



JONAH

BIBLE PASSAGE: Jonah 1–4

FOCUS VERSES: Titus 2:11; Ephesians 2:8; 4:32; John 1:16

Summary: God called the prophet Jonah to warn Nineveh, but Jonah disobeyed and sailed in the opposite direction. A huge storm hit, and the sailors threw Jonah into the sea. God sent a big fish to swallow him. Inside the fish, Jonah prayed and admitted he was wrong. The fish spit him out, and this time Jonah went to Nineveh. He warned the people, and the people responded by believing in God. Jonah was upset that God showed grace, and God used a vine to remind him to have grace for others.



MONTHLY *Memory Verse*

*Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised,
and His greatness is unsearchable.*

(PSALM 145:3)



God gives grace.

We will go deeper in God's truth by answering these questions:



WHAT IS GOD'S GRACE?
God's grace is His free gift of forgiveness and salvation that we don't earn, but He gives because He loves us.



SHOULD WE SHOW GRACE TO OTHERS?
Because we recognize the grace God has shown us, we can show kindness and forgiveness to others.



HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?
Kids will reflect and respond to the truth they learned about God.

Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: PRAYING ALOUD

Not all kids are comfortable praying aloud. Some will be unsure what to do when called on to pray. Here are some ways for kids to practice praying so they become more comfortable praying aloud.

- **Fill in the Blank.** During prayer time, read a statement and invite kids to fill in the blank aloud together. For example: "God, today we thank You for _____. After today's lesson, would You help us to _____?"
- **All at Once.** Invite kids to spread out around the room and pray aloud at the same time. Remind kids that they are not listening to each other, they are all talking to God at once.
- **Praying Scripture.** Select a Scripture verse or passage from the day's lesson or the unit's theme and invite kids to fill in their name or pray that Scripture aloud.
- **Praying for Others.** Invite kids to call out the name of someone they need to pray for. For example: "God, we bring to You all these people who are sick." (Kids would then say someone's name aloud together.)

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: GUILT

One study revealed that as many as 40 percent of believers struggle with guilt because they are afraid they are displeasing God.* Guilt is a normal human emotion that the Holy Spirit often uses to convict of sin. Second Corinthians 7:10 says: *For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.* The feeling of guilt is designed to bring us back to God, not to consume us with fear and take over our lives. Some kids struggle with guilt, especially kids who have experienced trauma. In today's lesson, kids will learn the grace God shows us when we mess up. Help kids understand that guilt can lead us to turn away from our sin and receive God's grace, like Jonah did. Instead of serving God out of guilt, we can serve Him out of gratitude for His grace.

*For more resources on this topic, check out:
britecurriculum.com/resources

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Forgiveness: not holding someone's wrongs against them

Grace: giving what is not deserved

Omnipotent: having unlimited power; stronger than anything

Salvation: rescue from sin and separation from God

Bible TEACHING

JONAH (JONAH 1-4)



PRAY: God, thank You for this amazing story. You saved Jonah even when he disobeyed. Show us Your heart to rescue those far from You, and help us to be thankful and show grace like You. Amen.

SUPPLIES:

Bible, teaching slides, printable pages, writing supplies (1 per kid), teaching images

PREP:

Print the printable pages (1 story picture page per kid). Keep the Answer Key with you.

LEADER TIP:

For smaller groups, print the story images and tape them to the wall in order.

Pass out a printable page and writing supply to each kid.

Say: The pictures on your page represent parts of Jonah's story, but they are not in the right order. Take just a moment to guess the right order by writing numbers 1 through 7 next to the pictures. Feel free to work with your neighbors!

Give kids a moment to write in their numbers.

Say: I'll reveal the right picture as we go so make sure to check your answers!

Say: Jonah was a prophet in the northern kingdom of Israel. One day, God commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh, a city in the enemy country of Assyria.

Show teaching image: Go!

Tell kids they should have put a number 1 by this picture.

