

Before serving any food, always check with caregivers for kids who have food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.

Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
Lower Elementary		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: Jesus turns our frowns upside down.	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles
TURN-THAT-FROWN-UPSIDE-DOWN BAGEL: Kids retell the ups and downs of the story with a bagel face.	SUPPLIES: Whiteboard or blackboard and dry erase marker or chalk OR paper, marker and tape	SUPPLIES: Bagels, spreadable cream cheese, alfalfa sprouts, sliced black olives, sliced baby carrots, red bell peppers, plates, table knives
Upper Elementary		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: Jesus calms my fears.	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles
BANANA BOATS IN A STORM: Kids recreate the story by fashioning a boat and disciples.	SUPPLIES: None	SUPPLIES: Bananas, chocolate chips, mini marshmallows, graham cracker bears, aluminum foil, permanent marker, plates, baking sheets, potholders, table knives, spoons
All Kids		
WORKSHOP FOCUS: We can trust Jesus.	SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles	SPARK RESOURCES: None
JIGGLY WATER WALKING: Kids show how Peter quivered and Jesus saved him, using gelatin cups and gummy bears.	SUPPLIES: None	SUPPLIES: Blue gelatin, gummy bears, clear plastic cups, plastic spoons, permanent markers



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 turns our frowns upside down.

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)

Walking on Water Storytelling

Set Up: Draw a simple happy face and a frowning face on the board or on scratch paper and affix them to the wall.

Activity Instructions

Hi everybody! I am so glad you are here today. We can all say hi to one another with a “smile greeting.” We are not going to make a sound. We’ll just walk up to each person in our group and give them a huge smile. Ready, set, go! Do the smile greeting.

That was fun. Point to smiling face. **When do you normally smile?** (*when I’m happy*) Point to frowning face. **When do you normally frown?** (*when I am mad, afraid, grumpy, etc.*)

We are going to read a story in our Spark Story Bibles that has both smiling and frowning faces. Open your Spark Story Bible to Walking on Water on page 294. Wait until all the kids have located the story. **I am going to read this story to you. Whenever I stop and look at you, I want you to show how the people in the story are feeling by either smiling or frowning.**

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles

Supplies

Whiteboard or blackboard
and dry erase marker or
chalk
OR paper, marker and tape

Read the story to them, stopping at the end of the sentences listed below. After the kids have determined whether the characters in the story feel like smiling or frowning, point to the corresponding face on the board.

- **The disciples were shaking in their sandals.** (*frown*)
- **He waved a friendly hello.** (*smile*)
- **Jesus smiled at him.** (*smile*)
- **“Help me, Jesus! Save me!” he yelled.** (*frown*)
- **“Hooray! This proves it!” they said.** (*smile*)

Discuss these questions about the story:

How many times did Jesus turn their frowns upside down into a smile? (*two times*) **How do you feel when your frown is turned upside down?**

This is a happy story because it shows how Jesus can change things for the better. Jesus can make us smile by showing us how much God loves us.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Turn-That-Frown-Upside-Down Bagel

Before serving any food, always check with caregivers for kids who have food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.

Set Up: Cut bagels in half lengthwise (so each half is still a circle). Slice red bell peppers in thin rings about 1/2 inch (1 cm) wide. Slit the end of each red pepper so it looks like a long mouth. Set out ingredients in separate containers, along with plates and knives.

Activity Instructions

Have kids wash hands first. **We are going to make a healthy snack to show the smiles and frowns of this story.**

1. Give each kid a bagel half on a plate with a table knife. **We are going to turn this bagel into a face. First, spread it with cream cheese. Put enough on so that the center hole is covered.**
2. **Put alfalfa sprouts on the top of your bagel so it looks like funny hair.**
3. **Put eyes on your face with olive slices.**
4. **Put a nose on your face with a carrot slice.**
5. **Put a mouth on your face with a piece of red pepper. Turn the mouth down like a frown. The pepper will stick way off the face of your bagel person.**

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles

Supplies

Bagels, one half per kid
Spreadable cream cheese
Alfalfa sprouts
Sliced black olives
Sliced baby carrots
Red bell peppers
Plates
Table knives

6. Invite kids to retell the story in their own words following the format of the Open the Bible section where the face goes frown, smile, frown, smile. Keep a Spark Story Bible open for reference. Every time the mouth changes, have kids to change it on their bagel face. After the story has been told, kids can eat their bagel snacks.

