

Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
Lower Elementary		
<p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: Jesus calms the waves.</p> <p>RIDING THE WAVES WITH JESUS: Kids sense Jesus' ability to bring calm to life's storms as they create a storm in a bottle.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Empty 2-liter bottle with cap, food coloring, water, glitter, pebbles, cross with the words "Peace. Be Still." attached to it, flashlight, life jackets (optional)</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Construction paper, markers, empty plastic bottles with caps, small plastic bowls/containers, plastic spoons, glitter, colored sand and/or pebbles, funnel, water, food coloring, glue gun (adult use only), glue gun glue (adult use only), duct tape, clear contact paper, 2-liter "storm" bottle from Open the Bible</p>
Upper Elementary		
<p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: Chart your course with Jesus as your guide.</p> <p>CHECK OUT THE WEATHER: Kids navigate life's storms by creating their own weather map collage.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Light blue construction paper, markers/pens, life jacket or floatation device, cardboard box with the word "boat" written on the side</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Cardboard or tagboard, weather sections of newspapers, weather maps/symbols printed from Internet, magazines, scissors, markers, glue, clear vellum, cardboard preprinted with the words "Do Not Be Afraid"</p>
All Kids		
<p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: Jesus is with you through the storms of life.</p> <p>LIFE'S STORMY WATERS: Kids whip up a shaving cream storm frame as they talk about WWJD (What Would Jesus Do?) moments.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Poster with "WWJD" written in bold print, collection of pictures/artwork/magazine ads/photos that depict a variety of storms</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Mural paper, paper towels, heavy construction paper or cardstock, shaving cream, liquid watercolor paints (blue, green, orange, purple), wooden stir sticks, plastic bowls, wax paper, sponges, old toothbrushes, digital camera (optional), photo printer (optional), glue (optional)</p>



Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content. Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find a downloadable Family Page for this rotation's story filled with ideas for families to use to explore this story and live out their faith at home.

Workshop Focus: Jesus calms the waves.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
- Be sure to visit www.sparksundayschool.org to download the Family Page for this story. Make copies of it and ask Shepherds to distribute it during the Wrap Up.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

A Storm Storytelling

Fill a clean/empty 2-liter soda bottle with water, food coloring, glitter, pebbles (such as fish tank pebbles). Secure the cap on top using a glue gun. Place a cross with the words "Peace. Be Still." in the center of the discussion area/table. Have a flashlight and life jackets handy.

Activity Instructions

Gather kids together around the cross, the flashlight, and the water-filled bottle.

Welcome aboard! Today we're going to climb aboard an imaginary boat. Put on your life jackets (real or imaginary) and let's go for a little ride. Who knows a story in the Bible that has a boat in it? (*Noah's ark, Jonah and the big fish, Jesus and the fishermen*)

Did you know that Jesus was a fisherman? One of the most exciting stories in the Bible takes place on a boat when a huge storm comes up. The skies get dark and the waves get big. Let's read about what happened in the boat today and then we'll create a little ministorm of our own.

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bible

Supplies

Empty 2-liter bottle with cap
Food coloring
Water
Glitter
Pebbles
Cross with the words "Peace. Be Still." attached to it
Flashlight
Life jackets (optional)

Everyone, turn to page 286 in the Spark Story Bible. Whoa! Check out that wave! What do you think those guys are saying? (*Yikes! Watch out! Hey, Jesus!*) **What is Squiggles thinking?** (*I wish I were on a cruise!*)

Read page 286 aloud to the kids. Turn the page. **What is Jesus doing?** (*standing up, talking*) **Let's keep reading and see what happened.**

How did Jesus calm the waves? (*stood, lifted his arms, and spoke*)

How do you think the disciples felt when he did that? (*amazed, grateful, surprised*)

Just for fun, let's take a minute and create a little ministorm of our own. Here's how it will work. Here's the cross with Jesus' words "Peace. Be still." Give the cross to one of the kids and have him or her sit in the chair at the head of the table.

The rest of us are going to be disciples and storm makers. Once the storm gets going, the person with the cross, [Name], will raise the cross and say, "Peace. Be still." and we'll all stop.

