

Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
Lower Elementary		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: God protects us.	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles	SPARK RESOURCES: None
PROTECTION INSPECTION! Kids learn about protection systems found on and in their own bodies.	SUPPLIES: None	SUPPLIES: Thread, crayons, paper, medicine dropper, measuring cup, measuring spoons, water, white glue, borax, green food coloring, plastic tubs with lids, plastic spoon, wax paper, soft clay, palm-sized rocks, glitter
Upper Elementary		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: God always knows where we are.	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	SPARK RESOURCES: None
WHERE ON EARTH? Kids simulate how wildlife biologists track wild animals.	SUPPLIES: None	SUPPLIES: Index cards, hole punch, string, marker, cups, crayons, envelopes, colored paper, paper, pencils, clock with second hand, large boxes
All Kids		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: We are part of God's community.	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	SPARK RESOURCES: None
KEEP THEM SAFE! Kids learn the advantages of being part of a group.	SUPPLIES: None	SUPPLIES: Bingo or poker chips, rag strips or bandanas, paper-chain necklace



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 protects us.

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 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)

The Lord Is My Shepherd Storytelling

Welcome to Spark Science. I'm glad you're here. I'd like everyone to look at your shoes. I have a rather silly question for you. Why do you think people invented shoes? (*to protect their feet, to look nice, to keep their feet warm, to run fast*) **Shoes can protect our feet from sharp rocks or thorns, from cold snow, from really hot sidewalks, and from stubbing our toes. Are there any other clothes we wear for protection?** (*raincoats, hats, pants*) **What do clothes protect us from?** (*cold, rain, sunburn, bugs*)

Are there any other ways we can be protected from cold, rain, sunburn, and other dangers? (*go inside, use umbrellas, sunscreen, bug spray*)

Today's story is all about being protected and taken care of in many different ways. Let's find out more by turning to page 160 in our Spark Story Bibles and reading The Lord Is My Shepherd.

Who took care of and protected the sheep in this story? (*David, the shepherd*)

David thought of someone who acted like a shepherd by taking care of him and other people. Who did David say was a good shepherd? (*God*)

Even if you don't have any sheep, can you be like a good shepherd by taking care of others? (*yes*)

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles

Supplies
None

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Protection Inspection!

Set Up: Make nose mucus by pouring 4 ounces (12 ml) of glue in a plastic tub. Add 1/2 cup (120 ml) of water and stir with a plastic spoon. In a separate container, mix 1 teaspoon (5 ml) borax and 1 cup (140 ml) water. Pour the glue mixture into the borax mixture and stir. Add some food coloring. Knead the substance until it is gooey, pouring off any extra water. Cover until ready to use. This recipe makes enough for 8-10 kids. Note: When you complete the activity, throw the “mucus” in the garbage. Do not pour it down a sink.

Have a strand of thread ready to use as you are speaking. Make one golf-ball sized ball of soft clay for each kid.

Activity Instructions

We’re talking about protection today. We already discussed how clothes are good protectors. Our body has many other natural protectors as well. One protector is our eyelid. Everybody blink a lot. How do our eyelids protect us?

(keep out dirt, blink out the sun, make it dark so we can sleep)

Another protector is the hair on our heads, arms, and legs. Can you feel it when I touch your head and then your hand with a piece of thread? How does hair protect us? *(keeps our heads warm, prevents sunburn, helps us feel if something little is crawling on us)* **Our teeth, our voices, our legs and arms are also good protectors. But right now, it’s time to find out about some hidden body protectors.**

The first hidden protector can be found on each side of your head. Don’t stick a finger in there—but what is inside your ears? *(ear wax)* **Let’s find out how ear wax can protect us.**

1. Distribute paper and crayons. **Feel the ends of a crayon. Crayons are made of something a lot like ear wax.**
2. **Make your thumb and pointer finger into an O shape. Trace the inside of the O in two different places on your paper. Imagine those Os are your eardrums. Color in one O so that you don’t see the paper any more. Leave the other O alone.**
3. **What do you think will happen to the paper inside each O when I put a drop of water onto it?** *(The empty one will get soggy. The colored one will stay dry longer.)* **Let’s find out.** Use the eyedropper to place one drop of water in each circle on each kid’s paper. The water drop on the waxy O should bead up. It may take a minute or two for the one on the plain paper to soak through.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Thread
Crayons
Paper
Medicine dropper
Measuring cup
Measuring spoons
Water
White glue
Borax
Green food coloring
Small plastic tubs with lids, 1 per kid
Plastic spoon
Wax paper
Soft clay
Palm-sized rocks, 1 per kid
Glitter