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.

What did you learn today about Jesus? *(He turns frowns upside down.)* **Jesus wants to help us, just like he helped Peter. Jesus knows when we are afraid and hurting. Jesus wants to turn our frowns upside down.**

Spark Resources
Family Pages



Supplies
None

Prayer Time

Let's all start our closing prayer by frowning. When I say, "You turn our frown upside down," smile a big smile. At the end, we'll be smiling!

Dear Jesus,

We feel afraid sometimes. (frown) **But when we ask you for help, you turn our frowns upside down.** (smile)

We feel helpless sometimes. (frown) **But when we ask you for help, you turn our frowns upside down.** (smile)

We can't always do things on our own. (frown) **But when we ask you for help, you turn our frowns upside down.** (smile)

**You make us smile because of your love. Thank you, Jesus.
Amen.**

Workshop Focus: Jesus calms my fears.

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)

Walking on Water Storytelling

Greet kids by name and thank them for coming. **Welcome to the Cooking Workshop! Today is all about boats. Have you ever been in a boat? Have you ever been in a storm in a boat?** Allow time for responses. **Have you ever tried to step out of a boat and walk across the water? Someone in our story today does just that. Let's look up Matthew 14:22-33 on page 1076 in our Spark Bibles.**

When all kids have located Jesus Walks on the Water, ask for volunteers to read it aloud. Have kids place an I Read It sticker next to this story in their Spark Bibles.

Discuss these questions together.

How do you think the disciples felt when they found themselves in a storm out on the water? (*fearful, anxious*) **Why do you suppose Peter asked Jesus to call him out onto the water?** (*curiosity, courage, faith, we don't know*) **Would you have been willing to walk out on the water? Maybe you've never been in a boat in a storm, but I'll bet you've been in scary situations.** Encourage them to share their experiences with another kid. **Jesus reached out to Peter and calmed his fears. Can you think of a time Jesus helped you feel less afraid?** Encourage them to share.

Invite kids to place a Makes Me Feel sticker in the margins of this story.

Spark Resources
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies
None

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Banana Boats in a Storm

Before serving any food, always check with caregivers for kids who have food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.

Set Up: Preheat oven to 300 degrees F (150 C). If possible, try this recipe in the church oven head of time to make sure the timing is right. Tear off one piece of aluminum foil per kid, approximately a square foot (24 cm). Set out the ingredients and supplies.

Activity Instructions

Have kids wash their hands first. **We are going to make banana boats to reenact this storm story.**

1. Give each kid an unpeeled banana, a piece of aluminum foil, a plate and a table knife. Kids carefully slit open their banana lengthwise, being careful not to cut all the way through it.
2. Kids spoon half of their banana out of the peel and eat it. Kids may need to wash their hands again at this point. Kids stuff chocolate chips and marshmallows into the inside of the banana peel.
3. Kids wrap up their banana with aluminum foil and write their name on the outside with the marker.
4. Leader bakes kids' banana boats on baking sheets for 5 minutes. While the banana boats are baking, kids tell the story again in their own words. They can look in their Bibles to guide them.
5. Leader removes banana boats from the oven and carefully opens each boat with potholders. Leader puts boats on plates for kids. Kids arrange graham cracker bears in their boats to represent the disciples. Kids can eat their creations with spoons.

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles

Supplies

Bananas
Chocolate chips
Mini marshmallows
Graham cracker bears
Aluminum foil
Permanent marker
Plates
Baking sheets
Potholders
Table knives
Spoons

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.

