

Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
Lower Elementary		
<p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: Jesus calms big storms.</p> <p>DE THUNDER, DE LIGHTNING, DISCIPLES!: Kids take turns adding to a class “storm mural” drawn with Kid Pix or a similar program.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles</p> <p>SUPPLIES: MP3 player or computer, speakers</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Computer(s) with access to Kid Pix® or similar program, printer and paper (optional)</p>
Upper Elementary		
<p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: Jesus protects us from storms outside and fears inside.</p> <p>JESUS TAKES NASTY STORM BY STORM! Kids create a podcast or desktop newspaper account of the event, with weather reports and interviews with various disciples.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: MP3 or CD copy of “Ready for the Storm,” MP3 or CD player, speakers</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Computer(s), podcast recording equipment such as USB microphone, and laptop recording software such as GarageBand®</p>
All Kids		
<p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: Jesus’ love brings calm and peace to life’s storms.</p> <p>INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVIVING A STORM ON A GALILEAN LAKE: Kids collaborate on a survival guide on what to do when caught in a storm with 12 scared disciples.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Electric fans, paper scraps to crumple and toss, paper towel tubes</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Computer(s)</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 big storms.

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

Prior to class, go to the website <http://www.sound-effect.com/>. On the main page you may see some storm-related downloads; if not—or if you want to explore further—go to the bottom of the left rail, where you will see a link for “weather.” Click on this link or on sound files on the welcome screen to find the clips you like. Or you can play lower-quality MP3 versions for free, straight off your laptop or computer, if you have Internet access in the classroom.

Set up your MP3 player or computer with speakers plugged in and ready to go, the sound effects cued up.

Activity Instructions

Hello, class! Today we’ll learn about the story of A Storm, which takes place on the Sea of Galilee with Jesus and the disciples. A storm came, and the disciples got really scared. Do you get scared when storms happen? What do you do during a storm? Allow kids to share their responses. **Today we’ll listen to some stormy sounds while we listen to the story from the Spark Story Bible.**

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles

Supplies

MP3 player or computer
Speakers

Pass out Spark Story Bibles. Then invite kids to turn to A Storm on pages 286-289, the story of how Jesus calmed the raging waters and winds on the Sea of Galilee. Play the storm sound effects you downloaded or stream them, and invite kids to contribute their own weather-related noises if you like.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

De Thunder, De Lightning, Disciples!

Set Up: Make sure the computer(s) is/are set up to Kid Pix or a similar program that allows kids to make pictures with a computer. If only one computer is available, put kids into teams and have them share it, or have the class perform the activity as a collaborative project.

Activity Instructions

Now that we've heard the story A Storm, and listened to some storm sounds, now it's time to create a mural based on the Bible episode. Use the computer(s) to create scenes from the story where the disciples and Jesus meet up with that terrible weather on the sea. Draw and decorate any way you like. Afterwards, you can save your picture while others add to the story and the scenes.

Optional: If a printer is available, have kids print out their pictures and place them on a wall to create a physical mural.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Computer(s) with access to Kid Pix or similar program
Printer and paper (optional)

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.

As we leave today, remember that Jesus can quiet any storm. Even when it looked like he was asleep in the boat, he was ready to hush the wind and the waves. When you are scared, turn to him. He will protect you because he loves you.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

Fan
MP3 player and speakers for storm sound effects

Prayer Time

Ask kids to gather in a circle. Turn on the fan to blow “wind,” and cue up storm sound effects. If you like, ask a student to flicker lights on and off. **Repeat each line after me.**

Dear God,

The waters grew dark

And the winds blew wild.

The disciples got scared.

But all the while

Jesus was waiting (Stop sounds.)

To bring calm and peace. (Stop lights flickering.)

He lifts up his hands . . . (Stop fan.)

And down go the seas!

Thank you Jesus, for protecting us.

Amen.

Workshop Focus: Jesus protects us from storms outside and fears inside.

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

Obtain a copy of the Rich Mullins song “Ready for the Storm” from the album *Songs 2*. You can buy the CD at Amazon.com or a Christian bookstore; an MP3 copy can be streamed for free, or downloaded, from:

http://www.last.fm/music/Rich+Mullins/_/Ready+for+the+Storm

Set up your MP3 player or computer with speakers plugged in and ready to go, the song cued up.

Activity Instructions

Pass out Spark Bibles. Ask the kids if they know where the book of Matthew is. Then invite them to turn to A Storm (Matthew 8:23-27) on page 1067, the story of how Jesus calmed the raging waters and winds on the Sea of Galilee. Invite kids to place an I Read It sticker in their Bible. Address kids as follows: **As we read the A Storm story, we will listen to a song by Rich Mullins, “Ready for the Storm.” Think about what it was like for Jesus in the boat—who was ready for any storm—and the disciples, who definitely were not. We’re told in this story that Jesus was asleep and the disciples were awake. But as you hear the story, and the song in the background, think about how the reverse is true spiritually. Does**

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

MP3 or CD copy of “Ready for the Storm”
MP3 or CD player
Speakers

Jesus ever sleep when we are afraid? And are we sometimes asleep at the wheel when we should take our fears to him? What do you think? Allow kids to share their responses.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Jesus Takes Nasty Storm by Storm!

Set Up: Have the computer(s) ready to go with a program that will allow you to assemble and do some basic design on copy as a class. This could be Microsoft Word, for example. If you decide to create a podcast, have your USB microphone and digital recording software ready. You must have a familiarity with sound recording and editing programs such as GarageBand and Logic (Mac), or Pro Tools and Ableton Live (Mac and PC). Don't attempt the podcast activity if you lack experience with digital sound recording and mixing into the MP3 format.

