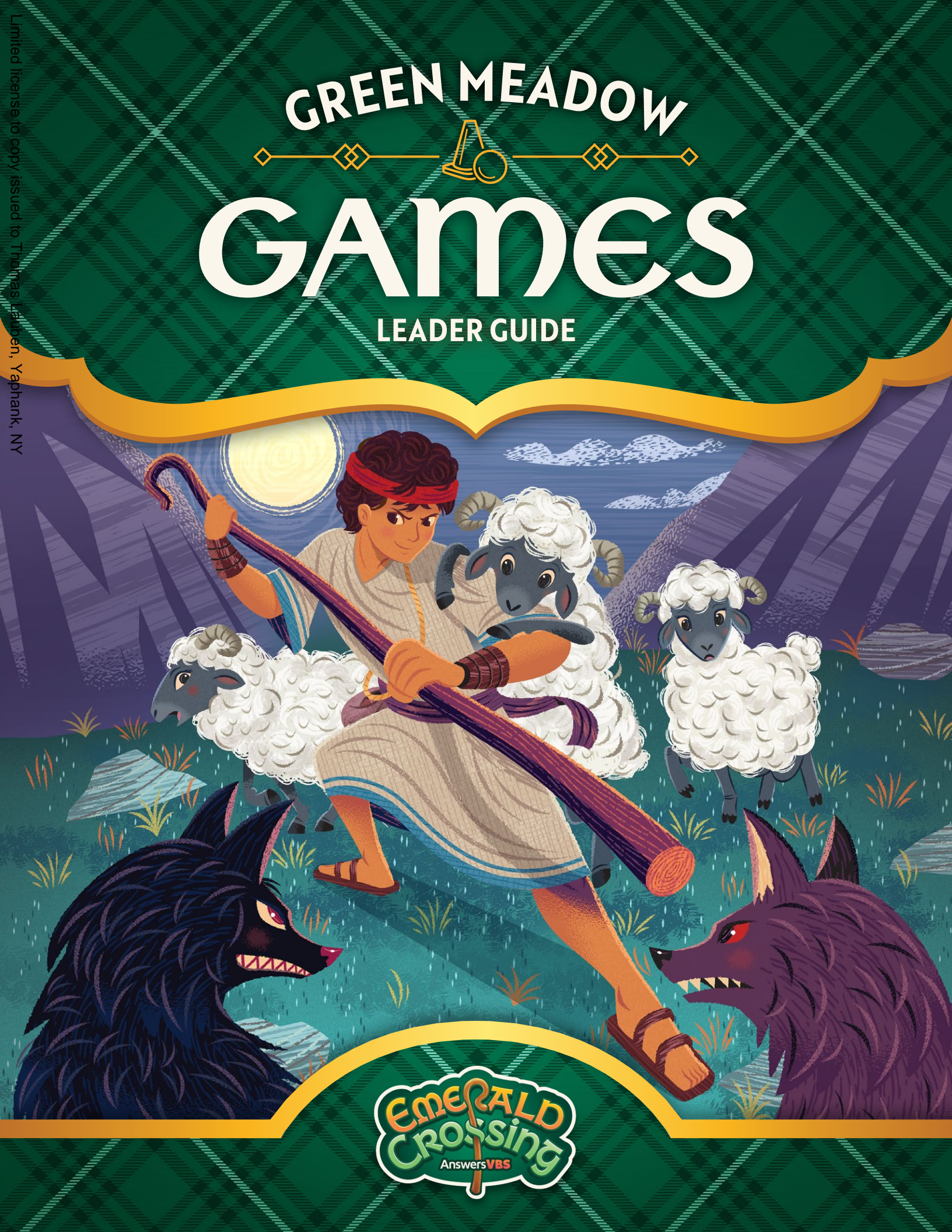


GREEN MEADOW

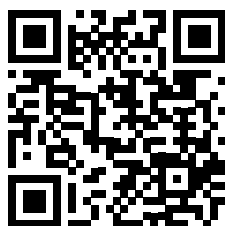


GAMES

LEADER GUIDE





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Course Overview

Theme Verse: Psalm 23:1

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Titles	Lost to Found	Wrong Path to Right Path	Fearful to Peaceful	Grumbling to Grateful	Shaky to Sure
Locations	Sheep Farm in Donegal	Green Pastures in County Galway	Black Valley in County Kerry	Enemy Territory in Dublin	Higher Lands in County Antrim
Bible Passages	Psalm 23:1 1 Samuel 17:34–37	Psalm 23:2–3 1 Samuel 17	Psalm 23:4 1 Samuel 19–23	Psalm 23:5 2 Samuel 9:3–7 1 Samuel 16:1–13	Psalm 23:6 1 Chronicles 22
Lesson Focus	Like David, I can be a child of God and have the Lord as my shepherd.	Like David, I need the Lord to lead me on the right path through his Word.	Like David, I can turn to the Lord for comfort when I am anxious or afraid.	Like David, I can have an attitude of gratitude in every situation.	Like David, I need to be on the lookout for God's goodness and mercy, my traveling companions through life.
Apologetics Content	Is the Lord a distant God? Did he create the universe and then just sit back and watch?	Is the Bible a trustworthy guide to lead us through life?	Why do we even have hard times?	Are good things because of "good luck" or a good God?	What should rainbows remind us of?
Memory Verses	Psalm 23:1	Psalm 23:2–3	Psalm 23:4	Psalm 23:5	Psalm 23:6
Names of God	Shepherd	Leader	Comforter	Provider	Promise Keeper
Animal Pals	Mia the Connemara Sheep	Guide the Border Collie	Shadow the Raven	Pesky the Woolly Aphid	Shirley the Highland Cow
Celtic Corner Crafts	Baa-loved Sheep Keepsake Ornament—Shepherd's Staff	S.O.A.P. Bible Puffball Zipper Pull	"Don't Worry, Just Pray" Magnet Night-Light in the Darkness	Thankube Gratitude Attitude Game	Psalm Scroll Highland Cow
Celtic Corner Science	Sink or Float Wet Woolly	Genetically You Sling Fling	Shadow Play Fear Not	Sticky Stuff Overflow Your Cup	Firm Foundations Real Rainbows
Green Meadow Games	Gaelic Football Lost Sheep Relay	Shamrock, Riverdance, Viking Strongman Challenges	Run, David, Run Walk Through the Valley	Raiders My Cup Overflows Relays	Psalm 23 Partner Obstacle Course Pot o' Gold
Still Water Snacks	Cross Trail Mix Sweet Sheep	Scene 23:2 Border Collie Paw Print	Stuffed Staff Bird's Nest	Piled-High Popcorn Full Float	Cow Patties Spud Circles
Cool Contests	Guess the Rainbow Skittles	Group Spirit Day	Dress-Up Day	Bible Challenge	Mission Money Mania



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Green Meadow Games

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Handy Helps

Top o' the Morning to Ya!

It's early morning on the Emerald Isle. Gaze ahead as the sun rises on the cool, green pastures dotted with grazing sheep. Listen to the waves crash at the staggering Cliffs of Moher as their towering crags ascend majestically from the sea. Catch the earthy scent of sheep and cattle, fertile meadows, and dense forests. Step into a local restaurant and taste the rich flavors of a land known for its butter and potatoes. Run your hand over the soft wool of a pastured lamb or the rough, stony exterior of an age-old castle. Tune in as lively folk music entertains and delights all who listen.

From the lush meadows of its countryside to the cobblestone streets of its cities, there is something to delight the senses everywhere we turn in Ireland. So journey with us to *Emerald Crossing: An Irish Adventure Through Psalm 23*. Every stop along our path will teach us about the Good Shepherd and how he cares for his sheep. Like David discovered throughout his life, first as a shepherd and later as a king, we'll discover important truths such as:

- I can be a child of God and have the Lord as my shepherd.
- I need the Lord to lead me on the right path through his Word.
- I can turn to the Lord for comfort when I'm feeling anxious or afraid.
- I can have an attitude of gratitude in every situation.
- I need to be on the lookout for God's goodness and mercy, my traveling companions through life.

Beauty and adventure await us each day at Emerald Crossing, where lads and lasses will gather at the **Emerald Isle Assembly**. This high-energy beginning includes wacky intros, lively songs, a Mission Moment, and prayer.

Then they're off to rotate through five fun sites:

Flock Talk Time, where Bible lessons are taught in creative, hands-on ways.

Celtic Corner Science and Crafts, where kids will create their own crafts and explore God's world through science activities.

Still Water Snacks, where kids enjoy scrumptious Irish fare.

Green Meadow Games, the rambunctious rec time where kids join in some lively competition.

Top o' the Morning Missions, Music, and Memory Verses, where kids sing songs, learn their memory verses, or go in-depth with the Mission Moment featuring Children's Hunger Fund.

Finally, everyone heads back to the **Emerald Isle Assembly** for the closing, where there's more singing, contest results, and the highly anticipated daily drama. Lads and lasses will be introduced to an Irish sheep farmer named Grandpa Fitz, who runs Stillwater Farm. Through some challenges, some fun, and a few big surprises, Grandpa Fitz shows how the Lord has been his comforter and guide his whole life.

So pull on your work boots, grab your walking staff, and get ready for a grand ol' time at *Emerald Crossing!*

Our Goal

We are so thankful for how God has chosen to use the Answers VBS programs over the past years! But why did we decide to embark on such an undertaking in the first place? And why are we still at it by God's grace?

Our primary goal has always been to bring God glory by boldly and unashamedly proclaiming him to a strategic group—young people! From both a biblical and statistical point of view, young people are a big deal. They're not only awesome—we love 'em!—but they're also dearly cherished by our Lord and tend to be softhearted toward spiritual things. Researchers generally agree most people become Christians when they're children, so it's apparent this age group is a huge mission field!

Children are loved by their Creator, and Jesus said to let them come to him (Luke 18:16). We want children to come to Christ and not be hindered in any way from doing so. To that end, we combine a biblically rich VBS with off-the-charts, irresistible fun. In a day and age when content sometimes suffers, we don't want to sacrifice rich teaching. But it's also crucial that the most exciting book in the world not come across as boring or irrelevant. We want to reflect our creative, inspiring, joy-giving God who made laughter and fun.

So why do we do it? We want kids around the world to hear about and personally meet our awesome God and understand how they can receive eternal life through repentance and faith in Christ Jesus. We believe VBS is a great way to introduce them to God, as it is one of the biggest outreaches of the year for most churches.

We pray you will find that every prayer prayed, every minute invested, every dollar spent, and every word spoken will bring God glory as you reach kids for Christ. Just remember—VBS is worth it. May God richly bless your VBS. We're praying for you!

Your Role

Your role as the game coordinator is outlined in the following pages. Your responsibilities may include:

- Planning games for all age levels
- Gathering game supplies ahead of time
- Setting up games daily during VBS
- Running game time and overseeing others who are running game time
- Making sure key lesson themes are reinforced through the games

- Overseeing the cleanup of the game area(s) each day
- Praying over all aspects of this job before, during, and after VBS

This is *your* guide. Read it carefully and prayerfully, using our suggestions combined with the ideas the Holy Spirit brings to your mind.

So get ready! Get set! God is about to use you and your church to impact lives.

Frequently Asked Questions

The content of *Emerald Crossing* may be new to you. For a list of helpful articles on the topics covered in this VBS program, please visit AnswersVBS.com/emeraldfaq.

Terms to Know

Throughout the VBS curriculum, various terms will be used. Here is a list of some of the most common terms you should know.

Lads and Lasses: Terms used when referring to children during VBS week.

Travel Groups: Groups of children (individual classes) named after animals that live in Ireland, such as Hedgehogs, Red Deer, Sheepdogs, and Irish Hares.

Group Guides: Group leaders who lead the travel groups from place to place during VBS. No teaching is required for this position.

Flock Talk Time: Bible and apologetics lesson time.

Shepherds: Teachers of the Flock Talk Time.

Celtic Corner Science and Crafts: Rotation site where crafts are made and science experiments are explored.

Still Water Snacks: Indoor or outdoor location where snacks are served.

Green Meadow Games: Indoor or outdoor site (outdoor is preferred) for recreation time.

Top o' the Morning Missions, Music, and Memory

Verses: Rotation sites where kids can spend additional time learning songs, memory verses, and missions.

Good as Gold Memory Verse: Daily Bible verse to learn.

Animal Pals: Our friendly animal mascots that remind us of the main theme of each day.

Toddlers: 2–4-year-olds.

Pre-Primaries: 4–6-year-olds or children ages 4 through those who have completed kindergarten.

Primaries: 6–9-year-olds or children who have completed grades 1–3.

Juniors: 9–12-year-olds or children who have completed grades 4–6.

For multiage K–6 travel groups, we recommend using the material for the Primaries.

Top 20 Tips for Green Meadow Games

1. Pray! This is your most important preparation. Give all concerns to the Lord and watch him do great things.
2. Decide which games you will play. Adapt this guide to fit your needs. Consider the age group and the amount of time you have scheduled. Two main game possibilities are given daily starting on page 15, geared for Juniors and Primaries. There are also Toddler Games (page 7), Pre-Primary Games (page 9), and Super Simple Games (page 13). Additional game ideas that can work any day are given at the end of this guide.
3. Keep in mind that younger kids like to do several simple games each period, as well as repeat favorite games played on prior days.
4. Depending on the game, the amount of time you have, and the size and age of your group, consider setting up several games as stations and having kids rotate through them. This works especially well with large groups or young children who have short attention spans.
5. Before VBS begins, gather the game workers for a trial run. Play all the games to work out any trouble spots.
6. Use cones, rope, or field paint to designate the playing area and start and finish lines. Use chalk if playing on pavement.
7. Change the size of the balls to make the activities easier for younger children (larger balls) or more challenging for older children (smaller balls).
8. Have a backup plan in case of bad weather or when equipment fails. Check the Super Simple Games (page 13) for ideas.
9. Use water! Children love to get wet. Use water from buckets and get children wet with sponges, cups, or splash balls.

