



GETTING READY

1. Welcome/Opener

What You Need:

- Host
- Fruit cake

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Upbeat music to use as kids enter the room

Large Group Visuals:

- Theme Slide
- Ingredient Slides

Optional Videos (available for purchase through the 252 Media Package):

- Theme Loop Video
- Countdown Video (30- or 60-second version)
- Theme Video

What You Do:

- Download and print this week's tech sheet for everyone helping with Large Group.
- Download the slides and have them ready to use. If you do not have CG capabilities, you have Orange's permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.

- A 252 Media Package is available for purchase to go along with each curriculum tier. These graphic motion loops are included in the package. For more information, visit Store.ThinkOrange.com.
- Download music from a resource such as iTunes® and have it ready to play.
- Have a fruit cake for the Host to bring out on stage. Have a fork handy if he or she decides to taste the cake in front of the kids.

2. Communicator Script

What You Need:

- Communicator
- Bible
- *Optional:* Tile or similar tracking device
- Large prop box containing: (See “What You Do”)
 - Graduation cap
 - Telescope
 - Backpack or small suitcase
 - Three wrapped packages: gold, frankincense, and myrrh
 - Crown

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Upbeat music to use as kids exit the room

Large Group Visuals:

- One Big Story Intro (Video)
- Key Question Slide
- Numbers 24:17b Slide
- Micah 5:2 Slide

What You Do:

- Download the slides and have them ready to use. If you do not have CG capabilities, you have Orange’s permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.
- *Optional Tile:* The personal story included in the Introduction of the Communicator’s Script includes a Tile device used to track phones, wallets, bags, etc. If you choose to use the story as is, it might be fun to have a Tile that you can show the audience. You can find them on Amazon, electronics stores, or big-box stores. You might also be able to borrow one from a volunteer or use your own.
- Collect props and place them in the prop box. Wrap gold coins, a jar filled with liquid and labeled “Frankincense,” and a jar filled with liquid and labeled “Myrrh,” each in its own individual package. Place these three wrapped packages in the backpack/small suitcase.

3. Worship

What You Need:

- I Choose You
- Wide Open

Led by the Light

Bible Story: Led by the Light (The Wise Men Visit Jesus) • *Matthew 2:1-12*

Bottom Line: You can find joy when you search for God.

Key Question: How can you find joy all year long?

Memory Verse: *Always be joyful because you belong to the Lord. I will say it again. Be joyful!* Philippians 4:4 (NIRV)

Life App: Joy—Finding a way to be happy, even when things don't go your way

Basic Truth: I need to make the wise choice.

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: *Theme Slide*

Host enters.

Welcome

Host has lots of energy

Opener

HOST: "Welcome back from Christmas, [*name of environment*]! I hope you all had an awesome time with family and friends. See what I have here? That's right—a fruitcake! Show of hands—how many of you have ever had a bite of

fruitcake before? Really?! Wow. I'm just smelling this thing, and I'm not too sure I want to try it. But since some of you have tried it before, I'm thinking I should give it shot. What do you think? All right . . . here it goes!"

Host takes a large mouthful of fruitcake and responds with humor. Maybe even spitting it out on the plate. Play it up.

"Wow. Wow. I have no words, but ewwwwwww. I don't know about that. Why do people still sell that?! Let's move on. Let's have another show of hands—how many of you ate some really *good* food this past week? (*Pause for response.*)

"Okay, well I want to hear the most delicious thing you ate. So, everyone yell out the best food you ate on the count of three. One, two, three! (*Pause for response.*)

"Well, I'm sure the food was delicious and you all had a good time, but today I wanted to take a look at the types of weird holiday food people around the world eat. You might have a had some good Jello or honey baked ham and biscuits, but I wonder how many of you have ever had this stuff called 'oyster dressing.' Yikes. Anyways, this game is pretty simple. I'm going to describe the ingredients inside of an interesting holiday food. Your job will be to tell me if you think the food I'm describing is real or fake. If you think it's real, you'll move to this side of the room [*point to one side*]. If you think it's fake, you'll move to this side of the room [*point to the other side*]. Easy! Okay, everyone stand up and let's get started!"

CG: Ingredient Card 1

"First round ingredients are as follows: Oysters, celery, carrots, onions, and eggs. Is this group of ingredients an actual holiday dish? Make your choice now!"

Wait for kids to finish moving to their side of the room.

"If you chose 'real,' you're correct! Those are some of the ingredients for 'Oyster Dressing!' Good job. Okay, next round."

CG: Ingredient Card 2

“Listen closely to these ingredients: anchovies, dried sea kelp, water, onions, and fish sauce. What do you guys think? Real dish or fake? Make your choice now.”

Wait for kids to finish moving to their side of the room.

“If you chose real, good job! That’s part of the recipe for a delicious Korean New Year soup. It’s kinda popular, actually! Okay, two more rounds.”

CG: Ingredient Card 3

“Let’s keep going. What about this dish: the lining of a cow’s stomach. That’s it. Real or fake? Make your choice.”

