

# LESSON

## NOAH'S ARK...REALLY?

TODAY'S

### BIBLE BASE

# 12

### Just for Teachers

#### **Bold Bible Truth** **THE BIBLE IS TRUE.**

(2 Timothy 3:16)

“So Noah did everything exactly as God had commanded him.”

(Genesis 6:22)

- **Noah builds an ark and fills it with animals to survive a flood.**

Genesis 6:9–7:24

- **God's Word guides us.**

Psalms 119:105

- **God's Word stands forever.**

Psalms 119:160

- **God's Word is powerful and purposeful.**

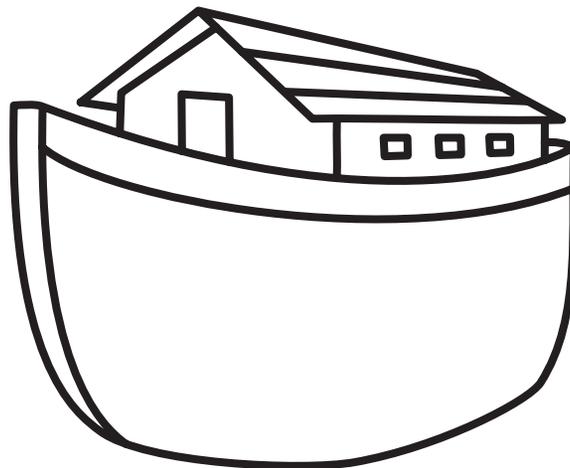
Hebrews 4:12

#### **Create a Bold Classroom Environment**

As you create a “we’re all in this together” culture, realize that very few preteens will initiate relationships. Although some kids are outgoing, most fear being different, which makes it tough to be a newcomer. An easy way to engage new kids with others is to assign a project to a few kids, and intentionally assign newcomers and kids who aren’t clique-ish. The project can be as simple as group discussion or setting up chairs. The team task gives kids a reason to chat with each other as they work toward a common goal.

#### **Pray for Your Preteens**

Like Noah, the kids in your class live in a fallen, sinful society. As you prepare for this lesson, pray that God will give kids the courage and conviction to live as followers of Jesus...even when the world around them is awash in wrongdoing. In the ark to the right, write a prayer for specific areas of life that your preteens may struggle in. 



The preteens in your class are gradually turning into “truth detectives” as their brains develop logical-thinking skills. Preteens may look at information critically, trying to make sense of things that seem inconceivable. When things *don't* seem plausible, they're at a crossroads. When it comes to Scripture, kids may be asking, “Can I have faith in something that seems hard to believe?” Today's lesson will give kids the chance to read, think, inspect, consider, and examine the story of the great flood, discovering God's truth in the midst of mystery.

# THIS LESSON AT A GLANCE

Section	What Preteens Do	Supplies	Easy Prep
<b>Begin Boldly</b> (about 5 minutes)	Enjoy a snack, review BE BOLD Values, and add questions to the wall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bible</li> <li>• BE BOLD Values poster</li> <li>• snacks</li> <li>• clear gallon container of water</li> <li>• variety of items that sink and a variety that float</li> <li>• sticky notes</li> <li>• pens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fill the large container with water.</li> </ul>
<b>Game</b> (about 10 minutes)	Race to get on the “ark” before the flood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hula hoops (1 for every 8 kids)</li> <li>• music</li> <li>• music player</li> <li>• spray bottle filled with water</li> </ul>	
<b>Question of the Week</b> (about 20 minutes)	Dig into Scripture to explore how a man could build an ark large enough to fit <i>all</i> animals onboard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bibles</li> <li>• Bold Action Student Books</li> <li>• scissors</li> <li>• whiteboard or large sheet of paper</li> <li>• marker</li> <li>• pencils or pens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tear out pages 63-74 from Bold Action Student Books.</li> </ul>
<b>Bold Action</b> (about 15 minutes)	Follow instructions to create something that will serve others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bold Action Student Books</li> <li>• scissors</li> <li>• brightly colored markers</li> <li>• transparent tape</li> <li>• 16.9 ounce water bottles (2 per preteen)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a sample water bottle wrap, and wrap it around a water bottle. Hide your example and all the water bottles so kids won’t know what they’re making.</li> </ul>
<b>Bold Blessing</b> (about 10 minutes)	Receive a prayer blessing and a Mystery Mission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mystery Mission Cards</li> <li>• Mystery Mission Stickers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fold and seal a Mystery Mission Card for each preteen using 3 stickers.</li> </ul>



