

WEEK 1 PRESCHOOL LESSON GUIDE



THE BIG IDEA

Jesus came to bring good news to the world.

THE BIBLE

The Birth of John Foretold:

Luke 1:5-20; 57-66

WELCOME TIME

MUSIC | Songs of Joy

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *You can lead kids in worship with any songs you like best, but here are a few songs that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, read this!*
 - "Oh What a Special Night" (Animated Praise)
 - "Joyful Joyful We Adore Thee" (Go Fish)
 - "Away in a Manger" (Yancy)
 - "Jesus, Savior of the World" (Kidspring)
- ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** *Provide an assortment of instruments from other countries for kids to play while listening to the song "Celebration," performed by kids from all over the world. You could also play any version of "Joy to the World" you like and give kids bells to shake as they sing along.*

ACTIVITY | Drumroll, Please!

- Welcome to Joy to the World, everyone! This month is all about celebrating, since we are talking about things that happened around the time Jesus was born!
- A celebration is when people get together because they want to honor someone or remember an important day. There are usually parties with lots of food, decorations, music, and of course . . . lots of noise!
- Let's create our very own hand drums to use as a noisemaker to prepare for some good news we'll hear about today!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Help kids build their drums by following these instructions (or something like it). To help little hands, punch holes in the paper plate, hot glue the popsicle stick to it, and tie string to beads ahead of time. Prepare enough materials in advance for each kid.
- When we get good news, we want everyone to know it! Everyone . . . drumroll, please!

ACTIVITY | Birthdays Around the World

- There are so many different ways people celebrate an important day, like a birthday!
- How do you celebrate your birthday?
- Those sound like lots of fun! Let's take a look at how kids all around the world celebrate birthdays!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show this video (or something like it) of how kids celebrate birthdays around the world. You can also look up how to say "Happy Birthday" in a few different languages and teach them to the kids!
- No matter where you are, birthday celebrations take time to prepare. Today's Bible story is how God prepared the world for Jesus's birthday!

TEACHING TIME

BIBLE STORY | The Birth of John Foretold

- Hi friends! I just got a letter from my friend, Linda. She is traveling far away in a place called Singapore in Southeast Asia. Do you know where Singapore is on this globe? [Show kids its location on the globe by placing a Christmas sticker there.]
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before story time, print and place the story cards inside an envelope and seal it shut. Place it next to a globe on top of a desk or table.
- Here's what the my friend's letter says:
 - Dear [Your Name]. *N h o!* That's how you say "hello" in Mandarin Chinese, which is the language people speak in Singapore. Singapore is both a very modern-looking city and a beautiful island rolled into one! I'm amazed at how clean everything is. Did you know that they don't allow you to bring chewing gum into Singapore? Isn't that wild?!
 - Anyway, I just read about some good news, and I just had to share it with you. It comes from the New Testament in the Bible, and it's about an older couple named Zechariah and Elizabeth who loved God deeply. [Show picture 1.]
 - One day, Zechariah was at the temple when an angel named Gabriel suddenly appeared! The angel came from God to give Zechariah a very important message. [Show picture 2.]
 - The angel told Zechariah that God would give him and his wife, Elizabeth, a baby. They were to call him John because he would be filled with the Holy Spirit and turn many people to God.
 - Zechariah couldn't believe it. It seemed too good to be true! "How can this happen?" he wondered. "Elizabeth and I are too old to have a baby!"

- Wow, that does seem impossible. **But is anything impossible for God?** No, right? Let's keep reading.
 - Zechariah was so shocked at the news that he wasn't able to talk at all. For months and months!
 - But guess what? Just as the angel, Gabriel, said, Elizabeth and Zechariah had a baby boy! *[Show picture 3.]*
 - Zechariah wrote down the baby's name. He would be called John, just like the angel had said. As soon as he did that, he was able to talk again! The good news the angel said would happen came true!
 - And the best part of this good news was that when John grew up, he would be the one to tell others the good news about Jesus!
 - I can't wait to let you know more about my travels and all the stories I hear as I travel around the world. I'll write to you again next week. Your friend, Linda.
- Wow, that is some good news! Isn't it cool that my friend in Singapore and everyone around the world could know about the same good news as us?

THE BIG IDEA | Jesus came to bring good news to the world!

- Since our letter came from Singapore this week, let's learn how to say something in Mandarin Chinese – the world's second-most spoken language. Mandarin and English are the main languages of Singapore!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Find a native speaker to record this on a simple video, or play this sound clip on Google Translate for kids to copy. Afterward, pass out the Big Idea passport printable to have them trace the Big Idea. Then give everyone a sticker or stamp for box #1. Collect the passports at the end of large group time and save for next week.*
- Are you ready? "Shì dà chuàng yì de shí hòu le!"
- That means, "It's time for the Big Idea!"
- **Now, can I get a drumroll?** *[Have kids use hand drums from earlier.]*
- **Jesus came to bring good news to the world!** Say it again with me!

