



GETTING READY

1. Welcome/Opener

What You Need:

- Host
- Candy or prizes to throw out to those who guess correctly

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Upbeat music to use as kids enter the room

Large Group Visuals:

- Undercover Christmas Theme Slide
- Christmas Traditions Around the World Game Slides

What You Do:

- The game this week is an all-play trivia game. You can play it by calling on the first person who raises his or her hand/stands up, or you can play a little more chaotic way, which is to allow everyone to yell the answer out and then throw candy in the general direction of the first right answer you hear.

2. Communicator Script

What You Need:

- Communicator

- Bible
- Big wheel bike or picture of one
- Five presents topped by lids on which the five key words have been written

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Upbeat music to use as kids exit the room

Large Group Visuals:

- Picture of Big Wheel
- John 3:16 slide in end zone
- Slide with John 3:16 verse with GOD highlighted
- Slide with John 3:16 verse with LOVED highlighted
- Slide with John 3:16 verse with WORLD highlighted
- Slide with John 3:16 verse with GAVE highlighted
- Slide with John 3:16 verse with SON highlighted
- Key Question Slide

What You Do:

- Download a picture of an old school big wheel bike.
- Download a picture of someone holding up a John 3:16 sign in the end zone.
- Wrap five presents, but keep them so that their lids can be removed while still wrapped. Write on the inside of each lid one of the key words:
 - Lid #1 – GOD
 - Lid #2 – LOVED
 - Lid #3 – WORLD
 - Lid #4 – GAVE
 - Lid #5 – SON

3. Worship

What You Need:

- We Are Royals
- Through It All

The Greatest Love of All

Bible Story: The Greatest Love of All (God Loves the World) • John 3:16

Bottom Line: God did something about our greatest need.

Key Question: Why do we need to be rescued?

Memory Verse: “God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.” *John 3:16 (NirV)*

Life App: Compassion—Caring enough to do something about someone else’s need

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Story: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 35 minutes)

Engage kids’ hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

SFX: Play high-energy music as kids enter.

CG: Undercover Christmas Theme Slide

Host enters.

Welcome

*Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening (*Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*), or a viral video on YouTube, etc. Christmas is coming up, so obviously there is much to talk about there. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they’re there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what’s happening.*

Opener

HOST: “Hey everybody! So good to see you this week. Can you believe it’s December?! I love this month . . . there are so many traditions we see during the Christmas season. We know what we do, but have you ever thought about what other countries do this time of the year? Are their traditions the same as ours or are there some traditions around the world that we don’t do in our celebration of Christmas? I’ve got an all-play trivia game—CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD—and here’s how you play. I’ll read a question. I’ll call on the first person to stand who thinks he or she knows the answer. Don’t shout it out! If you get it right, I have a prize for you.”

**Note: If you don’t mind the chaos, you can allow everyone to yell out the answer and just throw candy in the general direction of the right answer.*

CG: Christmas Traditions Q1

“Question 1: In what country do people exchange books on Christmas Eve in an event called *Jolabokafloð*, or ‘The Christmas Book Flood’?” (ICELAND)

(If nobody gets it, give multiple choice answers – A. Belize B. Ecuador C. Iceland D. Jamaica)

CG: Christmas Traditions A1

“Answer 1: The answer is Iceland. And then they spend the rest of the night reading and eating chocolate. I could get into that!”

CG: Christmas Traditions Q2

“Question 2: As a part of celebrating Christmas in Lebanon, children may go up to any adult and say ‘Eediti ‘aleik!’ which means . . .

- A. Merry Christmas!
- B. You have a gift for me!
- C. Where’s the Christmas party?
- D. You have broccoli in your teeth.”

CG: Christmas Traditions A2

“Answer 2: B – You have a gift for me! And if the adult has a present to spare, the kid gets another gift!”

CG: Christmas Traditions Q3

“Question 3: In Syria, what animal do children receive gifts from?

- A. Santa’s reindeer
- B. The shepherds’ sheep
- C. The wise men’s camels
- D. Elf’s narwhal”

CG: Christmas Traditions A3

“Answer 3: The wise men’s camels!”

CG: Christmas Traditions Q4

“Question 4: In South Africa, what seasonal delicacy do the locals enjoy?

- A. Baked cow hooves
- B. Steamed lily pads
- C. Deep-fried caterpillars
- D. Roasted earth worms”

CG: Christmas Traditions A4

“Answer 4: The answer is C – Deep-fried caterpillars. But not just any caterpillars . . . the caterpillars of Emperor moths! Yummy!”

