

WEEK 5 LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

Everyone is invited to worship Jesus.

BIBLE

The Magi Visit Jesus:
Matthew 2:1–12

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Most of us know what it's like to be left out, which is why we try so hard to make sure everyone has a gift at Christmas. This week, we'll hear how the Magi made a long trip to look for Jesus, deliver gifts, and worship him after his birth. God invited these men from a far off place to bring gifts and see Jesus because **everyone is invited to worship Jesus.**

WELCOME TIME

ACTIVITY | Make A Star

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *In teams, invite the kids to race to build the shape of a five-pointed star using pool noodles (or pool noodles cut in half if space is limited). You may scaffold this activity by placing an outline of a star on the ground with painter's tape and having kids place the pool noodles on top.*
 - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** *Instead of creating stars, wrap different toys with wrapping paper (it doesn't have to be neatly wrapped). Allow toddlers to rip open the packaging and play with whatever toy is inside.*
- When the sky is clear at night, you can see stars twinkle as we head off to sleep. Did you know that a long time ago, people used stars to guide them when they traveled? They would follow the stars to know which direction to go.
- In today's Bible story, we'll learn about some people who followed a special star to a very special place.

ACTIVITY | Freeze-Dance Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, queue up versions of popular Christmas songs in different languages, such as ["Away in a Manger" in Navajo](#), ["Come All Ye Faithful" in Swahili](#), ["Silent Night" in Spanish](#), or ["Hark the Herald Angels Sing" in seven different languages](#).*
 - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** *Play tunes that toddlers might be more used to for this activity since the concept of different languages might be lost on them at this moment in time.*
- Christmas isn't just celebrated here in this country. People all over the world celebrate Christmas, too, just like you and me. Why? Because Jesus is the savior God promised who came at the perfect time and is God's greatest gift who brings joy to the whole world!
- Let's worship God together with people from all over the world!

STORY TIME

SCRIPTURE | Matthew 2:1–12 (The Magi Visit Jesus)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Teach this Scripture passage by reading from a preschool-friendly Bible translation, Bible storybook, or using the talking points provided below! Use the props from previous weeks for Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus. Add new ones to represent the Magi and Herod. Show each figure when talking about them in the Bible story. Consider sitting on a rug with kids in a half circle to make this more cozy.
- Welcome back to the Joy Story corner! We're going to learn all about why the birth of Jesus gives us so much joy.
- **Who do you like to share your joy with? When you are happy, who do you want to tell first?**
- Christmas is over ... the decorations are coming down. Before you know it, it will be January and a whole new year will begin. But just because Christmas day is over doesn't mean our story is over. We have one more very important Joy Story.
- **Everybody lean in closer and go, "Shh!"**
- The Magi, who are sometimes called "the wise men," followed a bright star and traveled from the east to Jerusalem because they knew a new king had been born.
 - **Where do kings usually live?** *In a palace.*
 - So they went to the palace and saw King Herod. They asked where the new king was. Herod had no idea what they were talking about. But he did not like the idea of a new king.
 - **Show me your most grumpy face.** Yes, that was how Herod felt!
 - Herod told the Magi he wanted to worship the new king, too. But really, he wanted to make this new king go away forever.
- The Magi continued on from the palace and found where the new king was. It's where Jesus was. Jesus was the new king that had been born. They were overjoyed!
 - They also brought special gifts that you normally gave a new king.
 - **Can you say these gifts with me? Gold. Myrrh. Frankincense.**
- When it was time for them to leave, they had a dream not to go back the way that they came. They would not have to go back to see Herod. Jesus was safe and ready for the whole world to meet him!

BIG IDEA | Everyone is invited to worship Jesus.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Prepare five wrapped boxes in advance, each containing a different toy with a Big Idea tag attached (use one of the Big Idea graphics provided or write your own). Label each box with a number corresponding to the week. This week, invite a couple of kids to unwrap box #5. If you have a [recordable plush](#) available, you could record yourself saying the Big Idea in advance, reset it each week, and gift wrap it in the box again. Once unwrapped, say the Big Idea aloud for the kids (or squeeze the tummy if using a recording) and have kids follow along with the motions below.
- What's the Big Idea of today's Joy Story?
 - **Everyone** (*Point at all the kids in the room.*)
 - **is invited** (*Make "come here" motions by waving your hand.*)
 - **to worship** (*Lift up both hands.*)
 - **Jesus** (*"Jesus" in ASL.*)

VIDEO | Joy Story, Episode 5

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Cali's World](#).

