

First Words

Bounce, toss, roll, and run! Playing with a **ball** is lots of fun.

Swedish: **boll** [boh]l]

Italian: **palla** [PAH-lah]

German: **ball** [bah]l]

Spanish: **bola** [BOH-lah]

Swahili: **mpira** (plural) [mm-PEER-ah]



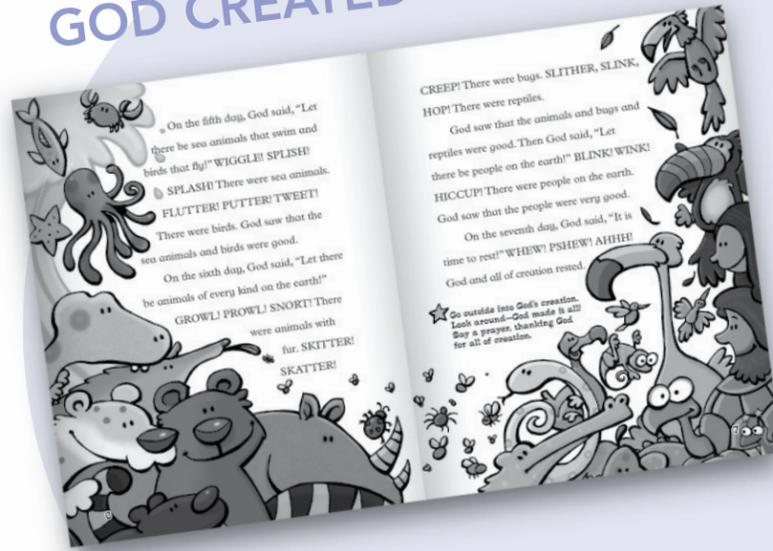
Help Adam name all the animals God created. What animals does *your* child recognize?

Learn more about the Spark Story Bible at sparkbibles.com.

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Parent Pages **Splash!** Birth to Three Faith Formation

GOD CREATED



13 Months

Splash! Parent Pages

Bilingual Babies

by the Rev. Nancy Windels

Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Deuteronomy 6:4-7 NRSV

We want the language of faith to be a native language.

language of faith to be a native language, rolling easily off their tongues, not the awkward “second language” it may have been for us. Teaching our children words of faith empowers our children to engage and participate in worship.

What might this look like with a young child?

Learning new things and discovering new words is an exciting part of the second year of life. When a child points and says “this,” we teach the word. It is a wonderful time as parents to guide our children in the world of words. As parents we are our child’s first priests, the ones entrusted with bringing our child up to worship and serve God. This means teaching the words and actions of the faith. Often worship has been a place where many words are spoken but few are understood, by children and adults alike.

At their baptisms, we promised to raise our children in the faith. We want the

- “I’m sorry and I forgive you” can begin with the simple pattern of “Uh oh” and “All better.” This gives our children the language of sin and grace and the ritual of mercy.
- Begin teaching prayer by folding hands and saying “Amen.” Saying Amen in response to the phrase “In Jesus’ name we pray” lets your child say “Me too!” in prayer.

The Rev. Nancy Windels is pastor of education and family ministry at Normandale Lutheran Church in Edina, Minnesota. She is a parent and sings in the trio Moms Making Music.

One Parent’s Perspective

After carefully choosing our child’s name, we were surprised by the challenge of using it. Perhaps we were overwhelmed by the power of the naming process, spoken of in the Old Testament. Did naming those animals help Adam understand his responsibility for them?



Creation Exploration

Genesis
1-2

(Child's name), what do you see?
Trees tall and green,
Branches that wave in the breeze,
Grass that tickles my toesies. (Tee hee.)

(Child's name), what can you smell?
Oranges, and 'nanas, so good for me,
Flowers, sweet as sweet can be. (Mmm, mmm.)

(Child's name), what can you hear?
The wind in the leaves,
The rain on my roof,

The birds in the tree.
(Chirp, chirp.)

(Child's name), what can you touch?
The bark on the tree,
The pansy's soft petal,
The soil in the garden. (Dig, dig.)