CG: Christmas Traditions Q5

“Question 5: In Bolivia, what animal do people bring with them to midnight mass/church service?

- A. A sheep
- B. A cat
- C. A rooster
- D. An armadillo”

CG: Christmas Traditions A5

“Answer 5: The answer is a rooster! This comes from the belief that a rooster was the first animal to announce the birth of Jesus. Good thing it wasn’t a cow!”

CG: Christmas Traditions Q6

“Question 6: In Oaxaca, Mexico, locals celebrate ‘The Night of _____,’ where competitors carve nativity scenes into these.

- A. Tree stumps
- B. Radishes
- C. Styrofoam blocks
- D. Pumpkins”

CG: Christmas Traditions A6

“Answer 6: The answer is Radishes. Nativity scenes are carved on the Night of Radishes and displayed at the Christmas market.”

“Well, I have to say, that was quite interesting. No matter how you celebrate it, Christmas time is here, and that is very exciting! Let’s stand and worship together!”

Worship Leader enters as Host exits

Announcements

Use this as an example of what to say. Make it your own and help the kids feel welcomed. Then take a moment to share any/all announcements.

HOST: "I'm so excited to be here with all of you today and get a little crazy! If it's your first time here, I want to welcome you and I would love to have a chance to meet you, get a high five and show you around. Here at Mission, we believe that this is a place for you and you belong here no matter who you are or what you believe. Mission is for YOU!

I have just a few announcements for you all today...

Share any/all announcements.

Now let's all stand up, get close, give someone a high five and let's sing and worship together!

Host exits and Worship Leader enters.

Worship

WORSHIP LEADER: "Thank you, *[Name of Host]*. Let's get up and get loud as we sing and dance for who God is and what he's done for us!

We are Royals

WORSHIP LEADER: "That was amazing! (*Take a moment to say something about the next song*). So let's give everything we have and worship God together!

Through It All

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: “Hey guys! Look at this room full of good people! So glad you’re here. I don’t know about you, but I sure learned some interesting Christmas traditions!”

Tell a story similar to the following personal story or use “Imagine” language to tell the same story.

“No matter how old you are, Christmas time makes everybody feel like a kid again. I was thinking back to some of my own Christmas mornings just the other day, and I remembered the year I got a Big Wheel. You know what I’m talking about? Check this out!”

CG: *Picture of a Big Wheel bike (Or an actual Big Wheel bike on stage if you can find one. Consider riding on stage on the Big Wheel if you have one.)*

“Oh yeah. On that hog, I was unstoppable. Cracks in the sidewalk? No worries. Bumps in the driveway? Pssssh. Small wild animals? No match. But . . . there was one moment that I put a little too much confidence in my Big Wheel abilities. The front steps. Oh yes. Twelve brick steps down to the sidewalk. Could the Big Wheel do it? Well, I thought so. *(Act it out)* I mounted up and prepared for the ride of my life. I teetered over the edge and WHOOSH! I was gone. But about six steps in, it was clear I had bit off more than I could chew. Big Wheel tipped and flipped me over the front of the bike. I finished the steps sliding down on my stomach. Not a great moment. Road rash for weeks!”

“Maybe you’ve done something similar. We have these moments when we think we are invincible. We think that NOTHING can stop us. But then we superman off the roof and break our arm or Big Wheel down the front steps to our doom. There are times where we don’t realize how badly something might go until it happens, and then we find we need to be rescued.”

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: “Now it’s easy to see how this can happen to little kids. I mean we are pretty daring when we’re little. But what if this can carry over into other areas . . . like our relationships with God? That may seem a bit strange, but what if we can get ourselves into situations where we think that nothing bad can happen to us or that we don’t need anybody else because nothing could go wrong? Or we start to believe that there is no reason we need to be rescued because everything is just fine?”

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: “As we move closer and closer to Christmas, let’s look at probably the MOST famous verse in the entire Bible. You may have even seen it on signs in the end zones at football games. Does anyone have a guess as to what that verse is?” *(Pause for responses.)*

“Yes! John 3:16!”

CG: *John 3:16 slide in end zone*

My guess is many of you have heard this verse before. Here it is. *(Read directly from John 3:16, NIV)* ‘God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.’”

“How many of you have heard that verse before?”

Pause for responses.

“Yeah—pretty famous verse. Maybe it’s even so familiar that we can lose sight of how important it is. I want to focus on a few of the key words from the verse that will help us understand what it means. Now because it is Christmas, I brought along a few presents to help us out.”

