



Follow the Leader

- Great for Sunday school, VBS, and other summer programs
- Five large group sessions
- Five small group sessions for Kindergarten-Grade 3 and Grades 4-8
- Five original dramas
- Large selection of crafts and activities
- Complete—no other resources to buy

Follow the Leader



Grand Rapids, Michigan

Any questions or comments about this unit?
We'd love to hear from you:

Faith Alive Christian Resources
1-800-333-8300
E-mail: editors@faithaliveresources.org

RCA Children's Ministry Office
1-800-968-3943
E-mail: childrensministry@rca.org

Presbyterians for Renewal
1-502-425-4630
E-mail: office@pfrenewal.org

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Walk With Me

Grades K-8

Summer Book 6: Follow the Leader

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How to Use This Book

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” (John 3:16-17)

Our world is full of people looking for leaders. Leaders help us know where we are going and inspire us to follow them. Good leaders help us to be better people. They help us to aspire to greatness and to do things that are pleasing to God. Poor leaders can lull us into a sense of mediocrity; they can take away our enthusiasm and lead us away from being the people God wants us to be. God does not call all of us to be leaders, but God does call all of us to be *followers*: followers of Christ, the one true leader.

The stories in this unit illustrate that in Bible times, God’s people were looking for leaders who could save them from their enemies. Moses was used by God to rescue Israel from slavery in Egypt. Gideon led Israel to a victory over the Midianites. David killed the giant Goliath. Esther saved her people from certain death. But each time, redemption was fleeting. God’s people turned away from God again and again, and each time a new leader was needed to set things right. It was only when Jesus was born that full redemption came for the Israelites and for all those who follow him. Jesus saves us once and for all!

Goal and Theme

The unique format of this five-session course allows you to use it as a lively and exciting curriculum for your summer Sunday school or for an entire week of summer ministry such as vacation Bible school (see pp. 6-7 for helpful tips). The large group/small group format can also be used for a midweek program.

Whether you choose a church or summer ministry setting, the goal of this course is to teach five Bible stories that focus on leaders. The first four stories feature leaders who have a heartfelt desire to serve God and his people as they await the promised Messiah. Their stories inspire us to serve God in our everyday lives. Just as our work is only part of what God is doing in his kingdom, their work was also incomplete. The final story about Jesus teaches us that full redemption only comes through Jesus Christ.

To support our theme, this book offers a variety of ideas and options for large group sessions, small group sessions, and a summer celebration program. Use the ideas and options that work best with your church school or summer ministry. Ideally the large group session would take about 15-20 minutes, after which kids break up into their small group sessions for 30-40 minutes. You may also want to schedule an extra practice time or two if your church is planning to host the summer celebration program.

Finding time to do everything in this book will not be possible or desirable for most churches. You will need to choose what your group will be able to handle in the time you have available. **You will need one copy of this book for each of your leaders.** As purchaser of this book, you are granted permission to photocopy the dramas, patterns, and activities on reproducible pages 185-216.

Getting Started

Because these materials suggest a different format and approach than the regular *Walk With Me* units, you’ll want to spend some extra time planning and preparing to teach these sessions. Although each church situation is unique, you may find some of the following suggestions helpful:

- In early spring, organize a small team to read through this book. They can review the session plans, dramas, and songs, then choose what they think will work best for your church.

- After the committee makes its recommendations, recruit teachers, song leaders, accompanists, and drama participants.
- Recruit volunteers who are willing to gather materials for these special sessions. Give them plenty of time for this task (a month or two) since they will likely want to ask the congregation to save and/or gather some of the items.
- Schedule rehearsals for the drama team.
- If you wish to have costumes for the drama team, recruit volunteers to gather materials and design the simple costumes described on pages 8-9.
- If you're planning to use the summer celebration program, schedule a single, final rehearsal for everyone involved in the program.

Large Group Sessions and Summer Celebration Program

The large group session materials include a drama for each week and a list of songs to learn as a whole group. Presenting a drama may at first sound intimidating, but the dramas are written in such a way that both children and adults will enjoy performing and/or viewing them. Each drama takes about eight to ten minutes and requires three or more actors. Costumes may be as simple or elaborate as you'd like. (We've provided directions for making simple costumes on pp. 8-9.)

You'll probably want middle school kids or a team of older teens to play these roles (although adults would be fine too). You can use younger children in non-speaking roles in the plays about Moses and Gideon.

The dramas and songs can be used for each large group session and also for the summer celebration program. You'll find a sample program along with ideas for organizing and producing it on pages 11-13.

Small Group Sessions

Small group sessions will give you the opportunity to help apply the story to the children's lives. If you are unable to present the story as a drama in the large group setting, you can still use the drama or another form of the story in the small group setting. It's a story you want children to hear!

Each small group session opens with a *Hello* step designed to catch the children's interest and get them thinking about the lesson's theme.

Next comes the *Know* step (telling the story). If the children have already heard the story in the large group session, you'll want to use this time to review the story with them. If you did not participate in a large group session, either use the drama or another interesting way to present the story to the group (see sessions for suggestions).

The *Grow* step helps children understand what the story means for their lives, and the *Show* step guides them to respond to what they learned in this session.

Each small group session includes options for activities and crafts. You'll want to consider these well ahead of teaching these materials. Once you've decided which crafts and activities to use, you may want to appoint two or more volunteers (possibly parents of children in the group) to gather the materials, cut out patterns, and assemble all the items you'll need. Having a helper in the classroom is also a plus when doing crafts and other activities with young children.

We trust that God will use you to share these stories and help children to follow the one true leader, Jesus Christ!



Small group leaders may want to send a short letter to the families of the kids in their group at the beginning of this unit. Explain what these five sessions will be like, and invite families to share in the experience by praying for you, talking about the stories with their kids, helping out in your sessions, and/or attending the summer celebration program (if you plan to have one).

How to Use This Book for VBS or Other Summer Ministries

You can use the five sessions for a five-day vacation Bible school or for five weekly sessions. Below is a suggested schedule and format for using the large group and small group approach for Bible school. If you have fewer than five sessions, you may choose to omit one or more of the sessions in this unit, but we recommend that you not eliminate session 5, the story about the birth of Jesus.

Opening Large Group Session (30 minutes)

- Opening prayer and singing time (Check each session for song suggestions; all songs are on the CD that accompanies this course.)
- Drama time (See pp. 127-150 for dramas for each of the sessions and tips on how to present them. Purchasers of this book are free to photocopy all drama scripts.)

Break-out Small Group Sessions (45-90 minutes)

Small groups may spend 45 minutes or more enjoying the four steps of the session plans. Be aware that you will need to make some choices about what to use and what to ignore, especially in the Show part of each session.

- The Hello step (10 minutes) gets you started with a fun activity that introduces the theme of the story being studied.
- The Know step (10-15 minutes) gives you some great ways to review the story that was presented in the large group session.
- The Grow step (10-15 minutes) helps nurture faith as kids think about how the story affects their lives.
- The Show step (15-30 minutes) helps kids respond to the story through a variety of crafts and activities. You'll find suggestions for learning the Memory Fun or Memory Challenge and for retelling the story to others. And you'll find single session ideas for crafts, fun projects, and other activities.

Closing Large Group Session (15 minutes)

You may want to get the entire group back together for a time of singing and sharing. If you're planning a summer celebration program, you can use this time to review the songs that are part of that program. Kids can recite their Memory Challenge and show their crafts or other projects to the entire group. End your time together by inviting everyone to join hands for prayer.

Terrific Tees



Make your summer program extra special for the kids by ordering T-shirts printed with the program logo for all participants. (See p. 185 for a logo that can be screen-printed onto shirts or printed on a program.) When ordered in large quantities, these T-shirts are quite inexpensive. Look for a printer in your area.

