

Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
Lower Elementary	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles</p> <p>SUPPLIES: None</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Large plastic garbage bag, scissors, masking tape, newspaper, paper bag, plastic sandwich bags, crackers, small plastic person, spray bottles, water, pliers, bowl, garbage can</p>
Upper Elementary	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Button, coin, or other small object</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Pennies, index cards, pencils, whiteboard, marker, broom straws, scissors, dice</p>
All Kids	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: None</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Paper, pencils</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: God can help us anytime, anywhere we are.

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)

Jonah and the Big Fish Storytelling

Welcome to Spark Science. I'm glad you're here. Everybody put your hands on your tummies. What does a tummy do? (*It holds the food we eat.*) **Our tummies hold and break up the food we eat. I've got a funny question—has your tummy ever talked to you?** (*When I'm hungry it rumbles and growls. Once I had butterflies in my tummy.*)

Tummies can talk to us. Some people say when they're nervous, it feels like butterflies are in their tummies. Show me what that would look like. Encourage kids to flutter like butterflies.

When you're hungry, your tummy might growl or rumble. Make those sounds now. Encourage kids to make noises. **When you feel sick, what does your tummy do?** (*It hurts. I throw up.*) **Show me that now.**

Part of today's story takes place in a tummy. Let's turn to page 190 in our Spark Story Bibles and read about Jonah and the Big Fish.

Why was Jonah in the tummy of the big fish? (*he didn't do what God wanted, he was in the water instead of in Ninevah*)

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles

Supplies
None

It was stormy when Jonah went into the water. What would probably have happened if the big fish didn't swallow Jonah? (*He could have drowned.*)

How did Jonah get out of the fish? (*The fish spit him out onto shore.*)

Since God helped Jonah get into the fish where he would be safe, then helped him get out onto shore, we know God can help us anytime, anywhere we are, too.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Tummy Talk

Set Up:

- Create a large, open area.
- Fill the spray bottles with water.
- Cut open the large plastic garbage bag and tape to the floor. Place one spray bottle on the garbage bag.
- At one end of the bag, use the tape to make two parallel straight lines on the floor, 18 inches (46 cm) apart and 3 feet (1 m) long. Use the tape to make a square at the end. Place the pliers and one spray bottle in the square.
- At the opposite end of the bag, use the tape to make two parallel curvy lines on the floor, 18 inches (46 cm) apart and about 15 (4.5 m) feet long. Place the bowl in the middle and the garbage can at the end of the curvy lines.
- Make a food particle by placing the crackers in the plastic sandwich bag and sealing tightly. Wrap this bag in a piece of newspaper and place in a paper bag.
- Make a Jonah particle by placing the small plastic person in a plastic sandwich bag. Wrap this bag in a piece of newspaper and place in a paper bag. Mark this parcel so you know to use it second.

Activity Instructions

Remember when I asked you to pretend you were sick? When a food is bad, it bothers our tummies. To get rid of the bad food, we get sick.

We know that Jonah was bad food for the big fish in a couple ways. Most big fish don't eat people. We taste bad. Jonah also behaved badly when he didn't do what God wanted.

We're going to explore more about tummies and how they work.

On the floor is a big model of our digestive system.

1. **It all starts here.** Gather kids by the pliers. **When we eat, what's the first thing we do?** (*bite, chew, use our teeth*) **That's what these pliers will be—teeth.**
2. **When you chew food, have you ever noticed that it gets wet?** (*Yes! That's spit/saliva.*) Hold up water bottle. **This will be our spit.** (*Yuck!*)

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Large plastic garbage bag
Scissors
Masking tape
Newspaper
Paper bags, 2
Plastic sandwich bags (heavy duty), 2
Crackers, 2-3
Small plastic person
Spray bottles, 2
Water
Pliers
Bowl
Garbage can

