

Day One

KNOWING JESUS

- **Large Group**
 - Songs
 - Puppets
 - Opening Time: Who Do You Know?
 - *Do you want to know Jesus?*
 - Memory Verse: Fast and Slow
- **Small Group**
 - Story: John Meets Jesus
 - *Theme: Jesus came to help people*
 - *Mark 1:16-20, Luke 5:1-11, 17-26*
 - Craft: Marionette
 - Act out the story of the man who could not walk
 - Memory Verse Review
- **Large Group**
 - Story review questions



Day One Opening

Pre-Rainbow Express Gathering

You will begin each day by knocking on doors and then playing games to help attract children to your Rainbow Express.

Song Time/Puppets

When it is time to begin your activities, have all the children sit down in a large group. It would be helpful to bring a tarp for them to sit on. When the children are together and seated on the tarp, begin your song time.

The Song Leader will come to the front of the group to lead songs. One or two others may also want to come to the front to help show motions. Be sure to have several songs ready to sing and that everyone in the group knows the songs.

TIP—The Large Group Leader should lead his opening monologue and serve as a sort of “master of ceremonies” to keep each activity flowing smoothly. He should not, however, tell the day’s Bible story. That will go much smoother in the small group time. Children listen more attentively in smaller groups.

During this time you will also have the puppets sing their song(s). Doing the puppet show in between songs can help keep the children’s attention. You are provided with one song for each day. If the children are responding well and enjoying the puppet music, it is okay to perform more than one of the songs and repeat the songs from day to day.

The Opening

Each day the Large Group Leader will welcome the children and provide an introduction to the day’s themes and activities. The more creative and engaging the Large Group Leader acts, the more interested and involved the children will be during the large group. Prepare ahead of time by making a fun costume.

The Large Group Leader will come to the front of the group and explain the day’s theme before the children divide into their small groups. What is provided here is a guide for the day’s opening. Do not simply read from this page. Read through the discussion guide repeatedly and be able to lead it from memory. Do not feel that the Large Group Leader has to memorize and recite this page. It is not necessarily intended to serve as a script. Rather, use it as a suggestion to help you know how lead the opening time.

(Be sure to have your Bible in your hands during this opening time.) Hello boys and girls. I am glad that all of you are here today. I hope you will come to Rainbow Express every day this week. We are going to have a lot of fun learning what it means to know Jesus. Do you know what it means to know Jesus? This week I hope we can help you learn.

We’re going to try something: I need your help making an important choice. One of my favorite basketball players is Michael Jordan. I was told that I could buy a book about him. That made me very excited. I like to read about Michael Jordan. I could learn stories about what happened to him as a child. I could learn about how he grew up. I could learn

about how good he was at basketball. Don't you think it would be fun for me to know all about Michael Jordan?

What if I had another option? I was told I could actually go and meet Michael Jordan, or I could buy the book. Now this is a pretty tough choice for me. What do you think I should do? I have an idea. I will let you vote. Raise your hand if you think I should get the book about Michael Jordan. (*Count their hands*) Okay, now raise your hand if you think I should go and meet Michael Jordan. (*Count their hands.*) So it's better to get to know somebody than just to know about them.

That's what we're going to talk about all week. Some of you that are here don't know very much about Jesus. We're going to tell you some wonderful stories about Jesus and the amazing things He did. Some of you already know a lot of stories about Jesus. We want to help you know how you can really know Him. Jesus wants to be a part of your life.

Today we are going to learn about a man named John. John was a friend of Jesus and followed Jesus around wherever He went. Rather than just knowing about Jesus, John spent everyday with Jesus so that He could talk to and listen to Him. John enjoyed his time with Jesus so much that he wrote about many of his adventures. What he wrote down is in this amazing book I have in my hand, the Bible! This will give you the chance to know Jesus just like John did.

Memory Verse Activity

When the Large Group Leader finishes his opening time, the Memory Verse Teacher will come to the front to lead the memory verse activity. The large group memory verse activity for day one is "Fast and Slow". Have your poster of the memory verse available. Read through the verse all together several times to practice. Practice saying the memory verse faster and faster. Try saying it slower and slower. Say it in "slow motion", using exaggerated hand motions and deep slow motion voices.

