

JESUS IS BORN

Leader Guide

Holy Moly:
It's Christmas!
Week 3

Fear almost kept the shepherds from hearing the angel's good news.

KEY VERSE

“Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.”
Luke 2:10-11

STORY AT A GLANCE

Jesus

- Jesus' birth begins the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation (Galatians 4:4-7).
- *Messiah* (Hebrew) and *Christ* (Greek) both mean “anointed one.” (Anointed means called or blessed.)
- The Messiah is the person set apart by God to bring salvation (Luke 2:28-32).



Angels

- Powerful, unearthly messengers; feared by God's people.
- Appear in the Bible as agents of God's will—for both judgment and salvation.
- Common first words to humans are “Do not be afraid!” (Luke 1:12-13; 2:8-14; Matthew 28:5).

Shepherds

- Unlikely first responders to angels' news—ceremonially unclean, so banned from synagogue and temple services.
- Angels' appearance to them revealed the depths of God's grace (Titus 2:11-14).



Bethlehem

- Name means “House of Bread.”
- Where prophet Micah foretold that a Savior would be born (Micah 5:1-5).



Mary and Joseph

- Forced to have their baby far from home because of a Roman census (Luke 2:1-7).
- Knew that their baby was God's Son (Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:20).



Supplies:



Video



Reproducibles



Story Presentation and Script



Scissors



Crayons and Markers



Clear Tape



Construction Paper



Optional: Star-Shaped Stickers, Googly Eyes, Other Decorations

(10–15 min.)

DISCOVER



Get Ready

Choose three volunteers for a round of “Guess Who!” Whisper one of the characters from today’s story—angel, sheep, or shepherd—in the ear of each volunteer. Invite the rest of the kids to take turns asking yes-or-no questions to figure out which character each volunteer is. If the answer is yes, the volunteer jumps up and down. If the answer is no, the volunteer turns in a circle. Play until kids figure out all three characters.

After “Guess Who!” ask:

- What else do you know about shepherds, angels, and sheep?
- What other characters do you think are in our story today?
- When have you received exciting or surprising news?

Introduce the Video

Today’s video tells the story of the night Jesus was born. Read these statements aloud before showing the video.

- You’ll see shepherds taking care of their sheep at night.
- Angels from heaven come to bring the shepherds exciting news.
- God chose shepherds to be the first to visit the baby.
- Mary and Joseph’s baby is born in a town called Bethlehem.

Play the Jesus Is Born Video



Watch for when color appears in the video. Who is black and white? Who is colored in? Pay attention to when this changes!

If time permits, watch it again!

(5–10 min.)

RELATE



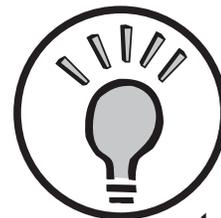
Talk about the Jesus Is Born Video

Ask kids these questions about the video, making sure both younger and older kids have a chance to answer.

- I wonder why the shepherds were so scared.
- I wonder how the shepherds felt while trying to find the baby Jesus.
- What surprised you about who God chose to be baby Jesus’ first visitors?
- How did the shepherds know where to go?
- I wonder how Mary and Joseph felt when the shepherds arrived to see the baby.
- What colors did you see around baby Jesus?
- Where else did you see color in the video? How was God at work in those moments?

(5–10 min.)

CONNECT



Hear the Story

Project the Jesus Is Born Story Presentation on a screen so everyone can see. Read the story from the Jesus Is Born Story Script while kids view the images, then ask these questions.

- Angels are messengers. What message did these angels have for the shepherds?
- The shepherds show some before-and-after feelings. How did they feel before the angels shared their message? How did they feel after this message?

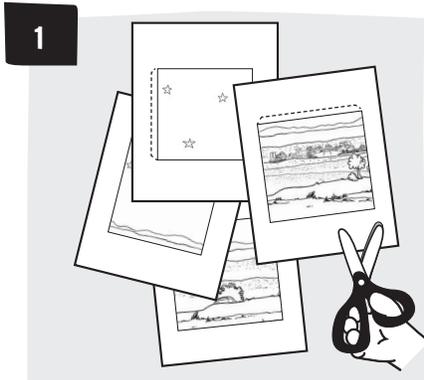
This is a story we hear each year at Christmas time.