Forming Ministry Teams

“Follow the Leader” provides a great opportunity for many people from your congregation to become involved in summer outreach ministry. Here are a few suggestions for setting up teams from your congregation:

- *Planning Team:* Decides the dates of the program. Assists and guides the other teams so that the main theme and vision of the VBS or other outreach program is apparent.
- *Music Team:* Chooses music, finds music leader and musicians, selects music for program. This leader’s guide suggests a number of songs and includes them on a CD.
- *Publicity Team:* Creates small fliers and distributes them throughout the neighborhood. Gets the word out about the location, date, and theme.
- *Program Team:* Organizes the summer celebration program and possibly an “after-program” event like an ice cream social or picnic.
- *Small Group Session Team:* Selects the ideas that will be used for the small group sessions, especially for craft and activity time.
- *Drama Team:* Recruits actors, obtains the necessary items for each drama, and presents the drama to the entire group. See session 1 for additional comments.
- *Costumes Team:* Gathers materials and makes simple costumes as described on pages 8-9.
- *Decoration Team:* Decorates the large group session area as desired, perhaps with large drawings of the key Bible characters included in the five stories (use an overhead projector to trace pictures onto shelf paper), enlarged Memory Fun/Memory Challenge verses, and the “Follow the Leader” logo.

We encourage you to draw on the diverse gifts of members when you compose your teams. Involve as many people from the congregation as you can. Thinking about these stories and how the children will respond to them makes planning an exciting task.

Costumes for Dramas

Costumes can add a lot to the dramas that are part of every large group session. You might find pieces of clothing at home that you can adapt, or you can create simple costumes as directed below.

Clothing for the Hebrew people is best represented using layers of roughly textured fabric in plain colors or stripes. Queen Esther's costume and those for the royal court can be made from white linen draped loosely around the body topped with flowing robes made from plain-colored napped fabrics like velvet, corduroy, or fleece.

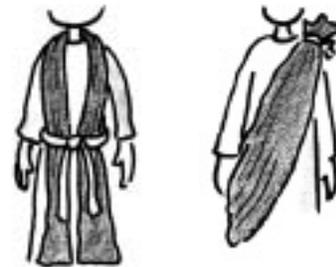
Costumes Requiring No Sewing

Use 3-4 yards (2.5-3.5 m) of fabric for the basic layer of the costume, and select one of the options below to make the undergarment.

Option 1: Cut a hole for the actor's head in the center of the cloth. Slip the garment over the actor's head, and use the side openings as sleeves. Wrap the excess fabric loosely around the body as shown below, and secure with a length of fabric used as a belt. To add interest to the costume, create an additional layer with another piece of fabric.

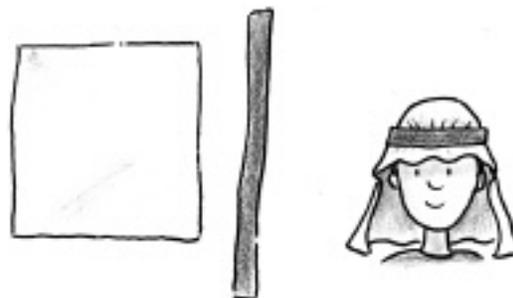


Option 2: Drape the cloth around the shoulders of the actor, and allow the fullness of the cloth to hang down the front. Secure the fabric in place with another length of fabric used as a belt. This method will give the appearance of a full costume from the front view and works especially well if the wearer is seated. The cloth could also be draped under one arm and tied in place on top of the opposite shoulder. Secure in place with a length of fabric used as a belt.

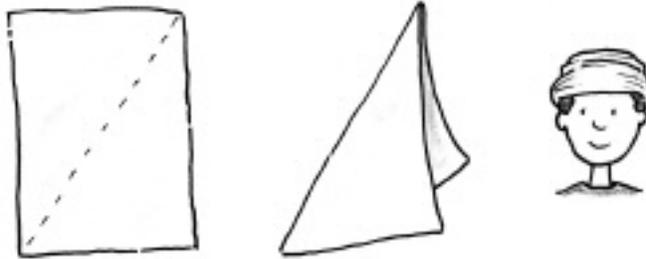


Here are two options for creating a headpiece (you'll need about a square yard or meter of fabric for each one):

Option 1: Create a burnoose using a large piece of cloth and a strip of fabric to hold it in place.

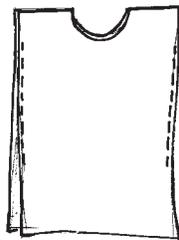


Option 2: To create a turban-like headpiece, fold the piece of fabric in half crosswise. Lay the middle of the fold on the actor's forehead and allow the point of the triangle to hang down the back of the neck. Twist and wrap the pointed ends of the cloth around the head and either tie or pin in place. Complete the turban by tucking in the rest of the cloth as needed.



Costumes Requiring Simple Sewing

Fold fabric in half crossways. Sew pieces together to make shoulders, leaving openings for head, arms, and legs.



Tailoring Your Sessions to the Ways Children Learn

How do children and young teens learn? The answer to that question can be almost as varied as the kids in your group. Some learn best through words. Others through music. Still others through nature or through movement.

Sessions in the *Walk With Me* curriculum try to respect the many ways kids learn. *Walk With Me* sessions include a wide range of activities that speak to kids with the following types of intelligence (based on Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences). Within each session, the icons below highlight the learning styles represented by each activity. As you teach, you'll begin to get a sense for how the kids in your group learn best. Kids who are



Word Smart

learn best through verbal activities (listening, reading, or speaking), including discussions, worksheets, writing, reading, storytelling, and word games.



Number Smart

learn best by exploring patterns and relationships through activities such as problem solving, logical puzzles or games, making charts and graphs, or putting things in sequence.



Picture Smart

learn best by visualizing concepts. These kids enjoy viewing maps, slides, pictures, videos, and diagrams; making jigsaw puzzles; and expressing their ideas with shape, color, and design.



Body Smart

learn best by using their bodies, acting things out, using puppets, moving—anything hands-on.



Music Smart

learn best through sound, music, and rhythm—playing musical instruments, writing their own songs and raps, listening to recordings, singing, and so on.



People Smart

learn best through doing things with others, cooperating and working in small or large groups, role playing, conversations, brainstorming, and other interactive exercises.



Self Smart

learn best by working independently through such things as writing in a journal, meditating, reading, and reflecting.



Earth Smart

learn best through activities connected to living things and natural phenomena, through nature walks, examining plants and animals, nature experiments, and activities that focus on ecology.

—The ideas on this page are based on material from the following resources: *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom* by Thomas Armstrong, © 2000, and a chart prepared by Donald L. Griggs, Livermore, California.

Sample Summer Celebration Program

Follow the Leader

Procession: “Step by Step” (Beaker)

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Reading: Exodus 14:5-28

Song: “Pharaoh, Pharaoh” (Tony Sbrano)

Drama: “Only 300 Men!” (based on Judges 7)

Song: “Lovely Noise” (Gregg Sparks, Rebecca Sparks)

Congregational Song: “Forever” (Chris Tomlin)

Reading: 1 Samuel 17:1-4, 8-9, 20-23, 32-51

Song: “Davey, Davey” (Dave Huber, Dan Lueders, Aaron Reynolds)

Reading: Esther 7

Memory Challenge Song: “John 3:16” (Troy Nilsson, Genie Nilsson)

Drama: “Born to Save” (based on Luke 2:1-20)

Song: “Amen” (African American Spiritual)

Meditation

Closing Prayer

Additional Program Ideas

Having a summer celebration program is a great way to help focus your church's attention on sharing the good news about Jesus. This program can be used during a Sunday service or for a week-night "bring-a-neighbor" service. Read through the sample program (previous page) and use it as a guide to making your own unique program. (You may want to use the logo on p. 185 for a program cover.)

Here are a few additional ideas:

Scripture Readings

- Your middle school children and younger children who are good readers can present this part of the program. Consider using simplified English versions such as the New International Readers' Version or the New Living Bible. *The Message* could also be used for one or two of the readings.

Singing

- We suggest seven songs for the children to sing during the program; one will be sung with the congregation. (These seven songs, as well as the optional songs listed on p. 13, are on the CD included with this guide.) Scheduling a closing song time during your weekly or daily session will give kids time to practice the songs. Even if the children know all the songs by the last session, you may still want to plan an extra practice session, perhaps on a Saturday or in the evening.
- You may want to divide up the songs. For example, kids in K-3 might learn a few of the songs while the older kids learn the rest. Or have boys learn some songs and girls learn others. For the program, have each group sing the songs they've learned instead of having all the kids sing together.
- If the children made noisemakers in session 1 (see p. 27) or joy bells in session 4 (p. 86), use them during the singing of "Lovely Noise" (track 7).
- The congregation joins the children in singing "Forever" (track 12). If this song is not familiar to your church family, include the words in the program or project them on a screen. (This will make visitors feel more welcome too.)

