



Hop to It

The Great Jailbreak

BIG IDEA: I can tell everyone about Jesus.

BIBLE BASIS: Acts 5:12–42

KEY VERSE: “Go into all the world. Preach the good news to everyone.”
Mark 16:15 (NIV)

LEADER DEVOTIONAL

I’ve been driving the same car since high school. My wife and I went on dates in this car. I commuted to my first four jobs in this car. I drove my first child to daycare in this car. It easily has over 150,000 miles on it. And like all older cars, it has its quirks — the most problematic of which is its failure to “ding.” You know — the sound cars make when a door has been left open, the keys are still in the ignition, or the headlights have been left on.

Every so often I’ll leave for work while it’s still dark, but arrive after the sun has risen. Because it’s now light outside and my car’s “dinger” is dead, it’s easy to forget that the headlights are still on. As you could probably guess, at the end of my workday, I return to a car with a dead battery. So I walk back inside, grab the portable jumper that lives in the facilities closet, hook it up to connection points, and begin the process of bringing my car back to life. The only thing that will make my battery work again is power from another source. I could scream at my car, honk its horn, and kick the tires. But nothing would happen. The same can be said about our souls. We are made alive through an outside power — the power of the Holy Spirit. Look at just some of the ways God’s Spirit gives us life:

Have anxiety? The Spirit gives us the ability to trust God. (Psalm 63:8)

Overwhelming temptation? The Spirit gives us a way out and a means to obedience. (Romans 8:2)

Crushing fear? God gives us a Spirit of power, love, and self-control. (2 Timothy 1:7)

As you prepare to lead this week, remember that it was by the power of the Holy Spirit that the apostles proclaimed the name of Jesus. The Holy Spirit directs, protects, and guides us. Invite Him to be a part of your week.

John Garrison
GO! Contributor



LARGE GROUP SKILL BUILDING

How to Manage Preschoolers using “Choice Reduction”

Preschool kids live in a world where the vast majority of choices are made for them, but at the same time, they are autonomous individuals who want to feel like they are making their own decisions. When an adult’s authority clashes with a child’s autonomy, argument and misbehavior are often the result. But with “Choice Reduction,” everybody wins! “Choice Reduction” is when you reduce the number of choices for a child to 2 (or 3) choices that are acceptable to you, but at the same time allow the child to feel like a decision maker. That’s a win-win! Here’s how it can work for you:

Create acceptable choices: Let’s say you’re seated in a circle with the kids during small group time. There’s a kid named Noah who can’t stop talking to his friend. He’s not only being a distraction to the friend, but he’s a distraction to you and the entire group. So you say to him, “Noah, you need to make a choice. Do you want to sit quietly right there next to your friend, or do you want to sit quietly next to me?” Most often, the child will select from one of your choices and you can stop here.

Restate the choices: Occasionally, a child might try to push for a 3rd, less acceptable, option. In this example, Noah might say, “I don’t want to sit here anymore. I want to play with the toys.” In that situation, you would say, “That’s not a choice.” Then repeat the two choices: “Would you like to sit quietly next to your friend, or do you want to sit quietly next to me?”

State the consequences: Your biggest concern is that Noah sits quietly somewhere in the group; you don’t care where. But Noah feels like he has a choice. “I’ll sit quietly by my friend,” he says. “That’s a great choice!” you say back to him, then continue. “But if you can’t stick with that choice, then I’m going to make the choice for you.”

Follow through: Noah is generally a good kid, so he’ll most likely follow through with his choice. But if he doesn’t, you say, “Noah, it looks like you’re struggling to make the right choice, so I need you to come sit quietly next to me.”

Nobody likes to be told what to do all the time. You don’t and I don’t. But sometimes we forget that kids don’t either. With “Choice Reduction,” everybody gets a choice and everybody wins!

9.3 Large Group Lesson | Preschool



UNIT DESCRIPTION

Get ready for Kenzie the Kangaroo to hop into the hearts of the preschoolers. She traveled all the way to the preschool room, but when she got there, the story objects fell out of her pouch and now they're lost. Not to worry, though! The preschoolers will hop to it and save the day! Once found, the objects will help kids learn that they can follow Jesus and tell others about Him.

