

## Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
<b>Lower Elementary</b>		
<b>WORKSHOP FOCUS:</b> Jesus was born for us!	<b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> Spark Story Bibles	<b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> None
<b>SHEEP TWEETS:</b> Kids share a play about the “tweets” nativity characters might have sent.	<b>SUPPLIES:</b> None	<b>SUPPLIES:</b> Sheep Tweets Script (pages 99-100), horn or other “tweet” sounding instrument; costumes for sheep, shepherds and angels (optional)
<b>Upper Elementary</b>		
<b>WORKSHOP FOCUS:</b> We must find Jesus!	<b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	<b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> None
<b>CAMEL TALES:</b> Kids become young and old camels to recall the story of the wise men.	<b>SUPPLIES:</b> None	<b>SUPPLIES:</b> Camel Tales Script (pages 101-103), pillows, fabric pieces, walking cane
<b>All Kids</b>		
<b>WORKSHOP FOCUS:</b> Hurray! Jesus has come!	<b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	<b>SPARK RESOURCES:</b> None
<b>A GIBBERISH CHRISTMAS:</b> Kids use a special acting technique called Gibberish to tell the Christmas story.	<b>SUPPLIES:</b> Party noisemakers	<b>SUPPLIES:</b> A Gibberish Christmas Script (pages 105-106), cardstock, hole punch, markers, yarn, scissors



Looking for additional Spark content to further engage kids? Visit [www.wearesparkhouse.org](http://www.wearesparkhouse.org) to learn more about these options for purchase.

- The Director CD-Rom contains Activity Pages, Coloring Pages, Family Pages, Large Group Openings, and two additional in-class activities for each lesson.
- A Sparkhouse Digital annual subscription gives you access to all content contained in the Director CD-Rom and the Spark Leader Guides, plus administrative tools and other extras.



**Workshop Focus:** Jesus was born for us!

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.

## Open the Bible (10 minutes)

### Christmas Storytelling

#### Activity Instructions

Welcome kids by name. **I'm glad to see you! Today, we are going to talk about what happened the night Jesus was born. Let's open our Spark Story Bibles to Jesus Is Born on page 212.**

Read story, stopping occasionally to have the kids repeat character lines, particularly the animal lines on pages 216-217.

**How did the shepherds feel when they saw the angel in the sky?** (*scared*) **Let's stand up and do a scared gesture. How can we look scared? How do you think the angels felt when they were singing in the sky?** (*excited to tell the good news, happy*) **Let's stand up and show an excited, singing gesture.**

**How do you think the shepherds felt when they finally met baby Jesus?** (*unable to speak because of their excitement*)

**The shepherds were excited to learn that the baby Jesus was born to help them. And you know what? Jesus was born for you and me, too! Let's stand up, throw our hands in the air and say "Jesus was born for me!"** Do this three times, getting a little more energetic each time.

#### Spark Resources

Spark Story Bible

#### Supplies

None

# Activate Faith (25 minutes)

## Sheep Tweets

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**Set Up:** Locate costumes if you'll be using them.

### Activity Instructions

**Who knows what Twitter is?** Allow all answers. **Twitter is a Web site people use to share news with their friends. When people share a bit of news on Twitter, it is called a "tweet." Do you know anybody who uses Twitter? We are going to be silly and pretend that the Internet existed way back in the Bible days when Jesus was born. We're going to pretend that the shepherds and angels and even the sheep could tweet. I know it sounds funny, but we can learn about the Christmas story by imaging what the characters might have said in their tweets.**

1. Divide the group up into sheep, shepherds, and angels.
2. Explain that you (narrator) will tell the story of the night Jesus was born.
3. Kids will *get ready* for their group's part when you say "repeat your tweet."
4. You will then say the tweet and the kids will repeat it in a creative, dramatic style.

Perform the script together. Afterwards, congratulate kids on their acting.

