


Dreams and Schemes

A pair of blue and white patterned shorts hanging on a clothesline against a clear blue sky. The shorts are secured with pink clothespins. The pattern on the shorts consists of white and purple floral and leaf motifs on a blue background.

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

LEADER'S GUIDE K-8 SUMMER BOOK 3

Dreams and Schemes



Grand Rapids, Michigan

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Walk With Me

Kindergarten-grade 8

Summer, Book 3: *Dreams and Schemes: The Story of Joseph*

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Contents

How to Use This Book	4
The Joseph Stories: God’s Word for Us.	6
Preparing the Learning Environment.	7
Costumes for Dramas	10
Tailoring Your Sessions to the Way Children Learn	12
Tips for VBS and Other Summer Ministries	13
Sample Summer Celebration Program.	14
Video Resources	16
Session 1: Troubles Everywhere	
Large Group Session	20
Small Group Session, K-3	26
Small Group Session, 4-8	32
Additional Activities	38
Session 2: Do the Right Thing	
Large Group Session	50
Small Group Session, K-3	54
Small Group Session, 4-8	60
Additional Activities	65
Session 3: Joseph in Jail	
Large Group Session.	78
Small Group Session, K-3	82
Small Group Session, 4-8	88
Additional Activities.	93
Session 4: From Prison to Palace	
Large Group Session.	106
Small Group Session, K-3.	110
Small Group Session, 4-8	116
Additional Activities	123
Session 5: A Happy Ending	
Large Group Session	136
Small Group Session, K-3	140
Small Group Session, 4-8	146
Additional Activities	152
Dramas	162
Songs	186
Reproducible Pages.	213
Pictures for Backgrounds and Teaching	267
Leader’s Evaluation	287



How to Use This Book

“*The LORD was with Joseph and he prospered.*” —Genesis 39:2

Kids (and grown-ups too!) love the Joseph stories. After all, the main character is fascinating. Joseph has big dreams, then survives a murderous plot by his brothers and a trip to Egypt in chains. Falsely accused by his master’s wife and carted off to prison, our gifted hero ends up holding down the second-highest position in a powerful nation. To top everything off, his big dreams finally come true, and he is reunited with the brothers who once wanted to kill him. And through it all, Joseph is amazingly faithful to his God.

A great story? For sure. But it’s first of all about God, not Joseph. The theme of all our sessions is that God was with Joseph and God is also with us. Because of God’s presence in our lives, we can survive our troubles, do what’s right, use the gifts that God gives us to serve others, and be empowered to forgive. God is in the driver’s seat. God works behind the scenes in our lives to turn evil into good, bring about reconciliation, and fulfill God’s plans.

Settings for Using This Material, Goal

This course, with its unique format, makes a lively five-week curriculum for your summer Sunday school. If you wish, you could easily extend the sessions to more than five weeks since there are so many options and additional activities.

You could also use the five sessions for a great week of special summer ministry programs, such as vacation Bible school or other outreach programs. Plans for large group and small groups include plenty of games, crafts, projects, and a celebration program.

Some churches use summer programming in a day-care setting. Full-day programming allows for the option of doing more in-depth projects. We’ve also provided activities that help build academic skills.

With the advent of year-round school, some churches present this special programming in a weekend retreat format. They divide the curriculum material into three sessions: Friday night, Saturday morning, and Saturday afternoon. Sunday morning worship activities are coordinated with the theme of the weekend retreat, and the children sing the songs they’ve learned.

Wherever you plan to use this material, the basic goal is to teach children the Joseph stories so that they and all who participate in the sessions will learn to live more fully in the powerful and loving presence of God.

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 vacation Bible school. Ideally, children would meet in a large group session for about 15-20 minutes, then break up into small group session for about 30-40 minutes. You may also want to schedule an extra practice time or two if your church is planning on doing the summer celebration program.

Finding time to do everything in this book will not be possible (or desirable) in most settings, so you’ll need to choose what you think your group will be able to handle in the time frame you have available. You will need one copy of this book for each of your leaders. As purchaser of this book, you are hereby granted permission to photocopy the dramas and the all the material on reproducible pages 213-283.

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. The team 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'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 these dramas are written in such a way that children as well as adults will enjoy performing and/or viewing them. Each drama will take about 10-15 minutes and requires six to a dozen actors (you can easily add more nonspeaking parts to most of the dramas). The costumes and sets may be as simple or as elaborate as you would like.

You'll probably want middle schoolers or older teens to play these roles. Some of the dramas offer ways to include younger children in nonspeaking roles as well, if you wish to do so. You'll need an older adult to play the role of Abuelo (grandfather), who introduces each skit and assumes the role of Jacob in them as well.

The dramas and songs can be used not only for each large group session, but also for the summer celebration program. You'll find a sample program along with ideas for organizing and producing it on pages 14-15.

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 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 will help children understand what the story means for their lives, and the Show step will guide them to respond to what they learned in this session.

At the end of the small group sessions you will find a large number of "Additional Activities and Ideas for Summer Ministries." These activities can be used to extend the session or to replace parts of the regular (small group) sessions. The activities are grouped under the primary intelligence used by the activity. Please see page 12 for an explanation of the various intelligences. For each additional activity, we suggest the appropriate grade level at which it may be used most effectively, along with possible places in the session ("Where to Use") to insert the activity. Activities marked "your choice" could be inserted anywhere at your discretion.

We have, of course, listed far more for each session than you'll be able to use. Choose the items that best fit your schedule, the children you're teaching, and the facilities/equipment you have available. Once you've decided which crafts and activities to use, consider appointing two or more volunteers (possibly parents of children in the group) to gather the materials and do any necessary preliminary work. Having a helper in the classroom is also a plus when doing crafts and other activities with young children.

The Joseph Stories: God's Word for Us

You are embarking on an extended journey through the life of Joseph. Usually when we travel through Genesis, we begin with the creation story and then learn about Noah's ark. During a more extensive visit, Abraham and Sarah become the focus. We spend a lesson or two with Jacob, and then visit Joseph quickly as we leave Genesis. Why should we spend so much time with Joseph on this trip?

On one hand, the scenery seems familiar—it includes features we've seen in the stories of Abraham and Jacob. God is working through a chosen family to accomplish the divine plan on earth. Within this chosen family, God selects one person from each generation for special attention. Joseph is the chosen one of his generation. God works through Joseph to do amazing things. So far we are on familiar ground.