3. **After we chew food, what happens next?** (*We swallow it.*) **These straight lines will be the throat—the tube that takes food to the tummy. Food gets squeezed and mashed as it goes down.**
4. **What happens when food gets to the tummy?** Gather around the garbage bag. (*It rolls around. It gets digested.*) **Tummies make an acid that helps turn food into a slimy, stinky mess.** Show second spray bottle.
5. **The food needs to be smaller so the energy in it can get into the blood and travel to other parts of the body. That happens in the small intestine.**
6. **What happens to all the things that aren't digested?** (*I don't know. They come out as poop.*) **Everything that doesn't go into our blood goes through our large intestine, and comes out our bottoms as waste.** Have kids walk through curvy lines to garbage can.
7. **Now that we know how it all works, let's see it in action.** Station kids along the floor model. If possible, have at least two at each place. **I'll tell you what is happening at each step.** Expect lots of giggles!
 - a. **Here's a food particle.** Hold up the food particle with crackers inside. **The energy is trapped inside. We'll work together to get it out.** Hand it to the kids with the pliers.
 - b. **First, the teeth will tear open the outer layer. Pass everything, all the pieces, to the next kids.**
 - c. **After we bite food, we chew it. As we chew it, our mouths add spit. So spray the particle and pass it back and forth. Pass everything to the next kids.**
 - d. **After we chew food, we swallow it and it goes down the throat. As it goes down, it gets squeezed and mashed. Pass everything to the next kids.** By this time, the paper should be getting shredded.
 - e. **Once it gets in the tummy, it gets covered with stomach acid, so spray the food. Our stomach muscles are very strong, so the food gets mashed.** Encourage the kids to be mash the bag. When the crackers become visible, be sure that everyone has the chance to see them.
 - f. **Pass everything along to the small intestine. Here is where the tiny food pieces are the energy that goes out from the sides into the blood.** Have kids open the plastic bag and pour the cracker dust into the bowl.
 - g. **All the rest of the materials keep going through, until they end up as waste.** Throw the remaining materials away.
8. **Now that we know how it works, switch stations, and let's do it one more time.** Repeat steps a through e with the Jonah particle. Once it is obvious that there is a "person" in the package, stop the process and lead a discussion.

9. **This is just like today's story! Jonah was swallowed by a big fish. But the fish's tummy knew that Jonah was not good food. Do you remember what happened to Jonah? (He got spit out!) So all of the other materials keep going through the system, while Jonah has to go back up through the mouth.**
(Ugh!)

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.

Jonah behaved very badly when he ran away from the job God gave him. He was also bad food for the fish. But he was the one God wanted to help the people of Nineveh. Through his experience, Jonah learned that God was with him, everywhere and all the time. And God helped Jonah, even when he wasn't being good. God is always there to help us, too. Anywhere and anytime we need help, God is there for us.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Gather kids in a circle. Have them rub their tummies as you say this prayer:

Dear God, you were with Jonah when he was in the tummy of a big fish. As we learned about what happens in our tummies today, we also learned that you are always with us. Help us to do as you ask the first time. Amen.

Workshop Focus: God works in mysterious ways.

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)

Jonah and the Big Fish Storytelling

Set Up:

Place the small object in your pocket.

Welcome to Spark Science. I'd like to shake everyone's hand. As I do this, I'm going to give one of you something special. Do your best not to let everyone else know if you get the special item. To do this effectively, put your right hand in your pocket between each hand shake and act like you are pulling something out. Pull it out at random to give to one kid. **Hi, I'm glad you're here. Hello. It's good to see you again.**

So now, I've selected one of you to be special. How might we be able to tell who it is? (*They might act funny. They might be smiling, or avoiding our eyes. Various responses.*)

Today we're going to investigate different ways some people use to try to do this very task. Let's find out the task and the method used by reading the story of Jonah. Open your Bibles to the book of Jonah (page 1008), and we'll start at chapter one.

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

Button, coin, or other small object

Who was selected by God in this story? (*Jonah*)

Did Jonah tell anyone else about his calling? (*No. It doesn't say.*)

Who had to determine that Jonah was special? (*the sailors*)

How did they do this? (*by casting lots*)

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Counting on Coins

Set Up: Cut the straws into various lengths.