Note: Limit the wetness to a reasonable amount—don't get the kids dripping wet.
10. Be sensitive to those with disabilities who are unable to play. Model through your words and actions how you value and care about each person.
11. Invest in a megaphone for the game leader.
12. Be enthusiastic! Announce the name and object of the game with excitement and energy. The kids will pick up on how you feel about it.

Example: "Hey, kids! We're going to play a great game today called _____. The object of the game is _____."
13. Keep instructions short and simple. Expect children to be quiet and respectful when instructions are being given. A demonstration goes a long way.
14. Decide ahead of time how you are going to form teams. Use bandanas, strips of material, jerseys, or wristbands to designate teams. Form teams quickly and in fun ways.
15. Once in teams, pump them up by asking questions:
 - » "Who thinks their team is going to win today?"
 - » "Who thinks the Hedgehogs will win?"
 - » "Who thinks the Sheepdogs will win?"
16. Have a countdown to get started.

Example: "Everyone ready? 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, GO!"
17. Teach children to always tag with two fingers on the shoulder.
18. Use the teaching tie-in to connect the games with the lesson content. Games are great, but games with a point are better! If not using the game that goes with the tie-in, adapt and pair it with your own game. Prepare ahead so you can deliver the tie-in naturally.
19. Encourage game leaders and group guides to participate in the games. This fosters connections and trust with the kids. However, be sure to caution them to limit their abilities, especially with the younger students.
20. Keep everyone hydrated. Consider setting up a water station.

Toddler Games

Playing is what this age group does best! While they're playing, they're learning. These games are an important part of the teaching process because they help cement the lessons into the kids' minds in a fun way.

Consider having an outdoor playtime if you have a good space for it. The outdoor location should be enclosed so no one wanders off. If you don't have a safe area, use tarp-covered hay bales or snow fencing to create one. Ask church families to bring plastic slides, big wheel riding toys, and other age-appropriate outdoor equipment. Make sure they're labeled so they can be returned easily after VBS.

For game time, use the following suggestions or other options from the Game Guide, such as the Pre-Primary games. Also, it's fun to repeat favorites throughout the week.

Day 1

Shift the Sheep

Prep: Place two Hula-Hoops on the floor a few feet from each other. Pour cotton balls inside one hoop.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Have the kids work together to move all the cotton balls into the other hoop as fast as they can. Optional: race against a timer (set for one minute) or use a stopwatch and see if they can beat their time in a second round. For an outdoor option on a hot day, move sponge balls between two wading pools with water.

TEACHING TIE-IN

A shepherd takes his sheep to the best pastures where they can find green grass. After sheep have eaten the good grass in one pasture, a shepherd may lead them to another pasture.

Who is our animal pal today? Mia the sheep. Since Mia (My-a) is a sheep, she will follow her shepherd to good pastures.

In this game, we will all be shepherds and work together to move the sheep from one pasture to another as fast as we can.

Follow the Shepherd

Prep: Set out obstacles such as the following: a blue tablecloth spread out like a river to jump over (or step across on paper stepping stones); two or three Hula-Hoops for holes to tiptoe around; boxes for hills or mountains to walk around; stuffed animals can be wild and scary, causing a detour; a blanket over a table for a tunnel to crawl through.

Class Time: Children will pretend to be sheep following their shepherd. Play Follow the Leader around the obstacles. Finally, end in a play area to jump and skip, then rest while finishing with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

What do you think would happen if a sheep didn't follow its shepherd? Take responses. A sheep could go the wrong way and get lost. It might fall into a hole or tip over and need help

to get up. Wild animals might chase it. So it's important that sheep follow their shepherd. It's also important that we follow the Good Shepherd, Jesus. He will help his children.

Day 2

Good Doggies

Prep: None.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Have the kids line up like doggies on all fours. Have the leader stand across the room/play area and give dog commands (demonstrate as needed) as the doggies move forward together: Come—crawl; Stay—stop; Sit—squat on feet; Good doggies—once they reach the leader.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Who is our animal pal today? Guide the border collie. Guide is a good dog. He obeys the shepherd and helps take care of the sheep. If Guide didn't listen to the shepherd, some of the sheep could go the wrong way or get hurt. God's Word, the Bible, is our guide. When we obey and do what it says, we will be able to follow our Good Shepherd, Jesus.

How Tall Was Goliath?

Prep: Print and tape together the [Goliath Picture](#), then laminate it. Tape the picture on a wall at the children's height.

Class Time: Have the kids take turns touching the picture. Move it up a few inches and ask, "Was Goliath this tall?" Continue moving it, allowing kids to jump and touch it. Eventually, it will be high enough that only you can jump up to touch it. (You don't have to go the whole nine feet, just explain that he was even taller than you.) Finish with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

When the enemy Philistines wanted to fight the Israelites, they sent out their biggest, "baddest" champion. What was his name? Goliath. No one wanted to fight Goliath. He was so tall and scary. The Israelites were afraid because they forgot that God was with them. But David remembered how great and powerful God is. He knew he could trust God to help him. So David put a stone in his sling and threw it. Zoom! The stone flew through the air and hit that big ol' giant. And Goliath fell down. David won because he followed God. The Bible can help us follow God just as David did.

Day 3

Birds of a Feather Relay

Prep: Gather packages of colored feathers. Determine which colors you will use and attach one of each color to a separate basket.

Class Time: Have the children line up and give them each a feather. On their turn, they must run to the basket with the same color as their feather to deliver it, then return to start. Take turns running until all the feathers are distributed. Check to see how many were put in the correct baskets. If you have a larger class, you may want to divide into two lines but use the same baskets. Finish with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

What kind of bird is our pal, Shadow? A raven. Ravens have dark feathers, but there are many other birds with lots of different colors, like we saw in our game. The Bible tells us that God cares about all his creatures—even the birds. So if God takes care of something as small as a bird, he will take care of us too, right? Birds don't worry, and we don't need to worry either. Whenever you're feeling worried or afraid, remember you can talk to God about it, then trust him to help you.

Blindfold Crawl

Prep: Place stuffed animals in the play area.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Blindfold the kids, using scarves or sleep masks, then have them crawl around the area searching for the stuffed animals. You may have them collect the animals in a specific spot or shout when they find one, then leave it there for others to find. Play until everyone has found at least one animal. If you have a large class, divide into two groups to take turns or set up two areas to play at the same time.

TEACHING TIE-IN

We've been talking about shadows and feeling afraid today. Sometimes things don't go well, and we may feel sad or scared. But God says we can trust him to help us keep trying to do what we need to do, whether things seem bright and happy or dark and sad. In this game, you won't be able to see what's going on, but you can keep trying, and we'll find out how well you do.

Day 4

Hunt for Woolly

Prep: Print and cut out the [Woolly Aphid Cards](#), then laminate them. Hide the cards around the area for the kids to find.

Class Time: Have the kids bring the cards to a container. If playing outdoors, have some spray bottles ready with water (pretend bug spray) for leaders to spray the bugs when the children find them. Finish with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Show a card. **Today's animal pal is a bug called a woolly aphid. Pesky bothers plants. He likes to eat them! There's another kind of bug that bothers sheep. It likes to fly and crawl around a sheep's face. That would surely bother me if a fly were crawling on my face. Sometimes things may bother us. We might have a hard time that makes us upset or grumpy. But God doesn't want us to grumble. He wants us to remember his goodness and thank him for all the good gifts he gives to us.**

Quiet, Quiet

Prep: None.

Class Time: Play this game like Ring Around the Rosie, using the same tune. Have the children stand in a circle, holding hands. As everyone moves to the right, sing: "Jesus is my Shepherd. He leads me by still waters; quiet, quiet, we all lie down." At "lie down," the children drop to the floor/ground. Play a few times, singing quietly then loudly. Finish with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Loud noises can scare sheep. If a shepherd led his sheep to a noisy, rushing river, the sheep probably wouldn't drink from it. Good shepherds know their sheep like quiet places to drink and eat and rest. They will take their sheep to the best places because they care about them. Who is our Good Shepherd? God/Jesus. Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He knows everything about you, and he loves you very much.

Day 5

Animal Pal Pretend

Prep: None.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Have the children stand facing you. Explain that they must copy your movements for each animal pal. Call out which animal pal you will act out: Mia the sheep—get on all fours and "baa!"; Guide the border collie—run in place and bark; Shadow the raven—spread your arms and soar in a circle; Pesky the woolly aphid—flap your hands quickly and say "buzz"; Shirley the Highland cow—lie down on all fours and say "moo." Play a few rounds, going faster and faster each time.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Each of our animal pals reminds us of something we've learned this week. Mia (*My-a*) the sheep reminds us that the Lord is our shepherd. Jesus wants you to follow him. Guide the border collie reminds us that the Bible will guide us when we do what it says. Shadow the raven reminds us that we don't need to be afraid because Jesus is with us. Pesky the woolly aphid reminds us that even when things aren't going right, we don't need to grumble. Instead, we can be grateful and thank God for good things. Shirley the Highland cow reminds us that we can trust God to keep his promises because all of God's promises surely are true.

God's Promise Game

Prep: Inflate balloons if you're using them.

Class Time: Have the kids line up at the starting line. Give each child a ball or balloon. Show the kids the finish line. The children will use their hands to push their ball or balloon across the area and over the finish line. Optional challenge: Have the children place the ball or balloon between their knees as they run. Finish with the teaching tie-in. (If any balloons pop, pick up the pieces right away.)

TEACHING TIE-IN

Was it easy or hard to get to the finish line? Take responses. As you grow up, some things might be hard, and some things might be easy. But no matter what happens, if you believe and trust in Jesus and follow him as your Good Shepherd, then you have his promise to be with him in heaven forever. God keeps his promises. And that's for sure!

Pre-Primary Games

Each day, three options are given for Pre-Primary Games. Some are the same as Toddler Games, and some are different. Because the children's attention spans are short, it's good to have several quick games like these to play. Use one at a time, or if you have at least three leaders and 12 kids, it works well to set up daily stations using the three options. Have the kids rotate in small groups from one game to the next, spending approximately a third of their time at each. You can also substitute other games in this guide or repeat favorites from previous days.

Day 1

Option 1: Sheep, Sheep, Shepherd

Prep: None.

Class Time: In this version of Duck, Duck, Goose, players sit in a circle facing each other. Choose one player to walk around the outside of the circle. As he walks, he'll tap the other kids' heads, saying, "Sheep, sheep, sheep." When he taps and says, "Shepherd!" the tapped player jumps up and chases the tapper around the circle. The tapper races to sit in the shepherd's spot. If he makes it, he takes that spot in the circle, and the shepherd becomes the tapper. If the tapper is tagged before he reaches the shepherd's spot, he taps again. You may also have him "lie down in green pastures" in the middle of the circle for a round. Continue playing until everyone has a chance as the shepherd. Finish with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Psalm 23:1 tells us the Lord is our what? Shepherd. A shepherd's job is to take care of the sheep, just as God takes care of his children. We can be God's children, too, when we ask him to forgive us of our sins.

Option 2: Lost Sheep Hunt

Prep: Using up to six colors, print and cut out enough sets of [Lost Sheep Pictures](#) for at least one sheep per child. Hide the sheep in obvious places around the play area.

Class Time: Divide the group into up to six teams and assign each team one of the colors. Place a Hula-Hoop on the ground for each team as "sheep pens." Tell kids to go find the lost sheep that matches their team's color and place them in their team's sheep pen. Remind them that if they find another team's sheep, they should leave it hidden. Play until all the lost sheep have been found, then finish with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

You found all of the sheep! The Bible tells us a lesson about one hundred sheep. One sheep went missing, but the shepherd searched and searched until he found him. He was so happy! God feels just like that happy shepherd when sinners ask to be forgiven. If we put our trust in Jesus, we go from being like a lost sheep to a found sheep!

Option 3: Shepherd, Shepherd, Where's Your Sheep?

Prep: Bring a small stuffed animal sheep.

Class Time: Have the group sit in a circle. Choose one player to sit in the middle with the sheep in front of him. Have him close his eyes while a leader chooses one of the players in the circle to sneak up, take the stuffed animal, and hide it behind his back. Everyone chants, "Shepherd, shepherd, where's your sheep?" The middle player can open his eyes as the others start passing the sheep behind their backs, trying not to be seen. They can't hold onto the sheep for more than five seconds. The middle player has three guesses to point to who has the sheep. That child becomes the new middle player. Play until everyone gets a turn in the middle. Finish with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Our sheep was lost, but you clever shepherds found him! There's a lesson in the Bible about a sheep that was lost. Guess what? The shepherd found him and was so happy when he did! God feels just like that happy shepherd when sinners ask to be forgiven. If we put our trust in Jesus, we become one of God's children. Psalm 23 shows us that God takes care of us like a shepherd takes care of his sheep.

