



Mad Props

Moses: The Red Sea and Wilderness

BIG IDEA: God is giving, so we can be thankful without complaining.

BIBLE BASIS: Exodus 13:17-17:7

KEY VERSE: “Do everything without grumbling or arguing.” Philippians 2:14 (NIV)

UNIT DESCRIPTION

“Mad Props” is an off-the-wall prop filled adventure through the story of the Israelites exodus from Egypt. There’s just one problem. The story props have gone totally, completely, 100% mad! They’re all mixed up and hidden in one of 4 different prop boxes. Throughout the story, kids will get to vote for one of the boxes. Whatever silly prop is inside will then be used to help tell the story. Through it all, kids will see how God did some of the most out-of-this-world, amazing things you could ever imagine through a man named Moses.

SET-UP INSTRUCTIONS

- Print out the 4 numbered “Prop Box Signs” and tape one to each of the 4 cardboard boxes. Place the boxes in order on a table in the teaching area.
- Put one of the 4 story props in each of the boxes. You can use the suggested story props, or you can use whatever other props you would like. Today’s suggested story props are:
 - Small lamp shade
 - Strand of Christmas lights
 - Pineapple
 - Rubber chicken
- Place your white board or paper pad on an easel or mount it somewhere in the room where the kids can see it. If you would like you can prepare the board ahead of time by drawing a line down the middle of it. On the top right side of the board, write the word “Israelites.” On the top left, write the word “Us.”



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★ LARGE GROUP LESSON

CG: “Mad Props” title graphic
Sound: PLAY upbeat music as kids move to large group area

MAD PROPS INTRO

Large Group Leader: Hello everyone and welcome to our very last week of “Mad Props.” During “Mad Props,” our story props have gone totally, completely, 100% mad! (*Stand behind the 4 prop boxes.*) They’re all mixed up and hidden in these boxes. During the story, I’ll have you vote for one of the boxes, then I’ll use whatever random prop is inside to tell the story. Before we get started, though, I want to see if you all remember what happened in last week’s story. Who remembers how God helped the Israelites escape from Egypt?

Take answers from kids. Answer summary: God sent the Angel of Death. The angel killed the oldest son of every Egyptian family, but it passed over the Israelite houses that had lambs blood painted on the doorpost. Pharaoh finally told the Israelites to pack up their stuff and leave Egypt.

Wow—you kids have a great memory! Believe it or not, though, the story’s not quite over yet. Today we’re going to see how God rescued His people in a really big way! Let’s play another round of “Mad Props” to see what happened.

Ahead of time, place each random prop inside of one of the 4 prop boxes. This week’s suggested props are: a small lamp shade, a strand of Christmas lights, a pineapple, and a rubber chicken. When indicated below, have the kids vote for one of the boxes, then reveal the prop inside. Use that prop as if it were the items in that part of the story. The lesson below gives suggestions for how to use the props, but feel free to get creative.

CG: “The Big Bible Story” graphic

BIG BIBLE STORY—CROSSING THE RED SEA

Prop Box #1: (*Have the kids vote for one of the prop boxes, then reveal the prop.*) After being slaves for 400 years, the people of Israel had finally been set free from Egypt. There was only one problem, there was a giant sea called the Red Sea that stood in the way of their escape.

Meanwhile, back in Egypt, Pharaoh couldn’t believe he had just let all of his slaves go. (*Hold prop against your chest like it’s your heart.*) Once again, his heart was hardened and he decided to stop the Israelites from leaving. Upon Pharaoh’s order, the Egyptian soldiers raced through the desert on 600 of their best chariots in pursuit of the Israelites. (*Swing prop like you’re whipping a horse.*) When the Israelites saw Pharaoh and the Egyptians approaching, they complained to Moses, “How could you do this to us? Why would you bring us out here just to die?” But God heard their cries, (*swirl prop around like a tornado*) and He sent the pillar of cloud to block the Egyptian soldiers from attacking.

Prop Box #2: (*Have the kids vote for one of the remaining prop boxes, then reveal the prop.*) As the cloud held the Egyptians back, Moses lifted his staff in the air (*lift prop into the air*) and stretched out his

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hand over the sea. When he did this, a strong wind began to blow all night and pushed back the waters of the Red Sea. By morning, the waters were divided in two and the Israelites began to cross through the sea on dry ground with a wall of water on their right and left.

When Pharaoh's army saw that the Israelites were escaping through the sea, they began to chase them. (*Hold prop like a steering wheel.*) But as the Egyptians entered between the walls of water, God jammed the wheels of their chariots so that they had trouble driving. (*Turn steering wheel like you're losing control.*) As the last of the Israelites exited the Red Sea, Moses stretched his hand over the waters one more time. The water immediately crashed down on the Egyptian army.