Say: God wanted Jonah to tell the people of Nineveh that they were doing evil things. Instead, Jonah went in the opposite direction. He refused to go to Nineveh and disobeyed God. He boarded a ship, determined to get as far away as he could. God sent a great storm, tossing the ship among the waves.

Show teaching image: Ship in Storm.

Tell kids they should have put a number 2 by this picture.

Bible TEACHING CONTINUED

Say: Jonah was sleeping downstairs when the men on the ship came to him, asking him to pray for his God to stop the storm. Jonah knew that the storm was his fault. He told the men to throw him into the sea. They threw Jonah into the sea, and as soon as he sank beneath the water, the storm stopped.

Say: But God still had a rescue plan for Jonah, and it was ... interesting.

Show teaching illustration: Jonah Swallowed by the Fish.

Read Jonah 1:17 directly from the Bible: *And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.*

Show teaching image: Big Fish.

Tell kids they should have put a number 3 by this picture.

Say: Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights. Finally, Jonah prayed to God.

Show teaching image: Praying Hands.

Tell kids they should have put a number 4 by this picture.

Say: He prayed, "I was in great trouble, and I cried out to You. You saved me from death! I was about to die and I remembered You. Salvation comes from You alone."

Say: Then God commanded the fish to spit out Jonah onto dry land. Again, God told Jonah, "Go to Nineveh and give them My message."

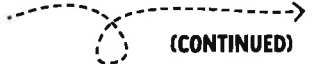
Say: This time Jonah obeyed. He went to Nineveh and warned them that God would destroy their city in 40 days.

Show teaching illustration: Jonah Tells the Ninevites God's Message.

Show teaching image: Welcome to Nineveh.

Tell kids they should have put a number 5 by this picture.

Say: The people listened! They cried out to God, repented of their sins and believed in Him. God showed mercy and didn't destroy their city.

 (CONTINUED)

Bible TEACHING CONTINUED

Say: But Jonah was mad again. He watched the city, waiting for God to destroy it. He was angry that God showed grace to Nineveh. Then God caused a vine to grow over Jonah's head, and it gave him shade.

Show teaching image: Vine.

Tell kids they should have put a number 6 by this picture.

Say: Then God sent a worm to eat the plant.

Show teaching image: Worm.

Tell kids they should have put a number 7 by this picture.

Say: Jonah was angry. God told him, "You are worried about one plant that you didn't even grow. I am more concerned about this great city of people who don't know Me." Grace is when we get something we don't deserve. God showed grace to the people of Nineveh even though they had sinned, just like He showed grace to Jonah by rescuing him even though he ran away. Our God gives grace.

Show teaching slide: Point to Jesus.



POINT TO JESUS

Say: The story of Jonah is a reflection of God's Big Story. God, the Creator, is in charge of all things, but when He told Jonah what to do, Jonah did the opposite. Jonah chose sin. But God rescued Jonah and redeemed Him, or brought him back from his mess. He restored Jonah to his mission and restored an entire city as a result. In the same way, we all sin and disobey our God. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, He shows us grace and redeems us. He restores us to a right relationship with God and one day, Jesus will return and make all things new.



STORY PICTURES

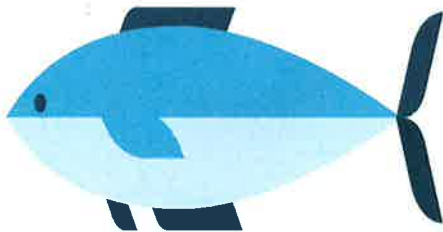
















ANSWER KEY



5



4



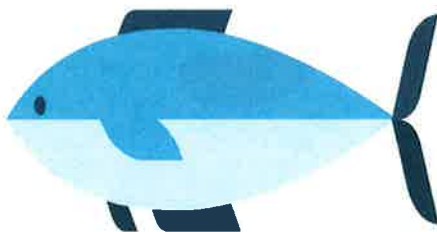
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1



2



3



7

Small Group ROADMAP

1

BELONG (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

MOVEMENT MEMORY

SUPPLIES: None

OR

GUARD AND STATUES

SUPPLIES: Upbeat worship music, music player

2

BELIEVE (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

TOSS THE VERSE

SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, ball (1 per kid)