Day 2

Option 1: Border Collie Tag

Prep: Mark a start and finish line on opposite sides of a playing field.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Choose taggers based on the size of the group (one tagger per 5–10 players). Have everyone else line up at the starting line. The taggers are the sheepdogs. Everyone else makes up the herd of sheep. When the sheepdogs shout, "Wrong path to right path!" the herd must try to run to the finish line without getting tagged by a sheepdog. When a sheep is tagged, he becomes a cast sheep. He must sit down but can tag players running by. Anyone tagged by a cast sheep also becomes a cast sheep. The winner is the last sheep or the last group of sheep standing. Choose new

taggers or have the last sheep become the new sheepdog to play additional rounds.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Who is our animal pal today? *Guide the border collie.* Guide is a good dog. He obeys the shepherd and helps take care of the sheep. If Guide didn't listen to the shepherd, some of the sheep could go the wrong way or get hurt. God's Word, the Bible, is our guide. When we obey and do what it says, we'll be able to follow our Good Shepherd, Jesus.

Option 2: Herding the Sheep

Prep: Since balloons can pop easily on grass, this game is best played indoors (or see the note in the next paragraph to see how to adapt it to outdoors). Inflate different colored balloons and set up sheep pens. These can be playpens, inflatable pools, or play tents. Spread the balloons out in the play area. Gather flyswatters or half pool noodles.

Note: One test church used beach balls (regular size or mini) with animal stickers—one color of sheep on one ball, another color on another, etc. They put clear packing tape over the stickers and played the game outside using baby pools with matching stickers (one pool had a certain sheep color; another had another, etc). Kids used half pool noodles to herd their beach balls into the pools.

Class Time: Give each player a flyswatter or a half pool noodle. Each player is a sheepdog and must herd the designated sheep into the pen. When the leader shouts the color of the sheep, everyone works together to round them up. After a little bit, switch to a different sheep. Finish with the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

You did a great job guiding the sheep to their pens. Did you know that it's helpful if sheep have guidance? A sheepdog can help lead them in the right direction. Psalm 23:3 reminds us that God guides his children on paths of righteousness—living right. That means he leads us to the right way when we read his Word, the Bible.

Option 3: David vs. Goliath

Prep: Mark a starting line for each team. Set up a table an appropriate distance from each team's starting line. On each table, stack 10 plastic cups into a pyramid. With a permanent marker, draw a mad face on the top cup to represent Goliath.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Divide the children into teams. Have the teams line up single file behind their starting line. Give each team a pile of beanbags. Players take turns throwing one beanbag at the stack of cups. After a throw, the player runs to the back of the line. Celebrate together as teams knock all their cups down and defeat Goliath.

TEACHING TIE-IN

When the enemy Philistines wanted to fight the Israelites, they sent out their biggest, "baddest" champion. What was his name? Goliath. No one wanted to fight him. He was so tall and scary. The Israelites were afraid because they forgot that God was with them. But David remembered how great and powerful God is. He knew he could trust God to help him. So David put a stone in his sling and threw it. Zoom! The stone flew through the air and hit that big ol' giant. And Goliath fell down, dead. Some people may think that David is the hero who took down Goliath, but David didn't win with his own strength. Who did David trust to guide and lead him? God. That's right! David knew God would be with him and lead him, no matter what. We can follow God's guidance, too, when we read his Word, the Bible.

Day 3

Option 1: Shepherd's Staff Freeze Tag

Prep: Mark boundaries for a large play area.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Have the children spread out, at least an arm's length apart. Choose a child or leader to be the wolf and one child or leader to be the shepherd. Everyone else is a sheep. Give a pool noodle to the shepherd. Explain that if the wolf tags a sheep, that sheep becomes frozen with fear and cannot move. The shepherd runs around gently tapping frozen sheep with his shepherd's staff (the pool noodle), which comforts and unfreezes them. Set a timer for 2–4 minutes. When time is up, if there are more frozen sheep than unfrozen, the wolf wins. If there are more unfrozen than frozen sheep, the shepherd wins. Choose a new wolf and shepherd and play as many rounds as time allows.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Let's see if you can finish this verse: "Your rod and your _____, they comfort me." Staff. Shepherds use their staffs to protect their sheep from hungry, wild animals. God, our Good Shepherd, cares for us and comforts us when we feel afraid. As we pretend to be sheep and wolves, let's remember how God comforts us.

Option 2: Irish Folk Dances

Prep: Find some Irish jigs for the kids to move and dance to. Use traditional songs like "Irish Stew," "The Wonder Hornpipe," and "Irish Washerwoman." Provide props to dance with, like ribbons, scarves, and small Hula-Hoops.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Have the children stand in a circle. Play the music. Do simple movements, such as moving in a circle while holding hands, stepping in and out, hopping to the left and right, clapping, etc. Then try moving using the props you've gathered.

TEACHING TIE-IN

What are some things you're afraid of? Take responses. Everyone feels afraid sometimes. What can we do instead of worrying? Think about what good things God has done

and pray to God. **We can thank God for the good things he's done for us, and we can talk to him about how we feel. Sometimes, it helps to do something fun, like doing a silly dance so we're thinking of good things instead of bad things. Let's try some fun Irish dances now!**

Option 3: Natural Disasters Parachute Games

Prep: Use a parachute or a large sheet to play some parachute games to reinforce that natural disasters are consequences of a broken world.

Class Time: Try any or all of these games. Finish with the teaching tie-in.

- **Volcano:** Have the children hold the parachute tightly on the edge and shake it, making little ripples to represent rumbling. Then have them lift the parachute over their heads. On the "Down!" command, they should pull the parachute down to the ground and kneel on the edge as they watch the cone form above them.
- **Hurricane:** Have the children hold the parachute tightly and walk in a clockwise direction. On the "Switch!" command, have them change direction. They can make the sound of strong winds as they walk.
- **Snowstorm:** Put cotton balls on top of the parachute, then have the kids raise and lower their arms rapidly, shaking the parachute hard to get the "snow" flying!
- **Tornado:** Place a ball on the parachute and have the kids coordinate their movements to make the ball circulate around the parachute in a tornado-like motion.
- **Rainbow (not a natural disaster, but Noah's flood was):** Have the children lift the parachute over their heads quickly. Call out a color. Those wearing that color must run around the parachute clockwise and return to their place before the parachute falls to the ground.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Have you ever been scared of a big storm? Take responses. Storms happen because we live in a broken world, but we don't have to be afraid of them. When things are dark and stormy, remember that you can talk to God about how you feel. God, our Comforter, is always with us and can help us have courage.

Day 4

Option 1: Shoo, Fly!

Prep: Since balloons can pop easily on grass, this game is best played indoors. Mark a center line. Inflate and place balloons on either side of the line. You can also use beach balls or pit balls for outside play. Gather flyswatters or half pool noodles.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Divide the group into two teams and assign them to a side of the play area. Give each child a flyswatter or a half pool noodle. Explain that the balloons are pesky flies that they must shoo away to the other team's side—without stepping over the line. Set a timer for 1–2 minutes. On the "Shoo, fly!" signal, teams begin swatting balloons.

When time is up, enjoy seeing how many pesky flies they moved to the other side.

TEACHING TIE-IN

What type of animal is our animal pal today? A woolly aphid/bug/fly named Pesky. Bugs sure can be pesky sometimes, can't they? Pesky the woolly aphid is our animal pal. Bugs are like enemies to sheep because they drive them crazy! But a loving shepherd takes good care of the sheep by rubbing oil on their heads to keep the bugs away. When pesky things bother us, we can remember all the good ways God cares for us. Let's quickly name 10 things we can be grateful (thankful) for. Do so. God is the giver of all good things.

Option 2: King David, May I?

Prep: None.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Play this game like Mother, May I? Choose a leader to be King David and stand at one end of the play area. Have the children line up across the opposite end. Beginning at one end of the line, the kids take turns asking King David questions, such as: "King David, may I take three giant steps?" King David either answers, "Yes, you may," or "No, you may not, but you may ____ instead." He then suggests something else they can do. Have everyone cheer each time someone makes it to David.

Suggested actions: giant steps, baby steps, backward steps, twirls, hops, skips, on all fours like a sheep, flying like a raven.

TEACHING TIE-IN

King David did a kind thing for Saul's grandson. Does anyone know what it was? David invited him to eat with him, even though Saul had been his enemy. David shared the good blessings God had given him. What's a good blessing God has given you that you can share with others? Take responses.

Option 3: Set the Table

Prep: Mark starting lines for each team. Set up tables for each team a short distance from their starting lines.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Divide the students into teams. Give each team a bucket with an equal number of assorted tableware (plastic dishes, cups, utensils, napkins, tablecloth, fake food, plastic vase of flowers, etc.). Have the teams line up single file behind their starting lines. At the start signal, the first kids in line grab something from their team's bucket, run to their table, set the item on the table, and shout out something they are grateful for. Then they run back, tag the next players in line, and go to the back of the line. Cheer as each team successfully sets the table.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Read Psalm 23:5. **What does God prepare for us? A table. Our memory verse today says that God prepares a table for us in the presence of our enemies. That means he gives**

us good things even when times are hard. We're going to play a game to help us think about good things from God that we can be grateful for.

Day 5

Option 1: Earthquake!

Prep: None.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Divide the kids into groups of three to create little houses. Two people stand with their hands touching in the air, and the third person stands/sits under their hands (inside the house). The game leader will call different commands: Switch—everyone inside each house must find a new house; Earthquake—each house “falls,” and everyone should find new partners; Border collie—everyone inside a house switches while another leader tries to tag the kids before they can make it to a house. If children are tagged, have them hop on one foot 10 times before coming back into the game.

TEACHING TIE-IN

A foundation is the first floor of the house. If you have a firm foundation, that means your house is strong and sturdy. It won't fall! We have a firm foundation in God because he always keeps his promises. He won't leave us feeling shaky! Let's pretend to be houses to remind us that God is our firm foundation.

Option 2: Mad Cow

Prep: Set up a “sheep pen” as a safe zone on one end of the room. Gather a cow headband for the tagger.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Choose a leader to be the cow and act as if he is sleeping in the middle of the room. Put a headband on to designate this person and for added fun, have the kids run around the cow. After a minute, the cow can get up and chase the kids around, mooing and snorting like a mad cow. Children may run to the “sheep pen” safety zone and stay until they count to 10. Anybody tagged by the cow must lie on his back like a cast sheep. Play until everyone is upside down. Play as many rounds as time allows.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Moo! Who is our animal pal for today? Shirley the Highland cow. Shirley reminds us that surely God's goodness

and mercy will follow us all the days of our lives when we admit, believe, and forever receive Jesus! No matter what happens in this life, if you believe and trust in Jesus and follow him as your Good Shepherd, then you will have his promise to be with him in heaven forever. God keeps his promises. And that's for sure!

Option 3: Psalm 23 Splash

Prep: Fill a water gun or soaker with water and give it to a leader for when “my cup overflows” is called.

Class Time: Begin with the teaching tie-in. Review the directions and motions the group will perform from the list. Practice a few rounds, calling out directions and demonstrating each motion. Once the kids get it, begin calling faster and faster. You may start with only a few directions, then gradually add others as you play. Optional: If you want to make it competitive for older Pre-Primaries, those who made the wrong motion during a round will be out.

Direction	Motion
The Lord is my shepherd	Make sheep noises
Green pastures	Lie down
Paths of righteousness	March in place
Shadow of death	Look afraid
My cup overflows	Drop to your stomach as the leader shoots water at the group
House of the Lord	Make a house with your arms and hands overhead

TEACHING TIE-IN

Our memory verse today talks about the house of the Lord. When we admit our sins to God, believe that Jesus died for our sins, and follow him as our Good Shepherd, we receive the gift of eternal life in heaven. Like David, we can be sure of living in heaven forever because we can trust God's goodness and mercy.

We've journeyed all the way to the end of Psalm 23! Our game today will test your memory with some fun hand motions. Read or recite Psalm 23:1–6 together, then begin.

Super Simple Games

Two super simple game ideas are suggested for each day, one indoor and one outdoor. These require few supplies and prep. Depending on your space, some of the indoor games may be played outdoors and vice versa. Check them out and adapt for your area.

Simple Indoor Games

Day 1: Yarn Ball Name Game

The yarn ball in this game emphasizes a sheep's coat of wool. Give one player a ball of yarn. That player says his or her name, then takes hold of the end of the yarn while passing the yarn ball across to someone else and saying that person's name. The person receiving the ball then says both the name of the person who passed it to them and the name of the person they will toss it to while holding onto the loose yarn. Play continues until everyone has had a chance to pass the ball and hold onto the yarn strand, resulting in a web of yarn. Optional: Have the person with the ball say his name and some fun facts about himself (e.g., I'm the youngest in my family, my favorite food is pizza, I play basketball). As soon as someone in the circle can relate to the fact, he or she shouts, "Me too!" and the ball gets passed to that person. If more than one person shouts, "Me too," the player with the ball can choose who to pass it to. Play continues until every person has received the ball and shared a fact.

Day 2: Inerrant Numbers

This game reminds players that we make many mistakes, but God's Word is perfect and inerrant (without error). Divide into groups of 5–10 players. Each group's goal is to count aloud to 15, but only one person at a time may speak. If more than one person speaks at the same time, everyone must start over at "one." Once a group reaches 15, they must all sit down. The first group to finish wins.

