

Bible Point

Jesus came as a baby.

Bible Verse

Jesus was born (adapted from Luke 2:6).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- learn that Jesus came as a baby,
 - learn that Jesus needed special care, and
 - thank God for Jesus.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ The animals gave Jesus a bed.

**Luke
2:1-20**



but destined for this special, divine child!

When Jesus was born, he was a human baby in need of care, just as each of us was at one time. Mary lovingly wrapped him in swaddling cloth to protect his skin from the sharp pokes of the hay in the manger, which was the only bed available for him. And Jesus, as well as Mary and Joseph, was protected from the outside elements by the stable, meant for animals

Prayer

- Read Philippians 2:3-11.
- What must Jesus have given up to come to earth as a human baby?
- How fully do your attitudes reflect the humility that Jesus demonstrated for us?
- Pray: God, forgive me for my less-than-humble attitudes. Help me to...












Repeating the Bible Point over and over will help the children remember it and apply it to their lives. Help children learn one point that will stay with them for days and even years to come.

Before the Lesson

- Collect items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed in the chart on the next page.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God's direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Arrival Activities Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Welcome Time —Receive a warm welcome from the teacher and Cuddles the Lamb.	Name tags (p. 8), marker, tape or safety pins, CD player	
	Option 1: Nativity Blocks —Play with blocks and build a barn for animals.	Large cardboard building blocks, people and animal patterns (pp. 23, 37, 50), scissors, tape	
	Option 2: Visit With a Baby —Receive a visit from parents and their baby.	A visitor with a real baby, baby's diaper bag	
	Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they help clean up the room.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Bible Song —Sing a song about the Bible.	Bible, CD player	
	Jesus Came as a Baby —Interact with sensory items on the StoryBoard as they hear the Bible story from Luke 2:1-20 and Matthew 2.	Magazine pictures of babies, scissors	
	Bright Star —Sing a song about Jesus' birth.	CD player	
Bible Activities	Interactive Bible Bulletin Board —Review the Bible story with Cuddles the Lamb as they create a bulletin board together.	Cow and donkey patterns (p. 37), scissors, tape, bowl, chow mein noodles	
	Sing It Out —Sing a song about Jesus' birth.	CD player	
	Bible Craft —Use potatoes to make pretend babies.	Flannel or fabric cut from an old blanket; scissors; small, clean potatoes; markers; rubber bands; shredded paper	
	Bible Game —Pretend to be babies.		
Closing 	Hay, Let's Eat! —Say a prayer and enjoy a snack.	Chow mein noodles, paper cups	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Arrival Activities

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: name tags (p. 8), tape or safety pins, marker, CD player



- Play “Away in a Manger” (track 4) from the CD as children are arriving. The music will be soothing to the children as they adapt to their surroundings.
- Use Cuddles the Lamb to help you greet each child by name and with a warm smile.
- Tape or pin a name tag to each child’s clothing.
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► Jesus came as a baby.**
- Place Cuddles out of sight so the children won’t be distracted by him during the next activity.

teacher tips

Toddlers and 2s need supervision at all times. It’s best to have at least two adults in the classroom. The ideal ratio is a minimum of one adult for every three to four children.

BIBLE POINT



Option 1: Nativity Blocks

SUPPLIES: large cardboard building blocks, people and animal patterns (pp. 23, 37, 50), scissors, tape

Photocopy and cut out the people and animal patterns. Tape the Nativity figures to several large cardboard building blocks. Encourage the children to build a barn or stable for the animals with the rest of the blocks. Tell the children that ► Jesus came as a baby and that he was born where animals sleep. Let the children identify the animals and talk about them.

teacher tips

Children this age enjoy knocking down blocks as much as building them up. Encourage children to be kind to one another by asking permission from the builder before knocking down a block structure.

Option 2: Visit With a Baby

SUPPLIES: a visitor with a real baby, baby’s diaper bag

Ask parents of a small baby to visit the class to let the children become acquainted with a real baby. Talk with the children about being very gentle and quiet with the baby. Ask the parents to bring a diaper bag with some of the baby’s things to show to the children. If possible, let the children watch the baby eat or drink. Remind children that ► Jesus came as a baby.



Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



As Arrival Activities draw to a close, gently mention that it will soon be time to clean up. Encourage children to help you pick up things in the room as you lead them in singing “Let’s Pick Up All Our Things.” Use the CD (track 2) and sing the song to the tune of “Looby Loo.”

teacher tips

Make sure electrical outlets are covered, electrical cords are hidden, and all chemicals are out of reach of children. The best environment is one that encourages exploration and active learning without limitations imposed by safety issues.



