

The Prodigal Son

Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference
Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Lesson Focus
We are welcome in God's home.

Gather (10 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Center Time Kids play house and farm to prepare for today's story, make pretend party cakes to welcome someone home, and color Bible story pictures.	Coloring Pages 	Dollhouse and furniture, play people, play barn, play animals, toy tractors, purple play clay, birthday candles, blank paper, markers or crayons
Circle Time Kids find a party hat and play a "welcome home hug" game.	None	Party hats
Prayer Time Kids echo a prayer.	None	Party hats

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
The Prodigal Son Storytelling Leader reads aloud from the Spark Story Bible.	Spark Story Bible	None
Prodigal Son Play Kids help retell today's story.	None	Dollhouse, play people, play farm, farm animals (including pigs)
A Dad and Two Sons Kids recall the story with stickers.	Leaflets, Lesson Stickers	None

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Lost and Found Kid's find pictures of lost things.	Leaflets	None
Welcome Home Kids play a peek-a-boo welcome home game.	Leaflets	Streamers
Party Music Kids make music for the prodigal son's party.	None	Rhythm instruments, basket

Send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Good-bye Time Kids tell one thing they did today.	Leaflets, Lesson Stickers	Party hats
Prayer Time Kids pray using a repeat-after-me prayer.	Family Pages 	None



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- The Director's CD-Rom contains Activity Pages, Coloring Pages, Family Pages, Large Group Openings, and two additional in-class activities for each lesson.
- A Spark Online annual subscription gives you access to all content contained in the Director's CD-Rom and the Spark Leader Guides, plus administrative tools and other extras.

Gather (10 minutes)

Center Time

You may choose to set up all or some of these learning centers for kids to play in as they arrive in your classroom. Have helpers in each center to help kids with the activities. Kids can stay in one center or travel to more than one.

When all kids have arrived and have had time to participate in at least one learning center, transition kids to Circle Time by dimming the lights and telling them it's time for a party, so they need to clean up. When ready, ask kids to dance with you in a conga-style line. Snake around the room a few times before arriving in the Circle Time area.

Home and Farm

Set up the dollhouse and farm on the floor or low table. Observe kids playing or play along with them. Let the kids lead the play.

Party Play Clay

Roll the play clay into individual round balls. Place balls on a kid-sized table in front of each chair. Set four birthday candles by each play clay ball so kids can make cupcakes or other decorations.

Coloring Center

Have coloring supplies available at a table for the kids to color. Be sure to help them put their names on their paper.

Circle Time

Place party hats in a circle for kids to find as the dance line arrives at Circle Time.

Welcome friends! We are all here to learn about God. Put on your party hats, and let's sing our welcome song. I wonder who is here today. Sing this song to the tune of "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush."

**Now it's time for Spark Time,
Spark Time, for Spark Time.
Now it's time for Spark Time,
We hear about God's love.**

**Our friends are here for Spark Time,
Spark Time, for Spark Time.
Our friends are here for Spark Time,
We hear about God's love.**

**[Name]'s here for Spark Time,
Spark Time, for Spark Time.
[Name]'s here for Spark Time,
We hear about God's love.**

Spark Resources

Coloring pages



Supplies

Dollhouse and furniture
Play people
Play barn
Play animals
Toy tractors
Purple play clay
Birthday candles
Blank paper
Markers or crayons

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Party hats

Continue until all kids and adults are named.

Ask an adult to stand at the door. Pretend not to see this person. Then discover the person at the door. **Welcome home! I've missed you. I'm going to give you a welcome home hug.** Get up and hug the person. Ask kids if they would like to be welcomed home. Kids can stand at the door one at a time and be welcomed home if they desire. Do not force hugs on kids who don't want to participate.

Prayer Time

Ask kids to put their party hats on again if they have come off. **It's prayer time!**
Repeat after me.

Prayer time hearts. Place finger on lips.

Prayer time hands. Fold hands.

Prayer time eyes. Close eyes.

Dear God,

Thanks for party hats.

Thanks for family hugs.

Thanks for homes.

Amen.