Drama

- Presenting one or two of the dramas from this course is bound to delight your audience. We suggest using the dramas "Only 300 Men!" and "Born to Save." Of course, if you think one of the other dramas would be more effective, feel free to substitute.
- Dramas can be presented by your drama team or by other adults, young adults, and middle schoolers. Involve younger children in nonspeaking roles. Costumes, props, and sets can be as simple or elaborate as you like. Read through the suggestions at the beginning of each drama.

Stage Direction Ideas for the Program

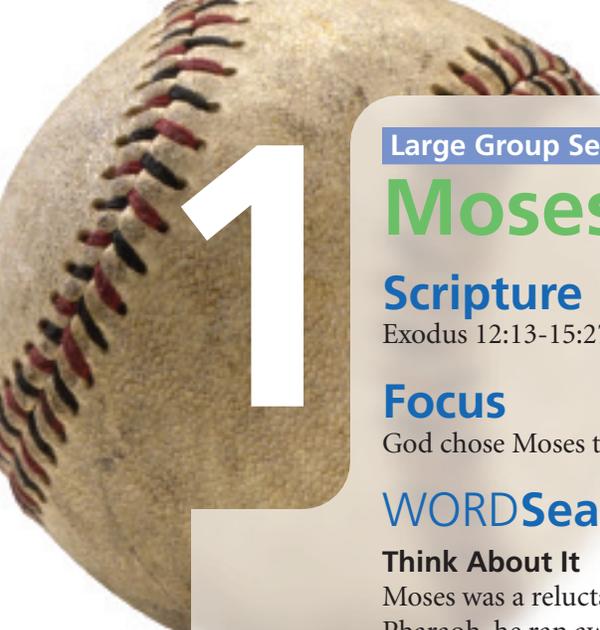
- **Pre-processional:** Have the children line up at the back of church.
- **Processional:** All of the children enter the worship space from the back of church singing "Step by Step."
- **Formation in Front:** Line kids up in front. They can be spread across the front of the worship space in a single row or several rows.
- **Singing:** If you are planning on having all of the children sing all of the songs, they may all stay up in front of church. (If you have steps at the front of the church, use these as risers.) If smaller groups are singing certain songs, have the others stay seated (on the steps or in front rows) until it is their turn to sing.
- **Opening Prayer:** Consider having one of the older children open with prayer. He or she can thank God for the Bible and the stories that they are going to share and ask God's blessing on the program.

- **Transition to Drama:** After the kids sing “Pharaoh, Pharaoh,” have them exit the stage area to make room for the drama or have them sit down. During the transition time, have the accompanist play music.
- **Drama:** The drama team will need to set up and take down quickly. They may need an extra stagehand or two to help them. Sets and props do not have to be elaborate; perhaps they can be partially set up ahead of time. Have the accompanist play music during the transition time before and after the drama.
- **Transition to Meditation:** Following the song “Amen” the children should be seated. The pastor then leads the balance of the worship time.

Optional Songs

Feel free to substitute some of the following songs for these we suggest for the program. These optional songs are listed in the large group sessions and are printed at the back of this guide. They’re also on the CD that accompanies this course.

- “Every Move I Make” (David Ruis)
- “How Did Moses Cross the Red Sea?” (Hugh Mitchell)
- “You’re Worthy of My Praise” (David Ruis)
- “I Want to Know You (In the Secret)” (Andy Park)
- “You Are My All in All” (Dennis Jernigan)
- “God Is in Control” (Twila Paris)
- “Make Me a Servant” (Kelly Willard)
- “Here I Am to Worship” (Tim Hughes)



1

Large Group Session

Moses: Out of Egypt

Scripture

Exodus 12:13-15:27

Focus

God chose Moses to lead God's people out of Egypt.

WORDSearch

Think About It

Moses was a reluctant leader. Even though he was raised in the home of the Egyptian Pharaoh, he ran away and spent his time as a shepherd. When God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, he resisted the call. Moses even complained that he wasn't much of a speaker, and God appointed his brother, Aaron, to assist him. But it turned out that Moses had just what it took to lead God's people. His most important leadership quality was a trust in God that defied common sense and everything he knew about military strategy.

Moses' leadership lasted for a long time, from the time he first entered Pharaoh's palace demanding the release of God's people to his death after forty years of wandering in the wilderness. We wonder, though, what the people of Israel thought of Moses' leadership skills when they left Egypt. We tend to think of the plagues as hard on the Egyptians, but they would have been no picnic for the Hebrews either. It is easy to imagine that God's people were less than excited about what Moses was doing on their behalf.

Pray About It

It's all about grace! Give thanks that while we're still drowning in our troubles, God comes to the rescue. "For God so loved [us] that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Rejoice in your baptism.

Then, when the plagues had finally reached their climax with a special dinner and a sign painted on doorposts, Pharaoh finally relented and allowed the people to leave, only to have a change of heart and take off after them. It looked as though Moses had led the people into a trap, with the Red Sea on one side of them and Pharaoh's army on the other. What's more, the Hebrews were not only outgunned, they were completely unprepared for a battle. They had no army, no weapons, and no plan.

Nothing short of a miracle could save the Hebrews—and that's exactly what God delivered. God did it in a way that made two things clear. First, it was clear that God was in the midst of them, in a pillar of cloud that went in front of them. This cloud moved behind them to block

Pharaoh and his army, leaving no doubt that something supernatural was happening. Second, by having Moses stretch out his hand to part the waters of the Red Sea, allowing God's people to pass through, and stretching it out again to have the waters close up over the Egyptian army, God showed the Israelites that it was through Moses that God would lead them.

It is interesting to look at many of these Old Testament events with New Testament eyes. This is, for example, the second time that God's people were saved by water. In the story of Noah and also in the story of the Red Sea crossing, water seemed to be the immediate threat. In reality, though, the actual threat was much greater. In the case of Noah, the great wickedness of the world was the actual threat; it was the water and God's grace that saved Noah and his family. Similarly, at the Red Sea, it was only through the water that God's

Tell About It

Celebrate the amazing greatness of our God, and tell the children that our God loves us so much that he sent Jesus, his only Son, to save us from our sins so that we can live forever with him. That's an even greater miracle than saving Moses and the Israelites from the Red Sea!

people were delivered. Like the Israelites, we are also in trouble because of our own sinful nature. And the waters of baptism symbolize our deliverance.

Again and again in the Old Testament we find a picture of our deliverance from sin and from peril through the grace of a loving God. For us, as for the Israelites, it is only through the miraculous intervention of God's Son, Jesus Christ, that we survive our encounter with the powers of this world. But unlike Moses, Jesus was not the least bit hesitant to save us, God's people, from certain doom. Thanks be to God!

Planning the Session

Presenting the story of Moses leading the people of Israel across the Red Sea to all the children—from kindergarten to grade 8—is quite a challenge! In the large group session, focus on presenting a lively and interesting story for all to enjoy. Responding to the story will happen in the small groups. Younger children in your group will remember a dramatic story of rescue from Pharaoh and his army. Older kids may begin to see how God used Moses to save people and how God may use them to do great things too.

The suggestions in this large group session assume that you'll be dramatizing the story about Moses to children and young teens and preparing them to respond to it in small groups. Depending on how much time you have available, you'll probably want to take 5-10 minutes for singing and another 10-15 minutes for the drama.

If you're going to be presenting a summer celebration program, you may want to use part of the large group session to help the children prepare. You'll find suggestions for program planning on pages 11-13.

Singing

You may want to ask someone with musical gifts to lead the singing and teach new songs to the children during these five sessions. Be sure to share the tips in the box "Introducing a New Song" with that person.

