every area it teaches? Or are you easily swayed by the opinions of men? Does Scripture reign supreme in forming the foundation of your thinking in all areas? Or do you delight in airing your own opinions?

As we focus on the bedrock base of God's Word today, let's be sure that we're pointing kids toward the Bible and not toward ourselves. God has magnified His Word above everything (Psalm 138:2), and who are we to usurp that position?

David understood the unique position occupied by the Word of God. Let's meditate with him on the importance of the Bible.

Oh, how I love Your law!  
It is my meditation all the day.

You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies;  
For they are ever with me.  
I have more understanding than all my teachers,  
For Your testimonies are my meditation.  
I understand more than the ancients,  
Because I keep Your precepts.  
I have restrained my feet from every evil way,  
That I may keep Your word.  
I have not departed from Your judgments,  
For You Yourself have taught me.  
How sweet are Your words to my taste,  
Sweeter than honey to my mouth!  
Through Your precepts I get understanding;  
Therefore I hate every false way.  
Psalm 119:97-104

## **DEVOTION 4**

### **LETTER OF LOVE**

*"From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 3:15*

William Tyndale, along with the other reformers, was convinced that the Bible alone held the words of eternal life. He made this clear in his preface to the New Testament:

Give diligence dear Reder (I exhorte the) that thou come with a pure mynde and as the Scripture sayth with a syngle eye unto the wordes of health and of eternal lyfe: by the which (if we repent and beleve them) we are borne a newe created a

fresshe and enjoye the frutes off the bloud of Christ.

The reformers' views on salvation, which were contrary to the Roman Catholic Church's, are summarized by the five solas.

- **Sola scriptura** (By Scripture alone)

The Bible is the supreme authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice and in every area it touches

on. We learn about salvation only through the pages of the Bible.

- ***Sola gratia*** (Grace alone)

Salvation comes by the free grace of God. Man cannot—and need not—do any work to earn God’s favor. Salvation is not based in any way upon human merit.

- ***Solus Christus*** (Christ alone)

Christ is the only mediator between God and man. Thus an individual can go directly to God through Christ.

- ***Sola fide*** (Faith alone)

Faith in the Person of Christ is the instrumental means of salvation. The Roman Catholic Church taught that, while initial grace was infused at baptism, the person had to cooperate with that grace until God accepted him as righteous.

- ***Soli Deo Gloria*** (For God’s glory alone)

Salvation is exclusively God’s work, and so He alone is worthy to receive praise and thanksgiving. This *sola* expresses the highest motive for all the Christian’s deeds—the glory of God alone.

Only the Bible gives the complete way of salvation—from the need for it (Adam’s disobedience and subsequent punishment was passed to all men because all have sinned) to the provision for it (the Last Adam came to redeem mankind from the curse of sin given in

Genesis 3). Apart from the Bible, how can we determine what sin is? How can we determine that we need to be saved from it?

As we discuss the true account of salvation with the children today, let’s be careful to show them that we rely on Scripture to tell us the truth about the condition we’re in (Romans 3:23) and how we can be rescued from it (Ephesians 2:8–9).

We’ll close this devotional by meditating on the God-breathed words of David concerning the salvation of the Lord.

Let Your mercies come also to me,  
O LORD—

Your salvation according to Your word.

So shall I have an answer for him  
who reproaches me,

For I trust in Your word.

And take not the word of truth  
utterly out of my mouth,

For I have hoped in Your  
ordinances.

So shall I keep Your law continually,  
Forever and ever.

And I will walk at liberty,

For I seek Your precepts.

I will speak of Your testimonies also  
before kings,

And will not be ashamed.

And I will delight myself in Your  
commandments,

Which I love.

My hands also I will lift up to Your  
commandments,

Which I love,

And I will meditate on Your  
statutes.

Psalm 119:41–48

## DEVOTION 5

### EXCITING TO EXPLORE

*“The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” Psalm 19:9–10*

William Tyndale was not only a student of the original languages in which the Bible was written, but he was also a student of the message those languages conveyed. To Tyndale, the words on the pages of Scripture were not just legible black squiggles on a white background—they were the very words of God, breathed out to give us all things pertaining to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). He not only translated the Scriptures into the common language of the English people, he also lived them.

During his last days as a free man, before his capture and imprisonment, he stayed with Thomas Poytnz and his family.

Tyndale’s time was still well disciplined. He reserved two days in the week which he called his pasttime. On Monday he visited all the English exiles, who had been forced out of their homeland for the sake of conscience. He enquired after their welfare, encouraged them and supplied some of their needs out of his generous allowance [from the Poytnz’s]. On Saturday he wandered the town, poking in every hovel and alley to discover the poor and diseased and, wherever he found genuine cases of hardship, would supply their needs also. (Brian H. Edwards, *God’s Outlaw* [England: Evangelical Press, 1998], p. 142.)

John Foxe writes of Tyndale during his imprisonment:

Such was the power of his doctrine, and the sincerity of his life, that during the time of his imprisonment, (which endured a year and a half), it is said, he converted his keeper, the keeper’s daughter, and others of his household. Also the rest that were with Tyndale conversant in the castle, reported of him, that if he were not a good Christian man, they could not tell whom to trust. (Josiah Pratt and John Stoughton, eds., *The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe*, vol. 5, p. 127.)

Even after his death, his archenemy Sir Thomas More could only say good things about how Tyndale lived his life. According to More, Tyndale was

... a man of right good living, studious and well learned in Scripture, and in divers places in England was very well liked and did great good with preaching. (*The Complete Works of St Thomas More*, VI, i [New Haven and London, 1969], p. 28.)