However, there are some key new features in the landscape. Unlike the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which take place in the wilderness, much of Joseph's story takes place in the middle of society. Joseph is surrounded by government officials and all the trappings and temptations of power in the midst of the Egyptian Empire, a culture very different from Joseph's own.

A second feature of this story is that God is not a visible companion as Joseph travels. With Abraham and Sarah, God is always at hand. God meets with them, gives them directions, offers them encouragement, and is a real companion along the way. Jacob's journey begins with God choosing him before his birth. God reveals himself in a dream before Jacob travels to the home of Laban, and God wrestles with Jacob on the journey back. Although Joseph is chosen, the choosing seems to come more from an overindulgent father than from God. God's message to Joseph comes in a dream, yet it is a dream whose provenance is up to the interpretation of the individual. Still we find that God is truly directing Joseph's journey. God's plan comes to fruition. God is with Joseph every step of the way, not in a visible, tangible way, but there just the same.

It may be just these differences in the journey of Joseph that make our extended stay with him worthwhile. After all, our own journey probably shares these same features. Most of us—including your students—live in the midst of other people. Even those who live in remote rural areas are surrounded by society through satellite TV and Internet connections. We can learn about our own journey as we see how Joseph deals with the seduction of power and the compromises that living in society often entail. How can we retain our faith in God and live out that faith even when we are in Egypt? How can we remain faithful to God when the people around us embrace very different beliefs and practices? Joseph's story helps us learn how.

Most of us are probably like Joseph in that God's work in our life is often hidden. God does not come and visit us in the same way that Abraham was visited by God. Yet we believe that God is in control of our lives and in control this world. How is God's control exhibited in the world around us? How is God active in your life and in the lives of your kids? How do we live according to God's direction when that direction is not always obvious? Maybe we can find some answers as we walk along with Joseph. Let's begin our journey together!

—Charles Allen Weissner

Preparing the Learning Environment

Create the Setting

The Joseph stories take place in two main locations: Canaan (session 1) and Egypt (sessions 2-5).

Canaan at the time of Joseph was a place of hills, meadows, and forests—imagine the sheep grazing as Joseph’s brothers took care of them. It was also a place of violence and betrayal, of brother pitted against brother. That was true in Joseph’s time; it’s also true today as Jews and Palestinians fight over their homeland.

Egypt is a land of ancient monuments. Some of the pyramids still standing today were there at the time of Joseph’s journey to Egypt. Today many refugees flee to Egypt for safety; like Joseph, they have no food or housing.

You’ll want to give kids a sense of both places. Here are several ideas for doing that.

1. Project an Image

Project images of Canaan and Egypt and the prison scene (session 3) on a screen or light-colored background material. We’ve provided prints (pp. 268, 270, 272) that you can copy onto a transparency and project with an overhead projector. Or, if your church has a video projector, you can scan the images, import them into PowerPoint, and project. For another source of many excellent Egypt photos, check out www.horus.ics.org.eg.

We’ve also included a simple map of Canaan and Egypt that you may want to project when introducing the dramas. The map will give older kids a sense of the relationship between Canaan and Egypt (see p. 274).

2. Paint a Scene

Trace the line drawings of Canaan, Egypt, and the prison scene onto a transparency (see pp. 268, 271, 273) Project the transparency with an overhead onto a wall. Then trace it onto paper and paint in the scene. Use brown paper drop cloths for backdrops (available at home improvement centers). They are huge, inexpensive, and make great backdrops.

3. Involve the Kids

Cover a wall with rolled paper or a large brown paper drop cloth (see “Paint a Scene”). Provide chalk, markers, and/or crayons. Invite the children to add to a mural of Egypt, showing pyramids, the Nile River, and scenes of daily life. You’ll want to provide resource books or websites for them to explore ideas, or they can draw on their imaginations or other learning experiences.



Hang a long piece of rolled butcher paper or paper tablecloth for a “graffiti wall” (hieroglyphics were often recorded on walls). Encourage kids to write in this space, expressing thoughts or ideas or pictures they want to share with others. Setting up ground rules ahead of time will help to avoid inappropriate uses of this public forum.

A fun way to involve kids who arrive early or who are waiting for family members to pick them up is to provide sidewalk chalk outside the approach to your building. Invite children to add to the Egyptian motif during any free moments.

You can also enlist the services of artists in the congregation to paint background scenes for your stage and make cardboard cutouts of sheep and tents for Canaan, and camels and pyramids for Egypt.

4. Construct a Pyramid

If space allows, construct a wooden pyramid as part of your setting. Use two-by-fours to make a pyramid shape, and drape it with brown paper or drop cloths. Use duct tape or staples to hold covering in place. Paint or draw a simple block pattern on the covering.

5. Play Designer's Challenge

Turn decorating or creating a fun learning environment into a game. Provide materials, break into teams, assign spaces, and see what people can create during the allotted time. End the event by unveiling each team's creation. Make the event fun by basing it on one of the television home-decorating shows.

Church members who may not want to teach or who don't have time to be involved in another way may be willing to share their gifts for one evening in this way. At the end of your program, leave up the learning environments for everyone to enjoy. Imagine the Nile River running through your church building! Blue cloth covered by plastic and edged with plants is one way of making it happen. Let your creativity loose and add another layer to the children's learning.

6. Take a Trip

Through the Internet, ancient and modern Egypt are just a click away. If you have an extended program, your kids can take the journey. One excellent site is www.horus.ics.org.eg. You'll find pictures, stories, crafts, games, projects, and much more, all delightfully geared to kids. Check it out!

You can also take a trip to the world of tolerance. Check out www.tolerance.org and *Hand in Hand: Helping Children Celebrate Diversity* (Faith Alive Christian Resources).

Other useful websites for older kids and leaders:

www.ancientegypt.co.uk/menu.html (British Museum site)

www.museum.upenn.edu/Canaan (University of Pennsylvania Museum site)

Session Symbols

Each large group gathering features a symbol that can be displayed as part of your stage background (pp. 275-278). You can either make these symbols (see sessions for specific suggestions) or project them with an overhead or video projector.

Symbols are as follows:

Session 1: Joseph's multicolored coat

Session 2: Large key (because the key is pinned to a background during the skit, you will need to make it, not project it)

Session 3: Star

Session 4: Gift box with gift symbols flowing out

Session 5: Completed puzzle

If you make the symbols rather than project them, you can easily create backdrop panels on which to hang them. Use felt, burlap, another fabric, or paper. Choose the size based on the space where they'll be hung. Attach the symbols using glue, fabric bonding, or appliqué. Hang them by making a pocket in the top edge and inserting a dowel rod, or hang them on a rope, using clothespins. You could also attach ribbon or rope to the top edge and tie them to a rod.