If your classroom doesn't already have large cardboard building blocks, make some! Just stuff clean cardboard packing boxes of various sizes with newsprint or newspaper, and tape shut. Cover with brick- or wood-patterned self-adhesive paper if you wish.



Let's pick up all our things.
Let's pick up all our things.
Let's pick up all our things
And put them all away.

Let's pick up all our things.
Let's pick up all our things.
Let's pick up all our things.
It's time to stop our play.

Everyone here can help.
Everyone here can help.
Everyone here can help.
Let's put it all away.

Bible Story Time

Bible Song

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



Say: ► **Jesus came as a baby.** How do we know that?

The Bible tells us. Show children the Bible. **The Bible is God's special book. The Bible tells us about God. Let's learn a song about the Bible.** Using the CD (track 3), lead the children in singing "God's Special Book" to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."



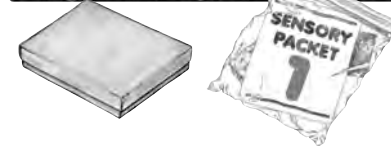
This is God's special book.
Yes, it's God's book you see!
I learn about all God has done,
And his love for me!

(Repeat.)

Bible!

Bible Story: Jesus Came as a Baby

SUPPLIES: pictures of babies from magazines, scissors



Before class begins, please check to make sure the sensory items are still attached securely so the children can touch them without danger of pulling the items off or putting them into their mouths.

Also before class, remove the *gift box* from the Learning Lab. For each child, cut out one picture of a baby from a magazine. (Parenting magazines or newspaper ads are great places to look!) Place one picture of a baby inside the *gift box*.

This Bible story is featured in *My First Hands-On Bible™*. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.



Panel 2



Hold the StoryBoard so that Panel 2 is revealed and Panels 1 and 3 are folded back. Say: **We're going to hear a Bible story about how ► Jesus came as a baby.**

Baby ► Jesus was born a long time ago. His mommy, Mary, and his daddy, Joseph, were traveling and didn't have a place to stay when it was time for Jesus to be born. So they stayed in a stable, which is where animals live.

Jesus didn't have a crib or a baby bed like you had. But he needed a place to sleep, so Mary and Joseph put baby Jesus in a manger. A manger is a wooden box that holds hay for animals to eat. Let's find the hay and touch it. Hold the StoryBoard so the children can touch the hay.

Ask: • **How does the hay feel?** (Scratchy; rough.)

Say: **The hay was rough and scratchy, so his parents wrapped baby Jesus in swaddling cloth, which was sort of like a blanket, to protect him and to keep him warm.** Hold the StoryBoard down for the children to touch the blanket.

Ask: • **How does the blanket around baby Jesus feel?** (Soft; smooth.)

Say: ► **Jesus came as a baby, and he slept in a manger. Let's find out more about what happened the night baby Jesus was born.**



Panel 1



Reveal Panel 1 of the StoryBoard, which shows the shepherds tending their sheep. Say: **On the night Jesus was born, shepherds were out in the fields taking care of their sheep. Let's touch the sheep.**

Let the children touch the sheep.

Ask: • **How does the sheep feel?** (Soft; fuzzy.)

• **What sound do sheep make?** (Baa, baa.)

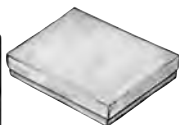
Say: **The shepherds were taking care of their sheep during the dark, still night. Then all of a sudden, there was a bright light! And angels appeared in the sky! Let's find and touch the angels on the StoryBoard.** Let children touch the angel's robe.

Say: **The angels told the shepherds that Jesus had been born. They said that ► Jesus came as a baby. Let's stand up and pretend to be shepherds and angels. The Angels can tell the Shepherds the good news that ► Jesus came as a baby. Have half the children stand at one end of the room and be the Shepherds. Have the other children be the Angels and hop over to the Shepherds. Lead the Angels in saying, "Jesus came as a baby!" Then have the Shepherds and Angels switch roles and play again.**

Say: **That was fun! The shepherds learned that ► Jesus came as a baby. So they hurried to find baby Jesus. Let's see who else went looking for Jesus.**



Panel 3



Now show Panel 3 of the StoryBoard, which shows the wise men and camels. Say: **When Jesus was born, a big shiny star appeared in the sky. Point out the star.**

Ask: • **How does the star look?** (Shiny; sparkly.)

• **When can we see stars?** (At night.)

Say: **Let's put stars on the StoryBoard.** Have two children place self-adhesive stars from Sensory Packet 1 in the sky. **Stars are twinkly. Let's wiggle our fingers like twinkly stars and sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."** Without using the CD, lead children in singing as they open and close their fingers in the air.