Day 3: Tricky Ravens

This game goes well with the animal pal of the day, Shadow the raven. It can also be used to reinforce that Jesus comforts us when we are scared; God's Word is like a flashlight, dispelling the fear and lies of the enemy (the tricky ravens). Play in a large room where all light can be blocked out. Mark off space for a jail. Choose a student to be the shepherd, with all other students being ravens. Give the shepherd a flashlight. Turn the lights out

and have students silently move about the room. When the shepherd flashes his light on a raven, the raven must freeze. If the raven moves while the beam is on him, he is eliminated and must sit in jail with the "jailbirds." The shepherd is not allowed to keep the beam on a raven for longer than five seconds. The last raven remaining wins and becomes the next shepherd.

Day 4: King of the Hill

Use this game to tie in the account of David being crowned as king. Players stand in a circle. One player sits in an office chair (that swivels well) in the middle of the circle. Give a foam ball to one of the players. The goal is to be the king (the one in the office chair). Players try to hit the back of the office chair with the ball. If a player succeeds, he or she becomes the next king. Encourage players to pass the ball to each other to get a good angle for throwing. The king can deflect the ball by hitting it away with arms, legs, and the front/sides of the chair. To speed up the game, add another ball to the circle and add a time limit (5–10 seconds) for holding onto the ball.

Day 5: How Do You Get to Heaven?

Have students sit in a circle. One student begins the game by standing up and miming an action (e.g., playing a harp, making a pizza, Irish dancing, playing golf, shearing a sheep). The next person in the circle asks the first person, "How do you get to heaven?" The first person must respond with a statement that does not match what they are doing. For example, the person is miming washing their hands, but they say, "by vacuuming the carpet." The second person then begins to mime vacuuming the carpet, and play continues to the third person, who asks the second person, "How do you get to heaven?" After everyone in the circle has gone, make sure to end by saying, "That's not how you get to heaven! We get to heaven by trusting in Jesus to forgive us and make us right with God."

Simple Outdoor Games

Day 1: Wild Rover

The name of this game comes from an old folk song that is very popular in Ireland. It tells a similar story to Jesus' lost to found parables. After a life of sinful living, a son comes home to his father, asks his forgiveness, and says he promises to be "a wild rover no more." Have players stand in a large circle, close together. Choose a student to be blindfolded and stand in the middle. Give that player a figurine or stuffed animal to be "the wild rover," which he must loosely hold in open hands. A leader chooses someone from the circle to sneak up to the person in the middle and steal the rover. After that player returns to the circle, everyone chants, "Wild rover, wild rover, you'll be a rover no more." The person in the middle may remove his blindfold and make three guesses as to who has the rover. The players in the circle may be sneaky and pass the rover to one another behind their backs. They can't hold onto the rover for more than five seconds. Players can choose to wave the wild rover overhead and everyone who sees it then says, "No, nay, never!" If the person in the middle correctly guesses who has the rover, he can remain in the middle for another round. If the person in the middle is incorrect after three guesses, the person with the wild rover goes to the middle. Play as many rounds as time allows.

Day 2: Green Pastures

This game goes well with the day's memory verse. Set up a play area about 20 yards or longer. Mark three sections with cones, rope, or field tape. Designate the three sections as pasture, path, and still waters. Have everyone start in the middle section. Call out either "Pasture," "Path," or "Still Waters." Players must run to that section of the field. Players who run to the wrong section or take too long are eliminated. The last player or handful of players left in the game wins. Play as many rounds as time allows.

Day 3: Wolf's Den

Use this game to emphasize the apologetic question for the day, "Why do we even have hard times?" We have hard times because we live in a sinful, broken world. But God's Word helps us deal with hard times. Divide a rectangular playing area into three equal sections. Place a few Hula-Hoops in the first and third sections. Choose one player to be the wolf, and the rest are sheep. Have the wolf start in the wolf den (the middle section), and the sheep start in either of the pastures (the first and

third sections). When the game leader calls out, "Switch pastures!" the sheep must run to the opposite pasture. If a wolf tags a sheep as they are running through his den, the sheep becomes a wolf. At any time, the leader can call out a natural disaster (i.e., fire, flood, blizzard, earthquake) and send one or two leaders to go out and tag more sheep. The sheep must run to their sheep pens (the Hula-Hoops) to be safe. Sheep tagged by leaders are eliminated. The last sheep standing wins.

Day 4: Flyswatter Name Game

This game goes well with the animal pal of the day, Pesky the woolly aphid. If they aren't already wearing name tags, give students name tags and markers to write names. To add to the theme, have them draw a bug on their name tag as well. Have players sit in a circle. Go around the circle and have everyone say their name. Choose one player to be the tagger. Give him a flyswatter and have him stand in the middle. Instruct the tagger to only tag with a gentle tap on the foot with the flyswatter, not a swat. Choose a player in the circle to begin the game by saying his or her name and the name of someone else in the circle. The tagger must run to tap the *second* person named before that person can say his name and the name of someone else. If the tagger is successful, the two switch places and play continues with the new tagger. Play as time allows. Optional: To let students really swat with the flyswatter, have them place their name tags on the ground in front of them. Instruct the tagger to swat the name tag instead of the person's foot.

Day 5: Shaky and Sure Foundations

Choose one player to be the "lost sheep" and explain that he/she is looking for a house. Have all other players get into groups of three and create a house. Two players stand across from each other with their hands touching in the air, and the third person stands/sits inside the house. When the game leader shouts, "Sure foundations!" everyone inside the houses must find new ones. At the same time, the lost sheep tries to find a house. If the lost sheep finds one, the player left without a house is the new lost sheep. When the game leader shouts, "Shaky foundations," all the houses "fall," and everyone must find new partners. No one can be with the same partner twice in a row. Again, the player left without a house is the lost sheep. Play for a set amount of time, giving several players the chance to be the lost sheep.

DAY 1

Gaelic Football

Supplies

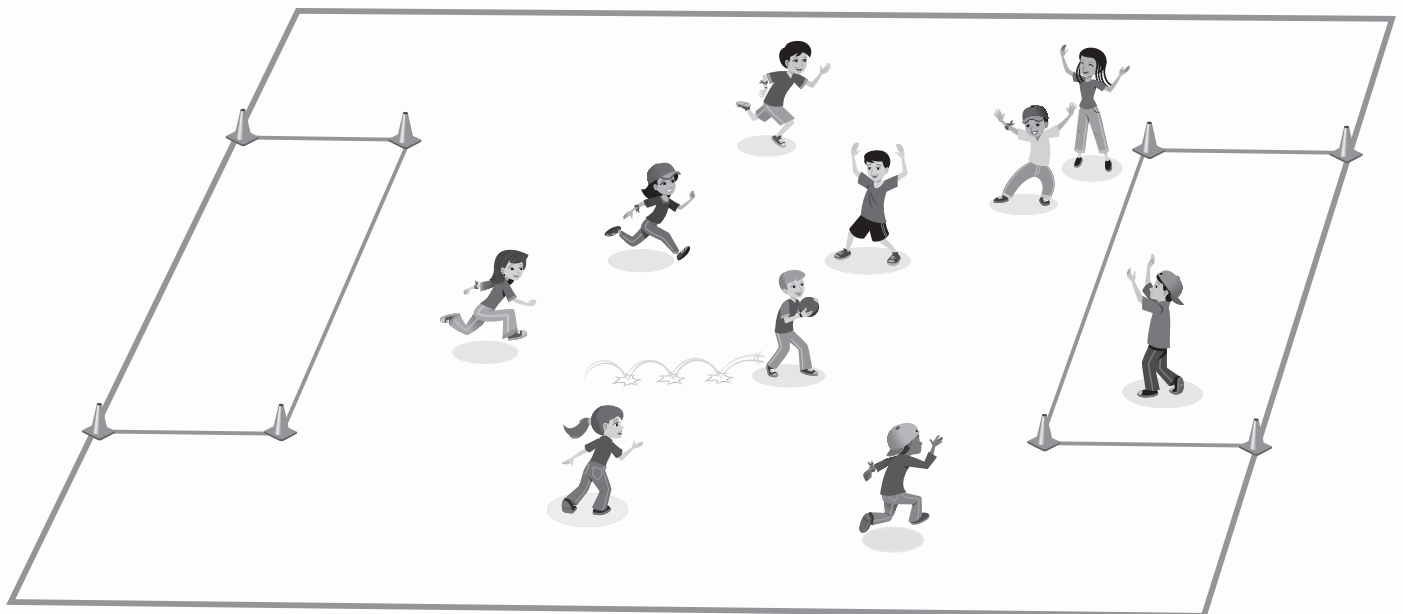
- ❑ Cones, chalk, field tape, or rope to mark boundary lines and goals
- ❑ Bandanas, jerseys, or wristbands for 1 team
- ❑ 1 large foam or playground ball
- ❑ Coin for coin toss

Prep

- Mark outer boundaries of a large rectangular play area.
- Set up a goal (12 x 6 feet) at either end with cones.

Class Time Directions

1. Divide the group into two teams. Have one team wear bandanas, jerseys, or wristbands.
2. Have players spread out across the play area.
3. Each team will work together to get the ball across the opposite team's goal line either by throwing it across the line or passing it to a teammate inside the goal.
4. To start, have a player from each team come to mid-field. Flip a coin to see which team starts with the ball first.
5. While holding the ball, a player can only take up to four steps, then they must pass it to a teammate. If they take more than four steps, they must give up the ball to the opposing team.
6. Players not holding the ball may move freely.
7. If the ball is dropped or intercepted, a player from the other team moves to where the ball fell, and play continues with the ball in that team's possession.
8. Players may not take the ball from someone's hands. They may only intercept by catching or hitting the



ball in mid-pass. No defense is allowed on the player holding the ball.

9. After each goal, play resumes at midfield with the non-scoring team in possession of the ball.
10. Play for a set amount of time or to a certain number of goals. The team with the most goals wins.

Teaching Tie-in

Welcome to the Emerald Isle! This week, we're roaming through Ireland, the home of green pastures, breathtaking coasts, and the Gaelic Athletic Association. Gaelic refers to the original languages of this fair isle.

One of the favorite sports of Ireland is Gaelic football. Enjoyed by lads and lasses alike, this game is an interesting mix of soccer, rugby, and basketball. The version we'll be playing is more like handball or ultimate frisbee. It requires good coordination between teams, and no one can be a self-ish player.

In today's Bible lesson, we're learning about Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who wants people to come to him and be in the same fold. We aren't made to walk alone. We're made to walk with our Shepherd and with each other. As we travel through this wild and beautiful country this week, remember to ask yourself the most important question, "Is the Lord *my* shepherd?"

Tip Corner

- Speed up prep time by having a leader divide the group into teams as the students enter the game area.
- If the group is larger than 40 players, consider having two games going at the same time.
- When a goal is scored, the scoring team could be given an opportunity to score an additional point by shooting a penalty kick into the soccer goal.
- Add a water element to this game by switching out the ball for a wet sponge or water ball.
- Assign a leader to each team to assist with ball distribution.
- Play multiple rounds, switching to a different kind of ball each time (e.g., dodgeball, NERF football, water ball).

Day 1 Overview

Lost to Found

Lesson Focus

Like David, I can be a child of God and have the Lord as *my* shepherd.

Bible Passages

Psalm 23:1; 1 Samuel 17:34–37

Memory Verse

Psalm 23:1

Animal Pal

Mia (My-a) the Connemara Sheep

Cool Contest

Guess the Rainbow Skittles

Science and Crafts

Experiments: Sink or Float / Wet Woolly
Crafts: Baa-loved Sheep / Keepsake Ornament—Shepherd's Staff

Treats

Cross Trail Mix
Sweet Sheep

Games

Gaelic Football
Lost Sheep Relay

DAY 1

Lost Sheep Relay

Supplies

- ❑ **Lost Sheep Pictures**, beanbags, or bandanas, 5 of the same color per team
- ❑ Cones, 5 per team
- ❑ Hula-Hoops, 1 per team

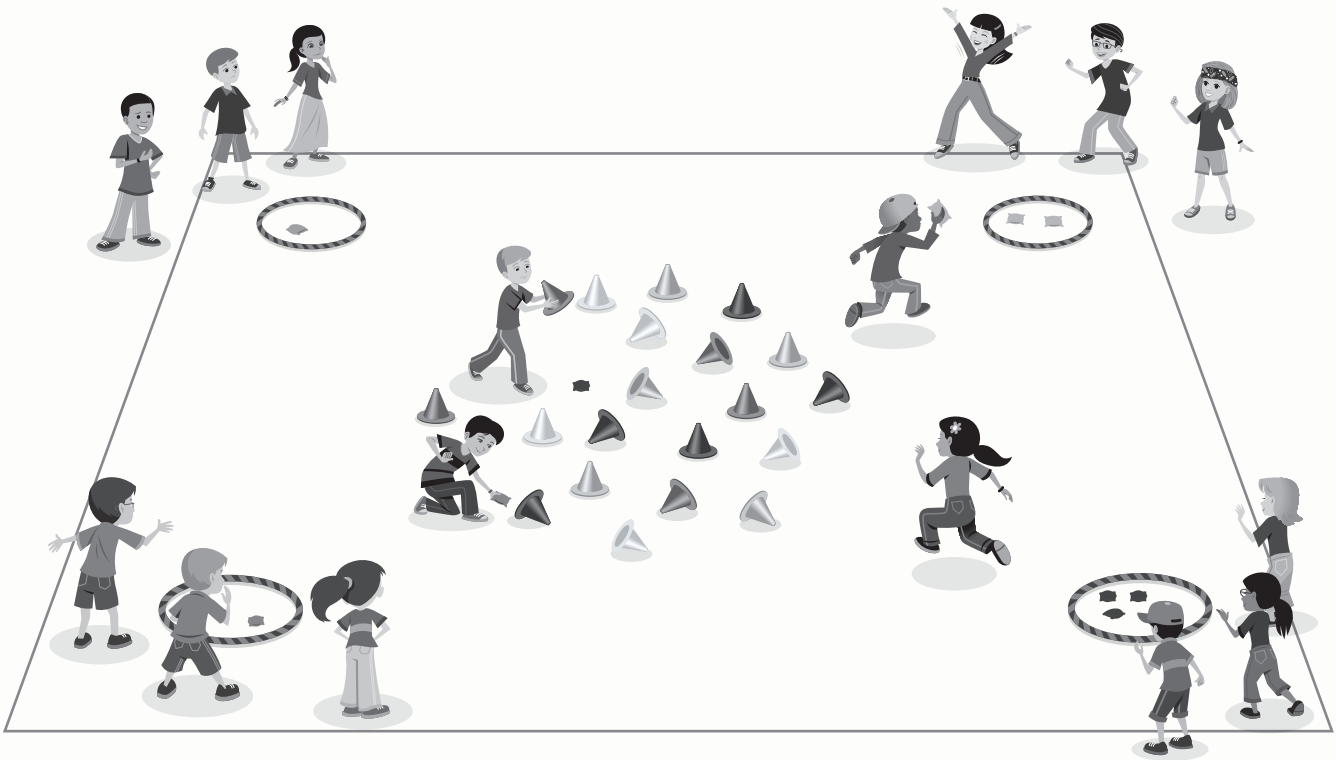
Prep

- Mark off a large play area and place a Hula-Hoop on the ground for each team at equal distances from the play area.
- Scatter cones in the play area.
- If using the **LOST SHEEP PICTURES**, print on a different color for each team and cut them out.
- Hide a **LOST SHEEP PICTURE**/beanbag/bandana under each cone. Place a total of five of the same color per team.