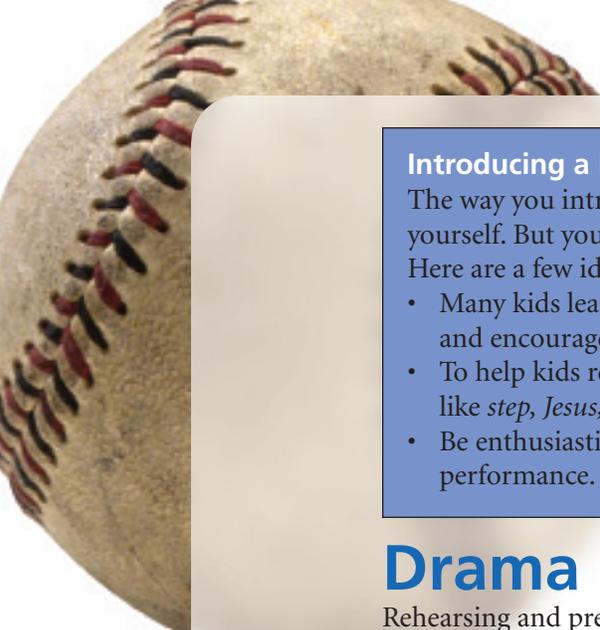
You'll find the songs on pages 151-184 of this book and on the CD that accompanies this course. The song "Step by Step" (track 1) is a great song to get the kids singing right from the first session. It's easy to learn and reminds kids to seek and follow the One who leads us. If you are doing the summer celebration program, "Step by Step" is suggested for the procession.

The song "Every Move I Make" (track 2) can serve as an optional theme song. It's a high-energy song reminding kids that God knows every move we make. If you're using the *Walk With Me* curriculum for your church school program, some of your kids may already know this theme song.

The song "John 3:16" (track 3) will help kids learn the Memory Challenge for this unit. Because the song is short, it can be sung a number of times to reinforce the words. "Pharaoh, Pharaoh" (track 4) is a lot of fun and relates directly to today's story. Encourage kids to "walk like an Egyptian" while they sing those words.

Older kids might sing the Pharaoh song while younger kids sing the old favorite "How Did Moses Cross the Red Sea?" (track 5). The song "You're Worthy of My Praise" (track 6) helps us remember who we follow. We've included signing for some of the key words on page 165.

If you decide to present a summer celebration program, consider dividing the songs between groups of children. Kids in kindergarten-grade 3 might learn some of the easier songs while those in grades 4-8 could learn the more demanding songs. Or older kids might sing parts of some songs, while the younger children sing only the repetitive parts.



Introducing a New Song

The way you introduce a new song is crucial. Of course you'll want to know it well yourself. But you'll also want to think through how you'll introduce it to your group. Here are a few ideas to keep in mind:

- Many kids learn mostly by rote and repetition. Listen to the CD or play the tune, and encourage kids to join in on a line or phrase that is repeated often.
- To help kids remember the words, make up motions to go along with simple words like *step*, *Jesus*, and so on.
- Be enthusiastic! Model your love of singing instead of being concerned about your performance.

Drama

Rehearsing and presenting a drama can be a fun and rewarding experience, both for the actors and for those who view the drama. Find a team of actors and begin working with them early. This could be a wonderful gift for your middle school group to offer to the younger children. Teens and adults can also be drama team members.

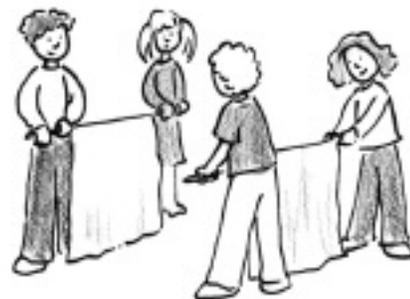
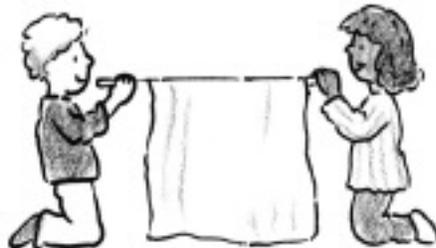
To cut down on the time required from drama team members, consider forming two or more teams for this unit. If your drama team doesn't have time to memorize their parts, reading the lines from scripts you provide is fine. Using music stands to hold the script allows the drama team to use their bodies to add expression. Encourage the drama team to rehearse together and to improvise a bit as they present the story.

This week's drama, "Parting the Red Sea," tells the story of the Israelites leaving Egypt and the parting of the Red Sea. It requires four speaking parts plus another four people to hold the water prop.

You'll also want to begin thinking about costumes and props. Consider asking members of your church family to help you out. Suggestions for simple costumes are included on the first page of the script. Use what you have available and what you can find to design your own costumes. If you wish to create Israelite clothing, see directions and illustrations for sewers and non-sewers on pages 8-9. Instead of costumes, the actors could wear sandals and carry backpacks and walking sticks.

For the Red Sea prop, purchase 3 yards (3 m) of lightweight blue fabric at least 44" (110 cm) wide. You will also need staples and four ½" (1.25 cm) dowels cut to 28" (70 cm) in length. Cut the fabric in half lengthwise. Attach the short ends to the dowels, leaving room on the ends of the dowels for people to hold the prop.

Recruit four volunteers to hold the dowels, stretching the fabric between them. Have them kneel and lift the fabric up and down to create the look of waves. When the water parts, each pair of volunteers should move to the side to create a path for the people of Israel to walk through the parted water.



No time or people for drama teams? To present the dramas without rehearsal, choose your actors from the large group, distribute costumes and scripts, and walk your actors through the presentation. It won't be smooth, but it's certainly possible. You'll need to allow more time than for rehearsed performances by a drama team. Plan to have at least one adult "stage manager" who assigns parts, distributes costumes, and acts as a prompter to keep the action moving. It would also help to have an older teen or an adult—perhaps a small group leader—take a major role in the play.

Before presenting "Parting the Red Sea," ask a good reader from your middle school group to read about Moses and the burning bush from Exodus 3:1-4, 7-10. Ask another good reader to read about the Passover from Exodus 12:1-3, 7-12. Finally, have a third child read about the Exodus from Exodus 12:31-32, 50.

Small Groups

After the drama, children will meet in small groups. Notice that we've included two sessions plans—one for kindergarten-grade 3 and another for grades 4-8. If your regular church school leaders are present, it's probably best to have the children meet in their groups as usual; however, you could also choose to combine several groups together. Each small group leader will need to adapt the plan to the needs of his or her children.



Small Group Session: Kindergarten-Grade 3

Moses: Out of Egypt

Scripture

Exodus 12:13-15:27

Memory Fun

John 3:16-17

Focus

God chose Moses to lead God's people out of Egypt.



HELLO

Moses Says



Goal

Imagine what it was like to follow Moses.

Time

10 minutes

Materials

n Sandals, walking stick, backpack; optional

As you welcome the children to your small group, greet each one by name. If this is your first time with this group, tell them a little bit about yourself and explain that you will be their leader for this unit.

Remind the group that God chose Moses to lead his people out of Egypt and that God expected the people to follow Moses. Ask the children to imagine that you are Moses and that they are the people who follow him and do what he tells them to do. (If you wish, wear sandals and carry a walking stick and backpack.) Have the group stand facing you, and then play a Moses version of "Simon Says." Demonstrate each action slowly so that everyone can keep up. This is a great way to review key points of the story and to include children who are nonverbal.

- Moses says, "Eat your bread quickly." (Pretend to chew very fast.)
- Moses says, "Tuck your shirt into your waistband." (Demonstrate.)
- Moses says, "Put your sandals on your feet." (Bend down and pretend to buckle your sandals—both feet!)
- Moses says, "March behind me." (Have kids fall in line behind you.)
- Moses says, "March right out of Egypt." (March around the room.)
- Moses says, "Camp by the Red Sea." (Have kids plop down beside you.)
- Moses says, "March through the Red Sea on dry ground." (Have kids march forward as you bring up the rear.)
- Moses says, "God has saved us from Pharaoh." (Have kids echo your shouts of joy and clapping.)

Quiet the group, and ask them to think about this question: **Would you have followed Moses—even if you thought you might drown in the Red Sea?**

2

KNOW

Retelling the Story

AA Word Smart

↑ Body Smart

People Smart

Goal

Tell how God worked through Moses to save God's people.

Time

10 minutes

Materials

n Happy/sad puppets, optional

Gather the children around you for the story, and invite them to help you tell it by pretending they are the people of Israel. Explain that when you give them a “thumbs up,” you want them to show thumbs up and say, “Thank you, Lord!” When you give them a thumbs-down, they should show thumbs down and say, “Save us, Lord!”

