

DAY 4
VBS
CROCK BRIDGE



STELLAR SMALL GROUP

ELEMENTARY LEADER GUIDE

DURING STELLAR



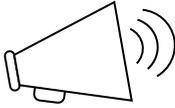
Get Crew Leaders involved!

Guide Crew Leaders to participate right along with kids. When Crew Leaders listen, get involved, and have fun, kids do too!



Call on kids to help.

Every day, allow kids who are paying attention to pass out supplies, read Scripture, or be your helper. Kids love feeling important and helpful!



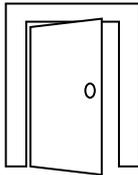
Use an attention-getting signal.

Attention-getting signals let kids know when it's time to stop what they're doing and look at you. Examples include: **Leader:** "1, 2, 3... Eyes on me!" **Kids:** "1, 2... Eyes on you!"

Leader: "If you hear me, clap once!" (Clap once and wait.) "If you hear me, clap twice!" (Clap twice and wait.)

Leader: "Mission control to crew!"

Kids: "Ready for launch!" (Sit up straight and freeze like astronauts preparing for takeoff.)



Gather outside the room first.

Gathering kids outside the room allows you to set the scene before they even enter the room and gives you the opportunity to create a big "wow" all at once.



Repeat the daily Main Point often.

Every activity focuses on one memorable Bible truth called the Main Point. Repeating the Main Point helps kids remember it and apply it to their lives after VBS.



Repeat expectations often and explain transitions.

Repeating expectations helps kids remember what is expected of them, creating a structured and positive learning environment. Clear transitions between activities prevent confusion and help kids shift their focus smoothly. When we take time to explain what's happening next, kids feel more secure and ready to engage.



Shine Jesus' light!

TOKENS

This year, our kids will participate in a Token Challenge! To recognize and encourage meaningful participation and positive behavior, we will be rewarding kids with tokens throughout VBS!

- **Who is giving out tokens:** All of our volunteers will receive tokens to reward kids as they catch them engaging well in VBS.
- **What are we doing with the tokens:** Kids will work together to reach an Overall Token Goal and receive a celebration on the last night of VBS! Tokens are used to reward kids for remarkable expressions of love, kindness, great listening, participation, and memorizing our Main Points and Bible verse!
- **When are we passing out tokens:** Immediately! We want to help kids connect their positive attitudes, behaviors, and participation with the reward of the token, so as soon as you see a behavior to celebrate, pass out the reward!
- **Where are we getting tokens from:** We will have tokens available for all volunteers at check-in each night. As we use up our stash, there will be designated spots to go to for more throughout the night.
- **How do we distribute tokens:** Our volunteers will keep their eyes and ears tuned in to our kids so they can immediately reward them with a token to celebrate what we want repeated! They will praise the specific behavior that earned the reward when we give them their token. For example:
 - Active engagement during each rotation
 - Invite kids to “Show Me What You Know!” and let them earn a token by sharing the memory verse, finishing the lyrics to a worship song, sharing today’s “Main Point”, etc.
 - Displays of the fruit of the spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, self-control, gentleness
 - Demonstrating good manners, listening attentively, and following instructions the first time they're asked
 - Being respectful to volunteers, peers, and the VBS environment.
- **When do kids turn in their tokens:** There will be buckets available at each rotation for kids to drop their tokens in. All tokens will be brought to the closing session and combined so we can see how we're progressing towards our goal each night!
- **Remember, the goal of using tokens is to reinforce positive behaviors,** encourage active participation, and create a fun and rewarding experience for all kids attending VBS. Thank you for your commitment to making VBS a memorable and impactful event!

SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH KIDS

**The word gospel means “good news.”
It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and
salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.**

The Goal: Consistent, Frequent, and Low-Pressure

Kids can trust Christ as Savior, and many of them do! Often, the ones who trust Him have heard consistent and frequent explanations of the gospel at home and church. However, young children are very eager to please adults, so we must be careful of what we say and how we present the Gospel. The child should take the initiative. We will avoid directly asking a child if he or she wants to trust Christ as Savior, unless the child has been asking questions and showing clear signs of readiness to make this decision. We will also avoid invitations where kids raise their hand or come to the front of the room to show their desire to trust Christ. Not only do children want to please adults, but they are also prone to copy the behavior of other children. Instead, we will give children the opportunity to talk to a leader or ask questions.