OR

ON THE RIGHT PATH

SUPPLIES: Bible, printable pages, scissors, 20 pieces of colored paper, painter's tape, 2 paper bags

3



DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4

BECOME (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

SOAKED IN GRACE

SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, printable page, water, large pitcher, cups (1 per kid), plastic container, plastic figurine, paper towels

OR

GIVING GRACE

SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, red paper (1 per kid), scissors, self-adhesive bandages (2 per kid)



MOVEMENT MEMORY

SUPPLIES:

None

PREP:

None

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Be mindful in choosing which kid will go first. Let kids who struggle with multistep activities be early in the order.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Welcome each kid by name and welcome any new kids to the group.*
2. **Discuss:** What was the best and worst part of your week?
3. **Discuss:** This month we are learning that God is greater than anything! How have you seen God's greatness this week?
4. *Gather kids in a standing circle.*
5. **Say:** Let's play a memory game!
6. **Say:** The first person will make a movement like clapping, jumping, waving or whatever movement you want to make without leaving our circle. The next person will make that movement and then make one of their own. The third person will make both movements and then one of their own. We will continue until we make it all the way around the circle.
7. **Say:** Are you ready? Make sure you are paying careful attention!
8. *Play the game. If anyone messes up, be encouraging and give them as many chances as they need to succeed. Show them the motions again if needed.*
9. **Discuss:** Was it hard to follow what everyone was doing? Would it have been easier to just do your own movements?

**ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:**

Today we are learning about Jonah. God gave Jonah grace when he messed up and didn't follow God's directions.



GUARD AND STATUES

SUPPLIES:

Upbeat worship music, music player

PREP:

None

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Welcome each kid by name and welcome any new kids to the group.*
2. **Discuss:** What was the best and worst part of your week?
3. **Discuss:** This month we are learning that God is greater than anything! How have you seen God's greatness this week?
4. **Say:** Let's play a game!
5. **Say:** I will choose one of you to be the "Guard." The rest of you will be "Statues" who will come to life when the Guard isn't looking.
6. *Choose one kid to be the Guard.*
7. **Say:** The Guard will stand facing the door. The Statues will come to life by dancing and moving around. The Guard will turn around and try to catch the Statues moving. If the Guard sees you moving, you will sit down. Then the Guard will turn around again. The remaining Statues will dance and move again, and the Guard will try to catch you!
8. *Start the worship music and play until all Statues have been caught.*
9. *Play as many rounds as time allows, choosing a new Guard each time.*
10. **Discuss:** What was the consequence for getting caught by the Guard?

**ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:**

Today we are learning about Jonah and the consequences he faced for not obeying God's instructions.



TOSS THE VERSE

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, teaching slide, ball (1 per kid)

PREP:

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide.

LEADER TIP: Use any easy and safe supply you have on hand to toss back and forth.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Have the memory verse posted for kids to reference during the activity. You can erase a few words at a time as they get quicker!

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find Psalm 145:3 in their Bibles. Read it aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** How did God show His greatness to Jonah? How did God show His greatness to the Ninevites?
3. **Say:** God showed grace to Jonah and the Ninevites. He gave them forgiveness when they did not deserve it.
4. **Discuss:** What is God's grace?
5. **Say:** God's grace is His free gift of forgiveness and salvation that we don't earn, but He gives because He loves us.
6. **Say:** Jonah was tossed into the sea, but God showed His greatness and grace.
7. **Say:** In pairs, you will toss a ball back and forth and alternate saying the words of our verse. For example, the first person will say "Great" and toss the ball to their partner. Their partner will say "is" and toss it back. You will go back and forth until you have said the entire verse.
8. *Divide kids into pairs and give each pair a ball. Encourage kids to practice tossing the ball back and forth and saying the verse. If anyone makes a mistake or drops the ball, remind kids that God is still great, even when we mess up.*
9. *If time allows, have kids say the verse again but change who begins the verse.*

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Just like Jonah, we don't always get things right, but God is still great. God showed His greatness by giving grace and forgiveness even when Jonah and the people of Nineveh didn't deserve it. Because God is so great and full of grace, He is always worthy of our praise.



