10 MUST KNOW BIBLE STORIES

stories worth exploring

The Story of Noah's Ark

Early Level: Teacher–led Activities

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SCOTTISH BIBLE SOCIETY

1. Introducing the Bible

To begin, introduce the word 'Bible' and the word 'Christians' to the pupils to allow them to have a clear understanding of what they are learning about. Show the children a Children's Bible and tell them:

This is a very special book. It's called 'The Bible' and it contains lots of exciting stories.
Ask the children: What is it called?
Let's all say together. "The Bible"

And people who believe the Bible are called Christians
Let's all say together "Christians"

Christians learn more about God and Jesus by reading the Bible.

Try saying this rhyme together.
Here is a Bible, I've brought it for you (open hands like a book)
And Christians believe that what's in it is true! (use BSL for true – one hand flat, one hand comes down perpendicular to it. See: https://www.signbsl.com/sign/true)

2. The Story of Noah's Ark – Introductory Activity

Hide some clues around your classroom area or outside area. They could be: different types of toy animals, a small toy boat, a rainbow, a 'rain' symbol or others of your choice that fit with the story.

When the clues have been found, tell the children that these items are all part of the story that you are going to tell them. Reiterate that the story comes from the Bible.
OR
Play a game of Simon Says: Explain to the children, in this game we had to obey Simon. Even though he asked us to do some silly things, we did what Simon told us to do. In the story they are about to hear, Noah did what God told him to. He obeyed God, even though what God told him to do seemed rather silly.

3. The Story of Noah's Ark – the Story

You will need: a play ark and some animals
See the Story Script for Noah's Ark Early Level for a fun, interactive way to tell the story

Now that you have introduced and told the story, choose from the following options to explore it further. Don't forget to tell the story again on each occasion. The first option contains some suggestions of how to do this.

1. Revisiting the Story

Revisit the story in a number of different ways to allow the children to get to know it. Try these suggestions:

- Read it from the Beginner's Bible
- Give out Bibles to pairs of children and ask them to look at the pictures and 'read' or tell it to their partner. Feedback to the class. What was each pair's favourite part? Why?
- Repeat your original way of telling the story. Young children love repetition!
- Allow lots of time for acting out the story and allow the children the opportunity to make their own suggestions.
- Use a video of the story:
  There are a few great videos of the story of Noah's Ark.

Video 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wbfp7fzhj4Y
This is only 2 min 11s, but it is in an animated pictures form that children will relate to and it captures all of the relevant parts of the story.

Video 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzYjy6lhRag
This is in cartoon form and is very accessible to young children. It tells the story in slightly more detail, including such facts as people teasing Noah about building the ark and the people and animals being cooped up together for so long. It is slightly longer at 3 min 38s.

Video 3: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4yzN0fUxjkQ
This is longer at 3min 51s, but it has a fun, modern approach that will engage children. A nice touch in this version is that the story is bookended with a sentence about God's perfect creation at the beginning and a sentence about God sending Jesus at the end - it puts it all in context, if that is helpful for you.
This video also has a 'quick version' at the end, so if you wanted to challenge your class to see if they remembered the story, you could check their answers by starting at 3min 20s and running the video to the end.

2. Summarise the Story with Actions

You could invent your own actions or try these ones together?

God told Noah to build an ark (everyone makes building actions and sound effects)
Noah, his family and two of every animal went into the ark
(everyone choose an animal and make that animal noise)
A big flood came (everyone make woosh noises)
God kept Noah and the animals safe (give yourselves a big hug)
The water went down and everyone came out of the ark
(move hands forward step by step)
Noah said thank you to God (hands together like a prayer)
God sent a rainbow as a sign of his promise
(make arching rainbow over your head)

3. Make a Picture Outdoors

Resources Required: rectangular cloths
Allocate each group a part of the story or allow them to choose their favourite part. Give each group a piece of cloth and ask them to go searching for natural objects to make a picture of that part of the story. To help, you may wish to show them the pictures from the Bibleworld powerpoint. It can be downloaded free here: https://bibleworld.co.uk/resources

For younger children, it may be easier to choose an aspect of the story to create e.g the people, the boat, the animals, the rainbow.