A Mission Focus

Summer is a great time to include a mission focus in your program. Living in Missions Everyday (LIME), a Reformed Church in America resource, provides materials for children to explore missions at home and around the world. Missions in Egypt are included in a resource book on the Middle East and India. Games, hieroglyphics activities, and website information are included along with background information on Egypt and a description of the work of Richard and Lynn Allhusen. The Allhusens work with refugees—people who come to Egypt from other countries because they have no home or food. Doesn't that sound like Joseph and his family? Go to www.RCA.org to access these helpful materials.

Check with Christian Reformed Home Missions or Christian Reformed World Missions (find both at www.crcna.org) or your denominational mission agencies for other materials.

Costumes for Dramas

Costumes can add a lot to the skits 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, with or without sewing.

Keep in mind that the clothing worn in Canaan was different than that worn in Egypt. In Canaan, Joseph and his family lived in a hilly area; they were often exposed to the elements as they took care of the family's sheep. Their clothing is best represented using layers of rough or basic fabrics in plain colors or stripes.

In Egypt, Joseph lived in a large city within the gates of a government compound in a warm climate. Their clothing is best represented by white linen or cotton draped loosely around the body—picture a big T-shirt that reached to the knees for men and to the ankles for women. Men who were working outside usually wore short skirts instead of the tunics. These could be made by winding a piece of the white fabric around waist and legs. Egyptian men and women used colorful cosmetics (blue and green eye shadow) and wore lots of jewelry—necklaces, bracelets, rings, and other jewelry made from gold that was mined along the Red Sea. They often went barefoot, but sometimes wore leather sandals.

Canaanite Costumes: Non-sewing

Use 3-4 yards of fabric for the basic layer of the costume.

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

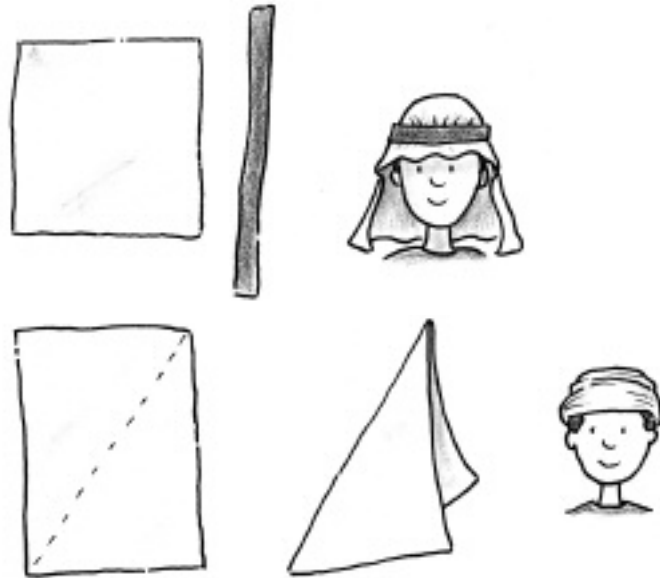


Option 2: Drape the cloth around the shoulders of the storyteller and allow the fullness of the cloth to hang down the front. Secure fabric in place with another length of fabric used as a belt. This method will give the appearance of a full costume from the front and works especially well if the wearer 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.



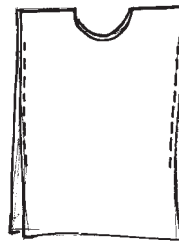
Here are two options for a Canaanite headpiece:

- Create a headpiece using the large piece of cloth and a strip of fabric to hold it in place.
- Create a turban-like headpiece. Fold the piece of fabric in half, crosswise. Because of the dimensions of the fabric, the edges will not all match. 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.



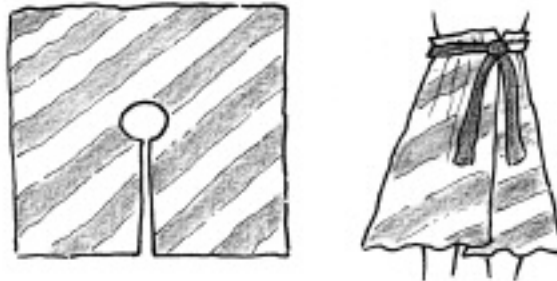
Canaanite Costumes: Simple Sewing

Fold fabric in half, crosswise. Sew pieces together to make shoulders, leaving an opening for the head. Leave sides open or stitch down sides. Leave opening for arms.



Egyptian Costumes: Non-sewing

Cut a hole in the center of a sheet, then slit down to the edge, as shown: slip over the child's head, then tie at the waist with a golden scarf or tie with a piece of white fabric that reaches to knees.



To make a headpiece, tie two golden scarves on a headband. The headband should have special jewel-like objects glued on it (use a glue gun). Wear with plenty of eye makeup and gold bracelets and necklaces to perfect the look.



Tailoring Your Sessions to the Ways Children Learn

How do young people 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. Young people 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.

Tips for VBS and Other Summer Ministries

Here's a suggested schedule and format for using the large group and small group approaches for vacation Bible school.

Opening—Large Group Session (30-60 minutes)

- *Arrival activities.* Check session 1 for easy ways to keep kids interested (and out of trouble!) during the time between their arrival at church and the beginning of your large group session.
- *Opening prayer and singing time.* Check each session for song suggestions; all suggested songs are on the CD that accompanies this course.
- *Drama time.* See pages 162-185 for dramas for each of the sessions and tips on how to present them; you may photocopy all drama scripts.

Snack Break

Small Group Sessions (45-90+ minutes)

Small groups may spend 90 minutes or more enjoying the four steps of the session plans. Use the section “Additional Activities and Ideas for Summer Ministries” to extend your basic session for as long as you like.

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 project to the entire group. Close your time together with a leader-led prayer; have everyone join hands for the prayer.

