



# SESSION 4

## LESSON GUIDE

**MISSION:**  
**DEEP SEA**

### **THE BIG IDEA**

My faith grows deeper when I share my story.

### **THE BIBLE**

**Jonah Goes to Nineveh:**  
Jonah 1-3

**WHAT?** *What are we talking about today?*

#### **VIDEO | Morning Intro 4**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play today's intro video.*

#### **MUSIC | Waves of Worship**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell the kids to sing and dance along to some fun songs about God's love, including our original theme song, "We Go Deep!" Here are some other songs we like:*
- ["Tell the World"](#)
- ["This is Living Now"](#)
- ["Tell His Story"](#)

#### **ACTIVITY | Swimming Fish**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Fill a large, plastic soft drink bottle about one quarter full with water. Add a few drops of blue food coloring and a very small drop of liquid detergent. Pour in a small amount of clean sand. Blow up a small balloon, release most of the air, then tie the ends closed. Tell the kids to use a Sharpie to draw a face on their "whale." Push the balloon into the bottle and screw the cap on tightly. When you have finished, you will have an ocean with a bobbing "whale" inside. The balloon will swim in the water by holding the bottle sideways and rocking it back and forth.*
- ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Pre-make the completed bottles, but have extra balloons for the kids to draw whale faces on and play with outside of the bottle.*

✂ **PRESCHOOL HACK:** Do this activity together as a group, or with one leader per small group, to demonstrate this activity. Ask for volunteers along the way to participate in each of the instructions.

- Today, we are going to talk about a man named Jonah. Jonah had quite the encounter with the ocean. . . and a big fish.

### ACTIVITY | Jump the Waves

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the group into two teams, with one at each end of the play area. In the middle of the room, have two leaders (or older kids) hold the ends of two jump ropes on the ground. Start with the ropes really close together. When you say, “Go,” the two teams will run and toward the middle and try to jump over both ropes. After both teams make it over the ropes, spread the two ropes apart a little bit and repeat. Keep going until it’s too wide for anyone to jump over! If someone falls into the ocean (can’t jump over both ropes), they must “swim” back to the starting line.

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide a buddy to accompany the kids from line to line, and encourage them to march instead of jump, and/or provide a similar activity in a different area.

✂ **PRESCHOOL HACK:** Knowing that younger kids may have difficulty with controlling their movements, play this game outdoors or ask the kids to hop instead of run.

- Some things can be too difficult for us, like trying to jump that last distance! Or maybe talking about Jesus to our friends. Our memory verse for Mission: DEEP SEA tells us that God’s love is SO wide, long, high, and deep – way wider than these jump ropes! Let’s hear more about how much God loves everyone, and what that means for us.

## SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

### ACTIVITY | DEEP SEA HQ Skit

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Use the script provided to perform a skit or make a video for the kids.

### ACTIVITY | Spitting Jonah

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Using the Spitting Jonah origami instruction sheet, tell the kids to create their own fish out of paper. Then, they can make the fish “spit” out “Jonah” (a pom-pom). For an added challenge, put out a toy boat (or a box) and encourage the kids to aim “Jonah” into the boat.

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Make the origami fish ahead of time. Help the kids decorate their fish however they want. As an alternative, make paper boats and encourage them to play with a few pom-poms.

✂ **PRESCHOOL HACK:** Pre-make the origami fish, but allow the kids to add the decorations and googly eyes, and play with the pom-poms.

- In today’s Bible story, we are going to learn about a man named Jonah and how he got swallowed by a big fish! Spoiler alert – he was okay, though. But let’s back up a bit.
  - God wanted Jonah to go to a place called Nineveh and tell the people there about God.

- Jonah didn't like the people there, so he decided to get on a boat and go the other way.
- But God had something waiting for Jonah. A great, big fish came and swallowed Jonah whole.
  - Jonah was in a dark and scary place for three whole days. Do you know what Jonah was doing in that dark and scary place?
  - He was praying. Jonah prayed, "God, I'm sorry. Please forgive me! I'll do whatever you want, but please forgive me!"
  - And do you know what happened? God heard Jonah's prayer. So, the fish spit Jonah up.
  - We are going to make a fish of our own. Each of you will follow these instructions. When you're done, you can come get a pom-pom to use as "Jonah."
  - See if you can get your fish to spit Jonah out of its mouth!

