

Our back yard

Vicki, Sean and Kaylee are brother and sisters. They have a big back yard, and an even bigger front yard. A creek runs through their front yard and under the driveway. They have a flying fox and some good climbing trees. Dad has joined a monkey bar onto one of them. He made it out of an old ladder. Beside the house is a long slope that is great for riding bikes or billy carts down. You just have to make sure you don't end up in the creek!

Dad is a carpenter who loves his shed where he and the children work on their latest projects. Dad likes to make tables and seats out of old wood. The children, especially Kaylee, like helping out and constructing things too.



Listen to God! Matthew 13:53-56

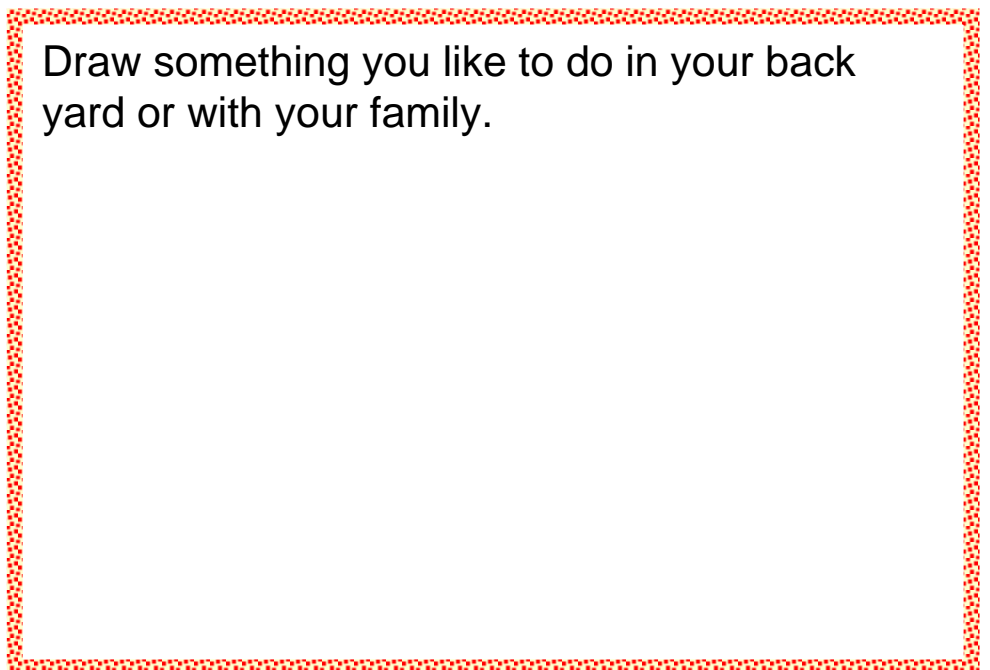
Did you know that Jesus' earthly father was a carpenter? Did you know that Jesus grew up in a family with brothers and sisters? I wonder what their backyard was like! I wonder what they liked doing together the most?

Talk to God!

Thank God for your home and family.
Thank him for the things you are able to enjoy doing at your house.



Draw something you like to do in your back yard or with your family.



Make a joyful noise

The neighbours feed Rainbow Lorikeets that come to their garden. Vicki, Kaylee and Sean love to watch them flashing through the trees and chattering and screeching as they fight over the bird feeder. Often there are twenty to thirty birds at a time.



“They are the most colourful AND the noisiest birds I’ve ever seen,” insists Kaylee. “Their noise wakes me up in the mornings. I’m glad it’s such a happy noise.” As well as the syrup of water and honey from the bird feeder, Rainbow Lorikeets like to feed on pollen, nectar, berries, blossoms, seeds and insects.



Listen to God!

Psalms 98:4-9

In older versions of the Bible, several Psalms tell us to “make a joyful noise” when we are worshipping and praising God, especially when we are with other people. How many ways can you find in these Bible verses to praise God? Write them in the smiley face.

Talk about ways we can praise God. Why not make some musical instruments – perhaps maracas or a drum?