Activity Instructions

In today's story, the sailors "cast lots" to determine who was responsible for the stormy weather. Casting lots is mentioned 70 times in the Old Testament, and 10 times in the New Testament. What does it mean to cast lots? (*roll dice, draw straws, flip a coin*)

There are many different ways to cast lots, including rolling dice, picking a number, or drawing straws. Do you think casting lots can really tell you something? (*It works to choose a random person, but not to tell if someone is innocent or guilty.*) **We're going to find out.**

- 1. Casting lots is usually about chance.** Show a penny. **What is the chance that when I flip this coin, it will land with heads up?** (*50%, 1 in 2 chance*) Flip the penny and announce results.
- 2. According to the laws of probability, the penny should land heads up half the time. Let's see if that is true. Find a partner.** Distribute penny, index card, and pencil to each set.
- 3. Take turns flipping a penny ten times with your partner. Record each time whether it lands heads up or tails up.**
- 4. Let's compare results.** Write results on the board and discuss. **How many times total was a penny flipped? How many total times did it land heads up? Is that close to 50%, or half the time?**
- 5. Why do people flip a coin?** (*to choose things randomly*) **Scientists often have to test things randomly. For example, if they are developing a new chemical to kill weeds, they have to randomly choose which weeds to spray it on. They can't just choose to spray it on the weeds that are already dying in order to make the results look good. That wouldn't be fair. When people cast lots or flip a coin, they assume the results will be fair and random. Do you think the casting of lots in today's story was random?** (*yes, no*) **Why or why not?** (*God was guiding the process. Jonah already knew he was the cause of the storm, so he rigged or influenced the results. Yes, because the sailors didn't know what was going on.*)

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Pennies, 1 per kid
Index cards
Pencils
Whiteboard
Marker
Broom straws
Scissors
Dice, 2

6. **So, do you think it makes a difference if one or more people know what the results of casting lots should be?** *(yes, no, it could)* **Flipping a coin should give everyone an equal chance. Looking back at the results of our penny flips, did some people get more heads up than others? Why? Is there anything you can do to increase the chance of a penny landing heads up?** *(Maybe whether you start it with heads up, how many times it spins, or how high you flip it.)* **How can we test those ideas?** *(various replies)* Let kids perform tests as they are able. Record and discuss results.
7. **Although there are things we might be able to do to influence the results of flipping a coin, we can't be absolutely sure of the results. The whole story of Jonah—from casting lots to sitting in the belly of a big fish—shows that God works in mysterious ways.**
8. **There's one other thing I'd like to do before we leave today. Does anyone think you know who received the special thing I passed out when I shook hands at the beginning?** *(yes, no)* **I'm going to pick one other person who can try any casting-lots type method they want to name that special person. It can be flipping a coin, rolling dice, drawing straws, counting off by a chant like eenie-meenie-mynie-moe, picking a number between one and twenty-five or any other method you describe.** Select a volunteer and see what happens.

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.

Casting lots can work if you truly want a random result. A truly random result might not have helped the sailors in today's story calm the stormy seas. But both God and Jonah knew that Jonah was hiding from his calling. God worked in very mysterious ways to get Jonah to accept his responsibilities. Speaking of responsibilities, we'll have fun with the closing prayer by drawing straws and rolling dice. If you get the short straw or the highest number, you are responsible for creating the next line of our closing prayer. I'll start it.

Prayer Time

Dear God, today we realized that hiding from your calling is not a good idea.

Select kids by rolling dice and drawing straws for additional sentences.

Amen.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Workshop Focus: Do what God asks you to do.

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Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Jonah and the Big Fish Storytelling

Set Up: Create a large, open area.