If you made the happy/sad puppets (option, step 1), you may use them instead of the thumbs-up/thumbs-down signal.

The story follows:

For over 400 years, the people of Israel were slaves in Egypt. Every day they worked in the hot sun, making bricks for their Egyptian masters. When they didn't make enough bricks, they were beaten. (**Thumbs down: “Save us, Lord!”**)

The people of Israel cried out to God and asked God to save them. God heard their cries and called Moses to go to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. (**Thumbs up: “Thank you, Lord!”**)

Moses said, “Pharaoh, let my people go!”

But Pharaoh said, “No way!” (**Thumbs down: “Save us, Lord!”**)

Then God sent plagues to the land of Egypt. One day all the water turned to blood. On other days, God sent frogs, flies, and lice—they were all around and in everything. “Disgusting!” cried the Egyptians and the Israelites. (**Thumbs down: “Save us, Lord!”**)

Still stubborn Pharaoh would not let God's people go. (**Thumbs down: “Save us, Lord!”**)

One night God sent one more plague—this time only to the Egyptians. God told Moses to have the Israelites mark their doors with blood from a lamb so that nothing would happen to them. But in every Egyptian home, the oldest son died.

Finally Pharaoh said, “Go. Leave and take your sheep and cattle with you!” (**Thumbs up: “Thank you, Lord!”**)

Moses told the people to pack quickly and to follow him right out of Egypt. In the daytime, God went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to show them where to go. At night, God went ahead in a pillar of fire to give them light. (**Thumbs up: “Thank you, Lord!”**)

Moses led the people around the desert road toward the Red Sea. When they were camped there, they looked up and saw Pharaoh and his army following them! The people cried out, “Moses, did you bring us here to die?” (**Thumbs down: “Save us, Lord!”**)

Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid! Our mighty God will fight for us.” (**Thumbs up: “Thank you, Lord!”**)

Then the Lord told Moses to raise his staff and stretch his hand out over the water. A big wind blew up, and the water divided and left a dry path in the middle. Moses led the people right through the middle of the Red Sea with a wall of water on either side of them. When they reached the other side, God closed the path through the water and drowned Pharaoh's army. God's people were safe! (**Thumbs up: “Thank you, Lord!”**)



GROW

Litany Posters

Self Smart

People Smart

Body Smart

Word Smart

Picture Smart

Goal

Realize that God chooses us to do his work too.

Time

15-20 minutes

Materials

- n “I Can Too” posters (reproducible page 191)
- n Bright-colored cardstock
- n Fine-tipped markers
- n Tempera paint in shallow pans
- n Paper towels, wipes, spray bottle of water for cleanup
- n Recycled plastic grocery bags
- n Clear tape or tacks, optional

Ahead of time, make one photocopy of the “I Can Too” poster for each child.

Emphasize again that God chose Moses to do a special job—leading the Israelites out of Egypt. Then say, **God wants us to do his work too.** To help the children remember this truth, give each one a copy of the poster. Read the leader’s part and have them point to themselves as they respond.

Leader: Moses followed God.

Children: I can too!

Leader: Moses trusted God.

Children: I can too!

Leader: Moses prayed to God.

Children: I can too!

Leader: Moses worked for God.

Children: I can too!

Ask the children to think of one way they can work for God right now, and have them draw a picture of themselves doing this work in the framed box on the poster. Here are some ideas you might suggest:

- tell or read a Bible story to a younger brother or sister
- help set the table at home
- hand out bulletins at church
- design a children’s bulletin
- pray for someone who is sad or sick.

Have each child write his or her name under the picture. Then set out the paint and have each child place one hand in the paint and make a handprint in the empty space in the middle of the poster. (If you’re really brave, do footprints instead!) Have lots of paper towels and water or wipes on hand for cleanup. Allow paint to dry, and send the posters home in plastic grocery bags. Encourage the children to actually do what they drew.

If you wish to make a banner, use clear tape or tacks to mount the posters in a long row on a blank wall in your room or hallway. Use the banner to remind your children to follow God and to do God’s work.

- someone they know who is doing God’s work in your community.
- themselves doing God’s work in one specific way (see suggestions in step 3, p. 21).

Suggest that the children give or mail the card to the person they’ve drawn—it’s a great way to offer encouragement, another way to work for God.



Invite someone who knows how to work with PowerPoint to scan the title page of one card and the children’s drawings. Then show the pictures during your next large group session or summer celebration program.

4 SHOW

Celebrate!

Goal

Thank God for providing leaders.

Time

10-20 minutes or more

Materials

See individual projects for lists

“When the Israelites saw the great power the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in Moses his servant. Then Moses and the Israelites sang . . . to the LORD” (Ex. 14:31-15:1). We too can thank our great God for caring for us and for giving us leaders. Below are a variety of projects to help kids celebrate God’s goodness. Some of the projects run for the entire unit, others are for just this session. Choose one or more that best suits your time frame and the interests of your children.

Unit Projects

Memory Fun Posters Word Smart Picture Smart

Time

10-15 minutes

Materials

- n Memory Fun posters (reproducible page 195 or 196), one per child
- n Cardstock
- n Markers or crayons
- n Yarn, glue sticks

Ahead of time, make one copy of the Memory Fun poster in the version you’ve chosen to use (NIV or NRSV) for each child.

Remind the children that God saved Moses and the Israelites from Pharaoh and his army. God saves us too—from our sins. Then read the Memory Fun verse to the group.

Read the first part again, and have the children repeat it after you. Explain that God loves each one of us and sent Jesus to be our leader. Jesus wants us to follow him. Invite them to color the picture of Jesus in the manger and outline the footprint around the Memory Fun verse with yarn.

"Step by Step"

Music Smart

Body Smart

People Smart

Time

10-15 minutes

Materials

- n Song: "Step by Step" (p. 151; CD, track 1)
- n CD player
- n Scarves or ribbon streamers

Listen to the song "Step by Step" a time or two. Then invite the group to sing the song and add motions for these words:



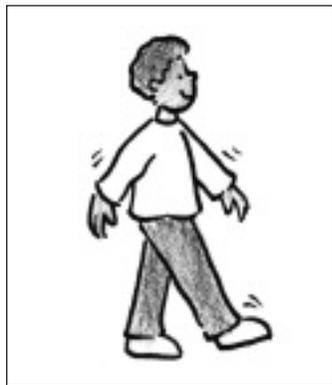
God (point up)



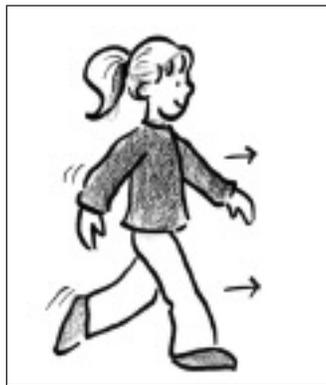
My (point to self)



Praise (lift scarves or ribbon streamers high in a circular motion)



Walk (walk in place)



Step by step (take three steps forward)



Follow (form line with one hand on shoulder of person in front of you)

Consider singing this action song as the concluding activity to each session during this unit. If you're doing the summer celebration program, adapt the motions for the processional (see p. 12).

If you decide to make noisemakers during this session (see p. 27), you may wish to substitute them for the scarves or ribbon streamers.

One-Session Project Ideas

Red Sea Scenes Picture Smart Number Smart

Time

15-20 minutes

Materials

- n Blue cardstock or construction paper, one per child
- n Colored sand in small paper cups, one per child
- n Sandpaper, optional
- n Scissors, optional
- n Newspapers
- n Glue in shallow containers
- n Bottle of water
- n Small paintbrushes
- n Teddy Grahams® snacks

Ahead of time, fold each child's paper into thirds as shown below, and mix several colors of sand together in each cup. (The sand doesn't turn brown when all the colors are mixed together like paint does.) Make a sample scene to show the children.

No sand or too much mess? Use coarse sandpaper cut into $8\frac{1}{2}$ " x $3\frac{1}{2}$ " (22 x 9 cm) strips for the desert. Have the children glue the strips in place.