After the Memory Verse Teacher finishes, divide the children into small groups to continue.

Day One Scripture

Mark 1:16-20, Luke 5:1-11, 17-26 (NIV)

As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” At once they left their nets and followed him.

When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God, he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.”

Simon answered, “Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.”

When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!” For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, “Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men.” So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

One day as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there. And the power of the Lord was present for him to heal the sick. Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said, “Friend, your sins are forgiven.”

The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, “Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, “Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins....” He said to the paralyzed man, “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, “We have seen remarkable things today.”

PREPARATION TIP—We have included the scripture today's story is taken from. Before you learn the children's version of the story (next in this packet) you will be using to teach at Rainbow Express, please read through the verses. Pray and ask God to help you understand the scripture and the point He wants you to help the children understand.

Day One Small Group

Small Group Story Time

The text provided here is to serve as a guide for you while you tell the story. Read it through several times and be able to tell it from memory. It is not important to be able to recite this story word-for-word. Your goal is to be able to translate the story as it is written in the Bible (see previous pages) to a level children will understand. Use the wording included here as suggestions to help you make these concepts understood by elementary age children. Feel free to adapt these words to fit well with your own style.

Today's Story: John Meets Jesus

I'm going to tell you about a man named John. John and his brother James were fishermen. They lived near a big lake with their father. Everyday they would go out in the boats and catch fish to sell. John liked the lake, and he liked being a fisherman. I am going to tell you why John stopped being a fisherman. I'm going to tell you how his whole life changed one day at the lake.

James and John were in the boats, getting ready for another long day of fishing. Not far away, their friends Simon and Andrew were working at their own boat.

While Simon and Andrew were throwing one of the fishing nets into the water, a man came up to talk to them. John recognized this man. His name was Jesus. John had heard about Jesus and knew that Jesus was very special.

"Come follow me," Jesus said to Simon. Simon dropped his nets. Together with his brother Andrew, they jumped out of the boat to follow Jesus. Next Jesus came to James and John. Jesus invited James and John to follow Him too. John was excited. He had heard that Jesus was going to help people by doing wonderful things for them. Quickly, James and John left their boats to follow Jesus.

John started spending more and more time with Jesus. Jesus taught wonderful things. He told everybody how much God loved them. He told people that God wants to forgive us for all the bad things we do. Jesus was different from anybody John had ever met. Jesus cared about people. He helped people.

One day, a little later, James, Simon, Andrew, and John were all out at the lake. Jesus was at the beach that morning, and a big crowd had followed Him. Jesus climbed into Simon's boat and pushed it a little ways into the water. From there, He taught the people about God's love.

When Jesus finished teaching, He told Simon to take the boat out a little deeper and put the fishing nets into the water. "We've worked hard all night long and haven't caught a single fish," Simon said. "But because you want me to, I'll put the nets in the lake again."

John watched Simon and Andrew put the nets down into the water. Instantly, the nets filled with fish. It was more fish than John had ever seen at one time before. They were everywhere! The fish were so heavy that the nets started to rip. James and John had to help just to pull them into the boat.

John couldn't believe what had happened. How did Jesus know that the fish would be

PREPARATION TIP—When you tell the story use as many interactive elements as you can. You are going to be outside talking to kids with short attention spans. Keep them involved so they will hear the story!

Remember that involving the children will help them pay attention. Use hand motions and sound effects. Have your children repeat things back to you. Ask questions.

DO NOT READ TO THE KIDS. TELL THEM THE STORY! Even though you will be telling and not reading the story, have your Bible open to the story in your lap. This will help the children recognize that the story comes from the Bible and is not simply a fairy tale or something we have made up.

Helpers: While the story teller is teaching, sit with the children and be a good example by listening to the story. Watch for children who need special attention.

there? Only the Son of God could know that! That day, James, Simon, Andrew, and John left the boats to go everywhere with Jesus.