William Tyndale not only learned the Word of God, he loved it, and he lived it.

What about you? Do you love to study the Bible? Does your life exemplify the message God has given to us? Do you delight in learning more of God’s revealed truth? Although Tyndale was not perfect and he was a sinner just as you and I are, God mightily used him

**to bring about reformation and to call people back to His Word as their authority. We needn't be knowledgeable in Hebrew and Greek to bring the Word of God to our students. Tyndale has given us the Bible in our language—how will we carry on his legacy?**

How can a young man cleanse his way?

By taking heed according to Your word.

With my whole heart I have sought You;

Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!

Your word I have hidden in my heart,

That I might not sin against You.

Blessed are You, O LORD!

Teach me Your statutes.

With my lips I have declared

All the judgments of Your mouth.

I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies,

As much as in all riches.

I will meditate on Your precepts,

And contemplate Your ways.

I will delight myself in Your statutes;

I will not forget Your word.

Psalm 119:9–16

# TOP 20 TIPS WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN

*“Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.’” Matthew 19:13–14*

1. Show love. All children, regardless of age or appearance, need to be loved. Greet them warmly each day, and always be ready with smiles, giggles, encouraging words, and appropriate hugs. (Make sure all staff are aware of your church’s appropriate touching policies.)
2. Learn names. It makes children feel important and loved to be called by their name. Make sure visible name tags are always on each child.
3. Keep it moving. Children have short attention spans.
4. Use active learning. The more children can actively be involved in the learning process, the more they will retain.
5. Be all there! Try to leave behind whatever is currently going on in your life and focus your attention on the children under your care during VBS. Listen to them and care for them.
6. Eliminate down time. Find activities to do when you have a few free minutes so all time is being used in a fun and productive way. Practice memory verses, share Terrific Trivia Tidbits and jokes, play impromptu review games, or ask fun conversation starters.
7. Think safety. Read the Child Safety Precautions page. Ensure there are always at least two unrelated adults with the children at all times.
8. Be thematic. Children love costumes, fun cheers, songs, and anything that goes with the theme. Be ready to wear a Bible character costume or winter gear, such as a winter scarf, ski goggles, or clothes in wintry palettes like white and bright blue. Get them enthused and excited about participating in the daily contests.
9. Walk worthy. Be an example in both word and deed. Children need to see authentic Christianity, so make sure you are walking the walk and not just talking the talk.
10. Notice the good. Children want attention and will sometimes act up in an effort to receive attention, even if it is negative attention. Be proactive by noticing and praising the things they do right. Be an encourager.
11. Be aware of age-level characteristics. With younger children, activities need to be hands-on, concrete, short, and simple. Older children love to talk and are processing and questioning information. Be ready to give an answer for the hope that is within you.



12. Challenge them. Children generally rise to the level expected of them, so challenge them to learn their memory verses and song lyrics. At the same time, encourage in them a true love for the Lord and His Word.
13. Pray. Before, during, and after VBS, be a faithful prayer warrior for the children in your care.
14. Be organized. Read through all training information, ask questions, and faithfully prepare any materials for which you are responsible.
15. Be a team player. Children do not need to hear negative words from their leaders. If you are frustrated or upset, take it to the Lord, but do not complain or get angry in front of the children.
16. Remember to take bathroom breaks. The younger the children, the more important this is!
17. Maintain order. Children like order! Think through potential trouble spots in your day and decide on a firm, loving discipline strategy. Ask for help from experienced individuals.
18. Build team spirit. Work as a team rather than allowing cliques to develop. Everyone should be an important member of the team.
19. Use guided conversation. Be alert and ready to turn conversations to spiritual matters. Build upon what the children are learning throughout the VBS day.
20. Be prepared to lead a child to Christ. Attend the Gospel Presentation Workshop to be equipped should God give you the awesome opportunity to talk to a child about Christ.

# AGE-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS

Kids are awesome! Each one is unique and is a special creation from the hand of our amazing Creator. With all their uniqueness, however, they also share some common characteristics. That doesn't mean every child always exhibits the following characteristics at the suggested age, but these guidelines can be a benchmark to use when looking at

characteristics of children as a whole. It can be helpful to see how God has wired different age groups and can be used to help us be more effective in teaching and interacting with them.

First, you'll see characteristics of children in general and then characteristics broken down by the four age groups we use with Answers VBS.

## COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

- Children are born sinners.
- God has given each a conscience, and they (generally) want good to win over evil.
- God has shown Himself to all children through His creation, making it obvious to all that there is a Creator.
- Children enjoy active learning—moving around, seeing things, touching things, smelling and hearing things, and being involved.
- Children need to be loved, encouraged, and praised.
- Children are rapidly growing and changing.
- Children trust the adults who are responsible for them.
- Children can get discouraged with criticism and failure.
- Children are eager to learn and are curious about the world and about God.

## TODDLERS (2-4 YEARS OLD)

### Physical Characteristics

Toddlers are active! They're on the move, running, climbing, and exploring. They're beginning to perform simple tasks, like using scissors. They can easily get hurt as they are rapidly developing physical skills but don't have wisdom to know when to stop running, climbing, etc.

### Takeaways for Us

- Keep toddlers moving. Engage them actively as much as possible. Have them do motions to songs and actions to Bible accounts.
- Supervise them carefully.
- Provide chunky, nontoxic supplies.
- Intersperse periods of sitting with something active.