Activity Instructions

And now, we're going to turn this classroom into a newsroom. Jesus calming the storm is the big story, and I need all of you to play important roles here. I need a volunteer to play Jesus, and three additional volunteers to play disciples. Now, I need four reporters to interview these players. Then, when they are done interviewing, I need a meteorologist to recount the weather conditions, and three editors to team with the reporters to write the stories and good headlines. And, finally, when the stories are done, I'll be the copy boy: Give them to me and I'll type them into the computer and get a rough layout of the newspaper going. We can all pitch in on how the design should look. Select volunteers, expanding or contracting the numbers and roles depending on class size. This example will cover 12 kids.

Note: If you, or a volunteer, has video expertise, consider adjusting this Activate Faith activity by filming the class as they act out the A Storm news story, with class members playing various parts. You can also post this video to YouTube.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Computer(s)
Podcast recording equipment such as USB microphone, and laptop recording software such as GarageBand

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.

Ask kids to gather in a tight circle and crouch as if in a boat, and put themselves in the place of the disciples as they pray. **We're in the boat, and, boy, is it stormy! Who will protect us? (Jesus) Who will save us? (Jesus) Who always protects and saves us, of course? (Jesus)**

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Let's pray.

Dear God,

When waters grow treacherous

And life grows tumultuous

And the waves never seem to stop crashing,

It's hard to tell which is worse:

The storms outside us

Or the fears that churn inside us.

We thank you that the same Jesus

Who stilled the waves and silenced the winds

Holds that same power over our anxious hearts

And troubled souls.

Thank you, Lord, for the gift of your son,

Who saves us in so many ways

From life's raging seas.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

Workshop Focus: Jesus' love brings calm and peace to life's storms.

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Open the Bible (10 minutes)

A Storm Storytelling

Use anywhere from one to four electric fans in the area where kids will read the passage in A Storm. Have paper scraps that you can pass out that they may crumple and toss, and cardboard paper towel tubes (or a substitute) to make howling wind noises with.

Activity Instructions

Pass out Spark Story Bibles and Spark Bibles. Invite Upper Elementary kids to turn to Matthew 8:23-27 on page 1067, the story of Jesus calming the dangerous storm on the Sea of Galilee. Lower elementary kids can follow the action in their Spark Story Bibles, pages 286-289.

In this passage, a storm blows up out of nowhere, catching the disciples by surprise. But if it caught Jesus by surprise, he doesn't seem to know. He's asleep in the boat! What was it like for the boatful of believers to confront all that wind and fury?

That's where you come in. At various points during the reading, feel free to toss crumpled up paper scraps in the breeze generated by the fan(s). And watch out for lightning and sea monsters! Just kidding.

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bible
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

Electric fans
Paper scraps to crumple and toss
Paper towel tubes

Pass out paper scraps, then turn on the fan(s). Go around the group, with each Upper Elementary kid reading one verse. As the passages are read, you can also encourage kids to sway and rock as if on the lurching boat. Afterwards, allow kids time to cool down from their maritime ruckus!

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Instructions for Surviving a Storm on a Galilean Lake

Set Up: Have the computer(s) ready to go with a program that will allow you to assemble and do some basic design on copy as a class. This could be Microsoft Word, for example.

Activity Instructions

Did you ever wonder how the story of the disciples in the storm might've turned out if they'd had a little water safety instruction? And to think: some of these scaredy-cats were actually fishermen! Well, as a class, we're going to work on a survival guide for the disciples. What we need to do is think in terms of a scouting book, or a worst-case scenario guide. Here's the big question (feel free to write this on a blackboard or whiteboard): **WHAT STEPS WOULD YOU TAKE IF YOU WERE STUCK IN A BOAT WITH 12 SCARED DISCIPLES, AND JESUS, TO ENSURE CALM, ORDER, AND EVERYONE'S SAFETY?**

If you wish, use examples from one of the Lutheran Handbooks (Augsburg Fortress) or a survival guide to show kids how these lists might look, though this is not necessary. Then, have groups of kids write a few rules out on paper, which could then be typed and assembled in order by a team of two or three "editors" at a computer terminal. Team older kids up with younger ones as a way to build leadership among the Uppers, and confidence among the Lowers. If you like, print the lists and give each kid a copy of the assembled "instructions" list.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Computer(s)

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 had fun figuring out how to handle life's storms today. But who always knows how to bring calm and peace to life's storms? (Jesus) That's right—Jesus' love brings calm and peace to life's storms.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

Fans used during Open the Bible

Prayer Time

Ask kids to gather in a circle. Set up fan(s) inside the circle, blowing out. Ask a student volunteer to help with the prayer by being the "whisperer." **As we begin the prayer, I will recite it. Make all the noise you like. But when my designated "whisperer" comes by, do what he [or she] tells you to do after he [or she] whispers in your ear.** Tell the whisperer to say, "SHHHHH! BE QUIET AND STILL!" Also instruct the whisperer to turn the fan[s] off as kids quiet down.

And now, I will pray for us.

Dear Lord,

How loud and untamable the rough seas became!

The waters rose up and rebelled

So loud you could hardly hear

The cries of the disciples begging Jesus to save them.

Asleep in the boat, Jesus appeared unconcerned.

But with love as wide as any ocean

And every ocean,

Jesus rose up like a wave

And commanded that the seas and wind

Obey him and only him!

He hit the storm with thunderous love

And soon all was still . . . calm . . . quiet.

May the force of such love rule our hearts

And ripple through our souls

Now and forevermore

As we shout one and all: (Motion for kids to shout.)

Thanks be to God!

Amen.