BIBLE POINT

Say: **The wise men knew that ► Jesus came as a baby. They wanted to visit him and to bring him gifts. Let's see what the wise men brought Jesus.** Have children take turns peeking in the gift boxes on Panel 3. Encourage children to sniff the felt and tea bag.

Ask: • **How do the gifts smell?** (Good; nice.)

• **Do you think Jesus and his family liked the gifts the wise men brought? Why or why not?** (Yes, because they were nice; yes, because everyone likes presents.)

• **What's the best gift someone ever gave to you?**

• **What made that gift so special?**

• **Who gives you gifts?**

• **Why do those people give you gifts?**

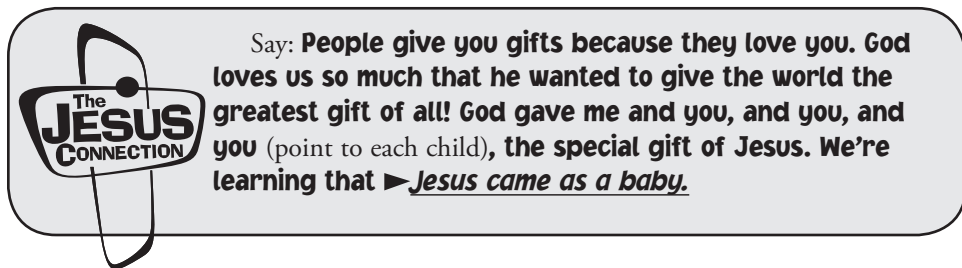


teacher tips

Have an adult helper assist in choosing two children to put star stickers on Panel 3. Use two stickers for each lesson.



BIBLE POINT



God sent us baby Jesus because he loves us. Let's thank God for baby Jesus!

Help children sit in a circle. Give each child one of the baby pictures you collected before class. Have one picture of a baby already placed inside the *gift box*.

Have children pass the *gift box* around the circle. Tell children that when each child receives the *gift box*, the child should give the picture of the baby a big kiss and then shout, "Thank you, God, for baby Jesus!" Then the child should put the picture of the baby inside the box to show that all babies are gifts from God—especially baby Jesus! When each child shouts, lead the rest of the children in clapping to thank God for sending baby Jesus.

After all children have placed their pictures inside the box, hold the *gift box* yourself as you ask children the following questions.

Ask: • **Have you ever seen a real baby before? What are real babies like?** (They're cute; they cry a lot; they stay up at night.)

• **The Bible says babies are gifts from God. How does knowing that you're a special gift from God make you feel?** (Happy; good; proud.)

• **Why do you think God sent the special gift of Jesus to us?** (Because he loves us; because he likes to give us good things.)

Say: **The wise men knew that Jesus was very special, just as the shepherds and angels knew how special he was. Let's play a game. I'll say the name of someone or something in the Christmas story. Then you can take turns finding the pictures on the StoryBoard.** Be sure each child finds at



teacher tips

Important: Put the StoryBoard away and out of reach of children.

least one story picture. Have children find the following pictures:

- angels,
- stable,
- camels,
- big star,
- sheep,
- manger,
- shepherds,
- cow, and
- baby Jesus.

Say: **What a wonderful story! Let's sing a song to show how glad we are that ► Jesus came as a baby.**



■ **Bright Star**

SUPPLIES: CD player



Using the CD, lead children in doing the motions and singing “Bright Star” (track 5) to the tune of “The Mulberry Bush.”



The star was shining in the night (*“twinkle” fingers in the air*),
In the night, in the night. (*“Twinkle” fingers in the air.*)
The star was shining in the night. (*Twinkle” fingers in the air.*)
It was a pretty sight! (*Cup hands next to eyes.*)

In the manger the baby slept (*rest head on hands*),
The baby slept, the baby slept. (*Rest head on hands.*)
In the manger the baby slept (*rest head on hands*)
All through the night. (*Pretend to rock a baby.*)

In the sky the angels sang (*cup hands next to mouth*),
The angels sang, the angels sang. (*Cup hands next to mouth.*)
In the sky the angels sang (*cup hands next to mouth*)
About the baby Jesus. (*Pretend to rock a baby.*)

The shepherds went to see the child (*walk in place*),
See the child, see the child. (*Walk in place.*)
The shepherds went to see the child (*walk in place*)
And bowed on their knees. (*Bow on one knee.*)

