



Glacier Games

Elementary Station Leader Manual

Group resources really work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's:



Relational

Person-to-person interaction enhances spiritual growth and builds Christian friendships.

Experiential

What we experience through action and discussion sticks with us up to 9 times longer than what we simply hear or read.

Applicable

The aim of ministry is to equip people to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

Lifelong

Experiences transform the heart, moving faith beyond the walls of church and into everyday life for years to come.

Glacier Games Leader Manual

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Visit our websites:

group.com

group.com/TrueNorth

Thanks to our talented team for all they do to point kids to Jesus! Laura Baldwin-Stout, Jody Broelsma, Stephen Caine, Lyndsay Gerwing, Charity Kauffman, Micaiah Lee, Laycie McClain, Mike Porter, Joani Schultz, Elisa Snell, Rodney Stewart, and Ali Thompson

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Thanks for joining the team!

True north is a fixed point on Earth's globe. Unlike magnetic north, *true north* is unmoving, unchanging, reliable, resolute.

If you're reading this manual, chances are that *Jesus* is your true north. You've trusted him to be a faithful friend when life's journey got lonely.

You've relied on his unchanging love through life's ups and downs. You've turned to Jesus' comforting words of hope when the world felt cold and dark.

And you want to share *all* of that with kids in your community!

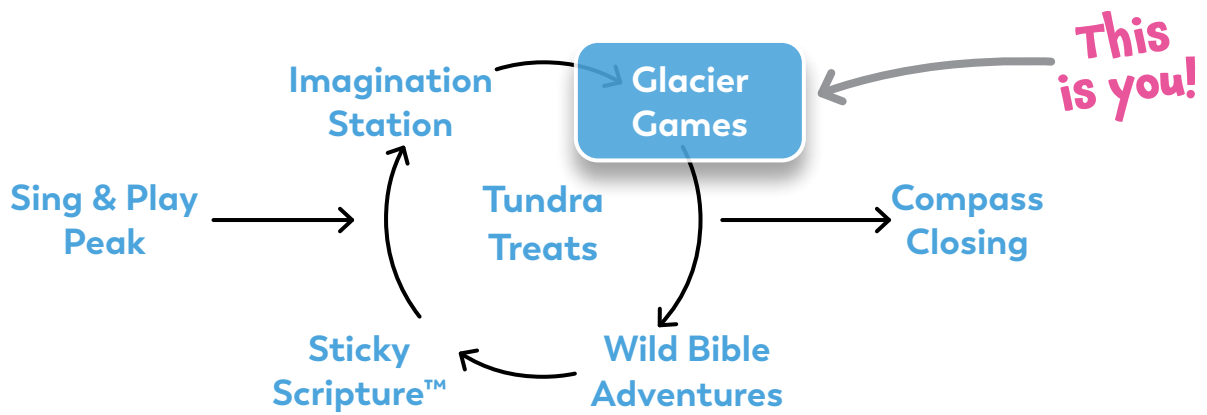
Like you, we love Jesus, and we love kids. We know that kids today may find their world untamed and wild. We understand that kids' source of truth may shift, depending on the latest news headline, trend, or social media influencer. We long for kids to boldly step out in faith, knowing that Jesus always points them in the right direction. He is *their* true north. Now...and for eternity!

That's why we're so glad you've joined this adventure! Think of our team as trail guides, going ahead to make sure the terrain is smooth and the trail is well-marked. We've tested these activities with kids, so you can make the most of every minute you have. And we're praying that God's vast love amazes and astounds you as you lead kids into the wonder of a friendship with Jesus.

It's hard to find your way in a world gone wild.

But we have Jesus—our true north!

Together, let's give kids a rock-solid foundation and point them to Jesus, their unmovable, unshakable friend forever.

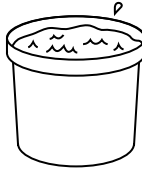


Before True North



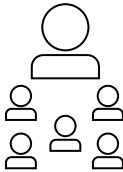
Pray for everyone who will attend True North.