You Are A Gospel Seed Planter

Overall, you should see your evangelistic role as a gospel seed planter. You are laying a foundation of biblical truth and repeating the gospel message clearly, consistently and frequently, so kids will be prepared to understand and receive the gospel when they are ready. Children often need to hear the gospel message many times before they can understand and respond to it.

What to say:

-  **GOD RULES.** The Bible tells us God created everything, including you and me, and He is in charge of everything. (Genesis 1:1; Revelation 4:11; Colossians 1:16-17)
-  **WE SINNED.** Since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God’s punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)
-  **GOD PROVIDED.** God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It’s something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9)
-  **JESUS GIVES.** Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God’s family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18)
-  **WE RESPOND.** We can respond to Jesus. The ABCs of Becoming a Christian(see next page) is a simple tool that helps us remember how to respond when prompted by the Holy Spirit to receive the gift Jesus offers.

THE GOSPEL PRESENTATION

A,B,C: (Admit, Believe, Confess)

Admit that we have sinned and need God's forgiveness.

Believe that Jesus died for our sins and rose again.

Confess that Jesus is Lord and choose to follow Him

On Tuesday (Day 3)

In 2nd-5th Grade Small Groups:

During the lesson, Station Leaders will share the Gospel. See *page 3 in the SG Leader Guide* for explanations of how to share the Gospel.

Kids will use the Response Card to share their thoughts about following Jesus. They will tell us they want to Wait, they Already follow Jesus, they are Ready to follow, or they have Questions about it.

Crew Leaders will collect the cards as kids finish and let Station Leaders know who in their crew has Questions or is Ready to follow Jesus. Station Leaders will lead any kids who have *Questions* or are *Ready* to step into the hallway and have an in-person conversation with one of the counselors.

Prayer Requests - Give to prayer team to pray over (send cards, if manageable)

Follow Jesus - give to a designated spiritual counselor to have a one-on-one conversation with the kid

Baptism - give to a designated spiritual counselor to have a one-on-one conversation with the kid

As crews finish collecting responses from their kids, the Station Leader will pass out the next activity. This will give kids something to work on quietly while other crews are still responding.

Counselors will take their kids back to their crews when they are done talking.

Station Leaders will turn in their entire stack of cards to _____ (who for your campus?) so that each kid can be appropriately followed up with in the weeks to come.

Children's Ministers will preselect spiritually mature leaders to be available in the halls to have one-on-one conversations with kids about their next steps!



The light of Jesus shines through us!

Bible Story: Philip helps the Ethiopian. (Acts 8:26-39)

Bible Verse: “He told him the good news about Jesus.” (Acts 8:35b)

Leader Insights

- While the Ethiopian had wealth and power, he walked in darkness without understanding God’s Word. God provided Philip to shine a light—one that changed the Ethiopian’s life for eternity!
- Philip is often called Philip the Evangelist, to differentiate him from the Apostle Philip (John 1:43). Acts 6 tells of seven men (including Philip) chosen as deacons who would lead the early church.
- The official didn’t come from modern-day Ethiopia. The ancient Nubian kingdom could be found near the Nile, closer to where we would find Sudan today.
- Jewish law prohibited a eunuch from entering the temple (Deuteronomy 23:1). When the Ethiopian went to worship in Jerusalem, he’d only be able to stand in the outer courts.
- The scroll read by the Ethiopian would have been an expensive investment. Considering that and his lengthy trip to Jerusalem, it’s evident that the eunuch had more than a passing curiosity about God.