(Child's name), this is God's world,
The work of God's hands,
And you are, too. Hurray!



Family traditions help children



Thanks for Plants!

Give thanks to God together for the world of plant life all around you. In your home, outside your window, or in the yard, look together at plants. Houseplants, grass, trees, and even dandelions are fascinating and amazing. Name each plant for your child as you observe and touch them carefully. Pray together using words and whole body actions, giving thanks for the plant life you have experienced together. Pray, "Thank you, God, for trees" as you stretch your arms high, and "Thanks, God, for our spider plant" as you droop your arms and head in imitation of that spiderlike greenery.

God Makes Yummy Food

For your family devotion time, snuggle together and read the creation story aloud from a Bible storybook. The Bible story tells us that God made everything for us, including plants that give us wonderful things to eat. What fruits and vegetables does your family like best? Search magazines for pictures of these and others. Show them to your young toddler and name them.

Make a treat together to sample some of the wonderful foods God makes. Create edible smiling faces using peeled apple wedges for the mouth, seedless orange slices for ears, and raisins for eyes. Let your toddler pick up the foods and enjoy the feel. (Substitute other foods if your child isn't ready for the ones suggested.)

Pray together, "Thank you, God, for making plants to eat—especially (name favorites). They are good! Amen."



Musical Moves

Your child probably loves to move to music whether it is on the radio or CD player or sung by you. Music also is an important and wonderful part of worship, and you can help your little one love that music, too. During familiar hymns or parts of the liturgy, hold your toddler and move from side to side in rhythm with the music. Clap together to worship songs with stronger beats. (It might even catch on with grown-ups!) Point out the choir and people playing instruments. If possible, after the service, take your child to look at an instrument and carefully touch it.



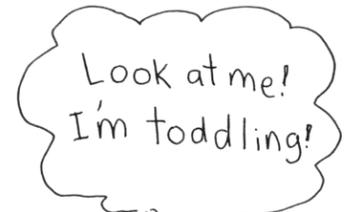
develop a sense of identity and belonging.



Light a Candle

A candle on your table can help transform the humblest or most chaotic of dinners into a more peaceful feast. After you set the table, after all the food is on, and after everyone is seated, quietly light a candle in the center of the table. Consider singing a little song to signal what is happening and be sure to light the candle slowly, quietly, gracefully. Pre-dinner chaos melts away in candlelight, especially if the room is otherwise more dark than light. At the end of the meal, give your child the chance to blow the candle out.

Onesies by John Bush



Gardening

This month's Bible story focuses on the plants of God's creation. Spend time "playing" with plants with your baby. If you have a garden, plop him down in it and let your child touch the dirt and plants. If you have houseplants, help your child pour a cup of water on them to give thirsty plants a drink. Visit a plant nursery, conservatory, or florist shop. Smell the flowers and talk about their colors. Touch the tree trunks. Collect leaves from the ground. Bring something home to remember your trip and tell other family members or friends about your plant adventure.



From the Songwriter

The Seed Song

Genesis 1-2 could provide heady inspiration for a song. But what if the emphasis was on plant life? "The Seed Song" was pretty tough to write," says Aimée Pakan, half of the husband-wife duo Tangled Blue. "The subject was tough—God created the seed-bearing plants—and it was a personal goal to record a song that wouldn't drive parents nuts to listen to over and over again!" Aimee scrapped one idea before hitting the showers—literally. "I was frustrated and decided to take a shower break," she recalls. "It was in the shower that the idea about trees and seeds and also the melody came into my head. I decided to keep it fairly simple—focus on one thing, one mystery in creation—and celebrate that."

She notes that "I may not strive to always write a song about Jesus or his work, but I think that he is reflected in a lot of my music. When you believe something strongly, you think about it a lot."

"The Seed Song" is Track 1 on the *Totally Toddler Tunes* CD. Learn more about Aimée's music at www.tangledblue.com.



Family Kin-nections: Create a Tradition

Family traditions help children develop a sense of identity and belonging. Encourage grandparents to establish their own unique traditions to do with their grandchildren whenever they are together. For example, they might take a walk together to explore God's world or visit a bakery to share a special treat.