ON THE RIGHT PATH

SUPPLIES:

Bible, printable pages, scissors, 20 pieces of colored paper, painter's tape, 2 paper bags

PREP:

Print the printable page on cardstock and cut out (1 Path Card and 1 Number Card per kid). Tape the colored paper on the floor to create a winding, life-size game board path. Place the Path Cards in one paper bag and the Number Cards in the other.

LEADER TIP: Game Clues: There are 30,000 known fish species in the world! Look up how many people live in your city before beginning the activity.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Some kids may struggle with regulating their emotions during this activity. Prep them beforehand to let them know they will feel some frustration.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Discuss:** What did God do when Jonah ran away from Nineveh? How did God respond to the Ninevites?
2. **Discuss:** What is God's grace?
3. **Say:** God's grace is His free gift of forgiveness and salvation that we don't earn, but He gives because He loves us.
4. **Say:** Jonah went on a long journey when God told him to go to Nineveh. Let's play a game where we go on a journey too!
5. **Say:** Everyone will choose a Path Card and a Number Card. I will read the question on the Path Card. If you answer correctly, you will move forward the number of spaces it says on your Number Card. If you get it wrong, you will move back to the beginning and get a chance to start over.
6. *Play the game and help kids as needed. If kids get an answer wrong, remind them that the consequence is going back to the beginning but then show grace and allow them to continue as they were. Some of the questions are designed to be difficult to answer. For example: $1,403 \times 5 = 7,015$. If needed, reuse the Number and Path Cards to ensure everyone can finish the path.*
7. **Discuss:** What did I give you if you messed up?
8. **Discuss:** What does God give us when we mess up?
9. **Read:** Ephesians 2:8.



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

We all mess up and need God's grace and forgiveness every day! I am so grateful that we have a God who loves us so much!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

Discuss: How does this true story from the Bible show us that God is good?

Say: God could have left Jonah in the belly of the fish. That's what he deserved! Instead, God showed His goodness by giving Jonah grace. Jonah got another chance, and God's goodness was displayed again when Jonah preached to Nineveh. The whole nation was spared when they turned to God.

Read Psalm 145:9 directly from the Bible: *The LORD is good to all, and His mercy is over all that He has made.*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... GUILT?

Discuss: Have you ever felt guilty for doing something wrong?

Discuss: How can guilt be good? How can guilt be bad?

Discuss: What does the Bible have to say about that?

Say: Some people struggle with feeling guilty even after they've been forgiven. Some people struggle with guilt for things that aren't even their fault. God gave us the feeling of guilt to help us realize we should turn to Him and away from our sin. Once we are forgiven, we don't have to feel guilty anymore. Romans 8:1 says: *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.* Once Jesus forgives us, we are no longer punished. There may be consequences for what we did, but God isn't mad at us for what we did. God forgives us and gives us a new start. God didn't create us to live in guilt. He sent Jesus so that we could live free of guilt, forgiven by Him.



SOAKED IN GRACE

SUPPLIES:

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, printable page, water, large pitcher, cups (1 per kid), plastic container, plastic figurine, paper towels

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Print the printable page. Place the figurine in the plastic container. Fill the pitcher with water.

LEADER TIP: Label cups with kids' names to deepen the analogy.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Discuss:** What did Jonah do when he was angry about God's grace?
2. **Discuss:** How should Jonah have reacted instead?
3. **Read:** Ephesians 4:32.
4. **Discuss:** Should we show grace to others?
5. **Say:** Because we recognize the grace God has shown us, we can show kindness and forgiveness to others.
6. **Read:** John 1:16.
7. *Pour water from the pitcher into cups (1 per kid).*
8. *Show kids the plastic figurine in the container and give everyone a cup of water.*
9. **Say:** Your cup of water represents the grace that God has given you, like the verse we just read. I will read some situations to you, and we will talk about how we could show grace in these situations. Then we will pour some of the grace we've been given on this figurine.
10. *Read and discuss the situations on the printable page. After each situation, have kids pour out some of their water on the figurine in the plastic container.*
11. **Say:** Look at the person. They are covered in grace! We poured out the grace we received from God onto others.
12. **Discuss:** Is it hard for you to show grace to others? Why or why not?
13. **Discuss:** What can you remember to help you show grace to others?
14. **Pray:** God, thank You so much for Your amazing grace! Help us to remember Your grace, so we can give grace to others. Amen.
15. **Say:** God gives grace. Let's take time to respond to Him.