Feedback and praise children's efforts.
Why was that their favourite part? What happened in the story?
The value of this activity increases if you use it to develop the children's understanding of Christian belief. Enjoy looking at their pictures as a class. As you move around, ask each group "What does/did God do in the part of the story they created?" Use their answers to emphasise Christian belief. Some suggestions of how to do this can be found in the table below:

Part of the Story	What God did	What Christians believe
Beginning: people being bad and disobeying God.	He saw what was going on in the world.	God is sad when people don't live his way.
Noah loves and obeys God.	He sent a flood to destroy the bad people. He kept Noah safe.	There are consequences when we don't live God's way.
Noah building the big boat.	God gave Noah instructions about how to build the boat.	God speaks to people.
It rained and rained and the earth was flooded.	God made it rain and caused the flood.	God has control over the weather.
The animals and Noah and the big boat.	God kept Noah, his family and the animals safe.	God looks after us.
Noah saying thank you to God.	God kept Noah and his family safe.	It is good to say thank you to God for what he has done.
The rainbow.	God put a rainbow in the sky.	The rainbow shows us God keeps his promises. God does what he says he'll do!

Indoor Option
If necessary, this activity can be done indoors using loose collage parts (feather, foam, match sticks, pipe cleaners etc.)

4. Quiz

Consolidate the children's knowledge of the story with a fun quiz

Noah's Ark Quiz Questions

Ask yes or no questions about the story. The children should move one way if they think the answer is yes and the other way if they think the answer is no. If you have minimal space, ask them to put their hands on their head if they think the answer is yes or on their toes if they think the answer is no.

1. Did Noah obey God? *(yes)*
2. Did God like it when everyone else did something bad? *(no, he was angry and sad)*
3. Did God tell Noah to build a train? *(no, a boat)*
4. Did God tell Noah to take 5 of every animal? *(no, 2)*
5. Did God keep Noah safe in the boat? *(yes)*
6. Did God make it snow? *(no, rain)*
7. Did God put a rainbow in the sky? *(yes)*
8. Did God promise to send a big flood every year? *(no, to never flood the world again)*

5. Keeping Safe

Explain to the children that Christians believe God kept Noah safe and God keeps them safe. Now we're going to think about people who keep us safe.

Who keeps us safe?

Provide a selection of pictures of people who keep us safe. This could include pictures of policemen, traffic wardens, nurses, parents, ambulance men, lollipop person or other people relevant to the children in your class. Add in some pictures of arbitrary people who don't necessarily keep us safe e.g. a clown, a dancer, a cook, a burglar. There are some suitable pictures for you to use in our 'Additional Resources'.

Either:

- Hide the pictures around your area and ask the children to find them
- Have an outside treasure hunt for the pictures
- Have a relay race outside (or in the gym) to collect each picture one-by-one

When collected, ask the children to sort them out into two groups – those who keep us safe and those who don't. Talk about how each person keeps us safe.

How do we feel when we are safe?

How do you feel when you're safe? Ask them to show you their happy face (or hold up a happy emoji to show them)

How do you feel when you are unsafe? Ask them to show you their sad face (or show them a sad emoji or a crying emoji or maybe a frightened emoji.)

What could we do to keep safe?
Read out the different scenarios below. Ask the children how they would feel in this scenario? Ask them to discuss with their partner what they could do to feel safer. Emphasise what would be a safe thing to do in that situation.

Scenarios

- You are in the supermarket with your mum. When you turn around you can't see your mum.
- You are climbing a tree. You go higher than you've been before. You look down and see how high up you are!
- You're trying to cross a road. There are lots of cars coming.
- You're playing at the park and someone you don't know starts to speak to you. They ask you which school you go to and where you live.

Where am I Safe?
Allow the children to draw a picture of where they feel safe.

Make a Den
Allow the children to make a den with blankets, chairs and other items. Do they feel safe and cosy inside their den? If you are feeling adventurous, you could make a den outside using tarpaulins and bungees. Crowd inside it and read a story together. Do you feel safe?

6. Saying Thank You

Teacher Note: *If you watched any of the videos, you may recall that when Noah came out of the ark, he made a sacrifice to God. This was his way of saying thank you to God. for keeping him safe.*
Christians believe that it is good to say thank you to God and to others for what we have.

Stand in a circle and roll a ball to each other. When a child catches the ball, they have to call out someone they could say thank you to. Encourage them to think hard. Who at home could they say thank you to? Who at school? Who in their community? Who in their activities or clubs?

Repeat this, but this time they have to say **why** they would say thank you to that person. Make a **thank you card** for someone.

7. Promises

The Bible tells us that God put a rainbow in the sky when he made a promise to Noah.