Wait for kids to finish moving to their side of the room.

“If you chose fake, you’re wrong! Cow stomach is actually a real dish you can eat. I mean, I don’t know if I would want to eat it, but it’s a popular holiday dish for some cultures. Now on to the final round! Are you ready? *(Pause for response.)*”

“I said, are you ready? *(Pause for response.)*”

CG: Ingredient Card 4

“Last ingredients: vegetables, mayonnaise, chicken, lemon juice, and Jello ALL mixed together. Real or fake? Make your choice!”

Wait for kids to finish moving to their side of the room.

“If you thought this chicken Jello was real, then you are CORRECT! Can you imagine biting into this cold chicken *jello* . . . thing? So gross! Anyways, great job! All of those holiday dishes are real things that people eat, and it just goes to show that not all of our holiday experiences are exactly the same. People find joy in different ways. And for some people, these foods that might sound strange to you are probably part family traditions or even comfort food. Maybe you’ll have a chance to try them someday! Who knows they might even bring you some joy!”

“Now, it’s time to welcome our friend [*name of worship leader*] to the stage to lead us in worship!”

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

Worship

WORSHIP LEADER:

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT

VIDEO: *One Big Story Intro*

CG: *Blank Key Question Slide*

During the One Big Story Intro, set up the table. Bring out the prop box and set it down behind the table.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: “Hey, everyone! Great to see you all! Hope you had an amazing Christmas! Let’s get started with a question. What are some things you’ve had to search for?”

Take some responses from the kids, commenting on them as they share.

“Wow. You all have searched for a lot of stuff. We search for things all of the time, don’t we? We search for something to eat in the refrigerator, a book we need to read for school, maybe homework we *swear* is in the bottom of our backpack.”

The following is a personal story. Use this as a hypothetical situation or as an example for the sort of story to share from your own life.

“I have this habit of losing things. It seems like I’m always searching for my keys or my wallet. It’s so frustrating because I know they must be somewhere in my home, but I can *never* find them. But check this out! For Christmas I got a key and wallet tracker!”

Optional: Communicator takes out a Tile device from his or her pocket and holds it up.

“I just connect these to an app on my phone, slip one in my wallet and the other on my key chain . . . and boom! No more lost keys and wallets. These things are amazing! If I can’t find my keys, all I have to do is grab my phone, click on the app, hit this button, and the device my keys start making a noise.”

Optional: Communicator demonstrates how this works.

“And let’s say it’s the other way around and I can’t find my phone, I just click the device on my keys or in my wallet and my phone starts beeping. Incredible, right?! Now, I’m not sure what happens if I lose all three of these things . . . it would be searching a usual, I guess, but at least it’s a start, right?”

“Now, it’s one thing to search for things we can see: keys, wallets, shoes and socks, and lost toys in our rooms. It’s another thing to search for things we can’t see.”

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: “For example, have you ever tried to search for courage? Maybe it was a time when you were facing the best team in your league and were scared you’d get crushed! Or how about searching for peace and quiet? Maybe you’re upset at school and just want a quiet moment to yourself with no one asking how you’re doing or trying to fix everything for you. What’s hard about searching for things you can’t see is knowing when you’ve actually found them.”

“Some of you might have even tried searching for God. You have lots of questions about faith and Jesus and Christmas and all this talk about joy. Some of you might wish that God would just make Himself visible so you’d know if you could trust Him to answer your prayers.”

“If that’s you this Christmas season, you’ve come to the right place. We want to be one of the best places for you to search for God and ask all of your hard questions. Thankfully, when we have hard questions, we can find some great answers in the Bible. Let’s head to the book of Matthew and find out about some people who were on their own search . . . for Jesus.”

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: “Last week we learned that the first people who knew about Jesus’ birth was a group of shepherds who received a visit from angels telling them to seek out the Savior who had just been born in a manger in a town called Bethlehem. But far to the East, there was a group of men who were about to start their own journey.”

Take the Graduation Cap from the Prop Box and set it on the table.

“We’ll call these men the ‘The Wise Men’ because their job was to give advice by looking at the stars in the sky and using them to help make decisions.”

Take the telescope from the Prop Box and set it on the table.

“We’re not quite sure exactly what happened, but we can imagine that one night the Wise Men were looking into the sky and noticed a very unusual star. They couldn’t figure out what it was, so in order to solve this mystery, the Wise Men searched through ancient Jewish texts.”

Take the scroll from the Prop Box and set it on the table.

“There’s a good chance they had these texts because of a guy we learned about earlier this year—Daniel. Daniel was one of God’s people who was living in a faraway place called Babylon. Daniel could interpret dreams and visions through the power of God, so several kings had made him an advisor. That’s probably how the wise men who lived there had record of the writings and prophecies of Jewish people—and how they knew about the Savior who was to come.”

