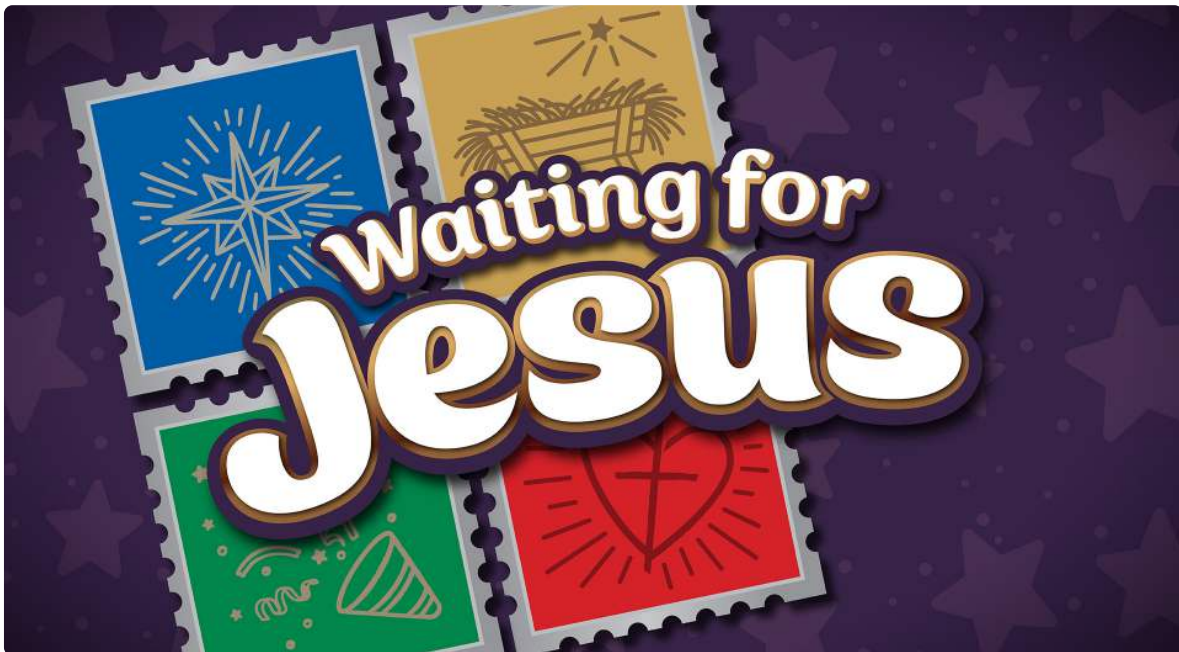




GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

These additional games and activities can be used throughout the Waiting for Jesus series. If you want to integrate more movement and facilitate more interaction in your lesson, check out these options. We've included tips to make the games and activities inclusive for all kids and have designated which games are intended for each lesson in the series.

GAME 1: ONE HAND, TWO HANDS, NONE

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: One Hand, Two Hands, None Slides

This game works great with the Hope lesson!

Ahead of time, prepare to display the One Hand, Two Hands, None Slides.

Gather kids. **Let's play a game where you'll each make a decision and hope you guessed correctly! You'll decide during each round whether you want to put up one hand** (demonstrate holding up one hand high above your head), **or two hands** (demonstrate holding up two hands high above your head), **or none** (demonstrate hands down to sides). **I'll give you 10 seconds each round to make your decision, and then a slide will appear on the screen. If you match the slide, you're still in! If you don't match the slide, you're out for the next round. Then you can be back "in" for the following round.**



Go through each slide in the slideshow, giving the kids 10 seconds before you move to the next slide each time. During the 10 seconds, kids must either hold up one hand (high above their heads), two hands (high above their heads), or none (hands down to sides). Once they decide and do the pose, they can't switch. When the slide appears, whoever matches the slide will stay in for another round, and whoever doesn't match the slide can sit down or just be "out" for a round. Then the kids who were "out" can play again for the following round.

Was it hard to know the right pose to choose each time? Did anyone guess right every time? Allow the kids to respond. **We had to make a choice and just hope we got it right and then wait to see. A long time ago, God's people hoped for something even greater: they hoped and waited for the birth of a promised Savior—Jesus! It wasn't just a wishful hope like we had in the game, where we didn't know what would happen. Hope is a confident expectation that God will do what He said He will do. Hope is more than wishful thinking—it's being certain that God will come through. For many years, people waited confidently and expected God's promise to happen. Jesus was their hope, and Jesus is our hope! Even today, we can have hope no matter what because of Jesus. Jesus is our hope!**

Leader Tip: For Preteens. Make it more fun by having a kid up front (instead of the slideshow), but the kid will have to turn around with her back facing the group, and the group will turn around with their backs to the kid up front. Neither the kid up front nor the group can see one another when they make their choices.

GAME 2: EVERYBODY'S IT

In this easy and quick game of Tag, kids will experience chaos at the beginning of the game when all the kids are “It.” Then they will experience peace and calm when all the kids are “frozen” and still. The game moves pretty quickly so you may want to plan to play several rounds. Ahead of time, make sure there’s enough space for kids to run around. If there are chairs or if kids brought Bibles or other items to church, you may want to have the kids play the game in a separate space (or have the kids help move everything to the side).

This game works great with the Peace lesson!

Make It Inclusive: If there are kids in your group with physical restrictions, allow them to participate in a seated position and providing them a pool noodle. They get to have an arm extension for this game. They can tag using the pool noodle.

Gather kids together in an open space. **Do you know the difference between chaos and peace?** Allow responses. **We’re going to get a good demonstration in our game today. We’re going to play a game of Freeze Tag, but instead of only one or two taggers, everyone is “It!”** That means every kid can tag any other kid. When I say, “Go,” you can all run around trying to tag others and not get tagged yourself. Tag someone by lightly tapping the other person on the back or shoulder—don’t tag on the head, and don’t hurt someone by hitting. If you get tagged, you should immediately freeze where you are. The game will end when everyone (except one last person!) is frozen.

When the kids are ready, say, “Go,” and encourage them to tag each other. You can play several rounds.

How did it feel at the beginning of the game when everyone was running around trying to tag or escape being tagged? Allow the kids to respond. **It might have felt chaotic, loud, or crazy. How did it feel at the end of the game when everyone was frozen and quiet?** Allow the kids to respond. **It probably felt calm and peaceful. Peace is the feeling of calm deep inside your heart. Peace is a deep feeling that everything will be OK. True peace doesn’t just come from a quiet room. True peace in our hearts comes from Jesus. We’re learning that Jesus is our peace!**

GAME 3: JUMP FOR JOY RACE

SUPPLIES: dice (1 per small group or 1 per kid)

This game works great
with the Joy lesson!

In this game, kids will roll a dice and jump to race to a finish line based on the number they roll on the die.

In our story today, we're learning about how when Jesus was born, a group of ordinary shepherds were the first to hear the news. An angel brought them the good news which would bring "great joy for all people." Then a whole bunch of angels appeared and praised God. The news of Jesus is the best news ever!

You might have heard the phrase "jump for joy." That means celebrating some good news. The good news today is that Jesus came to earth so we can be saved, and Jesus is our joy. We're going to jump for joy in a game. When you jump in the game, remember that we can always have joy because of Jesus!

Divide the kids into equal small groups of 5–8 kids. If you have enough dice and enough space, you could play the game with all of the kids at once. Determine a starting line on one side of your room and a finish line on the other side of your room. Have each group line up at the starting line. The first person in each line will get a dice. The kids will roll their dice and jump the number of times that corresponds to the number they roll on the dice. They can jump as far as they want, but they have to roll again each time before jumping. Once they get to the finish line, the kids can run back to their line and give the dice to the next kids in line. The group that finishes first, wins.

When was the last time you were so happy that you jumped for joy? Allow the kids to respond. **How do you think God's people felt when they heard the news that Jesus was born? Do you think they jumped for joy?** Allow the kids to respond. **Joy is different from happiness. Joy is deep gladness because of Jesus! Joy is something no one can take away because God loves us always. Joy comes from God and lasts forever! We can have everlasting joy from God because Jesus is our joy!**

Make It Inclusive: For kids who can't jump, they can take large steps, or they can be the "dice roller" and roll the dice for the team.

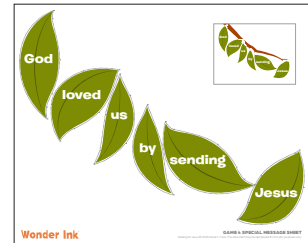
GAME 4: SPECIAL MESSAGE RELAY

SUPPLIES: scissors, disposable straws (1 per kid), clothespins with springs (1 per 6 kids, optional)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Special Message Sheet (1 per 6 kids)

This game works great with the Love lesson!

Ahead of time, print a Special Message Sheet for each group and cut apart the boxes (or let the kids help cut them). Divide the group into teams of six. Give each group a set of special message papers. Designate a starting line on one side of the room and an ending spot on the other side of the room (not too far away—the kids will suck through straws to move the papers across the room) and have the kids line up at the starting line.



In today's story, a messenger of God—a prophet—gave a special message to God's people. The messenger was Isaiah. And the message he gave had to do with a "branch" that would grow from a family tree. We're going to play a game where you get to help deliver a special message that has to do with the message Isaiah gave to God's people. You'll race put leaves on a branch to deliver the special message. But you won't just deliver the parts of the message in a regular way—you'll have to use a straw!