SET-UP INSTRUCTIONS

- Hide the following items somewhere in the preschool room that's visible from the seating area and not too hard to find.
 - Box of Kleenex tissues
 - Paper chain
 - Pillow
 - Toy sword
 - Cross
- Print the 2 pictures of Kenzie the Kangaroo (one sad and one happy) and place them in the storytelling area. (See Resource Folder.)
 - Optional: use a kangaroo puppet instead
- Create a "Super Duper Bible Box" and place your storytelling Bible inside. This box will be used every week. See the Resource Folder for details on how to make the "Super Duper Bible Box."
- If using the non-video options for the Topher segments of the lesson, print the Topher's Storytime Rules signs and Topher's Big Idea signs on 8½ x 11 cardstock paper and place in the story time area. See "Getting Started" in the Resource Folder for the printable signs and for more instructions on how to perform the non-video options.
- Note: Any media repeated throughout the unit, such as the Topher videos and the title slide, is located in the Lesson 1 Resource Folder only.



★ LARGE GROUP LESSON

Show “Hop to It” title graphic

WELCOME AND MUSIC

As children enter the story time area, give them a high-energy welcome — smile, wave, give high fives, and tell them you’re glad to see them. For added energy during the transition, play a fun song that the children are familiar with. When the children have all arrived, play one or two upbeat worship songs of your choosing and lead the kids in singing.

Worship Song 1: Thankful

Worship Song 2: Super Wonderful

Worship videos [here](#)

After the songs, help the children sit down by saying the following rhyme with them:

Topher the Gopher 1, 2, 3. *(Clap on each number.)*

Digs a hole right under me. *(Make a motion as if digging with a shovel.)*

Slowly I start sinking down. *(Twist your body back and forth, lower and lower to the ground.)*

Until I’m sitting on the ground. *(Sit down on ground or chair.)*

BIG IDEA AND BIBLE VERSE

Large Group Leader: Hello everybody! I’m so, so glad you’re at church today! You see, I *really* need your help finding our story objects. The objects help us tell the Bible story. In just a little bit, we can hop to it and find them together.

Today’s true Bible story is going to teach us that **I can tell everyone about Jesus**. That’s our Big Idea for the day. Let’s say it together. *(Repeat Big Idea with children.)* **I can tell everyone about Jesus**. It’s true! **I can tell everyone about Jesus**. In fact, that’s what today’s memory verse tells us. Let me teach it to you.

Memory Verse Video

“Go *(march in place)* into all the world *(draw a big circle with your hands)*. Preach the good news *(cup hands to mouth)* to everyone *(spread hands out in front of you)*.” Mark 16:15 *(extend hands like you’re holding a book)*.

Let’s do that together. *(Repeat Memory Verse with children 2 or 3 times.)*

STORY TIME RULES

Wow — nice job! I think you kids are ready for the Bible story. Before we get started, though, I think we should go over our three story time rules.

Play “Topher the Gopher Story Time Rules” video

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(Note: Play the “Topher the Gopher Story Time Rules” video or use the Story Time Rules script found in the Resource Folder.)

HOP TO IT INTRO

For the past two times at church, we’ve had a furry friend join us. Does anyone remember who that friend is? *(Children respond.)* That’s right — it’s Kenzie the Kangaroo. And guess what. *(Hold up picture of Kenzie looking sad.)* She’s back! Unfortunately, she’s looking kind of sad again. You see, she had our story objects in her kangaroo pouch. She hopped all the way to our room here at church, but when she got here, the story objects fell out and now they’re lost. We need the story objects to tell the Bible story.

That’s okay — you are all great at finding things. Let me see your pretend binoculars. *(Hold hands to eyes like you’re looking through pretend binoculars.)* We can use our pretend binoculars to look around the room and help Kenzie find the lost story objects while we tell the Bible story. I’ll bet when we find all of the lost objects, Kenzie will feel happy again.

If you’re ready to get started, let’s give Kenzie two big thumbs up. *(Children give thumbs up.)* Great! First, let’s get our Bible out of the Super Duper Bible box. Then we can look for the missing story objects. *(Move to the Bible Box.)* I need your help getting the Bible out, though. We need to say our special Bible words together. Repeat these special words after me: It’s true, it’s true, the Bible is true!

(Repeat the words with the children, then turn on the Bible Box light so that the Bible is revealed. Optional: play the Bible Box sound effect when you turn the light on.)

Play the “Bible Box” sound effect

(After the Bible is revealed, open the box and take it out. Hold the open Bible in front of you.)

Show the “The Great Jailbreak” slide

BIG BIBLE STORY — THE GREAT JAILBREAK

(Note: Ahead of time, hide the story objects around the room in locations that are at least partially visible from where the children will be seated. If the children struggle to find an object, give them some direction.)

Let’s look for our first story object. Use your pretend binoculars to look for a box of Kleenex tissues. *(Once found, choose a child to hop like a kangaroo to the object to retrieve it for you.)* In the Bible, in the Book of Acts, lots of sick people were coming to the disciples. *(Take out tissue and pretend to sneeze into it.)* Achoo! The sick people hoped the disciples could heal them with the power of Jesus.

