

## TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

### BIBLE STORY

Jesus teaches us that  
God loves us  
no matter what.

**PRODIGAL SON**  
**LUKE 15:11-24**

### MEMORY VERSE

"The people were amazed  
at his teaching."

**MATTHEW 7:28, NCV**

### KEY QUESTION

Who teaches you  
important things?

### BOTTOM LINE

Jesus teaches me  
important things.

### BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be  
my friend forever.

### PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

### SMALL GROUP

**15**  
MIN

#### SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

*Offer one or more of these activities as preschoolers arrive.*

Picture Clues  
Rolling Hearts  
Shop with Ollie

### LARGE GROUP

**20**  
MIN

#### WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

#### STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

"Important Things," "Best Friend"

Bible Story  
Prayer

### SMALL GROUP

**25**  
MIN

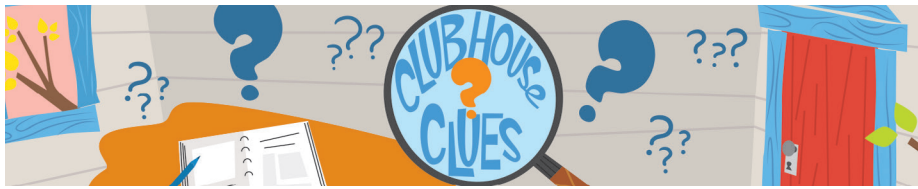
#### GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

*Offer as many of these activities as your time, facilities, resources, and leadership allow.*

Memory Verse Party Hat  
Great Big Heart  
The Special Chair  
Story Search  
Run to the Prodigal Son  
Journal and Prayer

### HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Going Home  
Memory Verse Card  
Parent Cue Card (*print or email*)  
Parent Cue App



WEEK  
**FOUR**  
JANUARY 2024

SMALL GROUP  
**3-5** YEAR  
-OLDS

PRELUDE      SOCIAL      WORSHIP      STORY      GROUPS      HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES

### MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages preschoolers to follow guidelines while having fun and learning new concepts



### 2. ROLLING HEARTS

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Rolling Hearts" Activity Page, cardstock, washable markers, and a large die

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** Copy "Rolling Hearts" on cardstock, one per child.

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**PRODIGAL SON**  
**LUKE 15:11-24**

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Leader will roll the die and call out the number it lands on. Encourage children to color in that number of hearts. Continue to roll and color until the children have filled in most of the hearts on their page.

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** Make sure the children's names are on their pages and set aside for pick up. Introduce the Bible Story today and how Jesus teaches us that God loves us no matter what, as you point to the hearts on the page.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** "Friends, come find a spot at the table. What do you see on your paper? (*Pause.*) Yes, hearts! Lots and lots of hearts! Hearts remind me of love!"

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** "I'm going to roll this die and tell you what it lands on. When I do, I want you to use a marker to color that many hearts on your page. Are you ready? Let's roll. (*Roll the die.*) I rolled a [number], so color [number] hearts! Fantastic! Let's roll again! (*Continue until all or almost all of the hearts are colored in.*) Look at these colorful hearts! Great job, friends. Hearts remind me of love."

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "In our Bible Story today, we'll learn that Jesus teaches us that God loves us no matter what. (*Point to the hearts on each child's page.*) He does! Come with me and let's go hear our story."

### MEMORY VERSE

"The people were amazed at his teaching."

**MATTHEW 7:28, NCV**

**TRANSITION:** Move to Worship and Story by saying "one, two, three—LOVE!" On the word "LOVE," children will make a heart by placing their fingertips together in a heart shape.

### KEY QUESTION

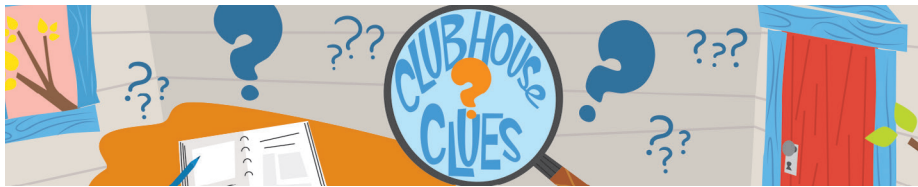
Who teaches you important things?

### BOTTOM LINE

Jesus teaches me important things.

### BASIC TRUTH

Jesus wants to be my friend forever.



CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

**MADE TO CREATE**  
an activity that allows preschoolers to review the Bible story, bottom line, or memory verse by creating a craft to take home



**1. MEMORY VERSE PARTY HAT**

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE REVIEW]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Memory Verse Label" Activity Page, Avery® Labels #5160 or equivalent, party hats, stickers, and a permanent marker

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** Copy "Memory Verse Label" on Avery® Labels #5160 or equivalent, one per child. Put the children's names inside the party hats before distributing. Lay stickers on the table for easy access.

Say the Memory Verse and do the motions together. Sit together at the table.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Invite the children to decorate their party hats with stickers and the Memory Verse Label. Help each child put on their decorated hat. Say the Memory Verse together.

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** Say the verse and do the motions together. Then, review the Bible Story.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** "Let's say our verse and do the motions together. 'The people (*spread arms out*) were amazed (*hold hands like binoculars, open and shut*) at his teaching,' (*pull O-hands from head*) Matthew 7:28. (*Open hands like a book.*) Come and sit with me at the table. What do you see? (*Pause.*) Yes, we have party hats and stickers!"

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** "Let's decorate our party hats with these fun stickers. Now, let's put on our Memory Verse Label. Let's say our verse together. 'The people were amazed at his teaching.' Matthew 7:28. It's time to put on our party hats. Everyone, put on your hat and stand up."