Spread out newspapers to protect the work area and to collect excess sand. Give each child a sheet of paper opened up so it lies flat. Then show them how to paint the center section with glue. (If the glue is too thick, add a few drops of water.) When finished, they should immediately pour the sand onto the glued section and shake off the excess sand.

Explain that the blue paper represents the water of the Red Sea and the colored sand represents the dry path God made through the Red Sea. Teddy Grahams will represent the people of Israel.

Tell the children that about 600,000 Israelites walked through the dry path to the other side of the Red Sea. Invite them to glue on one Teddy Graham for Moses and one for every thousand Israelites (6).

Then give each child a handful of Teddy Grahams to eat. You may want to invite kids to add more to the scene. (Don't worry if they eat a few more than they glue to the scene.) Emphasize that *thousands* of God's people left Egypt. Moses had a big job, but he had a bigger God!

Relay: "Let My People Go!"

 Body Smart

 People Smart

Time

10-15 minutes

Materials

- n Bathrobe with ties, one per team
- n Adult sandals, one pair per team
- n Walking stick or cane or a wrapping paper tube, one per team
- n Paper plate or basket of small crackers, one per team

Create teams of four to six children. Select a playing area so that the teams can walk about 12-15 yards (11-14 m). At one end of the race, place the clothing and walking stick. At the other side, place the plate or basket of crackers. Have kids line up with their team behind the pile of clothing.

The first child puts on the bathrobe, ties the belt, puts on the sandals, and picks up the walking stick. Then he quickly walks to the plate, takes one cracker, and eats it. When the cracker is eaten, he hurries back to his team and takes off the robe and sandals. The next child repeats the actions, and the action continues until every team member has completed the relay.

This relay will work best if you have adult judges watching each team. The judge monitors that children do not leave the starting line until they have the belt tied and sandals on. No one else may help. The judge also monitors that the cracker is eaten before the child returns to his team.

When the excitement is over, remind the group that Moses told the people to put on their coats and sandals and eat quickly so that they would be ready to leave Egypt. What a night of waiting—and praying—that must have been!

Coasters

 Picture Smart

 Body Smart

Time

15-20 minutes

Materials

- n 4" (10 cm) square light-colored ceramic tiles, one per child
- n Small self-adhesive felt pads, 4 per child
- n Craft foam
- n Footprint pattern (reproducible page 197)
- n Fine-tipped marker, scissors
- n Blocks of wood
- n Glue
- n Several dark brown or black permanent ink pads
- n Scratch paper
- n Scripture stamps, optional
- n Permanent colored markers

Ahead of time, purchase ceramic tiles. (Check with floor and tile stores for discontinued lots.) You'll find felt pads in most hardware departments.

To make footprint stamps, photocopy the pattern on page 197, cut it out, trace the footprint on craft foam, and cut out the shape. To make a handle for the stamp, glue the footprint to small blocks of wood. Make several stamps for the kids to share—some right feet and some left feet. Make a sample tile to show the children.

Give each child a tile and four felt pads. Turn the tile so the unfinished side is facing up. Stick a felt pad on each of the four corners of the tile. Ask the children to write their names on the back, and then turn the tile right side up.



If you have time, your children will enjoy making their own footprint stamps. Some may want to make left feet and others right feet so that they can share the stamps.

Have the kids practice stamping a footprint on paper first. Show them how to place the stamp down flat with even pressure. Have them try it a couple of times on paper to figure out the right amount of ink and pressure to get a good result. Then have them carefully stamp a right footprint on the tile and press. Repeat with a left footprint so that they have two feet in a following position as shown below. Offer bright-colored markers for the kids to make a colorful border around the tiles. To avoid smearing the ink, let the coasters dry thoroughly before handling.



Encourage the children to use their coasters at home to remind themselves and their families to follow Jesus.

You can purchase stamps of Bible verses. If you can find John 3:16, you might prefer to make Memory Fun coasters instead of footprint reminders.

Noisemakers



Picture Smart



Body Smart



Music Smart

Time

10-15 minutes

Materials

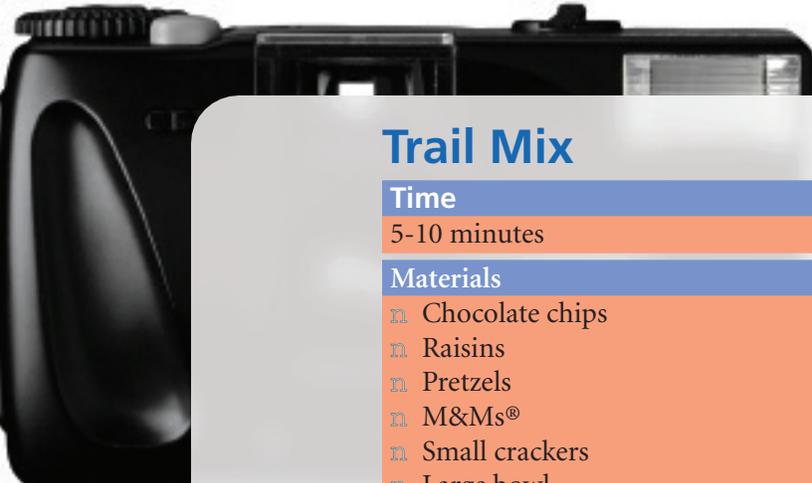
- n Empty film containers or pill bottles, one per child
- n Strips of wrapping paper to cover containers, optional
- n Scissors, optional
- n Dried beans or rice in large container
- n Clear tape
- n Glue
- n Stickers, ribbon, other trims
- n CD player, unit CD

Ahead of time, collect film containers or pill bottles. (A pharmacist may be willing to donate unused bottles.) If the containers have labels that need to be covered, cut strips of wrapping paper to fit the height and distance around. Be sure to make a noisemaker for yourself too.

Remind the children that God's people were very thankful when God parted the Red Sea and Moses led them through to the other side. The Bible tells us that they sang and danced for joy (Ex. 15:1; 20).

Invite the children to make noisemakers so that they can celebrate too. Give each one a container to partially fill with beans or rice. Help them tape the lids on securely! If necessary, glue strips of wrapping paper around the container. Add stickers, ribbons, and other trims.

Play the song "Pharaoh, Pharaoh" (track 4) as kids dance round the room, keeping the beat with their noisemakers. Sing "Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah" as they shake them extra hard!



Trail Mix

Time

5-10 minutes

Materials

- n Chocolate chips
- n Raisins
- n Pretzels
- n M&Ms®
- n Small crackers
- n Large bowl
- n Measuring cup
- n Large spoon
- n Sandwich bags

Remind the children that the night they left Egypt, Moses told the people to put their coats and sandals on and to eat quickly (Ex. 12:11). Invite them to make a snack for the “journey.”

Let kids help you fill the bowl with the snacks you’ve provided. Mix the food using the large spoon. Place about one cup of the mixture in each bag; eat and enjoy!

Wonder if your snack tastes as good as the lamb and unleavened bread (flat crackers) the Israelites ate on their last night in Egypt. If your children know their Bible stories well, talk about the manna God sent them to eat while they were in the desert. Give thanks for God’s loving care!



Because of possible allergies, we suggest that you avoid peanuts or nuts in this mix. Do check for other allergies as well.

Exodus Crackers

Time

5-10 minutes

Materials

- n Cinnamon graham crackers
- n Teddy Grahams® snacks
- n White icing
- n Blue food coloring
- n Bowl, spoon
- n Plastic knives, one per child

Let the children help stir a few drops of blue coloring into the icing. Then give each child some frosting on a plastic knife. Show them how to frost the edges of the cracker, leaving a path through the middle. Walk Teddy Grahams through the dry land.



Small Group Session: Grades 4-8

Moses: Out of Egypt

Scripture

Exodus 12:13-15:27

Memory Challenge

John 3:16-17

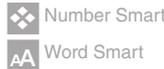
Focus

God chose Moses to lead God's people out of Egypt.



HELLO

Get 'Em Organized, Moses!



Number Smart



Word Smart



People Smart



Self Smart



Body Smart

Goal

Imagine what it was like for Moses to lead the people out of Egypt.

Time

10 minutes

Materials

▪ Sandals, walking stick, backpack; optional

As you welcome kids to your small group, greet each one by name. If this is your first time with this group, tell them a little bit about yourself and explain that you will be their leader for this unit.