Welcome to Spark Science. I'm glad you're here. Who can describe how to play Simon Says? *(One person is Simon. They give directions. You only do it if they start a sentence with "Simon says." If they say "Simon says pat your head," you pat your head or you're out. If they just say "pat your head" and you do it, you're out.)*

Let's play a game of Simon Says. Tell the person next to you to smile. Simon says walk towards the doors. Simon says stop and turn around. Act like you are taking a nap. Simon says make a face like a fish. Pretend you are in the belly of a giant fish. Simon says tell the person next to you to smile.

Good job. Today's story reminds me of Simon Says. Let's see if you agree. It's the story of Jonah and the Big Fish. You'll find it in your Spark Story Bible on page 190. In your Spark Bible, look for the book of Jonah, Chapter 1 (page 1008). You might want to have the Shepherd work with one group while you work with the other. Bring everyone together for the review.

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies
None

Who was giving directions to Jonah in the story? (God)

Did Jonah listen to the directions? (no)

How did God let Jonah know he was doing the wrong thing? (He caused a storm on the sea. He had a big fish swallow Jonah.)

Did Jonah ever do what God asked him to do? (yes)

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Do What?

Activity Instructions

God wanted Jonah to go to Nineveh to remind the people how to behave. What would happen if Jonah didn't go? (God might have destroyed the city.) **Although the people of Nineveh didn't know it, it was very important for Jonah to follow God's directions.**

The same thing is true in science experiments. Not following specific directions can lead to disastrous results. How well do you follow directions? (Very well. Sometimes I forget what I am supposed to do.) **Let's find out.**

1. Distribute paper and pencils. **Pick one spot in the room. It could be a certain chair, the left side of the door, a picture on the wall. Describe that spot in words or with a drawing on your paper. Do not tell anyone else your special spot.**
2. **When you are done, fold your paper in half with the pencil marks inside so no one can see them.**
3. **Find a partner. The kid with the birthday closest to today goes first. That kid must give the partner five specific instructions on how to get to the special spot—without naming the spot. For example, if you are giving directions, you might say go 2 steps forward. Turn to your left. The kid giving directions must give five directions and cannot move until all five directions have been followed. Then meet up with your partner and show your paper. How close is your partner to the right spot?** Give the kids several minutes to complete this portion. Encourage the use of specifics—go right or left, go toward the windows or toward the door, etc.
4. **How did it feel to follow directions without knowing where you were supposed to be going?** (frustrating, funny, harder than I thought it would be) **How did it feel to watch your partner, especially if your partner got confused and didn't follow your instructions?** (Frustrating. I wanted to just say go to the special spot.)
5. **Switch roles and try it again. Were you ever tempted to go a different way?** (yes, no)

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Paper

Pencils

6. **While it is very important to follow directions, another important part of the story is giving good directions. When Jonah finally went to Nineveh, he had to convince the people to change their ways. He had to be clear and convincing in his instructions to them. If he had just said, "Do the right thing," or "behave better," people might have been confused. But God told Jonah exactly what to say, and what the people were supposed to do. By following these instructions, the people of Nineveh were saved.**
7. If time permits, ask kids to practice giving and following directions on how to tie a shoe, how to play hopscotch, how to write their names, etc.

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.

Much of the time, we give and hear general directions, like "clean your room," or "be nice to others." Today we learned about the importance of giving and following specific directions. God told Jonah exactly what he was supposed to do and why. But Jonah didn't follow the directions and then bad things happened. A rule of thumb to remember is that if you are given very specific instructions, it's a good idea to follow them exactly. For our prayer today, please follow my words and actions.

Spark Resources
Family Pages



Supplies
None

Prayer Time

Dear God,

As we put our right hand over our hearts, (place your right hand over your heart)
we pledge our love to you.

As we pat our heads with our left hand at the same time, (with right hand still over your heart pat your head with your left hand)

we will think about what we have learned today.

As we twirl in a circle, (twirl in a circle)

we will remember that your love always surrounds us.

And as we stomp our left foot, (stomp your left foot)

we will remember to follow the directions you give us.

Amen.

