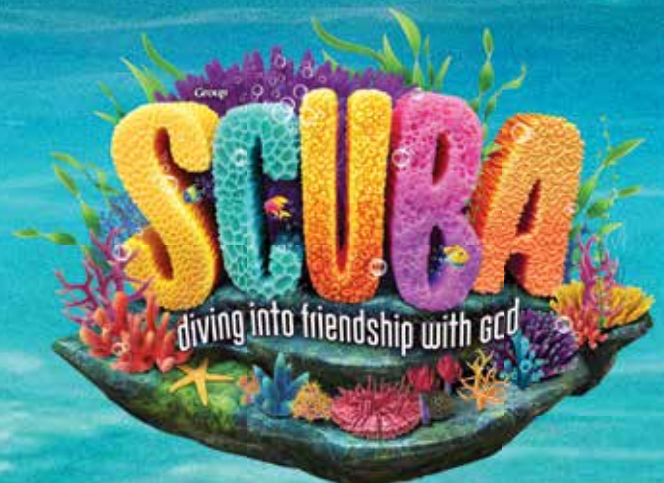




imagination station

Station Leader Manual



Group resources really work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's:



Relational

Person-to-person interaction enhances spiritual growth and builds Christian friendships.

Experiential

What we experience through action and discussion sticks with us up to 9 times longer than what we simply hear or read.

Applicable

The aim of ministry is to equip people to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

Lifelong

Experiences transform the heart, moving faith beyond the walls of church and into everyday life for years to come.

Imagination Station Leader Manual

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Visit our websites:

group.com

group.com/Scuba

Thanks to our talented team for diving in! Laura Baldwin-Stout, Jody Brolsma, Stephen Caine, Lyndsay Gerwing, Charity Kauffman, Micaiah Lee, Michael Paustian, Mike Porter, Joani Schultz, Elisa Snell, Rodney Stewart, and Ali Thompson

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10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

26 25 24



thanks for joining the team!

Scuba divers all follow one unwavering rule: Dive with a buddy. That means never jumping into the water alone. It means discovering the deep blue alongside a friend.

Together, we're going to explore unfathomable faith!

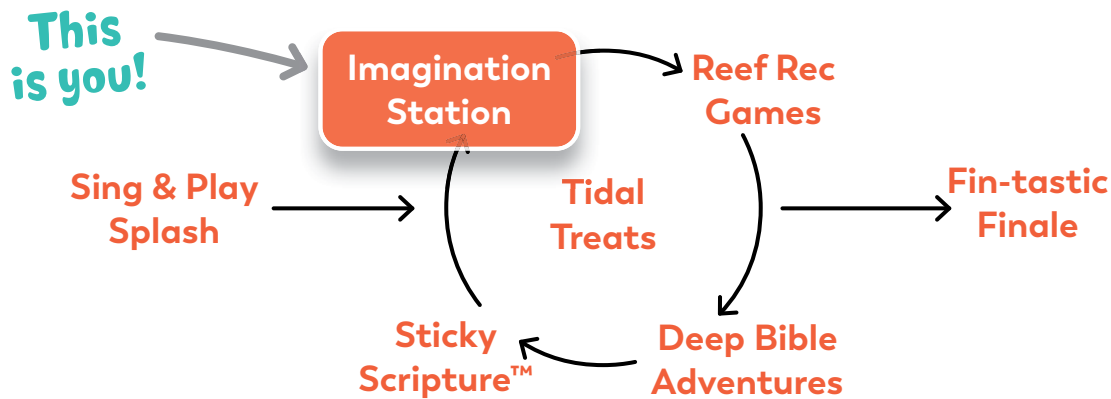
Scuba VBS is going to be full of Bible adventures, games, music, snacks, hugs, high-fives, and sciency-fun "wows." But we're doing more than simply entertaining kids. We have a powerful purpose at the heart of every single activity:

Helping kids dive deeper into a friendship with God.

That's why we're here—dive buddies on a life-changing mission. You're the hands and heart of God, showing kids what a warm friendship with God looks like. And we're right beside you all the way.

What a team!

Thanks for diving in, getting your feet wet, and making a splash that'll have eternal impact with kids.

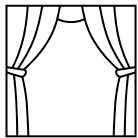


before scuba



Pray for everyone who will attend Scuba.

Ask God to prepare your heart and the hearts of the kids and leaders who will be part of VBS.



Get your room ready to energize imaginations!

Choose a room with enough space for Crews to do the activities. Move chairs and tables out of the way. Place blankets on the floor for each Crew in a rotation to sit on. Use the decorating ideas at group.com/vbsTools to make your room look like it's deep in the ocean. The O-fish-al Ballots will add to your undersea adventure, and you'll use the Talk-Starter Posters at the start of each day's session.



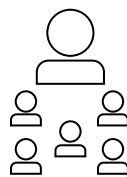
Work with the VBS Director to collect necessary supplies.

Almost all the supplies are easy to find around the church, from church members, or from Group.



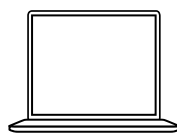
Order Imagination Station Crew Teaching Kits.

At Imagination Station, kids don't just watch experiments—they participate in the science! Each Crew Teaching Kit provides supplies for Crews of five kids plus a leader to do fun experiments all week long! These Teaching Kits will make sure the sciency-fun wows stick as lasting memories to help kids remember the Bible Points. Be sure to order an extra pack so you can demonstrate experiments.



Determine the number of Crews you'll have in each rotation.

Kids join mixed-age Crews—groups of up to five elementary-age kids and one adult or teenage leader. Plan on one-fourth of the total number of Crews in each rotation. If your VBS has 20 Crews, you'll work with five Crews (approximately 25 kids and five leaders) during each session.



Watch the demonstration of each day's Imagination Station Crew Teaching Kit item.

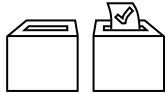
Head to group.com/vbsTools to see easy, step-by-step instructions for these wow experiments!

during scuba



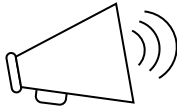
Get Crew Leaders involved!

Guide Crew Leaders to participate right along with kids. When Crew Leaders listen, get involved, and have fun, kids do too!



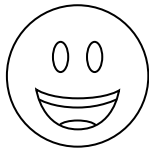
Talk About Talk-Starters.

Start each day with a talk-starter question to help kids get to know each other. Kids will “vote” for their answer by placing matching scales on their Crew’s fish. You’ll need the Talk-Starter posters for the room, and one O-fish-al Ballot Talk-Starter Pack per Crew of five kids and a leader.



Use an attention-getting signal.

Attention-getting signals let kids know when it’s time to stop what they’re doing and look at you. Use the Dive Whistle (available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier) or another signal of your choice.



Call on kids’ Crew roles.

Every day, kids choose one of five jobs: Guide, Kit Carrier, Prayer Person, Schedule Supervisor, or Thank You-er. Kids love when those jobs get called on! In Imagination Station, you’ll call on the Kit Carrier.



Repeat the daily Bible Point often.

Every activity focuses on one memorable Bible truth called the Bible Point. Repeating the Bible Point helps kids remember it and apply it to their lives after VBS. Each time kids hear the day’s Bible Point, they clasp their hands and say, “Thanks, God!”



Play the Sing & Play Splash Music while kids explore.

Music creates a fun atmosphere and, more important, reinforces faith!

DAY 1:

God is a friend who's real.

Bible Verse: "We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God." (John 6:69)

Bible Story: **God shows himself to Elijah through ups and downs.** (1 Kings 18-19)



Sing & Play Splash

- Learn the Day 1 Bible Point and verse, and meet Bible Memory Buddy Tad.
- Sing Scuba songs.
- Meet Sydney Shores, an aspiring treasure hunter.



Deep Bible Adventures

Experience the highs and lows of Elijah's encounters with the real God.



Tidal Treats



Crunchy Coral



Fish Sticks

Sticky Scripture

Play "Believe It or Not" as they dive into John 6:69 and discover what it means to believe.



Imagination Station

Explore unseen things in the ocean to discover that God is a friend who's real!



Fin-tastic Finale

Explore things that are real and imitation, connecting those discoveries to how we experience that God is real.



Reef Rec



TP Tell-All



Off the Hook



Flinchy Fish

At **Scuba VBS**, the daily Bible Point is carefully integrated into each station's activities for unforgettable Bible learning. See how your station reinforces today's Bible Point.

god is a friend who's real.

Bible Story: God shows himself to Elijah through ups and downs. (1 Kings 18–19)

Bible Verse: “We believe, and we know you are the Holy One of God.” (John 6:69)

Diving Into the Bible

A harsh drought plagued Israel for years due to the wicked deeds of idol-worshipping King Ahab. Finally, to show God's existence, God's prophet Elijah summoned 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah to Mount Carmel. The prophets built an altar, then prayed to their false god, Baal, for fire. For hours the hundreds of prophets prayed, shouted, and even cut themselves. But no one answered. Then Elijah built a simple stone altar and dug a trench around it. Servants poured water on his altar again and again. Elijah prayed, “O Lord, answer me...so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God.” Instantly fire came from heaven and burned up Elijah's sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the soil! God—the only true God—answered.

Yet Elijah's triumph soon turned to terror as Queen Jezebel swore she'd have Elijah killed. The prophet fled into the wilderness, where hunger and depression wore him down. God appeared, not in a flash of fire but in a gentle whisper. The one true God answered again.

Connecting With Kids

Like Elijah, kids swim in a culture increasingly resistant to any one source of truth. Today's kids doubt the integrity of the Bible. They're dubious about the church. And many view the idea of one *true* God as judgmental and exclusive. The kids at your VBS really *can* understand what Elijah faced—living in a world that embraced countless false gods and warred against God's truth! Fundamentally, when we believe God is *real*, the existence of God gives us hope. Belief in one *true* God grounds us, providing stability and firm footing through life's ups and downs. Today, root kids in the truth that the one amazing, powerful God really and truly desires a friendship with them!