## **Emotional/Social Characteristics**

Toddlers want to do things by themselves, such as picking out their clothes and dressing themselves. They like imaginative, dramatic play. They're testing their powers and saying "no" a lot. They often want to please adults and try to mimic their behaviors. They're affectionate toward others. Toddlers are fearful of things that are loud and out of the ordinary.

### **Takeaways for Us**

- Let toddlers be helpers. Give them simple one-step jobs to do, and have them help pick up things and straighten the room at the end of the lesson. Let them know they've done a good job.
- Be consistently there all week; establish routines and stick with them.
- Be consistent in discipline. Let your "yes" be "yes" and your "no" be "no."
- Give them opportunities to dress up and play imaginatively.
- Adults—don't dress in elaborate costumes that may seem unfamiliar and scary.

- Be careful to walk worthy—act and speak in godly ways. Little eyes are watching and will want to imitate you!

## **Spiritual/Mental Characteristics**

Toddlers are curious and want to touch, smell, feel, see, and experience their world. They have short attention spans and learn/communicate in short sentences. They understand short and simple directions. They believe what you say. Their attitude toward God and others is in the process of being formed during these years.

### **Takeaways for Us**

- Involve toddlers' senses in learning! The more they can touch, smell, see, taste, and feel, the better!
- Give clear, simple directions.
- Keep activities and lessons short. Toddlers' attention spans are only a few minutes long before they need to switch to something new, so keep it moving!
- Be careful to speak accurately and truthfully.
- Show care and respect for your Bible, and help them see your love for it and for the Lord.

## **PRE-PRIMARIES (4-6 YEARS OLD)**

### **Physical Characteristics**

Pre-Primaries are active and more confident in physical activities like jumping, hopping on one foot, and walking backwards. They love to be moving. They're improving in hand-eye coordination.

They're rapidly growing and may need rest after active play.

### **Takeaways for Us**

- Pre-Primaries like to play hard, so keep them moving with short, simple games and activities. They may need

to sit and rest for a brief time afterwards.

## **Emotional/Social Characteristics**

Pre-Primaries are less fearful than Toddlers but still often exhibit common fears, such as fear of dogs and the dark. They can have emotional extremes and are testing others to see who can be controlled. They want to please adults and want praise. They will often mimic adults' behaviors. They like imaginative play. Pre-Primaries can handle small tasks and levels of responsibility.

## **Takeaways for Us**

- Let them be helpers. Give them simple jobs to do, and have them help pick up things and straighten the room at the end of the lesson. Let them know they've done a good job.
- Give them opportunities to dress up and play imaginatively.
- Be consistent in discipline. Let your "yes" be "yes" and your "no" be "no."
- Be careful to walk worthy—act and speak in godly ways. Little eyes are watching and will want to imitate you!

## **Spiritual/Mental Characteristics**

Pre-Primaries talk a lot and ask a lot of questions, including questions about God. They understand that sin is disobeying God. They need a lot of guidance in tasks but can also follow a simple series of directions. They have an attention span of approximately 5 minutes. They enjoy doing new things and hearing stories and

songs. They're not always able to tell the difference between reality and fantasy. They're developing attitudes toward right and wrong and can do basic memory work.

## **Takeaways for Us**

- In down time, give them time to ask questions and be ready to patiently answer! But while you are teaching, be careful you don't get so wrapped up in letting them talk that the lesson doesn't happen!
- Vary activities often—every 5–10 minutes.
- When engaged in pretend activities, name them as such (e.g., "Let's pretend to be explorers!"). At the same time, point out often that God's Word is not pretend but true!
- Repetition in songs and stories works great and is enjoyed by Pre-Primaries.
- Sing the memory verse songs with them. They will be able to learn at least parts of the verses by the end of the week.
- Use visuals.
- Teach them about sin and asking God for forgiveness.
- Show interest in each child, helping them sense your care and interest in them.
- Be careful to speak accurately and truthfully.
- Show care and respect for your Bible, and help them see your love for it and for the Lord.

# PRIMARIES (6–9 YEARS OLD)

## Physical Characteristics

Primaries love games and competitions, but it can be hard for them to lose. They are continuing to grow and improve in hand-eye coordination and fine and gross motor skills. They need to have opportunities for movement.

### Takeaways for Us

- Use games to teach! Primaries love any kind of games, whether active or learning-type games.
- Help them learn to take turns and to be good winners and good losers! Both winning and losing well are important in God's sight.
- Use boy vs. girl competitions to get them revved up! As long as you keep it light and fun, they will enjoy these times!

## Emotional/Social Characteristics

Primaries are becoming more independent and confident in their ability to do things. Girls play most often with girls and boys with boys, but there is some mixing of girl/boy friends. They like to have a best friend and enjoy pretend play. Primaries enjoy jokes and are gaining a sense of humor. They care about being accepted by the team and want adult/teacher approval.

### Takeaways for Us

- Give Primaries plenty of opportunities to work in teams or with partners.
- Use humor with Primaries. The sillier, the better!

- Be careful to walk worthy—act and speak in godly ways.

## Spiritual/Mental Characteristics

Primaries like to talk and ask questions. They understand simple concepts and sentences and are concrete in their thinking, rather than being able to understand abstract or symbolic thinking. They're learning to read. They need active learning. They're gaining a growing attention span. They understand the consequences of their actions. They can tell the difference between reality and fantasy. They often have a strict sense of right and wrong.