## **PRETEEN POINTER**

You may think splashing in water is only for preschoolers, but plenty of preteens will be tempted to flick water at their friends. Minimize an in-class flood by making sure kids take turns with the water. Kids who seem most drawn to making a big splash can have the task of choosing which item to “sink or float.” Or put them in charge of finding new classroom items that can get submerged.

# **BEGIN BOLDLY** (ABOUT 5 MINUTES)

## **Arrival Activity**

Greet preteens warmly as they arrive. Have healthy snack stuff on a table.

Set out a clear container of water. The container should be at least one gallon—the larger the container, the easier it’ll be for kids to see things sink or float. Provide a variety of items that will sink or float. You might set out cans of soda (regular and diet), an orange, a ball, classroom items or waterproof office supplies, small toys, and paper cups.

Let kids take turns choosing an item and guessing whether the item will sink or float. Some things may surprise kids! For example, a can of regular soda will sink, but diet soda floats. An orange in its peel will float, but a peeled orange will sink!

As you’re ready to move on, move the snacks and water out of sight.

## **Welcome Kids**

Say: **This week we’ll explore a Bible story about a time people were so cruel, lawless, and mean that God took some big, bold action. Fortunately, *this* classroom is nothing like *that* world. Here’s why!**

Ask a willing reader to read aloud the BE BOLD Values from the BE BOLD Values poster:

**You’re accepted just as you are.**

**We respect each other’s thoughts and struggles.**

**We’re all in this together.**

**God is here, ready to be your friend because you matter!**

Say: **Here we live as God’s friends and followers...and we treat each other the way we want to be treated. Sounds like people in our Bible story needed their own Be Bold Values to follow! Let’s learn more about that!**

## **Question Collection**

Say: **You got to explore things that float and don’t float. That’s pretty appropriate since today’s Bible story is about *one* thing that floated... and lots of stuff that didn’t.**

**Today we’re talking about the story of Noah and the ark. You may have heard the story, but maybe you haven’t heard it directly from the Bible in a while. When you think about it, this is a pretty amazing story, and it’s one you probably have some questions about. As I read it, if you think of a question related to the story, come up and write it on a sticky note and put it on the wall.**

Read aloud Genesis 6:9-15, 17-22; and 7:17-24. Allow kids to come up and write questions as you read. If lots of kids are up at the wall, you may pause your reading so they can listen to the whole story.

When you finish the passages, read aloud some of the questions to get any clarification on what kids meant by their questions.

Say: **Thanks for sharing your questions. I'm glad we're all in this together! Sometimes stories in the Bible seem unbelievable. When we try to figure them out logically, we may have questions and even doubts. And this is a good, safe place to really dig in and explore those questions with God as our guide. So, Noah's ark? Could that *really* happen? First let's play a little game to see what it might've been like for all those animals.**



## **GAME** (ABOUT 10 MINUTES)

### **Park on the Ark**

Scatter hula hoops around the middle of the room, and explain that these represent the ark—Noah's big boat. Tell kids that they're the animals in the story. Have "animals" scatter around the room.

Say: **When I start the music, I'll call out a way for you to move around the room. As you move, you have to touch each corner of our classroom. When the music stops, you'll stop what you're doing and run to the ark and try to get in. My ark is kind of small, so there won't be room for everyone!**

Turn on the music and call out a fun way to move around the edge of the classroom. Use this list of "animal motions" for kids to follow, calling out one motion and having kids do that action until the music stops:

- Hop like a bunny.
- Belly crawl like a turtle.
- Flap like an ostrich.
- Pounce like a lion.
- Crab walk.
- Waddle like a duck.

At random intervals, turn off the music and have kids race to squeeze into the hula hoops. Set the spray bottle to mist, and spray any kids who can't squeeze into the "ark." After several rounds, gather kids and set the hula hoops out of sight.

