



TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Hope Is Alive
Crucifixion and Resurrection
John 18–20:1-18; 1 Peter 1:3

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Whatever happens,
remember Jesus is alive.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"In this world you will have
trouble. But, be encouraged!
I have won the battle over
the world."
John 16:33b, NIRV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Hope—Believing that something
good can come out of
something bad

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

PRELUDE: Setting the Tone for the Experience

See the Getting Ready pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the Prelude folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

SMALL GROUP

10
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing Time for Fun Interaction
Early Arriver
Opening Activity

LARGE GROUP

30
MIN

STORY: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways
WORSHIP: Inviting People to Respond to God
Opener
Worship "Happy Day" from *Orange Kids*, and "The Battle Belongs" by *Phil Wickham*
Bible
Story Bottom Line
What's Our Part in the Story?
Prayer

SMALL GROUP

25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a Safe Place to Connect
Bible Story Review: HOPE (*k-1st grade*), Story Stones (*2nd-3rd grade*)
Application Activity: You're Invited! (*k-1st grade*), Find Your Hope (*2nd-3rd grade*)
Memory Verse Activity: Jesus' Words (*k-1st grade*), Big Picture Race (*2nd-3rd grade*)
Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss



PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES 10 MINUTES

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LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS KIDS ENTER.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

Host enters.

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME INTRO

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

OPENER

HOST: "Happy Easter, everyone! Wow, what a special day! Today we celebrate the most amazing news ever—that Jesus is alive!

"I love Easter because it reminds me that I can always have hope. I know that Jesus died on the cross for my sins, and then He came back to life. Because of what Jesus has done, I can be forgiven and live every day of my life knowing that I have a relationship with God that will last forever. Amazing! And even when life gets tough, I can remember to look at the 'big picture' and think about what Jesus has done for me.

"We'll get into the whole story in just a few minutes. But first—since it's Easter—I thought it would be fun for us to play a really fun game with Easter eggs! Sound like fun? *(Pause for responses.)* Great!

"First, I'll need you to partner up with one other person. Go ahead and do that really quick. Give your partner a high five. *(Pause while the kids partner up.)* If you still need a partner, raise your hand.

Help the kids who still need a partner by pairing them up with each other, then having them high five and stand together. Be ready to assign adult leaders to be partners with any kids who still need one.

"All right! Now that we all have a partner, one person from each pair can stand on this line, and their partner will stand on the other line and face them.

Reference the two tape lines, which are a few feet apart.

"Okay, you can go ahead and get in place.



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LARGE GROUP
K-3

PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES 10 MINUTES

Pause while the kids get in place, standing across from their partner on the two tape lines.

“Great job, everyone! We’re ready to play the game. Here’s an Easter egg for each team.

Walk down the line, giving an empty plastic egg to all of the kids on one side (so that you have one egg for each pair of kids).

“Now that you’ve got your eggs, here’s how the game works. We’ll start with the eggs on this side. *(Point to the side on which the kids have the eggs.)* When I say ‘toss,’ you’ll toss your egg to your partner. If they catch it, your team is still in and you’ll take one step farther apart. If the egg hits the floor, your team is out and you’ll have a seat. What do you say we try a practice round first? Okay—ready, set, toss!

AUDIO: FUN, INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

The kids toss their eggs to their partners. This first round should be pretty easy, since the lines are just a few feet apart, but if anyone drops their egg on the first try, they can stay in the game.

“Is everyone ready to play for real? Then let’s get to it. Ready, set, toss!

Let the kids toss their eggs again. From this point on, if an egg hits the floor, encourage the two kids who dropped it (“Good try!”) while you motion for them to have a seat. All teams who caught their egg get to stay in the game. Have them take a big step back for each new round. Play the game in this way for as many rounds as you can—until you get down to one winning team, or a few winners.

Congratulate everyone and collect the eggs as you send the kids back to their seats.

“That was amazing! I love Easter games. I love Easter treats. I love EVERYTHING about Easter! And Easter always reminds me of how God sent Jesus to be our Savior. Let’s get ready to sing and worship God together.

Everyone on your feet!”



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PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

10 MINUTES

WORSHIP

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

"Hey, friends! Happy Easter! Are you ready to celebrate this amazing day? Are you ready to have some fun? We're starting with 'Oh Happy Day!' This song is all about celebrating Jesus' victory over death! It's a party in here! Let's sing loud and dance with joy! Get on your feet!"