Why It Matters Today

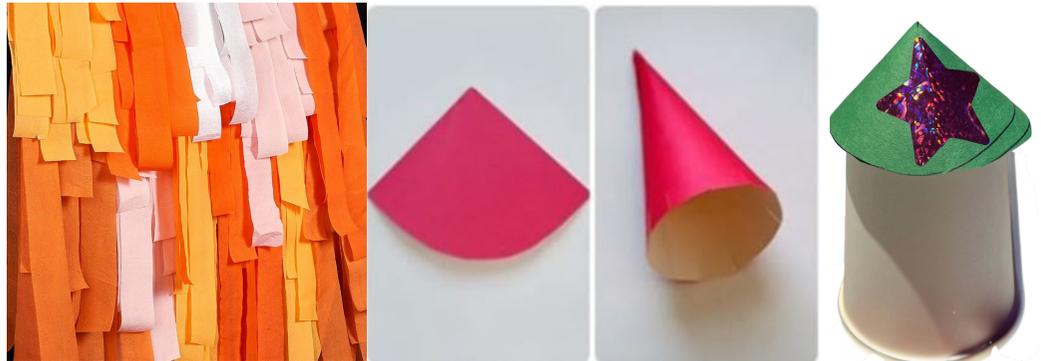
Kids may feel like they’re usually the ones who *need* help. They know what it’s like to wrestle with challenges. Kids might sometimes feel like they’re the ones who need help—whether it’s figuring out tough homework, tying their shoes, or reaching something high on a shelf. But no matter their age, kids have something incredible to share: the light of Jesus! They can make a difference not just by helping others, but by sharing the Good News of Jesus’ love and salvation. Their words, excitement, and faith can point people to Jesus in ways that adults might not. What an amazing truth—God can use kids to shine His light and share His love with the world! Use today’s activities to encourage kids to boldly share Jesus and make an eternal impact on those around them.

Day 4 Supplies:

- "I Don't Understand" Activity page printed on colored paper (1 copy per Crew in a rotation)
- yarn
- scissors
- flashlights (1 per Crew in a rotation)
- folding chairs (1 per Crew) *or camping chairs
- 3 in paper cups (white, silver, or light blue work best)
- Cone Template (on multicolored cardstock. 1 cone/kid)
- Colored tissue paper cut into strips/streamers (red, yellow, orange for flames)
- Glow-in-the-dark paint markers
- Markers or stickers for decoration
- dot stickers (optional, for window on rocket)
- Glue sticks/glue dots
- tape
- scissors
- Day 4 Label (1/kid)

Before You Blast Off

- Roll the "I Don't Understand" handouts into "scrolls" and tie them shut with yarn.
- Cut strips of red, yellow, and orange tissue paper to look like fire for the rocket craft.
- Cut cone templates out of colored paper for the top of the rocket. Roll and staple (or use glue dots) so they are ready for kids.
- Cut Day 4 labels.



VBS @ ROCK BRIDGE SMALL GROUP PLAYLIST

Welcome Crews

Greet Crews warmly outside your room.

SAY

It's been so fun helping you experience exciting things in the Bible. And that's just what happened in our Bible story today! It all started with an important man who was on a trip. So let's take a trip back into our Bible story!

Lead Crews inside the room, and have them sit on their blankets.

Get Confused

SUPPLIES: "I Don't Understand" Activity page scrolls.

As kids enter, hand each Crew Leader a scroll. Direct them to keep it taped shut.

SAY



Remember, yesterday we talked about how soldiers led Jesus away to the cross. Do this with me. Hold your arms in front of you, with your wrists together.

We watched as they hurt Jesus and nailed him to that cross. Now do this. Move your arms out wide, to represent the cross.

Remember that Jesus died on that cross because of his love for us. Cross your arms over your chest, guiding kids to do the same.

Whisper: Those are clues you'll need to remember later!

Today's totally true story happened after Jesus had died, come back to life, and gone back to heaven. It's about an important man from Ethiopia. This guy worked for the queen, taking care of her money. He was super smart and pretty important. Hold up your scroll. But he got confused when he tried to read a scroll.

Look closely at kids.

Hmmm, I've spent a lot of time with you this week. You're pretty important—and smart. And you've figured out and learned an awful lot in our time together. You're a bright bunch!