4. **Why would a soggy eardrum be bad?** *(It couldn't protect us.)* **To see which one is stronger, try to poke your finger through each O.** *(The wax one is stronger.)*
5. **You can find some important protectors at the tips of your fingers and toes. What are those hard shells you have there?** *(fingernails, toenails)* **How do they protect you?** *(You can use them to scratch things or to open things, they can be sharp.)* **They can be sharp and used as weapons, but they protect you in another way.**
6. Distribute a golf ball-sized piece of clay and a rock to each kid. **Roll the clay into a finger shape.**
7. **What will happen when you drop a rock onto your clay finger?** *(It will smash it, make a dent.)* Let kids have a turn dropping a rock onto their clay finger.
8. **Roll your clay finger so it looks good again. This time, we're going to add a fake fingernail.** Give each kid a plastic lid to cover the finger. **What will happen this time?** *(It won't smash as much.)* Let kids drop the rock onto the plastic lid. **Fingernails and toenails protect the soft tips of our fingers from most smashes and cuts.**
9. **Here's one more hidden protector.** Give each kid a piece of waxed paper. **This is the one that most people never think of as a protector—but it is! This protector traps germs and keeps us healthy, and gets rather dirty and nasty as it works.** Place a spoonful of premade "mucous" slime on each piece of waxed paper. **Can you guess what protector this is?** *(nose icks, snot, goobers, boogers)* Accept kids' responses. Expect laughter and some gross-out noises. **God made each part of our body for a purpose—even mucus in our noses!**
10. **This is like the mucus in your nose. Go ahead and touch it, but don't put it in your nose! When you're ready, I'll sprinkle some glitter germs on your slime. Watch how the slime holds onto them, especially if you poke and pull it. When germs and dust gets in your nose, the mucus traps them, so they can't get into your lungs.**

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.

Wow! What wonderful bodies we have, with amazing protectors all over the place. God watches over us like a shepherd. God created us with many body protectors, so we can survive our daily lives. As I mention some of these natural protectors we explored today in our closing prayer, be sure to point to them and think about all we learned.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Dear God,

Thanks for watching over us like a shepherd. Thanks for creating us with lots of natural protectors, from the hair on our heads, to the wax in our ears, to the mucus in our noses, and to the nails on our fingers and toes. Thanks for taking such good care of us!

Amen.

Workshop Focus: God always knows where we are.

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)

The Lord Is My Shepherd Storytelling

Welcome to Spark Science. I'm glad you're here. This may seem a bit odd, but do you know where you are? Accept answers to this and the following: **If someone asked you how to get from here to your house, could you give that person directions? Could you get to the grocery store? To your school? Sometimes, you might hear us talk about adults "shepherding" kids around. What does that mean?** (*It means making sure kids get safely to where they need to go.*) **Being a shepherd means you have to know how to get your flock from one place to another. Today's story is all about shepherding. Let's find out more by turning to Psalm 23 in your Spark Bible on page 596.** Have volunteers read each verse aloud.

Give kids time to answer and discuss the following questions. **What were some key things the shepherd did for the sheep?** (*kept them safe, led them to food and water, made sure they didn't get lost*)

What do you think would happen if a flock did not have a shepherd? (*They might get lost, hurt, killed, starve.*)

Who takes care of the largest flock of them all? (*God*)

Spark Resources
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies
None

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Where on Earth?

Set Up:

- Create a large, open area or go outside. There will be two kids on each team
- Make name tags using the index cards, 1 per each team of 2 kids. Punch a hole in two corners along the long side of the index cards. Cut the string into 20 inch (50 cm) lengths. Tie one end of the string into each hole.
- Put a different colored crayon in each cup.
- Label envelopes 1, 2 and 3 for each team of two kids.
- Cut the colored paper into 2-inch (5 cm) pieces. Put an unequal number of same-colored pieces into each envelope in each set. (For example, one team might have 6 brown pieces in envelope #1, 11 brown pieces in envelope #2 and 23 pieces in envelope #3.)