Prop Box #3: (*Have the kids vote for one of the remaining prop boxes, then reveal the prop.*) On the other side of the Red Sea, the Israelites began walking into the desert. And with each step, they became more and more hungry. (*Pretend to take a bite out of prop.*) As they held their growling stomachs, they began to realize something; they were almost out of food! So the people of Israel complained to Moses and Aaron, "Why did we ever leave Egypt? At least we had lots of food when we were in Egypt!"

God had a plan, though. That evening quail flew down from the sky and covered the ground. (*Move prop like a quail fluttering down to the ground.*) The Israelites ran through the camp and gathered as many of the birds as they could eat. (*Run around and pick up the previous props.*) The next morning, dew covered the ground. When the dew dried up, thin flakes of manna appeared. Again, the Israelites gathered up as much of the bread as they could eat for that day. (*Pretend to take a bite out of prop.*)

Prop Box #4: (*Reveal the prop from the final box.*) God continued to provide a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night to lead the Israelites towards the land He had promised. As the Israelites traveled further into the desert, though, there was no water to drink. (*Pretend to drink from prop, but realize that it's empty.*) So once again, the people of Israel complained, "Why did you bring us out here just to die of thirst?" But God always provides for his people and this was no exception.

Moses grabbed his staff and took the leaders to a giant rock. As the leaders looked on, Moses struck the rock with his staff. (*Pretend to strike a rock with the prop.*) They couldn't believe their eyes. Water began to gush out of the rock. The people of Israel rushed toward the water and began drinking it. (*Guzzle water from the prop.*) Not only was there enough for them, but for their livestock too. God was providing everything that his people needed, but the people were never thankful.

CG: "Big Bible Story Questions" graphic

BIG BIBLE STORY QUESTIONS

When finished, have the kids turn briefly to their small groups and discuss the following questions: **What do you think this story teaches us about God? Why do you think God continued to take care of His people even though they were complaining? Look up Deuteronomy 7:6-7 to see the answer.** After a few minutes, draw their attention back to the teaching area.

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THE ISRAELITES COMPLAINED

Isn't that one of the most amazing stories you've ever heard? Can you imagine being one of the Israelites when they were crossing the Red Sea? Don't you think you'd be pretty thankful? (*Let kids respond.*) Me too! In fact, let's make a quick list of all the things the Israelites could be thankful for.

Draw a line down the middle of your marker board or paper pad. On the top left, write the word "Israelites." As kids give you answers, write them down on the left-hand side underneath "Israelites" for all the kids to see. Leave the right-hand side open for later.

That's a pretty good list! If God had done all those things for you, do you think you'd have much to complain about? (*Kids respond.*) I wouldn't think so either, but that's exactly what the Israelites did. God gave the Israelites everything they needed—freedom, protection, food, and water—but they still complained. In fact, they eventually stopped trusting God to take care of them and because of that, God made the Israelites wander through the desert for the next 40 years. Can you believe that? The Israelites weren't very thankful, were they? Can you imagine complaining like that after God had given you so much? (*Kids respond.*)

WE ARE LIKE THE ISRAELITES

You know what, though—we probably *can* imagine it, because we can be just like the Israelites sometimes. Let me show you what I mean. In the same way the Israelites had a lot to be thankful for, we have a lot to be thankful for too. Let's make a list for ourselves. What do we have to be thankful for?

Write "Us" on the top right of the marker board or paper pad next to "Israelites." As the kids give you answers, write them down on the right-hand side of the board.

That's a great list! God has given us all these things, so you might think we would never complain about anything. But do we? (*Kids respond.*) Sure we do. In fact, here's what we're going to do. I'll show you some things on the screen that kids might complain about. Let's all read them together, but we have to read them in our whiniest voices. Are you ready?

CG: It's not fair! My brother got a bigger piece of cake than I did.

Great whiney voices! How about this one:

CG: Why do I have to eat that? It tastes sooooo gross!

CG: Why can't I get that new video game? I don't get to have anything fun!

CG: I always have to go to bed early. No one else has to go to bed this early.

Does that sound like anything you've ever said before? I'll bet it does! But that's not what the Bible tells us we should do. Let's take a look. (*Encourage kids to open their Bibles to Philippians 2:14. Be prepared to give younger kids more time and assistance in finding the verse. When ready, choose a kid to read it aloud or read it aloud yourself while the kids follow along.*)

CG: "Do everything without grumbling or arguing." Philippians 2:14



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When we complain, it's usually because we've forgotten about all the incredible things that God has already given us, just like the Israelites. So the next time you find yourself complaining about something or using your whiney voice, be sure to stop and think about all of the things God has given you. God is incredibly giving, so we can be thankful without complaining!

Close the large group time by praying for the kids in whatever way the Holy Spirit prompts you. Before praying, be sure to let kids have an opportunity to give back to God in worshiping with their tithes and offerings.

CG: "Mad Props" title graphic

