

VBS 2026 GRADES 1–2 BASE CONFERENCE PLAN (1½ HOURS)

Purpose Statement

This 90-minute conference plan is designed to encourage and equip church leaders to minister to 1st–2nd graders using Lifeway's Illumination Station® VBS Curriculum.

Needed Resources

- (2) *VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide* (005853152) — Use one copy while presenting; place the second copy on the display table, open to pages 15–16 (Additional Activity Options for Day 1).
- (2) *VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Pack* (005853472) — Gather and prepare the following items as described:
 - (2) Pack Items 1–5: “Days 1–5 Bible Story Pictures” — Pull one set to tape to the focal wall as the conference progresses. Include a second copy in the corresponding group baskets (see below).
 - Pack Item 6: “Illumination Station Banner” — Display on the focal wall. Follow the instructions on the footer of the item to prepare ahead of time. Add the prepared plastic bag (see pack item 15 below) to the lower right-hand corner.
 - Pack Item 7: “Illumination Station Banner Add-ons” — Prepare ahead of time following the instructions on the pack item footer.
 - (2) Pack Item 8: “Theme Verse Poster” — Hang one poster on a wall where it can be easily referenced during the session. Place the other in the Day 4 group basket.
 - Pack Items 9–13: “Days 1–5 Bonus Verse Posters” — Add to the focal wall as the conference progresses.
 - Pack Item 14: “Gospel Poster” — Prepare ahead of time according to the footer instructions.
 - Pack Item 15: “Daily Window Icons” — Insert into a gallon-sized ziplock bag and trace the daily icon shapes onto the bag with a permanent marker. Remove the pack item. Leave the bag open and fasten to the dotted rectangle in the lower right-hand corner of pack item 6 using clear tape. The icons should be difficult to see. You may choose to add a sheet of black paper to help them blend further and cover any branding on the back of the bag.
 - Pack Item 16: “Who Do People Say” — Place in the corresponding group basket.
 - Pack Item 17: “Shadow Puppets” — Prepare ahead of time according to the footer instructions. Place on the display table next to the guide displaying “Additional Activity Options.”
 - Pack Item 19: “Sunbeam Prayer” — Place in the corresponding group basket.
- *VBS 2026 Kids Activity Book* (005853151)
- *VBS 2026 Memory Maker* (005853571)
- *VBS 2026 Bible Study Location Sign* (005853617)
- *VBS 2026 Visual Pack* (005853615)
- *VBS 2026 String Flags* (005853579)
- *VBS 2026 Tablecloths* (005853575)
- *VBS 2026 Gospel Guide* (005853630)
- *VBS 2026 Parent Guide* (005853631)
- (2) *VBS 2026 Writing Paper* (005853611) (for display on Additional Activity Options table)
- *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (CSB)* (005567177)
- *Illumination Station Devotional: Shining a Light on Jesus* (005854728)
- *VBS 2026 Music for Kids CD* (005853488)

- *VBS 2026 Administrative Guide* (005853431)
- Optional: *Wholly Kids: Guiding Kids to a Life in Christ* (005490111)
- Optional: *Ages and Stages: A Discipleship Framework for Church and Home* (005827406)
- Optional: *Every Age, Every Stage: Teaching God’s Truth at Home and Church* (005820949)
- Optional: *Life as a Christian: A Primer for New Believers* (005835478)
- *Giant Inflatable Game Cube* (005841133)
- *KidMin Toolbox: Books of the Bible Flash Cards* (005839273) — Display on the Additional Activity Options table.
- Item 1: “Handout” — Print 1 double-sided copy per conferee.
- Item 2: “Daily Content Activity” — Print each of the five pages and place each one in the corresponding group basket below.
- Item 3: “Gospel Icons” — Print 1 copy of each icon and insert one in each pocket of the *Giant Inflatable Game Cube*.
- Bible
- Light bulb-shaped sticky notes (1 per conferee)
- Pens (available in case conferees do not have them)
- Mini glow sticks in 5 different colors, a roughly equal number of each color (1 per conferee)
- (5) Small baskets (ideally matching the colors of the mini glow sticks) — Insert the corresponding page of item 2 in each basket, making one basket per day.
 - Day 1 basket—include pack items 1 and 16.
 - Day 2 basket—include pack items 2 and 19.
 - Day 3 basket—include pack item 3.
 - Day 4 basket—include pack items 4 and 8.
 - Day 5 basket—include pack item 5.
- (1) Gallon-size ziplock bag (for use in preparing pack items 6 and 15)
- (1) Sheet of black construction paper (for use in preparing pack items 6 and 15)
- (1) Black permanent marker (for use in preparing pack items 6 and 15)
- (1) Letter-size sheet of yellow cardstock (for use in preparing pack item 7)
- (1) Sheet of vellum (for use in preparing pack item 14)
- (3) Craft sticks (for use in preparing pack item 17)
- Flashlight (for display on the Additional Activity Options table)
- 3-by-3-inch sticky notes (for display on the Additional Activity Options table)
- Neon highlighter (for display on the Additional Activity Options table)
- Thin paint brush (for display on the Additional Activity Options table)
- Half-sheet of construction paper (for display on the Additional Activity Options table)
- Glow-in-the-dark paint (for display on the Additional Activity Options table)
- 10 index cards — On each index card, write in large letters a different Bible book from this list: *Genesis, Exodus, Psalms, Proverbs, Jonah, Matthew, Mark, Luke, Romans, and Revelation*. Display on the Additional Activity Options table.
- Gift bag (for display on the Additional Activity Options table)
- Scissors
- Mavalus® or painter’s tape for hanging posters
- Scotch tape
- CD player or Bluetooth speaker

Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semi-circle facing the front of the room. Designate a space at the front for a focal wall, leaving enough space for the “Illumination Station Banner” (pack item 6), “Theme Verse

Poster” (pack item 8), “Days 1–5 Bible Story Pictures” (pack items 1–5) and “Days 1–5 Bonus Verse Posters” (pack items 9–13), which will be displayed as the session progresses. Set up two tables on either side of the focal wall and cover each with a *VBS 2026 Tablecloth*. On one table, place a leader guide open to pages 15–16 alongside the Additional Activity Options from Day 1 for conferees to browse afterwards. On the other table, display all needed resources to be referenced throughout the session. Decorate around this space with *VBS 2026 Wall Art* and *VBS 2026 String Flags*.