Class Time Directions

1. Divide the group into even teams of 3–6 players.
2. Assign each team a color.

3. Have teams line up single file behind their Hula-Hoop.
4. Explain that the goal of the game is to be the first team to find all five of its lost sheep (picture, beanbag, or bandana).
5. On the start signal, the first player from each team runs to the play area and tips over one cone. If the sheep underneath matches his team's color, he can take it back to his team's Hula-Hoop, then go to the back of the line. If the sheep underneath is not his team's color, the player must return empty-handed.
6. Emphasize that cones should be left overturned when a lost sheep is found. Optional: challenge older kids by having players put the cones back to their upright position so those in line have to remember where they saw which colors.
7. Teammates should communicate to help one another find their lost sheep.
8. The first team to collect all five of its lost sheep wins.



9. Have the other teams continue playing to recognize second-place team, third-place team, and so on.

Teaching Tie-in

Our animal pal today is Mia (My-a) the Connemara sheep. What do sheep have to do with our memory verse? Take responses. Recite Psalm 23:1 together.

In Psalm 23, God is the Shepherd. Who do you think the sheep are? Take responses—us. All of us start out like lost sheep. We're spiritually lost in our sins—separated from the holy God because of our sin. But God loved us so much that he sent Jesus to die for our sins. If you make Jesus your shepherd by repenting of your sins and believing in him, you go from lost to found; your sins are forgiven, and you become a child of God.

In this game, you're going to be like good shepherds and work together to find your team's lost sheep.

Tip Corner

- Match the color of the team's Hula-Hoop to the color of their sheep.
- Using cones of various colors will help students recall which cones were searched previously.

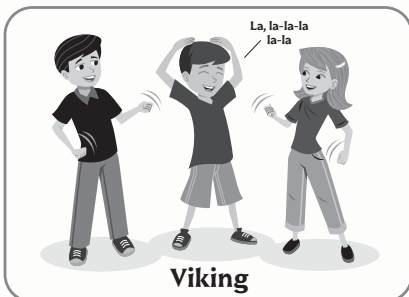
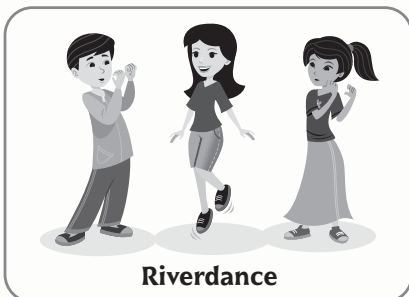
DAY 2

Shamrock, Riverdance, Viking

No Supplies or Prep

Class Time Directions

1. Before beginning the game, have game leaders demonstrate each motion while the group copies.
 2. Have players stand in a circle with a game leader in the center.
 3. The leader points to anyone in the circle and says one of the commands: Shamrock, Riverdance, or Viking. That person and the players on either side must perform the hand motions for that command.
 - » Shamrock: The middle person holds both arms overhead in a leaf shape. The people on the left and right make leaf shapes with their arms on either side of the middle person.
- » Riverdance: The middle person hops up and down, alternating legs, as if doing an Irish dance. The people on the left and right pretend to play flutes.
 - » Viking: The middle person mimes putting on a helmet with his hands and flexes his biceps. Optional: Have him hum or scat the “Ride of the Valkyries.” The people on the left and right pretend to row the oars of a Viking longboat.
4. Any player who doesn't do the correct command or takes longer than five seconds is eliminated, and the circle becomes smaller.
 5. The last two players left win. You may choose to let one of the winning players give the commands for the next round.



Teaching Tie-in

How do we know the Bible is trustworthy? Take responses. We know the Bible is trustworthy because it was written by God. We can also look at the evidence. No normal book could fit together so perfectly, fulfill prophecy, find so many confirmations in history and science, or survive all the attempts to destroy it.

The Bible is perfect and inerrant. Say the word “inerrant” with me. Do so. Inerrant means without error or mistake.

People make mistakes all the time, of course, but in this game, we’re going to see how long we can go without making a mistake. Unlike us, God’s Word never fails, which is why we can put our trust in it.

Let’s remember that truth as we stumble our way through Shamrock, Riverdance, Viking.

Tip Corner

- For large groups, split into multiple games.
- Speed up the game by adding another leader in the center of the circle.
- Keep the pace quick so that multiple rounds can be played and eliminated players don’t become bored.

Day 2 Overview		
Wrong Path to Right Path		
Lesson Focus		Bible Passages
Like David, I need the Lord to lead me on the right path through his Word.		Psalm 23:2–3; 1 Samuel 17
Memory Verses	Animal Pal	Cool Contest
Psalm 23:2–3	Guide the Border Collie	Group Spirit Day
Science and Crafts	Treats	Games
Experiments: Sling Fling / Genetically You Crafts: S.O.A.P. Bible / Puffball Zipper Pull	Scene 23:2 Border Collie Paw Print	Shamrock, Riverdance, Viking Strongman Challenges

DAY 2

Strongman Challenges

Supplies

Supplies will vary depending on which challenges you choose to do.

- Goliath Picture, 1 per team
- Chalk, field tape, or rope
- Cones
- Cardboard boxes (11 x 17 in.), 9 per team
- Dodgeballs, 5 per team
- Pool noodles, 1 per team
- Yoga balls or hippity hop balls, 1 per team
- Bags of potatoes (1–3 lbs.), 2 per team
- Timer
- Potatoes, 1 per player
- Permanent markers
- Tape measure

Prep

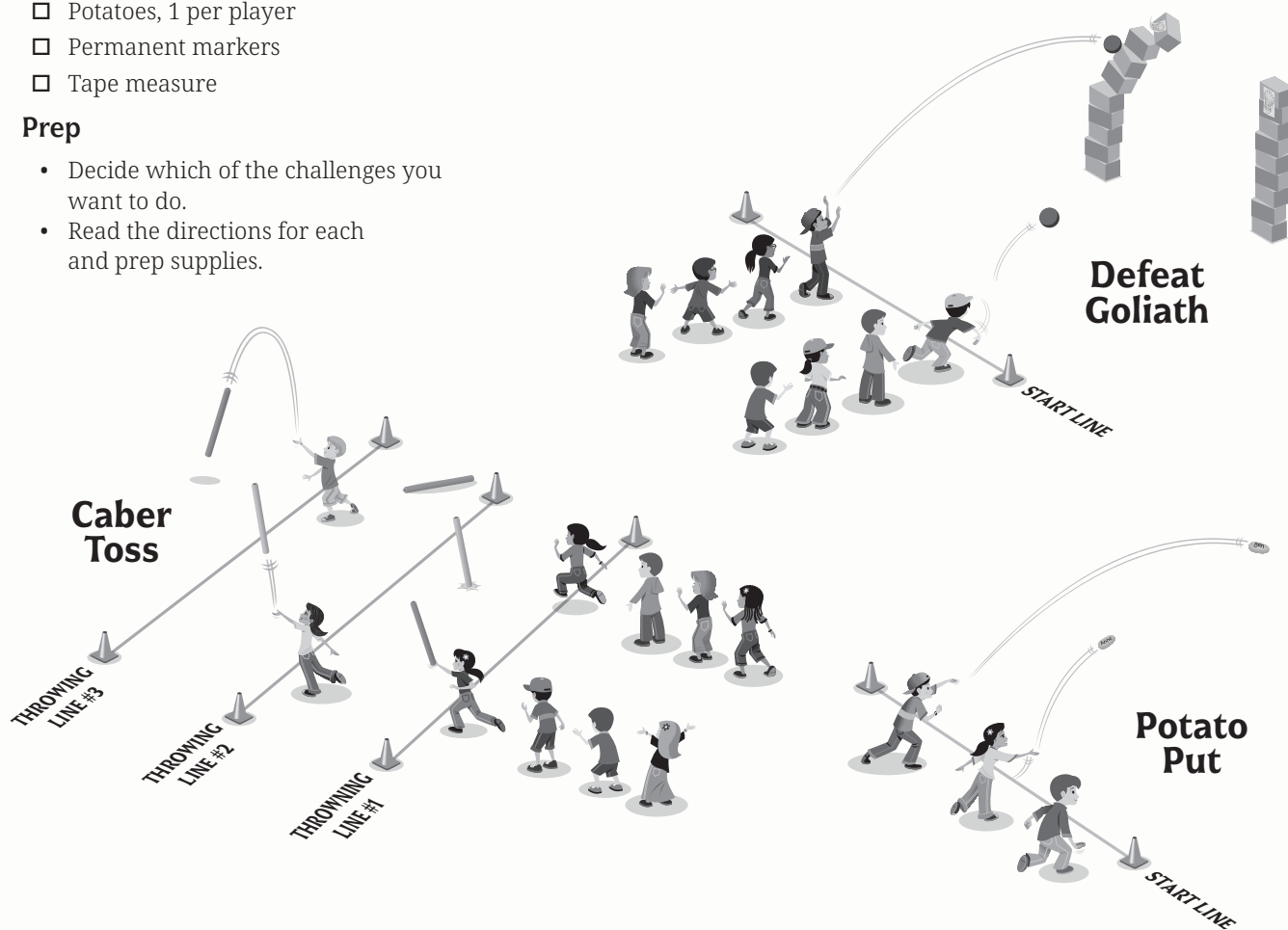
- Decide which of the challenges you want to do.
- Read the directions for each and prep supplies.

Class Time Directions

Choose one or more of the following challenge options.

DEFEAT GOLIATH

1. Divide the group into even teams.
2. Create a Goliath for each team: Stack nine 11 x 17-inch cardboard boxes. Print and tape the **GOLIATH PICTURE** to the top box.
3. Mark a starting line for each team 20 feet (adjust per age group) away from their Goliath.
4. Players line up behind their starting lines.
5. Give each team five dodgeballs.



- The first player in line grabs a dodgeball and throws it at their team's Goliath, trying to knock him down, then runs to the back of the line.
- Players take turns throwing dodgeballs until all of their Goliath boxes are on the ground.
- The first team to "defeat Goliath" wins.

CABER TOSS

- Divide the group into even teams.
- For each team, make three throwing lines about ten feet apart.
- Give each player a pool noodle.
- Players line up behind their teams' first throwing lines.
- At the start signal, the first person in line holds the pool noodle on the bottom end (so it stands straight up) and tosses it so it flips 180 degrees, end over end.
- Players must make a successful flip at each line before moving to the end of the line.
- The next player in line can go once the previous player has made the first successful flip.
- The first team to have all of their players complete all three tosses wins.

ATLAS STONES

- Divide the group into even teams.
- Mark a starting line for each team and place a cone 15 yards away.
- Give each team a yoga ball or hippity hop ball.
- Players line up behind their starting lines.
- Set a timer for 3–4 minutes.
- At the start signal, the first person carries the yoga ball (or hops on the hippity hop ball), runs around the cone, and returns to the start line. He passes the yoga ball or hippity hop ball to the next player in line, then goes to the back of the line.
- The team with the most completed rounds in the allotted time wins.

FARMER'S CARRY

- Divide the group into even teams.
- Mark a starting line for each team and place a cone 15 yards away.
- Give each team two bags of potatoes (1–3 lbs. each).
- Players line up behind their starting lines.
- Set a timer for 3–5 minutes.
- At the start signal, the first person carries one bag of potatoes in each hand to the finish cone, runs around

the cone, and returns to the starting line. He passes the bags to the next player in line, then goes to the back of the line.

- The team with the most completed rounds in the allotted time wins.