Ask God to prepare your heart and the hearts of the kids and leaders who will be part of VBS.



Have access to a water hose or large buckets of water.

Each day includes one water game option to give Crew members a refreshing cooldown. Look for this icon:



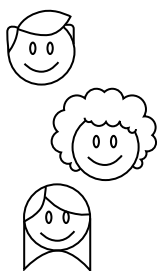
Determine the number of Crews you'll have in each rotation.

Kids join mixed-age Crews—groups of up to five elementary-age kids and one adult or teenage leader. Plan on one-fourth of the total number of Crews in each rotation. If your VBS has 20 Crews, you'll work with five Crews (approximately 25 kids and five leaders) during each session.



Plan your games.

If you have only a few Crews at each rotation, you may have time for all three game options. Each day, one game option ties to the Operation Kid-to-Kid project. Include these games since they'll help Crews connect with this important part of VBS.

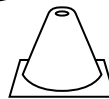


Work with the Director to recruit several teenage assistants.

These helpers will be invaluable to your success. Prior to each day, review the games so your volunteers will know how to help you prepare, distribute, and collect the game supplies.

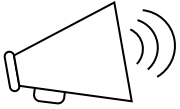


Work with the VBS Director to collect necessary supplies.



Almost all the supplies are easy to find around the church, from church members, or from Group.

During True North



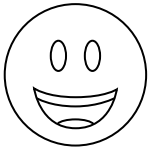
Use an attention-getting signal.

Attention-getting signals let kids know when it's time to stop what they're doing and look at you. Use the Wilderness Whistle (available from group.com) or another signal of your choice.



Repeat the daily Bible Point often.

Every activity focuses on one memorable Bible truth called the Bible Point. Repeating the Bible Point helps kids remember it and apply it to their lives after VBS. Each time kids hear the day's Bible Point, they pretend to pull a rope with both hands and say, "Trust Jesus!"



Call on kids' Crew roles.

Every day, kids choose one of five jobs: Guide, Kit Carrier, Prayer Person, Schedule Supervisor, or Thank You-er. Kids love when those jobs get called on!



Get Crew Leaders involved!

Guide Crew Leaders to participate right along with kids. When Crew Leaders listen, get involved, and have fun, kids do too!



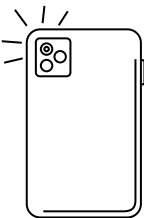
Play the Sing & Play Peak Music while kids play.

Music creates a fun atmosphere and, more important, reinforces faith!



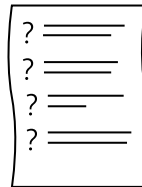
Learn (and use) names.

While you won't have the opportunity to spend one-on-one time with participants, kids and adults will be wearing name badges. Try to call people by name.



Meet with the Spotlight VBS Photographer.

Each day, one group of Crews gets their photos taken at the start of Glacier Games. Later, these pictures create a cool slideshow that retells the Bible story. Work with the photographer to get the kids involved and energized as they have their pictures taken.



Use the game introductions and questions to connect the game with the Bible Point.

For some games, the link to the Bible Point is made in the introduction. Following other games, you'll ask questions of the combined Crews, or each Crew will gather in a knee-to-knee circle to discuss the questions in the Wrap-Up Questions box. Don't rush the life-application discussion or wrap-up time! Copy the Wrap-Up Questions ahead of time and hand them out. (The Wrap-Up Questions are also included in the Crew Leader Guides on the True North Clip Art & Resources CD.)

DAY 1:

When we wonder, we can trust Jesus.

Bible Story: John prepares the way and baptizes Jesus. (Matthew 3; 11:1-6)

Bible Verse: “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise.” (Matthew 7:24)

Sing & Play Peak

- Learn the Day 1 Bible Point and verse, and meet Bible Memory Buddy Ponder.
- Sing True North songs.
- Meet Scout Rivers, an explorer who has lots of questions about the wilderness.