Forming Ministry Teams

Dreams and Schemes provides a great opportunity for many people from your congregation to become involved in summer outreach ministry. Here are a few suggestions for involving people from your congregation:

- *Planning team:* Decides the dates and organizes the teams listed below. Assists and guides the various teams so that the main theme and vision of VBS or other outreach program is apparent.
- *Music team:* Chooses music, finds music leader and musicians, selects music for the program. This material suggests a number of songs included on a CD.
- *Publicity team.* Creates fliers and distributes them throughout the neighborhood. Gets the word out about the location, date, and theme.
- *Program team.* Organizes the program; sends invitations. Possibly organizes an “after-program” event, such as an ice-cream social or picnic.
- *Small group session team.* Selects the ideas that will be used for the small group sessions, especially the craft and activity time.
- *Drama team.* Organizes a drama team, assists in obtaining the necessary items for each drama, and presents the drama to the entire group. See session 1 for additional comments.
- *Decoration team.* Decorates large group session area. See “Creating the Learning Environment” for ideas.

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! Planning can be exciting as you think about the stories of Joseph and how the children will respond to them.

Sample Summer Celebration Program

Dreams and Schemes: The Story of Joseph

A Children's Summer Celebration Program

Processional and Greeting: *"God Is Great"*

Opening Prayer

Reading: *Genesis 37:3-11*

Rap: *"Troubles"*

Reading: *Genesis 39:2-20*

Song: *"God Is with Me"*

Reading: *Genesis 40, "One Word at a Time"*

Song: *"God Knows Your Destination"*

Congregational Song: *"Trust and Obey" (stanza 1 and chorus)*

Reading: *Genesis 41:14-43*

Drama: *"Joseph and the Surreptitious, Seditious Sect of Spies"*

Song: *"In His Time"*

Meditation: *Pastor*

Closing Prayer

Program Notes

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 special weeknight "bring-a-neighbor" service. Read through the sample program above and use it as a guide to creating your own, unique program.

Here are a few additional ideas:

Scripture Readings

- Your middlers and younger children who are good readers can nicely present this part of the program. Consider using simplified English versions such as the NIrV or the New Living Bible. *The Message* could also be used for one or two of the readings.
- For directions to the "One Word at a Time" reading of Genesis 40, please see page 8 of session 3. Use older kids for the reading, supply mikes for each, and have them practice it a time or two!
- In place of the reading of Genesis 39:2-20, you could have the children in K-3 present their "Gift Box" version of this passage (see session 3, p. 83). Or have all the kids act out the story as the narrator reads it.

Singing

- All the songs we suggest are included on the CD that accompanies this resource. Feel free to substitute other songs that the children have enjoyed throughout the unit. Having a closing song time during your weekly or daily sessions will give kids time to practice the songs.
- You may want divide up the songs; for example, have kids in kindergarten-grade 3 learn a few of the songs and the others learn the rest. Have each group sing the songs they've learned at the program. Or have boys learn some songs, girls learn others.
- If the kids used kazoos during the unit, use them for some of the songs at the program!

Drama

- Presenting one of the dramas from this course is bound to delight your audience. We suggest using the last drama in the series (“Joseph and the Surreptitious, Seditious Sect of Spies”). You could omit the introductory skit about the two kids working on a puzzle and go directly to the story itself. Of course, if you think one of the other skits would be more effective, feel free to substitute. The skit for session 4 (“Cowabunga”) would be our second choice (it has the advantage of including additional nonspeaking roles if desired).
- The drama can be presented by your drama team or by other adults, young adults, and middle schoolers. 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

- **Pre-processional:** Have the children line up in the back of church.
- **Processional:** All of the children enter the worship space from the back of church singing “God Is Great.” Encourage the children to smile and greet people as they enter. Let them shake hands with each other and with the people in the congregation.
- **Formation up front:** Have the children line up in front. They can spread across the front of the worship space in a single row or several rows. (During practice time, assign each child a special spot or area where they will be standing when they sing during the program.)
- **Singing:** If all of the children will be singing all of the songs, they may all stay up in front. If smaller groups are singing, have those who are not singing stay seated until it is their turn to sing.
- **Opening prayer:** Have one of the older kids open with prayer. He or she can thank God for the Bible and the story of Joseph that they are going to share, as well as ask God’s blessing on the program.
- **Scripture reading:** Have the children who are reading move to a visible location. Microphones may or may not be necessary depending on the size of your group and/or worship space.
- **Transition to drama:** After kids sing “God Knows Your Destination,” have them exit the worship space to make room for the drama or have them sit down. Have the accompanist play music during this transition time.
- **Drama:** The drama team will need to set up and take down quickly. They may need extra stagehands to help them. Sets/props do not have to be elaborate; perhaps partial set-up can be completed ahead of time. Have the accompanist play music during the transition time before and after the drama.
- **Transition to Meditation:** Following the song “In His Time,” the children should be seated. The pastor then leads the balance of the worship time.

Video Resources

Videos That Tell the Joseph Story

You may wish to use these resources as a way of presenting the Joseph stories to the children. Choose the segment related to the story presented in each session. Check them out at your local library, at Christian bookstores, or on the Internet.

God's Story, Joseph segment, 12 min.

This series, illustrated by British painter Alan Parry, is designed to introduce children to some of the great stories of the Old and New Testaments. British actor Paul Copley narrates, and the choristers of Leeds Parish Church provide the music.

Video/Yorkshire Television, 1981

Joseph 192 min.

Joseph is the favorite son of Jacob and the enemy of his jealous brothers, who plot to kill him. However, Joseph survives and is sold to a powerful Egyptian landowner only to face unbearable tests of cruelty and pain. Cunningly he uses his wiles to carve a place of honor and plot his freedom. But suddenly Joseph's master's wife accuses him of treachery and rape, sealing Joseph's fate. What starts as a tragedy ends in great triumph. This live-action drama, contained on two videos, stars Ben Kingsley, Paul Mercurio, Martin Landau, and Lesley Ann Warren. Closed-captioned.

The Bible Collection series

Video/Turner Pictures, 1995

Joseph and His Brothers 30 min.

Following Joseph's description of his dreams and his father's gift of a coat of many colors, Joseph's jealous brothers sell him into slavery in Egypt. Even in bondage, Joseph prospers, first as a household servant, then in prison, and finally as counselor to the mighty Pharaoh. After his prophecy of a seven-year famine comes to pass, Joseph is made governor of the land. Eventually Joseph holds the lives of his brothers—and all of Canaan—in his hands. This animated story is seen through the eyes of three young visitors from the twentieth century. Closed-captioned.

The Greatest Adventure Stories from the Bible series

Video/Hanna-Barbera Productions, 1990

Joseph and His Brothers 30 min.

