

## Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
<p><b>Lower Elementary</b></p> <p><b>WORKSHOP FOCUS:</b> I can hear God's voice all around me.</p> <p><b>WHISTLE WHILE YOU WORK:</b> Kids write a work song and use instruments and materials to add other sounds.</p>	<p><b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> Spark Story Bibles</p> <p><b>SUPPLIES:</b> None</p>	<p><b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> None</p> <p><b>SUPPLIES:</b> <i>Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs</i> DVD, TV and DVD player, whiteboard or chart paper and markers, variety of musical instruments appropriate for kids, sandpaper, small hammers, blocks of wood, broom</p>
<p><b>Upper Elementary</b></p> <p><b>WORKSHOP FOCUS:</b> God provides a stable foundation.</p> <p><b>BUILT ON A ROCK:</b> Kids build a set for a House on the Rock performance.</p>	<p><b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p><b>SUPPLIES:</b> None</p>	<p><b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> None</p> <p><b>SUPPLIES:</b> Tarp for protecting the floor from paint, refrigerator-size cardboard boxes, paint, paintbrushes, paint shirts, paint can opener and stir sticks (optional), painting cleanup supplies, Built on a Rock Script (pages 93-94), a brown tarp (the rock), tan tarp (the sand), robe, tool belts with tools, construction hats, blue scarves</p>
<p><b>All Kids</b></p> <p><b>WORKSHOP FOCUS:</b> God speaks through sight and sound.</p> <p><b>SHADOW PUPPET PLAY:</b> Kids use shadow puppets to tell the story and explore ways to see and hear God's Word.</p>	<p><b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p><b>SUPPLIES:</b> None</p>	<p><b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> None</p> <p><b>SUPPLIES:</b> Shadow Puppet Script (page 95), Shadow Puppet Play Shapes (page 97), pencils, construction paper, small craft sticks, scissors, glue, plastic sheet protectors in blue and ivory, overhead projector or spotlight heavy paper (optional)</p>



Visit [www.sparksundayschool.org](http://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:** I can hear God's voice all around me.

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.sparksondayschool.org](http://www.sparksondayschool.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)

### House on the Rock Storytelling

Gather kids in your storytelling area. **Welcome to the Creative Drama workshop! There are many sounds all around us. Listen now. What do you hear?** Give kids time to respond. (*ticking of a clock, music playing in another room, breathing, and so on*) **Jesus often told stories called parables. In today's story, Jesus tells a parable about listening to him. Turn to page 282 in your Spark Story Bible and listen to House on the Rock.** Read the story aloud.

**Jesus said that people who listen to him are like the smart man. Where did the smart man build his house?** (*on the rock*) **What happened when the storms came?** (*The house stood.*) **Jesus said that people who do not listen to him are like the silly man. Where did the silly man build his house?** (*on the sand*) **What happened when the storms came?** (*The house fell.*)

**Let's make the sounds we might have heard if we had been where the men were building their houses. Invite the kids to use their bodies and voices to make these sounds:**

- sounds one might hear while building a house
- sounds one might hear on a sandy beach

Spark Resources  
Spark Story Bibles

Supplies  
None

- sounds one might hear while walking on rocks
- rainstorm sounds
- sounds of a house being destroyed
- sounds of a peaceful night's sleep in a safe and secure house

## Activate Faith (25 minutes)

### Whistle While You Work

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**Set Up:** Preview the “Whistle While You Work” song scene from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* before the workshop to ensure it is appropriate for your kids. You can rent the movie or find the clip online. Set up the TV and DVD player or computer/laptop projector in your space, making sure that everyone in the room will be able to see it.

#### Activity Instructions

**Each of the men in Jesus’ parable built a house. Have you ever worked hard to build or make something? It can be rewarding to work hard and then have something to show for it at the end. Many people enjoy working hard. Some even whistle while they work. Let’s watch a movie clip about whistling while you work. Listen, too, for other sounds you hear throughout the song.**

Watch the movie clip from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* together. In this scene, Snow White and the animals clean the dwarves’ house to the song “Whistle While You Work.”