Why It Matters

Elijah experienced the reality of God through fire, and later in a whisper. This passage can help kids who are questioning the truth of a God they can't see or hear.

Items for Every Day:

- Imagination Station Crew Teaching Kits* (1 per Crew)
- O-fish-al Ballot Talk-Starter Packs* (1 per Crew)
- Talk-Starter Poster Pack*
- Mini Buddies Poster Pack*
- baskets to hold supplies (1 per Crew in a rotation)
- 1 or more helpers (2 would be great!)
- Sing & Play Splash Music CD or download*
- media player
- Dive Whistle* or other attention-getting device

Day 1 Supplies:

- 2 bright flashlights
- 2 different colors of cellophane (found in the party section of most discount stores)
- tape
- Super Sand (from the Crew Teaching Kit*)
- spoons (1 per Crew)
- pitchers of water (1 per Crew in a rotation, refilled each rotation, plus 1 for you)
- 8-ounce opaque cups (1 per child, plus 3 per rotation for you)
- plastic containers with large openings, such as animal crackers containers (1 per Crew in a rotation)
- Echolocation Tubes (from the Crew Teaching Kit*)
- balloons (1 per Crew in a rotation)
- scissors
- utility knife
- rubber bands (1 per Crew in a rotation)
- salt packets (1 per Crew)

*available from group.com or your Group VBS supplier

Imagination Station

Before Day 1, decorate your room to look like a colorful coral reef!

Hang the Day 1 Talk-Starter Poster on a wall at kids' eye level.

Hang the poster of Tad from the Mini Buddies Poster Pack.

Label each O-fish-al Ballot with a Crew number or name, and hang the ballots around the room where kids can reach them.

Place a table along a wall of your room. You can place the day's supplies on the table for easy access and store the remaining supplies under the table.



Prepare to Dive In

- For each rotation, prepare a stack of three cups. Put one spoonful of Super Sand in one of the cups. Practice the cup pouring trick so you feel confident you can do it.
- Tape four layers of one color of cellophane to one flashlight, and four layers of the other color of cellophane to the other flashlight, so that the lights shine two different colors. (We found that it takes multiple layers to shine a good, bright color.)



Prepare for Echolocation Experiment:

- Use a utility knife to cut a round hole in the side of each container, near the bottom. The hole should just fit an Echolocation Tube.
- Cut the mouths off the balloons, then throw away the mouth pieces. Stretch the remaining part of a balloon (the wider part) over the top opening of each plastic container. If your balloons are tearing, it may help to stretch them a bit before trying to put them on the container.
- Use rubber bands to secure the balloons.
- Create a basket of supplies for each Crew. (You can restock between rotations.) You'll need one supply basket per Crew.



FIELD TEST FINDING

We should've chosen more powerful flashlights! Our flashlights weren't very bright, and they didn't project the color onto kids well. Test your flashlights ahead of time to be sure they'll work.

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

Give clear, concise directions while demonstrating experiments. This is where kids explore, experiment, test, try...and play! Guide kids in your expectations, but also give them some freedom to test their own hypotheses!

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

The size of your balloon and rubber band may vary depending on what size containers you use. We used a 12-inch balloon and a 3/4-inch rubber band for our snack container, which had a 4-inch opening.

Contents for Crew supply baskets

For each Crew member:

- ✓ 1 Echolocation Tube (from the Crew Teaching Kit*)
- ✓ 1 opaque cup



For the whole Crew:

- ✓ 1 set of fish scale stickers of each color (from the O-fish-al Ballot Talk-Starter Pack*)
- ✓ Super Sand (from the Crew Teaching Kit*)
- ✓ spoon
- ✓ prepared plastic container
- ✓ salt packet



Got Imagination?

Have the fun Sing & Play Splash Music playing as Crews arrive. Greet kids enthusiastically as they enter Imagination Station. Then have Crews sit together on the floor.

SAY Welcome to Imagination Station! When we're here, we can be oceanographers exploring the great depths of the ocean. And there's a lot to explore! Scientists have mapped the entire surface of the moon...and most of Mars...but only 5% of the ocean floor! Plus, scientists believe that of all the creatures that live in the ocean, we know about only a small amount of them!

Here at Imagination Station, we'll dive deep to discover amazing things God created in the ocean! But first, I need to ask you something very important.

ASK Who brought their imagination today?

SAY It's okay if not everyone remembered their imagination—it is our first day of VBS. But since this is *Imagination Station*, we're definitely going to need lots of imagination as we explore. The great news is, I know someone who makes me think very imaginatively! Our Buddy Tad can change color to blend in! That makes me think about how creative and imaginative God is in the way he made fish! Point to the poster of Tad. But good news! Tad showed me how we can change color, too!

Turn off the overhead lights. Then turn on the flashlights and shine them around the room on kids so they can see their skin and clothes change color.

Wow! We're bright with imagination now, and we're ready to explore the hidden things in the ocean.

We're learning that God is a friend who's real. (*Thanks, God!*) Sometimes people have a hard time believing God is real, because we can't see God. So we'll learn about a whole bunch of things in the ocean that are real, even though we can't see them!

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

You can add to your room's decor by hanging the O-fish-al Ballots, labeled with each Crew's name or number. Crews will go up to their own fish each day to add their scale stickers. Spread out the fish, and avoid putting fish from the same rotation near each other. That way, more than one Crew can go at a time.

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

Ham it up as you present the talk-starter question each day. You'll set a fun mood and encourage kids' imaginations at the same time!



Answer a Talk-Starter Question

Have Kit Carriers come get the baskets for their Crews. It may be tempting and distracting for Crews to rifle through these goodies! Have Kit Carriers give the baskets to their Crew Leaders, and tell kids only the Crew Leaders should touch the baskets when you call for a supply.

SAY Every day at Imagination Station, you'll get to answer a fun talk-starter question. You'll vote for your answer in a special way.

In your Crew basket, you'll see that there are two different colors of fish scale stickers that can fit right on the O-fish-al Ballot—these colorless fish around the room.

Look around the room now and find your Crew's O-fish-al Ballot. Allow time.

Now, every day you'll have two choices for our talk-starter question. You'll choose the scale that matches your answer and stick it onto your Crew's fish.

Are you ready? Here's our first talk-starter question!

Point to the Day 1 Talk-Starter Poster.

ASK Would you rather live in a giant sandcastle on the beach or live in a coral reef cave under the sea?

SAY One at a time, you'll come up and vote with your fish scale stickers. If you'd rather live in a sandcastle, you'll put a yellow fish scale on. But if you'd rather live in a coral reef, use green!

Point out how the colors of the fish scale stickers match the border on the poster, in case kids forget which color is for which vote.

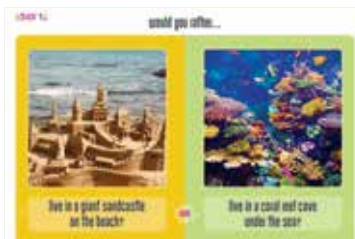
Call up Crews one at a time to vote. When everyone has voted, look at the O-fish-al Ballots and point out which color seems to have more votes.

All week long, you'll get to answer fun talk-starter questions and add more fish scales. Together we can watch as we make our fish colorful!



FIELD TEST FINDING

Over the years, we've watched kids get super excited about talk-starter questions! They can't wait to see what the question is and see how their Crew friends vote. What a fun and easy way for kids to get acquainted and bond with their Crews!



FIELD TEST FINDING

We've found that the Dive Whistle is a great way to get kids' attention back after a Crew activity or discussion. But if kids start talking or lose focus when you weren't planning on it, you may need a quicker way to get kids' attention. We used sign language, and our Station Leader said, "If you can hear me, sign *scuba*," then demonstrated the sign (curving your thumb and first two fingers around your mouth like a scuba regulator). Another option would be to make a waterfall by trickling your fingers down as you make a calm "shhhhh" sound, and have kids copy you. Both of these help quiet kids down and get their hands out of distracting items. Whatever you choose, be sure to pause before moving on so everyone can hear—there's so much fun in this station!



Oceans All Around Us

SAY The ocean is full of fun, colorful fish...and something else that's helping keep you alive right now! God created things called phytoplankton (fye-toe-PLANK-ton). *Phytoplankton* are teeny tiny plants, so tiny you need a microscope to see them.

But those tiny things are extremely important. Take a deep breath in. Lead kids in breathing deeply.

ASK Who knows what we breathe in?

SAY All animals, including humans, breathe in oxygen. And where does that oxygen come from? You might know that some of it comes from trees and other plants all around us. But most of it doesn't come from there!

About 70% of the oxygen on our planet comes from plants that are in the ocean. And a lot of those plants are phytoplankton!

Now, I told you before that you can't see phytoplankton without a microscope. That's because they're very small! There's even one type of phytoplankton so small that millions of them can live in one single drop of ocean water!

And that tiny type of phytoplankton is responsible for about one out of every five breaths we take.

Lead kids in taking five deep breaths.

Even though you can't see that tiny type of phytoplankton, it filled your lungs with oxygen in one of those breaths you just took. We can't see phytoplankton, but we know it's real because it helps us breathe!

And God is a friend who's real. (*Thanks, God!*) We know he's real because of all the things he does to help us!

ASK What are some things God does to help us? Crew Leaders, let's hear from you first! Call out a few things.

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

Some kids know a lot about the ocean! They may want to share their fun facts during activities. Redirect them by saying something like "Wow! It sounds like you know a lot about sharks! You can talk with your Crew about that during snack time or while you're traveling between stations." This will give kids the opportunity to share without compromising your ability to complete the activities at Imagination Station.



Echolocation

SAY

There's something else in the ocean that no one can see—not even with a microscope. But it's something that helps a lot of animals in the ocean find their way around. It's called echolocation!