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "Let's say our Memory Verse together and do the motions. 'The people (*spread arms out*) were amazed (*hold hands like binoculars, open and shut*) at his teaching,' (*pull O-hands from head*) Matthew 7:28. (*Open hands like a book.*) One more time. 'The people (*spread arms out*) were amazed (*hold hands like binoculars, open and shut*) at his teaching,' (*pull O-hands from head*) Matthew 7:28. (*Open hands like a book.*) Great job!"

"In our Bible Story today, Jesus told a story about a dad who loved his son even though his son had gone away and spent all the money. The dad loved the son so much he even threw a party for him when the son came back. Hey! I wonder if the son wore party hats like ours!"

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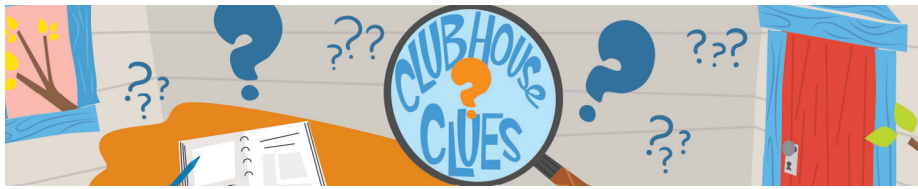
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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

“Jesus told this story to teach us that God loves us no matter what—just like the father in the story. I’m so glad Jesus came to teach us important things. **Who teaches you important things? Jesus teaches me important things!** One more time like we’re at a loud party. **Who teaches you important things? Jesus teaches me important things!** Yes, He does.”



**MADE TO REFLECT**  
an activity that encourages personal application and prayer



**6. JOURNAL AND PRAYER**

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Memory Verse Card" Activity Page from Week One in Bible, a journal, a fun-shaped pen, heart stickers, and a variety of stickers or a hand stamp

**WHAT YOU DO:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** If you do not have the "Memory Verse Card" in your Bible, copy "Memory Verse Card" on cardstock and cut, one per Small Group. Place one card in your Bible at Matthew 7:28. Keep this card in your Bible all month.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** Encourage the children to pretend to be pigs with you as you lead them to your Small Group spot. Sit down and gather the children around you. Review the Memory Verse and motions, then write each child's name in the journal and let the children put heart stickers on their names.

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** Pray with the children using the list you made in the journal.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY:** "It's Small Group time! Today we're going to pretend we are pigs! Oink! Oink! Follow me, little piggies! (Pretend to be a pig as you lead the children to your Small Group spot.) Oink! Oink! Here we are! Let's sit down so we can talk about today's Bible Story. One, two, three, sit down with me!"

**DURING THE ACTIVITY:** (Open the Bible and lay it in front of the children.)

"In our Bible Story today, a son was so hungry, he thought about eating pig food! Yuck! The son had gotten a job feeding pigs, because he spent all of the money his father gave him. What did the son do when he didn't have any money and was hungry? (Pause.) That's right! The son went back to his father and said he was sorry. The father was so happy his son was home he threw a party! The father loved his son no matter what!

"Jesus told the story about the father loving his son no matter what, because Jesus wants to teach us that God loves us no matter what too. Wow! That is very important! I'm so glad Jesus teaches us important things! **Who teaches you important things? Jesus teaches me important things!** And every time Jesus teaches, people are amazed!

"Hey! That reminds me of the Bible verse we have been learning! Let's stand up and say it together one time with the motions. Then, if anyone wants to say it by themselves, they can! Just say what I say and do what I do. 'The people (spread arms out) were amazed (hold hands like binoculars, open and shut) at his teaching;' (pull O-hands from head) Matthew 7:28. (Open hands like a book.) That was fantastic!

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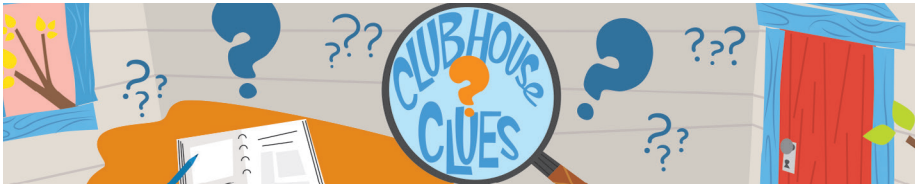
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## (6. JOURNAL AND PRAYER, CONTINUED)

"Let's sit down so anyone who wants to say that Bible verse can give it a try. I have my stickers/hand stamp ready! *(Give each child the opportunity to try and say the Bible verse.)* Everyone, clap for [name of child]! Here is your sticker/hand stamp! *(Say this with each child as they try and say the Bible verse.)*

I am very proud of you for trying to say that Bible verse! When I count to three, I want everyone to stand up and show me your sticker/hand stamp. One, two, three! *(Pause.)* Yay! *(Clap.)*

"Now, let's sit back down so we can write in our prayer journal and talk to God. *(Open journal.)* Jesus taught us something very important today. Jesus taught us that God loves *(say each child's name)* no matter what! That's why I am going to write everyone's name in our journal, and then you will put a heart sticker on your name. *(Remember to print as you write in the journal, so the children can recognize their names and the letters. Say, "God loves [name of child] no matter what" each time a child puts a heart sticker on their name.)*

**AFTER THE ACTIVITY:** "Look! Everyone has a heart on their name because God loves you no matter what! Let's pray and talk to God about it. Would anyone like to pray before I pray? *(Give each child who wants to pray the opportunity to do so.)*

"Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to teach us important things—like how You love us no matter what! You love *(say each child's name)*, and me no matter what! That's amazing! We love You, God! In Jesus' name. Amen."