There are five presents in order on a table. Lift the lid off the first present to reveal the word GOD in the lid. To make it more interactive, consider passing out the presents to the small groups throughout the room and have them open them when cued and hold up the lid for everyone to see.

“This verse starts with God, and that is an important starting point for everything.

CG: Verse with “GOD” highlighted

The Bible opens with God creating a magnificent paradise filled with beautiful things—land, sky, and sea . . . plants and trees . . . birds, fish, and land animals. Then God created man and woman and put them into His perfect world to be in charge of and care for it all!”

“Everything was, well, perfect. God walked and talked with His precious friends, the people He had made. He set them free into His perfect world, but He told them that there was one condition: ‘Don’t eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ALL OF THIS (*motion around*) is yours—but this ONE TREE is not. Listen to Me about the tree or you will certainly die.’”

“Sadly, they disobeyed and went against God’s instructions for them, and the perfect world was shattered along with their relationship with each other, creation, and even their relationship with God.”

“And to be honest, we’ve done the same. Maybe not with fruit from a tree, but we have gone against God’s instructions for us, and the result is that our relationships with God are no longer what they were meant to be. They’re broken.”

“So the first word is GOD, and this word reminds us not only that God is before all things but also that God has a way for His people to follow, and sadly, we have not always followed it.”

“Our next key word is LOVED.”

Lift the lid off the second present to reveal the word LOVED in the lid.

CG: Verse with “LOVED” highlighted

“What was God’s reaction to His people disobeying Him? How did God feel about His creation once they had chosen not to follow His instructions and broken His perfect world? This may surprise you, but

God LOVED. Our response when somebody hurts us is often to get revenge or to maybe even cut off the relationship with that person. But God's response? LOVE. But who does He love?"

"Check out the next word."

Lift the lid off the third present to reveal the word WORLD in the lid.

CG: Verse with WORLD highlighted

"'God so loved the WORLD.' Now when I say 'world,' don't think of a globe. Sure, God loves the physical world He created, but in this verse, 'world' means people. All people. EVERY SINGLE person. It is easy for us to sometimes pick and choose in our mind who deserves God's love. Maybe who we even think has earned it. But here we read that God so loved the world. There's nobody—not one single person—beyond God's love. That is amazing, right?"

"God's love is not just a feeling. Rather, it is something that causes Him to act. Check out the next word . . ."

Lift the lid off the fourth present to reveal the word GAVE in the lid.

CG: Verse with "GAVE" highlighted.

"'God so loved the world that he GAVE.' God's response to the sin and brokenness of the world—all of the things that had hurt Him—was to give. I don't know about you, but that is not my reaction when someone hurts me. I want to take. I want to withhold. But God's response was to give. But what did He give?"

Lift the lid off the fifth present to reveal the word SON in the lid.

CG: Verse with "SON" highlighted

"'God so loved the world that he gave his one and only SON.' Around two thousand years ago, God sent Jesus into this world in the most unusual way because of His love for us!"

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: "This month we will celebrate when Jesus was born. A lot of times we can focus on HOW Jesus came into the world, but we can forget WHY. Why did God send Jesus? It was to rescue us. See, the rest of the verse says, 'God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.' When Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate the fruit of the tree in the garden, it led to brokenness, separation from God, and death. And all of that was passed on to us. Our relationship with God is also broken. And when we sin, we show how broken we still are. Our disobedience separates us from God and leads to life apart from him forever. We need to be rescued to fix our relationship because we can't fix it on our own. That's why God gave His SON to take our place to live for us and to die for us."

“Just like me and my Big Wheel bike when I was little, sometimes you don’t know you need to be rescued until it is too late. But God knew that we couldn’t rescue ourselves and needed to be rescued, so He gave His Son.”

“Why? Because God loved. And He still loves. And He will keep on loving.”

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: “This Christmas could be an awesome opportunity for many of you to see your need to be rescued for the very first time, to realize that God has already sent a Rescuer in His Son, and to begin a relationship with Jesus! As you go to small group today, I want you to discuss this question:”

CG: Key Question Slide

“Why do we need to be rescued?”

“Think through how you’d answer that question for yourself. Why do you need God’s rescue? And if you’re having a hard time figuring out how you’d answer that question, don’t worry about it. Your Small Group Leader would love to help you and answer any questions you might have about Jesus. Before we head to groups and talk more about being rescued, let’s take a moment and talk to God. Let’s pray.”

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.

SFX: Play high-energy music as the kids exit.