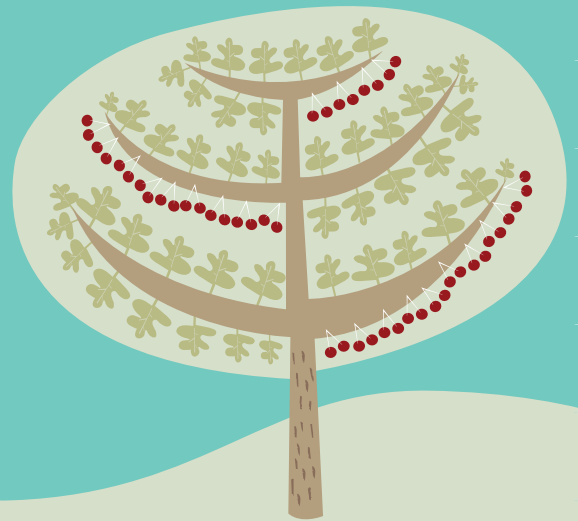
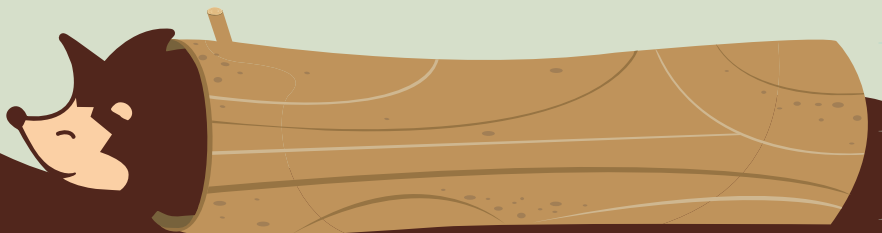




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HOW IT WORKS
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At the beginning of each Tru Fire Blessings lesson you will find a short summary of the portion of The Big God Story children will be exploring within the lesson.



Components of a Tru Fire Blessings Lesson

Overview and Features

Tru Fire Blessings is designed for three-year-old children based on three Foundational Truths **God made me, God loves me, and God is with me.**

THE ONE-YEAR SCOPE & SEQUENCE FEATURES:

- **Repetition**—Each part of The Big God Story will be repeated two weeks in a row in the Scope & Sequence but will utilize different storytelling techniques and activities each week.
- **Interaction**—Children will use their senses to explore God's Word through a variety of visual, auditory, and other sensory activities.
- **Chronological**—Follows the sequence of The Big God Story meta-narrative.
- **Remember & Celebrate**—On the 13th week of every quarter (once per quarter), there will be a weekend to remember one of the three foundational truths and celebrate who God is.
- **Worship**—Kids will worship through music provided with Tru Fire Blessings and will be encouraged in the home as well.

PARENTING COMPONENTS:

At Home Weekly

- Fun facts and ideas that will *Inspire, Equip, and Support* parents
- Weekly pre-teaching of The Big God Story
- Child-development tips for parents that align with spiritual formation

HomeFront Magazine: A Spiritual Parenting Resource is a magazine that gives families ideas for creating fun, spiritually forming times in their homes—setting aside a sacred space for family in the midst of their active, everyday lives! As the new issue becomes available each month, you may choose to print it for families or encourage them to visit www.HomeFrontMag.com to subscribe to have the magazine sent directly to their inbox. HomeFront is also available as an app for your iPhone, iPad, or Android device.



Hamilton the Hedgehog is a recurring character used as a tool to help engage the children.

SAMPLE SERVICE OUTLINE

This sample outline offers flexibility for the timing of your service. The attention span and interest level of young children can change based on a variety of factors. You may find yourself allowing more time for one section of the lesson, and moving quickly through another depending upon the mood and dynamic of your class on any particular day.

| Experience/Lesson Section | Minutes |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Explore | 15 min. |
| Discover | 25 min. |
| Respond | 15 min. |
| Bless | 5 min. |

LEADER PREP

Each week you'll find three encouraging articles that help leaders prepare their hearts to present the lesson. See the Inspire, Equip, and Support information below.

INSPIRE

The Inspire section of the lesson is where the Tru Fire Team and practitioners share personal stories of how God has worked in their lives. The Inspire for that week will help illustrate the Ponder Point and our relationship with Him. We hope you find these to be inspiring and encouraging as you begin to prepare for each week's lesson.

EQUIP

Flowing out of Inspire, the Equip section is designed to give you more insight into the segment of The Big God Story you'll be exploring with the children that week. In addition, it offers fresh perspective and shares context on the Bible passage. The philosophy behind this is to equip you with the biblical framework of the lesson and enhance the learning experience.