Teaching Steps

1. Opening (5 minutes)

- Play songs from the *VBS Music for Kids CD* as conferees enter.
- Greet conferees at the door, welcoming them to Spotlight Bible Study. Hand each person a copy of the handout (item 1), a light bulb-shaped sticky note, and a mini glowstick as they enter.
- Say: “Before we dive into our content today, I would love for you to think about how a 1st or 2nd grader might answer this question: ‘Who Is Jesus?’” Guide each conferee to write her answer down on a light bulb-shaped sticky note and then stick it somewhere on the focal wall.
- Say: “Some kids might answer by saying ... (bold statements relate to the daily Spotlight Questions)
 - **Jesus is the Messiah.**
 - Jesus is my Savior.
 - Jesus is God.
 - **Jesus was an ordinary man.**
 - **Jesus was a teacher.**
 - **Jesus was someone who lived a long time ago.**
 - Jesus is a character in the Bible.
 - I don’t know.
 - Who?”
- Explain that we are ministering to a diverse range of kids at VBS, some who have already professed faith and are following Jesus, some who are close, others who are inquisitive, others who come to church some but don’t seem engaged, and others who have never even heard of Jesus before. VBS is about reaching all of these kids and helping them see the truths of the Bible. This year, we’ll see a daily Spotlight Question, with a corresponding answer.
- Say: “I asked you to answer Day 1’s Spotlight Question, ‘Who is Jesus?’ as though you were a 1st–2nd grader. Thinking like a 1st–2nd grader will help your preparation! An age-appropriate response to this question (which will still require explanation) is: ‘Jesus is the Messiah, the promised Son of God.’”
- Open the session in prayer. Pray using the “Praying for Your 1st & 2nd Grade Kids” prompts (p. 4 in the *VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide*). Afterwards, tell conferees where they can find the prayer prompts.

2. Preparation for Leading VBS—Resource Overview (20 minutes)

- Ask conferees to share with the person next to them about a unique or breathtaking light they have seen and describe what caught their attention.
- Say: “It is likely that some of us might have shared similar answers, such as a sunrise or your town’s Christmas lights. Others might have been more unique—lights at a sports stadium, a meaningful family heirloom lamp, or a fun decorative piece of wall art. Just as many of you may have had a different answer or reason behind the answer,

events like this provide the opportunity for finding out all of the different things you can bring to VBS to make it the best experience it can be. Don't underestimate the opportunity to mingle in the hallways and share ideas!"

- Continue: "Some of you may be new to this, others may have led VBS for many years. We're going to look at the different tools Lifeway provides so that you will know what is available and where to find it."
- Hold up the *VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide*. Work through the leader guide, showing conferees pages as you reference them:
 - "So You're a VBS Leader! ... Now What? (p. 1) provides a great starting point. This page walk through the before, during, and after of VBS, and where to find more information in the guide on what to do and how to do it during each stage.
 - Step 1—Ask God to Make Your Heart Ready and Step 2—Make a Plan:
 - These steps are the *before* stages. Content in the leader guide equips you to learn about the characteristics of the kids you will be teaching, the Bible study content, and guides prayer that the Lord would move as He desires!
 - Step 3—Teach:
 - This step is the *during* stage. This encompasses executing the Bible content and all activities while utilizing provided teaching tips (p. 6 and in the margins throughout).
 - Step 4—Continue the Connection:
 - This step is the *after* stage. VBS isn't over after Day 5! There are suggestions for keeping the connection going such as writing personal notes (p. 9).
 - Page 3 gives a one-page overview of the content for Illumination Station VBS. This is a brief introduction that provides VBS leaders a flavor of what is to come throughout the week."
 - Page 4 provides introductory information on how to understand and connect with 1st and 2nd graders, looking at developmental characteristics. Say: "Understanding *how* kids are wired, and *why* they act the way they do, will help inform our teaching and our classroom management."
 - Hold up the *VBS 2026 Administrative Guide*. Say: "The Administrative Guide is not something every leader needs, but your VBS Director should have a copy. This gives access to additional printables such as *Age Group Characteristics* which can provide further insight to anyone working with kids about how they engage and what they need."
 - Reference the Lifeway resources, *Wholly Kids, Ages and Stages: A Discipleship Framework for Church and Home*, and *Every Age, Every Stage: Teaching God's Truth at Home and Church* as sources of more information about kids and their development.
 - Page 5 is titled *Make VBS Great for All Kids!* Say: "Sometimes we can get caught up in preparing content with certain kids in mind, maybe it's 'church kids' who know the basics of the Bible, how to behave in church, and are always willing to answer our questions. But VBS is about *all* kids, and this page highlights some suggestions to help all kids feel welcomed and engaged."
 - Briefly highlight some of the adaptations for both kids unfamiliar with church and kids with special needs.
 - Page 6—"How to Plan a VBS Session"—provides tips for VBS success, and an explanation of how the leader guide is organized. This may be different if you have previously served with a different age group at VBS. It is important to