Let’s look for our next story object. Use your pretend binoculars to look for a paper chain. *(Choose a child to hop and retrieve it.)* Some of the leaders in Israel didn’t believe that Jesus was the Son of God and they didn’t like what the disciples were doing. *(Put the paper chains on your hands like handcuffs.)* They were jealous that the disciples were able to heal the sick people, so they had the disciples arrested and put in jail.

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Let's look for our next story object. Use your pretend binoculars to look for a pillow. *(Choose a child to hop and retrieve it.)* That night, the disciples were asleep in jail. *(Put head on pillow and pretend to lightly snore.)* Suddenly, something woke them up! *(Take head off pillow.)* It was an angel of God. The angel opened the doors to the jail and let the disciples out. The angel told them, "Go and tell everyone about your new life with Jesus."

Let's look for our next story object. Use your pretend binoculars to look for a toy sword. *(Choose a child to hop and retrieve it.)* The next day, the guards went to get the disciples from their jail cell, but the disciples weren't there. They were outside telling people about Jesus. When the guards found them, they said *(point sword)*, "Hey you! You're coming with us!" But this time, the guards took them to a court.

Let's look for our next story object. Use your pretend binoculars to look for a cross. *(Choose a child to hop and retrieve it.)* The leaders said to the disciples, "We told you not to tell anyone about Jesus!" But a disciple named Peter said, "We must obey God instead of people. *(Hold up cross.)* You had Jesus killed on a cross, but God raised him from the dead and now we are telling everyone that Jesus is alive!"

(Hold up picture of Kenzie looking happy.) Hey — look at our friend Kenzie! She's so happy that we found the story objects and told the Bible story! Do you know what else makes Kenzie happy? She loves when we sing songs to Jesus. Let's do that right now!

MUSIC AND CLOSING

(Encourage the children to stand up. Lead them in a worship song of your choice. Following the song, use the rhyme from earlier to help the children sit down again.)

Worship Song 3: Opposite Song

In today's true Bible story, the disciples told everyone about Jesus. Not even the jail could stop them! That makes me wonder, though — do you think we could tell others about Jesus? *(Children respond.)* Yes we can!

Did you know there are still some people who haven't heard the good news of Jesus? It's true! But we can tell them about Jesus just like the disciples did. We can tell people, "Jesus loves you!" Let's practice. Who could we tell at the playground? *(Take answer.)* Great answer! Let's run to [insert name/title] and say, "Hey [insert name/title], Jesus loves you!" *(Run in place, then say with children.)* Who could we tell at home? *(For each location, repeat above instructions.)* Who could we tell in our neighborhood? Who could we tell at school?

Jesus loves *everyone* and He wants *everyone* to follow Him. When we tell people about the good news of Jesus, they can follow Him just like we do. It's true — **we can tell everyone about Jesus.**

9.3 Large Group Lesson | Preschool



TOPHER'S BIG IDEA

Hey — that's our Big Idea for today! I think we should tell it to our parents when we see them. Maybe we should practice first. (*Appear to be thinking.*) Hmm...who could we practice telling? I know! We could tell our friend, Topher the Gopher. Let's see if we can find him.

(Play "Topher's Big Idea Video 1" or, for a non-video option, print out the "Topher's Big Idea Cards" ahead of time and hold up card #1. See the "Topher's Big Idea" document in the Resource Folder for more suggestions on how to perform the non-video option.)

Play "Topher's Big Idea Video 1"

(Whisper.) Uh-oh. It looks like Topher is asleep. I think we should wake him up. When he wakes up, we can all tell him that **I can tell everyone about Jesus**. On the count of 3, let's all yell, "Topher the Gopher, wake up, wake up!" *(Count to 3 and yell with kids. Then play "Topher's Big Idea Video 2" or hold up card #2.)*

Play "Topher's Big Idea Video 2"

Topher: Hey, what's the Big Idea?

Children and Large Group Leader: **I can tell everyone about Jesus.** *(Repeat the Big Idea several times. When finished, play "Topher's Big Idea Video 3" or hold up card #3.)*

Play "Topher's Big Idea Video 3"

Topher: Wow! That is a Big Idea! Thanks for telling me! Goodbye kids. *(Encourage kids to wave goodbye to Topher as he disappears back into his hole.)*

Large Group Leader: Let's say a prayer to Jesus and ask Him to help us tell everyone about Him. *(Encourage kids to repeat the following prayer after you.)*

Dear Jesus,
I believe that you are alive.
And that you love us very much.
Please help me share that good news
With everyone I know.
Amen.