Not long after, people were listening to Jesus again. They were in a house, and Jesus was teaching to all the people there. There was a huge crowd in the house. So many people wanted to hear Jesus that not everybody could come in. There were lots of people outside, listening through the doors and windows. They all loved to listen to Jesus teach. He talked about God and God's plan for people. Mostly, he talked about God's love.

There were lots of sick and hurt people there too, because Jesus could do something amazing. Jesus healed sick people. He didn't use medicine or magic or anything like that. He just used God's power to make them better.

While Jesus was teaching, John started to hear a very strange sound. It sounded like somebody was making scratching noises on the roof of the house. Jesus kept talking, but the sound got louder and louder. Suddenly, a big hole appeared in the roof above them.

There were people standing on the roof of the house. Four men had brought their friend that could not walk. They wanted Jesus to make him better. When they couldn't get in the house because it was so crowded, they just climbed up on the roof and dug a hole. While John watched, they used ropes to lower the man that couldn't walk down to Jesus.

Jesus smiled. He wasn't angry that the men interrupted Him. Instead, He was glad they believed in Him so much. He looked at the man who could not walk. "I am going to forgive you for all the bad things you have done," Jesus said.

There were some church leaders there that didn't like to hear that. The church leaders knew that the bad things we do are called sins. They knew that only the Son of God can forgive people's sins. Jesus is God's Son and can forgive sins, but those church leaders did not believe Him.

Jesus looked at the church leaders. "I want you to know that I really do have power to forgive sins. So that you can see that my power is real, I am going to do something nobody else can do." Jesus turned back to the man that could not walk. Jesus reached out and took the man's hand. "Get up and walk," Jesus told the man.

With Jesus' help, the man slowly stood up. Everybody was surprised. This man had been born with legs that did not work right. He had never stood up before. Smiling the man began to walk around, then jump, and then run. He happily walked home with the four friends that had carried him on the roof.

Every one that was there that day was amazed. They had just seen Jesus do something that nobody else could do. Do you know why Jesus can do such incredible things? Do you know why Jesus cares about us so much and loves us so much? Do you know why He wants to forgive us of our sins? It is because Jesus was not just a special person. Jesus is God's Son. Jesus came to Earth to help people know about God's love. He came to show us that God wants to be part of our lives. God wants to forgive us for all our sins and help us have a brand new life with Him.

This week, you're going to learn about Jesus and how much He loves you. You're going to learn that Jesus knows you very well, and He wants you to know him too. The most important thing that Jesus did to show His love for you was to die on the cross. Jesus was killed on the cross but came back to life on the third day. He did this so that He could take the punishment for all the bad things we have done.

If you want to know how to let Jesus forgive you and be a part of your life, just ask. We would love to help you.

Prayer Time

Take this time after the story to pray with the children in your small group. Ask them for things they would like to pray about. Tell God how awesome He is. Ask Him to help you and the children in your small group to listen to God and obey Him. Pray that the children in your group will get to know God and feel the love He has for them.

Craft

While still in your small groups, lead the children in making the craft for the day. The craft time is not only a way to reinforce the lesson, but it also allows time to get to know the children in your small group. During this time, ask them questions about their families, friends, and school. Invest in their lives.

Paralytic Puppet

Supplies:

Crayons, Scissors, Tape, Brads (2 - 4 per child), Yarn (1 – 5 pieces per child), Popsicle Sticks (2 per child), Puppet Pages (1 per child)

1. Give each child a page to color. As they are coloring, go back over what happened to the man in the story.
2. Have children cut out the parts of the man. (*NOTE—This craft can be tricky for younger children. See the following pages for two different versions of the craft. Feel free to use whichever will work best with your children.*)
3. Use the brads to attach the arms and legs to the body. Remind the children that Jesus changed the man's life in two ways. He made him able to walk, but He also forgave him of all the bad things he had done. Tell the children that Jesus can do the same for them if they ask Him to do so. If any children are ready to ask Jesus into their heart, talk with them.
4. Tape the string to the arms, legs, and head of the puppet. Then tie it to the intersection of the popsicle sticks.
5. Have the children use their puppets to act out the story of the paralyzed man.

