

Spark Summer: Splash in God's Word!

Director Guide

Introducing Spark Summer!

Spark Summer is a flexible approach to planning Bible-focused summer programming for preschoolers through upper elementary kids. You can use Spark Summer for your congregation's five-day vacation Bible school program, midweek events, summer Sunday school, or other creative ways that fit your congregation's needs. Spark Summer taps into what congregations love about Spark: easy-to-use leader material, fun activities for kids, and a focus on the Bible. Read on for more about what Spark Summer is all about.

About the Daily Stories and Themes

Each day in Spark Summer focuses on a Bible story about water. Two stories are from the Old Testament, two are from the Gospels, and one is from Acts. Each day also has a theme word to help kids focus on a concept from each story. Look for the theme word to be woven into the activities for the day in all sorts of ways.

About the Bible

Spark Summer is centered around placing God's Word into kids' hands. Kids will explore the Bible story each day in multiple ways as they meet in small groups with Shepherds, in the Large Group Gathering and workshops, and during snack time. They experience the Bible directly during their small groups, as the Shepherds provide support for exploring the story for the day.

About the Daily Schedule

Spark Summer follows a schedule that is illustrated on page 16 of this Director Guide. Kids gather in small groups with their Shepherds, then move into the Large Group Gathering where they'll sing, watch a skit, and learn more about the story and daily theme. Then kids rotate through the workshops of Art, Games, Science, and Video. You plan when they will enjoy an easy-to-serve snack. Kids finish the day in small groups with their Shepherds.

About Preschoolers

Spark Summer is for preschoolers too! Each day, the Spark Preschool content provides enough activities for preschoolers to explore the story in a safe, self-contained setting. After playing in story-related centers, they can join the big kids during the Large Group Gathering. When they return, they gather for storytelling and then explore the story through options for art, games, music, and snack.

About the Music

Instead of providing a CD of prerecorded music, Spark Summer offers suggestions for each day so that you can choose music that fits your church's traditions and interests. When planning the music for the Large Group Gatherings, you can choose from options such as camp songs, hymns, spirituals, global songs, and other tunes that kids love to sing. These song suggestions will include music from the Spark Songbook and Spark Song CD. Spark Summer also provides new verses for "Spark My World," which can be found on the Spark Song CD and in the Spark Songbook, so you can sing about each day's story.

About Decorating

Summer programming (especially VBS) often means decorating the church to reflect the theme and the characters. With Spark Summer, the amount of decorating is up to you. This Director Guide provides several images for backdrops. You may consider supplementing these with decorating supplies in the Spark colors of red, orange, and yellow. Or you could explore the water theme in your decorating through lots of blues and greens, wading pools, droplets, and other aquatic ideas.

About the Files

All Spark Summer content for leaders is available electronically instead of print to allow for easy sharing and customization. Each day has several files for that story. Files are available as PDFs or in Rich Text Format (rtf) to let you customize for your setting. Look through the files you need, send files to volunteers, and download files such as the PowerPoint slides to your laptop to create presentations.

About the Spark Summer Community

Go to the Spark Sunday School page on Facebook to connect with other congregations using Spark Summer. You can share ideas with other leaders, post pictures of your decorations, and ask questions as you plan your Spark Summer program.