Ask someone to turn off the lights, have someone turn on the flashlight and shine it on the water bottle. Have someone create a "storm" in the bottle by swirling/shaking it. Have everyone make wind and wave sounds. Let them create a really big noise. Then have the cross holder lift the cross and say "Peace. Be still." and (hopefully) it will all go quiet. Have kids remove their life jackets if you used them.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Riding the Waves with Jesus

Set Up: Prepare a clean/empty or dry, 16 oz. plastic bottle for each student. Remove labels. Create an easy-to-access “buffet” of glitter in a plastic container, colored sand in a plastic container, small plastic spoons, funnels, and a station for an adult to use the glue gun to secure the caps. Place the oversized “storm” bottle from Open the Bible in the center of the space.

Activity Instructions

Each of you will have a chance to create a miniversion of the storm bottle. I will walk you through the steps to create this cool project. When you are done, you will be able to recreate the waves from the storm from the story and share Jesus’ message of peace.

Walk the kids through the steps below, one at a time.

1. Give each kid a 2" x 6" (5 x 15 cm) piece of paper and have him or her use markers to decorate it with the words “Peace. Be Still.”
2. Set the decorated paper aside.
3. Give each kid a 12 or 16 oz. clear plastic bottle.
4. Have the kids form two lines at the “buffet” and walk down and add:
 - a. a dash of glitter, and
 - b. some colored sand (or pebbles for fish tanks).
5. Fill the bottles carefully with water. Leave about 1 inch (2.5 cm) of space at the top. This is most easily done at a sink.
6. Add several drops of food coloring if desired.
7. Secure the top and gently shake.
8. Add more food coloring if needed.
9. Have an adult help secure the top by gluing with a glue gun and wrapping with duct tape.
10. Use clear contact paper to wrap the decorated “Peace. Be Still.” label around the bottle.
11. Kids are then ready to create the storm waves within the bottle and then have it “calm” as they set it down to rest.

This is a simple-to-make art project that will keep kids thoroughly entertained and retelling the story of calming the waves long after they leave class.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

2" x 6" (5 x 15 cm) pieces of construction paper, 1 per kid
Markers
Empty 12 or 16 oz. clear plastic bottles with caps, 1 per kid
Small plastic bowls/containers
Plastic spoons
Glitter
Colored sand and/or pebbles
Funnel
Water
Food coloring
Glue gun (adult use only)
Glue gun glue (adult use only)
Duct tape
Clear contact paper
2-liter “storm” bottle from Open the Bible

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Today's story reminds us that Jesus will always be with us in life. There may be lots of storms and bumpy rides, but remember, Jesus is always there. Remember his words "Peace. Be still."

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

Completed storm bottle projects

Prayer Time

Let's have a fun action "WAVE" prayer to end the day. Everyone, hold your storm bottle. While I pray, you can shake it and create a storm. When I raise the cross (from Open the Bible), stop your storm bottle and read the words "Peace. Be still." Start shaking storm bottle.

Leader: **Dear Jesus, Thank you for being with us every day. You are there for us when the waves get high and the ride gets bumpy and the thunder booms. You keep us safe and make us feel calm.** Raise the cross.

All: **Peace. Be Still. Amen.**

Workshop Focus: Chart your course with Jesus as your guide.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

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- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
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Open the Bible (10 minutes)

A Storm Storytelling

Precut a set of “waves” out of light blue construction paper. Have a life jacket or floatation device handy for a visual. Write the word “boat” on the side of a cardboard box.

Activity Instructions

Come and grab a seat. Today we’re headed out to the ocean. Don your life jacket. It’s likely to be a bumpy ride, so I’m going to be prepared. There are lots of things in life that come our way when we are sailing along. Take a minute to write down one of the “waves” or fears or concerns or issues that face you or your friends at this time in your life. Don’t worry, we won’t be reading these aloud. Hand out “wave pieces” and markers/pens. Ask kids to put them in the “boat” when they are finished.

In today’s story, we discover Jesus on a boat with the disciples. The disciples were fishermen and very accustomed to the sea. Can you tell me what you know about life as a fisherman? (*out on the water, long hours, brave, hard working, etc.*) **What do you think they were most afraid of on the water?** (*weather, storms, waves, not catching enough fish, etc.*) **Turn to Matthew 8:23-27 in your Spark Bible** (page 1067). **This story might be familiar to you. Take a moment to read it to yourself [or with a partner].**

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

Light blue construction paper
Markers/Pens
Life jacket or floatation device
Cardboard box with the word
“boat” written on the side

Now, what stood out about that day? (*the storm frightened the men, Jesus' words, amazement*)

Why do you think Jesus was sleeping? Why do you think the men were afraid? What part of the men's words was almost like a prayer? Accept all answers.