POTATO PUT

- Mark a starting line.
- Give each player a potato and a marker. Have each player write their name on the potato.
- At the start signal, players take turns going to the line and throwing their potato as far as they can.
- The player whose potato goes the farthest wins.
- Use the tape measure to determine the farthest throw and second or third places.

Teaching Tie-in

Celtic tradition celebrates feats of strength. On Irish farmlands, men competed by lifting sacks of oats, pulling carts, and heaving heavy weights. Ancient lifting stones still dot the Irish roadsides, fields, and coasts—waiting for anyone bold enough to test their might against the strongmen of old. Other challenges they've done (not for us to do at home!) include throwing hammers, weights, or sheaves of old. Tossing the mighty caber (a large wooden pole) end over end. These contests demanded Goliath-like strength.

You may have heard the account of David and Goliath before. When you pause to think about it, though, David never should've stood a chance. Goliath's armor alone weighed 125 pounds—the heft of a king-size mattress. The head of his spear weighed 15 pounds. Picture swinging around a bowling ball. So how did David win? Take responses. God gave David the power to beat Goliath. David relied on God as his strength and his guide throughout his whole life.

Now it's time to join a clan and test your mettle against your Irish brothers and sisters in our own strongman competition!

Tip Corner

- Boost team spirit by assigning a clan name to each team. Assign teams a color and matching bandanas.
- For the caber toss, mark one end of the pool noodles with duct tape so players can easily distinguish a complete flip.
- Add some flair to the Defeat Goliath relay by constructing a large sling for players to vault their balls into the air with the sling.

DAY 3

Run, David, Run

Supplies

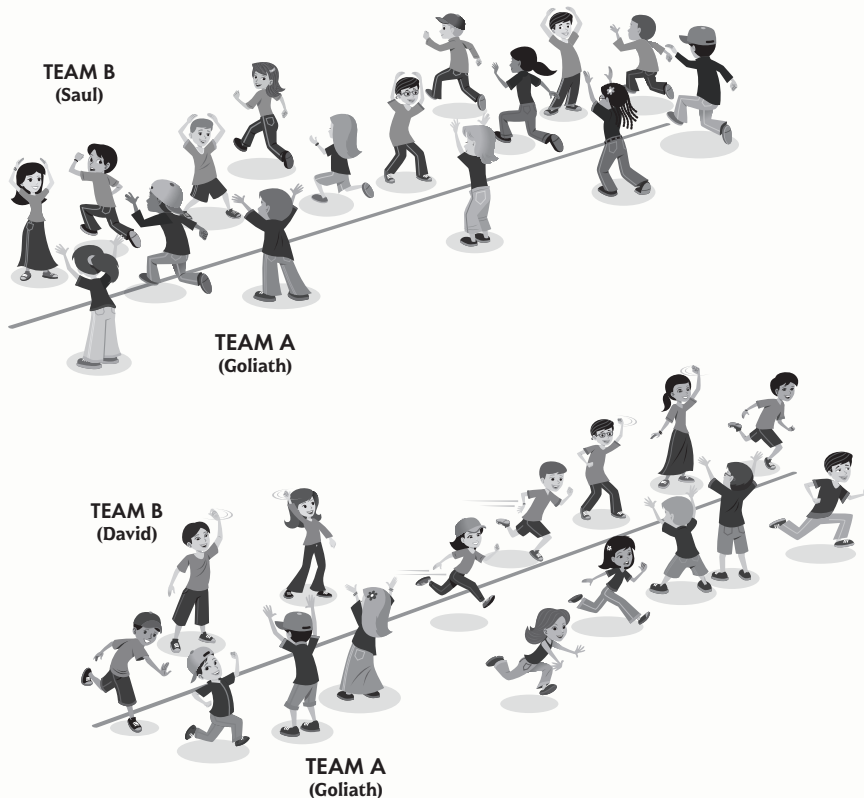
- Cones, chalk, field tape, or rope to mark boundary lines

Prep

Mark the outer boundaries and a center line of a large rectangular play area.

Class Time Directions

1. This game is like Rock, Paper, Scissors, but with larger hand motions and running. Explain that *David runs from Saul, Saul runs from Goliath, and Goliath runs from David.*
2. Have a leader demonstrate each movement and have players practice them.
 - » David: Students mime swinging a sling with one arm.
 - » Saul: Students make a crown with both hands over their heads.
 - » Goliath: Students stretch both arms wide overhead in a V, making themselves tall and menacing.
3. Divide the group into two teams and have them huddle up to decide as a group which motion they will do. Tell them to keep their voices down so their opponents don't hear.
4. Have both teams line up along the center line, facing each other.
5. At "Three, two, one, go!" everyone reveals the motion their team chose.
6. Whichever team has the dominant motion chases the other team back to the boundary line, tagging as many opponents as they can. Players who reach the outside of the boundary line without being tagged are safe.



7. Tagged players join the opposite team.
8. Teams huddle up again to pick the next motion.
9. If teams pick the same motion, it's a draw, and teams must return to a huddle to pick again.
10. Play continues until one team has only one player. The last player standing wins.

Tip Corner

Speed up the prep time by having a leader divide the group into teams as the players enter the game area.

Teaching Tie-in

In today's Bible account, David runs . . . a lot. For about ten years, David was on the run from King Saul. He ran from mountains to valleys and from caves to cities. He dodged spears, made daring escapes, and even avoided capture by pretending to be crazy. Sometimes David became very afraid and anxious while he was on the run. Read Psalm 56:3-4. What did David do when he was afraid or anxious? Take responses. He put his trust in God.

David knew that no matter what happened to him, his future was safe in God's hands. You can do the same. This game reminds us of David's life. It's called Run, David, Run.

Day 3 Overview		
Fearful to Peaceful		
Lesson Focus		Bible Passages
Like David, I can turn to the Lord for comfort when I am anxious or afraid.		Psalm 23:4; 1 Samuel 19-23
Memory Verse	Animal Pal	Cool Contest
Psalm 23:4	Shadow the Raven	Dress-Up Day
Science and Crafts	Treats	Games
Experiments: Shadow Play / Fear Not Crafts: "Don't Worry, Just Pray" Magnet / Night-Light in the Darkness	Stuffed Staff Bird's Nest	Run, David, Run Walk Through the Valley

DAY 3

Walk Through the Valley

Supplies

Amounts will vary depending on how many courses you decide to make.

- Cones, chalk, field tape, or rope
- Obstacles (e.g., cones, plastic cups, balls of paper, playing cards, boxes, Hula-Hoops)
- Plastic gold coins, 1 per player
- Buckets, 2 per team
- Blindfolds, at least 1 per team
- Timer

Prep

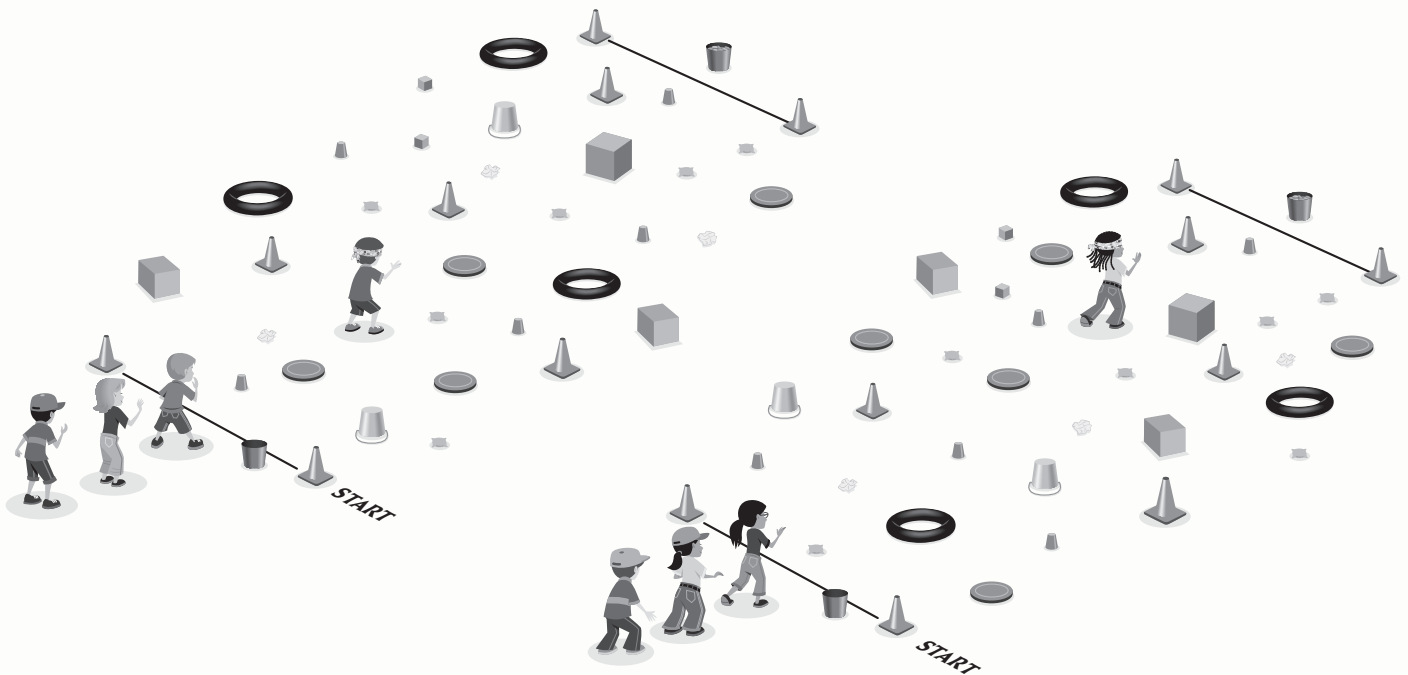
- Determine how many teams you will have and gather supplies accordingly.
- For each team, mark a 3 x 10-foot course with cones, chalk, field tape, or rope, including start and finish lines.
- Scatter obstacles in each course.
- Add gold coins (equal to the number of players on each team) to one bucket per team. If the teams are

not equal in number, some players may need to go twice.

- Place the bucket of coins at the finish line and an empty bucket at the start line of each course.

Class Time Directions

1. Divide the group into even teams and assign each team an obstacle course.
2. Have each team line up, single file, at their starting line.
3. Blindfold the first person in line.
4. Tell the second player in line to guide the first player through the obstacle course with verbal instructions. For example, he might say, "Take two small steps to the right." "Turn 90 degrees to your left." "Walk forward diagonally." Depending on the size of your play area, you can either have the guide stay behind the start line or walk next to the blindfolded player.
5. If the blindfolded player makes it to the end of the course without touching obstacles more than three times, he can grab a plastic coin from the bucket.



6. After grabbing a coin, the player returns to the start line, leaves the blindfold for the next player in line, drops the coin in the empty bucket, and then goes to the back of the line.
7. While the next player is getting blindfolded, change the course a little to mix it up.
8. Play then continues with the blindfolded player receiving directions from the player behind him.
9. If a blindfolded player touches obstacles three times, he must return to the back of the line without claiming a coin.
10. The first team to retrieve all their gold coins wins (or whichever team has the most coins once all players have had turns).

Teaching Tie-in

Can you picture a deep, dark valley? Imagine the long, creepy shadows, the threat of a crumbling rockslide, and eyes looking at you from around the corner. Yikes!

Lots of things in this life are going to make us afraid. I can't see into your heart to know what those things might be, but God can. One of God's names is Comforter. He wants to give you comfort for whatever troubles you.

When we turn from sin and receive the Lord as our shepherd, he offers us peace in times of trouble. He won't always take the trouble away, but he promises to walk with us through our valleys. He will never leave us alone, just like your teammate who is going to guide you through the valley in this game.

Tip Corner

Eye masks, scarves, ties, bandanas, or cut-up old T-shirts make good blindfolds.