**What sounds did you hear during the song?** (*whistling, singing, sweeping, dusting, a mouse squeaking, etc.*) **Did you know that people have been singing work songs for thousands of years? Work songs help people keep a rhythm while they work and help workers pass the time if they are bored or lonely.**

**Today, we’re going to make up our own work song using musical instruments and other items you might find while building or cleaning a house.**

1. Have the kids help choose a tune for your song. Try “The Alphabet Song/ Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,” “Mary Had a Little Lamb,” or “Itsy Bitsy Spider.”
2. Invite kids to come up with the first line of your song. Encourage them to think of something that has to do with enjoying work or with listening to the sounds of a building or cleaning project. Write down the first line of your song on the whiteboard.
3. Work on the second line of your song. It doesn’t have to rhyme with the first line, but it can be fun if it does. Try ending each line with a word whose sound ends with an open vowel like “ee” (me, be, see, we) or “oo” (you, too, who) or “ay” (day, play, say, way). Those may be easiest to rhyme. Write it down on the whiteboard. Repeat until your song is written.

#### Spark Resources

None

#### Supplies

*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* DVD (1937, G, animated)

TV and DVD player or computer/laptop projector  
Whiteboard or chart paper and markers

Variety of musical instruments appropriate for kids

Sandpaper  
Small hammers  
Blocks of wood  
Broom

4. Practice your song by singing it through two or three times.
5. Hand out instruments and some cleaning and building materials to the kids so that each has something to play. Use the instruments to enhance your song. Sing the song again with the instruments and materials several times, giving kids the chance to use different instruments and materials each time. They may also want to make sound using their bodies or voices.

Give great praise for the kids' creativity in lyric writing and their use of instruments and other materials to make sounds. **In his parable, Jesus compared people who listen to God to the smart man who built his house on rock. We just had fun making sounds and listening. What are some other ways we can listen for God's voice?** Give kids time to respond.

## Send (5 minutes)

### Wrap Up

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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. After the prayer, invite kids to sing their song one more time as they clean up the room, putting away all the instruments and the cleaning and building materials.

#### Spark Resources

Family Pages



#### Supplies

None

### Prayer Time

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Invite the kids to make their favorite sound from the activity to make noise for God.

**Dear God,**

**Hear our joyful, noisy praise!**

Make noise loud and long.

**Amen! Amen! Amen! Amen!** (quieter each time)

(It may take four or more "Amens" to get the kids to quiet down!)



**Workshop Focus:** God provides a stable foundation.

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.sparksondayschool.org](http://www.sparksondayschool.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)

### House on the Rock Storytelling

**Welcome to Creative Drama! Let's start off doing a little improv. "Improv" is a kind of acting that you make up as you go along instead of rehearsing it ahead of time.** Form two groups. Both groups will "act" riding a bicycle, but instruct one group to "ride" on an icy puddle and the other to "ride" on dry ground. **Who is safer: the riders on an icy puddle, or the riders on dry ground?** (*the riders on dry ground*)

Provide a new scenario: Both groups will improvise carrying a heavy box, one group on a narrow curb, and one group on a wide sidewalk. **If you were going to carry a heavy box, would you be safer balancing it while walking on a narrow curb or on a wide sidewalk?** (*walking on a wide sidewalk*)

**One last question before we open our Bibles: If you were going to build a house, would you be better off building it on a rock or on the sand?** (*on a rock*)

**Today's parable is about two men who built houses on different foundations. Let's read Matthew 7:24-28 (page 1066) in our Spark Bibles.** Read the story aloud. **What happened to the house that was built on the sand?** (*It fell.*) **What happened to the house that was built on the rock?** (*It stood.*) **Let's look at the**

Spark Resources  
Spark Bibles  
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies  
None

**Know It! and Think About It! questions at the bottom of the story in our Spark Bibles.**

**Where is the best place to build a house?** Give kids time to respond. Open their imaginations beyond “rock vs. sand.” **If you could build your house anywhere, where would you build it? Rural, suburban, urban? In what climate? In what country? Why?**

**What’s the safest place in your home?** Give kids time to respond. **What do you like most about that place? Why?** Invite kids to choose a Spark Bible Sticker to add to the text.