Boldly patterned visuals by Garnet Henderson highlight the story of Joseph being sold into slavery by his envious brothers. Ruben Blades's narration reveals feelings as the family is reunited and Joseph forgives his brothers. The music by guitarists Strunz and Farah uses Latin American and Middle Eastern rhythms.

The Greatest Stories Ever Told series

Video/Rabbit Ears Productions, 1993

Genesis: Joseph

This video covers Genesis 37-50:26. Filmed on location in Israel and Egypt, the biblical accounts of Genesis are dramatized in the original language. Verse by verse narration taken from the RSV. Accompanying materials provide background information about Bible characters, places, customs, and events. Maps and illustrations also included.

New Media Bible Series

Video/Genesis Project, 1976

The Story of Joseph and His Brothers: The Coat of Many Colors 30 min.

After young Joseph receives a splendid coat of many colors from his father, his brothers become jealous and throw him down a well. Captured by slave traders and taken to far-away Egypt, Joseph's amazing ability to explain people's dreams helps him survive and eventually makes him a favorite with the great Pharaoh. When Joseph finds himself sitting

in judgment over the very brothers who once tried to kill him, he must choose between vengeance and the power of divine forgiveness.

The Beginner's Bible series

Video/Sony Music Entertainment and Time-Life Video & Television, 1996

Theme-Related Videos

The following theme-related resources are listed by sessions.

Session 1

Joseph in Bondage 30 min.

This animated episode recounts the wickedness and jealousy of Joseph's brothers as they sell him into slavery in Egypt, while his father, Jacob, mourns the loss of his beloved son.

In the Beginning: Stories from the Bible series

Video/Nippon Television Network/RAI TV, 1992

Someone to Watch Over Me 30 min.

Dylan and Jesse are on a fun-filled imaginary safari until a glitch in the computer program causes it to end prematurely. But when Dylan goes aboard to retrieve a forgotten backpack, he's catapulted into a series of bizarre events that would amaze even inventor John Avery Whittaker. Will Dylan survive his enemy's relentless pursuit? Can anyone lead him out of this labyrinth? In the end Dylan learns an important lesson about God's protection and purpose for his life. Closed-captioned.

Adventures in Odyssey series

Video/Focus on the Family, 1996

Session 2

Doing the Right Thing 28 min.

Rhonda and Fiona discover that doing what's right feels a lot better than attempting to get away with something wrong. When they find a lost wallet on the playground, the girls struggle with the temptation to spend the money before finally concluding that it's not theirs to spend.

You Can Choose! series

Video/Elkind and Sweet Communications, 1992

Legend of the Desert Bigfoot 55 min.

The Last Chance Detectives are hot on the trail of a "bigfoot" that has terrorized several people on the outskirts of town and has apparently stolen some gold. While searching for bigfoot clues, Mike, Ben, Winnie, and Spence discover a malnourished and mistreated dog named Jake at the homestead of snarly Silas Varner. When Varner belligerently disregards their pleas to take Jake to a vet, Mike takes matters into his own hands and removes the dog from the property. Since the town vet proclaims the kids' timely action has saved Jake, Mike and his friends feel they did the right thing in taking the dog from his owner. Later, Mike is confronted by the full implication of this reasoning—that the end justifies the means—when the trail to bigfoot leads to a stolen gorilla. The gorilla has escaped from a man who attempts to enlist the kids' aid by telling them that he has "liberated" the animal from an inhumane situation, just as they had done with Jake. Closed-captioned.

The Last Chance Detectives series

Video/Focus on the Family and Tyndale Family Video, 1995

Saying No 28 min.

Missie Mouse has to choose whether to say no to a friend or do something she knows is wrong. When Missie's best friend, Rhonda, tries to pressure her into smoking cigarettes, Missie agonizes over her options before finding that there are ways to say no without ruffling Rhonda's feathers.

You Can Choose! series

Video/Elkind and Sweet Communications, 1990

A Twist in Time 30 min.

Whit is working on a new invention, but Dylan and his friend Sal can't stand the suspense of not knowing what it is. When they disregard Whit's instructions and sneak into his workshop, they trigger a surprising series of events that could lead to disaster for Whit's End. Through their ordeal, the boys discover that every action, no matter how insignificant it seems, can have dramatic consequences.

Adventures in Odyssey series

Video/Focus on the Family, 1997

Session 3

Appreciating Yourself 28 min.

Tuggy Turtle learns that being himself is a lot better than pretending to be something else. When he becomes troubled by feelings of inadequacy, Tuggy starts making up stories until his friends help him to recognize and appreciate his own true wonderful qualities.

You Can Choose! series

Video/Elkind and Sweet Communications, 1992

Take Me Out of the Ball Game 30 min.

Nicholas's Little League baseball team, coached by his dad, is being carried by the powerful bat of Thurman Miller. Game after game, Thurman delivers the key hits. Nick and his dad grow more and more certain that their team just cannot lose. However, in a modern enactment of "Casey at the Bat," the mighty Thurman finally falls short. In the process, Nick—with the help of special guest Orel Hershiser—learns about the importance of keeping things in the right perspective. Closed-captioned.

McGee and Me! series

Video/Taweel-Loos and Company, 1990

Session 4

Joseph in Egypt 30 min.

Although sold by his own brothers into Egypt as a slave, Joseph remains faithful to God. When he interprets dreams, Joseph earns the respect of all, including Pharaoh. Through Joseph's instructions to Pharaoh, Egypt prepares for the approaching famine. Eventually Pharaoh makes Joseph ruler over Egypt under him.

The Animated Stories from the Old Testament series

Video/Family Entertainment Network, 1992

Dare to Share 11 min.

This video views the work of the One Great Hour of Sharing offering through the eyes of two teens. Though living thousands of miles from each other, their lives are connected in an international encounter of faith by a simple stone. The ancient legend of Stone Soup becomes a metaphor for Christians' commitment to care for and share with others. Viewers witness the journey of the special stone as it travels to China, Africa, Central America, and Armenia. War, earthquake, and poverty have taken their toll, but food, medicine, blankets, seed potatoes, fish farming, and educational programs are making a difference in people's lives around the globe. Adults and youth will be moved by Kristen, a teen from the United States, and Anna, her friend from Armenia, and their newfound friendship.

Video/Church World Service, 1996

Mother Teresa: Seeing the Face of Jesus 35 min.

This video presents the life and work of Mother Teresa with words and pictures that even the youngest child will enjoy. Children will learn that Mother Teresa was a person much like themselves: a person whose strong faith and trust in God helped her to make incredible changes in our world.