Wild Bible Adventures

Consider people's wonderings about Jesus, then act out the surprising thing that happened when John baptized Jesus!



Tundra Treats



A (Northern) Light Snack



Blizzard in a Cup

Sticky Scripture

Play “Wilderness Wise” as they explore Matthew 7:24 and discover what it means to have wisdom.



Imagination Station

Investigate with magnets, then craft a compass to discover what it means to trust Jesus—he always points us in the right direction!



Compass Closing

See how we can trust Jesus to stand strong, even when people try to “poke holes” in our faith.



Glacier Games



Goals for Good



Water Way



Fish, Wolf, Bear



At **True North**, the daily Bible Point is carefully integrated into each station's activities for unforgettable Bible learning. See how your station reinforces today's Bible Point.

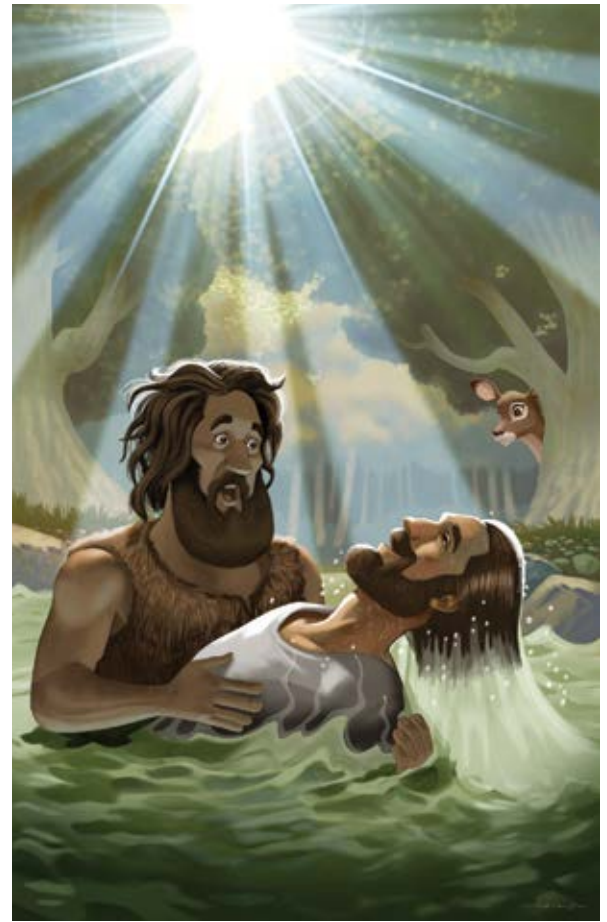
When we wonder, we can trust Jesus.

Bible Verse: “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise.” (Matthew 7:24)

Bible Story: John prepares the way and baptizes Jesus. (Matthew 3; 11:1-6)

Jesus’ cousin John came with unconventional clothes, a pauper’s diet, and a bold message: “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.” Meaning? Jesus—the Messiah and fulfillment of God’s kingdom on earth—is *here!* John proclaimed Jesus’ power and authority. He resisted the very idea of baptizing Jesus, the one who would baptize with fire and the Holy Spirit! While John adamantly proclaimed Christ, even *he* had questions about Jesus. From prison, John sent a message to Jesus, asking, “Are you the Messiah we’ve been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?” John’s circumstances may have caused him to wonder if (and when) Jesus might take political action. Scholars ponder if John may have assumed the Messiah would be the one to rescue God’s people from Roman rule—as many Jews of the time anticipated. However, Jesus had a greater mission than anyone could comprehend. He came to save *the world* from sin. Such love and compassion go beyond anything we can understand or imagine!