- remember that this book is written to give you options and flexibility, so adapt content to suit your context.
- Explain that each daily session is comprised of a 30-minute Bible teaching time that is split into five segments:
 - Start It — An opening activity to kick off the learning experience (4–6 minutes).
 - Learn It — This section contains the primary teaching, with the Bible story printed both here and on the back of the “Days 1–5 Bible Story Pictures” (pack items 1–5). Bold print provides a condensed story for younger kids, or to fit within tighter time constraints. Remember to have an open Bible while teaching, reference Scripture, and give kids opportunities to follow along in a Bible (9–10 minutes).
 - Know It — A daily time to connect with the VBS theme verse: John 8:12 (3–5 minutes).
 - Live It — An application activity designed to help kids see how the truths of the Bible story can impact their lives (6–8 minutes).
 - End It — A brief closing time to wrap up the teaching time (4–6 minutes).
 - Encourage conferees to adapt and adjust as their schedule determines. For example, conferees may need to lean heavily on *Learn It* content if teaching in a large group setting and designating the *Know It* and *Live It* sections for small group leaders.
 - Highlight the “Additional Activity Options” in the leader guide and the purpose of these activities (first and second activities are for application, the third is for Bible skills, and the fourth activity is for learning the bonus verse). Encourage conferees to use these activities to supplement learning. Suggest that these activities don’t have to only be used within Spotlight Bible Study but could be utilized in other areas of VBS too!
 - Say: “Finally, page 6 closes with a note on decorating. While we all want VBS to look and be awesome, there are some safety, security, and sensitivity considerations we need to have in decorating, especially with this theme.”
 - Pages 7–8 provide a helpful overview of supplies for the week. Suggest that “Everyday Supplies” be set up on a counter or a cart, and daily supplies be organized into bins with specific activities in buckets for ease.
 - Point out that there are many low prep activities featured in the curriculum. Say: “But low prep does not equal low fun!”
 - Page 9—Continue VBS at Home. Remind conferees to not wait until after VBS to think about follow up. Encourage conferees that as the leaders who have spent significant time with 1st and 2nd graders, they might be some of the best people to engage in follow up.
 - Read 1 Thessalonians 2:8. Remind leaders that kids want to connect with adults who are authentic followers of Jesus. Say: “The relationships and teaching we share with kids will be more meaningful if our hearts are prepared having meditated on the biblical content too!”
 - Encourage leaders to not skip the Leader Devotions at the beginning of each day’s content. Encourage them to make use of the space provided for notes to reflect on what the Lord is teaching them, and how that can be used to inform their teaching at VBS.
 - Highlight the beginning of the Bible Study content, comprised of three pages for the *Start It*, *Learn It*, *Know It*, *Live It*, and *End It* sections, followed by two pages of *Additional Activity Options*. Direct attention to the margins of the Bible Study content which will list supplies, helpful info (such as key term definitions for

words like *Messiah*, which we referenced in our opening activity), Activity Book answers, special needs adaptations, and opportunities where a gospel-sharing transition has been suggested (also indicated by a cross icon).

- Hold up the *VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Pack*. Explain that leaders will need both this and the *VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide*. While every teacher needs a leader guide, only one leader pack is needed per room.
- Say: “This pack contains posters and activity items that are essential to your teaching in Spotlight Bible Study. Pack items will include preparation instructions and a notice if it is OK to copy. The leader pack also contains a copy of the *VBS 2026 Music for Kids CD*.”
- Hold up the *VBS 2026 Kids Activity Book*. Say: “These books may be one of the smallest items you can use to help you teach, but they are one of the most important items. These books are intended to be used one per child, at various points throughout each day of VBS and at home!”
- Briefly reference other items displayed on the resource table and encourage conferees to interact with them before they leave, including the:
 - *VBS 2026 Memory Maker* — Provide one tag each day to help kids remember what they have learned or use these as prizes throughout the week.
 - *VBS 2026 Gospel Guide* — This is a great tool for walking through the gospel with kids or parents utilizing “The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me.”
 - *VBS 2026 Parent Guide* — This tool helps parents know what their kids are learning and provides them ideas to engage with their children at home.
 - *Illumination Station Devotional: Shining a Light on Jesus* — This resource provides kids a framework to continue studying God’s Word after VBS is over.
- Say: “For further resources and helps visit lifeway.com/vbs and ministrygrid.com.”

3. Presentation—Start It, Learn It, Know It, Live It, End It (45 minutes)

- Explain that *illumination* comes from the word illuminate, which has two different meanings: (1) “to light something up, like turning on a light in a room,” or (2) “to make something clear or to explain it.” Note that kids will be learning about both kinds of illumination in Spotlight Bible Study as they find out more about making things clear and about making things bright.
- Say: “Now, let’s do some illuminating ourselves!”
- Ask conferees to locate their mini glow sticks and activate them. Instruct conferees to gather in groups based on the five colors represented by the glow sticks. As this happens, provide each group with a basket.
- Give each group a basket that contains content relating to one day of *Illumination Station VBS*. Say: “Inside you’ll find an overview page, and any supplies needed for your assigned activity. Feel free to make notes on the overview page and be ready to share highlights of your findings with everyone.”
- Allow eight minutes for the groups to work.
- Overview Day 1:
 - Mention a few of the lyrics from the Day 1 song, God’s Promised Son: “Jesus is God’s promised Son, Light and life for everyone who believes. He’s the Messiah, His name is higher, than any other name.”
 - Attach the Day 1 banner add-on (pack item 7) to the “Illumination Station Banner” (pack item 6). Explain that this is Today’s Point for Day 1. VBS begins with the truth that Jesus is God’s promised Son.
 - Attach the “Day 1 Bible Story Picture” (pack item 1) to the focal wall and read the following Bible story summary taken from the *VBS 2026 Administrative*

Guide (p. 7). Emphasize that this is an introductory Bible story summary for VBS directors and is not the full story found within the daily content of the *VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide*. Model good storytelling techniques by making eye contact with attendees, varying speed, pitch, and volume where necessary. Consider moving around the room to engage the conferees. (NOTE: The summaries found on page 3 of the *VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide* are even shorter and could be used instead to save time.)

