

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: John 10:1-16
- In This Passage: Jesus says he is the good shepherd. Like a shepherd, he calls his sheep, and they know his voice and follow him. He seeks to give his sheep a rich and satisfying life, and he sacrifices his own life for his sheep. He knows his sheep, and his sheep know him.
- Bible Point: Jesus knows us...
- Application: ...so we get to know him.
- Summary Verse: "Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves" (Philippians 2:3).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *Jesus knows us*. One of the greatest cries of the human heart is to be known, understood, and loved. That goes for kids, too. Help kids take comfort in the fact that Jesus knows them, loves them, and invites them to get to know him, too.
- Think About: What's something only Jesus knows about you? How do you feel realizing that Jesus knows that?

Dig In to Prayer

- Pray that Jesus would open kids' hearts to get to know him more.

Quick Tip

- How well do you know your kids? Can you call each one by name (without looking at their nametags)? If you struggle with remembering names, ask God to help you remember the names of your kids. Practice simple tips like these to memorize kids' names:
 - When you first meet a child, use his or her name twice as you look that child right in the eye —"Madison, it's nice to meet you, Madison."
 - Use a visual cue to help you. Maybe a child resembles a cousin of yours with the same name. Maybe Christopher has a curly "C" of hair on his forehead. Don't rely on outfits since those will be different next time! (You don't need to let kids know these cues; maybe you remember Noah because he has a big nose-ah.)
 - If your church allows, take a picture of each child and make a picture directory with kids' names. Pray for them by name each night as you look at their pictures.

This Lesson at a Glance



OPENING

Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids create a sheep pen, sort “sheep,” and listen to Jesus.

Supplies

- Bible
- chairs
- pompoms (in 4 colors)

Easy Prep

- You'll need a pile made up of all the colors of pompoms for each group of 4 kids. Also hide some of each color of pompom around the room.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids receive an affirmation and pray.



OBJECT LESSON

Kids change their voices with homemade kazooos.

Supplies

- short cardboard tubes (1 per child)
- wax paper (one 5x5-inch square per child)
- rubber bands (1 per child)
- stickers (optional)



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids use plates to fan balloon “sheep” to a destination.

Supplies

- 2 pieces of construction paper in different colors
- 10 to 15 inflated balloons that match 1 of the colors of construction paper
- 10 to 15 inflated balloons that match the other color of construction paper
- small dessert-size paper plates
- painter's tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- On the floor at opposite ends of the room, tape rectangles large enough for $\frac{1}{2}$ the total number of balloons to fit in.
- On the wall near each rectangle, tape 1 of the pieces of construction paper to indicate which color balloon should go in which rectangle.
- Place balloons in the center of the room with the colors mixed together.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids follow a partner's voice.

Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)



CRAFT

Kids make sheep on leashes.

Supplies

- disposable bowls (1 per child)
- glue sticks
- black paper
- googly eye stickers (2 per child)
- cotton balls (about 25 per child)
- hole punch
- yarn
- scissors

Easy Prep

- Cut out a black oval for each child. Ours were about 2x2½ inches.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO

Kids watch a video and discuss the Bible Point.

Supplies

- “Feeling Sheepish” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))

**Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



Welcome

Supplies

- Bible

Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have kids wave at three people they're not sitting near.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having kids say "drippy haybath" (the letters of happy birthday mixed up).
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we'll learn that Jesus knows us! He knows everything about us—even our names. Jesus even knew what our parents would name us before we were born!**

Share

- Share something about *your* name with kids. You might share why your parents named you what they did, what your name means, or a reason you like your name.
- In small groups, have kids share something about *their* names. They can share their full names, tell something their parents have told them about their names, such as other names their parents were thinking of, or what their parents call them for a nickname.
- After small groups have discussed, have a few kids share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **Each of your names is special, and Jesus knows your name—he knows everything about you! Jesus is your good friend, and he loves knowing all about you! When we're friends with Jesus, we can get to know him, too.**

Pray, thanking Jesus that he knows each of the children.



Supplies

- Bible
- chairs
- pompoms (in 4 colors)

Easy Prep

- You'll need a pile made up of all the colors of pompoms for each group of 4 kids. Also hide some of each color of pompom around the room.

Create a Sheep Pen

Say: **Today we're learning that Jesus knows us, so we get to know him. In our Bible story, we'll see how Jesus talks about sheep and shepherds to help his friends understand how he knows us.**

You might not know much about sheep and shepherds. But if you or a friend has a pet, that can help you understand a little about sheep and shepherds, too.

Share about a pet *you* or someone close to you has had.

Ask: • **Tell about your pet or a friend's pet. How can you tell the pet knows its people?**

Say: **A dog or cat can tell its own human from a stranger. And an owner can easily pick out his or her dog or cat from a group! That's kind of like how it was with shepherds and sheep. Let's act it out to help us understand.**

Have kids help you build a sheep pen by arranging chairs in a circle, leaving a small space to be the gate.

Say: **In Jesus' time, some shepherds traveled around with their sheep. When night came, they would find a sheep pen for their sheep to sleep in. But they might not be the only group of sheep in that pen. There could be a bunch of shepherds who all ended up at the same sheep pen one night.**

Have kids form groups of four. The child in each group that's standing closest to you will be the shepherd. The others will be the sheep. Have each group come up with a password that only their group knows. Have the shepherds lead their sheep into the pen.

Say: **After the sheep were in the pen, some of the shepherds would go find somewhere else to sleep in for the night. But one shepherd would sleep right across the entrance to the pen. That way, no wolves or thieves could get in to hurt the sheep.**

Have one shepherd lie across the entrance to the pen and the rest of the shepherds move to a corner of the room.

Say: **In the morning, when the shepherds came back, they'd call their sheep. By now, the sheep might be all mixed together. But the shepherds knew their sheep, and the sheep knew their shepherds. They would come only if they heard the call from *their* shepherd. And shepherds would take only *their* sheep because they knew their sheep.**

Have the shepherds take turns coming to the gate and shouting their passwords from earlier. When the sheep hear their shepherd, they should get up and leave the sheep pen.

Explore the Passage

Gather with kids outside the sheep pen. Say: **Now that we have a better understanding of how well shepherds and sheep knew each other, let's see what Jesus had to say.**

Read John 10:2-5.

Ask: • **How is this like what we just experienced?**

• **What do you think Jesus meant by saying this?**

Say: **If you're confused about what it means, you're not alone! The people who heard Jesus say this didn't know what he meant, so he explained it. We can always ask Jesus questions, just like they did. That's one way we get to know Jesus. Let's see what he said.**

Read John 10:11-15.

Ask: • **Jesus explained what shepherds do to protect their sheep. How is that like what Jesus**

does with us?

Sort Flocks

Say: Jesus knows us, so we get to know him. He knows us even better than a shepherd knows his sheep, and he was willing to give up his life to save ours. Let's try another experience where you can see how well you know your sheep.

Give each group of kids a pile of pompoms. Say: **Now you're all shepherds. These pompoms are your sheep. Everyone choose a color that will be your flock, and make sure no one else in your group picks the same color.** Pause.

Read John 10:14 again. Say: **Now let's see how well you know your sheep. Choose just your sheep from the pile.** Allow time for groups to sort the pompoms into flocks.

Say: **Jesus said another thing that was kind of confusing.**

Read John 10:16.

Ask: • **What do you think this means?**

Say: **In Jesus' day, there were two main groups: the Jews and the Gentiles. The Jews were people who came from Israel and were part of what had always been God's chosen family. The Gentiles were everyone else. A lot of people thought the Jews were the *only* people God loved, so the Jews didn't like to even hang out with Gentiles. The Jews thought they were the only ones who could be God's sheep. But Jesus invites everyone to be his sheep, or part of his flock.**

You have *your* sheep, but you're missing *all* the sheep of your flock! So go find some! Have kids search around the room to find sheep of their color and add them to their flocks.

Say: Jesus knows us, so we get to know him. And we can help *other* people get to know him and bring them into Jesus' flock of sheep.

Listen

Say: Jesus knows us, so we get to know him. One way we do that is by listening. Jesus even said that his sheep would listen to his voice. Let's do that now.

Turn off the lights, and have at least a full minute of silence, providing an opportunity for kids to listen to Jesus. At the end of the time, ask kids to share anything they heard from Jesus.

Say: **Sheep don't know their shepherds fully on day one. It takes time to get to know someone! If you didn't hear anything from Jesus now, that's okay. Just keep listening for his voice. The more you listen, the more you'll get to know him and recognize his voice.**

Have each child hold a pompom as you pray: **Jesus, thank you that you know us. Help us get to know you and recognize your voice. In your name, amen.**



Call the Sheep

Be Called by Name

Have kids spread out around the room, while you stand in the center. If you have more than 10 kids, create the same setup, but in small groups with your adult and teen helpers. Say: **Today we found out that Jesus knows us and we can get to know him. He knows everything about us, and he wants us to be close to him. He wants to be the best of friends with each of you! That's why he calls our names, like we learned about in the Bible.**

Call one child's name and tell him or her, "Jesus knows you," and then invite the child to join you in the center of the room. If you're having adult and teen helpers lead small groups, have them do the same thing with one child in each of their groups. Continue this process until all the children have joined you or their small-group leader in a huddle.

Pray

Say: **Jesus knows and loves each of you. Let's thank Jesus that he wants to know us, and let's ask him to help us get to know him even better, too.** Lead kids in a short prayer.

Say: **Jesus is the best of friends! This week, remember Jesus is always with you and he knows you. Please come join all your friends back here at church next week.**



OBJECT LESSON

Voice Change

[10 min]

Supplies

- short cardboard tubes (1 per child)
- wax paper (one 5x5-inch square per child)
- rubber bands (1 per child)
- stickers (optional)



Make Kazoos

Say: **We learned in the Bible story today that sheep know what their shepherd's voice sounds like. Let's make something that'll make our voices sound different. I'll show you how.**

- Give each child a cardboard tube, a square of wax paper, and a rubber band.
- Show kids how to set the cardboard tube upright on the table and then cover the top with wax paper.
- Have kids fold down and hold the wax paper to the sides of the tube while they wrap a rubber band around the top of the tube.

Use the Kazoos

Say: **Now let's "baa" like sheep into our kazoos!**

- Demonstrate first, using your full voice to "baa" into the open end of the tube. The vibrations through the wax paper will change the sound of your voice.
- Have kids "baa" into their tubes. Say: **Wow! You sound different!**
- Give each child a turn to "baa" while the other kids listen and hear their different voices.
- Prompt kids to say different words into their kazoos, including the Bible point, Jesus knows us.
- If time allows, invite kids to decorate their kazoos with stickers.

Talk About It

Say: **Our kazoos made our voices change. Even though your voice sounded different, Jesus still knows who you are. Jesus knows us. Sometimes it's fun to pretend to be different. We can change our voices or comb our hair differently or wear costumes. But Jesus still recognizes us because he knows us so well. We can't trick him! Talk into your kazoo as you say: Jesus knows us and loves us so much! Invite kids to repeat the Bible point into their kazoos, and then put the kazoos in a safe place so kids can take them home.**



Supplies

- 2 pieces of construction paper in different colors
- 10 to 15 inflated balloons that match 1 of the colors of construction paper
- 10 to 15 inflated balloons that match the other color of construction paper
- small dessert-size paper plates
- painter's tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- On the floor at opposite ends of the room, tape rectangles large enough for $\frac{1}{2}$ the total number of balloons to fit in.
- On the wall near each rectangle, tape 1 of the pieces of construction paper to indicate which color balloon should go in which rectangle.
- Place balloons in the center of the room with the colors mixed together.

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

Fan Plates to Move Balloons

Say: **Today our Bible story is about how Jesus knows us the way a good shepherd knows his sheep. Shepherds watch over their sheep and take care of them. The shepherd knows each sheep, and the sheep listen to their shepherd because they know he cares about them. Let's play a game where you'll be shepherds trying to get your sheep into a pen—a place where they'll be safe!**

- Divide into two roughly equal teams, and give everyone a paper plate.
- Assign a balloon color to each team. Kids on a team will fan paper plates to move balloons of their assigned color into the pen (the rectangle taped on the floor) near the piece of paper that matches the color of the balloons.
- Teams will move their balloons into the pens as quickly as they can.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play. You can reset the balloons and play as many rounds as time allows.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What was fun about taking care of your balloon sheep?**

• **What made it hard to get *all* your sheep in the pen?**

Say: **The sheep didn't always go the direction you wanted them to, and that made it hard to round them up! But you didn't leave any behind because you knew which sheep belonged to you. Like shepherds watch over their sheep, it's good to have someone watching over you who knows and cares about you.**

Tell about someone who's watched over *you* in your life and knows you well.

Ask: • **Who are people who know *you* and watch over you?** Kids will likely share about their family members, teachers, or good friends.

Say: **It's great to have those people watching over us, but we have another friend who does that—Jesus! Jesus knows us and cares to watch over each one of us all the time. Jesus is our good shepherd! As we follow Jesus, we'll get to know him better, too.**



Shepherd Search

Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

Follow a Partner's Voice

Say: **We're learning that Jesus is our good shepherd. He knows us, watches over us, and cares about us like a shepherd cares for each of his sheep. Let's play a game of shepherds and sheep to see what all this means.**

- Form pairs. Partner with someone yourself if you have an uneven number of kids.
- Give partners time to introduce themselves if they don't already know each other and find something they have in common, such as a favorite color, what school they go to, or a favorite sports team. Once pairs find something simple they have in common, that word or short phrase will be their special call.
- For the first round, one partner will be the Shepherd and the other will be the Sheep.
- Have all the Shepherds stand along one of the walls, facing their partners.
- Have all the Sheep stand along the opposite wall, facing the wall so their backs are turned to their partners.
- Have the Shepherds shuffle so they're no longer standing across from their partners.
- At your cue, the Shepherds can start calling out the word or phrase they and their partners decided on, and the Sheep will walk backward, trying to get to their Shepherds only by listening for their voices and special calls.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play. It will help make the game more challenging as partners try to listen for each other.
- Play a second round, allowing pairs to come up with a new special call and swap roles.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What was hard or easy about listening for your Shepherd's voice?**

• **What would be different if you had to pick out the voice of someone you know really well, like a parent or your best friend?**

• **Who are people you could easily pick out of a crowd?** Share an example of your own, such as your mom because of her gentle voice or a friend because he or she is always joking and laughing with you.

• **How can we get to know Jesus' voice like that?**

Say: **Jesus know us better than anyone, and as we spend time with Jesus, we'll get to know him more and more so we can recognize his voice in our lives. It's good to know the voice of our good shepherd!**



CRAFT

Sheep on a Leash

[20 min]

Supplies

- disposable bowls (1 per child)
- glue sticks
- black paper
- googly eye stickers (2 per child)
- cotton balls (about 25 per child)
- hole punch
- yarn
- scissors

Easy Prep

- Cut out a black oval for each child. Ours were about 2x2½ inches.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Talk About It

Say: **In our Bible story, we learned that Jesus is like a shepherd. We found out that Jesus knows us, and we can get to know him, too. In the Bible, Jesus told a story about sheep to help his friends understand how much he knows and loves them—and us, too! He said his sheep follow him and know his voice. Jesus meant that he protects us and shows us how to make good choices. And he knows us so well that he knows what's the very best for us!**

Show the craft to kids. Say: **Let's make sheep that will follow us to help us remember that Jesus is our shepherd.**

Make a Sheep on a Leash

- Give each child a bowl and a black oval.
- Kids can add eyes by placing two googly eye stickers on their black ovals.
- Have each child turn his or her bowl upside down and glue the oval to the side.
- Kids can cover their bowls in glue and then stick cotton balls on to make sheep. As kids work, go around and help kids use a hole punch to make a hole right under the face of the sheep.
- As kids finish, help them each tie a piece of yarn through the hole. The yarn should be long enough that kids can lead their sheep by it as a leash.

Lead the Sheep

Say: **Your sheep look great! Do your sheep follow you like Jesus said his sheep follow him, the shepherd?** Allow time for kids to lead their sheep around the room.

Say: **Jesus says he's the shepherd and we're the sheep because it helps us understand that Jesus knows us, protects us, cares for us, and loves us! And we can get to know him and learn from him, too!**



Supplies

- “Feeling Sheepish” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))

Tip

- Don't have internet in your classroom? That's okay! You can download the videos before class using the “download” button at the link provided, or just purchase this quarter's DVD [here](#).

Discuss and Watch “Feeling Sheepish”

Say: Today we're learning that Jesus is like a shepherd! Jesus knows us, even better than a shepherd knows his sheep.

Ask: • **What are some interesting things you know about sheep?**

Say: **We know a little about sheep, but we could learn a lot more! Let's find out more about sheep by seeing some real shepherds!**

Watch “Feeling Sheepish.”

Ask: • **What did the shepherds say or do that reminds you of how Jesus interacts with us?**

• **What was different about the shepherds and Jesus?**

Say: Jesus knows us, so we get to know him. The shepherds in our video knew how to take care of their sheep and how to get them to go where they need to go. They made sure a lot of grass grew so the sheep would have food. They knew the names of certain special sheep, but most sheep didn't even have names. That's a little different from shepherds in Bible times. Jesus knows our names and so much more! He knows everything about us, and he invites us to get to know him.