### Takeaways for Us

- Be concrete in what you say. Don't use abstract or symbolic language. For example, regarding salvation, don't ask if they have Jesus in their hearts. They will take that literally. Becoming a child of God, or being in God's family, is a more concrete way to express the same concept as they will understand what it means to be in a family.
- Activities can stretch for a longer time as they are getting older, but it's still good to vary activities and involve Primaries actively and with movement as much as possible.
- Some children read better than others. Be careful about asking children to read out loud. Try asking for volunteers.
- Small print can be a challenge, so use larger print when possible.
- Encourage memorization.
- Use visuals.

- Show interest in each child, helping them sense your care and interest in them.
- Be careful to speak accurately and truthfully, and explain Bible words and concepts.
- Remember that you are a role model.
- Show care and respect for your Bible, and help them see your love for it and for the Lord.

## ***JUNIORS (9-12 YEARS OLD)***

### **Physical Characteristics**

Juniors can vary widely as they grow, with some having a growth spurt that launches them into puberty. (This can make them get tired easily.) Height, weight, and physical maturity can be all across the board. They're continuing to grow in physical abilities. Some are becoming known for athletic abilities. Juniors enjoy going places and doing interesting things.

### **Takeaways for Us**

- Don't comment on physical appearance, such as how tall someone is. Juniors can feel sensitive and awkward about their bodies.
- Make sure to help each child realize how special and uniquely created by God he or she is. Some have giftings/ talents physically, some musically, some academically, etc. They need to be assured that they are God's masterpiece, created exactly as they are for a special purpose.
- Some love being active, and some don't, but it's good to keep them involved and moving.

### **Emotional/Social Characteristics**

Juniors can't wait to grow up. They look up to teenagers/young adults. They like challenges and may develop interests and hobbies, although they're self-conscious about their abilities and failures. They're becoming more independent and can handle responsibilities. They enjoy close friendships and small group discussion with peers. They're greatly influenced by their friends and want to be accepted. They look to friends for information and advice on issues. They like humor and jokes but may use it sarcastically. As they head into puberty, they may experience mood swings.

### **Takeaways for Us**

- Make sure the teens and young adults in their VBS world are good role models.
- Don't tear down Juniors or resort to sarcasm. Be an encourager, listen well, and be patient with them.
- Incorporate small group discussion into learning, and do things that allow teams or pairings.
- Be careful to walk worthy—act and speak in godly ways.

## **Spiritual/Mental Characteristics**

Juniors are beginning to think abstractly and are asking many questions, for which they're looking for good answers. They have a much longer attention span than younger children. Their reading and memorization skills are improving. They're developing their views on current issues and often want to associate themselves with their parents' belief system. They spot inconsistencies in what people do versus what they say. Juniors enjoy serving and caring for others.

### **Takeaways for Us**

- Ask thought-provoking spiritual questions. They are thinking and like to talk. Be there for them as a safe person to bounce thoughts and ideas off of.
- Listen well, and pray with them.
- Some children read better than others. Be careful about asking children to

read out loud unless they volunteer or you know they can read well.

- Allow them to act out lessons. Most Juniors enjoy this active involvement.
- Give them opportunities to be involved in mission/serving projects.
- Challenge them to ask God to help them grow in their love for God and His Word. Help them set up Bible reading plans, and encourage them to memorize passages of Scripture.
- Make sure to walk the walk and not just talk the talk. They can spot inconsistencies, so it's important to walk worthy.
- Show interest in each child, helping them sense your care and interest in them.
- Be careful to speak accurately and truthfully, show care and respect for your Bible, and help them see your love for it and for the Lord.

# ***CHILD SAFETY PRECAUTIONS***

Keeping children safe during VBS is an important responsibility of all VBS workers, requiring both prayerful and practical steps. Begin with prayer, praying before and during VBS for God's protection over each child, worker, and visitor. Pray for the smooth running of the facility as well. This is a critically important step in your safety plan, which should not be taken for granted! Then plan and execute practical steps, such as the following.

- Thoroughly check all areas for cleanliness and safety daily before VBS begins. Remove hazardous or toxic items, cover outlets, put away heavy or dangerous objects, tape down cords, and make sure everything is in good working order. Check both inside and outside the facility.
- Make sure all workers have had background checks.
- Children should be signed in and out of VBS by their caretakers. Release the children only to authorized individuals.
- Always have at least two unrelated adults (eighteen and above) with children, including trips to the bathroom. Children must be well supervised at all times.
- Count children every time you move to a different station.
- Enlist qualified members of the church with medical experience to be at the facility during VBS hours. Outline a procedure to quickly find and alert them of any situation needing attention. Make sure an accident report is filled out after any incident.
- Be well aware of which children have which allergies, and make sure precautions are taken to protect them.
- Memorize the location of first aid kits.
- Be aware of what the protocol is in case of emergencies.
- Follow your ministry's safe check in and check out procedures.



# LEADING A CHILD TO CHRIST

*“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.” Romans 1:16*

VBS presents an ideal opportunity to share the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ with all attending. Every leader and team member should be ready to clearly present the gospel and counsel those wanting to learn more. Children are usually soft-hearted toward things of the Lord, and some will be interested in becoming a follower of Christ. Be ready, because eternal matters matter most!

## Before

- **Pray.** Salvation is God’s work, not ours. We cannot bring about salvation for anyone. We need to ask God to prepare the children and open their hearts to Him.
- **Be prepared.** Learn more about presenting the gospel and counseling a child about salvation.