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Lead kids to use the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages. Ask fun, relationship-building questions while kids wait to be picked up. As parents arrive, connect with them and point out the Take-Home page.



GIVING GRACE

SUPPLIES:

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, red paper (1 per kid), scissors, self-adhesive bandages (2 per kid)

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Cut large hearts out of the red paper (1 per kid).

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Discuss:** How did God show grace and forgiveness to Jonah?
2. **Discuss:** How much has God forgiven us?
3. **Read:** Ephesians 4:32.
4. **Discuss:** Should we show grace to others?
5. **Say:** Because we recognize the grace God has shown us, we can show kindness and forgiveness to others.
6. *Give each kid a red heart and a coloring supply.*
7. **Say:** Sometimes people do things that make us mad and hurt us and it breaks our friendships. Draw a person that you need to forgive. Maybe your brother, sister or friend hurt you. After you are done, tear your heart in half to show that your relationship with this person is broken.
8. *Give kids time to draw on their hearts and then tear them.*
9. **Say:** When we remember how much God has forgiven us, it can help us to forgive others. Let's pray and ask God to help us forgive this person.
10. **Pray:** God, thank You for forgiving us. Help us to forgive people in our lives. *Pause and encourage kids to pray quietly.* Thank You for helping us. Amen.
11. *Pass out two bandages to everyone.*
12. **Say:** Put your broken hearts together with these bandages. Remember that God can help you forgive others.
13. **Pray:** God, thank You so much for Your amazing grace! Help us to remember Your grace, so we can give grace to others. Amen.
14. **Say:** God gives grace. Let's take time to respond to Him.

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Lead kids to use the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages. Ask fun, relationship-building questions while kids wait to be picked up. As parents arrive, connect with them and point out the Take-Home page.



ON THE RIGHT PATH

YOUNGER ELEMENTARY SMALL GROUP
JONAH

PAGE 1 OF 2

PREP: Print the printable page on cardstock and cut out (1 Path Card and 1 Number Card per kid).

NUMBER CARDS

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8



ON THE RIGHT PATH

YOUNGER ELEMENTARY SMALL GROUP
JONAH

PAGE 2 OF 2

PREP: Print the printable page on cardstock and cut out (1 Path Card and 1 Number Card per kid).

PATH CARDS

HOW MANY SPECIES
OF FISH LIVE
IN THE WORLD?

DOES GRACE MEAN
TO GIVE FORGIVENESS
OR CONSEQUENCES?

HOW MANY PEOPLE
LIVE IN OUR CITY?

DID JONAH DESERVE
GOD'S GRACE
OR EARN IT?

DOES GOD GIVE US
SECOND CHANCES?

HOW DID GOD SHOW
JONAH GRACE?

WHAT IS $1,403 \times 5$?

HOW DOES GOD
SHOW US GRACE?



SOAKED IN GRACE

YOUNGER ELEMENTARY SMALL GROUP
JONAH

PAGE 1 OF 1

PREP: Print the printable page.