Echolocation is a fancy word for making sounds and listening for where they bounce. Normally, we can't see sounds. We might see something that's making a sound, like a barking dog. But we can't see the actual sound waves that come out of the dog.

However, as scientists, we're always finding new ways to study things! So let's find a way to see sound!

Have Crew Leaders get out the prepared containers and an Echolocation Tube for each child and hold them so kids don't touch anything yet. Each Crew Leader will also get out the salt packet and sprinkle salt on the balloon that's stretched over the mouth of the container.

We're going to see what sound does to this container. You'll each get a turn to talk into the container. You can try being loud or quiet, or use a squeaky or deep voice. But when it's not your turn, that's the part where you'll get to see the best! So keep your eyes on the top of the container as everyone else takes a turn.

First, let's assemble our tubes.

Have each child get an Echolocation Tube, and show them how to assemble it by putting the tabs into the slots. Use the tighter slots so the tube is similar in size to a toilet paper tube.

Now, Prayer People, you'll go first. Put your tube in the hole and make some noise. You can hum, talk, sing, or squeak! Just make some noise into your tube. Everyone else, watch the top of the container!

Crew Leaders can have kids rotate until everyone has had a turn. Kids will each use their own Echolocation Tube.

Kids can experiment with different types of sounds (hums versus talking), different pitches (high and squeaky versus low and deep), and different volumes.

When everyone has had a turn, sound the Dive Whistle. Have Crew Leaders collect the supplies and set them outside their circles for your helpers to collect. Set aside the used tubes to throw away or put in a recycling bin.

ASK

What did you observe—or see—as you watched the salt move for different sounds?

FIELD TEST FINDING

We thought about rounding up enough toilet paper tubes for each child to have one...but then thought about where those tubes would have been. Yuck! The fresh and clean Echolocation Tubes keep everyone germ-free!



FIELD TEST FINDING

Sometimes kids tilted the container and spilled the salt, so have extra salt handy just in case!

SAY When animals like whales and dolphins use echolocation, they can't see the sound. But listening for the sound helps them know where things are! It's almost like sound helps them see! Our sounds moved the salt.

ASK How does this experiment help us understand our Bible Point: **God is a friend who's real** (*Thanks, God!*)? This is a thinking question! Give kids time to make these cool faith-and-life connections.

SAY We saw the effects of the sounds we made! **God is a friend who's real.** (*Thanks, God!*) Sometimes that means we see the effects of what he does. Other times it means we might hear him whispering to us or encouraging our hearts. Even though we can't see him, we know **God is a friend who's real.** (*Thanks, God!*)



Disappearing Water

SAY Now let's explore something we can see in the ocean—water! Set out your three cups in a line, making sure you know which one has the Super Sand.

I'll pour some water into one of these cups. Then I'll move the cups around and you'll follow the movement to figure out which cup has the water.

Pour water into one of the empty cups. Move the cups slowly, so it's very easy for kids to get the answer right.

ASK Which cup has the water?

After kids shout out their votes, pick up the cup with the water and pour it into the other empty cup to show that they were correct. Then repeat the experiment.

For the final round, you'll pour the water into the cup with the dry Super Sand. When kids guess the correct cup, hold it as if you're pouring it into another cup. Nothing will come out! Kids will likely then guess the other cups, which you can also attempt to pour to show that they're empty.

ASK Where do you think the water went?

SAY **God is a friend who's real.** (*Thanks, God!*) **And our water was real, too. In fact, it's actually still inside this cup.** Walk around and show kids the cup with the water and Super Sand in it.

Seeing the inside of the cup helped you believe the water was there!

ASK How do you know God is real even though you can't see him?

FIELD TEST FINDING

When you pour a cup of water, you only tilt the cup partway. But our leader accidentally spilled some of the Super Sand when she went to do the final pour, because she turned the cup all the way upside down. No need to turn it that far! Just pretend like you're pouring water as before.

SAY

Before I started this trick, I had special Super Sand in this cup. The Super Sand absorbs all the water to make it solid—so it won't pour!

But I sure made it *look* like the water was gone, didn't I? Sometimes our brains can trick us into thinking things that aren't true. They might make us think God can't be real because we can't see him. But **God is a friend who's real.** (*Thanks, God!*) We can always trust what he does!

Now it's your turn to give it a try! In your Crews, experiment with adding water to Super Sand! Crew Leaders, you can find cups, a spoon, and Super Sand in your Crew basket. Just one spoonful of Super Sand is all you need for each person!

Have your helpers distribute pitchers of water, and allow time for experimenting.

I'm so glad all you scientists were able to join me today and discover more about the invisible things in the ocean...and about how **God is a friend who's real.** (*Thanks, God!*) I'll see you tomorrow for more sciency fun!

Collect the cups of Super Sand, and dispose of them in the trash. Don't dump it down the drain or you'll cause a clog!



FIELD TEST FINDING

Kids loved experimenting with the Super Sand in their Crews. They said, "This is soooo cool!" Make sure every child gets to try—they'll remember it much more when they get their hands on the science!

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

While Super Sand is fine for kids to use with Crew Leader supervision, it's important that you not send it home with kids.

God is a friend who loves.

Bible Verse: **“Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.”** (John 13:34)

Bible Story: **God shows compassion to the people of Nineveh.** (Jonah 1–3)



Sing & Play Splash

- Learn the Day 2 Bible Point and verse, and meet Bible Memory Buddy Finnley.
- Share God Sightings and add fish to the God Sightings Celebration Spot.
- Sing Scuba songs.
- Keep Sydney from scuba diving before being prepared.



Deep Bible Adventures

Journey with Jonah to discover God’s love.



Tidal Treats



Ocean in Motion



Fruity Fins

Sticky Scripture

Find John 13:34, play “Submariner See, Submariner Do,” and investigate what it means to follow Jesus’ example.



Imagination Station

Experiment with different modes of transportation and discover how God’s love empowers us.



Fin-tastic Finale

Participate in a game show about Jonah’s choices, then compare Jesus’ actions with Jonah’s.



Reef Rec



A Clean Getaway



Pass the Pearl



Catch of the Day

At **Scuba VBS**, the daily Bible Point is carefully integrated into each station’s activities for unforgettable Bible learning. See how your station reinforces today’s Bible Point.

God is a friend who loves.

Bible Story: God shows compassion to the people of Nineveh. (Jonah 1–3)

Bible Verse: “Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.” (John 13:34)

Diving Into the Bible

When God told Jonah to go preach to the people of Nineveh, Jonah jumped on the first ship...headed in the *opposite* direction! He'd likely heard of the Ninevites' reputation for cruelty. In Jonah's estimation, these people didn't deserve to hear about—or experience—God's love. But God had other plans. He sent a big fish to swallow the reluctant prophet. Deep inside the fish's belly, Jonah finally submitted to God's will. God forgave Jonah, then used him to deliver a warning to the people of Nineveh. As soon as the people heard Jonah's message, they stopped their evil deeds and asked for God's forgiveness. God lovingly forgave an undeserving people, demonstrating his heart of mercy for *all*.

Connecting With Kids

Jonah seems to have viewed the Ninevites as unredeemable—so sinful that they were unworthy of God's salvation. When do you first remember a feeling of shame or unworthiness? For many of us, the sense of being unlovable came as a child when we'd disobeyed, been caught in a lie, or disappointed an adult. Perhaps caring friends or family members demonstrated Christ-like forgiveness, modeling unconditional love! Unfortunately, plenty of kids who come to your VBS won't have experienced genuine love and forgiveness. Today is a great day to immerse kids in God's overwhelming love for *all* people. Joyfully share the truth that a friendship with God means we are loved—and so are those we don't think are lovable.



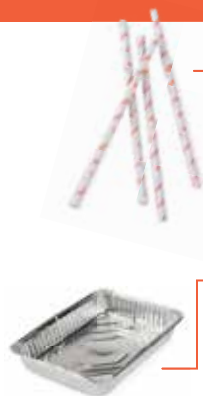
Why It Matters

Jonah didn't think the people of Nineveh deserved God's mercy. Jonah's attitude can challenge kids to think about who *they* may doubt God could love.



Day 2 Supplies:

- bubble solution and wand
- Day 2 Talk- Starter Poster from Talk- Starter Poster Pack*
- sturdy plastic disposable bottles of water (1 per Crew in a rotation)
- ketchup packets (1 per Crew in a rotation)
- salt
- Rowboat Racers (from the Crew Teaching Kit*) (1 set per Crew)
- bottle of dish soap



- Boat Boosters (from the Crew Teaching Kit*)
- 3-ounce paper cups (1 per Crew in a rotation)
- cotton swabs
- large disposable lasagna pans (1 per Crew)
- permanent markers
- plastic trays (1 per Crew in a rotation)
- 5-gallon bucket

*available from group.com or your Group VBS supplier

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

Today's Imagination Station includes an experiment that will work only one time—but you'll ask Crew Leaders to try it a second time. To avoid them trying to "fake" making it work, let them in on the secret ahead of time in whatever way you communicate with Crew Leaders—via email, in training, in staff devos, or in leader huddles. If Crew Leaders know in advance it's destined to fail, they won't feel like they're doing something wrong!

Prepare to Dive In

- Hang the Day 2 Talk- Starter Poster on the wall.
- Hang the poster of Finnley from the Mini Buddies Poster Pack.
- Put a few inches of water in each lasagna pan. Set each pan on a tray (for easier transportation when you clean up). Set the trays and pans on tables around the room, so each Crew can access one *later*. (Be sure they're not near where kids will be sitting.)
- Squirt a little dish soap into a paper cup for each Crew in a rotation. Set one of these cups next to each lasagna pan.
- Place a ketchup packet in each bottle of water. Be sure the packet floats at the top, then add water to fill the bottle completely to the rim. Screw the lid back on tightly.
- Create a basket of supplies for each Crew. (You can restock between rotations.) You'll need one supply basket per Crew.