SUPPORT

The Support section is intended to provide personal reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and personal spiritual transformation in God's Word. The role of the Spirit is primary here as we look to Him for wisdom, comfort, and guidance to prepare your heart to present each week's lesson, and seek the spiritual formation of both you and the children.

TRU FIRE MISSION STATEMENT

The Tru Fire Mission Statement sums up the purpose of every Tru Fire lesson, resource, and product: to help kids and their families connect to God, find their place in His big story, and respond to Him through the power of the Holy Spirit.

TRU FIRE LESSON PATH

The Lesson Path shows how the Tru Fire Mission Statement intentionally plays out in each Tru Fire lesson. The path breaks down how each section of a Tru Fire lesson plays a role in connecting children and their families to God and helping them create space to respond to Him. It's a great reminder that each Tru Fire lesson has been written with intentionality and care.

NAVIGATING THE LESSON

The Navigating the Lesson section assists practitioners in preparing for each week's lesson. With helpful information organized and condensed in an easy-to-read grid format, this section gives notes and tips for each portion of the lesson. Here you'll find items specifically directed to the staff, administrator, or lead volunteers who prepare resources, materials, and the gathering space for the upcoming services. Casual suggestions for how to make a lesson flow better for your church and kids will also appear here.

Classroom-specific tips, notes, and suggestions for weekly volunteers will still be available in the main section of the lesson to be easily accessed in the moment by the volunteers who most need them.

If you need to end a lesson early, consider jumping ahead to the BLESS section to send out the children with a sense of peace so they can be a blessing to others.



Explore::

15 min.



Exploration stations create space for children to engage in hands-on activities as they begin their time of worship.

SENSORY TABLE IDEAS:

1. Salt Designs: Cover a plastic tray with salt (just enough so you can't see the bottom). Draw simple designs on a couple pieces of paper and place them next to the salt tray. Encourage children to use their fingers to copy the design in the salt or to create their own designs.
2. Shaving Cream Hunt: Place several items (toy cars, toothbrush, comb, bubble wand, etc.) on a table or inside a bin. Cover the items with shaving cream. Encourage children to find the items that are lost in the foam.
3. Open and Close: Fill bags, boxes, or pouches with various themed objects. Encourage the children to figure out how to open the box and see what's inside. Ask them questions about the items they found.

Explore Stations May Include

- **Option 1:** Activities provided in the lesson
- **Option 2:** Storyboards with The Big God Story people (found with the Lesson Resources)
- **Option 3:** Sensory tables or bins

You may choose to use one or more of the options provided for your three-year-old activity areas. Consider setting up two stations each week. The first station would consist of the activities provided in the lesson. Then from week to week, rotate Options 2 to 3 in your second station.

Getting Started

Designate a space in your room or meeting space for EXPLORE stations. Set up as many tables to be EXPLORE stations as you would like to make available to the children.

Purchase materials and supplies for the specific lesson and items that are staples and will be used on a regular basis (see items below):

- plastic trays (purchasing suggestion: Brawny Tough Plastic Art Trays, Item # 8WWARTRAY from www.discountsschoolsupply.com)
- play dough
- play dough accessories (suggestions: child-sized rolling pins, cookie cutters, old rubber stamps, toy pizza cutters, toy kitchen utensils, small combs, and bubble wands)
- water droppers (purchasing suggestion: Item # 8WWAP7209J from www.discountsschoolsupply.com)
- small bowls
- small pitcher
- easy-grip tweezers or strawberry pickers (purchasing suggestions: Item # 8WWAP1963J and Item # 8WWAP7200J from www.discountsschoolsupply.com)
- salt
- rice
- large dried beans
- shaving cream
- cotton balls
- cotton swabs
- toothbrushes

Note: Please check with parents for any potential allergies.

Discover:: 25 min.



Children participate in discovering God's Word through storytelling, worship, and interactive experiences.



DID YOU KNOW ...

Hedgehogs:

- Are native to parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa. This little creature has been introduced to Southeast Asia, New Zealand, Australia, and North and South America.
- Curl up to go to sleep to protect themselves.
- Have prickly spines everywhere except on their face, legs, and belly.
- Root through hedges and undergrowth for food, which makes them welcome in many gardens.
- Eat insects, worms, centipedes, snails, mice, frogs, and snakes.

- As children transition from EXPLORE into DISCOVER consider using “*The Cleanup Song*” to cue them that it is indeed time to clean up. Once children have helped to clean up, encourage them to find a Story Spot and place it in the storytelling area.
- **Story Spots** refers to an item used to mark the place where each child will sit during the duration of DISCOVER. Consider using carpet squares, small circle-shaped rugs, or large sturdy place mats. When children hear the transition song, they will be cued to clean up and choose a Story Spot, place it in the gathering space, and sit down. At the close of your time together in The Big God Story, encourage children to return their Story Spots to their original location.