Kids’ curiosity can be intimidating—and a bit wearying. They have so many questions, many of which we simply can’t answer. And when it comes to questions about Jesus, God, or the Bible, adults can *really* feel overwhelmed and underprepared. But we don’t have to have all the answers! Sometimes our wonderings can lead to true *wonder*, as we discover the mystery and marvel of God. Today, celebrate curiosity and questions. Point kids to Jesus, a trustworthy and true friend who will guide us as we seek to know and understand him better.



Pointing to Jesus

People (even John the Baptist) wondered about Jesus. This passage can encourage kids that it’s okay to ask questions about Jesus—he will always help us find the truth.



Introduce Operation Kid-to-Kid™

Supplies:



photocopy of the Operation Kid-to-Kid parent letter on p. 7

COMPASS CLUE

IMPORTANT! No matter what games you choose to play today, begin each rotation time at Glacier Games with this quick introduction to the Operation Kid-to-Kid project. Glacier Games is where kids will hear the most about this awesome service project!

Welcome Crews to Day 1 of Glacier Games with a big smile, and introduce yourself.

Have kids sit down.

SAY

Before we trek into games, I want to tell you about a cool project we get to be a part of this week! It's called Operation Kid-to-Kid, and it gives us a chance to show Jesus' love.

Let's imagine we're exploring a place up in the mountains. Maybe you've been camping or have visited mountains like Alaska's landscape. Let's think about some things we'd need to take on a camping trip like that.

ASK

Call out some things we'd need on a trip into the mountains.

SAY

One thing you'd need in Alaska's mountains is something warm to cover up with! Here in [name of your community] we're in a hot season. Lots of you are wearing shorts and short sleeves because the sun is toasty warm! When it's hot out, you probably don't need many cozy clothes. But what might you look like if you were *freezing* right now?

Let's use our imaginations some more and picture being outside on a cold, windy, wintry day. Pause briefly and allow kids to get their mental picture. *Do you feel the chill? Show me how you look when you're trying to stay warm.* Pause and allow everyone to shiver and pretend to be cold along with you. You could even invite kids to get up and jump up and down to warm up or stamp their feet. Then have everyone sit down.

Brrr! It's no fun being cold for very long! Warm clothes and blankets are important to have. But some friends right here in [name of your country] need help getting warm clothes when the weather gets cold.

At True North, we want to help! This week, through a special project called Operation Kid-to-Kid™, we'll collect money to help give brand-new blankets and warm clothes to children all over North America. Those kids don't need to feel cold this winter! When we help, kids and their families can feel snug and cozy instead.

Explain where to find the Operation Kid-to-Kid donation station your VBS Director has set up.

When we help people have what they need, we're pointing them to Jesus and his love. You'll get a letter today that you can take home to your family (hold up a copy of the Operation Kid-to-Kid parent letter) so everyone at home will know what the project is all about. And we'll have a fun game each day that helps us remember our awesome Operation Kid-to-Kid project. Speaking of games, *let's play!*



Bundle Up Hope!

As part of True North, our church will participate in Operation Kid-to-Kid™. This outreach project gives kids the chance to bring hope and warmth to kids in North America. World Vision estimates that more than one of every six kids in the United States lives in poverty. As a result, these kids may have inadequate clothing as temperatures drop in the fall and winter.

We can change that! We'll join hundreds of thousands of children in a partnership with World Vision, raising money to provide brand-new warm clothes and blankets for kids in North America.

During True North, kids and adults will have the opportunity to donate to Operation Kid-to-Kid. **A \$5 donation can provide up to \$70 worth of brand-new warm clothes and blankets for a child in North America!**

If you'd like to contribute to this exciting program or have questions about Operation Kid-to-Kid, please contact

_____ at _____
Director Phone

Or simply send a donation with your child this week!



OPTION 1: Goals for Good

LOW ENERGY

Supplies:



— Wilderness Whistle* (Use this all week to call Crews' attention to you!)