FIELD TEST FINDING

Some ketchup packets float better than others, depending on how much air is sealed in them. If your ketchup packets aren't floating, just add salt to the water until the packets float.



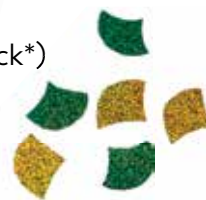
Contents for Crew supply baskets

For each Crew member:

- ✓ 1 Boat Booster

For the whole Crew:

- ✓ 1 set of fish scale stickers of each color (from the O-fish-al Ballot Talk- Starter Pack*)
- ✓ 1 cotton swab
- ✓ 1 set of Rowboat Racers



Got Imagination?

Have the Sing & Play Splash Music playing in your room as kids arrive.

Greet kids enthusiastically as they enter Imagination Station. Then have Crews sit on the floor.

SAY Welcome back! I'm so excited that we're all here at Imagination Station! We're taking a deep dive into the science of the oceans. And today we're talking about how people get around in the ocean! But first, I have an important question:

ASK Who remembered their imagination today?

SAY Uh-oh! Sometimes we forget. That's okay—it's only Day 2. I kind of thought that might happen, so I asked Finnley for ideas. Point to the poster of Finnley. And she had a great idea!

Finnley told me that when dolphins are excited or curious, sometimes they blow bubbles! Maybe bubbles will boost our imagination.

Blow bubbles all over where kids are sitting.

If kids get up to catch bubbles, have them sit back down before continuing.

Wow! I think dolphins are on to something with this bubble blowing! I feel totally full of imagination. Now that that's settled, let's do our talk-starter question.

FIELD TEST FINDING

We used straws from a local fast-food restaurant, which came individually wrapped. We thought that would be more sanitary, but we ended up with kids blowing and throwing straw wrappers everywhere! The paper Boat Boosters in your Crew Teaching Kit are eco-friendly and won't create additional distractions or mess.

FIELD TEST FINDING

You may think bubbles are kind of young, but our elementary kids couldn't get enough of them! Bubbles are fun for all ages!



Answer a Talk- Starter Question

Have Kit Carriers come up to get Crew baskets.

Point to the Day 2 Talk- Starter Poster.

ASK Would you rather ride a dolphin or go scuba diving?

SAY If you'd rather ride a dolphin like Finnley, you'll put a yellow scale on the fish. But if you'd prefer to go scuba diving, get a green scale! Get your scales ready, and I'll call you up one Crew at a time.

Call up Crews one at a time to vote on the O-fish-al Ballots.

Hmm, let's see which vote wins. First, I need a drumroll.

Lead kids in a drumroll.

I think the winner is... Announce which choice you think got more votes.

No matter how you get around the ocean, you won't see very much of it. That's because there's so much to explore! The oceans make up more than 70% of the earth's surface. And it's not just the surface that's big—oceans are *really* deep. Mount Everest is the tallest mountain on earth. But the deepest part of the ocean is even farther *under* the ocean's surface than Mount Everest is above it!

Still, scientists love to explore the oceans and discover new things. And other people travel the oceans just for fun! Like scuba divers!

Scuba Divers

Hold up one of the prepared bottles. The ketchup packet should be floating.

SAY Imagine this ketchup packet is a scuba diver. Squeeze the bottle in the middle to make the "scuba diver" dive! Scuba divers can't explore underwater for too long. They have to come back up! Stop squeezing the bottle and watch the "scuba diver" float again! That's because humans can't breathe underwater. Scuba divers wear special tanks full of oxygen to help them breathe. But those tanks won't last more than 45 minutes. And the deeper scuba divers dive, the less time their air will last!

Let's give everyone a chance to make the ketchup packet scuba dive!

Give each Crew a prepared bottle, and let kids all have a turn to squeeze the bottle. Then collect the bottles.

ASK If you were going to scuba dive, what would you most want to see?



SAY Scuba divers get to see a lot of beautiful things, like coral reefs, colorful fish, and even sharks!

God made so many different things. And he put them all in the right place for how he made them! Scuba divers can't breathe underwater, so humans live on the land. But sharks can't live on the land, so God put them in the ocean! He showed love in how he made everything so carefully!

God is a friend who loves. *(Thanks, God!)*

Rowboat Race

SAY Scuba diving is just one way to travel around in the ocean. If you want to go farther, you'd take a boat!

ASK What are some things that can power a boat?

SAY Some boats are powered by people rowing them. Other boats use gas or oil to create energy.

But the boats we'll use today have a totally different source of power!

Have Crews get out the strip of Rowboat Racers included in their Crew Teaching Kits and punch out the boats.

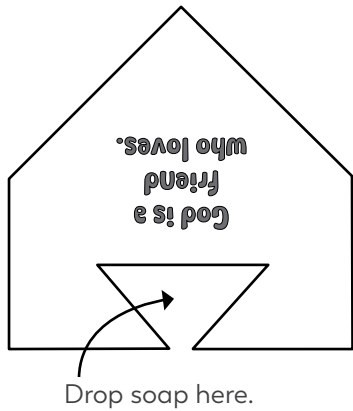
ASK Do you think soap can make one of these boats go? Let kids share their hypotheses and why they think that.

SAY Let's try it and find out! Crew Leaders, grab one boat and a cotton swab, and then lead your Crew to a tray of water. Crew Leaders will be the ones to do this experiment. So if you're a kid, just make sure you can see the water and don't touch it. Keep your hands glued to your sides!

FIELD TEST FINDING

We originally brought a tray with a water-filled pan to each Crew, but there was a lot of splashing and splashing! Plus, the water was pretty tempting to kids. We found it worked best to have kids move to the pre-set pans around the room—then we could call them away from all that enticing H₂O!





Each Crew Leader will place a boat near one edge of the pan, with the point facing out. Crew Leaders will dip a cotton swab into the dish soap, then quickly dab it in the triangle of the boat. The boat should move across the water! Crew Leaders can use permanent markers to make a line on the side of the pan that indicates how far the boat went with just that one drop of soap.

ASK Why do you think the soap worked to make the boats go?

Welcome lots of responses, encouraging kids to come up with a good list of guesses!

SAY Let's try this again! Have Crew Leaders put another dab of soap in the triangle of their boats. This time, nothing should happen.

ASK Why do you think it didn't work this time?

SAY The reason the soap worked the first time is that water has something called surface tension. Surface tension is like this.

Have several kids come up and link arms, standing tightly together. Everyone else can return to their Crew blankets, and your helpers can collect the cups of soap and cotton swabs. (Kids will return to the trays of water later, but staying near them will be a big temptation.)

It's when water molecules hold on to each other. It can help things float!

But some things break up that surface tension and make the water molecules unable to hang on tight. Soap is one of those things! Hold up the bottle of soap, and have kids break apart.

When the soap broke the surface tension, molecules moved, and that movement pushed the boat along!

Have kids sit back down.

Once the surface tension was already broken, more soap couldn't change anything! We got only one chance to make our boats go with soap.

In fact, that soap is so powerful that if you wanted another chance, we'd have to dump out your tray, rinse it out really well, dry it so there are no traces of soap left, and then fill it with fresh water. It would be a lot of work to make sure that little bit of soap is gone!

But we're learning that **God is a friend who loves.** (Thanks, God!) God doesn't give us just one chance! He loves us so much that he gives us a lot of chances. So I'm going to give you a chance to power your boats a different way!

FIELD TEST FINDING

Some kids reached in to move the boats with their fingers, which changed how they answered this question. If that happens, just remind kids that the soap didn't move the boat at all the second time.



Have Crew Leaders distribute a Boat Booster and a Rowboat Racer to each child.

ASK Do you think air power will work better than soap, worse, or the same?

SAY Let's try it. Everyone form a single-file line behind your Crew's tray. Allow time.

If you're first in line, put your boat at one edge of the pan, and blow it as hard as you can in one blow. Allow time. Crew Leaders can mark the child's finish line on the edge of the tray, then call up the next person in line, and so on.

When everyone has gone, sound the Dive Whistle. Tell kids to leave their Rowboat Racers and Boat Boosters in the tray and go have a seat on their Crew blankets.

So we know soap can power boats—well, once anyway. And we know air can power boats—in fact, that's what sailboats use.

Now let's think about God's love.

ASK How did this experiment demonstrate something about God's love? Give kids time to call out responses as they make faith-to-life connections!

What kinds of things can God's love empower us to do?

SAY God's love might empower us to go show kindness to someone who looks lonely. Or maybe God's love would push us toward someone who needs encouragement. God is a friend who loves. (Thanks, God.) When we experience God's love, we want to pass it on!

I'm so glad all you scientists were able to join me today and discover more about traveling the vast oceans...and about our friend God's vast love! I'll see you tomorrow for more sciency fun!

Between rotations, dump out the used pans of water into the 5-gallon buckets for easier clean-up later on. Have your helpers put a new pan on each tray for the next rotation. Because the soap residue will cause the surface tension experiment in the next rotation to not work, it's important to replace the pans with new pans of water. Save the cups of soap for other rotations.



★ SCUBA CLUE ★

If time allows, you can let kids each have more than one turn. They may discover that the angle at which they blow makes a big difference!

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

Here's a pro teaching tip: Create a welcoming environment where *all* kids feel free to share their thoughts. Respond to kids' answers by simply repeating what a child said. Repeating shows respect and that you heard that child. This also allows everyone to hear soft-spoken kids. You'll promote thinking and find that more kids engage and eagerly share rather than waiting for one person to share the correct answer.

DAY 3:

God is a friend we can trust.

Bible Verse: "I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart." (John 14:27)

Bible Story: Jesus calms a storm. (Mark 4:35-41)



Sing & Play Splash

- Learn the Day 3 Bible Point and verse, and meet Bible Memory Buddy Fisher.
- Share God Sightings and add fish to the God Sightings Celebration Spot.
- Sing Scuba songs.
- Help Sydney discover that trustworthy friends are a treasure.



