



Juneau's Puppy Playhouse Ages 3 through Pre-K!

Games

Preschool 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.

Games Leader Manual

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Thanks to our talented team that points the way to Jesus! Laura Baldwin-Stout, Jody Brolsma, 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!

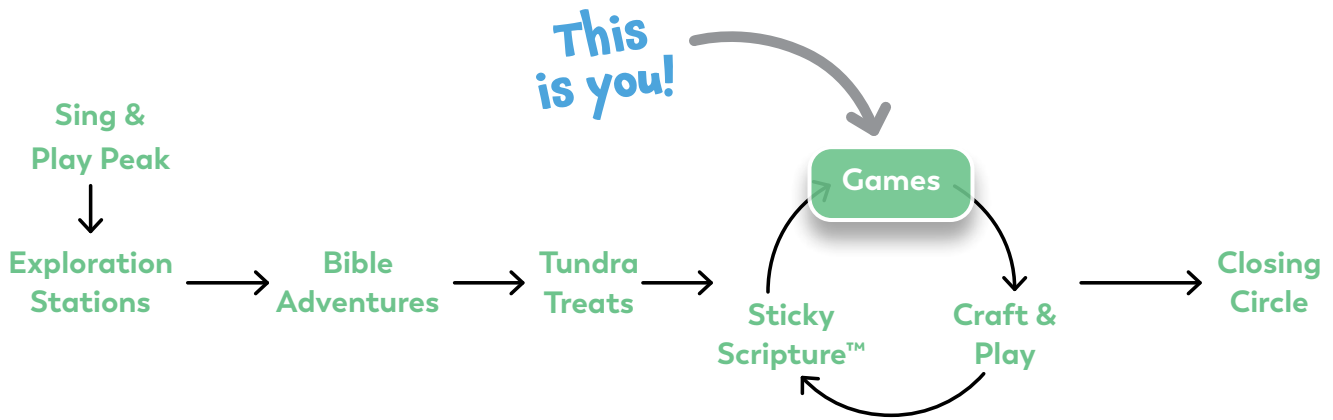
Like you, we love Jesus, and we love kids. We know that kids today may find their world untamed and wild. We understand that kids' source of truth may shift, depending on the latest news headline, trend, or social media influencer. We long for kids to boldly step out in faith, knowing that Jesus always 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.

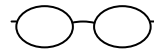


Before True North



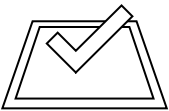
Pray for everyone who will attend True North.

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



Read each day's games.

Choose the activities that will work best with the area you have and with the number of Crews you're expecting in each rotation.



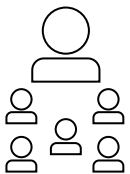
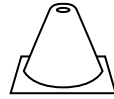
Create a safe playing area.

Clear the area of any rocks or sharp objects. If your area is indoors, be sure to remove chairs and other obstacles from the room you'll be using; also remove toys, books, or other items that might distract children. If you're meeting outside, create a physical boundary around the play area.



Work with the VBS Director to collect necessary supplies.

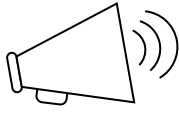
Many supplies, like posters and the Sing & Play Peak Music CD, will likely already be in the room.



Determine the number of Crews you'll have.

Crews consist of five preschool-age children (kids who've not yet finished kindergarten) and one adult or teenage leader. Plan on having one-third of the total number of preschool Crews in each of your rotations. For example, if your VBS has nine preschool Crews, you'll be working with three Crews (approximately 15 children and three teenage or adult helpers) during each session.

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 your Group VBS supplier) or another signal of your choice.



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!



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 make a pulling gesture with both hands, as if holding on to a rope and say, "We can trust Jesus!"



Play the Sing & Play Peak Music while kids play.

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

Preschool Sample Schedule (9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

If your Preschool Director decides to have preschoolers rotate through age-appropriate stations, you'll use a schedule similar to this one. (Note: Unless specifically indicated, these are not the same stations that elementary kids will visit.)

TIME	GROUP A Crews: <u>1-3</u>	GROUP B Crews: <u>4-6</u>	GROUP C Crews: <u>7-9</u>
9:00-9:25	Sing & Play Peak (with elementary kids) <i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
9:30-9:45	Exploration Stations <i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
9:50-10:15	Bible Adventures & Missions <i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
10:20-10:40	Tundra Treats (with elementary kids) <i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
10:45-11:00	Sticky Scripture	Games	Craft & Play
	<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
11:05-11:20	Craft & Play	Sticky Scripture	Games
	<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
11:25-11:40	Games	Craft & Play	Sticky Scripture
	<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
11:45-12:00	Closing Circle		





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)

Just for Day 1, preschoolers skip Sing & Play Peak and go straight to Juneau's Puppy Playhouse to meet their Crews and Crew Leaders.