Video/Morning Light Media, 1998

Session 5

Joseph's Reunion 30 min.

The drought has stripped Canaan bare of crops, yet rumors from Egypt describe impossibly vast storehouses of food. Jacob knows that unless he acts soon, his entire family will starve. At last he sends ten of his sons to Pharaoh to buy provisions. They never imagined that there they would find not only food, but also the brother they had long ago betrayed and given up for dead. When Joseph reveals himself to them as their brother, they are afraid that Joseph will take revenge against them. But then they experience Joseph's genuine forgiveness. Joseph sends them back to Canaan with gifts for his father and invites the family to come live in Egypt.

The Animated Stories from the Old Testament series

Video/NEST Entertainment, 1995

Joseph's Triumph 30 min.

Joseph becomes a cherished member of the Pharaoh's court by predicting and preparing for a great famine that covers Egypt. He forgives his brothers for their treachery and is reunited with his father, who ordains the twelve tribes of Israel.

In the Beginning: Stories from the Bible series

Video/Nippon Television Network/RAI TV, 1992

God Wants Me to Forgive Them 32 min.

This video contains two animated stories that teach children a biblical perspective on forgiveness. "The Grapes of Wrath" relates the story of a bunch of very cranky grapes who make fun of 5-year-old Jr. Asparagus. Jr.'s dad attempts to show the grapes the error of their ways. Jr. struggles to forgive them as everyone tries to understand what "seventy times seven" means. "Larry's Lagoon" shows how a three-hour boat tour takes a turn for the worse when first mate Larry absentmindedly crashes into an uncharted tropical island. Can Skipper Bob and the passengers possibly forgive Larry for making such a huge blunder? While the professor discovers how many contraptions can be built out of bamboo and coconuts, the others discover the real reasons God wants people to forgive.

VeggieTales series

Video/Big Idea Productions, 1994

Mystery Lights of Navajo Mesa 50 min.

At first, the Last Chance Detectives—Mike, Ben, Winnie, and Spence—are intrigued by a strange voice on the B-17 radio. Then a mysterious museum robbery has everyone in town talking. When Ben is out in the desert, he spots a strange, green, glowing object in the Navajo Mesa sky. As the local sheriff grows strangely silent about these events, the four friends decide it is time they investigate. While they are exploring the desert for clues, Ben accidentally breaks Mike's compass—a special gift from his deceased father. The story takes Mike and Ben through the normal twists and turns of misunderstandings and hurt feelings in a friendship. This episode promotes using the truth of the Bible as a guide during difficult situations. Closed-captioned.

The Last Chance Detectives series

Video/Focus on the Family and Tyndale Family Video, 1994

Rhythms of Peace 56 min.

Two versions of this video offer options for teaching. In the first setting, the host, wacky Mr. Fredd, introduces each story and its theme. Stories without Mr. Fredd allow for ease in stopping the video to teach four separate lessons about revenge, prejudice, war toys, or the power of love.

Video/Mennonite Media Productions, 1996

Troubles Everywhere

Scripture

Genesis 37

Focus

God is always with us, even in our troubles.

WORDSearch

Think About It

The story of Joseph is not an unrelated series of anecdotes. Each scene has been carefully crafted, and each works with the others to produce a marvelous story about God, faith, and humans. This session introduces dramatic tensions that will carry the story through to its conclusion. As you explore these tensions, it is important to remember and to remind your group that God is bigger than any of the problems that arise.

The first tension is within the family. As you know, Jacob had two wives; he also fathered children with their two handmaids. Joseph was the firstborn son of Jacob's favorite wife, Rachel, and quickly became the favorite son of the whole family. Jacob was older and had time to stay around the tents and spoil Joseph. From the point of view of the older brothers, Joseph didn't have to pull his weight.

To add to the natural sibling rivalry, Jacob gave Joseph a special coat. Newer translations avoid the old phrase "coat of many colors," but the point is still the same. Jacob gave Joseph a special coat, one that declared loudly to the rest of the family, "This is my favorite son; no one else even comes close!" While Jacob loved Joseph more than any other son, the other brothers grew to hate Joseph. This hatred becomes the tension that drives the rest of this chapter. It also causes Jacob deep grief and leads the brothers to fear retribution when they finally come face to face with Joseph years later.

The problems with Joseph's family didn't start with him or with his brothers. His father, Jacob, tricked his twin, Esau, out of his inheritance and their father Isaac's blessing. You remember that Isaac was the child born to Abraham and Sarah in their old age. Prior to his birth, Abraham was restless for an heir and had a son with Sarah's maid. Once Isaac was

born, Sarah ousted Hagar and Ishmael, afraid that Abraham's favor would not be properly focused on Isaac. Abraham and Sarah, Joseph's great-grandparents, had also visited Egypt in search of food as they traveled through the wilderness. Afraid for his safety, Abraham lied and said Sarah was his sister. Pharaoh took Sarah for his wife, and God had to intervene to rescue her. The problems in Joseph's family spanned the generations.

Of course, even the best of families can have problems. This side of heaven, sin will always be a part of our lives. No doubt you are well aware of tensions within your own family relationships. Your students are probably aware of tensions in their own families too. We may not want to recognize these tensions, both out of the desire for self-preservation and out of guilt, because we often feel that Christian families should be perfect.

Jacob's family also had problems. Jacob did not act wisely as a husband or as a father. Joseph was a braggart and let everyone

Pray About It

Give thanks for the way God has guided you "behind the scenes" throughout your life. Ask that you and your students will be given the faith to trust God to see you through your troubles.

Tell About It

The big theme of the Joseph story is in the first part of each session focus of this unit: God is always with us. That's the comforting message you want to convey to the kids throughout. Say it, but also let them see that you believe it.

know he was special. Consequently, his brothers were full of envy and hatred. Yet, this was God's family, and God worked with and through them. God was with them each step of the way, even in the midst of these tensions. Your students need assurance that God is always there in the midst of our troubles, even our family troubles.

The other main dramatic tension results from Joseph's dreams. The dreams occur near the very beginning of Joseph's story and add to the suspense. Will the dreams come true? Will the dreams survive family hatreds, or will the brothers kill the dreams? Will the dreams survive a life of slavery? Will the dreams be fulfilled even when Joseph is imprisoned? Can God bring his promise to fulfillment?