Deep Bible Adventures

Trust God in a scary storm—and with their own fears.



Tidal Treats



Seal Snacks



Sweet Sand Dollars

Sticky Scripture

Cheer on their favorite seahorse in the Seahorse 500. It's a race to the finish as kids learn John 14:27 and find out why we need peace from Jesus.



Imagination Station

Discover how ocean currents and pressure create constant movement in the ocean—and learn to trust God as our lives keep moving and changing.



Fin-tastic Finale

Do some surprising science experiments with things that sink, float, and fall!



Reef Rec



Fill 'er Up!



Bubble Trouble



Kelp Catchers

At **Scuba VBS**, the daily Bible Point is carefully integrated into each station's activities for unforgettable Bible learning. See how your station reinforces today's Bible Point.

god is a friend we can trust.

Bible Story: Jesus calms a storm. (Mark 4:35-41)

Bible Verse: “I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart.” (John 14:27)

Diving Into the Bible

After a long day of teaching along the Sea of Galilee, Jesus gave his followers instructions to cross to the other side of the water. The disciples put their backs into rowing, while Jesus, weary from the long day, quickly fell asleep. Before long, a sudden storm blew in. Gale-force winds stirred up powerful waves that broke over the side of the boat. Jesus’ friends panicked! What if the wind tipped the boat over? What if the boat filled up with water and sank? How could Jesus sleep through all this? In terror, the disciples woke Jesus up. Jesus commanded the wind and waves to be silent and still...and they obeyed! An immediate calm settled over the waters.

Connecting With Kids

What storms are kids at your VBS facing? Divorcing parents? Loneliness? Bullying? Food insecurity? A child may even be trying to navigate relationships with *others* who are facing challenges. At times, kids may feel like Jesus’ disciples, asking where Jesus is when hardships swell into a tidal wave of fear, uncertainty, and doubt. What a comfort to know we have a trustworthy friend nearby! God is a friend we can trust to comfort, guide, listen, and love us. Today, bring peace (just like Jesus did!) as you explore with kids what it means to have a trustworthy friend in God.



Why It Matters

Jesus commanded wild wind *and* waves to be still, showing his power and his ability to bring peace. This passage shows kids they can trust God when life’s troubles crash around them.

Day 3 Supplies:



- Day 3 Talk-Starter Poster*
- water bottle with cap (1 per Crew, plus 1 per rotation for you)



- thumbtack



- lasagna pans from Day 2, for catching water (1 per Crew in a rotation, plus 1 for you)

- Tidal Tablets (from the Crew Teaching Kit*) (1 per Crew)



- pepper

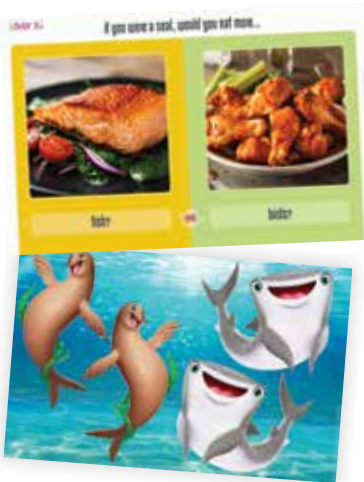


- half-full wide-mouthed jars of water (1 per Crew)

- Surprising Sand Dollars (from the Crew Teaching Kit*) (1 per Crew)



*available from group.com or your Group VBS supplier



Prepare to Dive In

- Hang the Day 3 Talk-Starter Poster on the wall.
- Hang the poster of Fisher from the Mini Buddies Poster Pack.
- Using a thumbtack, poke holes all the way around the middle of each full, capped water bottle, about ½ inch apart. They will leak a little (especially as you keep poking!) but should mostly retain the water. Keep them upright in a waterproof container.
- Create a basket of supplies for each Crew. (You can restock between rotations.) You'll need one supply basket per Crew.



holes ½ inch apart all the way around

Contents for Crew supply baskets

For the whole Crew:

- ✓ 1 set of fish scale stickers of each color (from the O-fish-al Ballot Talk-Starter Pack*)
- ✓ 1 Tidal Tablet (from the Crew Teaching Kit*)
- ✓ 1 Surprising Sand Dollar (from the Crew Teaching Kit*)



Got Imagination?

Play the Sing & Play Splash Music as kids arrive.

Greet kids enthusiastically as they enter Imagination Station. Then have Crews sit on the floor.

SAY Welcome back to Imagination Station! I'm so happy to see you scientists here again because we need to find out all about ocean currents and pressure! But before we get started, you know I *have* to ask...

ASK Did you bring your imagination today?

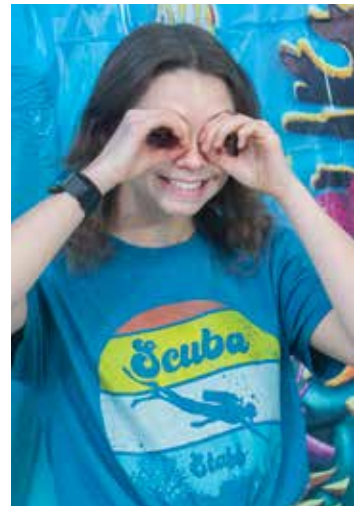
SAY Uh-oh! It looks like some of you left your imagination at home! I can tell you that you're definitely going to need it today! But good news! Point to the Fisher poster. I was talking with my friend Fisher, and he told me a little secret!

He reminded me that seals have big eyes that help them see underwater—kind of like built-in goggles! It made me think that maybe if we put on some goggles, we could see the world with more imagination!

Let's put on our goggles. Lead kids in holding their hands up like binoculars in front of their eyes. Have them look around and say what they see.

Then sound the Dive Whistle.

Wow! I think our goggles opened our eyes to new levels of imagination!



Answer a Talk- Starter Question

Have Kit Carriers get their Crew baskets.

Point to the Day 3 Talk-Starter Poster.

SAY Today's talk-starter question is going to help us think like Fisher! As a seal, Fisher likes to eat a lot! Sometimes Fisher eats fish, and sometimes he eats birds. That makes me curious what you'd like to eat if you were a seal.

ASK If you were a seal, would you eat more fish or birds?

SAY If you'd rather eat fish, you'll use a yellow fish scale to vote. If you'd prefer birds, bring a green fish scale with you. Wait until I call your Crew.

Call up one Crew at a time, and invite kids to place their fish scales on the O-fish-al Ballots.

Wow! It's hard to tell which choice got more votes. Let's see if you can help me figure it out with some noise. I'll name each choice, and you'll yell and cheer for the one you picked. Ready?



FIELD TEST FINDING

Our original talk-starter question for this day asked kids whether they'd spend more time on land or swimming if they were seals. Every child chose swimming! We realized we'd been thinking with an adult mindset—and we like sunbathing. But from a kid's perspective, it makes sense that swimming would be a unanimous vote!

ASK Who picked the fish?

Pause, and then sound the Dive Whistle.

How about birds?

Pause, and then sound the Dive Whistle.

Announce which choice you think is the winner.

SAY Well, if you really were a seal, you wouldn't have to choose! You could munch on a fish for lunch and snack on a bird later in the afternoon. Sounds pretty nice!

Control Water Pressure

SAY Seals can move themselves around by swimming in the water. But even if something isn't alive, if you put it in the ocean it will move around! That's because the ocean is full of currents and water pressure—it's always moving!

First let's experiment with water pressure.

Give each Crew an empty lasagna pan and a prepared water bottle. Tell kids not to touch the bottles yet. Keep one prepared bottle for yourself.

Hold up your bottle.

ASK Would you believe me if I told you that this water bottle is full of holes? Why or why not?

SAY It might be hard to believe, but your water bottle is actually full of little holes! The water isn't leaking out of the bottle because there's no pressure to push it out. But let's see what happens when we add air pressure on the top of the water—by letting some air into the top of the bottle.

Untwist the cap just a little—don't take it off completely. Water should come out through the holes. Then tighten the cap to stop it.

I want you to see this close up. Crew Leaders, gently holding the bottle over the pan, unscrew the cap *just a little bit* until water starts to come out through the holes. Then tighten the cap again. Allow time.

ASK What did you notice?

Why do you think that happened?

SAY It might not feel like it, but air has weight. The weight of the air coming through the cap created a pressure that pushed water out through the holes. But there are other ways to create pressure!

Have kids take turns squeezing the bottles over the pans to let a little bit of water out.

SAY The force of your hands making the bottles smaller also created water pressure! That’s kind of like the ocean. You see, water is heavy. A small amount like what was in your bottle might not seem heavy. But when you have as much water as the oceans have, that weighs a lot! And that means that the deeper you go in the ocean, the more weight is on top of you. That’s called water pressure!

If you went scuba diving in deep water, it might feel something like this.

Press down on one of your helper’s shoulders.

Have kids form pairs and take turns pressing down on each other’s shoulders.

Sound the Dive Whistle to regain kids’ attention.

ASK Call out words that describe how that felt. Accept answers from the whole group.

SAY When scuba divers dive, they have to come up slowly so they can get used to there being less and less pressure as they go up. Otherwise they can get really sick!

Sometimes in life, things can feel heavy. I don’t mean carrying heavy things; I mean when things feel heavy in our hearts. We might feel under pressure trying to do well in school, struggling with a friendship, or stressing because our parents are fighting.

ASK What things make you feel under pressure? Talk about that with your Crew. Crew Leaders, you share first. Allow time.

SAY I’m so thankful God is a friend we can trust. (Thanks, God!) That means even when we feel a lot of pressure, we can turn to God for help.

Ocean Currents

SAY So we’ve explored how air and water pressure impact the oceans. But there’s something else going on in the oceans: currents.

If you’ve ever been to an ocean beach, you’ve probably seen the end result of these currents—waves crashing onto the shore!

But those currents start way, way before the waves we see at the beach.

Way out in the middle of the ocean, currents are moving under the water. Let’s do an experiment that will help us picture what ocean currents might look like.