**? If this had really been Noah's ark, how well would you have done at getting on the ark?**

**? How do you think all those animals could fit on one huge boat?** Give kids a chance to speculate and problem-solve, rather than simply saying "I don't know." If you need to, ask a follow-up question such as "What would it have taken to get all the animals onboard?" or "How big do you think the ark would need to be?"

Say: **The account of Noah's ark is kind of a crazy one. When you actually think about all the details, it may seem hard to believe. **THE BIBLE IS TRUE**, but sometimes we have questions about how things could *actually* happen the way we read them in the Bible. Let's explore some evidence and recent findings to see what you think and discover what God can show you through this incredible story.**



## QUESTION OF THE WEEK (ABOUT 20 MINUTES)

### A Boatload of Questions

Draw a large, simple boat shape on a whiteboard or sheet of paper, to represent Noah's boat. Your boat needs to be large enough to be mostly obscured by the sticky note questions kids wrote earlier.

Say: **Looking at all our questions, it's clear there's a lot we wonder about the story of Noah and his floating zoo.** Have kids move their sticky notes with questions over the picture of the boat. They don't have to totally cover the boat, but they should obscure it somewhat.

Distribute pages 63-67 from the Bold Action Student Books to each preteen. Form small groups of three.

Say: **One of your pages summarizes what the Bible says about Noah's boat, and another tells about some modern evidence that may shed some light on this account from the Bible. And there are also some theories that people have suggested that may give you a different way to think about what might have happened.**

Have each person in the trio choose a different page to read aloud with their group. When kids have finished, say: **If this answered any of your questions or satisfied something you wondered about, take that specific question off our boat.** It's okay if all the sticky notes stay in place.

- ❓ **Which questions of yours were answered, or what did you read that gave you a new idea on how Noah's ark could've happened?**
- ❓ **What would it take to answer all your questions about the story?**

### Do They All Fit?

Say: **One question you may have had was about how so many animals could fit on one boat. That's sort of a brain-bender, isn't it? Let's try an experiment to think about fitting a lot of things into a small space.**

Have kids cut out the seven shapes from page 69 of their Bold Action Student Books. Then direct them to the square on page 71. Explain that all the pieces fit neatly into the square, without overlapping, being folded or torn, or extending past the boundaries of the square. Give kids one minute to see if they can figure out how the pieces fit. Tell kids that there *is* a way!

If someone figures out the solution, that's okay. But don't offer any help, and don't give the solution during your lesson.

- ❓ **How did you feel as you tried to make things fit?**
- ❓ **Do you trust me that there *is* a solution, even though I didn't give it to you? Why or why not?**
- ❓ **Can you trust in something even if you don't understand it? Why or why not?**



NOAH'S  
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- ❓ **What are things in our world today that you trust or believe in, even though you don't understand them?** Give your own example, such as how your cellphone works, where “the cloud” is, or what black holes are. Then let kids share their own modern mysteries.

Say: **Sometimes it can be frustrating when we don't get every detail from the Bible. We want to know *everything*! Let's see what the Bible says about itself!** Have a willing student read aloud 2 Timothy 3:16 from the Bold Action Student Book. Motion to the questions on the board.

## Trusting God

- ❓ **Setting your specific questions aside, what can you learn from the story of Noah, God's flood, and a big boat?**
- ❓ **Why do you think God put this story in the Bible? What does it show you about God? about people? How could it change the way you live?**

Say: **Every part of the Bible is there for a reason. Sometimes we have to hold on to our questions as we hold on to the truth of God's Word. As you grow, learn more, and listen to God, he can give you the answers, or peace to trust him in spite of your questions. Let's do that now.**

Have kids read the Scripture passages from page 73 of their Bold Action Student Books. Direct kids to choose the passage that gives them the most peace or trust in God's Word. Then have preteens take one of the question sticky notes, write their passage over the question, and put the sticky note on their page.

Say: **Trusting God doesn't mean that all our questions go away. It means we read God's Word—and ask questions—with faith that his word is purposeful and **THE BIBLE IS TRUE**. And even when we have questions, we can still look to see what God wants us to know and apply to our lives.**

If kids would like to continue to try the square puzzle, they can take the pieces home and keep trying.