### Spark Resources

None

### Supplies

Sheep Tweets Script (pages 99-100)  
Horn or other "tweet" sounding instrument  
Costumes for sheep, shepherds and angels (optional)

# Send (5 minutes)

## Wrap Up

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Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

**What else do you think those shepherds, sheep and angels would have tweeted about? What do you think Mary and Joseph would have tweeted?** Give kids time to respond. **Even though Jesus was born a long time ago, the Bible story makes us feel like we were there. What's important to remember is that Jesus was born for you and me. He shows us God's love and offers us forgiveness and eternal life. That's really good news!**

### Spark Resources

Family Pages



### Supplies

## Prayer Time

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**We are going to pray. Every time you hear me say "Jesus was born," I want you to point to yourself and each other and say in a big, loud voice: "for me and you!"**

**Hello God,**

**We just read the story about Jesus' birth. We are so glad that Jesus was born . . . for me and you!**

**We want to sing out the good news with the angels. Jesus was born . . . for me and you!**

**We want to run to the manger with the shepherds. Jesus was born . . . for me and you!**

**Thanks for loving us so much.**

**Amen**



**Workshop Focus:** We must find Jesus!

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
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## Open the Bible (10 minutes)

### The Visit of the Wise Men Storytelling

**Set Up:** None

#### Activity Instructions

Welcome kids by name. Discuss these travel-related questions together. **Have you ever been on a long trip? Where did you go? What did you do? Did you get bored during the long travel time?**

**Today, we are going to explore the story of the wise men who traveled from afar to worship baby Jesus and give him gifts. Let's open our Spark Bibles to Matthew 2:1-12 on pages 1058-1059.** Ask for volunteers to read the passage. Have kids place an "I looked it up" sticker in their Spark Bibles.

**How many wise men went to Bethlehem?** (*It doesn't say three as we usually assume!*) **Where did they come from?** (*the East*) **How did the wise men know where to go?** (*The star guided them.*) **How long did it take them to get to Bethlehem?** (*It doesn't say; scholars think it may have taken them up to 2 years.*) **Did the wise men ride on camels?** (*Camels were common pack animals, so we usually assume the wise men rode camels, but the Bible doesn't actually say they did.*)

#### Spark Resources

Spark Bibles  
Spark Bible Stickers

#### Supplies

None

**There are some details about this story that we don't know, but we do know that wise men from the East traveled a long distance to worship Jesus and give him gifts. They told each other, "We must find Jesus!"**

Invite kids to put a Spark sticker in their Spark Bibles and share how they feel about this story.

## Activate Faith (25 minutes)

### Camel Tales

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**Set Up:** Make copies of the script for kids.

#### Activity Instructions

**We are going to pretend camels can talk. We are going to perform a skit in which some baby-talking camels ask their grandfather and his friend camels to talk about their trip with the wise men.**

Hand out scripts and decide who will play each part. Allow kids to look over and highlight their lines. Dress each kid in a camel costume by tying a pillow onto their back with fabric.

Perform the skit. Afterwards, applaud each kid for their fabulous performance.

#### Spark Resources

None

#### Supplies

Camel Tales Script (pages 101-103), 1 per kid  
Pillows  
Fabric pieces  
Walking cane

## Send (5 minutes)

### Wrap Up

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Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

**Why do you think the old camels remembered their trip to Bethlehem so fondly? What was it like to put yourself into the story as a camel? How do you think differently about this story now?** Give them time for discussion. **Finding Jesus was important to the wise men in ancient times and it is important for us today too. We must find Jesus! But how will we do it? And why do we want to find Jesus?** Give kids time for discussion.

#### Spark Resources

Family Pages



#### Supplies

Pillows

## Prayer Time

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**Let's use our camel hump pillow as a prayer pillow. Let's form a circle and sit on our pillows with our legs crossed. Close your eyes. Sit up tall. Gently focus on your breathing. Breathe big, slow breaths. We'll have a little quiet time at the end of the prayer and then I will say "Amen." Let us pray.**

**God of all,**

**Thank you for sending Jesus to be the king.**

**Help us to find Jesus, for he was born for all of us.**

Kids observe a brief period of silence.

**Amen**



**Workshop Focus:** Hurray! Jesus has come!

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

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- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
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## Open the Bible (10 minutes)

### Christmas Storytelling

#### Activity Instructions

**Welcome to the Creative Drama workshop! We are going to do a very exciting acting exercise today. But let's start by talking about Christmas. What feelings do you have when you think about Christmas?** Allow all answers.

Give each kid a party noisemaker. **On the count of three, let's make some noise! One, two, three! That was fun, wasn't it? Why do you think people use these loud noisemakers at parties?** (*they're fun, exciting, help us celebrate*)

**The birth of Jesus is an exciting story. At Christmas time we celebrate the story of Christmas with parties, concerts, programs and worship services. It's great news that Jesus has come! Let's read the story in Luke 2:1-20 on page 1130 of our Spark Bibles or Jesus Is Born on page 212 of our Spark Story Bibles.** Ask volunteers to read the story from the Spark Bible. After the reading, have the group look at the illustrations of the story in the Spark Story Bible.