### SCRIPTURE | Jonah 1-3

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Summarize Jonah 1-3. You can do it something like this!
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide a small bin that kids can put their origami fish into and pretend to swim it around while listening to the story.
- **How many of you had something really amazing happen to you?** When that happened, you probably didn't keep it a secret, right? Nope, you probably told someone!
- It is important to tell others about God because God is even more incredible than anything we can think of!
- Jonah had an important message from God to deliver, but he was afraid. God wanted Jonah to go to a place called Nineveh and tell the people there that they needed to stop living the way they were, and to start following and obeying God.
  - This made Jonah afraid and it made him a little mad. He didn't want to do this. Even though God's instructions were pretty clear, Jonah made excuses.
  - He wasn't sure that he knew exactly what to say when he got there, or that the Nineveh townspeople would even listen to him. Nineveh needed Jonah's message, otherwise the whole city would be destroyed. It wasn't like missing a text message about a sale at your favorite store. Nineveh desperately needed this message.
  - But instead of going to Nineveh, Jonah actually decided to run from God and not do what he was told to do. He got on a boat that was not going to Nineveh.
  - While out on the ocean, Jonah was swallowed by a big fish! After three days and nights in this dark and lonely place, Jonah prayed to God. Jonah apologized and promised to do what God asked. God heard Jonah's prayer and commanded the fish, who spat out Jonah on the shore.
  - By then, Jonah realized the importance of sharing God's message with people and the whole town was saved as a result.
- Sometimes, it can be scary to do what God asks of us. It is okay to be afraid, but we all have our story to share, and when we do, our faith grows deeper.

**THE BIG IDEA | My faith grows deeper when I share my story.**

- S.E.A. Agents-in-Training! Our next mission is to find today's Big Idea! We are going to go deep sea fishing to figure it out.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Groups will use magnetic fishing poles to fish out the words for today's Big Idea. Each fish will have one word from today's Big Idea written on it. An alternative way to do this activity is to print and cut out the fish printable. Attach paper clips to each fish. Create a magnetic fishing pole by using a dowel rod, string, and a magnet.*
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Provide a buddy to hold and steady the pole. Pre-write the Big Idea so they can match their fish to it.*
  - ✂ **PRESCHOOL HACK:** *To help younger kids remember the Big Idea, provide hand motions for the words. For example: My faith (hands on heart) grows (move hand from ground up to demonstrate growth) deeper (points downward) when I (points to self) share (move hands outwards) my story (hold hands like holding a book).*
- Excellent work, agents! You've found it! Today's Big Idea is: **My faith grows deeper when I share my story.**

**OBJECT LESSON | Dominoes**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Start by handing out dominoes to each kid. Pass a Sharpie around and tell each kid to draw themselves on the back of their domino. As the VBS leader, be sure to take a domino yourself and draw you, too. As the kids finish decorating their domino, tell them to bring it to you. (While they are drawing, share about a person in your life who told you about God for the first time. What did they say to you? What would your life be like if they didn't share their story? Keep the story short and age appropriate for your group.)*
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Provide [cardboard blocks](#) that can work as dominoes. The kids will need larger areas to draw and these will allow for a whole piece of paper to be stuck to them. Use large crayons instead of permanent markers.*
  - ✂ **PRESCHOOL HACK:** *Provide [cardboard blocks](#) that can work as dominoes. The kids will need larger areas to draw and these will allow for a whole piece of paper to be stuck to them. Use large crayons instead of permanent markers.*
- God wants us to share our story with others. But just like Jonah, that can seem overwhelming, scary, or even impossible to do.
- *[Put your VBS leader domino at the front.] If one person tells one other person [add one of the kids dominoes behind yours], and that person tells another person [continue adding dominoes until all of them have been lined up behind the VBS leader one], eventually something big can happen. [Knock back the VBS leader domino and show the kids the domino effect as they all begin to fall over.]*
- By sharing your story with just one person, you never know the effect it can have. **My faith grows deeper when I share my story.**

## PRAYER

- God, each one of us has a story to share. Sometimes, You may ask us to share that story with people who are different than us, sometimes, You may ask us to share that story with someone who we aren't sure will listen. But just like Jonah, when we share our story anyway, our faith grows deeper. Help us to be brave enough to share our stories with others!