Activity Instructions

The psalmist described a shepherd who always knew where the sheep were. Scientists, including wildlife managers and field biologists have a harder time keeping track of their animals. Some of the animals they study don't stay in the same area every day. To track them, scientists use radio and GPS signals. Even with this information, scientists sometimes have to guess about animal location.

Can you think of any wild animals around here that you'd like to study? Accept answers.

1. **Find a partner. One partner will be the animal first, the other the scientist. We'll get a chance to switch roles later on. Choose an animal that both of you can agree on.** Distribute one name tag and marker to each group. **Write what type of animal you are on the tag—wolf, owl, swan, and so on. This is your radio collar.**
2. Distribute a box, crayon, cup, and set of envelopes to each group. **Each scientist and their animal work together to create a habitat in this open area. The box will be the animal's nest or den site. Place your crayon in the cup, and put it somewhere in your habitat. The cup is one water source, but you can use any water source you want. Your envelopes contain your food and should be placed in three different places.**
3. Distribute a piece of plain paper and pencil to each group. **Draw a map of your habitat area, labeling the places like "food station 1," "water," "home," and so on.**
4. The scientists must sit down with their backs to the habitat. **When I say go, the kid who is the animal first will go to the habitat.** Watch the time for 20 seconds, then call out **Stop animals!** One at a time, scientists call out the

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Index cards
Hole punch
String
Marker
Cups
Crayons
Envelopes—3 per 2 kids
Colored paper—a different color for each team 2
Paper
Pencils
Clock with second hand
Large boxes—1 per 2 kids

name of their partner animal, for example “rabbit” or “snake.” The animal must respond by calling out to its scientist where it is in the habitat, for example “food 2,” “water,” or “wandering.” Each scientist should then mark the animal’s habitat location on the map. Repeat the process with 20 second intervals for 2 minutes.

5. **Animals, you can roam around your area as much as you want. You can go to any animal’s water source, but you can only eat your own food. Every time you visit your food envelope, pick up one colored slip. When you stop at a water cup, make a crayon mark on your tag.**
6. Do a 3- to 5-minute round. **All animals—bring the food chips you collected and sit by your scientist. Scientists—show your partner your map and describe what you think they were doing. Animals, show your scientist your food slips and water marks. Do your numbers match their map? Talk about what was going on in the wild.**
7. **Everyone switch roles.**
8. End with a discussion comparing the amount of data collected between the groups. **Which scientists had the best idea of what their partner animal was doing? Why? What do you need to keep track of animals?** (*good ears, patience, good eyes*)

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.

Wildlife biologists gather huge amounts of information to keep track of animals. Think what it would be like to keep track of hundreds or thousands of animals all day, every day! Shepherding is a big job, especially since some sheep might like to stray. God is an amazing shepherd. God is always there, following us no matter where we go.

Spark Resources
Family Pages



Supplies
None

Prayer Time

Dear God,

You don’t need GPS systems to know where we are. You made us, and you love us, even when we try to stray. Help us to watch out for your younger sheep.

Amen.

Workshop Focus: We are part of God's community.

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)

The Lord Is My Shepherd Storytelling

Welcome to Spark Science. I'm glad you're here. If you were in trouble, whom would you turn to for help? (*parents, family, neighbors, teachers, police, church leaders*) **These people are all a part of our community. What are some benefits of living as part of a community?** (*There are people to be your friends. Some people might be good at cooking while others might be good at fixing things. You don't get so lonely.*)

We need our communities to survive. It would be impossible for the human race to continue if every person lived alone. There would be no one to help get big jobs done and no one to take care of us if we got sick or hurt. Today's reading is about community. As we read, listen for a word the author uses to describe community. If you have a Spark Bible, turn to Psalm 23 on page 596. The same story can be found in the Spark Story Bible starting on page 160.

What do you call a group or community of sheep? (*flock*)

Who is the leader of the community? (*the shepherd*)

Would all the members of this community be and act the same? (*no*)

What could be some different roles within the flock? (*moms, dads, young sheep, wanderers, slow sheep, noisy or quiet sheep*)

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies
None

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Keep Them Safe!