SITUATIONS

1. You can't find your favorite book/video game/ etc. You look around and finally find it in your siblings room. *How do you want to respond? How can you show grace?*
2. Your mom is late to pick you up after soccer. You are the last person there. You are tired and hungry. *How do you want to respond? How can you show grace?*
3. Your parents told you that you could go to your friend's house after school, but they changed their minds and said you need to go to your sibling's soccer game. You don't want to go because it's boring. *How do you want to respond? How can you show grace?*
4. Your mom tells you to get off the gaming system because your sibling has a friend over. You were there first. That's not fair. *How do you want to respond? How can you show grace?*
5. Your friend ignores you on the playground and plays with a different friend. You are sad and hurt. You talk to your friend and they say they are sorry, but you are still mad. *How do you want to respond? How can you show grace?*



TAKE-HOME

JONAH

BIBLE PASSAGE: JONAH 1-4 God called the prophet Jonah to warn Nineveh, but Jonah ran the other way. A storm came, and he was thrown into the sea, where a big fish swallowed him. Jonah prayed and admitted he was wrong, and the fish spit him out. He went to Nineveh, warned the people, and they believed God. Jonah was upset about God's grace, so God used a vine to teach him to care for others.

POINT TO JESUS: When God told Jonah what to do, Jonah did the opposite. But God rescued Jonah and redeemed Him. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, He shows us grace and redeems us too. He rescues us from sin and restores us to a right relationship with God.



God gives grace.



MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

*Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised,
and His greatness is unsearchable.*

(PSALM 145:3)

FAMILIES, ASK THESE THREE QUESTIONS!



**DID SOMEONE IN YOUR GROUP SAY
SOMETHING REALLY SMART TODAY?
WHAT WAS IT?**



WHAT IS GOD'S GRACE?
God's grace is His free gift of forgiveness and salvation that we don't earn, but He gives because He loves us.



SHOULD WE SHOW GRACE TO OTHERS?
Because we recognize the grace God has shown us, we can show kindness and forgiveness to others.

HOW IS GOD INVITING **ME** TO RESPOND?

CHOOSE ONE:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| ☐ I can talk to God about ... | ☐ I wonder ... |
| ☐ I can remember ... | ☐ I can ... |



DRAW OR WRITE YOUR RESPONSE

YOUR FAMILY'S WIN THIS WEEK ...

Wash the dishes together. While you do, talk about how God cleans our hearts of sin through grace.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD

Guilt can be a tough topic for kids. We can help kids view this topic through the lens of Scripture. Learn more about this and how to have a conversation at home here. [Britecurriculum.com/tough-topics](https://britecurriculum.com/tough-topics)

**WANT MORE
AT-HOME
DISCIPLESHIP
DISCUSSION?
SCAN ME!**



GOING DEEPER

Read God's Word this week!

Read each passage with a grown-up and answer the three questions together.

☐ **DAY 1**

Read: Jonah 1:1-5, 15

HE: What do these verses tell us about God?

WE: What do these verses tell us about people?

ME: How is God inviting me to respond?

?

☐ **DAY 2**

Read: Jonah 2:1-2

HE: What do these verses tell us about God?

WE: What do these verses tell us about people?

ME: How is God inviting me to respond?

?

☐ **DAY 3**

Read: Jonah 3:1-5

HE: What do these verses tell us about God?

WE: What do these verses tell us about people?

ME: How is God inviting me to respond?

?

☐ **DAY 4**

Read: Ephesians 4:15-16

HE: What do these verses tell us about God?

WE: What do these verses tell us about people?