## Activate Faith (25 minutes)

### Built on a Rock

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**Set Up:** Make copies of the Built on a Rock script and read through the script for details on this project. Select a date when the rotation classes can come together and tell the story of Matthew 7:24-28 using the sets they will build during this workshop. This might mean a call to the pastor or worship planner. Advertise the date within the congregation and to all the rotation classes. Set and advertise a rehearsal date in which all rotation classes can rehearse together before the performance.

Each rotation class should have a part in building a set that can be used to tell the story during worship. There are three main components to this rotation project:

1. Building the set
2. Rehearsing the drama
3. Performing the drama using the set

Plan carefully so that each rotation class has a chance to work on each of these three components. Make sure the set doesn’t get finished too quickly, leaving little or nothing for the remaining classes to do. Assign the parts so that kids from every rotation class have a chance to be in the drama.

Place a tarp on the floor to protect the floor from the paint during set building. Place the cardboard boxes on the tarp. Open the paint cans and put the paintbrushes near the cans. Arrange to have a few people help you clean up after class.

#### Activity Instructions

**The wise man in today’s parable built his house on a strong foundation: a rock.**

**The foolish man built his house on an unstable foundation: the sand. Today, we’re going to start building a set and rehearsing a drama that we’ll perform during worship on** (tell them the date). **The rehearsal for our drama will be on** (tell them the date).

#### Spark Resources

None

#### Supplies

Tarp for protecting the floor from paint  
Refrigerator-size cardboard boxes, 2  
Paint (indoor latex or tempera)  
Paintbrushes  
Paint shirts  
Paint can opener and stir sticks (optional, if you are using indoor latex paint)  
Painting cleanup supplies  
Built on a Rock Script (pages 93-94), 1 copy per kid  
Brown tarp (the rock)  
Tan tarp (the sand)  
Robe  
Tool belts with tools, 2  
Construction hats, 2  
Blue scarves, about 1’ x 4’ (30 cm x 120 cm)

1. Give a paint shirt to each kid.
2. Explain that the refrigerator boxes will represent the two houses in the story. Spend some time as a group planning the house design. Where do you want to paint a door, windows, or other items on the house? (Consider which sides will face the audience when the drama is performed.)
3. Begin painting the house according to your plans. Remember to leave enough for each rotation class to do.
4. Before the house is finished (unless it is the final week of this rotation), stop and clean up to rehearse the drama.
5. Hand out a copy of the Built on a Rock Script to each kid. Assign parts for the day, keeping in mind that other rotation classes will also be rehearsing. Only one kid will be able to play each leading part in worship.
6. Hand out blue scarves to all the other kids who are performing as the storm, and advise this group to wear blue on the day of the performance. Distribute other costumes as appropriate (see script).
7. Rehearse the drama.

**Jesus' parable talks about building a house on a firm foundation. It also talks about building our lives on God, our firm foundation. How can we build our lives on God, our firm foundation?** *(by listening to Jesus, by acting on his words, and other ways)*

## 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.

Play a game: **If you'd rather build your house in the country, stand on my right. If you'd rather build your house in the city, stand on my left.**

Continue with that pattern, using different choices. **If you'd rather . . .**

- **build the set** or **perform in the drama**
- **go rock climbing** or **play at the beach**
- **build a house in a cool, wintry place** or **a warm, summery place**
- **listen to Jesus in a loud, rocking worship concert** or **listen to Jesus in a quiet prayer**

**These "if you'd rather" choices are choices based on our personal likes and dislikes. There is no right or wrong for everyone. But the safe foundation and unsafe foundation scenarios we acted at the beginning of the workshop had right and wrong answers. You made your choice because of your prior**

Spark Resources  
Family Pages



Supplies  
None

**knowledge and experience about which foundations would be safe (dry roads, wide sidewalks) and which ones would not be safe (icy puddles, narrow curbs). When we build our lives on God's Word, God's strong foundation helps us make good choices.**

## Prayer Time

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Invite the kids to listen quietly as you pray.