This is such a simple story, but many people turn to it as a significant story in the Bible. Everyone can probably name a time in his or her life when something was scary or overwhelming, just like some of the ideas you wrote on the waves today.

What is Jesus' response to us in the face of the storm? (*have faith, know that Jesus is always there for us*)

Put a Makes Me Want To sticker next to this story and write the words "PRAY" and "HAVE FAITH" near the text.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Check Out the Weather

Set Up: This project will be a bit out of the box as kids use symbols from actual weather maps (recycled from saved newspapers, printed off the Internet) to create a personalized collage. Have available a collection of newspapers (weather sections) and preprinted (from the Internet) weather maps/symbols. Print "Do Not Be Afraid" on precut (2" x 6" [5 x 15 cm]) pieces of cardboard. Create a sample to show kids, if you wish.

Activity Instructions

Encourage kids to take creative risks with this project (writing letters in interesting fonts, overlapping materials, doodling/drawing/cartooning) to make it their own.

In the center of their collage will be the words "Do Not Be Afraid." The project will be about the size of a bumper sticker to allow kids space to be creative without being overwhelmed.

Today's project will include some very simple art materials, including a piece of cardboard, glue, weather maps, words from magazines, markers, and your imaginations. I'd like to have each of you create a collage using snippets from the weather maps, symbols from maps, lettering and/or words cut from magazines, and your own drawings and artwork to create a collage.

The idea today is to capture the sense of "a storm" or waves that you might face, such as things that might be challenging, or a bit overwhelming, or even frightening. Use the weather map symbols to tie in to the fact that we are all trying to find our way or predict what the weather is going to be like, just like the disciples were always watching the skies to see if a storm was coming. Once you have completed your collage, we'll add one more piece.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Precut pieces of cardboard or tagboard (5" x 7" (12 x 17 cm) or 7" x 9" (17 x 22 cm), 1 per kid
Weather sections of newspapers
Weather maps/symbols printed from Internet
Magazines
Scissors
Markers
Glue
Clear vellum
Cardboard preprinted with the words, "Do Not Be Afraid" (2" x 6" [5 x 15 cm]), 1 per kid

1. Kids will cut out symbols from weather maps (newspapers, printed off the Internet).
2. Magazines can also be used as a source for other words/images that may symbolize things that can be overwhelming or unpredictable.
3. Glue symbols and words onto a bumper sticker-sized piece of cardboard (5" x 7" [12 x 17 cm] or 7" x 9" [17 x 22 cm]).
4. **Now that you have your collage of "stormy waves," let's think back to the story. What did Jesus say to the disciples?** (*"Why are you afraid, you of little faith?"*)
5. Give each kid a piece of clear vellum to place over the collage to represent how Jesus "calmed the waves and rebuked the winds and seas."
6. Then give each kid a preprinted Bible verse (2" x 6" [5 x 15 cm]) that says "Do Not Be Afraid" and have him or her add it to his or her collage. Some kids might add it over the words, others might angle it, and still others might wrap it around or put it on the back.
7. **We all confront our fears differently, but Jesus is there in all life's storms.**

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Go back to the "waves" that the kids wrote at the beginning of the lesson that were placed in the "boat." Put the "boat" in front of the group. **Let's pray together today for Jesus to be with us in the midst of any kind of weather or any situation where we feel unsettled or afraid.**

Spark Resources
Family Pages



Supplies
None

Prayer Time

Ask kids to offer up a prayer statement in a round robin prayer. If kids do not want to pray out loud, they may place their artwork in front of them when it's their turn to symbolize that they are taking their turn in silence.

Dear Jesus,

Help us not be afraid of [kid inserts words or phrases, or places artwork in front of himself or herself].

Be with us through all kinds of weather and keep us on course.

Amen.

Workshop Focus: Jesus is with you through the storms of life.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

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Open the Bible (10 minutes)

A Storm Storytelling

Gather a collection of pictures/artwork/magazine ads/photos that depict a variety of life's storms. They could include famous paintings or photos, historical pictures, contemporary news articles (storms, wars, poverty, etc.), or even abstract pieces that invoke a stormy mood.

Set the WWJD poster in the front of the room. Have the collection of pictures ready to view. Note: You will want to be certain that choices are age appropriate and that they cover a range from literal to symbolic storms.

