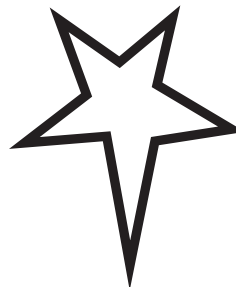




A four-week
Christmas curriculum
for grades K-5



TEACHER'S GUIDE




WILLOW

 the
chapel



The Stars of Christmas

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| | |
|--------------|-----------------|
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| Shepherd | Lynn Clay |
| Shepherd | Thomas Egler |
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| Wise Man | Nathan Bjorge |
| Wise Man | Isaac Bjorge |
| Wise Man | Sam Parks |
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| Announcer | Tom Anderson |

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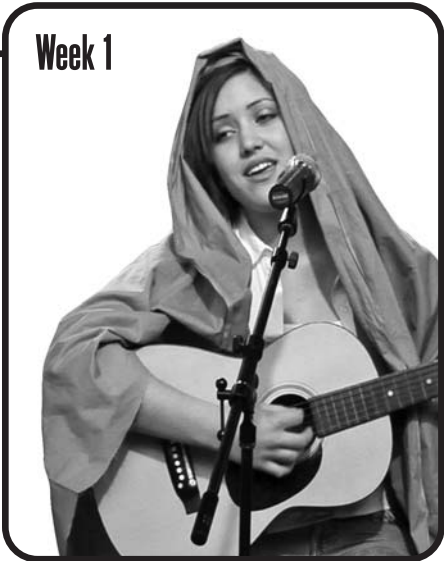
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INTRODUCTION

The Stars of Christmas is a four-week, teacher-driven, media-based Christmas curriculum for grades K-5. Unlike most video-based curriculum, these lessons are not “plug and play.” Instead, the Teacher sets up and interacts with the children between each segment, helping them to fully engage. The creative teaching provided on the video means that set up and preparation time for each lesson is short and simple.

Each week, children are introduced to the week’s “competitor” for the Star of Christmas Award through a Grammy-style awards ceremony that highlights a character from the Christmas story. Ultimately, kids learn that Jesus is the TRUE Star of Christmas.

Large Group incorporates creative Bible teaching, a Key Concept, Bible Verse, Rapid Rewind review, and other fun segments on DVD. Each section is then facilitated by a Teacher who engages with the kids before and between the video presentations. The video segments are fully integrated into the Teacher’s Large Group script.

Kids are divided into age-appropriate Small Groups (K-1, 2-3, and 4-5) of 6-10 kids, each led by an adult volunteer. Small Group time is integrated into the Large Group time. During Large Group, kids sit together with their Small Group leader and engage in Small Group Connection, Small Group Sharing, and finally, Small Group Activities. During the first two, kids stay where they are in the Large Group area. During the Small Group Activity time at the end of Large Group, children can stay where they are or move to designated seating areas for more space.

WHAT'S PROVIDED

- 4 *Stars of Christmas* interactive Large Group programs on DVD
- Downloadable curriculum for Large Group (one lesson appropriate for grades K-5) and Small Group (provided in three age-appropriate versions for grades K-1, 2-3, and 4-5)
- Take-home sheets to connect with parents each week
- Activities and visuals for Large Group and Small Group activities
- Customizable Word® documents for adapting lessons to meet your specific ministry needs



WHAT YOU NEED

- A DVD projector and projection screen or a large television and DVD player
- A teaching area with floor space big enough to accommodate all your kids and adult leaders in grades K-5
- Basic supplies listed at the beginning of each Large Group lesson (includes materials necessary for Small Group, as well)
- A Large Group Teacher and one adult volunteer for every age-appropriate Small Group
- *Optional:* A volunteer to operate the DVD (if desired, the Large Group Teacher can operate the DVD; see “How to Use the DVD” below)
- *Optional:* An administrator to coordinate set-up, gathering supplies, and copying materials. Set up for this series is simple enough that the Large Group Teacher can coordinate this, if desired.