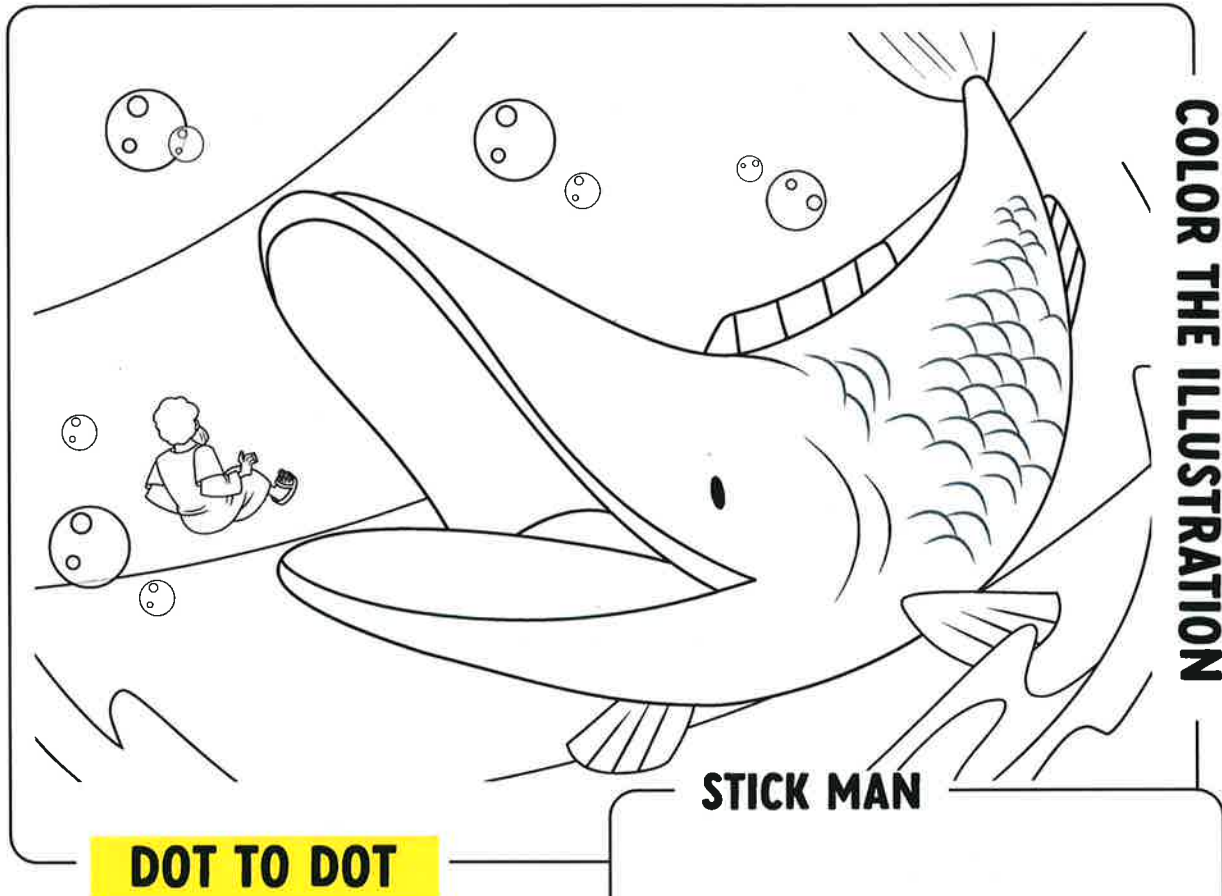
ME: How is God inviting me to respond?

?