Memory Verse Activity

Each day the small group time will include a Memory Verse Activity. The Memory Verse time is one of the most important activities of the day. We want these children to remember God's word and why it is important to them. A list of potential activities is included in the back of this packet. Use a different idea from that list each day to help the children learn the words of the verse and to explain why it applies to their lives. (Some require extra preparation, so be sure to review the list in advance.) The memory verse for this week is:

John 3:16—For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life.

When all the small groups are beginning to wrap up their memory verse activities, begin to re-gather the groups on the tarp for large group .

Day One Closing

Closing Time

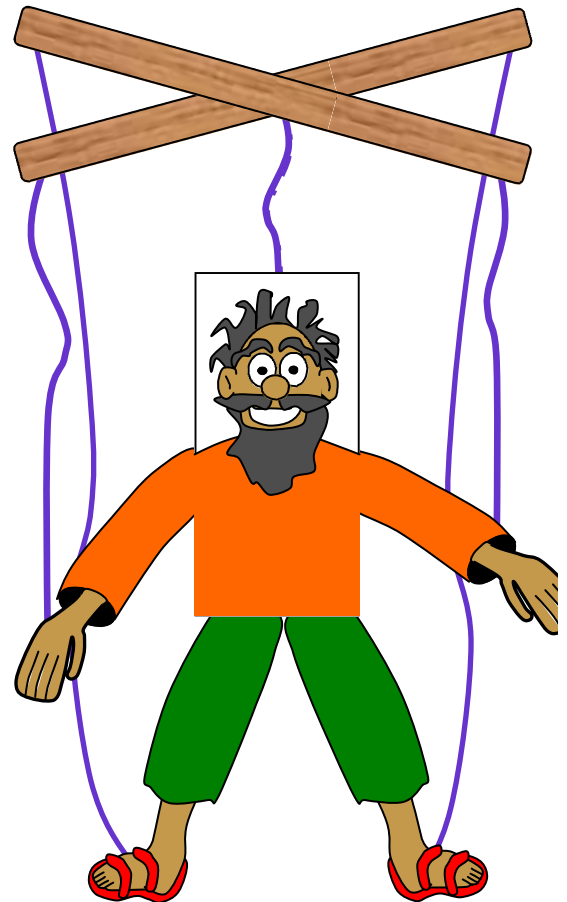
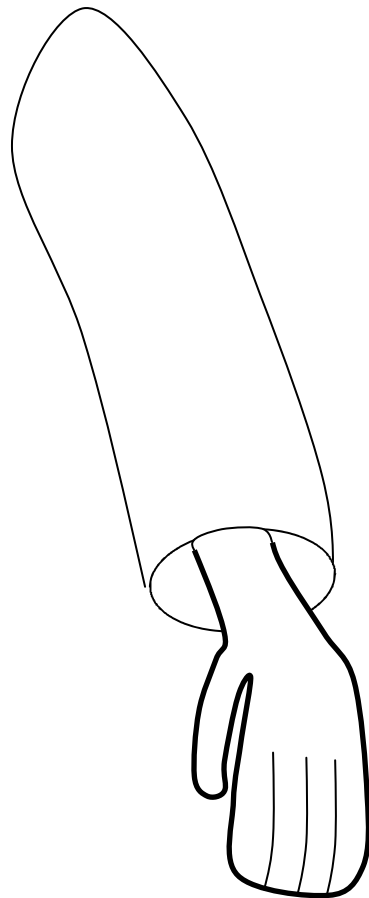
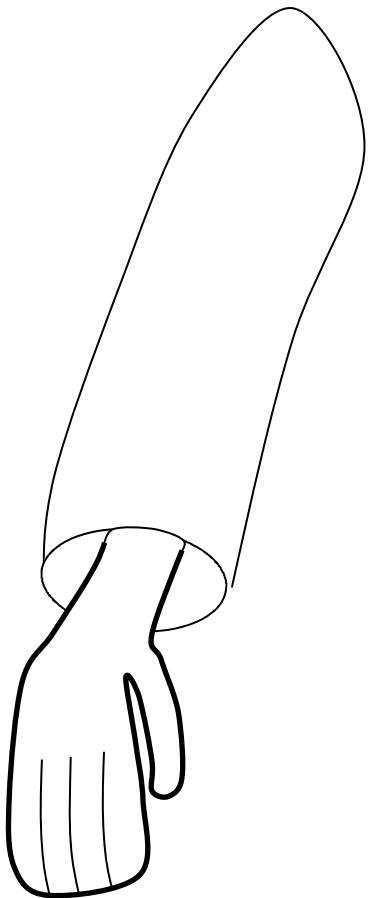
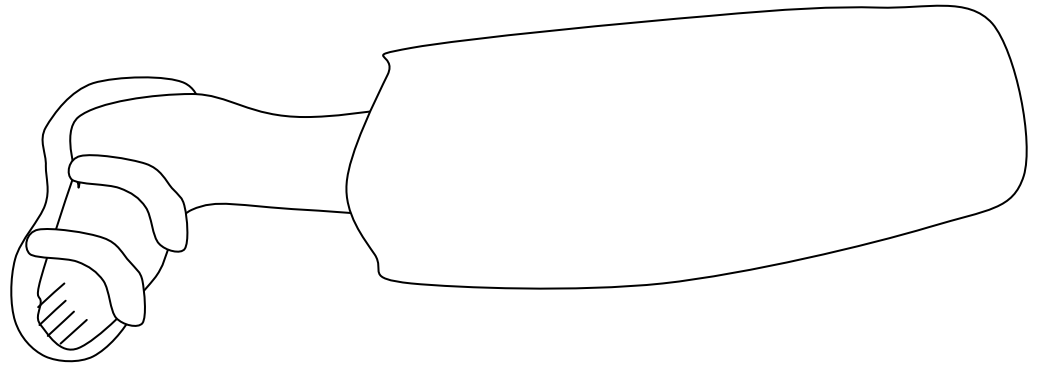
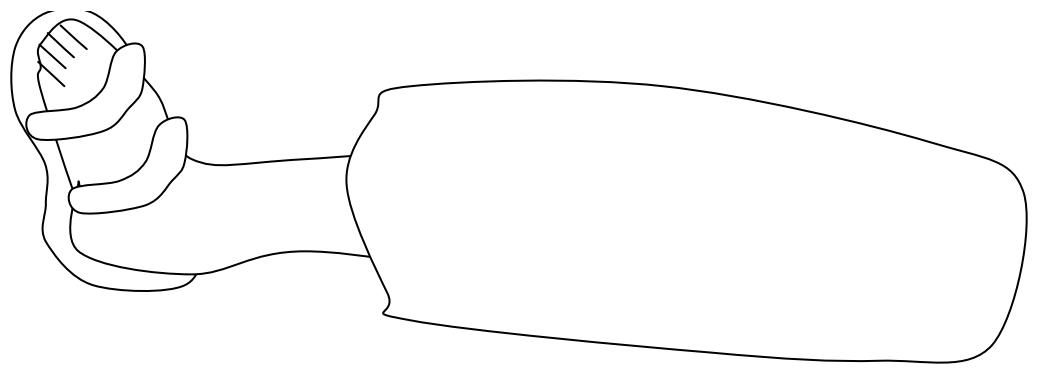
Each day you will end your Rainbow Express in a large group session. Have all the children return to the tarp where you started. Sometimes the movement from small groups to large group becomes distracting, especially to younger children. If you find your children becoming noisy as you return to your large group, consider singing a few songs to help everybody focus again.