## During

The gospel will be presented during the lesson time. Opportunities may arise, however, to share with a child one-on-one or with a small group of children. If so, keep the following in mind:

- Becoming a child of God involves repenting of one’s sin and having faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Repentance involves understanding what sin is (disobeying God’s commands) and desiring to turn from that sin.
- You can use the tract *How Can I Become a Child of God?* to explain the plan of salvation. Along with this, use your Bible. Children need to see and hear God’s Word, so have your Bible opened and marked ahead of time with the appropriate Scriptures.
- Avoid abstract phrases like “asking Jesus into your heart.” Instead, use terminology like “becoming a child of God.” Most children still think in concrete terms and need examples that are easy to understand.
- If a child indicates an interest to know more after hearing the gospel presentation, ask questions (such as one or more of the following) that require more than a “yes” or “no” answer:
  - » What do you want to talk to me about?
  - » Do you know what sin is?
  - » Can you think of a specific sin (wrong) you have done? Are you bothered by your sin?

**These questions are important.** A child who cannot verbalize a sin or does not seem to be repentant about being a sinner may not fully understand his need for a Savior. In this situation, you might list a child-oriented example of sin and ask him to discover any time he catches himself sinning over the next few days. Give him *How Can I Become a Child of God?* Pray with him, then send him on his way. Check back a day or two later, if possible. Otherwise, continue with these questions:

- » Why did Jesus come to earth? Why did Jesus need to die? Why did Jesus rise again?
  - » Why do you want Jesus to be your Savior?
  - » Why should God let you into His family? (Make sure the child understands that salvation is not based on what he does but is a gracious gift of God through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus.)
- Pray for discernment while listening to a child's answers.
  - When a child seems to have a basic understanding of salvation (belief in Jesus' death and resurrection, admission of and repentance from sin, and a desire to follow the Lord), encourage him to talk to his parents about what it means to become a child of God (if they are followers of Christ). Encourage a child who comes from a non-Christian home to verbalize his understanding to the Lord through prayer. There is no one prayer that should be prayed. Encourage him to ask the Lord to forgive him and help him know he is a child of God.
  - Let him see in your words and your face that you are excited that he wants to become a child of God! Read Luke 15:10 to him.
  - Some children may not want to make decisions but may want to learn more, to be assured of salvation, or to confess sin. Read Romans 10:9–10 and John 10:28–29 with children who are seeking assurance of their salvation. Encourage them to ask the Lord to help them know they are His children. If a child wants to confess sin, read 1 John 1:9 with him and encourage him to ask the Lord to help him know he is forgiven when he repents.

## **After**

- Review what it means to be a child of God.
  - » How long does God keep His children? (Hebrews 13:5b; John 10:28–29)
  - » Can anything separate God from His children? (Romans 8:38–39)
  - » What happens when God's children sin? (1 John 1:9)
  - » What do children of God believe? (Romans 10:9)
- Explain that Jesus loves His children and wants to spend time with them. Discuss practical ways to grow as a child of God. Provide him with the tract *Growing Up in God's Family*, and share the following:

- » Read your Bible, and obey what you read. You can start your Bible reading with the short Bible study you will receive the last day of VBS. (Make sure he has a Bible at home, and if not, provide one. Write his name, the date, and the occasion [VBS] on the presentation page.)
  - » Pray every day. Prayer is talking to God.
  - » Go to a church that believes and teaches the Bible as the Word of God.
  - » Tell others about Jesus. Tell your friends, family, and neighbors how they can become children of God.
- Fill out a Decision Card. Turn in to the VBS director.
  - Stay in touch with the child through postcards, visits, or phone calls. Invite him to upcoming church events.


# DAY 1 OVERVIEW

## Book of Books

<i>Bible Passages</i>	<i>Lesson Focus</i>		
The Bible is One-of-a-Kind (Selected Verses)	The Bible is the coolest book on the planet, unique in so many ways.		
<i>Animal Pal</i>	<i>Apologetics Focus</i>		
Blizzard the Polar Bear	Did you know the Bible isn't like any other "religious" book?		
<i>Science and Crafts</i>	<i>Snacks</i>	<i>Bible Gem</i>	
Experiment: It's S'now Unique!  Main Craft: Icebreaker Fishing  	Scripture Scrolls Snowflake Cookies (Psalm 119:18)  	2 Timothy 3:16	
		<i>Games</i>	Welcome to the Arctic Silly Snowmen
		<i>Cool Contests</i>	Frosted Food Fun



# DAY 2 OVERVIEW

## Incredible Impact

Bible Passage	Lesson Focus	
Saul's Life is Transformed (Acts 9:1–22)	The Bible's message has had an incredible impact on the earth.	
Animal Pal	Apologetics Focus	
Snowball the Arctic Hare	Did you know the Bible's teachings have positively influenced cultures around the world?	
Science and Crafts	Snacks	Bible Gem
Experiment: Slip and Grip  Main Craft: Northern Lightscape	Snow Ball Butterflies  Tundra Transformers (Psalm 19:7)	Psalm 119:105
		<b>Games</b>
		Snowball Fight Mad/Glad Game
		<b>Cool Contests</b>
		Chilly Cheers



# DAY 3 OVERVIEW

## Bedrock Base

<i>Bible Passage</i>	<i>Lesson Focus</i>	
The Wise Man Builds His House on the Rock (Matthew 7:24–29)	The Bible is the bedrock foundation to build our lives on.	
<i>Animal Pal</i>	<i>Apologetics Focus</i>	
Spike the Narwhal	Did you know science, history, and fulfilled prophecies confirm the Bible?	
<i>Science and Crafts</i>	<i>Snacks</i>	<i>Bible Gem</i>
Experiment: Solid Ground  Main Craft: Lil' Log Cabin  	Happy Hearts Ocean Jammers (Psalm 19:8)  	Matthew 7:24
		<i>Games</i>
		Battle for the Base Make It or Break It
		<i>Cool Contests</i>
		Polar Dress-Up Day