## **BOLD ACTION** (ABOUT 15 MINUTES)

Say: **One key verse in the story of Noah that really stands out to me is Genesis 6:22: “So Noah did everything exactly as God had commanded him.” Wow! Can you imagine that? God gave him instructions to build something that had never been seen, built, or imagined...ever! And Noah did it. Let's see how well *you* do at making something without knowing what it is! All I'm going to tell you is that it will help people. Do you trust me enough to obey my directions?**

Direct kids to cut out the strips from page 73 of the Bold Action Student Books. Be sure preteens carefully cut them out.

Next, tell kids to use brightly colored markers to draw a few words of encouragement or a Bible verse on each strip.

- ❓ **What do you think these are going to be?**
- ❓ **How do you feel about working on a project without knowing what it's going to be?**
- ❓ **How is that like the way Noah might've felt as he built the huge boat?**

Let kids reflect on this question silently:

- ❓ **What's an area of your life where God may be calling you to obey, even though you don't understand?**

Bring out the water bottles and tape, and show kids the sample you made. Let kids wrap each strip around a water bottle and tape it in place. Explain that kids can keep these in their cars and give them to people who look like they need help or encouragement...or someone who looks thirsty!

Say: **THE BIBLE IS TRUE, and it has meaning for us today—even though we don't always understand every part of it. Noah willingly obeyed God, though the task was huge and probably mysterious to him. You can also obey God, even when you don't understand everything about the Bible. As you give away your water bottles, remember that you can trust God's plans for your life.**



## **BOLD BLESSING** (ABOUT 10 MINUTES)

### **Pray**

Say: **We discovered today that THE BIBLE IS TRUE. As you grow and read more of the Bible, there will be parts that make you wonder or ask questions. Growing up doesn't mean you know all the answers; it often means you have more questions. God is bigger than our brains can imagine, so sometimes we can't figure out how he does things. That's okay! Before you try to make sense of all the details, ask yourself, "Why did God put this in the Bible? What does God want me to know from this?" Let's pray for wisdom as we read God's Word.**

Have kids hold their hands like fists, and gently "hammer" them together.

Pray: **God, your Word is amazing, inspiring, helpful, and mysterious to us. But we know each part of it has a purpose. Speak to us, showing us what you're building in each of us.** Pause for about 30 seconds. Then direct kids to hold up two fingers.

Pray: **God, you sent pairs of animals to Noah. When your Word makes us wonder, bring people beside us so we're not alone in our searching. Help us be friends who draw each other closer to you. Thank you for loving us and being with us in our questions. In Jesus' name, amen.**

### **Send-Off Cheer**

Have kids stand in a circle with their hands in the center, like a sports team. Tell them that when you finish the Bold Blessing, they'll raise their hands and shout "Let's be bold!"



### **PRETEEN POINTER**

Limiting the conversation to just last week's mission isolates preteens who don't feel like they did the "right" mission. Keep the dialog open by inviting kids to share about any mission.



### **PRETEEN POINTER**

If you're finding that some preteens aren't doing the Mystery Mission, help them catch the energy from your missions and the stories from other kids who've done them.



Say this Bold Blessing: **Receive this Bold Blessing and carry it out with you: God is big, and his Word is true. May you boldly live God's plans for you. May you obey him even when you don't understand. Let's be bold!**

### **Mystery Mission Reports**

Say: **Noah had a not-so-secret mission, but *you* are going to do a top-secret Mystery Mission. But before you get your new mission, I'd love to hear how it went when you did your last Mystery Mission. First let me tell you what happened on mine.**

#### **My last Mystery Mission was...**

Share a brief story of how *you* followed through with your bold mission, and then ask kids to partner up and share with one another.

Say: **Thanks for sharing your stories.**

**I want to encourage you to actually do those Mystery Missions, and here's why: They're chances to live like Noah, being a light to a dark world.**

### **Mystery Mission**

Say: **We discovered today that **THE BIBLE IS TRUE**. Noah trusted God and obeyed him to care for all the animals. This week, be like Noah as you live out your Mystery Mission. But no opening it until just before bed!**

**We'll talk about what happened the next time we get together.**

Distribute a Mystery Mission Card to each preteen. Take your own card home and complete the challenge, too!