

Large Group Opening

The Good Shepherd

Scripture Reference: John 10:11-18

Large Group Opening

Enjoy your time with kids as you sing, learn, and pray together. Choose a song to get things started, move into the object lesson that introduces kids to the story, and finish up your time with a prayer.

Spark Songs

Use one or more of the following songs from the Spark Song CD during your Large Group Opening. Use them in any order that suits your group's size, format, and time frame.

Spark My World (Track 1, Songbook page 4)

Sing the Spark theme song together and teach the kids a new verse for the story: "Jesus our Shepherd, brings good news, Gathers his flock to baa good news." Invite the kids to make actions to go with the new verse.

The B-I-B-L-E (Track 5, Songbook page 28)

Print B-I-B-L-E on pieces of poster board, one letter per piece. Hand out the letter cards randomly to kids in the group. Have kids hold their letter high when it is sung in the song.

Give Me Oil in My Lamp (Track 4, Songbook page 22)

Once kids learn the words and music to this song, challenge them to think of words for a new verse that a shepherd or a sheep would sing, such as "Give me grass for my flock" or "Give me baa's for my lamb."

Introduce the Story

Supplies:

- Binoculars
- magnifying glass

Stand in front of the group looking at them through your binoculars. Exaggerate your motions, bending down and standing on tip-toe to make sure you see everyone. Then switch to the magnifying glass and walk up to a few kids, looking at them up close. Say things like "Ah ha!" and "I see!" as you examine them.

Once you've finished your inspection, make the story connection. **I was looking out for everyone, trying to find out who is here, and seeing what you are doing. Jesus told the story of The Good Shepherd as a way to let people know that God was taking care of them—looking out for them, finding out what they are doing, and keeping them safe.**

Talk about these questions:

- Have you ever seen sheep or a shepherd?
- How does God take care of you?
- What people does God put in your life to help take care of you?

Closing Prayer

Stand in a circle, inviting kids to become a flock. Invite them to add names of people who take care of them when you leave a space in the prayer.

Dear God,

Thank you for taking care of us and being our Good Shepherd.

Thank you that you put other people in our lives to take care of us too, people like
(kids can name the shepherds in their lives).

Thank you for your son, Jesus, and all the things he teaches us.

Amen.