Exploration Stations

- Bible Activity Page
- Wonder Wall
- Wild Life: Explore the Campsite
- River Crossing



Sticky Scripture™

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



Tundra Treats



A (Northern) Light Snack



Blizzard in a Cup

Craft & Play

- Northern Lights Painting
- Snowflake Sun Catcher
- Floating Otter

Bible Adventures & Missions

Share the exciting news that Jesus is coming, just as John did!



Closing Circle

Review the day, learn about God Sightings, receive a Watch for God Wristband and Juneau sticker, and wrap up with prayer and music.



Games



Wonder Where



Pond Pickup



Wonder Who-la Hoop

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.



We can Trust Jesus!

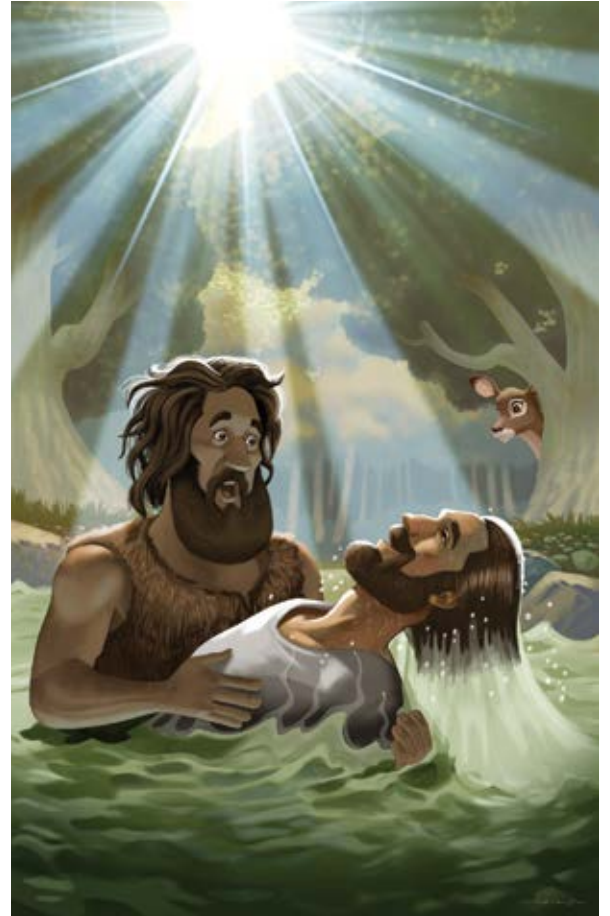
When we wonder, we can trust Jesus.

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.

OPTION 1: Wonder Where



Supplies:

parachute*

playground or beach ball



*available from group.com or your Group VBS supplier

Pre-Game Setup

- Spread out a parachute on the ground.



Gather kids around the parachute, and let them pick it up, each holding a handle.

SAY

Today we're discovering that when we wonder, we can... (trust Jesus!) Let's play a fun game where we'll get to wonder about who has the ball! Hold up the ball so everyone can see what it looks like.

1. Explain that in this game, you'll place the ball near someone's feet while everyone holds and shakes the parachute, making it wavy and wiggly.
2. Invite a willing person to be the Wonderer, who watches you carefully and tries to sort out where you've placed the ball.
3. Players should not tell anyone if the ball gets placed next to them, because the Wonderer is going to try to spot it.
4. Holding the ball below the level of the shaking parachute, walk around the parachute two times. As you go, pretend to set the ball down next to a few people to make it tough to know where the ball is.
5. You may place the ball right away, but continue walking around the circle a total of two times. Then count to three and lead everyone in heaving the parachute up while holding on tightly to the handles. This makes the parachute balloon upward. Call out: **I wonder where the ball is!**
6. Once the parachute is up, the Wonderer tries to quickly find who has the ball and run under the parachute to pick up the ball before the parachute comes down. Then the Wonderer runs around the parachute back to his or her spot, and you can retrieve the ball for the next round.
7. Continue rounds as time allows, picking new Wonderers and new people to have the ball.

SAY

Searching for answers and wondering can be so much fun! We get to play and discover, and when we wonder, we can... (trust Jesus!)

FIELD TEST FINDING

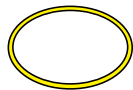
Our preschool friends watched the leader with eagle eyes! Because everyone was turning their heads, our Wonderer had an easy time spotting the ball. That's okay! Kids loved running under the parachute to pick up the ball. Such a fun, easy game!

COMPASS CLUE

Encourage everyone to cheer for the Wonderers as they run under and around the parachute!

