



# Ponderosa Preschool



PRESCHOOL  
LEADER MANUAL



# **PONDEROSA PRESCHOOL**

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## 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.

## Ponderosa Preschool Leader Manual

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**Thanks to the herd who rounded up this VBS!** Laura Baldwin-Stout, Jody Brolsma, Stephen Caine, Shelly Dillon, Jan Kershner, Lyndsay Gerwing, Laycie McClain, Mike Porter, Joani Schultz, Rodney Stewart, and Gabriele Woolever.

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ISBN 978-1-4707-7805-7

Printed in the United States of America.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 27 26 25

# Saddle Up for a Wild Weekend!

At Yee-Haw VBS, preschoolers kick up their heels as they stampede through the wild frontier and celebrate God's good gifts! They'll round up a whole herd of friends and discover that Jesus is God's greatest gift. As the Ponderosa Preschool Leader, you'll welcome preschoolers, guide them through God's Word, lead them in exciting games, and let them craft and create adorable projects—all while reinforcing one easy-to-remember Bible truth. At Yee-Haw VBS, you'll corral kids into meaningful conversations, warm friendships, and a frontier of fun! Get ready for laughter, excitement, noise, and the joy of watching kids become friends with God's greatest gift of all—Jesus!

Before you get started, here's what you should know:

- \* **Everyone's on the move!** Preschoolers start their day with the elementary kids at Moo-sic & More. Then they'll head to Ponderosa Preschool for most of their activities. At the end of VBS, you'll lead preschoolers to Closing Corral for large-group wrap-up time. (Check out the sample schedule on page 5 to get an idea of the flow of each day's activities and how you may want to have large groups of preschoolers travel through Ponderosa Preschool.)
- \* **Everyone's in a Crew.** At Yee-Haw VBS, preschoolers hold a Roundup Rope as they travel in small, mixed-age groups called Crews. Preschool Crews have up to five children (ages 3 to 5) plus one teenage or adult leader. Mixed-age Crews are a fresh, incredible way to reach kids!
- \* **Everyone's learning one key Bible truth.** Every activity at Yee-Haw VBS reinforces one simple Bible truth, called a Bible Point. It's important to use the Bible Point as it's written since it's integrated into the experiences and activities throughout the entire program. Yee-Haw VBS is intentionally designed so that every station connects to the Bible Point, so children come away with an easy-to-apply scriptural truth.

Kids will be listening for the Bible Point, **GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS**. When kids hear the Bible Point, they'll shout "Yee-haw!" and raise a fist in celebration. Just think, each time kids hear the Point, they'll be reminded of God's goodness and love for them!

## HAVE YOU HERD?

Every day you'll use an attention-getter to get everyone focused on you for more fun. A Buckaroo Bell (available from Group Publishing) or other attention-getter saves time and is loads better than lots of shushing or shouting.



Buckaroo Bell



"Yee-haw!"

## HAVE YOU HERD?

Team teaching is the way to go! You may want to round up a few willing friends who can share this experience with you. With one person leading Bible Adventures, one leading Craft & Play, and one leading Games, each person's job is a snap!



## Before You Saddle Up

- \* **Prepare your heart.** Pray for the preschoolers who will come to Yee-Haw VBS, for the parents who will be reached, and for the other volunteers on your team. Ask God to guide and encourage your VBS Director through this exciting event.
- \* **Prepare your supplies.** Work with the Yee-Haw VBS Director to collect necessary supplies and decorations. You may want to list the needs in your church bulletin and ask church members to donate items such as bandannas, stick horses, stuffed animals, bales of hay, rope, and even a saddle, if possible.
- \* **Prepare your lessons.** This is the easy part! Each lesson has been tested so you know it works. You don't have to memorize the script, but be familiar enough that you aren't reading it. During the Bible story, use emotion, energy, and excitement as you immerse kids in these incredible and true Bible adventures.
- \* **Prepare your wardrobe.** Ask your VBS Director what you should wear. Consider a fringed vest, western boots, and a cowboy hat. Staff T-shirts are available at [group.com/vbs](http://group.com/vbs) and will quickly identify you as a staff member.
- \* **Prepare your room.** Determine where you'll meet, remembering that you'll have plenty of busy preschoolers exploring your room. Ideally, choose an area that has an attached bathroom and sink since you'll likely be doing crafts in this area and will need to wash a few messy hands. It's also a good idea to have easy access to your outside play area so children don't have far to walk when they play games.