Set Up: Create as large of an open area as possible. Go outside if that is an option. Intertwine strips of paper and attach them with glue to create a paper-chain necklace.

Activity Instructions

What are some animals that live together in communities? (*fish, prairie dogs, meerkats, bees, ants, wolves, bison, zebras*)

Why do they live in groups? (*safety, gathering food, family unit*)

Do all groups of animals protect each other in the same way? (*no*) **How do animals protect one another in their communities?** (*Some herd together, some have lookouts.*) **Animals have to protect one another from predators. What are predators?** (*enemies*)

We're going to test two protection methods. The first protection method is animals who herd together. The second protection method is animals who use a lookout. We will compare the survival rates from our game of these two methods.

Our first scenario will be a herd of young bison and adult bison grazing in a field. Each bison must pick up at least 10 tokens as energy during the game. Bison will have a rag strip or bandana to symbolize their life. Each bison should tuck one end of the rag strip into their back pocket or waistband like a flag. If a bison's flag gets pulled off or dropped, that bison is dead. Even though we have bison and predators in this game, predators are only allowed to touch the flags, not the bison. And bison can't touch their predators either. When you lose your life, you have to go sit outside of the side of the game. Strew chips/tokens around open area.

1. Select an age that will create a group about 1/3 the size of the entire group. **If you're age X or under, you'll be a young bison during this round.** Give each young bison a rag flag or bandana.
2. Select a group (by age, eye color, clothing color, etc.) about 1/6 the size of the entire group to be the predators. **We have some predators here who would love to catch bison for dinner.**

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Bingo or poker chips, 15 per kid
Rag strips or bandanas, 1 per kid
Paper-chain necklace

3. **Everyone else is an adult bison. Without using words, whenever there is danger, you must protect the young of your group by rounding them up and putting them into the middle of your herd with your face out, using your size and horns to block an attack. Don't turn your back on the predators, as they could take your life as well!** Give each "adult" a rag flag or bandana. **To start, the predators should be prowling the sides while the bison herd is scattered around the open area, picking up energy chips. The predators can attack without warning, trying to pick rag flags from any pockets they can. How many animals will the herd lose? Let's find out.**
4. Stop the game after four to five minutes and count how many bison lost their lives. If time permits, play another round.
5. Predators and animals switch roles for the second scenario. Animals should all have a red flag or bandana again. Collect the chips and re-strew them around the playing area.
6. **Animal communities also protect their group by using lookouts. This time everyone will be an underground dweller, a prairie dog. Since we don't have underground tunnels, you'll be safe when you lay flat on the floor. But if even your head pokes up, you can get caught. Prairie dogs, if a predator takes your flag, that means you have lost your life. When you lose your life, you have to go sit outside of the side of the game.**
7. Give one kid the paper-chain necklace. **The prairie dog wearing the necklace will be the lookout, watching for an attack. Only the lookout can shout "Attack!" when the predators are attacking. If you're a prairie dog, when you hear the shout, immediately lay flat on the floor. After an attack, the predators have to move away from the prairie dogs again. The lookout can also shout "All clear!" when it's safe to get up again.**
8. **The lookout can't gather any food or be attacked while on duty. To give lots of kids a chance to be the lookout, every 15 seconds I'll say, "Switch." At that time, the lookout will put the necklace on someone else and start looking for food and acting like the other prairie dogs.**
9. Get the animals in position and start the scenario. Play for three to four minutes. Count how many prairie dogs lost their lives. **In our game, which protection system kept the animals safer, a herd or a lookout? Why?** Discuss kids' ideas.

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.

In today's story, one shepherd was in charge of an entire flock of sheep. Our experience with two protection methods showed that it really takes a group effort to keep everyone safe. During our final prayer, listen for the cue to circle up like the bison when I say, "Circle up," or to hit the floor like prairie dogs when I say, "predator."

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Dear God,

We know you are always looking out for us. But it's still important for us to *circle up* together, looking out for each other. There are many *predators* who will try to lure us away. Help us keep our heads together as we enjoy your loving care.

Amen.