DAY 4

Raiders

Supplies

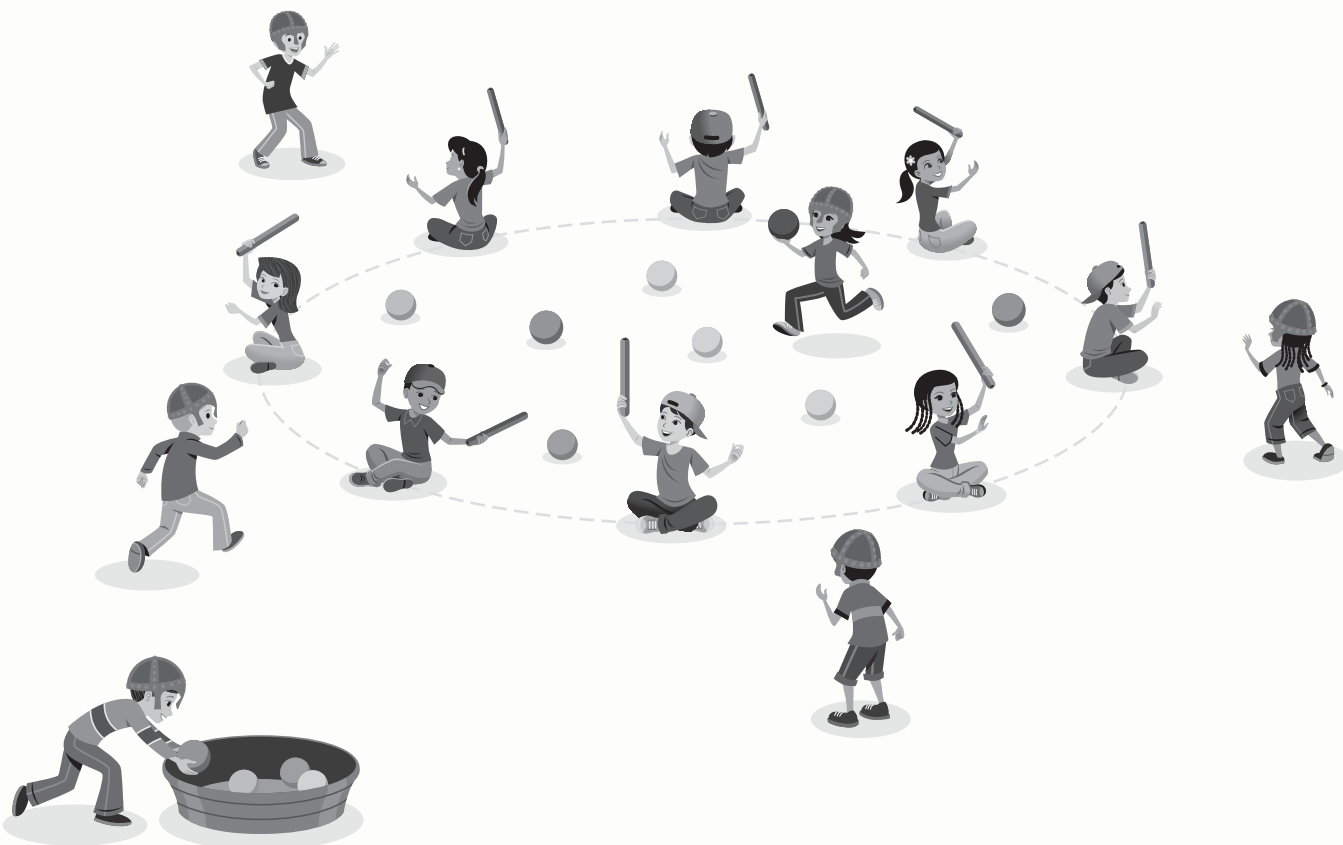
- Kiddie pool
- Balls of any size (as many as possible)
- Pool noodles (cut in half), enough for half the players
- Optional: water gun

Prep

- Set up an empty kiddie pool to the side of the play area.
- Place all the balls and pool noodles in the center of the play area.

Class Time Directions

1. Divide players into two teams. One team will be the Irish and the other team will be the Vikings.
2. Have the Irish team, each with a “sword” (pool noodle), sit in a circle around the balls that are in the center of the playing field. Players on this team should be spaced an arm’s length apart from each other. They can only move their upper bodies to tag the Vikings.
3. On the “Raid!” signal, the Vikings will start from the side near the kiddie pool (their “ship”) and try to make their way to the center of “Ireland” (inside the circle) without getting tagged by a pool noodle.



Vikings can use distraction, teamwork, jumping, etc., to make their way through the Irish to the inner circle.

4. Once in the inner circle, the Vikings' goal is to pick up balls, get back out of the circle, and deposit the balls in their "ship" (the kiddie pool). They cannot be tagged upon exiting the circle—only when entering.
5. If a player is tagged, he must get a ball from the kiddie pool and return it to the playing field.
6. Optional: To add some excitement, every once in a while, yell, "Stormy seas!" and have a leader run through the play area with a water gun and spray the Vikings. Sprayed Vikings must return to their ship and do 10 jumping jacks before returning to the game.
7. After the allotted time (about two minutes), count the number of balls the Vikings collected in the pool. Then switch sides and play again, seeing if the other team can collect more balls.
8. The team at the end of the two rounds that collected the most balls is the winner.

Teaching Tie-in

Can you name some of King David's enemies? Take responses—Goliath, King Saul, the Philistines.

One of Ireland's enemies was the Vikings. Rowing up to the coast in their longboats, they would raid the towns, sack monasteries, and plunder treasure.

Now, you probably won't be chased by a murderous king or attacked by Vikings, but you *will* face hard times because we live in a sin-cursed world. When bad things happen, who can we turn to for help? God. He is our Comforter and Provider. Our verse today reminds us that even in the midst of our enemies, God provides for us when we turn to him. Read or recite Psalm 23:5 together.

We'll take turns playing either the defending Irish or the enemy Vikings in this game called Raiders.

Tip Corner

- Make or buy Viking party hats for the Viking team. Use foam swords instead of pool noodles for the Irish team.
- For added challenge, play without the use of pool noodles.

Day 4 Overview

Grumbling to Grateful

Lesson Focus

Like David, I can have an attitude of gratitude in every situation.

Bible Passages

Psalm 23:5; 2 Samuel 9:3–7; 1 Samuel 16:1–13

Memory Verse

Psalm 23:5

Animal Pal

Pesky the Woolly Aphid

Cool Contest

Bible Challenge

Science and Crafts

Experiments: Sticky Stuff / Overflow Your Cup
Crafts: Gratitude Attitude Game / Thankube

Treats

Piled-High Popcorn
Full Float

Games

Raiders
My Cup Overflows Relays

DAY 4

My Cup Overflows Relays

Supplies

- ❑ Cones, chalk, field tape, or rope
- ❑ Tables, 1 per team
- ❑ Buckets (1 per team) with plastic tableware for each team (e.g., tablecloth, plate, utensils, cup, napkin, play food, plastic vase with flowers)
- ❑ Plastic cups, 1 per player
- ❑ Buckets of water, 1 per team

Prep

- Mark starting lines for each team.
- Place a table as the finish line for each team.
- For each team, choose a leader to play the role of David, who will sit or stand at the team's table during Relay 2.

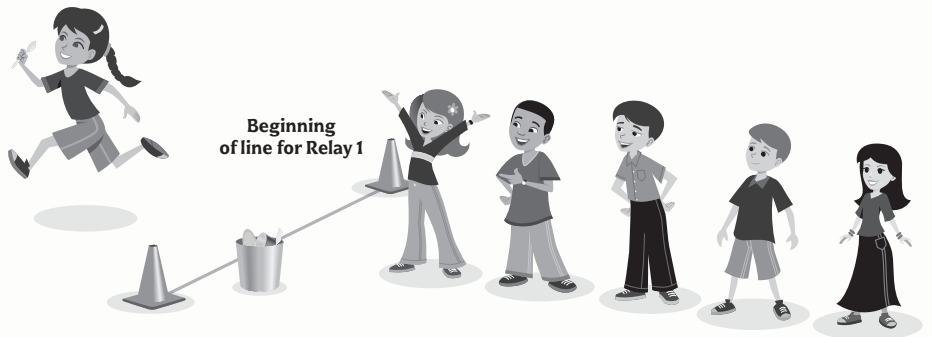
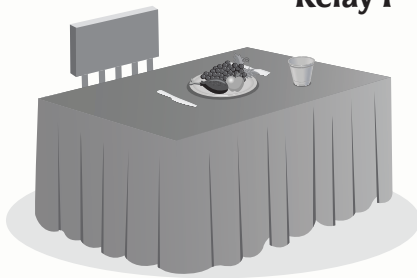
Class Time Directions

1. Divide the group into even teams.
2. Have teams complete both relays.
3. The first team to finish both wins.

RELAY 1—PREPARE THE TABLE

1. Give each team a set of tableware in a bucket.
2. Players line up behind their starting lines.
3. At the start signal, the first person in line grabs the first item, runs it to the table, and places the item on the table. The player runs back, tags the next player in line, then goes to the back of the line.
4. Teams repeat the process until all the items have been placed on the table.
5. Once the table is set, a leader, “David,” comes to sit at the table and the team begins the next relay.

Relay 1



Relay 2



RELAY 2—ANOINT DAVID

1. Players line up behind their starting lines.
2. Give each person a plastic cup.
3. Place a large bucket of water in front of the first person in line.
4. At the start signal, the first person fills his cup, then passes the water to the person behind him by pouring the water above his head. The next person must catch the water in his cup.
5. The water must be transferred in the same way from person to person, down the line, until it reaches the last person, who pours the water over “David” (the leader at their table).
6. The last person then moves to the front of the line, and the whole team shifts down. This gives each person a chance to “anoint” David.
7. Teams repeat the process until the bucket is empty or all have had a turn anointing David.

Teaching Tie-in

Can anyone say today’s memory verse? Take responses.
Read Psalm 23:5. **In Bible times, God’s priest or prophet**

would pour oil over someone when God had chosen that person for a special purpose. David was anointed by the prophet Samuel when he was chosen as the next king, and again when he began his reign.

David had to wait many years between his anointing by Samuel and his anointing as king over all of Israel. During those long years of waiting, God was preparing David to rule. **If the Lord is your shepherd, God is preparing you for something too. The things you do for God now, like studying the Bible and serving others, are preparing you.**

In this game, we’re going to prepare a table and anoint David.

Tip Corner

- Make sure the leaders playing David are comfortable with getting really wet or have some rain ponchos and towels handy.
- Have plastic crowns for the leaders playing David to wear.

line, set up a table with cups that the partners must work together to stack, one cup at a time, into the “house of the Lord” (a pyramid).

Finish Line: Set up a final finish line with cones that partners will cross once they have completed the final obstacle.

Class Time Directions

1. If you have set up two courses, divide the group into two smaller groups.
2. Divide players into partners. For an odd number of players, have a leader play.
3. Explain or demonstrate how to go through the course so that players can see the order and what to do at each obstacle.
4. At the start signal, have the partners race through the course. You can have the next pair in line go once the first pair finishes the third or fourth obstacle.
5. If playing with two or more courses, play for a set time. See which team has the most pairs that complete the course or which group completes the course first.
6. If playing with one course, tell the pairs their individual times, or time the whole group and have them run it again to beat their time.

Teaching Tie-in

If there is time, review the names of God for each day: Shepherd, Leader, Comforter, Provider, Promise Keeper.

Today, we’re learning that God is a promise keeper. God

never makes a promise he cannot keep. He promises eternal life in heaven to those who turn from sin and put their trust in him. This is why King David could write in the last verse of Psalm 23 that he was sure he would dwell in the Lord’s house forever.

We’ve journeyed through the entire Psalm! Now, it’s time to put your memory and muscle to the test. In this obstacle course, you’ll get a chance to practice each verse. Let’s go!

Tip Corner

- The possibilities are numerous for your Psalm 23 Obstacle Course. Have fun thinking of other obstacles or go with it as written.
- Eye masks, scarves, ties, bandanas, or strips of old T-shirts make good blindfolds.
- Have leaders who are available reset obstacles.
- Do not choose any objects that could be harmful if someone fell on them.
- Set up verse stations around the course for players to recite the verses. Use cones, chairs, or banners to mark the spot. Provide a verse sheet so players or leaders can check each other’s recitation. Suggested stopping points:
 - » During the second obstacle, replace counting to 23 with reciting Psalm 23:1–2.
 - » Recite Psalm 23:3–4 after the verse 4 obstacle.
 - » Recite Psalm 23:5 after the verse 5 obstacle.
 - » Recite Psalm 23:6 after the verse 6 obstacle.

Day 5 Overview		
Shaky to Sure		
Lesson Focus	Bible Passages	
Like David, I need to be on the lookout for God’s goodness and mercy, my traveling companions through life.	Psalm 23:6; 1 Chronicles 22	
Memory Verse	Animal Pal	Cool Contest
Psalm 23:6	Shirley the Highland Cow	Mission Money Mania
Science and Crafts	Treats	Games
Experiments: Firm Foundations / Real Rainbows Crafts: Psalm Scroll / Highland Cow	Cow Patties Spud Circles	Psalm 23 Partner Obstacle Course Pot o’ Gold

DAY 5

Pot o' Gold

Supplies

- Cones
- Large container (bucket, pot, or bowl)
- Plastic gold coins
- Foam dice, 1 per player
- Plastic baggies

Prep

- Set up a rectangular play area and place a cone at each corner.
- Fill a large container with gold coins and place it in between cones one and four.

Class Time Directions:

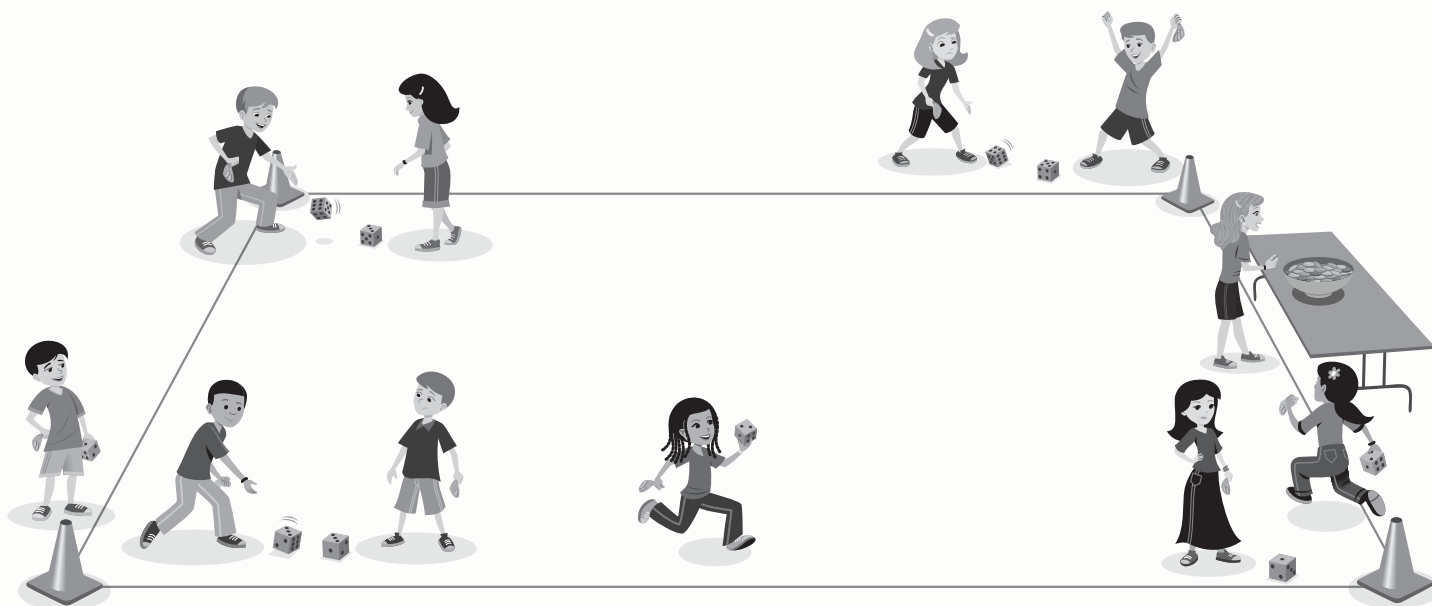
1. Give every student a foam die and a plastic bag.
2. Have everyone start at the first cone.
3. At the start signal, each player finds someone to challenge to a dice roll. Whoever's number is higher gets to advance to the next cone. The player with the lower number remains at the cone and challenges someone new.