- What is your favorite part of the story?
- What is a surprising part of this story?
- What message about Jesus do you want to share?

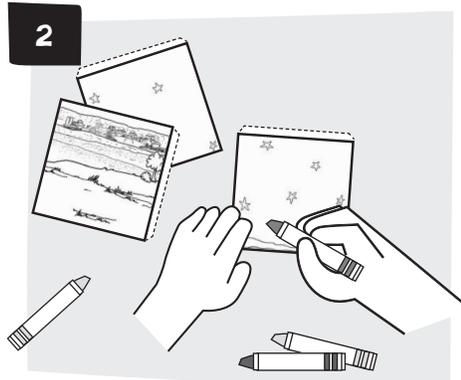
(20–30 min.)

CREATE

EXPLORE THE STORY: Kids create a story wall to use for retelling today's story.



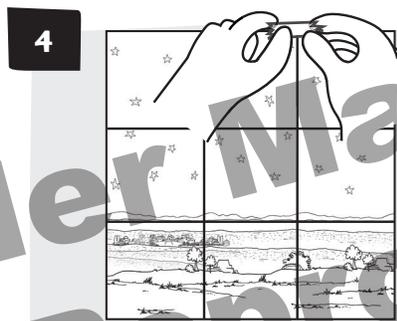
1
Cut out 9 background squares keeping the page number tabs intact.



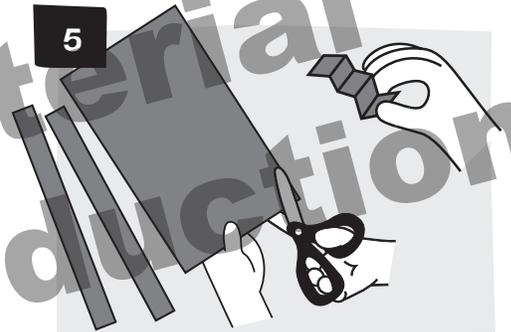
2
Color the night sky and field on all 9 squares.



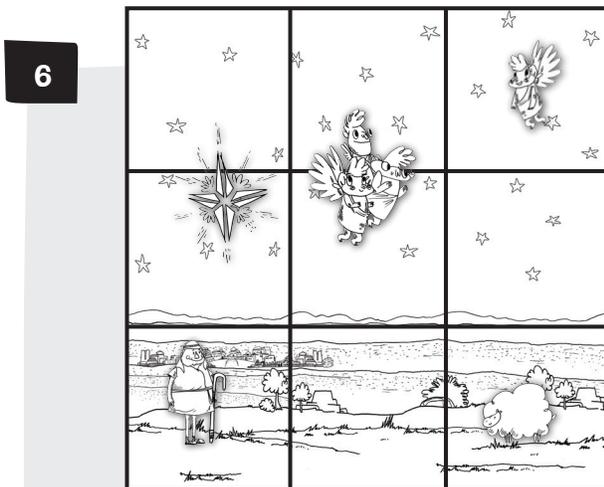
3
Cut out and color the characters.



4
Tape the background squares together on a wall at kid height using the page number tabs as a guide. Be sure to hide the tabs behind the next square.



5
Cut thin strips of construction paper. Fold them accordion style and tape them to the back of characters.



6
Tape characters with accordion folds to the background. Invite kids to retell the events in their own words.

Holy Moly!

As kids create their story wall, ask them these questions.

- The shepherds were afraid of the angels. Have you ever been afraid? When? Why?
- Is it okay to be afraid? Why?
- Why do you think the shepherds were afraid of the angels?
- Who can help when you are afraid?
- How do you think the shepherds felt when they met baby Jesus?

ACTIVITY TIPS

Fewer kids?

Focus on coloring the characters instead of the background.

Less time?

Cut out the background pieces and characters in advance.

More kids?

Create two or more sets of background and character images.

More time?

Let kids retell the story using the character cut-outs as paper puppets before taping them to the background.

CLOSING PRAYER

Holy Moly, God!

Who knew that what started out as a surprising message from the angels could bring such wonderful good news? Remind us that Jesus is always close by so we can stop, look, listen, and go ahead with Christmas joy!

Amen!

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IT'S CHRISTMAS!