OPTION 2: Pond Pickup

Supplies:



hula hoops (1 per Crew in a rotation)



plastic ball-pit balls (about 24 per Crew in a rotation)



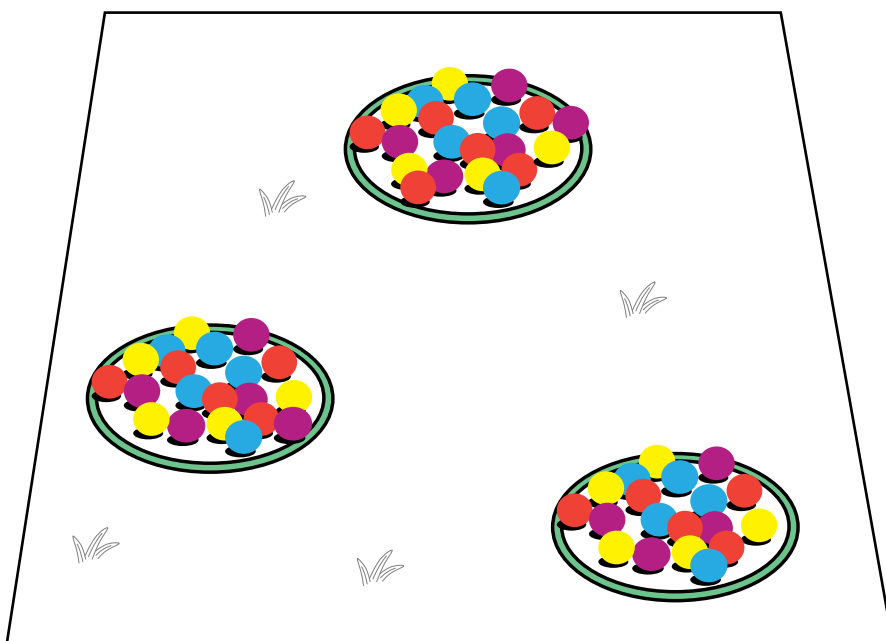
spray bottles full of water, set to a gentle spray (1 per Crew in a rotation)

Pre-Game Setup

- Lay hula hoops on the ground spread throughout the play area.
- Fill each hoop with about 24 plastic ball-pit balls.

COMPASS CLUE

This is a great time to play the Sing & Play Peak Music as kids work to “clean the ponds”!



Have each Crew gather around a hula hoop “pond” and wait for instructions. Give each Crew Leader a spray bottle.

SAY Oh no! These ponds are filled with rocks! Point to the hula hoops on the ground. Our Buddy Ponder the otter and his friends need a nice place to play and live. I wonder if we can help clean these rocks out of the ponds...and in a really fun way!

1. Have Crew members sit around their hula hoop and use their feet to pick up the ball-pit balls and place them outside the hula hoop.
2. Crew Leaders can gently spray water into the air above the Crew during play to simulate pond water splashes.
3. Reset the ponds so they're messy again. Play another round, challenging Crews to clean out the ponds even faster.
4. Reset the ponds for a final round, and invite Crews to wonder together and come up with another fun way to clean up the ponds.

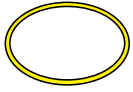
SAY Thanks for helping clean the ponds and for wondering up new ways to do it! Wondering uses our imaginations. If we ever get stuck when we wonder, we can... (*trust Jesus!*)—and ask for his help.

FIELD TEST FINDING

We found that a couple of our youngest preschoolers didn't quite have the coordination to use their feet to pick up the balls. No worries! We just let them use one hand at a time.



OPTION 3: Wonder Who-la Hoop



Supplies:

hula hoops (1 per Crew in a rotation)

Pre-Game Setup

- If you played *Pond Pickup*, simply reuse the hula hoops and move them to clear spaces on the ground (away from the ball-pit balls).
- Or place hula hoops on the ground around your play area—one per Crew in a rotation.



SAY It's our first day together at True North VBS. Some of us might not know each other. I'm sure there are some things we're wondering about our new friends. Let's have some fun and get to know each other a little better!

1. Have each Crew stand around a hula hoop on the ground.
2. Invite Crew Leaders to call out an "I wonder who..." statement about things Crew members might have in common, such as "I wonder if anyone's favorite color is blue," "I wonder who loves pizza," or "I wonder who has a pet at home."
3. Crew members who the statement is true about step into the hula hoop. Sometimes it'll be a fun challenge to fit everyone in it!
4. Then everyone steps back out of the hoop for a new "I wonder who..." statement from the Crew Leader.
5. Play for a few rounds, and then allow preschoolers to call out the "I wonder who" statements for a few more rounds.

ASK What are some things we found out about each other?

SAY When we're around new people, we can wonder if we'll make friends. We may wonder things about Jesus, too. When we wonder, we can... (trust Jesus!) He is our forever friend who can help us make other friends, too.

FIELD TEST FINDING

One Crew Leader had a group that *all* wanted to step into the hoop every time. She brilliantly began asking about things kids were wearing, such as "I wonder who has Bluey on their shoes." Soon kids got the idea that it was okay not to step into the hoop sometimes.



Day 1



- Wonder Where
- Pond Pickup
- Wonder Who-la Hoop

Day 2



- High-Five Hello
- Tide Pool Shuffle
- Crabby Crew Tag

Day 3



- Calm the Chaos
- Follow Mama (or Papa) Bear
- Water Woes

Day 4



- Changing Direction
- Off the Grid
- Hoping for a Splash

Day 5



- Helping Hands
- Helper Heroes
- Moose on the Loose



Questions:

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VBS Programming



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