The dreams were problematic partly because they ran counter to the status quo (God's direction often runs counter to the ways of the world). In Hebrew tradition, the oldest son is supposed to be the head of the family, the most powerful child. In later Hebrew law, the oldest son is entitled to a double portion of the family inheritance. Yet in the story of Joseph, God chose the eleventh out of twelve sons. God gave this young brother a dream that truly upset the family apple cart.

As Christians, God has promised us salvation. In some ways we already possess that salvation; in other ways it is not yet fulfilled. Joseph had to wait many years before the dreams came true. We too wait throughout our lives. Will God's promise prove stronger than the power of this world? Will the promise be kept despite economic or social problems? When life seems a lot like Joseph's dungeon, will God still work to fulfill the promise?

Like Joseph, our lives are filled with dramatic tension. God chooses us, God has a plan for us, but as troubles hit, we struggle to see God directly at work. Sometimes it is not until the end of a chapter in our lives, as we look back, that we can see God's presence and God's control all the way through. God is always with us, even in times of trouble—or especially in times of trouble. Joseph's faith and dedication to following the dream never waver. Even when God was not readily visible, Joseph followed the dream God had given him. We too are called to trust and to follow God, even when God seems remote. We can have faith that God is with us in the midst of our troubles. At the end of the story we can see God's hand at work and God's promises fulfilled.

Planning the Session

You are in charge of presenting the Joseph stories to all the children—from kindergarten to grade 8—in your church school or VBS. That's quite a challenge! Here in the large group gathering, you should concentrate simply on presenting a lively and interesting story for all to enjoy; interpretation of that story will happen in the small groups.

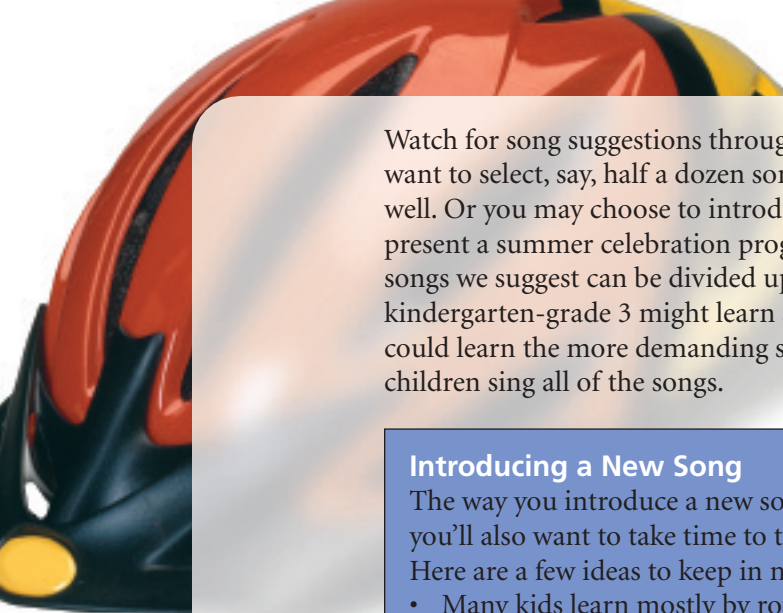
Depending on how much time you have available, you'll probably want to take 10 minutes or more for a community gathering time and another 15 minutes for the drama. In addition, we suggest some optional "arrival" activities (see below).

The suggestions in this large group session assume that you'll be dramatizing the beginning of the story of Joseph (from Genesis 37) to children and young teens and preparing them to respond to it in small groups.

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.

Please see the songs on pages 186-212 of this book. This unit on Joseph presents an opportunity to teach a variety of songs that remind participants that God is with them, whatever the circumstances. Long after this unit is over, the children will carry these songs with them into the difficult situations they face.



Watch for song suggestions throughout this unit, especially in the gathering time. You may want to select, say, half a dozen songs to be repeated throughout the sessions and learned well. Or you may choose to introduce a new song or two at each session. If you decide to present a summer celebration program at the close of the unit, please be aware that the songs we suggest can be divided up between groups of children; for example, children in kindergarten-grade 3 might learn some of the easier songs, while those in grades 4-8 could learn the more demanding songs. Of course, if you prefer, you could have all of the children sing all of the songs.

Introducing a New Song

The way you introduce a new song is crucial. You'll want to know it well yourself. But you'll also want to take time 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 at a time. You may want to start by teaching them a phrase that repeats often.
- Make up motions that may go along with simple words (step, Jesus) to help them remember the words.
- Be enthusiastic! Model your love of singing instead of being concerned about your performance.

Arrival Activities

Greet children enthusiastically as they arrive, welcoming them to this session. Make a special point of greeting friends or visitors who are attending for the first time. If you recognize children who have attended church school previously but are not regular attenders, let them know that you remember them.

Provide nametags if your summer program includes children and leaders who may not know each other. You may want to preprint the names of children you know will attend. All nametags should appear the same, however, so that some are not fancier than others.

Some congregations offer summer programming that fills a full day or half a day. There can be a gap of fifteen minutes or more between the time when the first participant arrives and the program begins. Make productive use of that time. Often leaders' children arrive up to an hour ahead of time. What an opportunity!

As the children arrive, play program-related music in the background (check the CD provided with this course). You may also want to provide a few games or self-directed activities that can be done casually. For example:

- Have the children make a collaborative coat for Joseph. Cut paper or cloth into 2" x 12" (5 cm x 30 cm) lengths. Cut a simple coat shape out of newsprint or plain fabric (or use an existing garment, a "coat" that represents a particular culture: poncho or ruana, ribbon shirt, kimono, guayavera, dashiki, or other garment). As kids arrive they can help to decorate a basic coat by adding the paper or cloth pieces.
- Set up a computer area where children can explore Canaan and Egypt sites.
- Create a home and family play center (many churches have one in a preschool area), where the youngest children can begin to explore what it means to be in a family, like Joseph.
- Set up a tent or other refuge that children can explore.
- Challenge kids to do an art project—choose one or more from the activities (see pp. 38-48) that you do not plan to use during your session.

Community Gathering Time

Create a visual focus point for the community gathering time. Symbols are suggested for each session that relate to the story being presented. The suggested backdrop symbol for today's session is a colorful coat. You can use the one the kids made on arrival (see above) or have someone from the congregation create a more elaborate coat to display. Hang the coat on a backdrop or in some other visible place. Another option is to scan the coat drawing from the back of this leader's guide (p. 275) and project it via an overhead or video projector.