**God of strong foundations,  
Be strong so that we might be strong.  
Be fair so that we might be fair.  
Love so that we might love.  
Amen.**

**Workshop Focus:** God speaks through sight and sound.

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## Open the Bible (10 minutes)

### House on the Rock Storytelling

Welcome kids to your workshop. Gather kids in your storytelling area and make sure each of the older kids has a Spark Bible and each of the younger kids has a Spark Story Bible. **What are your favorite sights and sounds?** Allow time for stories. Ask kids to try to make their favorite sound and have the rest of the group guess what it is.

**Did anyone mention God as a favorite sight or sound? God speaks to us in many ways. Sometimes, we hear God through the voices of people who love us, from the pastor in church, or from our teachers. Sometimes, we see God's work in a sunset or a snowstorm or in the face of someone we love. Let's hear what might happen when we listen for God through Jesus' words in the Bible. Turn to House on the Rock on page 282 in your Spark Story Bibles or Matthew 7:24-28 in your Spark Bibles (page 1066).** Read the story aloud from the Spark Story Bible. After the reading, invite older kids using Spark Bibles to add a sticker to the story. Younger kids can help them choose a sticker.

**What were some of the sounds that were named in this story?** ("boom" of bad weather; "plop-plop-plop" of the heavy raindrops; "wooshhh" of the wind)

#### Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles  
Spark Bibles  
Spark Bible Stickers

#### Supplies

None

**What sights and sounds make you think of God?** Give kids time to respond. Sights might include Christian symbols like the cross, fish, or dove, or other sights like a newborn baby or fresh fallen snow; sounds might include church sounds like an organ or church bell, or other sounds such as the ocean, a rainstorm, an electric guitar. Encourage kids to be creative in their musings. Again, you may suggest that they make a sound that makes them think of God, and let the rest of the group guess what it is.

## Activate Faith (25 minutes)

### Shadow Puppet Play

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**Set Up:** Cut out the Shadow Puppet Play Shapes for kids to use as tracing templates. If you have a larger group, cut more than one tracing template of each shape. You may want to photocopy the shape page onto heavy paper and cut the shapes from the heavy paper for easier tracing.

#### Activity Instructions

**We've been talking about how we can see and hear God through sights and sounds. Jesus said in his parable that people who listen for his voice and act on his words are like the smart man who built his house on rock. Let's use shadow puppets to tell the story of the smart man and the silly man.**

1. Give the kids pencils, construction paper, small craft sticks, scissors, glue, and the shadow puppet tracing templates.
2. Invite kids to trace a puppet onto construction paper using pencils.
3. Direct kids to cut out the shapes.
4. Glue small craft sticks onto the back of the construction paper shapes. Leave some of the stick hanging off the bottom to hold and move the shadow puppets around the projector.
5. When the kids have each made one or more puppets, choose one of each shape to use in your shadow puppet play.
6. Put a blue plastic sheet protector at the top of the overhead projector image for the sky. Put an ivory plastic sheet protector sheet at the bottom of the overhead projector image for the ground. If you are using a spotlight, skip the colored sheet protectors.
7. Hand out the scripts to one or two narrators.
8. Act out the play using the script and the shadow puppets. Place each shadow puppet on the overhead projector or in the spotlight when the script calls for it. Tell the story a few times, giving more kids a chance to participate.

#### Spark Resources

None

#### Supplies

Shadow Puppet Script (page 95), 1 or 2 copies  
Shadow Puppet Play Shapes (page 97), 1 or 2 copies  
Pencils  
Construction paper  
Small craft sticks  
Scissors  
Glue  
Plastic sheet protectors in blue and ivory  
Overhead projector or spotlight  
Heavy paper, optional

# Send (5 minutes)

## Wrap Up

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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 used light and sound to tell our story today. Would the story have worked as well if there had been no light?** (*No. You wouldn't have been able to see the shadow puppets.*) **Would the story have worked as well if there had been no sound, no speaking?** (*No. It would have been hard to know what the shadow puppets were doing and what each shape meant.*)

**How do we use our eyes and ears to see and hear God?** Give kids time to respond.

## Prayer Time

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Kids use the shadow puppets to act out the following prayer.