Invite younger kids to help older kids place "I looked it up" stickers in their Spark Bibles.

#### Spark Resources

Spark Story Bible  
Spark Bibles  
Spark Bible Stickers

#### Supplies

Party noisemakers

# Activate Faith (25 minutes)

## A Gibberish Christmas

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**Set Up:** Set out supplies

### Activity Instructions

**We are going to pretend to be the characters in the Christmas story, even some of the ones we don't normally think about.** Go through the list of characters in the script and assign everyone at least one part.

Have kids write the names of their characters in big letters on a piece of cardstock. Punch holes in the corners of the cardstock, tie the ends of one piece of yarn at each hole so that the sign can slip over each kid's head. Have them make one for each of their characters and place them all around their neck.

**There was a lot of excitement in the Christmas story. Sometimes when we are try to show powerful emotions, words can actually get in the way. There is an acting technique called "Gibberish." With this method, we don't use real words. We make up words as we go along! We also use our whole bodies to express ourselves, since nobody understands what our words mean. It's all about *how* we say our made-up words.**

**We are going to perform the Christmas story in Gibberish. First, we must practice our Gibberish. Take a deep breath and make nonsense sounds when you let your breath out. Any sounds will do.** Try this together. **Now let's try using Gibberish to show each of these emotions: sadness, anger, happiness, and great excitement.** Encourage kids to be more and more expressive with each try.

**Great work! Now, I will narrate the story. You have two jobs! When you hear me talk about your character, stand up and do whatever it is I say your character is doing. When I say your character's name and then I say, "Said" you will add your own Gibberish words. Have fun with this. It will be easy to follow along!**

Perform script together. The point is to have a very emotionally expressive telling of the Christmas story. Congratulate kids on their performances.

### Spark Resources

None

### Supplies

A Gibberish Christmas Script  
(pages 105-106)

Cardstock, 8 1/2 x 11 inches  
(22 x 28 cm)

Hole punch

Markers

Yarn

Scissors

# Send (5 minutes)

## Wrap Up

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Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

**What was it like to act out this story with Gibberish?** Encourage kids to share more about how they felt. **What emotions did the characters express?** (*uncertainty, fear, happiness, excitement, etc.*) **What do you think is important to let others know about the Christmas story?**

### Spark Resources

Family Pages



### Supplies

None

## Prayer Time

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**Let's pray. For our prayer, we will use big gestures and facial expressions. No need to talk in Gibberish, just show the emotion silently whenever you hear me snap my fingers.**

**Dear God,**

**Like Mary, we are a little worried.** Snap.

**Like the shepherds, we are a little excited.** Snap.

**Help us tell the good news to everybody with joy.** Snap.

**Hurray! Jesus has come!**

**Amen**



# Sheep Tweets Script

*Narrator reads all the parts and kids repeat the tweets for their characters. Use a horn or other noisemaker to sound the "TWEET" before each one.*

**Narrator: Outside of Bethlehem, the sheep were in the field enjoying a nice meal of grass. Sheep, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Sheep: Baa, baa, mmm, grass!**

**Narrator: The shepherds stood around watching their sheep. Shepherds, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Shepherds: Not much hap-nin 2nite.**

**Narrator: Then, all of a sudden a bright light and an angel appeared in the sky! Shepherds, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Shepherds: O NO! Totally scared.**

**Narrator: Sheep, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Sheep: Why is this grass so bright? Baaa.**

**Narrator: Angels, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Angels: Why are these guys freaking out?**

**Narrator: So the angels told them not to be afraid. Angels, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Angels: We just told 'em 2 chill.**

**Narrator: The angels told the shepherds to go to Bethlehem, where they would find baby Jesus in the manger. Angels, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Angels: Told 'em 2 go C baby.**

**Narrator: Shepherds, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Shepherds: Happy that the angel brought good news!**

**Narrator: Then, the shepherds looked up and the whole sky was lit up! Angels, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Angels: At work now. Telling good news. Big time.**

**Narrator: Sheep, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Sheep: Baa, baa. Why is the grass even brighter?**

**Narrator: Shepherds, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Shepherds: Whoa, that's a lotta light, dude!**

**Narrator: The angels praised God and sang Alleluia. Angels, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Angels: Glory 2 God in the Highest & peace 2 all the R-th!**

**Narrator: So the shepherds decided to go see the baby. Shepherds, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Shepherds: Leaving sheep with angels. Gotta run!**

**Narrator: The shepherds ran as fast as they could to the stable at Bethlehem. Sheep, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Sheep: Hey, where'd everybody go? Baaa!**

**Narrator: And they found baby Jesus in the manger, just like the angel told them that they would. Shepherds, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Shepherds: Found baby who is Savior of world. It's a great night!**

**Narrator: The shepherds shared the good news of Jesus' birth with everybody. They tweeted it from the mountaintop! Shepherds, repeat your tweet (TWEET):**

**Shepherds: Jesus was born for us!**

# Camel Tales Script

*A grandfather and his camel friends tell the little grand-camels about their long-ago adventure of going to Bethlehem with the wise men.*

CAST:

(The baby camel and camel friend parts can be divided if more parts are needed.)