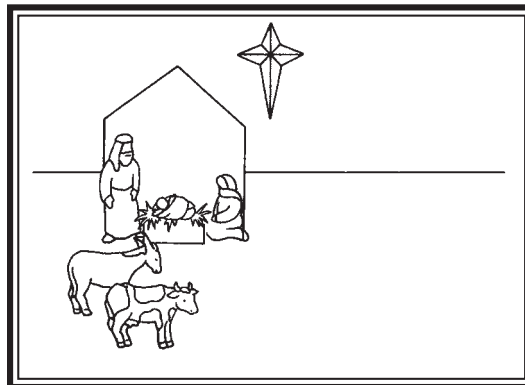
The wise men brought their gifts to him (*extend hands in front*),
Gifts to him, gifts to him. (*Extend hands in front.*)
The wise men brought their gifts to him (*extend hands in front*)—
All the way to Jesus. (*Pretend to rock a baby.*)

Jesus, we're so glad you're here (*clap hands to left and right*),
Glad you're here, glad you're here. (*Clap hands to left and right.*)
Jesus, we're so glad you're here. (*Clap hands to left and right.*)
We want to give you love. (*Cross hands over chest.*)

Bible Activities

Interactive Bible Bulletin Board

SUPPLIES: cow and donkey patterns (p. 37), scissors, tape, chow mein noodles, bowl



Before class, photocopy the cow and donkey patterns. Cut out a cow or donkey for each child.



teacher tips

Whenever possible, have Cuddles ask questions and encourage the children to give the answers. It's a great way to review the Bible story.

Bring out Cuddles the Lamb. Have a bowl of chow mein noodles nearby. Go through the following script; then put Cuddles away out of sight.

Cuddles: Hi! What are you going to do with that hay? I love hay. Can I have a bite?

Teacher: Sure, here's a bite. Lambs like to eat hay. Children, what other animals like to eat hay?

Pause for responses.

We've been learning that ► Jesus came as a baby and that he was born in a stable.

Cuddles: A stable? But that's where animals live!

Teacher: And that's where baby Jesus was born, Cuddles.

Cuddles: I like my stable. There's lots of hay in it. Can I have another bite of hay?

Teacher: Yes, then you can help us put pictures of animals on the bulletin board. Would you like that?

Cuddles: Sure. I like hay and I like to help!

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Have Cuddles hand each child a picture of a donkey or cow. Each time a child attaches a picture on the bulletin board, lead him or her in making the appropriate animal sound. If you have a large class, you may want to place the extra animals along the edges of the bulletin board. When all the animals are in place, lead children in repeating the Bible Point. Then let each child sprinkle a few chow mein noodles in the box manger you added last week. Be sure to give each child a nibble of "hay" to enjoy!

Say: **What a beautiful night it must have been when ► Jesus came as a baby. Let's sing our song again about the night Jesus was born.**



■ Sing It Out

SUPPLIES: CD player



Using the CD, lead children in doing the motions and singing “Bright Star” (track 5) to the tune of “The Mulberry Bush.”



The star was shining in the night (*“twinkle” fingers in the air*),
In the night, in the night. (*“Twinkle” fingers in the air.*)
The star was shining in the night. (*“Twinkle” fingers in the air.*)
It was a pretty sight! (*Cup hands next to eyes.*)

In the manger the baby slept (*rest head on hands*),
The baby slept, the baby slept. (*Rest head on hands.*)
In the manger the baby slept (*rest head on hands*)
All through the night. (*Pretend to rock a baby.*)

In the sky the angels sang (*cup hands next to mouth*),
The angels sang, the angels sang. (*Cup hands next to mouth.*)
In the sky the angels sang (*cup hands next to mouth*)
About the baby Jesus. (*Pretend to rock a baby.*)

The shepherds went to see the child (*walk in place*),
See the child, see the child. (*Walk in place.*)
The shepherds went to see the child (*walk in place*)
And bowed on their knees. (*Bow on one knee.*)

The wise men brought their gifts to him (*extend hands in front*),
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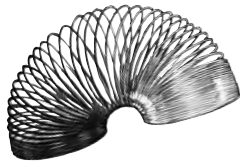
Jesus, we're so glad you're here (*clap hands to left and right*),
Glad you're here, glad you're here. (*Clap hands to left and right.*)
Jesus, we're so glad you're here. (*Clap hands to left and right.*)
We want to give you love. (*Cross hands over chest.*)

Say: **Thank you for singing with me! It's fun to sing about the night that ► Jesus came as a baby! Right now, let's make pretend babies to take care of. Our pretend babies can remind us of baby Jesus.**



■ Bible Craft

SUPPLIES: scissors; rubber bands; small, clean potatoes; cloth rectangles; markers; shredded paper



Before class, cut rectangles from an old blanket or from flannel. Remove the *large rainbow spring* from the Learning Lab. Cut or tear paper to make shredded paper “hay.”