You can also create some backdrops that suggest the land of Canaan, the setting of today's story. One way to do that is to project an image of Canaan on a screen or light-colored background. We've provided a print (p. 268) that you can scan, print on a transparency, and project with an overhead projector. Or, if your church has a video projector, you can scan the images, import them into PowerPoint, and project.

You can also use the line sketch of Canaan (p. 269), draw it on a transparency, project it, trace it on paper, and fill in the outline with paints or crayons. Please see "Preparing the Learning Environment" on pages 7-8 for details and for other ways of creating backdrops.

Welcome the children and set an enthusiastic tone for the gathering and the program. Connect children to the focus of the curriculum immediately by linking it to their own families and relationships. Ask participants to raise their hands in response to the following questions:

- Who has a younger brother or sister?
- Who has an older brother or sister?
- Who has a close friend or a cousin?
- Have you ever had a disagreement or quarrels with one of these people?

Comment that everyone has disagreements or quarrels with others. This story (of Joseph) is for all of us!

Begin singing one of the songs from the unit (see pp. 186-212) that you think is familiar to the children. When introducing each song, say something that relates to the children or to the theme of the week.



Avoid family images that don't fit the participants. Remember that not everyone has two parents and siblings. Give enough options so that everyone can relate.

A fun warm-up song that will get everyone involved is "Ha-La-La-La" (p. 186; CD, track 1). The song suggests actions (shake a neighbor's hand; rub a friend's back; clap a friend's hand) that loosen kids up and get them involved. You may want to use it as your opening song for all five sessions.

A song that you can use to close your gathering time is "As You Go on Your Way" (p. 188; CD, track 2). It's a prayer song that takes the form of an Irish blessing.

Here are some other songs you may want to introduce today that can also be used throughout the five sessions:

- "God's Path" (pp. 189-190; CD, track 3). This song has a catchy rhythm and clapping pattern; it can also be sung with foot movements.
- "Be Still and Know" (p. 191; CD, track 4)
- "I Will Call upon the Lord" (pp. 192-193; CD, track 5)
- "God Is with Me" (p. 194; CD, track 6)
- "Song of Joseph" (p. 195; CD, track 7). For today, use the first stanza.
- "God Is Great" (pp. 196-197; CD, track 8). While this lively praise song goes best with session 5, you may want to use it throughout the unit to emphasize how God kept his promise to always with be Joseph and with us.



We'll be suggesting other songs in future sessions for you to choose from.

Drama

Playing Favorites

Rehearsing and presenting a drama can be a fun and rewarding experience, both for the actors and for the people who view the drama. For this week's drama—"Playing Favorites"—you will need actors for thirteen reading parts and a leader or older child planted in the audience. We suggest an older adult for the role of Abuelo/Jacob, a grandfatherly type who introduces each skit.

Consider finding 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. And children of all ages can play nonspeaking



Kids enjoy watching teens and adults acting the skit, especially when they goof up their lines! Actors can "loosely" memorize their lines, giving them freedom to improvise a bit as they go along. A rehearsal is also a good idea. To cut down the time involved, form more than one drama team. If your drama team doesn't have time for memorization, reading the lines from scripts you provide is fine. They'll still want to rehearse together, even if they aren't memorizing their lines.

roles (for example, in today's drama kids in the front row are asked to play the part of sheep).

Alternatively, you can present the dramas "on the spot," without rehearsal. Choose your actors from older kids in the large group, distribute costumes and scripts, allow a few minutes for a silent read-through (while the others are singing), and then have the actors read and act out their parts. 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, when necessary, acts as a prompter to keep the action moving.

Costumes

Please see the drama script on page 162 for suggestions for costumes and props (they are minimal and contemporary). If you are using T-shirts as nametags for the brothers, you can obtain plain new shirts at craft stores, then write the names with paint marker, puffy paint, or fabric paints (or cut out letters from iron-on fabric). For a cheaper alternative, turn old T-shirts inside out so that no pictures or writing shows; then use tape or permanent markers to spell the names on the shirts. Yet another option is to use only a large version of the first letter of each name. *Note:* The T-shirts can also be used at other times in this unit, including the celebration program.

While today's skit uses contemporary clothing, you could, if you prefer, find or create costumes that reflect the times of Joseph and his family in Canaan. Please see pages 10-11 for specific ideas and patterns, both for sewers and non-sewers. If you decide on authentic costumes, you will need to use nametags rather than T-shirts for the brothers and modify some of the props as well.

Introducing Today's Skit

If the children decorated a coat during arrival time, show it now. Recall that the coat was once plain but the children helped make it beautiful. Hang the coat on a backdrop or some other visible place. Explain that today's story begins with a coat.

You may also want to project an image of a map of Canaan and Egypt (see p. 274) so that kids who are able to understand maps get a general sense of where the Joseph stories happen.

Introduce Abuelo, the wise person or grandfather who comes out each day and sits on a rock or in a rocking chair. Abuelo can enter by walking up a center aisle from the back of the room.

See reproducible pages 162-165 for the script.



If your group has lots of little kids or kids who haven't yet heard the Joseph story, you may want to summarize the action of today's story before presenting the skit.

After the Skit

The gathering leader should say something like this, immediately after the skit: **Sorry that we have to end on this note. But this is just the beginning of the story of Joseph. Remember, we haven't introduced one of the main characters—God. God is going to do some amazing things for Joseph. God can produce good things even in the hardest situations—with Joseph and with us! Stay tuned!**

Engage the children in more singing at any point in the community time, depending on the style of your gathering and your musical leadership.

Before separating into age groups, ask for God's blessing on your time together as you learn how God was with Joseph, no matter what happened. If any of the children's families have needs for which you can pray, be sure to do so. Pray specifically for families who are facing challenges such as illness or loss.

Dismiss the children by age group, starting with the youngest, as the group sings "As You Go on Your Way" (p. 188; CD, track 2).

Small Groups

After the drama, children will meet in small groups. Notice that we've included two session plans—one for children in kindergarten-grade 3 and another for children in grades 4-8.

At the end of the small group sessions, leaders will find numerous "Additional Activities." These may be substituted for activities in the small group sessions or, if this material is being used for VBS or other extended summer ministry programs, they may be used to extend the session to the length desired. Leaders should pick and choose activities as they think best. Notice that the additional activities are grouped according to each major intelligence (word smart, number smart, and so on). Each activity is labeled with the appropriate age group and comes with a suggestion for where to use it in the session.

If your regular church school leaders are leading this summer program, 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.