Baby Camel 1

Baby Camel 2

Baby Camel 3

Grandpa Camel

Camel Friend 1

Camel Friend 2

Camel Friend 3

**Baby Camel 1: Oh, Grandpa Camel! Would you and your friends pleeeeeeeeeease tell us that story again?**

**Baby Camel 2: Yeah, yeah, please.**

**Baby Camel 3: Pretty please, with hay on top?**

**Grandpa Camel: What story?**

**Baby Camel 1: You know, Grandpa! That story about when you followed the moon . . .**

**Baby Camel 2: No, no, it was a star! Didn't you even listen last time he told us?**

**Baby Camel 1: Yeah, yeah . . . that time you followed a star with those wise guys.**

**Grandpa Camel: Ha Ha! You mean wise men. Yes, my little grand-camels. You do love to hear that story, don't you?**

**Baby Camel: Yes, yes, yes!**

**Grandpa Camel: Well then, I'll have to tell it again.**

**Baby Camels: Yay!!!! (Bounce up and down)**

**Grandpa Camel: My friends can help me remember it.**

**Camel Friends: Sure thing, Bob!**

**Grandpa Camel: Okay, okay. Where do we begin? Well, it was a loooooong time ago.**

**Camel Friend 1: That's right. It was when Herod was King over Judea.**

**Camel Friend 2: And our owners, the wise men, knew that a special child was coming.**

**Camel Friend 3: They noticed a star rising. It was special star and they could tell it was sending them a message from God. So they decided to follow it.**

**Grandpa Camel: Yup, and nobody, but nobody, could talk them out of following it.**

**Camel Friend 3: Because they knew it would lead them all the way to the Christ child.**

**Camel Friend 2: So they packed us up with their gear. They didn't know how long the journey would take. They brought everything but the kitchen sink.**

**Baby Camel 1: What happened when you met the baby king?**

**Camel Friend 2: Hey, little camel, you are rushing us. I know you're eager but we'll get to that part of the story!**

**Baby Camels: (Giggle)**

**Grandpa: (stands up and walks around leaning on his cane) See this bad walk of mine? It came from hauling all that stuff to Bethlehem. (sits down)**

**Camel Friend 3: My hump hurts just thinking about those days. (grabs hump) Yowser!**

**Camel Friend 1: Remember how we traveled all the way from the East to Bethlehem? Up one hill and down another. Those wise men wouldn't stop until the star stopped.**

**Camel Friend 2: And that doggone star wouldn't stop.**

**Grandpa Camel: How long did we travel? I can't even remember anymore!**

**Camel Friend 1: Oh, I think it coulda been two years. I just know it was long. We all kept whining . . .**

**Camel Friends: Are we there yet?**

**Grandpa Camel: Ha Ha! We sure did. (stands up and walks again) Then we finally reached Judea and met King Herod.**

**Baby Camels: Goodie!**

**Grandpa Camel: Sorry, my little grand-camels, he wasn't the kind of king you'd want to meet. He was an evil king and he wanted to get information from the wise men so that he could get rid of baby Jesus.**

**Baby Camel 2: No, not baby Jesus. How could he have saved the world if King Herod got rid of him?**

**Camel Friend 3: He couldn't have. That's why it was so wise of our wise men not to tell Herod where he could find Jesus. God told the wise men the right thing to do.**

**Camel Friend 2: Yeah, I want to forget that whole Herod part of the story. He was mean. He didn't even give us any water to drink after our long journey.**

**Baby Camel 1: Now tell us the happy part! That's my favorite part!**

**Baby Camel 3: Me, too. Tell us, tell us!**

**Camel Friend 1: Well, you know that star they had been following?**

**Baby Camels: Yeah, yeah?**

**Camel Friend 1: It just stopped one day. It stopped dead in the sky, like it was pointing out Jesus to us.**

**Grandpa Camel:** And our wise men knew their journey had come to its end. They were so happy that they jumped for joy.

**Camel Friend 2:** So did we! We all sang and danced and bounced around. We were young then. (grabs back) Ouch!

**Baby Camel 2:** Oh, you can still do it. Let's all jump for joy like you did that day.

**Grandpa Camel:** Okay, I know we are old, but I can still remember the happiness of finding Jesus. I think we can all do a little jumping.