Then create a fun horse stable for your little ponies to play in. First, cover the walls with Weathered Wood Plastic Backdrop. On one wall, use black paper to create paddock doors for several horses—and don't forget to include a spot for Ranger! On another wall, cut cardboard to create a wooden fence. Set out a few coiled ropes, a saddle, and several bales of hay to finish your scene. You can find thematic decorations at [group.com/vbs](http://group.com/vbs).

### Sample Schedule—6:00–8:30 p.m.

If you have more than 20 preschoolers, we recommend having a separate leader for each of the three areas in Ponderosa Preschool. After Bible Adventures, form two groups of Crews and have Crew Leaders guide their Crews in rotating through the stations, according to a schedule like the one below.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Group A Crews</b> 1-4	<b>Group B Crews</b> 5-8
6:00-6:30	Moo-sic & More (with the elementary kids)	
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to Ponderosa Preschool.</i>		
6:35-7:00	Bible Adventures	
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
7:05-7:30	Craft & Play	Games
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
7:35-8:00	Games	Craft & Play
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to Closing Corral.</i>		
8:05-8:30	Closing Corral (with the elementary kids)	



# Ponderosa

## Preschool Schedule

### Day 1



**Bible Point:** God gives good gifts.

**Bible Verse:** “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

**Bible Story:** God sends Jesus to earth. (Luke 2:1-20)

<b>Time</b>	<b>Group A Crews</b>	<b>Group B Crews</b>
	Moo-sic & More <i>(with the elementary kids)</i>	
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
	Bible Adventures	
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
	Craft & Play	Games
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
	Games	Craft & Play
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
	Closing Corral <i>(with the elementary kids)</i>	



# Ponderosa

## Preschool Schedule

### Day 2



**Bible Point:** God gives good gifts.

**Bible Verse:** “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

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

<b>Time</b>	<b>Group A Crews</b>	<b>Group B Crews</b>
	Moo-sic & More <i>(with the elementary kids)</i>	
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
	Bible Adventures	
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
	Craft & Play	Games
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
	Games	Craft & Play
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to your next station.</i>		
	Closing Corral <i>(with the elementary kids)</i>	



# Day 1

**Bible Point:** God gives good gifts.

**Bible Story:** God sends Jesus to earth. (Luke 2:1-20)

**Bible Verse:** “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

## Consider This...

- ✦ There are dozens of prophecies in the Old Testament surrounding the birth of the Messiah, and Jesus fulfills every one!
  - Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem fulfills Micah 5:2: “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village among all the people of Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel, whose origins are in the distant past, will come from you on my behalf.”
  - Jesus’ virgin birth was foretold in Isaiah 7:14: “The Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel.”
- ✦ After Jesus’ birth, Mary wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger. Mangers held food for animals, giving them sustenance and life. Jesus called himself the Bread of Life, and he is what gives us strength, nourishment, and everlasting life.
- ✦ The shepherds were the first people to hear the good news of Jesus’ birth. Shepherds were among the lowest of the low in their society and considered unclean. Because the angel told these men about Jesus’ birth first, God showed that his love and the gift of Jesus are for everyone.

## Why It Matters...

Kids love receiving gifts—especially at Christmastime! Yet presents like bicycles and toys break. Kids outgrow new clothes, just as they grow from wanting skates to wanting smartphones. But God’s gift of Jesus is the *perfect* gift—one size fits all! As you share the Christmas story in today’s lesson, you’ll have the opportunity to help kids discover that Jesus is God’s most precious gift...for *all* of us, every day! Use today’s experiences to help kids understand *why* Jesus is a good gift, one that will be with them for eternity!