Ask: • **Have you ever seen a real baby before? What are real babies like?** (They’re cute; they cry a lot; they stay up at night.)

Hand each child a small, clean, smooth potato. Help the children use markers to draw eyes, noses, and mouths toward the tops of the potatoes.

Then help the children wrap their potato “babies” in the cloth rectangles. Place a rubber band around each potato to help the blanket stay in place. Write children’s names on the backs of the potato babies. Remind children that ► *Jesus came as a baby.*

Say: **Shh. Let’s pretend that our babies are sleeping. Remember how we learned that the animals gave baby Jesus a bed? Baby Jesus slept in a manger full of hay. Let’s gently lay our potato babies in a manger, too. As we do, we’ll thank God for sending baby Jesus.**

Hook the ends of the *large rainbow spring* together, and lay it in a circle on the floor to form a manger. Place the shredded paper inside the circle to represent hay.

Let children each gently lay his or her potato baby inside the “manger,” expanding the rainbow spring with each addition. Explain that as each child lays a potato baby inside the manger, he or she should say, “Thank you, God, for sending baby Jesus.”

After all the potato babies are “sleeping” in the manger, have children sit in a circle around the manger. Ask the following questions in a whisper, as if you don’t want to wake the babies. Encourage children to answer in whispers also.

Ask: • **Where is your favorite place to sleep?** (In my bed; on the couch; at Grandma’s.)

• **Why do you think the animals gave baby Jesus a bed?** (Because they loved him; because he was special.)

• **How do you think Jesus liked his manger bed?** (I think he liked it; maybe it was scratchy; it kept him warm.)

Say: **We’re learning that ► *Jesus came as a baby.* God gave baby Jesus two parents here on earth to take care of him. Jesus’ parents took good care of him, just like your family takes good care of you. Jesus’ parents must have been happy to have a baby like Jesus. Let’s play a game about babies!**



teacher tips

Encourage the children to hold and rock their potato babies while you sing “Away in a Manger” together. (Words are on p. 15.)



BIBLE POINT ►

■ Bible Game

SUPPLIES: none

Give children the following instructions.

Say: **Let's pretend to be babies and do what babies do.**

• **Lie down on your back, and wave your arms and legs around like babies do.**

• **Now roll over and over.**

• **Now cry like a hungry baby.**

• **Now crawl around the room.**

Say: **That was fun! Now let's pretend we're not babies anymore. We're growing up!**

Lead children in the following motions.

• **Let's stand up and jump up and down.**

• **Let's touch our toes.**

• **Let's sit down.**

Remind the children that Jesus did all the things that babies do because ► Jesus came as a baby.

Say: **You know, there are baby people and there are baby animals, too. Let's pretend to be baby animals and crawl to the snack table.**



Closing

■ Hay, Let's Eat!

SUPPLIES: small paper cups, chow mein noodles

Give each child a small paper cup filled with chow mein noodles representing hay. Remind the children that Jesus was born in a stable, which is where animals live. Tell the children to pretend they are the animals in the stable as they eat the chow mein noodles.

Before children leave class, ask if anyone would like to say a prayer. Lead children in a prayer. Say: **Thank you, God, that ► Jesus came as a baby.** As children are leaving, remind them to take their potato babies home with them. Encourage children to use their potato babies to tell their families the story of Jesus' birth!



Children may want to say a prayer, but they may not know what to say. Help them learn to pray by suggesting a sentence or a few words for them to repeat.



For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ **Finger Play Fun**

Review the Baby Jesus Finger Play from last week's lesson. Say it one line at a time and demonstrate the motions. Then do the whole finger play with the children a few times.

A baby was born long ago. (*Fold arms as if rocking a baby.*)

Mary and Joseph loved him so. (*Cross arms across chest.*)

Shepherds came to worship and pray. (*Fold hands as if in prayer.*)

Wise men brought gifts from far away. (*Hold out hands as if carrying a gift.*)

This little baby was Jesus, you see. (*Point up.*)

He came from heaven for you and me. (*Point to children and then to yourself.*)

■ **Guess Which One**

Place baby items such as a diaper, a soft hair brush, a bottle, a rattle, a spoon, a baby-food jar, and a small stuffed animal into a closable diaper bag. Sit in a circle around the diaper bag and allow each child to reach into the bag, feel an item, and guess what it is without looking at it. Then, take the item out and discuss how it is used. Remind children that they were once babies, but they're growing to be big. End the discussion by reminding them that ► *Jesus came as a baby.*

Patterns

Cut loosely around each pattern instead of cutting exactly on the outlines.