VIDEO | Joy to the World, Episode 1

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week's episode of Cali's World.*

ACTIVITY | Pass the Good News!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Prepare a "good news" envelope. Have the kids sit in a circle. Give the child with the nearest birthday the envelope and instruct the children that when the music plays, they are to pass it until the music stops. The goal of the game is that they pass it quickly so everyone has a chance to be given the good news!*
- **Did you all get the good news?**
- **How did you get it?** Someone shared it with you!
- I'm so glad Jesus came to bring good news to everyone in the world!

PRAYER

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play a song featuring kids from around the world ([like this one](#)) before praying together.
- Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to bring good news to the world. As we listen to kids all around the world praising you, we thank you that good news is for everyone. No one is left out of your good news! Help us to share the good news with other people. Amen

DISCUSSION TIME

ACTIVITY | Gingerbread Sins

- **Have you ever decorated a gingerbread cookie before?** Many people all over the world like to do so during Christmas time. While we can decorate with frosting, candy, and other goodies, it's tough to decorate if the cookie is broken!
- The bad news is that we, too, were all broken on the inside, because of sin. Sin is anything we do that's wrong or anything we don't do even though it's right.
- But wait — **Jesus came to give good news to the world!** And the good news is, Jesus can wash away our sins.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass out laminated gingerbread figure or place the printable inside a transparent sheet protector. Give each kid a dry erase marker and an eraser labeled, "Jesus."
- Draw some scribbles on your gingerbread person. You see how messy it can get? Sin dirties us up on the inside like that, whenever we say, do, or think about anything that is not what God wants.
- **When we pray and ask Jesus to forgive us of all our sin, do you know what happens?** He does it! He erases away our sins! Let's erase our scribbles to show what that looks like on our gingerbread person!

SNACK | Gingerbread Treats

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Provide each child with a couple gingerbread cookies to enjoy once they've finished the activity. For a simple treat, try this pre-made option. For an extended themed experience, consider getting a different snack box each week featuring flavors from different countries for kids to try!
- **Do you remember what language people speak in Singapore?**
- **What good news did Zechariah and Elizabeth get in today's Bible story?**
- **What was the name of their baby?**

RESPONSE | Sticky Joy

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Place the four poster boards (or pictures) around the room or on the wall. Label each of them "My Family," "My Friends," "My Neighbors," and "My World." Give each kid a few sticky notes and have them draw a picture of a few people in their lives that might fit into these categories. They can stick it on the corresponding posters.

✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Find pictures (photos of actual people they know or stock images) of people toddlers have in their lives. Have them repeat after you each time as you fill in the blank in “Jesus brings good news to my _____” with names like sister, dad, grandma, auntie, neighbor, etc.

- God puts people in our lives we can share the good news of Jesus with.
- **Does everyone in your family know Jesus?**
- **Do you have friends or neighbors who don’t go to church?**
- **Do you know that Jesus came to bring good news to the entire world?**
- Let’s go around and pray for people in our lives as we go around and place our sticky notes!

MEMORY VERSE | Luke 2:14 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print the memory verse words from the printable and tape it to the floor, spaced out in a large circle. Have kids hop, crawl, or walk backwards from globe to globe, and help them say each of the words they land on.
- Great job working together to learn the memory verse for the month! Let’s say it together one more time:
- **“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”**

PLAY TIME

While you’re waiting for parents to pick up their kids . . .

ACTIVITY | Coloring Page

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print and distribute the coloring page along with crayons or markers. As the kids color, you can review today’s Bible story, Big Idea, and memory verse. To reinforce the around-the-world theme, consider passing out passport visa or world flags stickers when they complete their coloring page.

ACTIVITY | Brush Painting

- One of the most ancient forms of art is brush painting, and it is still used around the world, especially in countries in Asia. People used to even write letters using a brush and ink!
- **Can you imagine having to share the good news we learned today using brush painting?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Draw out some lines with pencil for kids to trace over. You can look up traditional Chinese characters to try out ([like this](#) one), or just have kids trace over simple lines and shapes!
 - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Have kids trace a printed image using black finger paint, or create block letters for them to fill in.

ACTIVITY | Good News Travel

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a printable of the travel magazine “card” and fold it in half. Have them color in the cover. On the inside, let kids draw a fun place they might like to visit one day (real or made up!) or help them write the Big Idea.
 - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Find an easy world puzzle or atlas sticker book to introduce toddlers to different places around the world.
- Wherever we go, we can let people know that **Jesus came to bring good news to the world!**

Encourage your preschoolers to help clean up the room while they wait for their parents.