- Summary: “Jesus asked His disciples who people said that He is. Many people believed Jesus was a prophet. Many thought He was John the Baptist, Elijah, or Jeremiah come back to life. Jesus asked who the disciples said that He is. Simon Peter said Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Jesus said Peter was blessed because God had revealed the truth to him about who Jesus is. Jesus said Peter would share the good news about Jesus and start His church.”
 - Explain that the content each day will help answer a daily Spotlight Question. Read the Spotlight Question & Answer for Day 1: Who is Jesus? Jesus is the Messiah, the promised Son of God.
 - Say: “Though many churches ramp up towards a gospel presentation on Day 3 or 4 at VBS, you’ll see how each day’s content provides opportunities to shine a light on the gospel, helping us maximize the time we have with kids who may only show up for one day of VBS!”
 - Ask a conferee from the Day 1 group to read Matthew 16:16 aloud. Add the “Day 1 Bonus Verse Poster” (pack item 9) to the focal wall as the verse is read.
 - Invite the Day 1 group to briefly explain their activity and share the answers to their questions.
 - Slide the beam of the flashlight (from pack item 7) into the plastic bag on pack item 6 and move it around to illuminate the speech bubble with a question mark icon. Explain that kids can do this during large group each day. The question mark can help them remember the questions Jesus asked His disciples. (*Who do people say that the Son of Man is? Who do you say that I am?*)
 - Point out that this is the same icon as on the *VBS 2026 Memory Makers*. Mention that the End It section of each session contains further prompts on how to utilize the memory makers which display the same symbols.
- Overview Day 2:
 - Mention a few of the lyrics from the Day 2 song, Perfect: “Jesus is the sinless Son of God, perfect in everything He does. He’s the only One who has ever been perfect!”
 - Attach the Day 2 banner add-on (pack item 7) to the banner (pack item 6). This is Today’s Point for Day 1. Explain that VBS continues with the truth that Jesus is God’s perfect Son.
 - Attach the “Day 2 Bible Story Picture” (pack item 2) to the focal wall and read the following Bible story summary (*VBS 2026 Administrative Guide*, p. 7):
 - “God sent John the Baptist to get people ready for Jesus. People heard John’s message and started to repent of their sin. They wanted to stop disobeying God, so they asked God for forgiveness. Then John baptized them. He lowered them in the water and brought them back up to show that they had asked God for forgiveness. John preached that Jesus was coming. Jesus went to see John the Baptist at the Jordan River. Jesus told John that He wanted to be baptized because God said it was right, so John baptized Jesus. God’s voice came from heaven. ‘This is My Son,’ the voice said. ‘I love Him, and I am very pleased with Him!’”

- Read the Spotlight Question & Answer for Day 2: “Was Jesus just an ordinary man? Jesus is the perfect Son of God who came to be the Savior of the world.”
- Say: “The gospel opportunities continue on Day 2 with a clear stating of why Jesus came in this day’s Spotlight Question.”
- Ask a conferee from the Day 2 group to read Mark 1:11 aloud. Display the “Day 2 Bonus Verse Poster” (pack item 10) on the focal wall as the volunteer reads.
- Invite the group to briefly explain their activity and share their answers.
- Use the banner flashlight to illuminate the waves that are the Day 2 icon. Mention that the icon represents a river. Call for a volunteer to tell what happened beside the river (*people listened to John the Baptist preach*) and what happened in the river. (*Jesus was baptized.*)
- Overview Day 3:
 - Mention a few of the lyrics from the Day 3 song, Shine: “If you want a life that’s new, there is something you can do. Ask Jesus ‘cause He is the powerful Son of God.”
 - Attach the Day 3 banner add-on (pack item 7) to the banner (pack item 6). This is the Point for Day 3. Explain that VBS continues with the truth that Jesus is the powerful Son of God.
 - Attach the “Day 3 Bible Story Picture” (pack item 3) to the focal wall and read the following Bible story summary (*VBS 2026 Administrative Guide*, p. 7):
 - “One day Jesus went up a mountain. Large crowds of people came including people who were sick. Jesus healed them. He could do this because He is God’s Son. Jesus wanted to provide food for the people but the disciples didn’t know where they could get enough. Jesus asked how much food they had with them. They had 7 loaves of bread and a few small fish. Jesus thanked God for the food and began to break it into pieces. There was enough for everyone to eat until they were full and there were 7 large baskets of leftovers! Jesus fed 4,000 men plus women and children that day.”
 - Read the Spotlight Question & Answer for Day 3: “Was Jesus just a teacher? Everything Jesus said and did showed that He is the powerful Son of God.”
 - Ask a conferee from the Day 3 group to read Matthew 28:18 aloud. Display the “Day 3 Bonus Verse Poster” (pack item 11) on the focal wall.
 - Invite the group to briefly explain their activity and share their answers.
 - Use the banner flashlight to illuminate the bread and fish icon. Ask: “What does this remind you about from today’s Bible story?”
 - Say: “Nothing is as powerful as God and His powerful Son, Jesus. Jesus could do many mighty miracles because He is God’s Son.”
- Overview Day 4:
 - Mention a few of the lyrics from the Day 4 song, Bright: “I think about all You’ve done for me, how You gave Your life away, and how You rose up like the morning sun leaves me speechless and amazed.”
 - Attach the Day 4 banner add-on (pack item 7) to the banner (pack item 6). This is the Day 4 Point. Explain that VBS continues with the truth that Jesus is the proven Son of God.
 - Attach the “Day 4 Bible Story Picture” (pack item 4) to the focal wall and read the following Bible story summary (*VBS 2026 Administrative Guide*, p. 7):
 - “The religious leaders did not like Jesus because of the things He was doing and teaching. Jesus taught that He was God’s Son, so they wanted to stop Him. Jesus was arrested, put on trial, and nailed to a cross. When Jesus died, a Roman army officer who had been watching

Jesus said, “This man really was God’s Son!” After Jesus died, He was buried in a tomb. Some women went to the tomb. When they got there, they saw that the stone had been rolled away. They went in but did not find Jesus’ body. Instead, a man dressed in a white robe told them Jesus is alive!”