Give each Crew a Tidal Tablet, some pepper, and a jar of water.



★ SCUBA CLUE ★

The more you demonstrate experiments upfront first, the better prepared kids and Crew Leaders will be to try it out.

FIELD TEST FINDING

We tested a variety of fizzy tablets and powders to find one that made lots of bubbles, added color, and was safe. We also tried a variety of items that could represent the “non-living” things—like glitter, rice, and beads. Pepper was the winner!



FIELD TEST FINDING

When our Imagination Station Leader shared about her own worries, you could see the empathy on kids' faces! That helped set the tone for their own stories, too.

SAY The jar you have will be the ocean water. But there's nothing in the water!

ASK What kinds of nonliving things are in the ocean?

SAY We need to put some things in our ocean! Let's add pepper to be like [repeat some of the things kids named].

Have kids sprinkle pepper into the jar without touching or shaking the jar. The pepper should mostly cover the surface of the water.

ASK What is the pepper doing?

SAY Right now our ocean doesn't have any currents, so the pepper is staying still. But when I say so, you'll add something that will make the currents start moving!

Have Crews add the Tidal Tablets to their jars. Then Crew Leaders can hold up the jars while keeping them still so kids can see the pepper moving up and down as the water bubbles and turns blue. (If possible, it helps to hold the jar up so it has a window or light-colored background behind it.)

Because of the ocean currents, things in the ocean are always moving. Even things that aren't alive! So when people litter plastic that ends up in the ocean, it's moving up and down and all around, causing problems for sea animals that might eat it or get trapped in it.

Things in our lives are always changing, too. Sometimes those changes can be scary or even feel dangerous, like plastic in the ocean!

ASK Let's pause and think what this experiment can help us discover about our trustworthy friend God. What connections do you see? Welcome insights and responses.

SAY Life, like the ocean, is always changing. But God doesn't change! Life can shake us up, but God is always the same. No matter what changes come our way, God is a friend we can trust. *(Thanks, God!)*

ASK How can God help when you feel worried? Take responses from the whole group.

Pause and pray for kids, thanking God for being a trustworthy friend to them. Ask God to calm any worries or fears kids may be struggling with.

Sand Dollar Surprise

SAY Ocean currents wash lots of things up on the beach. Like this! Hold up a Surprising Sand Dollar.

Sand dollars like this one are just the shell of something that was alive! When sand dollars are alive, they can move on their own in the ocean. They're covered in tiny spines, and they have tube feet to help them move along the ocean floor. They can even bury themselves totally under the sand to hide from predators!

Now, some scientists have wondered how something this small and light can stop moving where the currents are so strong close to the shore. The answer is that sand dollars can sort through the sand and swallow little pieces of something found in sand, called magnetite. The magnetite works like an anchor and holds them in place! Let's think about something:

ASK How does God help us stay strong when life gets rough?

SAY God can be like the magnetite a sand dollar eats, anchoring us even when life is moving and changing all around us. He'll help us through it!

But there's something else I haven't told you about sand dollars.

ASK What do you think you would see if I broke this sand dollar in half?

SAY Well, I hope you trust me when I tell you that there's actually something very cool inside. Do you want to see what it is?

Have your helpers give a Surprising Sand Dollar to each Crew Leader. When everyone has one, direct Crew Leaders to break them into two or three pieces. (Almost like breaking a cookie.) Small pieces that look like doves will fall out!

ASK What did you find inside the sand dollar?

Now that you know a sand dollar is a shell of something that was alive, what do you think those little pieces are?

SAY Those little doves you found inside were once the teeth of a sand dollar! I told you there'd be something cool inside! And if you trusted me when I told you that, you can take a sand dollar tooth home with you to remind you that **God is a friend we can trust.** (Thanks, God!)

I'm so glad all you oceanographers were able to join me today. I'll see you tomorrow for more sciency fun!



FIELD TEST FINDING

We weren't very clear in our instructions to Crew Leaders, and one teen leader smashed the sand dollar into hundreds of tiny pieces! Make sure you emphasize that they only need to break it into a few pieces.

DAY 4:

God is a friend forever.

Bible Verse: "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying." (John 11:25)

Bible Story: Jesus dies and comes back to life. (John 18-20)



Sing & Play Splash

- Learn the Day 4 Bible Point and verse, and meet Bible Memory Buddy Waylon.
- Share God Sightings and add fish to the God Sightings Celebration Spot.
- Sing Scuba songs.
- Comfort a discouraged Sydney with the truth that God is a friend forever.



Deep Bible Adventures

Meet one of the witnesses to Jesus' death...and miraculous, life-giving resurrection!



Tidal Treats



Bubble Bites



Treasure Treats

Sticky Scripture

Play "Freeze Dance" and discover how Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Read John 11:25 and hear how Jesus made a way to be God's friend forever!



Imagination Station

Experiment with flotation to see how God is a friend forever.



Fin-tastic Finale

See how Jesus makes a way for a forever friendship with God, and experience how heaven will be a place without sadness or pain.



Reef Rec



Aqueduct



Receding Reefs



Whale of a Tail

At **Scuba VBS**, the daily Bible Point is carefully integrated into each station's activities for unforgettable Bible learning. See how your station reinforces today's Bible Point.

god is a friend forever.

Bible Story: Jesus dies and comes back to life. (John 18–20)

Bible Verse: “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.” (John 11:25)

Diving Into the Bible

Betrayed by a friend, accused by religious leaders, and arrested by the Temple guards, Jesus’ future seemed grim. The religious leaders saw Jesus as a threat, a liar, and a blasphemer...and apparently the crowds demanding his crucifixion agreed. His hurried trial ended in a death sentence—one usually reserved for criminals. Jesus died on a cross, under a sign mocking him as King of the Jews. His fearful friends scattered, leaving two men who’d followed Jesus from afar to prepare his body for burial. Jesus’ lifeless body lay in a borrowed tomb, sealed behind a heavy gravestone. It seemed like the end...but was it?

Three days later, Jesus’ friends discovered the stone had been moved and the tomb was empty! Jesus’ body hadn’t been stolen or moved—Jesus appeared repeatedly to his followers! They saw him, felt his breath, and touched the wounds on his hands! Jesus turned the *end* into *eternity*!

Connecting With Kids

Jesus’ followers felt they’d lost their closest friend forever. Kids have felt that, too. Friends come and go. They move away, discover new interests, make new friends, or sometimes just abandon us. The idea of “forever” seems impossible. Yet God had something surprising in store! Jesus’ death wasn’t the end—it was just the beginning of a friendship that will last into eternity! God always has been and always will be—he is forever! And even better, his love for us is forever, too! Things like sadness, loneliness, and worry won’t last forever. Today, share the exciting news that a friendship with God is one that will never ever end!



Why It Matters

Jesus died on a cross, paying the price for the sins of the world once and for all. Because of Jesus’ sacrifice, kids can have a forever friendship with God.



Day 4 Supplies:

Day 4 Talk-Starter Poster

spray bottle of water, set to mist



• large bowls of water (1 per Crew in a rotation; reset between each rotation)

bin of water-safe items, some that will float and some that won't



- clear plastic cups of water (1 per Crew)
- containers of salt (1 per Crew in a rotation)
- spoons (1 per Crew)
- eggs (1 per Crew in a rotation)
- Floating Message Papers (from the Crew Teaching Kit*) (1 per child)
- paper clips (1 per Crew)
- scissors (just for Leader)

*available from group.com or your Group VBS supplier

Prepare to Dive In

- Hang the Day 4 Talk-Starter Poster on the wall.
- Hang the poster of Waylon from the Mini Buddies Poster Pack.
- Practice adding salt to make an egg float so you know approximately how much each Crew will need for the containers you have.
- Cut apart the verses on each sheet of Floating Message Paper, making sure to cut just *outside* the black lines rather than directly on the lines. Paper clip the slips together, so the messages from one sheet are all clipped together. This gives kids in each Crew a variety of verses to choose from.
- Create a basket of supplies for each Crew. (You can restock between rotations.) You'll need one supply basket per Crew.

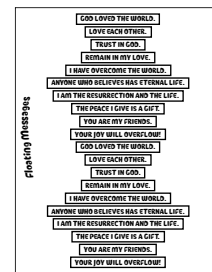
Contents for Crew supply baskets

For each Crew member:

- ✓ 1 Floating Message Paper slip (from the Crew Teaching Kit*)

For the whole Crew:

- ✓ 1 set of fish scale stickers of each color (from the O-fish-al Ballot Talk-Starter Pack*)
- ✓ 1 container of salt
- ✓ 1 egg



★ SCUBA CLUE ★

The type of salt you use makes a difference! We put 1½ cups of water in our cups, and then tried three types of salt: Epsom, sea salt, and iodized salt. Sea salt required the least (4 tablespoons), while iodized salt required 6 tablespoons and Epsom salt 8! We also noticed that it *really* made a difference to stir well after each tablespoon to help the salt dissolve.

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

Need ideas for your bins of water-safe items? Raid your craft closet! You may find things like beads, pompoms, buttons, foam pieces, coins, marbles, Legos, and more that would be great for sciency fun!

Got Imagination?

Play the Sing & Play Splash Music as kids arrive.

Greet kids enthusiastically as they enter Imagination Station. Then have Crews sit on the floor.

SAY Welcome to Imagination Station! Today we're learning that **God is a friend forever.** (*Thanks, God!*) To explore that idea, we'll be experimenting with things that float!

But first, I think you may know what I need to ask...

ASK Did you bring your imagination today?

SAY Hmm... This could be a problem. Scientists have to have imagination and curiosity as they study the oceans! Fortunately for us, I got some great ideas from my friend Waylon! Point to the Waylon poster. Waylon told me that whale sharks have a layer of mucus covering them. That mucus protects them!

That made me think we could all be covered with imagination!

Spray kids with a water bottle set to mist.