WHAT WE FOUND

We learned a lot about how to best conduct the scroll experiment! We originally taped the scrolls, but Crew Leaders had a hard time getting them open. We also planned to give each child a scroll but switched it to one per Crew so that kids wouldn't figure out the secret and hold it up to the light.



SPACESHIP TIP

Some kids may be better than others at reading the mirror-image words. Keep this part fast-moving so no one can accomplish the task.

Give instructions first, then let Crews carry them out.

- Crew Leaders will unroll the scroll and hold it on the floor in front of each child, allowing about 30 seconds for each child to try to read it and follow the directions.
- You'll call "Switch" after 30 seconds.
- The Crew Leader will show it to the next person in the Crew circle.
- Each person has 30 seconds to read and follow the instructions on the scroll.

ASK How did you feel when you tried to read?

Kids call out words to describe the experience.

ASK Call out something else that was hard for you to understand.

SAY I think you feel how the Ethiopian man in the Bible felt. *He struggled to understand the words on the scroll he read.*

Whew! Sometimes things are just hard to understand.

When we don't understand something, people say we're "in the dark." We *all* know what it feels like to be in the dark about things! When we're in the dark, we need help. And when other people need help **The light of Jesus shines through us!**

Sometimes even the Bible can be hard to understand. That's what happened in today's story.

Talk About Old and New Testament

SUPPLIES: folding chairs

SAY After Jesus died and came back to life, he went back to heaven. Well, his friends wanted to tell *everyone* about Jesus. They couldn't *wait* to shine Jesus' love, power, and help to the world!

A man named Philip had traveled all over, telling what had happened to Jesus. One day an angel told him to head down to the road between Jerusalem and Gaza. So Philip did! As Philip walked down the road, he saw a chariot. That's sort of like a fancy carriage. Crew Leaders, go grab a chair to put in the middle of your Crew circle. It'll be your chair-iot. Get it? *Chair-iot?*

Pause while Crew Leaders put chairs in the middle of the Crew circles.

WHAT WE FOUND

The chairs get in the way of Crew discussion a little bit, so be sure to use folding chairs rather than chairs with a solid back.

SAY

The chariot carried this important man from Ethiopia—the one I was telling you about. He was in charge of the money for the whole country, so he was pretty important! He rode along in his chariot, reading from the book of Isaiah.

Hold up your Bible.

Isaiah is in the Old Testament part of the Bible and tells what happened *before* Jesus came to earth. The New Testament part of the Bible tells about *after* Jesus was born, lived, died, came back to life, and went back to heaven. The New Testament tells every Stellar Small Group you've learned about all week here at VBS. The Old and New Testaments were written hundreds of years apart, so this important Ethiopian man was able to read part of the Bible—sort of like we do! Except back then, it was written on scrolls.

Hold up one of your scrolls.

And just like you had trouble, the Ethiopian man needed help. **And when people need help... The light of Jesus shines through us!**

So that's just what Philip did.

SAY

Run With Philip

God's helper, the Holy Spirit, told Philip to go walk alongside the chariot. Let's do that! Stand up and walk in a circle around your chair. Pause.

Wait, we have to run to catch up to it! Crews each run in a circle around their chair.

Whew! We made it! Let's walk along and talk to the man. Ask him if he understands what he's reading. Pause for kids, now walking slowly in a circle, to turn to their "chair-iot" and ask that question.

The Ethiopian man said he needed some help to understand it. So Philip got into the chariot with him. Look at the chairs skeptically. Our chariots seem to be a little smaller than the Ethiopian's. Everyone, have a seat near your chair-iot. Pause.

Let's read the verses that confused the man. As I read, see if you can figure out what the verses meant.

Read aloud Acts 8:32-33.

Think about what you just heard.

ASK

What do you think these verses mean? It's okay if you're not sure. Tell your Crew. Allow time. If needed, read them again—but it's okay if kids don't get it!



WHAT WE FOUND

Our space was tight, so we didn't have room to run around the chairs. Instead, we stuck with walking.

SPACESHIP TIP

Kids may share some inaccurate statements about Jesus, and you might want to correct them. Try to avoid going into any kind of long explanation, which will make your Bible time run too long. Honor kids' answers by briefly redirecting if needed. For example, one child shared how Jesus parted the Red Sea. Our Bible leader simply said, "That's right, God parted the Red Sea in the Old Testament!"



WHAT WE FOUND

We tried giving everyone a turn to read the scroll, but it was intimidating for the younger kids who weren't strong readers. By letting kids choose their roles, you'll ensure everyone can be a helper!

SAY

Those verses might seem a little confusing to us, too. Thankfully, Philip understood that the verses were talking about Jesus! Jesus was like the lamb who was led to die. Cross your fists at the wrist, encouraging kids to join you in the actions. **Jesus didn't even speak up for himself on the cross.** Stretch your arms out wide. **We experienced that story yesterday!**

Philip explained that Jesus loved us (cross arms over your chest) **and died for us—and then came back to life! He told the man everything he knew about Jesus!**

ASK

Tell your Crew something you know about Jesus. Maybe it's something you learned here at Stellar!

After Crews discuss, ask for several responses and repeat them aloud.

SAY

The Ethiopian man needed help.

Read Again...With Some Help!

SAY

I wonder if we can shine a light to help each other understand what we were trying to read earlier. We'll need everyone to help each other!

One person will need to read the scroll. If you're a strong reader, you might want that role.

One person will hold the scroll. You'll need steady hands!

One person will shine a light through the back of the scroll. That way, the reader can read it!

The other Crew members will be the ones who show me what the scroll says. When the reader reads directions...follow them!

Allow time for Crews to choose roles, repeating them if needed. Have the readers sit in the chairs and the people holding the scroll hold them *backward*, so the words face out. It's okay if not all Crews get through the whole handout.

After a couple minutes, call attention back.

ASK

How did the light help you?

What people can you look to for help when you don't understand the Bible?

SAY

The Ethiopian man isn't the only one who sometimes gets confused by the Bible. Sometimes we do, too! And we can always ask for help. Then when others need help understanding the Bible, we can shine Jesus' light as we help **them!** When people need help... **The light of Jesus shines through us!**

Hold up your Bible.

Disappear ☩

SAY

The Ethiopian man was so happy to hear about Jesus! He believed in Jesus, and he wanted to be baptized. That means he wanted to show that he was a friend of Jesus, too!

When Philip shined Jesus' light, the man wanted to follow Jesus. And the man went on his way, celebrating his new friendship with Jesus! We can celebrate, too!

Blast Off with Jesus' Light! (Paper Cup Rocket)

SUPPLIES: Small paper cups (white, silver, or blue work best), Colored tissue paper cut into strips/ streamers, Cone template cut and prepared, Glow-in-the-dark paint markers, Markers or stickers for decoration, Glue sticks/glue dots, dot stickers (optional, for window on rocket) tape, scissors, **Day 4 Label (1/kid)**

Philip traveled to share the Good News, just like a rocket zooms through space! When the Ethiopian heard about Jesus, his heart lit up with joy. And just like a rocket blasts off into the darkness, we are sent to shine Jesus' light wherever we go! Today we will be creating a rocket to remind us that we are sent to shine Jesus' light.

Begin by instructing Crew Leaders to hand each child a small paper cup. Have them turn their cups upside down so the open end faces down, then let them decorate the outside using markers, stickers, and glow-in-the-dark markers.

Encourage them to attach their 'Day 4 Label' on their rocket so it is visible. Next, provide the strips of red, yellow, and orange tissue paper and show them how to glue or tape the strips inside the open end of the cup so they hang down, looking like a rocket blast. Finally, they can attach the triangle tops to their rockets.

If you want the rockets to "fly," punch a hole in the top of each cup and help the kids attach a string for hanging. As they work, remind them that just as a rocket blasts off into the darkness, we are sent to share Jesus' light with the world. When everyone is finished, encourage the kids to hold up their rockets and say together, **The light of Jesus shines through us!**