**Baby Camels:** YAY! Come on, do it with us: (jumping) jump, jump, jump . . .

(Everyone stands up and jumps for joy, but the old camels do it gently.)

**Grandpa Camel:** Ha Ha! I do love to relive that story.

**Camel Friend 3:** I do too. But the best part was after that. Remember? The wise men got to see baby Jesus in person.

**Camel Friend 2:** They gave Jesus really expensive gifts.

**Baby Camel 2:** What were they?

**Grandpa Camel:** Gold, frankincense and myrrh. They were the kind of gifts that you give to a king.

**Baby Camel 3:** Then why would they give them to a child?

**Grandpa Camel:** Because little Jesus was a king—he was the king.

**Grandpa Camel:** Yes, kiddies, that's the whole story. Thanks for making us tell it again. It is the best thing that ever happened to us.



# A Gibberish Christmas Script

Characters:

Mary  
Joseph  
Donkey  
Innkeeper  
Cow(s)  
Sheep  
Dove(s)  
Chicken(s)  
Angels  
Shepherds  
Sheep

**("said . . . \*" indicates that character will speak in gibberish.)**

**Joseph stood up one morning and told Mary that they had to go to Bethlehem to be counted for the census. Joseph said . . .\***

**Mary, of course, was concerned about traveling while she was expecting a baby. Mary said . . .\***

**Joseph and Mary talked about it for a while. Mary and Joseph said . . .\***

**Finally they decided to go. They packed up their favorite donkey and headed to Bethlehem. Donkey was a little worried about the journey so Donkey said . . .\***

**Eventually, they got to Bethlehem. It was really crowded. Everyone was talking at once! Everyone said . . .\***

**Mary and Joseph found an inn. They knocked on the door and the innkeeper came out to talk with them. Joseph said . . .\***

**But the innkeeper didn't have a room. Innkeeper said . . .\***

**What a great idea! They could stay out in the barn. At least that would give them a roof over their head because Jesus was ready to be born. When Jesus was born, Mary laid him in a manger. She was so excited. Mary said . . .\***

**Joseph was excited, too. Their baby boy was here! Joseph said . . .\***

**The animals in the barn were excited, too. The cows said . . .\***

**The donkey said . . .\* The dove flew around and said . . .\* The chickens did a chicken dance and said . . .\***

**Oh, it was a very happy scene in the barn that night. In fact, everybody started talking at once about the Son of God being born right there in the stable. Everybody said . . .\***

**Meanwhile, out in the fields nearby, there were shepherds watching their flocks. They were just kind of hanging out. The Shepherds said . . .\***

**Then all of a sudden there was an angel in the sky! The shepherds were so scared. The Shepherds said . . .\***

**But the angel tried to calm them down. The angel had wonderful news for them. Good, good, good news! The Angel said . . .\***

**The angel had a lot to say. And then there was a whole sky full of angels. They were praising God with lots of energy. All the Angels said . . .\***

**Oh wow, the shepherds were jazzed about that! They spoke to one another very happily about how they should go to see this baby in Bethlehem. The Shepherds said . . .\***

**The sheep were excited too. The Sheep said . . .\***

**The shepherds ran—and I mean really ran—to see the baby. They talked as fast as they ran because they just couldn't wait to see Jesus. The Shepherds said . . .\***

**When they got there, they were out of breath. They were breathing so hard, they could hardly speak, but they spoke anyway. The Shepherds said . . .\***

**They found the child just like the angel said they would. Here was the Son of God—but he was just a little baby in a manger. They bowed down before him and said thank you to God. The Shepherds said . . .\***

**The cow gave praise to the baby Jesus, too. The Cow said . . .\***

**The dove flew around and sang praises. The Dove said . . .\***

**The chickens were just as happy as they could be. The Chickens said . . .\***

**Oh, Mary was happy about these things. She held the happiness in her heart. Mary said . . .\***

**Then, the shepherds ran back to their sheep. They couldn't stop talking about the good thing that had happened. The Shepherds ran and said . . .\***

**And that's the end of our Gibberish story of the night Jesus was born.**