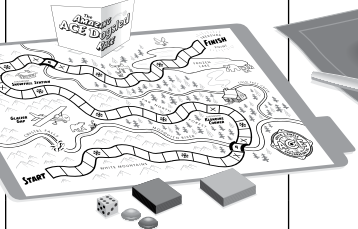

# DAY 4 OVERVIEW

## Letter of Love

Bible Passage	Lesson Focus	
The Gospel is a Message with Love (Selected Verses)	The Bible has a thrilling theme running throughout its pages.	
Animal Pal	Apologetics Focus	
Shaggy the Musk Ox	Did you know the earth didn't start out with polar ice caps?	
Science and Crafts	Snacks	Bible Gem
<p>Experiment: H2Ohhh!!!</p> <p>Main Craft: "White as Snow" Globe</p> 	<p>Gold Nuggets Snow S'Mores (Psalm 19:10)</p> 	Romans 5:8
		<i>Games</i>
		Circle Up Finding Your Way
		<i>Cool Contests</i>
		Bible Books Challenge

# DAY 5 OVERVIEW

## Exciting to Explore

<i>Bible Passage</i>	<i>Lesson Focus</i>	
Mary Loves to Soak in God's Words (Luke 10:38–42)	The Bible is exciting to explore! Let's learn it, love it, and live it.	
<i>Animal Pal</i>	<i>Apologetics Focus</i>	
Dash the Siberian Husky	Did you know we need the Holy Spirit to help us understand the Bible?	
<i>Science and Crafts</i>	<i>Snacks</i>	<i>Bible Gem</i>
Experiment: Arctic Exploration Main Craft: Amazing ACE Dogsled Race 	Treasure Treats Husky Puppy Chow (Psalm 19:11) 	Psalm 119:162
		<i>Games</i>
		Iditarod Race Broom Hockey
		<i>Cool Contests</i>
Mission Money Mania		



# MEMORY VERSES

**Theme Verse:** Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law.  
Psalm 119:18

## Junior and Primary

Day 1: All Scripture is given by inspiration of God . . . . 2 Timothy 3:16

Day 2: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105

Day 3: Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock. Matthew 7:24

Day 4: But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were

still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

Day 5: I rejoice at Your word as one who finds great treasure. Psalm 119:162

## Pre-Primary and Toddler

Day 1: All Scripture is given by inspiration of God . . . . 2 Timothy 3:16

Day 2: Your word is a . . . light to my path. Psalm 119:105

Day 3: . . . A wise man . . . built his house on the rock. Matthew 7:24

Day 4: . . . Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

Day 5: . . . Your word . . . great treasure. Psalm 119:162

# KJV MEMORY VERSES

**Theme Verse:** Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. Psalm 119:18

## Junior and Primary

Day 1: All scripture is given by inspiration of God . . . . 2 Timothy 3:16

Day 2: Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Psalm 119:105

Day 3: Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. Matthew 7:24

Day 4: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

Day 5: I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil. Psalm 119:162

## Pre-Primary and Toddler

Day 1: All scripture is given by inspiration of God . . . . 2 Timothy 3:16

Day 2: Thy word is a . . . light unto my path. Psalm 119:105

Day 3: . . . A wise man . . . built his house upon a rock. Matthew 7:24

Day 4: . . . Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

Day 5: . . . Thy word . . . great spoil. Psalm 119:162

## ***BONUS MEMORY VERSES***

### **NKJV**

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. Psalm 19:7

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. Psalm 19:8

The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. Psalm 19:9

More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Psalm 19:10

Moreover by them Your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great reward. Psalm 19:11

### **KJV**

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. Psalm 19:7

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. Psalm 19:8

The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. Psalm 19:9

More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Psalm 19:10

Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward. Psalm 19:11

# TERRIFIC TRIVIA TIDBITS

Use the fun facts below to get your mind thinking about our fun theme (Arctic) and our spiritual theme (the Bible). These trivia tidbits can be shared with the kids at arrival and dismissal time or during any down time.

## The Arctic

- True or False: Penguins live in the Arctic. False. They live in Antarctica and other places as far north as the equator, but definitely not in the Arctic.
- Guess what? Russia and the US are just over 2 miles apart at the nearest spot.
- Did you know icebergs come in different colors? They can be white, light blue, or even a blue-green color. They sometimes look striped as well.
- Talk about polar opposites! In the Arctic, there's ocean surrounded by land. In Antarctica, there's land surrounded by ocean.
- Now that's a snowflake! The largest snowflake ever recorded was seen in Montana in January of 1887 and was a whopping 15 inches wide and 8 inches thick!
- Let's catch some rays! That's what most animals want to do who live at the top of the world. They move at least a bit south during the coldest months. Only a handful stay year-round.
- What happens if you're in a ship and it gets stuck in ice? Sometimes it happens in the Arctic. That's why they now have special ships called icebreakers that can break through ice sheets.
- Looking forward to a snow day? Well, students in Norway don't get a day off school until the temperature is -58 degrees F.
- Wanna chase the Northern Lights? Wanna climb a glacier? Then you may want to book a vacation to the Arctic Circle!
- Mind your manners. If you want to say "thank you" in the Inuit language, say, "Qujannamilk," which is pronounced "Khoo-yanna-meek."
- What's for dinner? Well, favorites in Norway are whale steaks, whale stew, cloudberries, and lingonberries.
- Eskimo or Inuit? These native people of the Arctic region used to go by the name Eskimo, which means "eaters of raw flesh," but they now go by the name Inuit, which means "the real people."
- Brrr! The coldest recorded temperature in North America was in Canada's Yukon Territory in 1947, a chilly -81 degrees F.
- How do you like this idea? Many Swedish families eat sweets only once a week—on Saturdays.
- Beware! You can shoot a bear in Alaska, but you aren't allowed to wake a sleeping bear to take a photo!
- Do you know what the largest island is? Greenland! (In case you're wondering, Australia is not included because it's considered a continent.)
- Yowsa! A moose can have antlers that span up to 6 feet!