4. Ties result in re-rolls.
5. At each cone, players continue challenging each other to die rolls and advancing to the next cone.
6. When players make it past the fourth cone, they can pick up a gold coin from the container for their baggie and return to the first cone to begin again.
7. Play as time allows.
8. When time is up, have students count their coins. Whoever has the most wins.

Teaching Tie-in

What do a four-leaf clover, a wishing well, and a leprechaun's pot of gold at the end of a rainbow have in common? Take responses—they are all associated with "good luck."

We've learned there's no such thing as luck, but good things come from God. The promise of heaven is not a result of luck either. Like David, you can know that you will *surely* dwell in the house of the Lord forever by admitting you are a sinner and believing that Jesus died



on the cross and rose from the dead so you can have a relationship with God.

In today's game, your wins and losses depend entirely on a dice roll. This is to remind you that the promise of heaven is not the result of chance, but it's a sure thing for those who turn from sin and put their trust in Jesus.

Tip Corner

Quarters can be substituted for foam dice, and students can play heads or tails instead. Since it can be hard to find a quarter if it drops in the grass, this suggestion works best if playing indoors.

Additional Games

Follow the Shepherd

No Supplies or Prep

Directions

1. Have players sit in a circle.
2. Choose one person to be the guesser and send him out of the room while you choose someone in the circle to be the shepherd.
3. Explain that everyone must follow the shepherd by copying his/her movements.
4. Encourage the shepherd to be creative (e.g., stand up, clap hands, make goofy faces, jump up and down, twirl around, do the chicken dance, etc.).
5. While everyone is moving, have the guesser come back in and stand in the center of the circle. He has three attempts to guess which player is the shepherd.
6. The shepherd should move enough so the guesser has a fair chance to make a guess.
7. If the guesser guesses correctly, he wins. If he doesn't, the shepherd wins.
8. Choose a new guesser and shepherd. You may choose to allow the winning shepherd to become the new guesser.
9. Play as many rounds as time allows.

Animal Choir

Supplies

- Animal Choir Cards
- Card stock
- Timer

Prep

Print the **ANIMAL CHOIR CARDS** on card stock and cut them out, making sure there are enough for each student to receive one. There are four animals: sheep, dog, fly, and cow.

Directions

1. Shuffle the **ANIMAL CHOIR CARDS** and hand one out to each student. Students may not show each other their cards.
2. At the start signal, players must make the sound of the animal on their card and get in a group with all other players making the same sound. Explain that

they may not say the name of their animal or make hand motions.

3. Set a timer for 60 seconds.
4. When time is up, declare any animal groups with all their members as winners of the Animal Choir.
5. Collect, shuffle, and pass out the cards again to play another round.

Potato Sack Races

Supplies

- Cones
- Sack race bags
- Timer

Prep

- Mark a start line for each team and place a cone 15 yards away.
- Place a sack race bag at the start line for each team.

Directions

1. Divide the group into even teams.
2. Players will line up behind their sack.
3. Set a timer. At the start signal, the first person will step into the sack, jump to and around the cone, then return to the start line. He leaves the sack for the next player in line, then goes to the back of the line.
4. The team with the most completed rounds in the allotted time wins.

Find a New Land

Supplies

- Cones, field tape, rope, or chalk

Prep

Create five squares in a large play area using cones, field tape, rope, or chalk. These will represent the five locations around Ireland: Donegal, County Galway, County Kerry, Dublin, and the Higher Lands of County Antrim.

Directions

1. Choose two taggers to start in the center of the play area. Everyone else chooses any of the squares to stand in.

- When the players in the middle shout, “Find a new land!” everyone in the squares must run to any of the other squares without getting tagged.
- Tagged players become taggers.
- Players cannot immediately return to the same land as the previous round.
- The last player to become a tagger wins.
- Optional: Shout, “Viking attack!” and send a leader wearing a Viking helmet out as an additional tagger.

Psalm 23 Scavenger Hunt

Supplies

- Scavenger Hunt List, 1 per team
- Scavenger Hunt Pictures or items, 1 set per team
- 4 cones
- Brown lunch sack, 1 per team
- Clipboard, 1 per team
- Marker, 1 per team
- Timer

Prep

- Print one **SCAVENGER HUNT LIST** for each team.
- Print and cut out the **SCAVENGER HUNT PICTURES**, one set per team, OR gather one set of the following items for each team. Adjust the list as needed.

Verse 1: sheep stuffed animal or figurine

Verse 2: water bottle

Verse 3: rocks in a path formation

Verse 4: shepherd’s staff made from pipe cleaners

Verse 5: jar of oil or a cup

Verse 6: doll house or block house

- Use cones to mark the boundaries of a large play area and hide the pictures or items within the area.

Directions

- Divide the group into teams of 4–5. Give each team a **SCAVENGER HUNT LIST**, marker, clipboard, and brown lunch sack. Assign a leader to each team to help students read or recite the verses and search.
- At the start signal, have each team read or recite Psalm 23.
- After the team has read or recited the verses, they may begin searching the area for the coordinating items. When they find an item, they put it in their sack and mark it off their list.
- Set a timer. The team with the most items collected within the allotted time wins.

Swat That Fly!

Supplies

- Badminton net
- Rackets, 1 per player
- Shuttlecock

Prep

Assemble the badminton net.

Directions

- Explain that the shuttlecock is a pesky nose bot fly they need to swat away from the sheep.
- Divide into two teams.
- Pass out the badminton rackets.
- Play badminton.

Tip Corner

- Check online for directions if you aren’t familiar with how to play badminton.
- Use a regular shuttlecock or find a large plastic fly toy.

Field Hockey

Supplies

- Cones, rope, or field paint to mark boundaries
- Pool noodles cut in half, 1 per player
- Variety of balls—see Tip Corner
- Wristbands or bandanas for one team

Prep

- Use a soccer/football field or mark boundaries for a rectangular play area—as large as possible.
- Scatter balls all over the field.
- Cut pool noodles in half for the “sticks.”

Directions

- Divide the group into two teams. Give one team wristbands or bandanas.
- Give everyone a pool noodle “stick.”
- Explain that each team will be trying to bat balls over the other team’s end line using their pool noodle sticks. Balls cannot be kicked or picked up.
- Once a ball is over the end line, the team cannot hit it out.
- At the signal, players will work to hit balls over the other team’s end line while blocking the balls coming toward their end line.
- Play until all the balls are out of the play area and over the end lines. The team with the most balls over the opposite line wins.

Tip Corner

- Smaller, lighter balls made of foam or plastic are easier to bat with a pool noodle. For variety, you could use some playground or soccer balls since they’re more challenging to move with a noodle.
- For a less chaotic version of the game, you could play it more like field hockey, with only one or two balls that teams try to bat into a soccer or hockey net set up at either end. Keep track of goals scored.

Leading a Child to Christ

AnswersVBS presents many opportunities to share the gospel, and every teacher should be ready to explain how to be saved, whether it's one-on-one or with a small group. Use the following steps as a guide to explain salvation, ask questions, read scripture, and pray with and for students.

Pray. Salvation is God's work, not ours. We cannot bring about salvation for anyone, but we can ask God to prepare a child's heart to receive the truth.

Explain. Prepare a clear presentation of the gospel. Avoid abstract phrases like "asking Jesus into your heart" and instead use clear biblical language, such as "becoming a child of God." You may want to use the following three key words to share how to receive eternal life:

- » **Admit** you have sinned (disobeyed God's commands). Ask God to forgive you of your sins. The penalty for sin is death (Romans 6:23).
- » **Believe** Jesus, God's Son, died in your place and rose again, paying the penalty for your sins (John 3:16; Romans 10:9-10).
- » **Receive** the gift of eternal life by telling God you want to be his child (John 1:12).

Ask. To encourage discussion and to gauge understanding, ask open-ended questions, such as the following:

- » What is sin?
- » Can you think of specific sins you have done?
- » Are you bothered by your sin?
- » Who is Jesus?
- » Why did Jesus have to die?
- » Why did Jesus rise from the dead?
- » When you receive the gift of eternal life, is there anything else you have to do? Emphasize that salvation is not based on what we do but is a gift from God through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Respond. When children demonstrate a basic understanding of salvation, encourage them to talk with their parents about what it means to become a child of God (if parents are believers). If they come from a non-Christian home, encourage them to express belief in Jesus through prayer, confessing sin and asking Jesus to save them.

Some children may not be ready to make a decision. For children who have previously made a decision, they may need reassurance or want to confess sin.

- » Read Romans 10:9-10 and John 10:28-29 with those who need assurance, encouraging them to trust in God's promises.
- » For those wanting to confess sin, read 1 John 1:9 and remind them that God forgives when they repent (turn from sin).

Celebrate. Rejoice together! Read Luke 15:10.

Grow. Explain that children of God receive the Holy Spirit, who helps them understand and obey the Bible. Share practical ways for them to grow in faith and follow Jesus:

- » Read the Bible and obey what it says. (Provide a Bible.)
- » Pray every day. Prayer is talking to God.
- » Attend a church that teaches that the Bible is God's true Word.
- » Tell others about Jesus.

As you faithfully teach and guide children in the gospel, trust God to work in their hearts. Continue to pray for them and encourage them as they grow in their understanding of what it means to follow Christ.

Supply List

Day 1

GAELIC FOOTBALL

- Cones, chalk, field tape, or rope to mark boundary lines and goals
- Bandanas, jerseys, or wristbands for 1 team
- 1 large foam or playground ball
- Coin for coin toss

LOST SHEEP RELAY

- Lost Sheep Pictures**, beanbags, or bandanas, 5 of the same color per team
- Cones, 5 per team
- Hula-Hoops, 1 per team

Day 2

SHAMROCK, RIVERDANCE, VIKING

No Supplies or Prep

STRONGMAN CHALLENGES

Supplies will vary depending on which challenges you choose to do.

- Goliath Picture**, 1 per team
- Chalk, field tape, or rope
- Cones
- Cardboard boxes (11 x 17-inch), 9 per team
- Dodgeballs, 5 per team
- Pool noodles, 1 per team
- Yoga balls or hippity hop balls, 1 per team
- Bags of potatoes (1–3 lbs.), 2 per team
- Timer
- Potatoes, 1 per player
- Permanent markers
- Tape measure

Day 3

RUN, DAVID, RUN

- Cones, chalk, field tape, or rope to mark boundary lines

WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY

Amounts will vary depending on how many courses you decide to make.

- Cones, chalk, field tape, or rope
- Obstacles (e.g., cones, plastic cups, balls of paper, playing cards, boxes, Hula-Hoops)

- Plastic gold coins, 1 per player
- Buckets, 2 per team
- Blindfolds, at least 1 per team
- Timer

Day 4

RAIDERS

- Kiddie pool
- Balls of any size (as many as possible)
- Pool noodles (cut in half), enough for half the players
- Optional: Water gun

MY CUP OVERFLOWS RELAYS

- Cones, chalk, field tape, or rope
- Tables, 1 per team
- Buckets (1 per team) with plastic tableware for each team (e.g., tablecloth, plate, utensils, cup, napkin, play food, plastic vase with flowers)
- Plastic cups, 1 per player
- Buckets of water, 1 per team

Day 5

PSALM 23 PARTNER OBSTACLE COURSE

Supplies will vary depending on which obstacles you choose. Double this if making two courses.

- Cones
- Blindfolds
- Pool noodles (1 per pair of players)
- Green tablecloth or tarp
- Blue tablecloth or tarp
- 8 rocks, cones, or weights of some kind
- 3 tables
- Bucket of ping-pong balls
- 5 plastic cups of water, plus 10 more plastic cups
- Hula-Hoops, 2 per pair
- Optional: Small bucket of water and sponges

POT O' GOLD

- Cones
- Large container (bucket, pot, or bowl)
- Plastic gold coins
- Foam dice, 1 per player
- Plastic baggies

Download [these items](https://AnswersVBS.com/emeraldresources) from AnswersVBS.com/emeraldresources.