— pool noodles (4 per Crew in a rotation)



— small beanbags or balled-up socks (1 per person in a rotation)



— Sing & Play Peak Music CD or download*

• media player

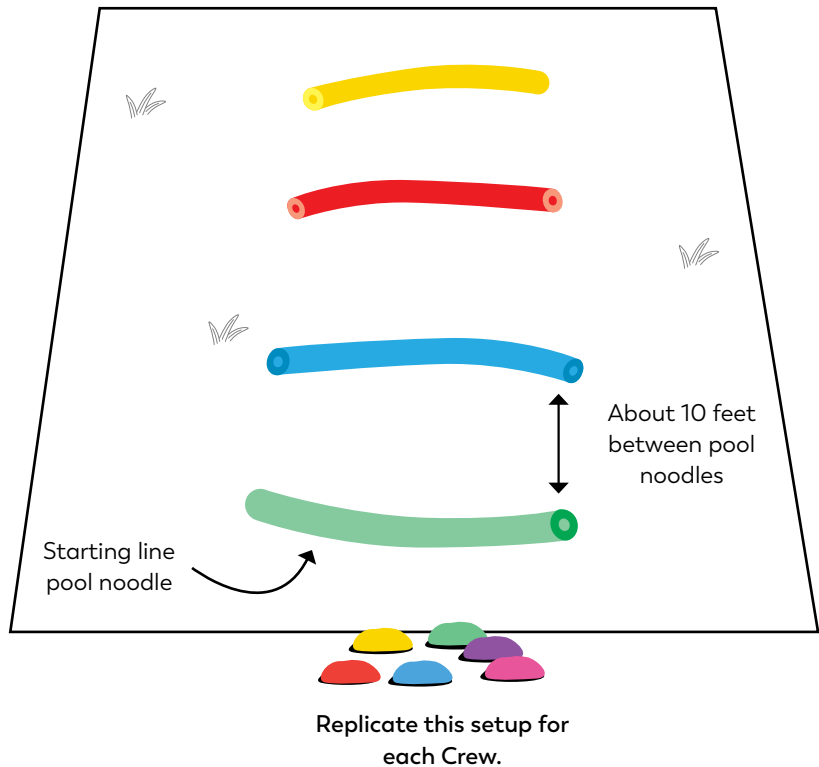
*available from group.com or your Group VBS supplier

Pre-Game Setup

- See the diagram below for a visual of setting up a game play space for each Crew.
- For each Crew, lay one pool noodle as a starting line.
- From each Crew's starting line, lay three more parallel pool noodles with about 10 feet of space between each.
- Place a pile of beanbags (one for each person in a Crew) at each Crew's starting line.

COMPASS CLUE

When you see a supply quantity listed as "per Crew in a rotation," that means you need only the amount required for your largest rotation of Crews. You'll reuse supplies from rotation to rotation. Anytime supplies aren't reusable (such as paper goods), you'll see the supply listed as "per Crew." Then you'll need the quantity of that supply for each Crew that visits Glacier Games throughout the day.



Let's Play!

Gather kids in Crew circles.

Demonstrate the sound of your Wilderness Whistle (or other noisemaker), and let Crews know you'll start and stop games all week with that sound, so they'll want to listen carefully for it.

SAY As we just talked about, we'll be collecting money this week to help friends through our Operation Kid-to-Kid project.

ASK I wonder, how many kids do you hope we can help, and why?

SAY These are great goals for doing a lot of good! But you may wonder, "Is it possible to help that many? I mean, we have only a week...and we're kids, too!" Let's see what happens when we combine our efforts, and how the good we can do grows as we work together!

1. Have each Crew pick a game space you've prepared.
2. Guide everyone to pick up a beanbag and line up along the first pool noodle—the starting line.

SAY 3. The sections marked by other pool noodles out in front of you represent different amounts of kids Operation Kid-to-Kid can help—like the goals we just talked about. In a minute, you'll toss your beanbag and see if you can get it to the farthest section you hope to hit. We'll pretend the first section is 10 kids, the next is 20 kids, and the third is 30 kids.