Collect all the party hats.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Party hats

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

The Prodigal Son Storytelling

Take out your Spark Story Bible and open to The Prodigal Son on pages 378–383. Read the story out loud and point to the corresponding pictures. Look for Squiggles the caterpillar in each picture. Ask kids what they think Squiggles is feeling or doing. Encourage them to make a face like Squiggles.

Ask the following questions, allowing time for the kids to answer. **Who told today's story? (Jesus)** **What person in Jesus' story went away and came back? (the younger son)**

Look at the faces in our story. Can you show me a person who is angry? A person who is sad? A person who is scared? A person who is happy?

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bible

Supplies

None

Prodigal Son Play

Bring the supplies from Home and Farm to the center of the circle after reading today's story. Use the dollhouse, play people, barn, and farm animals to recreate today's story. Allow kids to gather around the props and play with them while you retell today's story very simply using the props. **There was a man with two sons. The younger son took his money and left the home. He spent all of his money and had to sleep in a barn and feed the animals. He was scared. He went home and asked his dad to forgive him. His dad was so happy he threw a party for the younger son. The older son was angry. The father had never thrown a party for the older son. The dad said that he loved both of his sons.**

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Dollhouse
Play people
Play farm
Play animals (including pigs)

A Dad and Two Sons

Invite everyone to gather around a table. Give each kid a leaflet. Point to the picture on the front of the leaflet. **There were three people in the story Jesus told. I have some stickers to help us remember.** Point to the sticker outline next to the pig. **Who was scared and had to sleep with the pigs? The younger son. Let's put a sticker of the younger son here next to the pig.** Pass out the sticker and help kids place it as needed. **Who in the story was angry? The older son. Let's put a sticker of the older son here.** Pass out the sticker and help kids place the sticker in the appropriate outline. **Who was happy and threw a party? The daddy. Let's add a daddy sticker to the leaflet.** Pass out the father sticker. **The story Jesus told was about a daddy who loved both of his sons.**

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

None

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

Lost and Found

Ask kids to turn over their leaflets. **A father lost his son and then found him again! Let's find some lost stuff. Let's find a lost coin.** Look for the lost coin. **We found the lost coin, hurrah! Now let's find a lost sheep.** Find the lost sheep. **We found the lost sheep, hurrah! I think there is someone from today's story who was lost. I wonder if there is a lost son hidden in this picture.** Look for a picture of a man. **We found the lost son, hurrah! All the lost have been found! Hurrah!**

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

None

Welcome Home

Give each kid a couple of streamers to wave. Point to the picture on the leaflet of a door. **Here's a door to welcome people home. Let's play a peek-a-boo welcome home game. Cover your eyes. When I say, "Welcome home," open your eyes and wave your streamers. Let's try it.** Repeat this several times, and lead kids in cheering after each welcome. Then welcome each kid individually, naming each kid and having the rest of the class say, "Welcome home, [Name]," and wave on the count of three.

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

Streamers

Party Music

Clear out an area of the room for movement. Place instruments in a big basket. Place the basket on the floor in the cleared space. Make a big announcement using an instrument to help you. **A party for the son who came home is about to begin. We need some party music! Let's help out and make some party music for the party.** Hand out instruments. Allow kids to play immediately. Get up, dance around, and play party music.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Rhythm instruments
Basket

Send (5 minutes)

Good-bye Time

Have the kids sit in a circle and thank them for coming. **What did we do today? When I give you your party hat, tell me one thing we did today.** There are no right or wrong answers. If a kid is not interested in the activity, please honor his or her feelings. Give kids a church sticker to put on their clothing after they have recalled something they did today, saying, **"[Name], you are always welcome in God's home, the church."** Kids don't have to say anything to get a sticker. Allow kids to put the stickers on themselves.

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Lesson Stickers

Supplies

Party hats

Hold up the leaflet and point to Faith on the Go! on the back. **Be sure to take your leaflet home, because it has one more fun activity you can do with your family. You can hide something special and find it again with your family. Celebrate when you find the special thing!**

Prayer Time

Let's end our party with a prayer. Please repeat after me.

Prayer time hearts. Place finger on lips.

Prayer time hands. Fold hands.

Prayer time eyes. Close eyes.

Dear God,

Thank you for always welcoming us home.

Amen.

Be sure to send leaflets home with the kids, and give each of them a Family Page to take home.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None