Remind the group that God chose Moses to lead his people out of Egypt—over 600,000 of them! Ask them to imagine that you are Moses, and you're trying to get them lined up to march right out of Pharaoh's land. (If you wish, wear sandals and carry a walking stick and backpack.) Have everyone get in line according to these ideas:

- by year of birth (You'll probably have a pile-up in one spot! Try the next idea.)
- by their home zip code (Again, you'll likely have mad congestion. Keep trying!)
- alphabetical order by first name
- alphabetical order by last name
- by the number of letters in middle name
- by birthdays, beginning with January 1 and ending with December 31

Comment that it's hard to line up a small group of people. Quiet the group, and wonder what it was like for Moses to line up over 600,000 men plus women and children, sheep and cattle, and many others (Ex. 12:37). Ask everyone to think about this question: **Would you have followed Moses—even if you thought you might drown in the Red Sea?**

Water Relay Body Smart People Smart

Option to step 1

Time
5-10 minutes
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Sandals, walking stick, backpack; optional  Large bucket filled with water  Two smaller buckets  Two cups, one per team  Popsicles, optional

This is a fun outdoor activity for a hot day. Remind the group that Moses and the children of Israel certainly experienced hot days as they trekked through the desert.

Ask the group to imagine that you are Moses and that you are allowing the older Israelite kids to cool off by a small stream in the desert. (If you wish, wear sandals and carry a walking stick and backpack.)

Set a large bucket of water at the starting line, and have the children line up to form two teams. The first person in each line scoops up as much water as he can in a cup and runs the cup down to his team's smaller bucket at the finish line. He pours the water in the bucket, runs back, and gives the cup to the next person who repeats the action. This continues until every person on each team has had a turn. (If teams are unevenly numbered, have one child run twice.)

The winning team is the one with the most water in their bucket. If you wish, give each child a popsicle to cool off, then quiet the group and wonder how much water it would take to cool off 600,000 men plus women and children, sheep and cattle, and many others (Ex. 12:37). Ask everyone to think about this question: **Would you have followed Moses—even if you thought you might die in the desert or drown in the Red Sea?**

2

KNOW People Smart Body Smart

Retelling the Story (Role Play)

 Picture Smart  Self Smart  Word Smart

Goal
Tell how God worked through Moses to save God's people.
Time
15-20 minutes
Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Role play cards (reproducible page 198)  Cardstock for cards  Materials for each scene (see cards)  Boxes or bags  Stapler

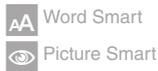
Before class, photocopy and cut out the role play cards. (Make an extra copy for yourself.) Gather the materials for each scene as listed on the six cards, and put each team's supplies in a box or bag; staple the role play card to the bag or box.

Split the class into six teams. Give each team their supplies and role play card. Allow a few minutes for teams to read and discuss how they will act out the scene and tell the story. Encourage them to think about how the Israelites might have felt and acted in the scenes described.

3

GROW

Workers in the News



Goal

Realize that God chooses to work through people like us.

Time

10-15 minutes

Materials

- n Newspapers, magazines, bulletins, newsletters
- n Posterboard
- n Glue sticks
- n Highlighters, markers

Ahead of time, collect brief articles from newspapers, denominational magazines, kids' magazines, church bulletins, newsletters from missionaries, and so on that have stories about ordinary people doing God's work. Or search the Internet for organizations such as Random Acts of Kindness, Locks of Love, Kids' Hope, and so on. If you can find articles with pictures, all the better! Use a marker to caption the posterboard: "God's Workers."

Set out the collection of articles, and explain that you've been watching for stories about workers—people just like us who are doing God's work. Invite each child to choose one article, read it silently, and then tell the group in one or two sentences the following information:

- the person's name
- where the person works for God
- what the person does for God and others

Set out the posterboard where kids can reach it and invite them to make a collage of the articles. For articles that don't include a picture of the person, have kids draw a big circle around the person's name with a highlighter.

Then have kids form a border by writing their names all around the edge of the collage. Add your own name too, and give thanks that God wants each of you to work for him.

4

SHOW

Celebrate!

Goal

Thank God for providing leaders.

Time

10-30 minutes or more

Materials

See individual projects for lists

"When the Israelites saw the great power the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in Moses his servant. Then Moses and the Israelites sang . . . to the LORD" (Ex. 14:31-15:1). We too can thank our great God for caring for us and for giving us leaders. Below are a variety of projects to help kids celebrate God's goodness. Some of the projects run for the entire unit, others are for just this session. Choose one or more that best suit your time frame and the interests of your children.

Unit Project Ideas

Memory Challenge Posters

AA Word Smart Picture Smart Body Smart

Time

30 minutes or more

Materials

- n John 3:16 poster (reproducible page 199)
- n Bright-colored cardstock
- n Beads in various sizes and colors
- n Small brads with about ¼" (0.5 cm) prongs, available from craft stores
- n Corsage pins
- n Colored aquarium stones (from pet departments)
- n Margarine tubs
- n Glue
- n Posterboard, marker; optional

This project can be completed over several sessions by allowing about ten minutes each time. This is a good way to keep kids coming back!

Ahead of time, make one photocopy of the John 3:16 poster for each child ("For God so loved the world . . ."). (Make a few extra copies in case posters tear.) Set out beads, small brads, and aquarium stones in margarine tubs, along with the other supplies.

Hand out copies of the poster, and invite kids to decorate the letters with the trims you've collected. They may choose to use only one kind or they can mix up the materials available. Show the kids how to carefully poke the brads through the paper and open the prongs on the back side of the paper. (It might help to poke a corsage pin through first.) Help them experiment with the amount of glue needed to hold the beads and stones in place. Allow posters to dry thoroughly between sessions.

As they work, encourage the group to repeat the Memory Challenge (John 3:16-17) after you, one phrase at a time (reproducible page 189 or 190). You might also want to write it on your board or on a large sheet of posterboard.

Memory Challenge Plaques

AA Word Smart Picture Smart Body Smart

Time

30 minutes or more

Materials

- n Unfinished wood plaques about 9" x 12" (23 x 30 cm), one per child
- n Picture hangers, small hammer
- n John 3:16 poster (reproducible page 199)
- n Black carbon paper, carpenter pencils
- n Wood-burning tools
- n Spray varnish
- n Beads, stones, glue; optional
- n Posterboard, optional

Ahead of time, purchase plaques at craft stores. (Or ask someone in your church family to cut them from scraps of pine or other solid woods.) Make a photocopy of the John 3:16

poster, and use carbon paper to trace the words onto each plaque. (A carpenter pencil with its thick point will work best.)

Plan to complete the plaques over several sessions, allowing about ten minutes each time. If you have time, older kids can trace the words on the plaque and attach the picture hanger themselves.

Demonstrate how to use the wood-burning tools to trace each letter. Or if kids prefer, they can glue on beads and stones (see poster activity above) to outline some of the letters. To give the plaques a nice finish, spray with varnish and allow them to dry.

As they work, encourage the group to repeat the Memory Challenge (John 3:16-17) after you, one phrase at a time (reproducible page 189 or 190). You may also want to write the Memory Challenge on your board or on posterboard.

You'll want an extra helper or two to supervise the kids as they use the wood-burning tools. Caution the kids that the tip of the burner is very hot.

One-Session Project Ideas

Obstacles!



Time

15-20 minutes

Materials

- n Blindfolds, one for each pair of kids
- n Sandals
- n Backpack with a bag of crackers inside
- n Canteen of water, paper cups
- n Pup tent
- n Large cactus plant
- n Pail of water
- n Pail of sand
- n Copies of the directions and dialogue below, optional

If your group is large, set up more than one obstacle course. You'll want room for two pairs to travel at once along each course.

Designate one place in your room as Egypt, and have the kids pair up in this area. Designate another place as the Promised Land, the place where the Israelites were headed. Remind the group that leading the people there was no easy task for Moses.

Give each pair a blindfold, and have one person put it on. Once blindfolds are secure, place the items suggested above (see materials list) in order with a sandal at the place designed "Egypt" and the pail of water closest to the "Promised Land."