DECORATING THE ROOM

No specific stage set is required for this series. Decorate your teaching room for Christmas with fun, colorful items. Add Christmas trees, large wrapped gifts, colored lights, icicles, over-sized candy canes or other decorations. Avoid themes such as Santa Claus, commercial characters, etc.

HOW TO USE THE DVD

The video is created to serve YOU. Take as much time as needed when you talk with the kids; the video will automatically wait for you! It won't jump ahead before you're prepared. When you're ready to move to the next segment, be sure the forward arrow in the lower right-hand corner of the screen is highlighted (this should be the default) and press the “Enter/OK” button on your DVD remote. Each segment is clearly labeled onscreen with the week and segment number (i.e. 2-7) corresponding with the same number in the Large Group script. This way you know exactly where you are at all times. If you ever need to return to a previous segment, simply highlight the back arrow in the lower left-hand corner of the screen and hit “Enter/OK” to go back. You don't need to pause the DVD except during the gift stacking activity in Week 4, where it is clearly marked.



HOW TO USE THE DVD (CONT.)

Please note that not every segment number is listed in the Large Group script. This simply means that the video will automatically move from the segment you play to a background screen. For instance, after you hit “Enter/OK” for the video to play 1-24 (a worship song), the video will play through the worship song and then automatically land on 1-25, a background *The Stars of Christmas* screen. It will stay here until you hit “Enter/OK” again to play 1-26 (the Bible Verse segment).

CUSTOMIZABLE LESSONS

Each Large Group and Small Group lesson is provided on the CD in an easy-to-use PDF format. However, we have also included a Word® document for each lesson with *only* the copy—no design or graphics. If desired, your church can use this copy to create customized lessons that include your church’s ministry name, special announcements, or additional materials specific to your ministry. You may also choose to create lessons that incorporate certain elements and not others.

If you choose to customize lessons, please include the following information in all page footers:

“Adapted with permission from *The Stars of Christmas* curriculum, © 2008 Willow Creek Community Church & The Chapel.”

You may not use customized lessons for resale in any form, digital or hardcopy.



THE LARGE GROUP SEGMENTS

1. Welcome and Introduction

The Large Group Teacher calls the children and volunteers to gather in the teaching area and gives a short, high-energy welcome.

2. Small Group Connection

Small Group leaders use a question or short activity to connect with their kids, while still seated in the Large Group area.

3. Icebreaker

This short, high-energy activity sets the stage for the Key Concept.

4. Introduction of Key Concept

The Large Group Teacher introduces the Key Concept.

5. Personal Application Story

The Large Group Teacher shares a personal story related to the Key Concept.

6. Small Group Sharing

Turning to their Small Groups, kids answer a question or share a story related to the Key Concept.

7. Worship Song #1

Kids have an opportunity to worship and let off steam after sitting through the first section of the lesson.

8. Teaching Video

A creative Bible teaching on video presents the week's Star of Christmas, highlighting a character in the Christmas story along with the Key Concept.

9. Object Lesson

The Large Group Teacher uses an object such as a paintbrush or crown to provide practical application of the Key Concept.

10. Worship Song #2

Kids have an opportunity to worship and let off steam after sitting through the teaching video and object lesson.

11. Bible Verse

The Teacher introduces a Bible verse that aligns with the Key Concept.

12. Large Group Review: Rapid Rewind

Kids have a chance to answer questions about the lesson through a fast-paced, video-based review.

13. Closing Prayer

The Large Group Teacher highlights the Key Concept and prays for the group, closing Large Group time.

14. Small Group Activity

Kids answer review questions and do age-appropriate application activities with adult leaders in their Small Groups. They may stay in the Large Group teaching area or move to designated seating areas for more space. (Each week, there is a simple craft activity for the K-1 Small Groups. If you do not wish to have your kids do a craft, simply use the 2-3 Small Group activity for the week.)