“Maybe they’d heard of God’s promises like this one:”

CG: Numbers 24:17b Slide

“A star will come from among the people of Jacob. A king will rise up out of Israel.” (Numbers 24:17b, NIV)

“Years later, because of Daniel, our wise men would likely have had written record of these prophecies, especially those referring to the night sky. They knew about a promised Savior, so they kept an eye on the sky for the news that God had fulfilled His promise.”

“When they saw the special star, they decided to head west in search of this new King. To honor Him, they gathered royal gifts and journeyed across the desert.

Take the pre-filled backpack or small suitcase from the Prop Box and set it on the table.

“They knew it would be a long and difficult trip. Traveling miles across hot sand isn’t exactly a fun road trip, especially when you’re probably riding on the back of a camel for days on end. It wasn’t easy, but they knew their search would be worth it.”

“At last, they reached Jerusalem. They went to the nearest palace.

Take the crown from the prop box and set it on the table.

“After all, where else would you go if you were searching for a newborn *king*? When they got there, they asked:”

(Read directly from Matthew 2:2) “Where is the child who has been born to be king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose. Now we have come to worship him,” (NIRV).

“At this point, Herod was the ruler of Jerusalem. I’m thinking he was probably all . . . What are you talking about it? So, he called for the Jewish religious leaders. He knew they’d know all about the ancient prophecies that would point to this king. Sure enough, they knew this king was to be born in Bethlehem because of something a prophet named Micah wrote hundreds of years before.”

“Listen to this from Micah 5:2:”

CG: Micah 5:2 Slide

“Bethlehem . . . you might not be an important town in the nation of Judah. But out of you will come for me a ruler over Israel,” (NIRV).

“Now that Herod knew the Savior would be born in Bethlehem, he secretly got the wise men together. They told him the exact time when the star had appeared, and then, Herod said:”

(Read directly from Matthew 2:8) “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report it to me. Then I can go and worship him too,” (NIRV).

“Now do you think Herod really wanted to worship this king? *(Pause for response.)* No, of course not! In fact, Herod wanted to do the complete opposite. He wanted to get rid of this new King, but at the time the wise men didn’t know that. They just carried on with their search.”

“Finally, the star they followed led the way to Bethlehem. Seeing the star made them so joyful! Their search had come to an end; they had found the new King!”

“They learned that His name was Jesus and they worshipped Him.”

Go back to the backpack/small suitcase, take the three presents out, and set them on the table.

“They gave Jesus the gifts they had brought from all the way across the desert. These gifts were not just any old gifts. They gave Jesus their absolute best! Each gift was meaningful and represented something.”

Open the gift containing gold.

“The first gift was gold, which demonstrated that Jesus was King.”

Open the gift containing Frankincense.

“The second gift was frankincense—a symbol to show that Jesus was God’s Son.”

Open the gift containing Myrrh.

“The third gift was myrrh, which was a hint that one day Jesus would die on the cross.”

“The wise men were filled with joy because they had finally found Jesus! It was time for them to report back to Herod and then go home. But God told them in a dream *not* to go back to Herod. So they went back to their home country a different way.”

“Their search for Jesus sounds amazing, right? Especially because they were able to see Jesus face-to-face and worship Him as King! The search was totally worth it.”

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: “But even though that’s a great story, you might be wondering, what does this mean for us? That’s a good question. It’s always important to ask how what we read in the Bible is important for our lives right now. The truth is that we’re always searching for something—and I’m not talking about keys and wallets. We search for truth, courage, all sorts of things, even joy!”

“You see, it’s easy for us to find joy at Christmas time. I mean, pretty much everyone has a smile the size of Buddy the Elf’s on their face during the holiday season. But what about the rest of the year? What happens if we go back to school and we fail the first math pop quiz we take? What happens if we go to try out for the basketball team and realize that everyone around us grew four inches over the break and we’re getting dunked on by sixth graders? How do we find the same joy in March and April that we have now in December?”

“Christmas presents and fancy foods are great and all, but they can’t give us joy that lasts. The only way we can find that sort of joy is through Jesus—putting your trust in Him and learning to live like Him. We can search the Bible and find out what He did. We can ask our moms or dads, Small Group Leaders, or other trusted adults how they find joy. We can pray and ask God to help us find joy no matter what is happening.”

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: “God promised to send us a Savior, and He did! God sent us Jesus, but it’s our job to go out and search for Him. God wants us to have a relationship with Him, but we need to trust Him and step out on a journey, just like the Wise Men did. At the end of their journey, what did the Wise Men find? Two things: Jesus and joy. If you do the same, I know you will, too. As you head out to small groups, think about this.”

CG: Key Question Slide

COMMUNICATOR: “**How can you find joy all year long?** This is a big question, and you may not have an answer right away. That’s totally fine. You’ll have a chance in Small Group to think through how you’d answer it. One of the ways is to keep coming back here to *[Name of Environment]*—we’re one of the most joyful places around! Before we head out, let’s pray and thank God for sending us Jesus to make it possible for us to have joy all year long. Let’s pray.”

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard.

Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.

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

CG: Theme Slide