The last thing you will do before games and snacks is to review the memory verse and the day's lesson. Have one person in your group dress up as John. This person can be, but does not necessarily have to be, the Large Group Leader. Many churches or school drama departments have costumes you might be able to borrow. If not, you can make a very simple costume out of fabric or linens. Another possibility is to use a puppet as John.

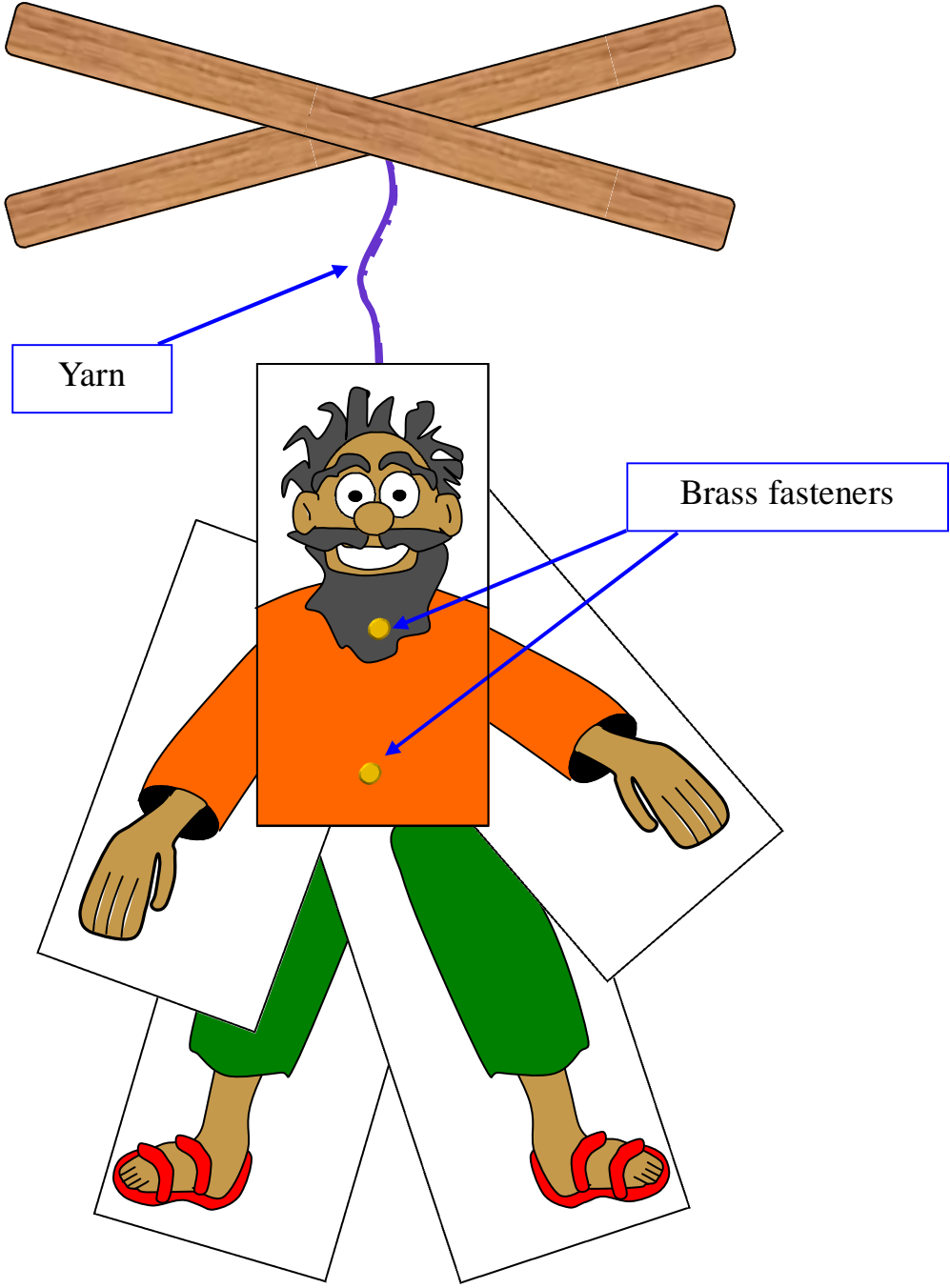
Have John give a brief re-telling of the day's story in the first person. As John tells the story, have him frequently pause to let the children answer questions and fill in the blanks about the lesson. When you finish reviewing the story, have everybody say the memory verse together one last time.

Game Time/Snacks/Wrap-Up

When you are finished, pray together and be ready to play games until the end of the Rainbow Express program. After the game time, pass out snacks, clean up the area, and walk everyone home. Return to Mission Arlington to turn in your materials and attendance sheet.



younger children



older children