You'll get to add up your Crew's number of kids after everyone throws and see how many kids you "helped"!

4. When you sound the Wilderness Whistle, Crew members can take turns along their line. Invite each person to call out what section they're wondering if they can hit before tossing a beanbag.
5. Allow Crews to play multiple rounds, and if anyone wants an added challenge, they can try to toss beyond the last pool noodle as a 40-kid section.
6. Play the Sing & Play Peak Music while Crews play.

ASK What did you like about getting to add up your team's efforts?

SAY The best part about Operation Kid-to-Kid is we get to combine our efforts here at our VBS and with other friends at many other VBS locations all over the world. It's fun to wonder about all the good we'll do with so many people working together! When we wonder, we can... (trust Jesus!)—to do big things!

FIELD TEST FINGING

You'll probably have kids call out ridiculously high numbers (we did!). If so, that's okay. Just adjust the numbers you assign to each section of pool noodles. So each section might represent 100 or 1,000 kids!



FIELD TEST FINGING

You may need a megaphone or some other means of amplifying your voice so all the Crews can hear you. This may come in handy for each day at Glacier Games.

OPTION 2: Water Way

LOW ENERGY



Supplies:



Wilderness Whistle*



pool noodles (approximately 1 per Crew in a rotation)

• scissors or serrated knife



disposable cups (1 per Crew in a rotation)



buckets (2 per Crew in a rotation)

• water



photocopies of the Wrap-Up Questions: Water Way (p. 11) (1 per Crew)



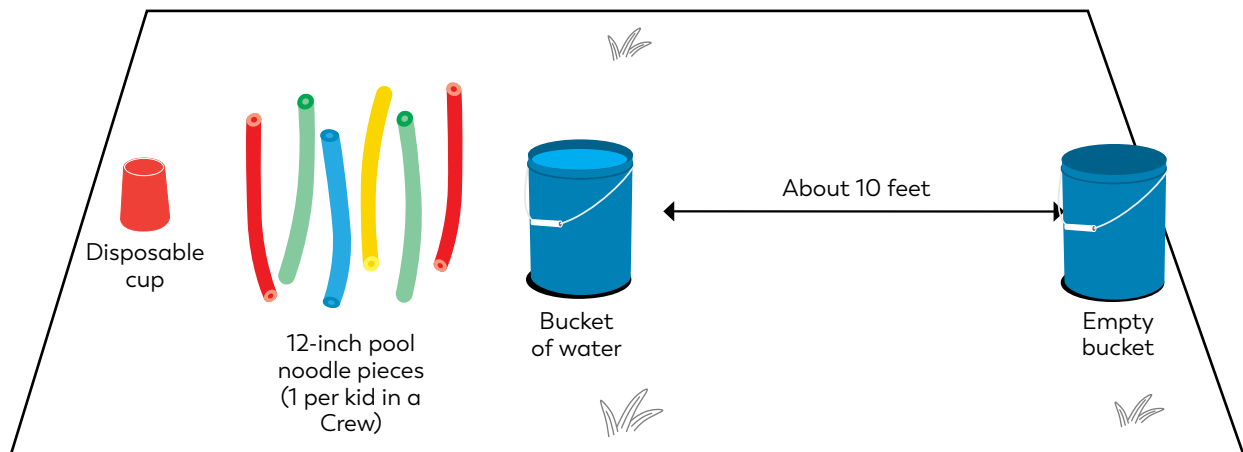
Sing & Play Peak Music CD or download*

• media player

*available from group.com or your Group VBS supplier

Pre-Game Setup

- Cut 12-inch pieces from pool noodles, and cut each piece in half lengthwise. You'll need one of these pieces for each kid (excluding Crew Leaders) in a rotation.
- Set up a game play space for each Crew following the diagram below.
- Place a full bucket of water, pool noodle pieces (one for each kid in a Crew), and a disposable cup at each space.
- Place an empty bucket about 10 feet away, directly across from each bucket of water.