**Holy Jesus,**

**Help us hear your words.** (Show ear puppet.)

**Help us speak your words.** (Show mouth puppet.)

**Help us act out your words by serving others.** (Show hand puppet.)

**In you, we rejoice!** (Show puppet of man rejoicing.)

**Amen!**

### Spark Resources

Family Pages



### Supplies

None



# Built on a Rock Script

## Characters:

Jesus

Wise Person

Foolish Person

Storm Motions (4-6 actors)

Storm Sounds (2-4 actors)

## Props:

Two refrigerator boxes painted in the Upper Elementary workshop

A brown tarp (the rock)

A tan tarp (the sand)

A Bible-times robe

Two tool belts with tools

Two construction hats

Blue scarves, about 1' x 4' (30 cm x 120 cm), one for each Storm Motions actor (also request that the Storm Motions actors wear blue on the day of the performance)

**Script:** *Two houses (painted refrigerator boxes) stand, one on a rock (a brown tarp), and one on the sand (a tan tarp).*

*Jesus stands to the side of the houses. He is wearing a robe. The Wise Person sits in front of the house on the rock with his/her head down. S/he is wearing a construction hat and a tool belt with tools. The Foolish Person sits in front of the house on the sand with his/her head down. S/he is wearing a construction hat and a tool belt with tools. The Storm Motions actors sit behind the house with blue scarves. They are wearing blue. The Storm Sounds actors sit opposite Jesus, to the side of the stage.)*

**Jesus:** Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.

*(The Wise Person stands and begins to build the house, miming hammering or painting.)*

**Jesus:** The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house.

*(The Storm Motions actors rage around the Wise Person's house, waving and swirling the blue scarves. The Storm Sounds actors begin by snapping their fingers, then clapping their hands, then patting their legs so the storm sounds rise. The Storm Sounds actors clap their hands again, then snap their fingers as the storm calms. The Storm Motions actors become calm and they still their scarves.)*

**Jesus:** The house did not fall, because it had been founded on rock.

*(The Wise Person smiles and stands with hands on hips, triumphant.)*

**Jesus:** And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

*(The Foolish Man stands and begins to build the house, miming hammering or painting. He falls over from time to time, as though the foundation isn't very firm.)*

**Jesus:** The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house.

*(The Storm Motions actors rage around the Foolish Person's house, waving and swirling the blue scarves. The Storm Sounds actors begin by snapping their fingers, then clapping their hands, then patting their legs so the storm sounds rise. The Storm Sounds actors clap their hands again, then snap their fingers as the storm calms. The Storm Motions actors become calm and they still their scarves.)*

**Jesus:** That house fell—and great was its fall!

*(The Storm Motions actors tip the house over. The Foolish Person falls to his/her knees and cries.)*

**Jesus:** Take care to listen to my words and act on them so that you might build your lives on the strong foundation that is God!

*(All actors freeze, then all come forward for a bow.)*

# Shadow Puppet Script

## Characters/shapes:

A mouth

An ear

A hand

A man building a house

A rain cloud

A wind swirl

A man rejoicing

A circle with a diagonal line through it

A pile of rubble

## Script:

**Jesus said . . .** (*shape of a mouth*)

**Everyone then who hears these words of mine** (*shape of an ear*)

**And acts on them** (*shape of a hand*)

**Will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.** (*shape of a man building a house*)

**The rain fell,** (*shape of a rain cloud*)

**And the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house.** (*shape of a wind swirl*)

**The house did not fall, because it had been founded on rock.** (*shape of a man rejoicing*)

**And everyone who hears these words of mine** (*shape of an ear*)

**And does not act on them** (*shape of a hand under shape of a circle with a diagonal line through it*)

**Will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand.** (*shape of a man building a house*)

**The rain fell,** (*shape of a rain cloud*)

**And the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house.** (*shape of a wind swirl*)

**That house fell—and great was its fall!** (*shape of a pile of rubble*)

**Jesus wants us to listen to his words** (*shape of an ear*)

**And act on them** (*shape of a hand*)

**So that we might build our lives on the strong foundation that is God!** (*shape of a man rejoicing*)



# Shadow Puppet Play Shapes