## SNACK | Clam Cookies

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Using two vanilla wafers, colored frosting, and a candy pearl, the kids will create their own clam cookie with a surprise pearl in the middle. Ask the following questions while the kids eat:*
- **If you were swallowed by a whale, what would be the first thing you'd do when you got to its stomach?**
- **What kinds of things do you think you'd find in its stomach?**

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Split off into small groups and have kids share their responses to the following questions. You could choose to combine this with snack time, if you'd like!*
- **What did God ask Jonah to do?** To go to Nineveh and share God's message.
- **Why didn't Jonah want to do this? What did he do instead?** He did not like the people and thought they wouldn't listen to him. So, he boarded a boat and decided not to go.
- **What happened after Jonah got spit out by the big fish?** He delivered God's message to Nineveh and the people prayed to God.
- **Read Jonah 1:17-2:1. If you were in a dark and lonely place like Jonah was, what would you do?**
- **Is there someone you think God is asking you to share your story with? Someone you think wouldn't listen?**
- **Who is someone that shared their story about God with you?**
- **How can sharing our story deepen our own faith?**
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Give preteens a piece of paper and fold it into fours. Tell them to create four quick sketch notes or comics that summarize their answers to the last four questions.*
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Use emojis to help review: 1) talking lips, surprised face, megaphone; 2) angry face, monkey covering ears, boat, runner; 3) whale, megaphone, talking lips, prayer hands, happy face. Use a variety of expressions to help them communicate their responses for the application questions.*

## ACTIVITY | Play Stations

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Set up the same "Play Stations" from the last session, or try out some new ones! Keep in mind that this time is to encourage free play, so allow the kids to float from station to station at will, but monitor flow.*

## NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

### VIDEO | Countdown Video

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show the kids the provided countdown video to reel them in after Play Stations or a break.

### RESPONSE | Sharing Your Story

- You don't have to travel super far like Jonah did to share your story – I bet there is someone you know, maybe someone you see every day, with whom you could share your story.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before this activity, hang up a large fishing net on stage or in a visible area. Tell the kids to think of someone who they need to share their story with (e.g., friend, a family member, teammate, neighbor, etc.). Once they have a name in mind, they will take a pre-cut fish and write the name of that person on the fish. Then, they will use a clothespin to pin their fish up on the net.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Help preteens practice telling their story with some simple tools, like CIY's free "[Tell It](#)" app or [set of cards](#) (\$1.00).
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide pre-cut pictures (or stickers) with suggestions (e.g., mom, friend, neighbor, teacher, etc.). Let the kids choose a picture and attach it to the fish. Provide a buddy to help them hang their fish on the net.
  - ✂ **PRESCHOOL HACK:** The kids can dictate the name of their person to an adult who can write the name for them on the fish. Or, the kids can draw a picture to represent the person they are thinking of.
- Say a prayer and ask God for help sharing your story with this person! **Because our faith grows deeper when we share our story!**

### ACTIVITY | S.E.A. Agent Certificate

- We've done a lot of deep sea exploring here at Mission: DEEP SEA. We've solved a lot of problems, played a lot of games, and heard some incredible Bible stories that showed us how to deepen our faith.
- Today is the last day of your training. . . which means you are all official S.E.A. agents now!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Using the certificate printable provided, the kids will graduate from being a S.E.A. Agent-in-Training to a "fully certified" S.E.A. agent!
- Congratulations, agents! Now, you're ready to grow your faith!

### MEMORY VERSE | Ephesians 3:18

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Groups will practice the memory verse by singing it to the tune of "Baby Shark." You can add the sign language to do with the song.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Allow preteens to use one of their own devices or borrow one from a leader to record themselves doing this video ahead of time. Then, play it back to teach it to the rest of the group. When they have seen it a couple of times, hit pause after certain lines to help them keep going and "fill in the blank." Do this a few times until the kids can do the whole song (and verse) from memory!

Grasp how wide (doo doo doo doo doo)  
and long (doo doo doo doo doo)  
and high (doo doo doo doo doo)  
and deep (doo doo doo doo doo)  
is the love of Christ!

#### ACTIVITY | DIY Aquarium Craft

- During Mission: DEEP SEA, we've talked about how wide and long and high and deep the love of God is. We've explored the deep ocean and worked together to complete our mission.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *The kids will create their own "aquarium" to take home. Instruct them to insert aquarium rocks, plastic plants, fish, and other creatures into the mason jar. Fill with water, five to six drops of blue food coloring, and glitter. Print the VBS logo on two-inch, round Avery labels and tell the kids to stick them to the lid of their plastic mason jars.*
- When you return to land, you will have this aquarium to remind you how deeply you are loved by God, and also of your new mission as a S.E.A. agent – **to grow your faith by spending time with God and others, by using your gifts and sharing your story!**