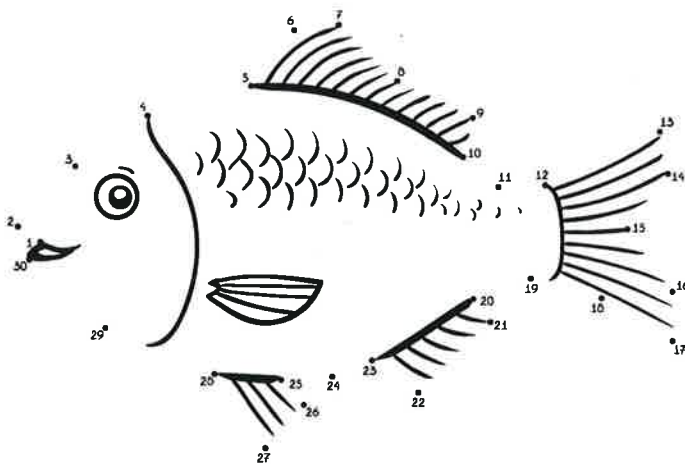


TAKE-HOME ACTIVITIES

JONAH



STICK MAN

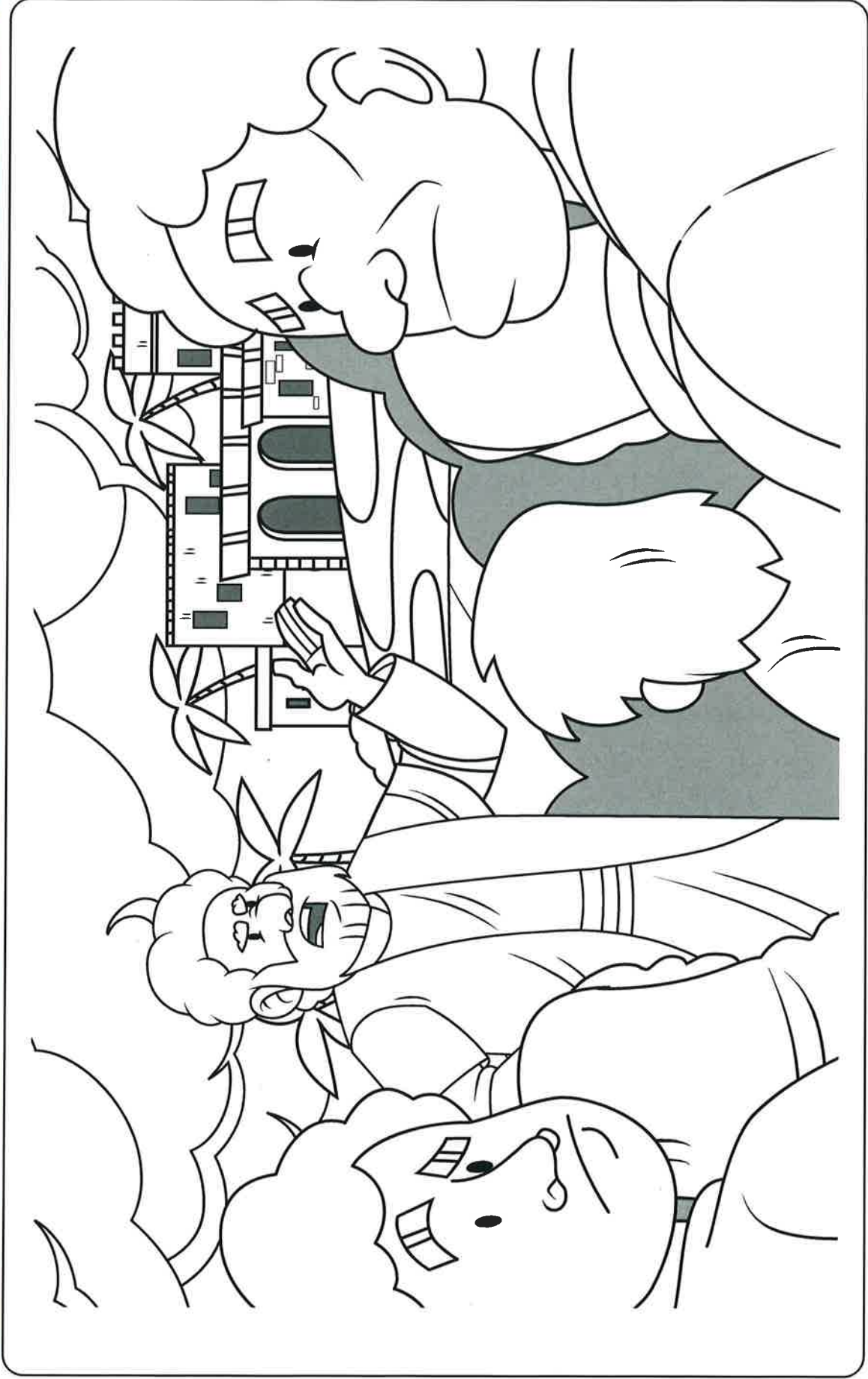


1. Think of a word from today's story. Draw a blank for each letter.
2. Find a partner to guess letters.
3. If they guess a letter from your word, write it in the blank.
4. If they guess a wrong letter, draw a piece of the stick man.
5. Can they guess your word before the stick man is complete?



JONAH 1-4

JONAH



brite*

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Coloring Page