- Who knew? There's a seed vault on a Norwegian island in the Svalbard archipelago built to preserve seeds in case something bad happens to the world.
- Wondering how to get around in the Arctic? Well, most travel is done by planes, snowmobiles, and dogsleds.
- Heard of calving? No, we're not talking about baby cows here, but instead when part of a glacier breaks off and falls into the ocean. When the glacier calves, it can be so loud it sounds like a bomb has exploded.
- The first submarine to cross under the North Pole was the USS *Nautilus* in 1958. Would you have the nerve to be on that sub?
- Do you have a favorite snack? If you live in Greenland, it may be dried whale.
- That's "snice"! No, it isn't the latest greeting, but a mixture of snow and ice.
- Ever had a nickname? The Arctic is nicknamed the land of the midnight sun because in the summer, at the North Pole, the sun doesn't set. That means it looks like day at midnight! Pretty cool, huh?
- This is "snow" joke! Most of Greenland (about 85%) is covered by a huge ice sheet that's as much as 2 miles thick.
- Ice-cold instruments? They can be found at the yearly Ice Music Festival in Norway. Musicians actually carve their instruments out of ice, then play them.
- Have you ever had goosebumps? When you get cold, God designed your body to try to warm you up by shivering and getting goosebumps.
- The word "Arctic" comes from the Greek word for "bear," referring to the northern constellations (Great Bear and Little Bear) near the North Star.
- Do you like the dark? You better if you live in the Arctic, because the sun never rises in the winter at the North Pole. That means all day long it's quite dark (except for any man-made lighting). Yikes!
- Ever think about staying in a hotel made entirely of ice and snow? They have them in the Arctic! One in Sweden is built new every year, starting in November. It's open from December to April, with even the beds made of ice.
- Did you know the Arctic Ocean is the smallest and shallowest ocean on the earth?
- Snowmobiles were first designed for the military. Sure glad they thought of them!
- Do you have a refrigerator? Well, before they were invented, blocks of ice would be cut from frozen lakes, then delivered to people's homes in ice trucks and placed in an ice box to keep food cool.
- "Snow" way! Did you know snow machines can even make snow in hot places like Dubai? Why would they do that? So people can ski. It's all in a huge indoor facility, which acts like a gigantic refrigerator!
- Do you like to sled? Sledding isn't just for fun in the Arctic. Sleds are used

to carry many supplies and are often pulled by teams of reindeer or dogs.

- Yikes! The water in the Arctic Ocean is cold enough to freeze a person in a matter of minutes.
- If you could paint your house any color, what would it be? In the far north of Norway, your home would probably be a bright color because the cheery colors help combat the long, dark winters.
- Think it's cold in the Arctic? Think again! The surface temperature of Pluto can get as low as -400 degrees F.
- What if you got trapped under snow in the Arctic? Maybe a St. Bernard or a German shepherd would find you. They're trained to smell people trapped under snow.
- Buried treasure! There's lots of treasure buried in the Arctic, like oil, gold, diamonds, and metals.
- Thirsty? Well, did you know glaciers store about 75% of the world's fresh water?
- Eight is enough. There are eight countries in the Arctic—Canada, Denmark (consisting of Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Russia, and the US (Alaska).
- What's your favorite sport? Some of the favorites in the Arctic region are snowboarding, bobsledding, ice skating, ice hockey, ice climbing, ice diving, shovel racing, heli-skiing, and ice swimming. Yeah, some of them are dangerous!
- What time is it? It may be hard to tell at the top of the world because all the

earth's time zones meet at the North Pole.

- Research labs and military bases have been built underground in the Arctic, but they haven't lasted long due to the shifting ice sheets.
- If you lived at the exact top of the world, you'd live in six months of darkness and six months of light. Kind of freaky, huh?
- You scream, I scream, we all scream for ice cream. Ice cream has tiny ice crystals, and it is the coolest treat on earth! And California, a hot state, happens to be the largest producer of ice cream for the US!
- Did you know the Arctic actually has very little snowfall and is considered a cold desert? There is a lot of snow on the ground, however, because what snow they get stays around for a long time due to the cold temperatures.
- Talk about snowed under! The record annual snowfall was in the state of Washington, with 95 feet recorded in 1998–1999 on Mount Baker.

## **The Bible**

- How many letters are in your name? Well, the longest name in the Bible is Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Isaiah 8:1). How would you like to have that one?
- Guess how long it would take to read through the entire Bible? You may be surprised to learn it can be done in 70 hours or less.
- Birthdays are a blast! And the oldest guy in the Bible had a lot of them. His name was Methuselah, and he lived to be 969 years old (Genesis 5:27). Now

that's a lot of birthday candles to blow out!