Write a short list on the board of things kids name that they fear.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

Whiteboard or chalkboard

Dry erase marker or chalk

Prayer Time

For our prayer, we're going to sit in a line on the floor as if we were in a boat. As we tell God the fears we listed on the board, we'll rock the boat like we're in a storm. When I say, "Jesus, calm our fears," we'll sit still to show how Jesus calms our fears.

Hello, Jesus!

In our boat of life, we sometimes feel afraid. We're afraid of _____. Call out one fear written on the board and allow the kids to rock the boat. **Jesus, calm our fears.** Wait for the boat to get still. Repeat this process two more times, naming more than one fear each time.

Thank you for giving us your peace.

Amen.

Workshop Focus: We can trust Jesus.

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)

Walking on Water Storytelling

Welcome to the Cooking Workshop! Everybody stand up and jiggle. Stand up and demonstrate. **That's right, jiggle and wiggle every part: your head, shoulders, elbows, hands, hips, knees, and toes. Good! Believe it or not, this is preparing us for our Bible story. Today we are going to explore a jiggly walking story from the Gospels. So let's find Walking on Water in our Spark Story Bible on page 294 or Matthew 14:22-33 on page 1076 of our Spark Bibles.** Ask for volunteers with Spark Bibles to read the story.

Show the illustration on pages 294-295 in the Spark Story Bible. **Where's Jesus? Where's Peter? Does Peter look a little scared? Do you think his legs were jiggling when he walked out onto the water?** Allow all answers. **Let's try to walk like Peter with jiggly legs.** Have kids stand up and walk from one part of the room to another. Tell them to walk like they are a little afraid and they don't know if they'll stay afloat. Do it with them. Have fun and jiggle your legs as you walk.

Sometimes, we feel like Peter. We are unsure or afraid. We want Jesus to help us but we wonder if he will. This story shows us that it is okay to have doubts. Jesus will still help us and show us that we can trust in him. Jesus reaches out his hand to Peter and to us. We can trust Jesus.

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles
Spark Bibles

Supplies
None

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Jiggly Water Walking

Before serving any food, always check with caregivers for kids who have food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.

Set Up: Prepare a batch of blue gelatin ahead of time and pour it into clear plastic cups, filling each one about half full. Put gelatin cups in the refrigerator early enough that they will be set by the time the kids arrive.

Give each kid a gelatin cup and one gummy bear. Write their name on the cup with the marker. **Now we are going to pretend that this little bear is Peter and the gelatin is water. Do you remember what happened when Peter took his eyes off Jesus and looked up at the storm cloud? (he sank) Now carefully push Peter part way down into the water.**

Give each kid another gummy bear. **Now we are going to pretend that this bear is Jesus. Could Jesus stay on the water? (yes) Stand Jesus on the water now. This is the moment when Jesus reaches out to Peter and keeps him from going under. Act it out with your bears now.** Read the story again using the gelatin cups and bears as props. Hand out spoons and let kids eat their gelatin cups.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Blue gelatin
Gummy bears
Clear plastic cups
Plastic spoons
Permanent markers

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.

Could Peter have walked on the water without Jesus? (no) Did Peter have perfect courage? (no) Even so, Jesus helped him do the impossible. This story teaches us that we can trust Jesus.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Begin from a seated position. **For our closing prayer, I want to hear some loud cheers. Whenever I say, "We can trust Jesus!" I want you to jump to your feet, clap, cheer, jump up and down, then quickly sit back down.**

Hello, Great God!

We are so glad to read stories about Jesus in the Bible.

The people in the Bible show us that we can trust Jesus! *(cheer!)*

Peter was afraid and unsure about walking on water.

Jesus kept him from sinking. We can trust Jesus! *(cheer!)*

Give us courage when we are afraid.

We can trust Jesus! *(cheer!)*

Amen.