Replicate this setup for each Crew.

Let's Play!

Give Crews a big welcome to Day 1 of Glacier Games, and introduce yourself if you haven't already.

SAY Today we're discovering that when we wonder, we can... (trust Jesus!) You know, we do a lot of wondering about a lot of things. Sometimes wondering is fun, and sometimes it's frustrating. One thing that's true either way is that wondering as a team can make a big difference. Give it a try in this game!

1. Have each Crew pick a play space you've prepared. Each child can take a pool noodle piece, and the Crew Leader can take the disposable cup.
2. Have the Crew Leader stand near the bucket of water and everyone else stand close together in a line between the two buckets.

SAY 3. Your goal for this game is to move water from your full bucket to your empty bucket by creating a waterway with your pool noodle pieces. Can you work together to make the water flow from piece to piece and into the empty bucket? Wonder together about how to do that, and then try out your ideas. See how much water you can move before time's up! You'll have the length of one song to play the game.

4. Instruct the Crew Leaders to start by using the cup to scoop water from the bucket and carefully pour it into the hollow of the first Crew member's pool noodle piece.
5. Play one of your favorite songs from the Sing & Play Peak Music while Crews play. When the song ends, turn off the music and sound the Wilderness Whistle to mark the end of the game.

Have each Crew sit in a knee-to-knee circle, and give each Crew Leader a copy of the Wrap-Up Questions: Water Way to lead a quick discussion.



FIELD TEST FINDING

This was a hit! Kids loved engineering a waterway together, and it helped set a pace for communication and teamwork for the week!

Wrap-up Questions: Water Way

ASK How did wondering together help us?

Who are other people you like to wonder with when you're figuring something out? Crew Leader, share an example of your own, then let each person share an example.

What makes those people good teammates?

SAY There's someone else we can turn to when we're wondering what to do. Someone we might not think of right away, but he's always close—Jesus! There's no better teammate or friend to wonder with!

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OPTION 3: Fish, Wolf, Bear MEDIUM ENERGY



Supplies:

— Wilderness Whistle*



— Sing & Play Peak Music CD or download*

• media player

* available from group.com or your Group VBS supplier

Pre-Game Setup

• *No setup needed!*



Let's Play!

Give Crews a big welcome to Day 1 of Glacier Games, and introduce yourself if you haven't already.

ASK What do you like about not knowing what's going to happen?

What do you dislike about not knowing what's going to happen?

SAY Wondering can make us a little nervous sometimes, in games and lots of other times in life. But when we wonder, we can... (trust Jesus!) We may not know what's going to happen, but Jesus does. Ready to do some wild animal wondering?

1. Go through the following motions for each animal choice.

- Fish—flap hands at cheeks to imitate fish gills and make a puckered-lip fish face.
- Wolf—howl toward the sky like howling at the moon.
- Bear—stand tall, hold hands up like big claws, and make a growly face.

SAY 2. When the music starts, move around the playing area. When the music stops, find someone standing nearby and stand back-to-back. Count to three together, then turn around and make one of the animal actions at the same time as your partner.

Bear beats wolf, wolf beats fish, and fish beats bear... because sometimes those slippery swimmers get away!

Before I turn the music back on, introduce yourselves. Tell your name, how old you are, and what school you go to.

3. Turn on the Sing & Play Peak Music to cue the start of the game and while everyone plays. When time is up, turn off the music and move on.



Glacier Games

Day 1



- Goals for Good
- Water Way
- Fish, Wolf, Bear

Day 2



- Pool Noodle Pals
- Find a Buddy
- Sharing Shelters

Day 3



- Melt in Minutes
- Power Ball
- River Run

Day 4



- Off the Grid
- Hope Rises
- Wilderness Course

Day 5



- Helping Herd
- Happy Campers
- Freeze and Thaw Tag



Questions:

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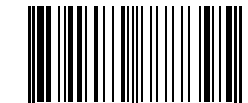
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VBS Programming



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