- Did you know the Bible is the best-selling book of all time? In fact, about 50 Bibles are sold every minute!
- Here's the easiest memory verse ever: "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). It's only two little words and is the shortest verse in the Bible.
- Take a guess if this saying is in the Bible: "Cleanliness is next to godliness." Nope! That's actually found in the Jewish Talmud.
- Not counting names for the Lord, guess what the most mentioned name is in the Bible? At about 1,139 times, it's David.
- This is cool! If you go to the very center verse of the whole Bible, here's what it says: "It is better to trust in the Lord than put confidence in man." (Psalm 118:8)
- Think you know the first word of the Bible? How about the last? If you said "in" (first word) and "Amen" (last word), you're right!
- Take a guess if this saying is in the Bible: "God helps those who help themselves." Many people think this is in the Bible, but it isn't!
- Here's something amazing! Did you know it's recorded in the Bible that two people never died? Both of them have names that start with E—Enoch and Elijah.

# FROSTY FUN

## Jokes and Riddles

- What do you get if you cross a snowman and a polar bear?  
Frost bite.
- What did the old polar bear say to the new polar bear?  
“Ice” to meet you.
- What’s big and furry and bright blue?  
A polar bear holding its breath.
- How long should an Arctic hare’s legs be?  
Long enough to reach the ground.
- What’s the Arctic hare’s motto?  
Don’t worry. Be hoppy.
- Why does the Arctic hare refuse to wear a hat?  
She doesn’t want to have a bad “hare” day.
- What do narwhals like to eat?  
Brrr-itos!
- Where does the narwhal most like to swim?  
Around “Fin” land.
- How did the police find the lost musk ox wool?  
They combed the area.
- How do you catch a unique musk ox?  
“Unique” up on it.
- If your husky gets cold, what do you call him?  
A chili dog.
- What do young huskies like to eat?  
Pup-sicles.
- What are dogs from Siberia like?  
They’re always “Russian” (rushing).
- Why is it dangerous to tell a joke while ice fishing?  
Because it can crack you up.
- What do you call snow in the summer?  
A puddle.
- What did the Arctic explorer say when he ran into trouble?  
There’s “snow” way!
- What did the baby chili pepper say?  
I’m a little “chili.”
- What are favorite fast food treats in the Arctic?  
Frostys and Blizzards.
- How do the mountain tops stay warm?  
They wear snow-caps.
- What animal in the Arctic is always wet?  
“Rain” deer.
- How do you know a seal is nearby?  
You hear it chomping on blubber gum.
- What do Inuit people cover their beds with?  
Ice sheets.
- Which book of the Bible do drama folks like best?  
Acts.
- Which book of the Bible is a favorite with lawyers?  
Judges.
- What would you get if a lion tried to copy the Bible?  
A copycat.

- Which birds are the most spiritual?  
Birds of prey.
- How tall was Nehemiah?  
Knee high. "Nee-high-miah."
- What job did Noah have?  
He was an Ark-i-tect.
- Why was Moses known as a mathematician?  
He wrote the book of Numbers.
- What is the favorite sandwich of Jacob's first son?  
A reuben.

### **Knock Knock Jokes**

- Knock knock.                      Who's there?  
Ken.                                      Ken who?  
Ken I come in your igloo? It's cold out here!
- Knock knock.                      Who's there?  
Anita.                                      Anita who?  
Anita borrow a hat.

- Knock knock.                      Who's there?  
Luke.                                      Luke who?  
Luke! It's a blizzard!
- Knock knock.                      Who's there?  
Alaska.                                      Alaska who?  
Alaska if she wants to visit the Arctic.
- Knock knock.                      Who's there?  
Sherwood.                                      Sherwood who?  
Sherwood like to go snowboarding.
- Knock knock.                      Who's there?  
Norma Lee.                                      Norma Lee who?  
Norma Lee I wouldn't be out in this cold weather!
- Knock knock.                      Who's there?  
Annie.                                      Annie who?  
Annie day now the sun is going to rise again!

### **"Slip of the Tongue" Twisters**

- Unique New York
- Six Sick Seals



## TWO-MINUTE TIPS

VBS comes only once a year, so make every minute count and use any down time to build relationships. If you find yourself with 2 minutes (or 3 or 4!), try any of the following ideas, such as when kids are waiting for VBS to begin, while they're eating snacks, or when they're waiting to be picked up.

- Try some get-to-know-you conversation starters:
  - » What's your favorite season? What do you like best about winter/cold weather?
  - » What's your favorite cold weather sport? Activity?
  - » What's your favorite flavor of ice cream? If you were making up a unique ice cream flavor, what would it be?
  - » Would you rather be too cold or too hot? Would you rather be in the Arctic or the Antarctic? Would you rather see a polar bear (Arctic) or a penguin (Antarctic)? Would you rather ride on a snowmobile or a dogsled? Would you rather make a snowman or a snow fort?
  - » If you could have any hot drink, what would it be?
- Play a quick game:
  - » Going to the Arctic: The leader thinks of a secret rule only he knows, like all words that start with an F, for instance. Then the leader says, "I'm going to the Arctic and I'm taking a flashlight." Then the next child repeats that and adds something he wants to take. If it starts with an F, the leader says he gets to go. If not, he has to keep thinking, trying to figure out what the secret rule is. Continue and see if kids can catch on to what the secret rule is. Change the secret rule with each round. Possible secret rules can be things that are red, things that come in pairs, round items, food items, animals, things made out of fabric, and things that start with the number 1.
  - » I Spy: Play I Spy, picking decorations around the room that are thematic (e.g., I spy something white, I spy an Arctic animal).
- Listen to or practice memory verses or bonus memory verses.
- Work on making up a group cheer or chant.
- Share Terrific Trivia Tidbits or Frosty Fun Jokes and Riddles.
- Just get to know each other! Being friendly and building relationships is a big deal. Laugh together. Kids love to laugh! And have fun.