VIDEO: "HAPPY DAY" LIVE LYRICS

"You guys brought the energy! That was awesome! Now, let's sing a song that reminds us that God is always fighting for us. It's called 'The Battle Belongs to the Lord,' and it's a powerful reminder that we don't have to face our problems alone. Psalm 46:1 says, 'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.' Let's sing about God's victory!"

VIDEO: "THE BATTLE BELONGS" LIVE LYRICS VIDEO

WORSHIP LEADER: "Thank you for joining in worship today! Let's thank God for his joy and for fighting our battles. Let's pray."



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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Storyteller enters as Worship Leaders exit.

SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “Hi, friends! I’m so excited to talk about the Easter story with you. We can find the whole story right here in the Bible. *(Hold up Bible.)* Easter is a HUGE celebration because of what Jesus did for us!

Flip back to Genesis.

“If we go back to the very beginning, we see how God created the world and everything in it—including people. But when people turned away from God, the world was broken. God chose one family, the Israelites, and promised to bless the whole world through them.

“Many, many years later, God fulfilled that promise by sending Jesus to live here on Earth. Jesus traveled around, teaching and healing people. He showed perfectly what it means to love God and love others.

“The religious leaders at that time were upset because they didn’t believe Jesus was the Son of God, and because people were following Him instead of them. So, when Jesus entered Jerusalem for Passover week, they made a plan to get rid of Him.

Pick up the Easter basket with the plastic eggs for the story. Set the basket on the table.

“Now, to tell you what happened next, I’ve brought this Easter basket. When I open one of these eggs, you’ll hear a sound from the story.

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 1 (STORY INTRO FANFARE)

“Oh, good—it worked! Let’s get started.

ARRESTED IN THE GARDEN

STORYTELLER: “There, in the city of Jerusalem, Jesus shared a very special Passover meal with His friends. The Passover was a time for God’s people to remember how God had rescued their ancestors from slavery in Egypt.

“Jesus stopped during the meal . . . and He washed His friends’ feet.

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 2 (WATER SPLASH)

“Jesus did this to show His friends what it meant to show love and serve.



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PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES

“After this, one of the disciples, Judas, snuck out early. Another one, Peter, promised that he would stick with Jesus no matter what.

“Later that evening, Jesus wanted to take some time to pray, so He led His friends to a garden.

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 3 (GARDEN)

“And there, in the garden, Judas returned. Judas had decided to betray Jesus. He led a mob of soldiers into the garden so that they could arrest Jesus.

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 4 (SOLDIERS)

“Jesus allowed the soldiers to arrest Him. They took Jesus for questioning. Jesus’ friends scattered, but Peter and John followed along behind from a distance. Peter had said earlier that evening that he would never leave Jesus. But three different times, when someone asked him if he knew Jesus . . . he was scared . . . and he said no.

THE CROSS

STORYTELLER: “Jesus was then brought to the high priest to be put on trial . . . but, of course, they couldn’t find anything that Jesus had done wrong. They were just looking for a reason to get Him in trouble.

“Then, early the next morning, Jesus was sent to the Roman governor, Pilate. Pilate couldn’t find a single thing against Jesus. But he knew that the religious leaders were out to get Jesus . . . so he had Jesus whipped. Soldiers put a crown of thorns and placed it on Jesus’ head. Then Pilate brought Jesus back out to the crowd.

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 5 (CROWD MURMUR)

“Pilate told the people that he had no reason to charge Jesus. He even offered to release Jesus. But the crowd shouted that they wanted Pilate to put Jesus on a cross. Pilate didn’t want to make the crowd angry, so he agreed. Jesus was forced to carry the heavy beams of His cross through the streets and out to a hilltop.

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 6 (LONELY WIND)

“There, Jesus was put on a cross. Only Jesus’ mother, Mary, along with Mary Magdalene, several other women, and John were brave enough to stay.

“Jesus knew that He had to give up His life in order to pay the price for our sins, or the things we’ve done wrong. This was what He had to do to rescue us. Jesus said, *‘It is finished’ (John 19:30)*. And then He died.



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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES

“The sky went dark . . . and the Earth shook.

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 7 (EARTHQUAKE)

“Later, a man named Joseph of Arimathea and a religious leader, Nicodemus, asked Pilate for permission to take Jesus’ body to bury it. They placed Jesus in a tomb that was like a large hole cut into the rock on the side of a hill. A stone was placed over the tomb to seal it shut.

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 8 (STONE)

THE EMPTY TOMB

STORYTELLER: “Jesus’ friends were sad and afraid. They huddled behind locked doors. And then came Sunday morning.