- Read the Spotlight Question & Answer for Day 4: “Was Jesus just someone who lived a long time ago? Jesus lived, died, and rose to life again to be our Savior, now and forever.”
- Ask a conferee from the Day 4 group to read Mark 15:39 aloud. Display the “Day 4 Bonus Verse Poster” (pack item 12) on the focal wall.
- Invite the group to briefly explain their activity and share their answers.
- Use the banner flashlight to illuminate the cross and tomb icon. Relate the icon to today’s Bible story. Remind conferees that kids can know Jesus is the proven Son of God, the One who is the Savior.
- Overview Day 5:
 - Mention a few of the lyrics from the Day 5 song, Forgiveness in You: “I found forgiveness in You, out of the darkness into the truth. Each day Your mercies are new. Light of the world I will follow You.”
 - Attach the Day 5 banner add-on (pack item 7) to the banner (pack item 6). This is the Day 5 Point. Explain that VBS concludes with the truth that “Jesus is God’s plan for forgiveness.”
 - Attach the “Day 5 Bible Story Picture” (pack item 5) to the focal wall and read the following Bible story summary (*VBS 2026 Administrative Guide*, p. 7).
 - “Peter and the other disciples stood up in front of a crowd. Peter said God proved who Jesus was by doing miracles, wonders, and signs through Him. God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth to die and take the punishment for our sins. The people were very sorry for their sins. They asked what they should do. Peter told them to repent—turn from disobeying God to obeying God— and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins. That day about 3,000 people responded to Peter’s message, repented, and were baptized.”
 - Read the Spotlight Question & Answer for Day 5: “Why do I need to respond to Jesus? Jesus is the only way to receive God’s forgiveness.”
 - Ask a conferee from the Day 5 group to read Acts 2:38 aloud. Display the “Day 5 Bonus Verse Poster” (pack item 13) on the focal wall as the volunteer reads.
 - Invite the group to briefly explain their activity and share their answers.
 - Use the banner flashlight to illuminate the speech bubble with an exclamation point on the banner (item 6). Ask how the icon from the banner can help us recall the important things Peter had to say in today’s Bible story.
- Summarize the weekly content by pointing out that kids should leave VBS having learned and understood five big truths, as shown on the now completed “Illumination Station Banner” (pack item 6).
- Say: “Jesus is God’s promised Son, God’s perfect Son, the powerful Son of God, the proven Son of God, and God’s plan for forgiveness.”

4. Post-event Continued Connections (Follow Up) (15 minutes)

- Remind conferees that kids want people to walk with them and disciple them as they grow in their love and knowledge of the Lord.
- Ask: “What do you think kids are looking for in that person?” Invite conferees to share.

- Explain that kids desire someone they feel seen by, and who is an authentic follower of Jesus. They aren't looking for someone who knows all the answers, but someone who loves them and loves God and will help try to find answers with them!
- Encourage conferees that this is true for prospects too! Through VBS, the hope is that a connection has been made between visiting kids, regular attending kids, and volunteers.
- Share that while church staff (such as pastors or children's ministers) or the VBS Director ought to take charge in follow-up strategies, every VBS volunteer has a role to play—especially those who have spent a considerable amount of time with kids and developed relationships—like Bible Study leaders!
- Direct attention to “Continue VBS at Home” (leader guide, p. 9). Say: “We pour so much effort into VBS week that we are often exhausted when the week is over—but the work is not done! Having spent a week investing in a group of kids we need to shift gears and look for ways to continue connecting with them.”
- Highlight the following strategies to continue the connection:
 - Greet kids (and families) wherever you see them—at church or at the grocery store!
 - Serve in an ongoing capacity with your church's kids ministry.
 - Take part in whatever organized follow-up processes or events your church has.
 - Write a personal note to kids after VBS. Mention that it would be hard for a Children's Minister or VBS Director to write a personal message to every child. The best positioned person to encourage and connect with that child is someone who spent a lot of time with them during VBS! You can even send a small gift along with the note. Ideas are provided in the leader guide.
- Encourage conferees that follow up does not have to wait until after VBS. Don't miss opportunities during the week to connect with kids and families! This could be something like:
 - A text to a parent during the week to share encouragement about their child. If church policy permits you might share a picture or video of that child having fun.
 - Working with your VBS Director to do a porch drop-off including a gift (such as a VBS related item, fast food drink gift card, or popcorn pouch). Don't forget to include church information and an invite to a follow-up event (this might be a traditional VBS family night, or a future Kids Ministry event planned). Another great resource to provide prospects with is *Life as a Christian: A Primer for New Believers*. This affordable book offers an incredible overview of the basics of the Christian faith that would be helpful to unchurched kids and parents alike.
- Say: “God can work through a volunteer assigned to hand out snacks, greet at the door, or be on the safety team. We all need to be prepared and ready to serve Him. One of the most important things anyone serving at VBS can be prepared for is sharing the gospel with a child.”
- Reference the “Teaching Others to Share the Gospel” printable from the *VBS 2026 Administrative Guide* (found inside the “powerpoints_training” folder). This provides a great training framework for teams to review together for this important conversation. The final page of this printable also highlights Levels of Biblical Learning for Salvation, providing helpful information on how a 1st–2nd grader could be expected to comprehend the gospel.
- Say: “Younger kids can be growing in understanding that ...
 - God provided a way for people to become Christians because He loves them.
 - God sent His only Son, Jesus, to be the only Savior of the world.

- Sin is choosing my way and disobeying God.
- Jesus took the punishment for people’s sins.
- People who trust Jesus as their Savior and Lord are Christians.
- God will forgive people when they ask Him.”
- Direct attention to the “Gospel Poster” (pack item 14). Demonstrate the interactive element of the poster, prepared using the instructions listed in the pack item’s footer.
- Say: “Lifeway VBS utilizes *The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me* as a framework to share the gospel with kids. Place this poster somewhere prominent in your classroom so you can refer to it throughout sessions as you lead.”
- Suggest different ways that this framework could be utilized in sharing the gospel such as matching the symbols and words up on paper plates, creating the symbols with chenille stems, making the symbols out of modelling clay, or creating inserts for the *Giant Inflatable Game Cube*.
- Review *The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me* using the Giant Inflatable Game Cube and inserts (item 3). After providing a warning, toss the game cube towards conferees and explain that they can choose to catch it or bump it in. When caught, instruct conferees to say the two words that correspond with the symbol that is facing them. Use the notes below for a short overview:
 - God Rules—The Bible tells us God created everything, including you and me, and He is in charge of everything.
 - We Sinned—Since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God’s punishment of death.
 - God Provided—God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It’s something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us.
 - Jesus Gives—Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God’s family for eternity. This is the best gift ever!
 - We Respond—We can respond to Jesus. The ABCs of Becoming a Christian is a simple tool that helps us remember how to respond when prompted by the Holy Spirit to receive the gift Jesus offers.
 - ABCs—A: Admit to God that you’re a sinner and repent; B: Believe that Jesus is the Son of God and receive God’s gift of forgiveness from sin; C: Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
- Say: “There is no better preparation we can do for VBS, outside of prayer, than readying ourselves for a gospel conversation with a child.”

5. Closing (5 minutes)

- If possible, dim the lights and ask conferees to locate their glow sticks. Lead conferees to shout the motto: “Jesus is the Light of the world.”
- Reference the “Theme Verse Poster” (pack item 8) and guide the group to read the verse aloud. Explain that Lifeway VBS content is rooted in Scripture, and we want to ensure we are pointing kids to Scripture as much as possible during VBS, so that they see statements like our motto aren’t made up—they’re inspired by the Lord!
- Lead conferees to find a partner and each take 30 seconds to pray for one another.
- Conclude by praying aloud for the group. Ask God to bless each VBS represented in the room and to help each conferee depend on Him before, during, and after VBS. Ask the Lord to change the lives of kids forever through VBS this summer.

VBS 2026 GRADES 1-2 OVERVIEW

RESOURCE OVERVIEW:

DAILY CONTENT:

DAY 1



TODAY'S POINT:

BIBLE STORY:

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE(S):

SPOTLIGHT QUESTION:

BONUS VERSE:

DAY 2



TODAY'S POINT:

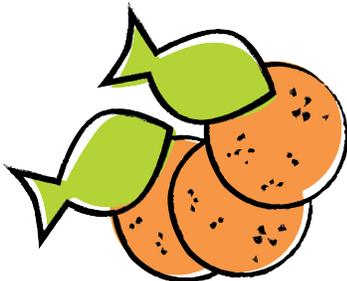
BIBLE STORY:

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE(S):

SPOTLIGHT QUESTION:

BONUS VERSE:

DAY 3



TODAY'S POINT:

BIBLE STORY:

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE(S):

SPOTLIGHT QUESTION:

BONUS VERSE:

DAY 4



TODAY'S POINT:

BIBLE STORY:

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE(S):

SPOTLIGHT QUESTION:

BONUS VERSE:

DAY 5



TODAY'S POINT:

BIBLE STORY:

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE(S):

SPOTLIGHT QUESTION:

BONUS VERSE:

NOTES:

DAY 1

TODAY'S POINT: Jesus is God's promised Son.

BIBLE STORY: Jesus Asked Who People Thought He Was (*Matthew 16:13-20*)

SPOTLIGHT QUESTION: Who is Jesus?

Jesus is the Messiah, the promised Son of God.

BONUS VERSE: Matthew 16:16

STORY RECAP:

Jesus asked His disciples who people said that He is and who the disciples said that He is. Simon Peter said Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus said Peter was blessed because God had revealed the truth to him. Jesus said Peter would share the good news about Jesus and start His church. (*VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide, p. 3*)

LEARN IT ACTIVITY FROM LEADER GUIDE (p. 12)

Look at pack item 16 when considering this activity and assume that the following command has been followed: Cut apart and post the letters from "Who Do People Say" around the room, low enough for kids to reach them.

- Call attention to the letter signs posted around the room. Form three groups of children and assign each group a shape of letter to find around the room and bring back to the group area. Wait as kids find the letters.
- Assist kids in unscrambling their sets of letters to form the words *John, Elijah, and Jeremiah*. Encourage kids to quietly point to the correct set of letters as they hear who the disciples answered that some people thought Jesus was. (*John, Elijah, Jeremiah*) Mention that the disciples in the story were people Jesus invited to follow Him while He lived on earth.

GROUP QUESTIONS

Why do kids need to hear the message communicated at VBS today?

How does this activity relate to the Bible story, *Today's Point*, or the *Spotlight Question*?