Activity Instructions

Welcome! Let's get right to discussion time today. I can't wait to hear what you have to say and see what you think. Take a look at this poster. Who can tell me what the letters "WWJD" stand for? (What Would Jesus Do?) Great—in today's story, Jesus is out on a boat with the disciples. I'd like us to work together in small groups to read the story and put together a list of all the things that Jesus did in the story.

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bible
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

Poster with "WWJD" letters written in bold print
Collection of pictures/artwork/magazine ads/photos that depict a variety of storms

Break kids into multi-age groups and have them read the story to each other from the Spark Story Bible, pages 286-289. As they read, see if they can find things that Jesus did—both words and actions.

Okay, let's see what you found out. Let's go around the room and have each group name something Jesus did. Record answers on the WWJD poster (*met by the lake, went into the boat, said "Follow me," talked, laughed, told stories, caught fish, slept, slept some more, opened his eyes, saw fear, asked "Why are you so afraid?" stood up in the boat, lifted his arms, said "Peace. Be still." saved everyone*).

Jesus was a busy man . . . even when he was sleeping! In the story, there was a huge storm and Jesus was there to help the disciples through all of it.

I'd like to show you some pictures today of other kinds of storms that people face. See if you can identify what the storm is or what the challenge is in the picture.

Go through three to seven photos as time allows. Accept all answers. Note: Use the photos as inspiration and as a way to stay on track.

In each of these "stormy" situations, Jesus is there. What are the words that he might say? (*don't be afraid, stay calm, peace*)

Let's put a Spark Spot sticker here to remind us that Jesus is with us through all of life's storms.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Life's Stormy Waters

Set Up: Cover tables with mural paper. Have paper towels available for quick and easy cleanup. Have small bowls, stir sticks, sponges, and wax paper at each station.

Activity Instructions

Today you will have a chance to create quite the storm using one of my favorite art supplies, shaving cream! When you are done, you will have a great piece of art to use as a backdrop for a photo.

For some of you, this might be the first time you've worked with shaving cream. It's will tap into a lot of your senses . . . it looks cool, feels squishy, and smells pretty good, too. Remember, when you work with shaving cream to not touch your face or eyes. Ask for help if you need to wash any off. So, let's get started.

Here's all that you need to do to create your stormy masterpiece. Optional idea: Cut a slit in the paper prior to "painting" with the shaving cream and insert a cross after shaving cream painting to symbolize Jesus in the midst of the storm.

Walk kids through the following steps:

1. Give each kid a sheet of cardstock and access to several sponges (cut sponges into 2" x 3" [5 x 7 cm] size, or use sea sponges). Old toothbrushes work, too.
2. Put a small amount of liquid watercolor paint in the bottom of each bowl (work with 3-5 color options depending on group's skill level).
3. Add shaving cream to the bowl.
4. Give each kid a chance to help mix up the bowl of shaving cream and watercolors using a wooden stir stick.
5. Have kids gently dip one side of the sponge or toothbrush into the shaving cream mixture.
6. Dab it gently on wax paper to get off excess.
7. Put the sponge on the cardstock and dab where desired.
8. Add a new paint or another color as you wish.
9. If kids are so inspired, have them use their fingers to really get the storm effect going!
10. Direct kids to wash hands when completed or between paintings.
11. Make another painting if desired.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Mural paper
Paper Towels
Heavy construction paper or cardstock, 3-4 per kid
Shaving cream (not gel)
Liquid watercolor paints in stormy colors of blue, green, orange, purple
Wooden stir sticks
Plastic bowls
Wax paper
Sponges (precut kitchen sponges into 2" x 3" [5 x 7 cm] sizes, or sea sponges)
Old toothbrushes
Digital camera (optional)
Photo printer (optional)
Glue (optional)

12. Optional: Have a photo-taking station and photo printer set up. Take pictures of kids holding a cross or the WWJD sign. When the project is dry, they can add their photo to it with glue.

Note: This project moves quickly, so have plenty of cardstock on hand so that kids can make a number of stormy creations.

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

We've talked about some of life's storms, and you made some really cool storm creations. Let's close with a prayer that reminds us we don't need to be afraid, because Jesus will always be with us to guide us.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Build a closing prayer in the form of prayer requests to help with life's stormy times. Have kids use the response phrase "Do not be afraid" following each request.

Dear God,

Hear our prayers during the stormy times of our lives. Insert prayer requests, with the kids saying "Do not be afraid" after each request.

Amen.