Explain that kids will lead their blindfolded partners along the way, two pairs at a time. You'll give directions (in **bold** below) and speak for the Israelites (see dialogue in parentheses) as the blindfolded person is led to each obstacle:

- **try on the sandal** ("Moses said, 'Get dressed and ready to leave Egypt.' Guess I'd better hurry.")
- **open the backpack and eat one cracker** ("This bread tastes like you forgot the yeast!")
- **take a drink of water from the canteen** ("It's hot in the desert! The water's bitter—but it's water!")
- **crawl in and out of the pup tent** ("I'm so tired. Wish I had my bed in Egypt.")
- **touch the cactus plant without touching a spine!** ("Moses, are you sure you know the way?")
- **dip hands in the pail of water** ("Cool! But how are we going to cross this monster?")
- **run hands through the bucket of sand** ("Dry ground? And we're walking through? Great leader!")

Ask the first set of travelers to rest while other pairs take a turn. (You may wish to rearrange the obstacles a bit.) When all the pairs have reached the Promised Land, “camp out” and talk about some of these questions:

time saver Short of time? Omit one or more of the obstacles.

- How did it feel to be led by someone? Was it hard to trust that person to get you to the promised land safely?
- What about the grumbling? How do you think Moses felt about that?
- What do you think you would have said to God as you walked through the Red Sea on dry ground?

Thank God for taking care of his children then and now!

Gotta Get Across!



Body Smart



Self Smart



People Smart

Time

15-20 minutes

Materials

- n Carpet squares or large floor tiles
- n Cardboard, utility knife; optional
- n Red flag or scarf
- n Whistle

Ahead of time, collect carpet squares or large floor tiles so that you have a few less than the number of children in your group. (Furniture or flooring stores might be willing to donate samples.)



If you can't find carpet squares or tile, use cardboard squares.

You'll need a hallway about 10-15 yards or meters long for this activity. Place the carpet squares or tiles randomly along the hallway. Have kids line up at one end and ask them to imagine that the hall is the pathway through the Red Sea.

The object of the game is to get everyone safely to the other side (marked by the red flag or scarf) as quickly as possible. Emphasize that paying attention to the leader is the key to success! This is how the game works:

When you blow the whistle, everyone must rush to a carpet square (a piece of dry land) and stay put until you blow the whistle again. This round, only one person can be on a square at a time, so this means some are stranded and must return to the starting line.

Quickly blow the whistle again, and have kids scramble for a square. This time two people can be on *two* squares, but no one can move past the finish line. Anyone stranded without a carpet square must return to the starting line. If a carpet square is left empty, it will be removed from the path.

Quickly blow the whistle again and have kids scramble for the remaining squares. This time two people can be on *three* squares but any empty squares will be removed from the path. The person nearest the finish line should cross over.

Repeat the actions, making up additional rules as you go along. Each round, at least one more person should cross the finish line. Depending on how many carpet squares are removed and how many you allow to double up, no one should be stranded. Eventually everyone should get across the finish line.

If you have ten kids and seven squares, the first three rounds of play might look something like this:

Round 1

7 kids on 7 squares

3 stranded at the starting line

Round 2

8 kids on 6 squares

2 stranded at starting line

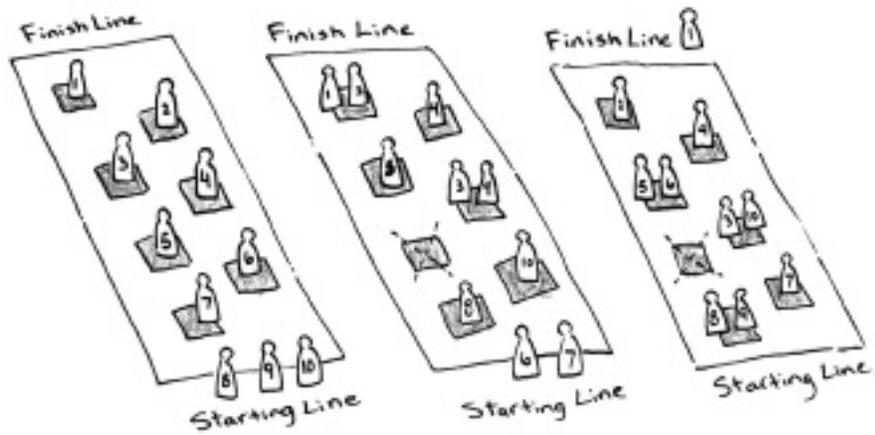
Round 3

9 kids on 6 squares

1 safe across the finish line

When everyone is safe across the finish line, ask questions like these:

- How hard was it to listen to the leader?
- What did it feel like to be stranded?
- Was it hard to trust the leader and the others that you would get across?
- How long do you think it took Moses and the Israelites to get across the Red Sea? Did it take teamwork? Trust?
- What do you think the people said to God as they walked through the Red Sea on dry ground? To Moses?



Round 1

Round 2

Round 3

“Pharaoh, Pharaoh”

Music Smart

Body Smart

People Smart

Time

10 minutes

Materials

n Unit CD, CD player

n Cymbals, tambourines, bells, triangles

Play the song “Pharaoh, Pharaoh” (track 4). Invite the children to listen to the words and sing along a time or two. Then give them noisy instruments and encourage them to celebrate God’s love and care every time they hear “Pharaoh, Pharaoh” and “yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.” Clap the cymbals even louder when you hear the spoken, “Uh!”



If you’re worried about disturbing others nearby, you might want to omit the cymbals!

If you’re doing the summer celebration program, your kids might enjoy adding these sound effects when the group sings this song (see program ideas on pp. 11-13).

Postcards

Self Smart

Word Smart

Picture Smart

Time

15-20 minutes

Materials

n Souvenir postcards

n Lined 4 x 6 notecards, one per child

n Pens, pencils, fine-tipped markers, colored pencils

n Bibles

n Paper punch

Before e-mail, we sent postcards to stay in touch with friends and family! To spark your group’s interest in this method of communication, show them a few souvenir postcards of places you’ve visited or those you’ve received from others in faraway places.



Then invite kids to imagine that they are Moses. Their job is to write a postcard to Moses' father-in-law in Midian (see Ex. 3:1 and 4:18). Give each child a notecard and pencil or pen. Suggest that they choose one event (the plagues, the Passover, leaving Egypt, crossing the Red Sea) to write about. They can only use one-half of the lined side of the card; the other half is for Jethro's address! Before they start writing, have them pick a topic and think about these questions:

- Where was Moses?
- Who else was there?
- What was happening?
- What prayer request might Moses share with Jethro?

Encourage kids to look up today's story in their Bibles (Ex. 12-15). Be sure to offer a few easy-to-read Bibles, such as an illustrated New International Reader's Version for children.

Allow several minutes for writing, and remind the kids to sign "Moses," adding their own initials too.

Write Jethro's address on the board for kids to copy to their cards. (Notes for Exodus 2:15 from the *NIV Study Bible* are the source of this "postal" information.)

Jethro
Southeast Desert Road
Sinai

Ask kids to turn the card over and draw a picture of the story they've described. Offer fine-tipped markers and colored pencils. Remind kids that stick people work just fine and expressions of feelings, especially thanksgiving, are great too!

Trail Mix

Time

5-10 minutes

Materials

- n Chocolate chips
- n Raisins
- n Pretzels
- n M&Ms®
- n Small crackers
- n Large bowl
- n Measuring cup
- n Large spoon
- n Sandwich bags

tip Because of possible allergies, we suggest that you avoid peanuts or nuts in this mix. Do check for other allergies as well.

Remind your group that the night they left Egypt, Moses told the people to put their coats and sandals on and to eat quickly (Ex. 12:11). Invite them to make a snack for the "journey."

Have kids fill the bowl with the snacks you've provided and then mix the food using the large spoon. When it's ready, invite each person to scoop about one cup of the mixture into a sandwich bag. Then eat and enjoy! Wonder if your snack tastes as good as the lamb and unleavened bread (flat crackers) the Israelites ate their last night in Egypt. If your children know their Bible stories well, talk about the manna God sent them to eat while they were in the desert. Give thanks for God's loving care!

time saver Short of time? Prepare the trail mix ahead of time, and let the kids enjoy it while they work on their craft projects or while they quiet down after the more active projects.