How could you transition from this activity to a gospel conversation?

How might you modify this activity if you have mostly unchurched kids who do not know who John, Elijah, or Jeremiah were?

DAY 2

TODAY'S POINT: Jesus is God's perfect Son.

BIBLE STORY: The Baptism of Jesus (*Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:1-11; John 1:29-34*)

SPOTLIGHT QUESTION: Was Jesus just an ordinary man?

Jesus is the perfect Son of God who came to be the Savior of the world.

BONUS VERSE: Mark 1:11

STORY RECAP:

God sent John the Baptist to get people ready for Jesus. Jesus told John that He wanted to be baptized because God said it was right so John baptized Jesus. God's voice came from heaven. "This is My Son," the voice said. "I love Him, and I am very pleased with Him!" (*VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide, p. 3*)

END IT ACTIVITY FROM LEADER GUIDE (p. 21)

Look at pack item 19 when considering this activity.

- Place the "Sunbeam Prayer" (item 19) on the floor with children seated all around the item. Explain that each sunbeam has on it a category, such as *Family*. Point out that this category is to remind kids to pray for their families and things their families need or to thank God for gifts He has given their families. Name the other categories and briefly explain what kids might want to pray for or about regarding those suggestions. When children have made their choices of what categories to pray for, ask them to fold their arms and sit quietly as others make their choices. Mention that kids will pray silently and may choose other categories as they pray until you say, "Amen." Encourage boys and girls to keep their hands still so they will not disturb other children as they pray. Sit quietly for a minute or two. Say, "Amen."

GROUP QUESTIONS

Why do kids need to hear the message communicated at VBS today?

How does this activity relate to the Bible story, *Today's Point*, or the *Spotlight Question*?

How could you transition from this activity to a gospel conversation?

How might you modify this activity if you have a group of 30 kids?

DAY 3

TODAY'S POINT: Jesus is the powerful Son of God

BIBLE STORY: Jesus Performed Miracles (*Matthew 15:29-39*)

SPOTLIGHT QUESTION: Was Jesus just a teacher?

Everything Jesus said and did showed that He is the powerful Son of God.

BONUS VERSE: Matthew 28:18

STORY RECAP:

Large crowds came and Jesus healed sick people in the crowd. Jesus wanted to provide food. The disciples had 7 loaves of bread and a few small fish. Jesus broke the food into pieces. There was enough for everyone to eat until they were full and there were 7 large baskets of leftovers! Jesus fed 4,000 men plus women and children that day. (*VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide, p. 3*)

LIVE IT ACTIVITY FROM LEADER GUIDE (p. 28)

- Ask what kids think a *miracle* is. After kids' responses, respond that a *miracle* is something only God and Jesus can do. Comment that some people try to make it look like they can do miracles, like a magician might try to trick people. Note that those things are not miracles since only God can do miracles.
- Ask kids to stand. Tell the group you will name an activity and if you name a miracle they can shout, "Miracle!" If the activity is not a miracle, kids will whisper, "No, no, no." Use the events in the margin.
- Mention that Jesus did a miracle each time He made someone well just by speaking to them. Note that Jesus did a miracle when He walked on top of water, another when He stopped a storm, and another when He fed a crowd with just a small amount of food. Tell kids that Jesus actually fed large crowds twice using just a small amount of food. Explain that in today's Bible story Jesus fed more than 4,000 people, but the Bible says that Jesus also fed a crowd of more than 5,000 people with just two fish and five loaves of bread. Note for kids that doing miracles was a way Jesus showed He is the powerful Son of God.

GROUP QUESTIONS

Why do kids need to hear the message communicated at VBS today?

How does this activity relate to the Bible story, *Today's Point*, or the *Spotlight Question*?

How could you transition from this activity to a gospel conversation?

How might you modify this activity if your kids are restless and not engaging?

DAY 4

TODAY'S POINT: Jesus is the proven Son of God

BIBLE STORY: Jesus Died and Rose to Life (*Mark 14:43–16:7*)

SPOTLIGHT QUESTION: Was Jesus just someone who lived a long time ago? Jesus lived, died, and rose to life again to be our Savior, now and forever.

BONUS VERSE: Mark 15:39

STORY RECAP:

Jesus was arrested, put on trial, and nailed to a cross. After Jesus died, He was buried in a tomb. Some women went to the tomb. When they got there, they saw that the stone had been rolled away. They went in but did not find Jesus' body. Instead, a man dressed in a white robe told them Jesus is alive! (*VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide*, p. 3)

KNOW IT ACTIVITY FROM LEADER GUIDE (p. 34)

Look at pack item 8 when considering this activity.

- Read the “Theme Verse Poster” (item 8) together. Invite kids to read the verse aloud along with you.
- Make sure kids still have tea lights from “Learn It” or redistribute them. Instruct kids to stand so their backs face the poster, holding their lights, and make sure their lights are off. Cover one of the words in the first half of the Bible verse. Allow kids to turn back toward the poster and to turn on their tea lights as soon as they know what word is covered in the Bible verse. Call on a volunteer to tell the missing word. Lead kids in reading the complete verse aloud together.
- Tell kids to turn their backs to the poster again with their tea lights off. Cover a different word in the verse. Let kids turn to the poster, decide what word is covered, and switch on their tea lights. Call on a child with a lit tea light to tell the missing word. The group reads the entire verse together again.
- During each of the next rounds, cover another word until the entire verse is covered. Remind kids that Jesus is the Light mentioned in the verse.

GROUP QUESTIONS

Why do kids need to hear the message communicated at VBS today?

How does this activity relate to the Bible story, *Today's Point*, or the *Spotlight Question*?

How could you transition from this activity to a gospel conversation?

How might you modify this activity if you predominantly had children who could not yet read?