Hamilton the Hedgehog

- As you begin the storytelling section of DISCOVER, have a volunteer available to be Hamilton the Hedgehog using the puppet you provide. Or you may choose to act as both the storyteller and the puppeteer. Encourage Hamilton to come out of his house.
- Consider having a façade that is part of your stage/teaching area. This façade can act as a puppet stage to conceal puppeteers. However, if this is not an option and if children see the volunteer with the puppet on her hand, encourage the volunteer to interact with both Hamilton and the children. The interaction will help children to see the puppeteer and puppet as individual characters.

Purchasing suggestions for Hamilton the Hedgehog:

- www.jazams.com/Store/pc/viewPrd.asp?idproduct=731&IDCategory=16
- www.amazon.com

Creating a House for Hamilton

- Hedgehogs make their homes in leaves and woodpiles within the forest and gardens. You may choose to create a log or leaf pile for Hamilton's home. For ideas on how to create your own hedgehog house, visit: <http://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/faq.php> or www.gardenersworld.com search: “hedgehog house.”

Welcome

- After children have placed their Story Spots in the gathering space, invite Hamilton the Hedgehog to join you in your time of DISCOVER and lead the children in singing the Bible song.

Ponder Point

- This is the lesson focus. After welcoming the children, you will have a time of praise and worship. Then there is an introduction to The Big God Story.

Bible Song (sung to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb”)

- *Now it's time to hear God's Word,*
- *Hear God's Word,*
- *Hear God's Word.*
- *Now it's time to hear God's Word,*
- *So let's look in the Bible.*

- When the song ends, have the children return to their Story Spots. The volunteer can return Hamilton to his house with his little face peeking out, or she may choose to sit quietly with him until it's time for him to participate in The Big God Story.



The Big God Story is written for a three-year-old audience and can be told in its entirety, but may need to be shortened if the class is on the younger side.

The Big God Story

As you transition children into the storytelling portion of DISCOVER, lead them in a Prayer of Release.

A Prayer of Release is a prayer asking God to remove any distractions that would get in the way of hearing from and responding to Him. As we pray, we dedicate this time to the Lord and ask to be filled with knowledge and understanding from the Holy Spirit, giving God His rightful role as Teacher.

We can begin to model this posture of prayer with the children in our care. Pray a simple prayer thanking God for His presence and asking Him to teach you as you gather together. For example: "Thank You, God, for being with us. We ask that You would teach us today."

After the Prayer of Release, you will begin storytelling from The Big God Story. Please note: The Big God Story can be told in its entirety, but may need to be shortened if the group is on the younger end of the spectrum.

Respond:

15 min.



Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond through worship, creative activities, and games.

As children leave their time in The Big God Story, they will have the opportunity to RESPOND to God as they praise Him along with those in their faith community. Children are also encouraged to participate in games, songs, manipulatives, sensory activities, and art. These activities will help reinforce what they experience in DISCOVER.

Snack: You may choose to enjoy a snack as children finish worshipping. Snack ideas may be provided to connect the snack to the lesson.

Hamilton's Box of Fun

This is a recurring activity that can be used each week. Some options have been provided to help you create your own "box of fun." Each quarter the suggested supplies will be refreshed. Be sure to check the Resource Files each week for updated coloring pages.

Hamilton's Box of Fun will encourage kids to interact with one another as they practice sharing toys and using their imagination with the different items inside the box. You may choose to use this at the beginning or end of the service, as time permits.

Invite your children to the circle time area and sing together:

Hamilton's Box (sung to the tune of "Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Dog Gone?")

*Where, oh where is Hamilton's Box?
Oh where, oh where can it be?
It's full of fun toys that we sure like a lot!
Oh where, oh where can it be?*

When the song ends, encourage the children to work together to find Hamilton's Box of Fun. Consider hiding the box in a new location each week to pique the children's curiosity and excitement.



Bless::: 5 min.



Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another.

- A blessing can be a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words of encouragement and guidance. A blessing can be offered in order to ask God's Spirit to overflow from the child's life in such a way that blesses others, while it can also be prayed over a child for the purpose of declaring God's protection, joy, or wisdom.

- This time is set aside for the leader to spend a few moments blessing the children. Within each lesson a simple blessing is provided along with a portion of Scripture that reinforces the spiritually forming concepts introduced within the lesson. For example:

Children, may you remember that God made our world and all the earth will worship Him.

Open the Bible and read Psalm 19:1 as a blessing over the children.

**The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.**

- Note: Be sure to send home the *At Home Weekly* with your kids.