Give a disposable straw to each kid. Tell them they will suck through their straw one at a time to move a paper piece to your team's branch on the other side of the room. Then they will run back and tag the next kid in line who will do the same. If they drop the paper, they can simply use the straw to pick it up again. For younger kids (or kids who can't use the straw), they can use clothespins to pick up and move the pieces of paper. The papers can be delivered to the branch in any order, and once all the papers are on the branch, the team can race to the branch together and work together to put the papers in order to discover the special message.

The special message is: God loved us by sending Jesus. Isaiah shared a message with God's people that God promised to send a Savior from the roots of Jesse's family tree, and 700 years later, the promise was fulfilled. God showed His great love for us when He sent Jesus to the world for us.

Leader Tip: For Preteens. To make the game more challenging, they can deliver the message while walking backwards or with their eyes closed, with a friend giving verbal directions.

GAME 5: WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

This easy and fun game needs zero prep and can include as many or as few kids as you want. You can play several rounds.

This game works great with the Second Advent lesson!

We're learning this month about advent. The word advent means the coming or arrival of an important person: Jesus! God's people waited and waited ... and waited for Jesus to come to earth the first time. We're waiting too because Jesus promised to come back, and everything will change because God's followers will get to be with Jesus forever! Let's play a game where we'll see what changes when people go away and come back. You'll have to pay close attention.

Choose 2–3 kids to go first. Tell them to stand in front of the group for 30 seconds so the kids can get a good look at them. Then they can go to a designated area where the others can't see (or have all the other kids turn around to face the wall) for about 45 seconds. The 2–3 kids will change three things about themselves. They can do things such as pull a sock up or down, take off a shoe, change their jewelry or hair, take off their glasses, untie a shoe, etc. After 45 seconds, call them back up to stand in front of all the other kids. The kids can guess to figure out what three things have changed about each kid.

Was it always easy to recognize things that were different about our friends when they came back? Allow the kids to respond. **We had to pay attention to our friends and know them, and what they look like, in order to know what was different or the same about them when they returned. We don't know everything about when Jesus will return again—like when He is coming. But we do know that Jesus will come back, and it will be a celebration for His followers because we will get to be with Him forever.**

Leader Tip: For Preteens. To make it extra challenging, give older kids less time to review the kids' appearances. Less time means more challenge!

GAME 6: BACK WRITING CLUES

SUPPLIES: thick white construction paper (1 sheet per kid plus 1), crayons (1 per 2 kids), tape, whiteboard posterboard (1 per 2 kids), dry-erase marker regular marker (1 per 2 kids plus 1)

Works great as a review of the Waiting for Jesus series!

Ahead of time, write on a sheet of paper the following words: hope, peace, joy, love, second. In this game, kids will write on a paper on a partner's back while the partner writes what he thinks is being written on his back. Make sure to use thick construction paper and crayons (or if using markers, make sure they don't bleed through the paper onto clothing) so the kids don't write on each other's clothing. Divide into pairs and choose one person from each pair to have a sheet of construction paper taped to her back. The partner will write a word (which you will show on a paper) on the partner's back with a crayon (or marker that doesn't bleed through the paper). The person with the paper on her back will pay close attention to the word being written on her back and will try to write that same word on a whiteboard or posterboard in front of her. Then she will say aloud the word that she thinks is on her back and the lesson it goes with.

In the Waiting for Jesus series, we've learned about the messages (or prophecies) from the Old Testament with clues about the coming Messiah and their fulfillment in the New Testament when Jesus was born. God's people waited for a long time for the promised Messiah. In the game, some of you are going to get messages (or clues!) that you have to decipher and try and figure out what the message is and which lesson it goes with. Pay close attention to what is being written on your back, and try to copy it yourself.

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. To make the game easier for kids who aren't strong readers or writers, use pictures, such as a heart for "love" or a 2 for "second" instead of words.

While the kids with the papers taped to their backs aren't looking, point to a word on your paper (hope, peace, joy, love, or second) so the writing partner can write it on the papers on the backs. The kids with papers on their backs will write what they think is being written on their backs. You can let the kids swap places and try again for another word. Continue until all the words have been used.

Was it easy or difficult to guess the message based on the clues you felt on your back? Allow the kids to respond. **The word hope reminds us of the lesson Hope lesson: Jesus Is Our Hope. The word peace reminds us of the Peace lesson: Jesus Is Our Peace. The word joy reminds us of the Joy lesson: Jesus Is Our Joy. The word love reminds us of the Love lesson: God Loved Us by Sending Jesus. The word second reminds us of our The Second Advent lesson: Jesus Will Return. We can celebrate Jesus, and we can wait with hope and joy because we know Jesus loves us. Jesus will return!**