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 9 (BIRDS)

“Jesus’ friend Mary Magdalene went to the tomb to place spices on Jesus’ body. When she arrived at the tomb, she saw that the stone had been rolled away! She RAN to tell Peter and John.

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 10 (RUNNING FOOTSTEPS)

“Mary said:

Open the Bible to John 20:2 (NirV) and read.

“They have taken the Lord out of the tomb! We don’t know where they have put him!” (NirV)

“Peter and John had to see for themselves. They raced to the tomb.

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 11 (RUNNING FOOTSTEPS—TWO PEOPLE)

“When they got there, they found the linen cloths that had been wrapped around Jesus’ body just lying there. They left, feeling confused. But Mary stayed outside the tomb, crying. When Mary looked in the tomb once again, she saw two angels.

Open one of the eggs.



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25 MINUTES

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 12 (ANGEL "AHHHHH")

"Turning around, she saw Jesus Himself standing there . . . but she didn't realize it was Him. Listen to this!

Open the Bible to John 20:15-16 (NirV) and read.

He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?" She thought he was the gardener. So she said,

"Sir, did you carry him away? Tell me where you put him. Then I will go and get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary." (NirV)

"Jesus said her name, and in that moment, Mary understood that it was Jesus. He was alive! She hugged Jesus, but He told her:

Open the Bible to John 20:17 (NirV) and read.

"Do not hold on to me. I have not yet ascended to the Father. Instead, go to those who believe in me. Tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" (NirV)

"Mary then raced back to find Peter, John, and the other disciples. She couldn't wait to tell them the amazing news that Jesus was alive!

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 10 (RUNNING FOOTSTEPS)

"And that's where we'll leave the story for today.

Open one of the eggs.

AUDIO: STORY SOUND 13 (CLOSING FANFARE)

Move in front of the table as you wrap up.

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "Something that I think is truly amazing about this story is how many times along the way that things must have seemed hopeless.

"When Jesus was arrested in the garden . . . when He was put on trial . . . and when He was put on the cross and died, it seemed like all hope was lost. When Jesus' body was laid in the tomb, His followers thought that was the end of the story.

"But it wasn't the end of the story. God always knew the big picture. This was all part of God's good plan. "Jesus' friend Peter later wrote about it this way.



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25 MINUTES

Open the Bible to 1 Peter 1:3 (NirV) and read.

Give praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his great mercy he has given us a new birth and a living hope. This hope is living because Jesus Christ rose from the dead. (NirV)

“Here’s what we need to remember today. This is why we can live each day with hope!

SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE

“Whatever happens, remember Jesus is alive. Say that with me.”

STORYTELLER AND KIDS: “Whatever happens, remember Jesus is alive.”

Host enters.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

WHAT'S OUR PART IN THE STORY?

HOST: “Jesus’ return to life is the best news ever. It gives us hope!

SLIDE: VIRTUE

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME TRANSITION TO VIRTUE

“Remember, hope is about believing that something good can come out of something bad.”

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): VIRTUE TRANSITION TO THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

STORYTELLER: “There were a lot of bad things that happened in this story that must have been very difficult for Jesus’ followers at the time. They believed that Jesus was God’s Son and that He had come to save the world. And when Jesus died, it looked like all hope was gone.”

HOST: “Jesus’ friends were sad, scared, and confused. But now we know why it all had to happen that way.”

STORYTELLER: “Our sins, or the things we’ve done wrong, separate us from God. But when Jesus gave His life on the cross, He paid the price for our sins. And when Jesus rose from the dead, He defeated death, once and for all!” HOST: “When we choose to follow Jesus and put our faith in Him as our Savior, we have the gift of eternal life. We get to live with God forever!”

STORYTELLER: “That’s right. Each one of us can choose to follow Jesus and be part of the incredible story God is telling. That doesn’t mean that the hard things in your life will just go away. But it does mean that Jesus will be right there with you—always. And it means that you can have hope no matter what happens.”



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25 MINUTES

HOST: "God loved us so much that Jesus came to rescue us. *[Basic Truth]* We can trust God no matter what. That's so good to know as we celebrate Easter together. Let's pray."

PRAYER

STORYTELLER OR HOST: "Dear God, thank You so much for sending Your Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. When we remember how Jesus died on the cross for our sins, we can see how He made a way for us to have a relationship with You that will last forever! God, we know that You are able to make something good out of the bad things that happen in our lives. Thank You for the hope we have because of Jesus. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Dismiss kids to their small groups.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS THE KIDS EXIT.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP