

God's Unfolding Story

Bible Story: Daniel and the Lions (Daniel 6)
Bible Phrase: "God rescued Daniel from the power of the lions" (Daniel 6:27).
Bible Truth: God is our rescue and strength.

- 1. God created everything.
2. People disobeyed God.
3. God chose a special people.
4. God sent Jesus to help us.
5. Jesus began the Church.
6. Jesus is preparing heaven for us.

Suggested Schedule:

- Arrival
Centers - 25 minutes
Clean-up Time - 5 minutes
Bible Story Time - 15 minutes
Craft Time - 10 minutes
Snack Time - 10 minutes
Game Time/Dismissal



Unfolding God's Story for Teachers

Daniel was a man of strength, discipline, honor, and integrity, and he lived in a time that possessing these attributes meant living a life that contrasted sharply with the prevailing culture.

In Ezekiel 14:14, Daniel is upheld along with Noah and Job with regard to righteousness. At what point did Daniel's life of faith begin? He was a young man when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon took him away from his home in Jerusalem after overthrowing Judah.

The book of Daniel is divided into two parts. The first (chapters 1-6) contains a series of 6 stories and the second (chapters 7-12) contains four visions. Our story for today is the last of the six stories.

The king's plan to make Daniel his second-in-command infuriated the other

leaders. They were power-hungry and envious. They could find no fault in Daniel, so they attempted to turn his faith against him with a royal decree making prayer a capital crime. Daniel knew the law, yet he disobeyed it and steadfastly trusted God.

Daniel offers us one of the greatest models of courage, commitment, and faith anywhere in the Bible. We are increasingly facing such hostilities, and prayer is essential if we are to remain faithful in the face of opposition.

Lesson Plan

Arrival

- Greet children at eye level and express how happy you are to see them.
Be sure each child has a name tag and the security measures of your church are followed.
Label all coats and personal belongings. Strongly encourage children who have brought items from home, such as toys and books, to place them on a shelf while they are working with other materials. Assure children their items will be safe and they can take them home at the end of the session.
Help each child make a choice where he or she would like to begin his or her Center Time.

Center Time



Puzzle Center:

Work Puzzles

Supplies:

- Offer a variety of non-fantasy wooden or cardboard puzzles for children to work.

What to Do: Encourage preschoolers to finish puzzles they begin. Affirm children as they work together to complete the puzzles.

Link to the Bible Story: As children work, look for opportunities in conversation to say the Bible phrase or to briefly tell the Bible story.

Art Center: Lion Prints

Supplies: Orange and brown or black tempera paint

- White construction paper (1 sheet per child)
- Sponge brushes, paper plates for paint
- Hand wipes or wet paper towels

What to Do: Print today's Bible phrase on each sheet of paper. Paint just the palm of a child's hand. Press the child's hand onto the sheet of paper several times to make several palm prints, then clean off the paint. Show the child how to take his finger and use the orange paint to make a mane around the palm print. Clean hands, then ask the child to dip his or her finger tip into the black or brown paint to make the lion's eyes, nose and mouth.

Link to the Bible Story: As preschoolers work, say something like, "In our Bible story today, a man named Daniel served the Lord faithfully. Daniel prayed to God each day, but one day Daniel was thrown into a den of lions because he prayed to God and not to the king. God rescued Daniel by closing the mouths of the lions so they did not harm Daniel."

Bible Learning Center:

Shadow Pictures

Supplies: Copies of Activity Page: Shadow Pictures, "Can You Match the Shadow?" (Reproducible)

- Crayons or washable markers

What to Do: Invite children to look at the shadow on the left and try to match it to the actual object on the right. Encourage children to draw lines to connect the matches.

Link to the Bible Story: As children work, use the pictures to talk about the Bible story. For instance, you might say, "This is a picture of a man named Daniel. In our Bible story today, Daniel loved and served God but one day was thrown into a lions' den. King Darius liked Daniel and was sad that his friend was thrown to the lions, but God rescued Daniel and closed the mouths of the lions so that he wasn't hurt."

Home Living Center:

Role Play

Supplies:

- Small rocking chair, sink and stove unit and small table and chairs; plastic dishes, child pots and pans; pretend food items; doll, doll bed, and doll accessories

What to Do: Home living items naturally encourage children to act out roles and activities they observe at home.

Link to the Bible Story: As children work and play together, listen for the opportunity to talk about the Bible story, Bible phrase, or Bible truth.

Block Center:

Build with Blocks

Supplies:

- Wooden blocks
- Plastic lion figures

What to Do: Provide a small carpet if possible. Blocks are best located in a corner of the room away from the traffic flow. If plastic lion figures are available, encourage children to build a structure to hold them.

Link to the Bible Story: While children are engaged in building with the blocks or playing with the lions, listen for opportunities to share part of the Bible story, Bible phrase, or Bible truth.

Clean-up Time

Encourage preschoolers to help at clean-up time. Assign specific tasks for preschoolers to do such as placing all the crayons in the basket, throwing away the trash, gathering all the glue sticks, etc. Guide children to the Bible Story Time area.



Bible Story Time

Supplies: • Bible

- Teaching Picture "Daniel and the Lions" (Reproducible)
- God's Unfolding Story Cube (Reproducible/Cardstock)

Introduction

- Show the God's Unfolding Story Cube. Express to the boys and girls that even though we find many stories in the Bible, the Bible really tells one big story, and all the little stories are a part of the big one we can call God's Unfolding Story. Tell children that each picture represents a chapter of God's Unfolding Story. Turn the cube and talk about each part of the story. (Refer to page 1.) Express that every story from the Bible is from one of the chapters in God's Unfolding Story. Today's story is from the third chapter, God chose a special people.
- Introduce the story by saying something like, "What does it mean to rescue someone? Who might come to

the rescue when there is a fire in a house or building? Who might come to the rescue when there is an accident on the road? Who comes to your rescue when you scrape your knee? Sometimes we talk about the firemen and policemen as being rescue heroes because they risk their lives to help people who are in trouble. The most powerful rescue hero is God. In our Bible story today we are going to hear about someone God rescued from a terrible danger."

Bible Story

Daniel and the Lions (Daniel 6)

Daniel was an Israelite who was wise and respectful. Most importantly, he loved God. When Daniel was a young boy, he, along with other Israelites, had been taken to live in another country. God had taken care of Daniel and his friends. Now as a much older man, Daniel worked for a Persian king named Darius. King Darius liked Daniel and had plans to make him a great ruler.

Some other men who worked for the King did not like Daniel. They tried to catch him doing something wrong, but Daniel faithfully obeyed God and honored the king.

Three times a day Daniel went into his room and prayed to God with the window open. This was one way he showed his love for God. The men who did not like Daniel encouraged the king to make a law Daniel could not obey. The king followed their advice without really thinking about what he was doing. The law required that no one could pray to anyone except the king. Anyone who did not follow the law would be thrown into the lions' den.

The men watched Daniel closely. They wanted to see if he would keep praying to his God. Sure enough, even though the king had made the law, Daniel continued to pray with his window wide open.

As Daniel prayed, the men watched and then went to the king. They told the king that Daniel was breaking the law by praying to his God. King Darius was very sad because he liked Daniel, but there was nothing he could do. The law had been made, so

Daniel had to be punished.

Daniel was taken to the lions' den. Before he was thrown into the den the king said, "May your God, who you serve continually, rescue you!" The authorities placed Daniel in the den and slammed the door shut.

All night long the king thought about Daniel. The next morning he ran to the lions' den and called out, "Daniel, Daniel, has your God been able to save you from the lions?"

Daniel answered, "My God sent an angel to shut the mouths of the lions, so they haven't harmed me."

The king ordered Daniel to be taken out of the lions' den. God had rescued Daniel! King Darius was thankful that God had protected his friend. The king wanted all the people in the kingdom to worship Daniel's God—the only real God.

Talk Time

1. Show the teaching picture for today's Bible story. Review by using these or similar questions. "Why was Daniel put into the lions' den? How did God rescue him? What did the king want the people of his kingdom to do after Daniel's life was spared?"
2. Read the Bible phrase on the teaching picture. Say the phrase together; "God rescued Daniel from the power of the lions" (Daniel 6:27). Explain, "God is all-powerful, and He wants everyone to know of His power and love. God chose to rescue Daniel. As a result, the king believed in God's power and wanted his entire kingdom to worship and praise the one true God." (Perhaps there was a time when God rescued you from danger or a tragic situation. Pray and ask God how you might appropriately relate to your preschoolers what happened. Avoid sharing graphic details, but tell the children enough to assure them of how God rescued you.)
3. Close the Bible Story Time by inviting the boys and girls to join you in prayer. Thank God that He is the most powerful Rescuer. Thank Him for times of personal rescue.

Craft Time: Paper Sack Puppet

Supplies:

- Copies of "Lion Puppet" (Reproducible, 1 copy for every child)
- Crayons or markers, glue sticks
- Brown lunch sacks – (1 per child)

What to Do: Cut out the puppet faces and bodies. Invite children to color their lions. Demonstrate where to glue a lion face to the flap of the paper sack and a body under the flap. Show children how to use the puppet by putting your hand inside the bag and closing it around the flap to make the puppet move.

Link to the Bible Story: Remind children that Daniel continued to love and serve God even though he knew the law and the consequences of disobeying it. God rescued Daniel to show His power and his love for Daniel.

Snack Time

Be sure to wash hands or use hand sanitizer. Say a thank-you prayer to God for the snack. When snack time has ended, encourage preschoolers to help with cleaning up.

Game Time / Dismissal: Daniel Lived

What to Do: Teach the children the following song to the tune of "Are You Sleeping?" using these motions.

(Hands together as in prayer)
Daniel prayed, Daniel prayed
Everyday, everyday.
Daniel prayed to God, Daniel
prayed to God
Everyday, everyday.

*(Arms extended in a
throwing motion)*
They threw him to the lions;
they threw him to the lions
One sad day, one sad day.
They threw him to the lions;
they threw him to the lions
Because he prayed, because he
prayed.

(Clap hand together)
God shut the lions' mouths,
God shut the lions' mouths
In the night, in the night.
God shut the lions' mouths,
God shut the lions' mouths
And Daniel lived, and Daniel
lived! (Arms outstretched)

Sing the song several times if children are interested. Remind them God is the most powerful rescue hero.

Dismiss children as parents arrive. Be sure to follow the security procedures of your church.





Resources and Supplies

Old Testament Unit 12: Prophets and Esther
Lesson 1: Daniel and the Lions

Standard Art Supplies

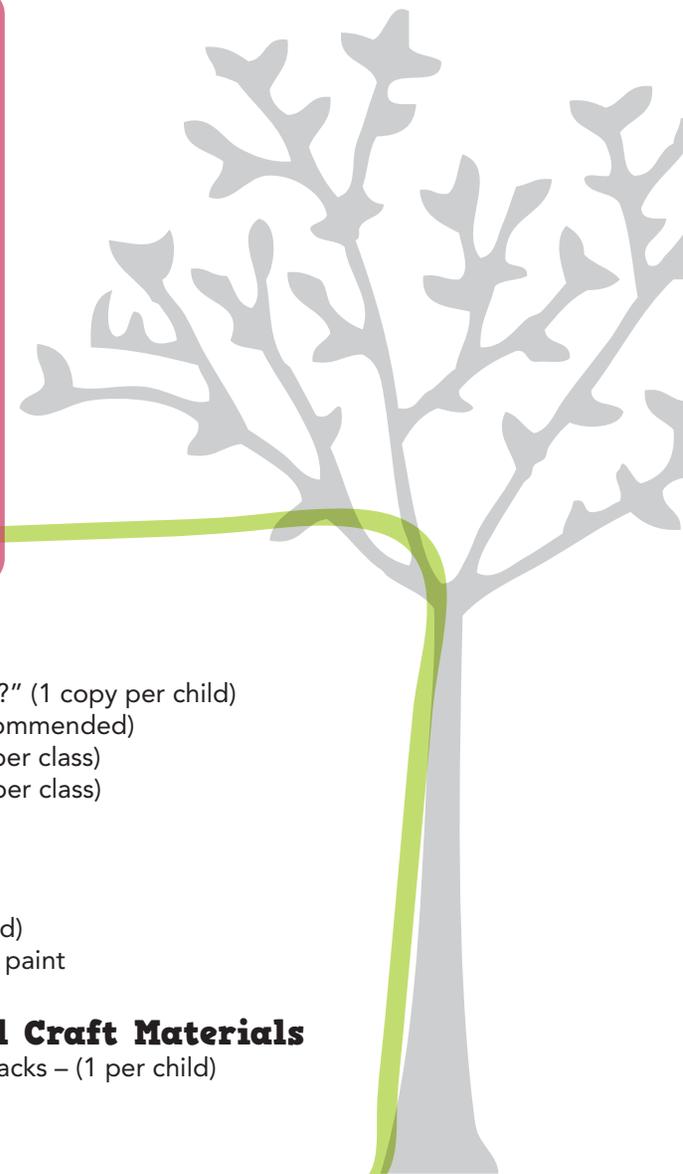
(Supplies that are generally in the room)

- Washable markers
- Crayons
- Child scissors
- Playdough and accessories
- Drawing paper
- Easel (optional)
- Glue/glue sticks
- Tempera paint, 4 colors
- Tape/masking tape
- Pencils/colored pencils
- Hole punch
- Teacher scissors
- Stapler/staples
- Permanent markers
- Watercolors
- Paintbrushes
- Yarn

Standard Equipment

(Equipment that is generally in the room)

- Bible
- Small beanbag for Bible Story Time
- Assorted wooden/cardboard puzzles
- Set of wooden blocks
- Small cars and trucks
- Doll bed
- Baby doll (soft plastic)
- Stove/sink unit
- Play dishes/pots and pans
- Small table and chairs
- Small carpet for block area
- Play food items
- Storage shelf for blocks
- Tables and chairs for art, puzzles, and Bible Learning Center
- CD player/Children's Worship CDs



Reproducibles

(Included with the lesson plan downloads)

- Activity Page: Shadow Pictures, "Can You Match the Shadow?" (1 copy per child)
- "Lion Puppet" (1 copy for every child, cardstock recommended)
- Teaching Picture: "Daniel and the Lions" (1 copy per class)
- God's Unfolding Story Cube (Cardstock—1 copy per class)
- Parent Page (1 copy per child)
- Coloring Page, "Daniel and the Lions"

Additional Art Materials

- White construction paper— (1 sheet per child)
- Orange and brown or black washable tempera paint
- Paper towels or wet wipes

Additional Block Materials

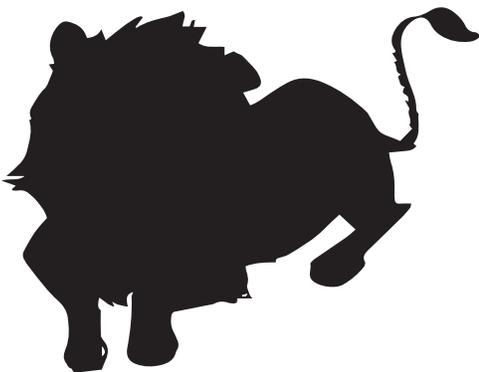
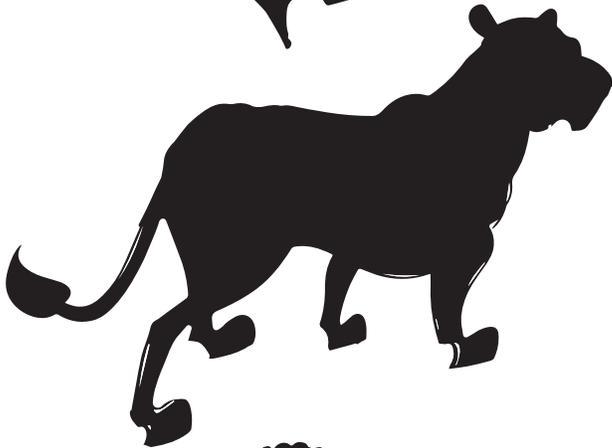
- Plastic lion figures

Additional Craft Materials

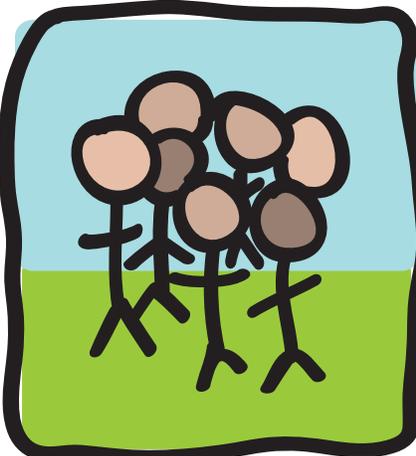
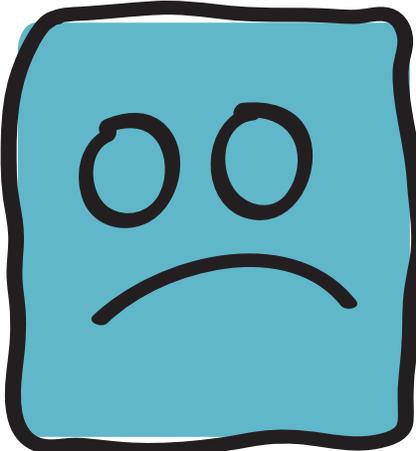
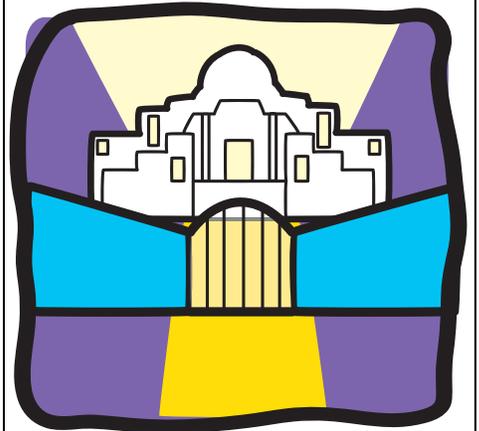
- Lunch sacks – (1 per child)



Can You Match the Shadows?

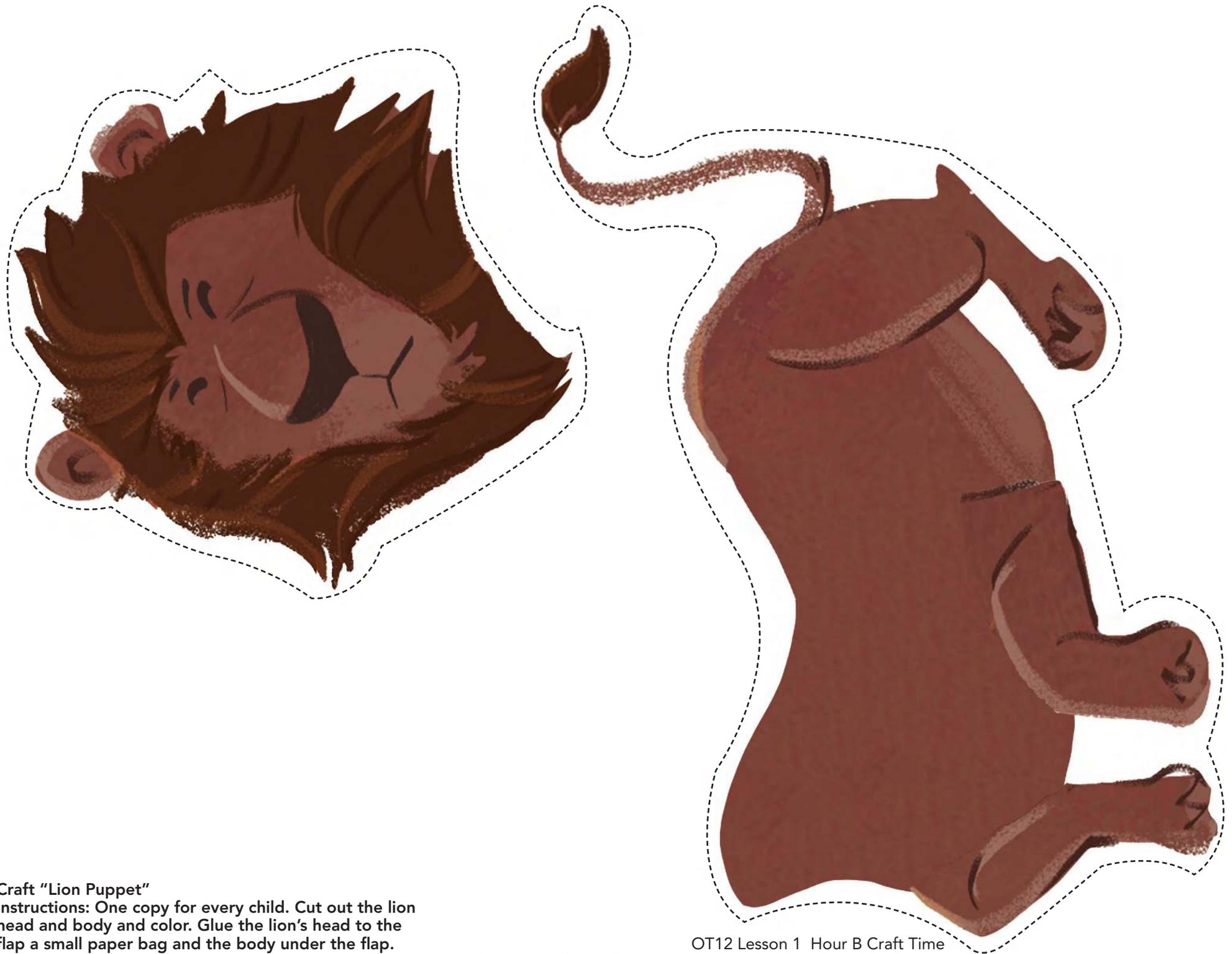


Activity Page: "Can You Match the Shadows?"
Instructions: Copy 1 sheet per child. Match the shadow on the left with the actual object on the right.



God's Story Cube

Instructions: Cut out on dotted lines, fold on solid lines. Glue or tape to form a cube.



Craft "Lion Puppet"

Instructions: One copy for every child. Cut out the lion head and body and color. Glue the lion's head to the flap a small paper bag and the body under the flap.



God rescued Daniel from the power of the lions. Daniel 6:27