### Moo-sic & More

Learn the Bible Point and Bible verse, meet cowboy Rawhide McSpur, and worship with upbeat songs.



### Preschool Bible Adventures

Learn that Jesus, who was born in a stable, is God's gift of love to us.



### Preschool Craft & Play

- Art Hearts
- Horsin' Around
- Giddyup & Grow Chart



### Preschool Games

- Baby on Board
- Hug Hop
- Shake, Shake, Shake



### Closing Corral

Watch a kid-story video, then explore what a big difference we can make when we share God's good gift of love in our world.



# Day 1 Bible Story

God sends Jesus to earth. (Luke 2:1-20)



# Day 1

## Bible Adventures

### Get Ready

- \* Mark your Bible at Luke 2:1-20.
- \* Put the costumes and baby doll inside the gift box.

### Welcome Crews

Gather children with their Crews, and introduce yourself.

Say: **Welcome to Yee-Haw VBS! I'm so glad you're here today! At Yee-Haw VBS, we're imagining that we're way out west, ready to saddle up and stampede through a fun frontier. We'll make a herd of new friends and discover that **GOD GIVES GOOD GIFTS.** (Yee-haw!)**

**You know, sometimes in the wild frontier, cowboys use a rope called a lasso to catch animals that might be trying to run away. They swing the lasso like this.** Make a circular motion in the air with one hand. **Show me how you'd lasso an animal!** Lead kids in pretending to swing lassos in the air.

**That's some good lasso-swinging! Now let's add in shouting "yee-haw" as we lasso!** Lead kids in shouting "yee-haw" as they pretend to swing lassos.

**That was fun! You know, sometimes when cowboys are out riding their horses and lassoing animals, they hear a bell that means it's time for dinner. It might sound like this Buckaroo Bell.** Hold up and sound your Buckaroo Bell. **Sometimes during VBS I'll need to get your attention so everyone can hear what to do next. When you hear the Buckaroo Bell, it means I need your attention, so freeze and listen carefully. Let's practice!**

Have preschoolers pretend to swing lassos and shout "yee-haw" again. After about 15 seconds, sound your Buckaroo Bell and have children freeze in place.

**Thanks, buckaroos! I think you'd do fine on the frontier!**

### Introduce Crew Leaders

Say: **During Yee-Haw VBS, your herd of new friends will include loving grown-ups called Crew Leaders. Your Crew Leader will stay with you, keep you safe, and have lots of fun with you! If you need anything at all, just tell your Crew Leader. When I count to three, give your Crew Leader a big buckaroo pat on the back.** Count to three and encourage children to pat their Crew Leaders on the back.

### Supplies

- preschool-friendly Bible
- Buckaroo Bell\*
- large gift box and lid wrapped separately
- baby doll
- simple Bible-times costumes or bathrobes for "Mary" and "Joseph"
- 3 adult-size flannel shirts
- several large, white shirts
- several white sheets or towels
- flashlight
- Moo-sic & More DVD\*
- DVD player and TV

\*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier



# Ponderosa Preschool

## Get ready for a herd of happy kids!

We're so glad you'll be hitting the trails with us! You're in for a blast as you lead preschoolers in heart-changing, age-appropriate activities that get everyone fired up about God's love.

This manual has *all* the details you need to lead children (ages 3 to 5) in

- \* **Bible Adventures** that get little ones moooving with all five senses;
- \* **Craft & Play**, including a meaningful service project option; and
- \* **Games** that let children play *and* that reinforce one simple Bible truth.

The preschoolers who mosey into your VBS will come away excited and ready to share what they've learned with friends, families, neighbors, and the world!



Questions?



[group.com/YeeHaw](http://group.com/YeeHaw)



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ISBN 978-1-4707-7805-7



9 781470 778057

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Printed in the U.S.A.

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# **THIS IS A SAMPLE**

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