Rainbow Hunt
Go outside to find items the same colour as the colours in the rainbow. Provide each pair of children with a clipboard, pencil and Rainbow Hunt sheet. (Available in additional resources). The children should look for items that match the colours and draw them in the appropriate spaces.

What is a Promise
Ask the children if they can tell you what a promise is?
Give a few examples of people who have made promises, but have then broken them. E.g mum promised to take you to the park when she finished work, but didn't. Dad promised to buy you a new football strip before your next match, but didn't.
How do you feel when someone makes a promise to you and then doesn't keep it. Ask them to show you their answer by making a face (or drawing one on their whiteboards)
How do you think other people feel when you make a promise, but don't keep it?

Easy or Hard?
Ask the children which of these promises are easy to keep (hands on head) and which are hard to keep (hands on toes).

I promise to ...

- eat all my tea
- be good all day
- always keep my room tidy
- hold your hand when I'm crossing a road
- always do what mummy says
- never be naughty

Reinforce that we should only make promises we think we can keep and we should do our best not to break a promise. Christians believe that God always keeps his promises.

8. Which Animal?

- Ask a child to think of an animal and mime it for the rest of the class to guess
- Ask a child to think of an animal and make that animal noise for the rest of the class to guess
- If space allows (or if outside) travel from one place to another like animals – you can imagine that you are going into or coming out of the big boat!

  e.g. Stomp like an elephant
  Scuttle like a beetle
  Tiptoe like a mouse
  Skip like a kangaroo
  Gallop like a horse
  Walk sideways like a crab
  Plod like a tortoise
  Crawl; like a spider
  Hop like a frog
  Waddle like a duck
  Creep like a tiger etc.

Introduce counting if appropriate e.g. take 3 tiny tiptoes like a mouse, take 2 giant stomps lie an elephant

9. Ideas to Link the Story of Noah's Ark Across the Curriculum

1. **How Big was the Boat?**
   The Bible tells us that the boat was 135m long, 22.5 m wide and 13.5 m high.

   Draw out in chalk, 135m x 22.5 m. Let the children see how big that is! It is longer than a football pitch! Describe to them how tall the boat was, relating it to about half the width. Can they imagine the size of the boat? Wow, it was big! I think a lot of animals could fit into it!
   ...or try some estimation?
   Mark a small line with chalk (or in advance roughly work out where 135 m is from your starting point.) The Bible tells us that the ark was 135m long. How far away do the children or your nursery staff think 135m is? Ask an adult (or a child if you prefer) to stand where they think it might be. This big? Ask them to move further away...or this big? It is actually THIS BIG!

   Repeat with the width.

   Chalk out the size and allow the children to play in an area as big as the ark. It was longer than a football pitch.

2. **Counting in Twos?**
   Practise skip counting in twos. Or line up like the animals in pairs and count how many children you have. Make a giant caterpillar and work out how many shoes it needs.

3. **Learn the Colours of the Rainbow in French**

Red	**Le rouge**
Orange	**L'orange**
Yellow	**Le jaune**
Green	**Le vert**
Blue	**Le bleu**
Pink	**Le rose**
Violet	**Le violet**

   You can access a rainbow song in French here:
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZWN2Uragvc

4. **Keep a Weather Diary**
   Keep a weather chart for 40 days. How many days did it rain? How many days was it sunny ...or windy? Can you make a bar chart from your data? In the story, it rained every day for 40 days and 40 nights. It didn't stop!

   Ask a child to choose a type of weather and act out something they would do in that weather (e.g put up an umbrella, splash in the puddles, put on sunglasses)

5. **Make a Simple Rain Gauge**
   Use a cut-down lemonade bottle marked on the side with a gauge and a funnel in the top to collect rain. Check the rainfall each day.

6. **Is it Waterproof?**
   The Bible tells us that God told Noah to cover the inside and the outside of the boat with tar to make it waterproof. What do you have that is waterproof? Gather different fabrics together and test them out. More information on how to do this can be found in the 'Contexts for Exploring the story of Noah's Ark' file.

7. **Language Development**
   See how many watery words the children can come up with e.g drip, bubble, splash. Display them in your classroom or use them to write a poem.
   Or try weather words: drizzle, drought, pouring, cloudy etc.

8. **Extra Cross-Curricular Ideas**
   There are many other cross-curricular ideas for early stages that fit in with Noah and the Ark in the file called 'Contexts for Exploring the story of Noah's Ark'. Why not have a look?