DAY 5

TODAY'S POINT: Jesus is God's plan for forgiveness

BIBLE STORY: Peter Preached About Jesus (*Acts 2*)

SPOTLIGHT QUESTION: Why do I need to respond to Jesus?

Jesus is the only way to receive God's forgiveness.

BONUS VERSE: Acts 2:38

STORY RECAP:

Peter told a crowd that God had proven who Jesus was by doing miracles, wonders, and signs through Him. The people were very sorry for their sins. Peter told them to repent—turn from disobeying God to obeying God—and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins. That day about 3,000 people responded to Peter's message, repented, and were baptized. (*VBS 2026 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide*, p. 3)

START IT ACTIVITY FROM LEADER GUIDE (p. 40)

- Guide kids to play “Come to Me.” Call for a volunteer to stand in the middle of the room with her eyes open. Instruct all other kids to spread out around the room and cover their eyes. Allow the child in the middle to quietly move to another part of the room. She then begins saying very quietly, “Come to me.” The other kids continue to keep their eyes closed but they begin moving toward the voice, trying to get to the speaker. Caution kids to move slowly and carefully to avoid bumping into each other. The child speaking cannot move around but does continue to often say, “Come to me.” When a kid reaches the speaking child, he sits down and watches other kids try to locate the speaker.
- Remark that Jesus invites, or calls, people to come to Him. Point out that that's what your group has been doing at VBS: learning who Jesus is and how to have a relationship with Him. Explain that today kids will learn more about how to respond to Jesus' invitation to come to Him.

GROUP QUESTIONS

Why do kids need to hear the message communicated at VBS today?

How does this activity relate to the Bible story, *Today's Point*, or the *Spotlight Question*?

How could you transition from this activity to a gospel conversation?

How might you modify this activity if you have a very small classroom?



Item 3. Gospel Icons



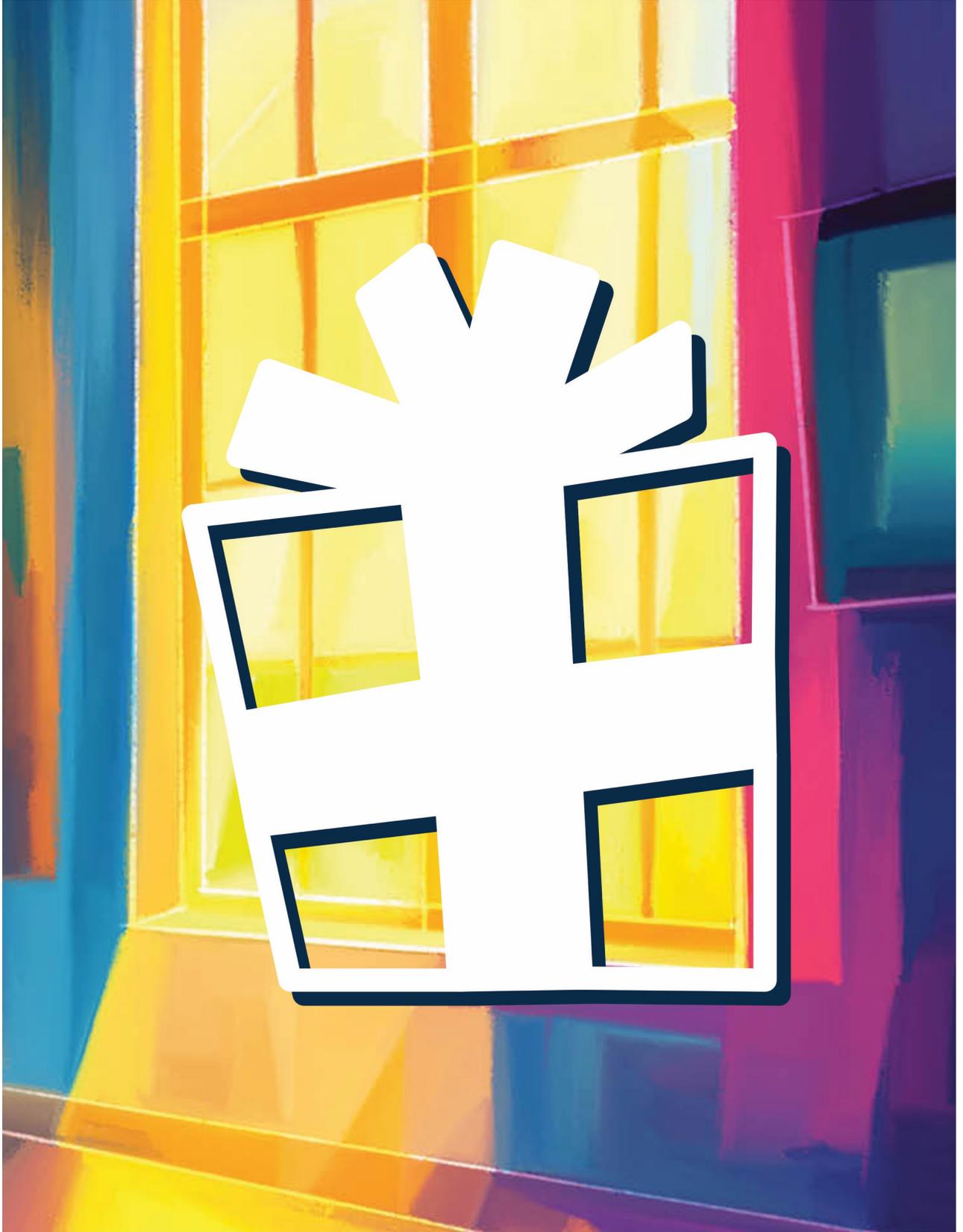
Item 3. Gospel Icons



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