It worked! I can see that we're all covered with a nice layer of imagination. Let's use that imagination as we answer our talk-starter question!

Answer a Talk-Starter Question

Have Kit Carriers get the Crew baskets.

SAY Normally when we think of boats, we think they float! But not all boats float. Now it's time to decide which kind of boat you'd like to ride in.

ASK Would you rather sail on a cruise ship or travel in a submarine?

SAY Talk about your answer with your Crew, and get your fish scales ready. Cruisers will use yellow fish scales, and submariners will use green.

Call Crews up one at a time to place their fish scales on the O-fish-al Ballots.

It looks like [color with more scales] is the winner! I guess I better book us a trip on a [cruise ship or submarine].

Whether you decided to be in a boat that floats or a boat that doesn't, we all need to know why some things float! So that's what we'll explore today!

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

You might think getting covered with "mucus" is gross, but the kids will love it!



FIELD TEST FINDING

We didn't offer bins of waterproof items and asked kids to find something around the room and make sure their Crew Leader said it was okay to put in water. Kids didn't put anything unsafe in the water, but they *did* raid our supplies for the rest of the day and the next day! Make sure to limit kids to your bin of goodies.

Does It Float?

Distribute a bowl of water to each Crew.

SAY We all know that some things float in water and other things sink. Point to the bin of items. **Pick something from this bin, and say whether you think it would float or sink. Then test your theory!**

Allow time for some experimenting, and then have your helpers collect the bowls and place any items back into the bin. (You'll redistribute the bowls later.)

ASK What surprised you?

Why do you think the things that floated did?

A Floating Egg

Hold up an egg.

ASK How many of you think an egg would float? Raise your hand if you do think eggs would float. Pause. Ask a few kids with their hands up to explain their reasoning, and a few kids with their hands down to explain theirs.

SAY Let's see who's right!

Place the egg carefully into a clear cup.

You might think eggs have air in them, so they would float. But good eggs don't have air!

Of course, we've been testing what can float in regular water from a faucet.

ASK How is water from the tap different from ocean water?

SAY One big difference is that ocean water is salt water! And salt water behaves a little differently from fresh water. That's because the salt makes the water heavier! The salt dissolves in the water and can help hold things up.

If we add enough salt to our cups, we'll see our eggs start to float! But before we start, show with your hands how much salt you think you'll need to add. Pause.

Well, I'll let you try it to see if you're right!

Have your helpers give each Crew Leader a cup of water, a spoon, and an egg. Crew Leaders can gently place the egg into the cup. (Have paper towels on hand in case any eggs break.)

Have Crew Leaders let each child add a little salt until the egg floats. Be sure Crew Leaders gently stir to dissolve the salt as kids add it.



SAY That egg reminds me of something. It reminds me that we've all done bad things—and not done the good things God wants us to do. That's called sin. Sin makes us sink like the egg! And on our own, there's nothing we can do to get unsunk. Our friend God knew that was a big problem, because he loves us so much! So he sent his Son, Jesus, to come and save us.

ASK How is Jesus like the salt in our water?

SAY Jesus came to save us! Like the salt lifted the egg, Jesus lifts us up out of sin! And Jesus helps us live with God forever. **God is a friend forever.** (*Thanks, God!*)

Collect the cups of water so your helpers can dump them out, rinse them, and refill them with fresh water for the next rotation. Rinse the eggs and save them for the next rotation, too.

A Floating Message

ASK Do you think *paper* would float?

SAY Paper normally *would* float. But today we have some paper that's a bit unusual.

Hold up one of the Floating Message slips.

ASK What do you think would happen if I put *this* paper in water?


SAY Let's see if you're right! I'm going to hand out a bowl of water for your Crew, but don't touch it yet.

Give each Crew its bowl of water from the "Does it Float?" activity.

In your basket, you'll find slips of paper with messages on them. Crew Leaders, you can read the messages aloud to your Crew. Each person can choose *one* message and hold on to it for now. Tell your Crew why you chose that message. Allow time.

Does everyone have their message? When I say go, we'll gently lay our messages on the water, then lift up our hands over our heads and see what happens. Ready, set, go!

Let's let that sit for a bit—no touching! While we wait, let's sing "Forever God, Forever Love."

 Play "Forever God, Forever Love." Lead kids in doing the hand motions to the song.

Track 5

After the song, ask kids to take a look at their papers—without touching.

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

Make sure no one drops the egg into the cup too hard. It may break!

FIELD TEST FINDING

It takes more salt than you might expect to make the egg float. We tried this experiment in the same bowls kids used for "Does It Float?" and we ran out of salt! Using a cup will allow you to use less salt, but you'll still want to have plenty on hand!

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

We tried this in both warm water and cold water straight from the tap. We thought warm water might break up the paper quicker, but it actually slowed the reaction!

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

At our field test, we had one Crew stir their water a little bit. It does make the paper dissolve faster, but it also makes the letters split apart and get mixed up! We've added some things to try to keep kids' hands busy. Make sure you remind them regularly not to touch the water or the papers!



FIELD TEST FINDING 🔍

Once again, on Day 4 we learned that leading kids in doing one step at a time, all together, will help you keep order and attention.

ASK Why do you think that happened?

SAY That paper was a special kind of paper made to fall apart in water. And it was printed with a special kind of ink that doesn't smudge when it gets wet. Instead, the letters stayed together and floated!

ASK The paper didn't last. What are some things in our world that don't last? Let kids call out answers.

What does this help us discover about God, our forever friend? Take kids insights and thoughts.

SAY Even things like mountains and oceans that seem permanent won't last forever. But God is a friend forever. (Thanks, God!) God will last forever, just like the messages on your paper lasted even after the paper disappeared!

Listen to these words Jesus said in Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth will disappear, but my words will never disappear."

The words on our papers were words from God, and God's words last forever! God is a friend forever. (Thanks, God!) I'll see you tomorrow for one more day of sciency fun!



DAY 5:

God is a friend for everyone.

Bible Verse: "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Bible Story: **Lydia believes in Jesus.** (Acts 16:11-15)

Sing & Play Splash

- Learn the Day 5 Bible Point and verse, and meet Bible Memory Buddy Octavia.
- Share God Sightings and add fish to the God Sightings Celebration Spot.
- Sing Scuba songs.
- Celebrate with Sydney, who's decided to dive for fun instead of treasure!



Deep Bible Adventures

Meet Lydia and discover how she began a friendship with Jesus.



Tidal Treats



Sticky Sand



Sea Food

Sticky Scripture

Explore John 3:16, play "Spot the Octopus," and find out who is "the world" that God loves.



Imagination Station

Discover just how vast the oceans are...and how big God's love is for everyone.



Fin-tastic Finale

Play a game to act out *all* the people God loves, then celebrate and remember to reach out with God's loving friendship.



Reef Rec



All In!



Feeding Frenzy



Wet Ones



At **Scuba VBS**, the daily Bible Point is carefully integrated into each station's activities for unforgettable Bible learning. See how your station reinforces today's Bible Point.

god is a friend for everyone.

Bible Story: Lydia believes in Jesus.
(Acts 16:11-15)

Bible Verse: “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

Diving Into the Bible

After Jesus returned to heaven, his followers knew they couldn't keep the amazing news of God's Son to themselves! A man named Paul devoted himself to traveling throughout the Mediterranean and Asia to let everyone know about Jesus. Paul wanted the world to know that Jesus—God's Son—had died, risen, and would give eternal life to all who believed. This good news meant life for Jews, non-Jews, people who believed in false gods—everyone!

During his first missionary journey, Paul met a group of women gathered near a river for prayer. These women believed in the one true God, but they hadn't heard about Jesus. Paul's words had a profound impact on one woman in particular—Lydia. This businesswoman insisted that she *and* her entire household get baptized! Because of Paul's message, she became the first Christian in Europe, and her home became one of the first churches.

Connecting With Kids

So much seems set out to divide us today. Kids hear adults compartmentalize people by race, political party, church denomination, “pro” or “anti” this-and-that—the list is endless. As a result, kids may view people in groups—groups they are (or aren't) part of. And too often, people view Christians as exclusive, seeking to keep people out. Yet God loves everyone! Jesus died for everyone! A friendship with God is a possibility for everyone! No one is left out or excluded from a friendship with God! How freeing...and unifying! Wrap up your week at Scuba VBS by challenging kids to view people in their world as those God dearly and desperately loves.



Why It Matters

Paul sailed to new lands to be sure everyone—including a businesswoman named Lydia—knew the good news of Jesus! This story can help kids understand that no one should be left out of God's loving friendship.

Day 5 Supplies:



- Day 5 Talk-Starter Poster
- pink crepe paper streamers (8 long pieces per helper, including yourself)



- pitchers of water (1 per rotation)
- blue food coloring
- 5 clear glasses



- Drip Droppers (from the Crew Teaching Kit*) (1 per Crew)
- measuring cup



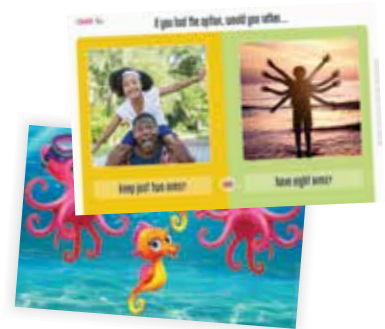
- teaspoon
- salt
- small slips of paper
- transparent tape
- marker
- cups of water (1 per Crew)
- Drip-Drop Heart (from the Crew Teaching Kit*) (1 per Crew)
- dish soap



*available from group.com or your Group VBS supplier

Prepare to Dive In

- Hang the Day 5 Talk-Starter Poster on the wall.
- Hang the poster of Octavia from the Mini Buddies Poster Pack.
- Assemble a set of 8 long pieces of pink crepe paper for yourself and each of your helpers.
- Using small slips of paper and tape, label the clear glasses as follows: rivers, swamps, lakes, groundwater, ice.
- Measure water for one pitcher per rotation so that the pitcher contains exactly 4 cups and 8 teaspoons of water. Dye the water blue.
- Remove the protective film layer from the Drip-Drop Hearts.
- Create a basket of supplies for each Crew. (You can restock between rotations.) You'll need one supply basket per Crew.