ACTIVITY | Follow The Star!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Using a [star-shaped frisbee](#) (or a regular frisbee with a star drawn on it), toss the star into

the air and have the kids race to catch it. Whoever catches it (or is the first to grab it from the ground) gets to toss it. Continue playing this game for a few minutes. If space is limited, do this activity while standing in a circle and invite kids to toss it to each other.

✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Cut out stars from cardboard or foam boards and hide them around the room (in plain sight) for toddlers to find.

- A lot of people missed out when Jesus was born. They were waiting for a savior, but they weren't paying attention to what God was doing.
- **Who knew that Jesus was born?** Shepherds in the fields nearby and the Magi from a faraway land who followed a star. Nobody would have thought shepherds and wise men from another land would be the first to see the savior God promised.
- Nobody should be left out of meeting Jesus. Just like it was when Jesus was born, **everyone is invited to worship Jesus** today!

PRAYER

- Dear God, we love you so much! Thank you for sending Jesus and inviting everyone to worship him. Help us share this good news with everyone we know. Amen.

SHARING TIME

SNACK | Star Of Wonder Bread

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Provide star-shaped cookie cutters and give each kid a slice of bread. Have them cut out a star shape. You can provide jam, nut-free butter, Nutella, and other yummy toppings. Provide gluten-free bread options if needed.
- The Magi followed a star to see the *real* star, Jesus. It was God's way of letting them know **everyone is invited to worship Jesus**.
- **Have you ever been invited to a party? What was it like?**
- **Did you ever invite a friend to come over and play with you? What did you say?**

ACTIVITY | Circle Time

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass around a customizable snow globe (choose from [classic globes](#), [mason jar kits](#), and [plastic kits](#)). Each week you can insert a picture of anything you'd like—a small toy, a laminated photo of one of the kids in your ministry, a photo of you or one of your volunteers as a preschooler, or even hand-drawn pictures of your kids made. Invite kids to shake the globe each time it's passed to them. After it's passed around the circle once, ask one of the questions and invite the kids to call out their responses.
- **Who followed a star to find the new king?** The Magi (or wise men).
- **Where did they go first?** The palace.
- **Who was the new king that was born?** Jesus!
- **Can you name one of the gifts the Magi brought Jesus?** Gold, myrrh, frankincense. These were gifts fit for a new king.
- **Who is invited to worship Jesus?** Everyone! **Everyone is invited to worship Jesus.**
- **Who can you invite?**

ACTIVITY | Joy Tree Ornament

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Each week, invite the kids to create a paper ornament to represent what they learned. The kids will create their joy tree ornament using the provided [ornament template](#), a hole puncher, and ribbon or twine. You may choose to have leaders write the Big Idea on the ornament for them. This week, have kids

decorate with [star stickers](#) or [stamps](#). Have kids write their names on the back and hang it up on a tree in your space (it can be a tree outline with green tape on a wall), or take it home! Consider printing on cardstock or laminating their finished work to make them last longer.

- This ornament can hang on a tree—or anywhere we want—to help us remember our Big Idea: **Everyone is invited to worship Jesus.**

MEMORY VERSE | Luke 1:46–47 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Help kids learn this month's memory verse by setting the words (and the Scripture reference) to the tune of "We Wish You A Merry Christmas." You can also have kids repeat the verse after you in small chunks, say them using silly voices, or create simple hand motions for keywords.
- **"My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior."**

PLAY TIME

ACTIVITY | Coloring Page

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print and distribute [the coloring page](#) along with crayons or markers. You can review today's Bible story, Big Idea, and memory verse as the kids color.

ACTIVITY | Joy Story Corner

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set up a rug and some cushions in a corner of the room. Provide a variety of nativity books and Christmas-themed picture books kids can peruse or have leaders read aloud to them. You can also make this a digital corner with screens queued up with Christmas songs (like [this one](#)) and storytelling videos (like [this one](#)).

ACTIVITY | From the Joy Box

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Each week, provide a box of different toys kids can play with. You can guide them to use the toys to build something they remember or reenact parts of the Bible story. This week, provide toy instruments and noisemakers for kids to have their own freestyle worship time. Feel free to play some music kids can jam along to.
 - ✳ **TODDLER HACK:** Toddlers will get overwhelmed fast. Be sure to offer a cuddle and a quiet corner of the room with calming toys and soothing sounds for toddlers to find comfort when overwhelmed.