Contents for Crew supply baskets

For the whole Crew:

- ✓ 1 set of fish scale stickers of each color (from the O-fish-al Ballot Talk-Starter Pack*)
- ✓ 1 Drip-Drop Heart (from the Crew Teaching Kit*)
- ✓ 1 Drip Dropper (from the Crew Teaching Kit*)



★ SCUBA CLUE ★

Between rotations, you'll need to reset your glasses by pouring the water back into the used pitcher. However, since you added salt to the pitcher, it's great to have a newly measured pitcher for each rotation.

You can reuse the same pitchers and cups for Crews from one rotation to the next, as long as you have time to dump the cups and refill the pitchers.

Got Imagination?

Play the Sing & Play Splash Music as Crews arrive.

Greet kids enthusiastically as they enter Imagination Station. Then have Crews sit together on the floor.

SAY Welcome to our last day at Imagination Station! This week came and went like the ocean waves! I've had so much fun with you. So I need to make sure you're prepared for our final day at Imagination Station!

ASK Did you bring your imagination today?

SAY Since it's our last day at Scuba VBS, we're going to need loads and loads of imagination as we explore just how big the oceans are! Now sometimes it's hard to find imagination, but I think my friend Octavia can help us out. Gesture to the Octavia poster. With all those tentacles, she's sure to be brimming with imagination! Let's see if her tentacles can give you some imagination.

You and your helpers wave a set of eight streamers over each Crew.

I can see that you've all caught some imagination from Octavia! So let's get started.

FIELD TEST FINDING

We thought it would be fun to have Crews toss rolls of crepe paper all around the room. Whoops! It was fun, but it was really hard to regain everyone's attention. And kids pilfered pieces of crepe paper that distracted them for a while.



Answer a Talk-Starter Question

Invite Kit Carriers to each get a basket.

Point to the Day 5 Talk-Starter Poster.

SAY I'm curious about what it would be like to have eight arms instead of just two. I wonder which you'd prefer!

ASK If you had the option, would you rather keep just two arms or have eight?

SAY If you say two is for you, bring up a yellow fish scale. If you think eight would be great, bring up a green one!

Call Crews up one at a time to put fish scales on the O-fish-al Ballots.

Wow! It looks like [sum up the results of the vote].

If you like to give hugs, you might like eight arms so you could hug a lot of people at once! That reminds me of our Bible Point: **God is a friend for everyone.** (Thanks, God!) There's no limit to how many people he can show love to at once!

And check it out! Your fish started out this week with no scales, no color at all. But now all your fish are unique and colorful as we've learned more about our friends!



Measure the Oceans

SAY We've been learning that the oceans are *big*. I told you that more than 70% of the earth's surface is ocean and that most of the ocean floor hasn't been mapped yet. I told you that the deepest part of the ocean is deeper than Mount Everest is tall.

But it can be hard to picture things like that. So, as curious scientists, let's see just how much of the water on earth is in the oceans.

Set out your five labeled glasses and a premeasured pitcher.

I'll need some help measuring these different types of water.

Ask a child to come help you measure the first measurement.

First let's look at rivers. Hold up a premeasured pitcher of water.

ASK If we imagine that this is all the water in the world, how much of it do you think is in rivers?

SAY It's actually just one little drop of this whole pitcher! Have your helper hold the "rivers" glass while you use an eye dropper to add one drop in it.

FIELD TEST FINDING

Interestingly, we found that almost all of our girls chose two arms, while our boys chose eight!

Repeat with the following, inviting a child to hold each glass and letting kids guess for each type of water:

- swamps: about 5 drops
- lakes: about 40 drops (kids can count to 40)
- groundwater: a little under 2 teaspoons
- ice: 4 teaspoons
- oceans: hold up the pitcher—all the water left is oceans! (It's about 4 cups and 2 teaspoons.)

Have your helpers remain upfront, holding their glasses in order.



SAY

When you think about how much more water is in the oceans than anything else, it's a *lot!* Maybe you've seen a big lake or a rushing river, and it seemed like a lot of water. But now you can see just how much water is in the oceans compared with rivers and lakes!

And remember, the ocean is salt water. Dump a bunch of salt in the "ocean" pitcher.

We can't drink salt water!

As oceanographers, we're seeing just how big our job is. We have a lot to explore! But let's see what this science can show us about God!

Stand by the "rivers" child.

Some people think God is only a friend to people who are basically perfect.

Stand by the "swamps" child.

Or maybe God is only a friend to people who've never missed a week of church.

Stand by the “lakes” child.

SAY Some might say God is only a friend to people who’ve never said a bad word.

Stand by the “groundwater” child.

Or that God is only a friend to people who pray and read their Bible every day—no skipping!

Stand by the “ice” child.

Maybe God is only a friend to people who do enough good things to earn his love.

Stand by the “oceans” child.

But we know that God is a friend for everyone. *(Thanks, God!)* He’s not just a friend to small groups of people. Through Jesus, God offers his friendship to anyone!

Have kids all pour the water from their glasses back into the pitcher and return to their Crews.

Measure the Drops

SAY The water we used for our experiment was what scientists call “to scale.” We didn’t *really* have all the water on the planet in our glasses! We just showed what fractions of water are in each kind of body of water.

Imagine if we had to count how many drops of water are in the *real* oceans...one drop at a time.

Let’s practice counting!

Have Crew Leaders get out their Drip-Drop Hearts and Drip Droppers, and give each Crew a cup of water.

ASK How many drops of water do you think can fit on that one heart before it spills off? Make sure each Crew member gets to make a guess.

SAY Let’s see if you’re right. First, let’s do some practice squeezes so you know how to squeeze just one drop of water at a time.

Have kids each do a “practice squeeze” where they use the Drip Dropper to pick up water and put it back into the cup so they know how to squeeze just one drop.

Now let’s count how many drops can fit on our hearts. You’ll each carefully add one drop, then pass the dropper to the next person.

Have kids in a Crew take turns putting the Drip Dropper into the cup of water and squeezing out one drop of water onto the heart.



FIELD TEST FINDING

As we hoped, kids guessed very few drops of water would fit on the heart—between one and three! Boy, were they surprised when they fit as many as 20 drops!

★ SCUBA CLUE ★

While this experiment could be done on a coin, we found that the water takes on the heart shape of the Drip-Drop Heart. This makes a great visual reminder of God's big love!

As kids add drops, the Crew will count together. Kids will stop counting when the water spills over the edge.

ASK How many drops did your Crew fit?

What did you notice about this experiment?

How might this remind you of God's love for everyone?

SAY You might have thought that little heart could fit only a few drops of water. But there was room for so many! That's because water molecules like to stick together. That made the water pile up until it just couldn't anymore.

God's friendship is like that, too. God loves collecting friends! **God is a friend for everyone.** (*Thanks, God!*)

Eventually, your heart *did* run out of room. But God never runs out of room for more friends!

Now, since we're scientists, I think we could do a little more experimenting!

ASK If we add a little soap to the water before dropping it onto the heart, do you think the heart could hold more drops or fewer? Explain why.

SAY Let's see! Have your helpers squirt a couple of drops of dish soap into each Crew's cup of water, and have Crew Leaders gently stir the soap in with the Drip Dropper, trying not to create bubbles. Have Crews dry off their hearts and try again with the soapy water.

ASK What happened this time?

Why do you think the soapy water didn't work as well?

SAY Water is "sticky." It might not feel sticky to us, but it likes to stick to itself. Remember how we explored surface tension the other day? When we add soap to water, it makes it less sticky. It reminds me of how sometimes we don't stick very well with other people.

ASK What kinds of reasons do we find *not* to love other people?

SAY It's easy for us to stick with people we like...and be less "sticky" with people who are different from us. But **God is a friend for everyone.** (*Thanks, God!*) Even if we aren't always loving, God is!

We've had so much fun trying to measure the ocean. But really, the ocean is way too big for us to measure! We can't measure it in cups (hold up the measuring cup), and we certainly can't count each drop one at a time. And we also can't measure God's love. **God is a friend for everyone.** (*Thanks, God!*)

SAY Let's help people know God is their friend by giving them these hearts. As a Crew, pick one person who has helped this week at VBS. Maybe it's someone who served you a snack or who cleaned up after everyone. Once you've all agreed on a person, make sure to find that person later today and give them the heart as you say, **"God is a friend for everyone."** (*Thanks, God!*)

Allow time for Crews to discuss and agree on who will get their hearts. If you're running short on time, simply let Crew Leaders take the hearts and encourage Crews to decide later.

I'm glad I got to have so much sciency fun with all you oceanographers this week! I hope you'll continue to use scientific curiosity to show you all about the awesomeness of God. Science can always point us to God because science is just studying things God made! So have fun exploring God through science!



Imagination Station

Day 1



Explore unseen things in the ocean to discover that God is a friend who's real!



Day 2



Experiment with different modes of transportation and discover how God's love empowers us.



Day 3



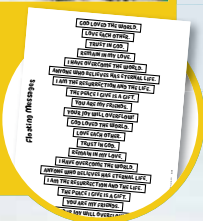
Discover how ocean currents and pressure create constant movement in the ocean—and learn to trust God as our lives keep moving and changing.



Day 4



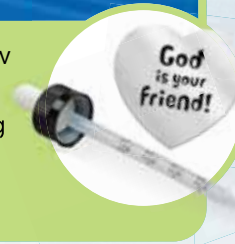
Experiment with flotation to see how God is a friend forever.



Day 5



Discover just how vast the oceans are...and how big God's love is for everyone.




Amazing science experiments that grow faith, stretch imaginations, and delight kids!



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