Talk to God!

Lord God we praise you. You are awesome. You are amazing. We worship you with joy because you are good, you are great, you have done wonderful things and your love for us never ends.



Look and learn

Vicki raced inside shouting, "Come quick, there's four tawny frogmouths sitting in our tree." She had been very observant to see them. Their shape and colour make them look just like broken tree branches. "I think two of them are babies," said mum. "They are fluffier than the others." The frogmouths stayed as still as statues all day. The family watched them closely and studied up what the bird book said about frogmouths. Kaylee looked up the internet too.

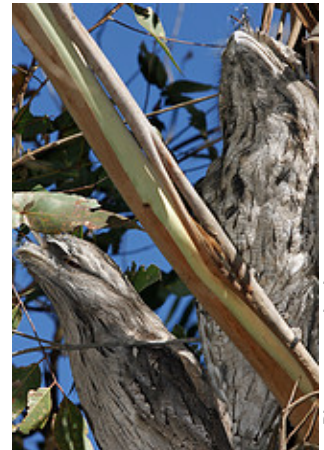


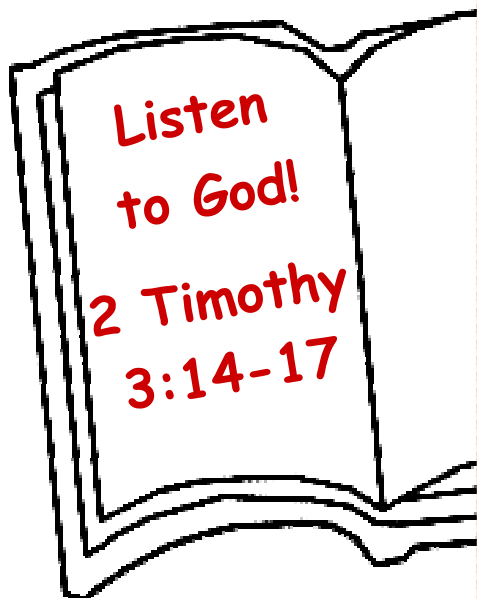
Photo source: kookr



Photo source: aartdvaark



The next day all four tawny frogmouths were gone. Once darkness came, they became active and spent the night hunting for mice and night flying insects, then found another spot to rest in the morning. The family learnt a lot about frogmouths by watching them and reading about them. We learn the way to live as God wants us to by learning from his Word, the Bible. Read, study and unjumble the following sentences.



Word the God's is Bible

the truth the us Bible teaches

Bible live the how us to shows

faults corrects Bible the our

salvation wisdom leads that the to Bible gives

Bible good doing in us the trains

Talk to God: Thank you for the Bible, Lord. Give us a love for it, and the desire to read it and learn from it everyday.




My shadow

Sean was trying to stand on his shadow but it kept moving. "What is a shadow anyway?" he asked mum. Mum explained that light can't go through our bodies or other solid things. When the sun is out, shadows form behind things where the sun cannot reach. The shadows change shape as we move and as the sun moves. As the sun goes down in the sky, shadows get longer. And when the sun goes behind a cloud, the shadows disappear. You can never jump on your own shadow, because as soon as you move, it will move too.



Was this photo taken in the middle of the day or in the late afternoon?



Some people are frightened of  shadows, but they can actually protect us. Shadows made by buildings or trees give us shade that keeps us safe from sun burn. The Bible tells us that God is like a shadow that protects us from harm.

Listen to God!

Look up these Bible verses then write and draw what each says God protects us with.

Psalms 36:7

Isaiah 4:5-6

Isaiah 51:15-16

(Some versions say we are covered with the shadow of God's hand)

Talk to God!

Dear God,
thank you
for your love
and protection.
Please keep
us safe at
school, at
home and in
everything
we do.



HAPPY FAMILIES

Mum likes birds coming into the back yard but she gets a bit nervous when the yellow tailed black cockatoos arrive. They are nomadic so usually come once a year. There is always a group of them and they hungrily strip small (and not so small) branches from trees and bushes looking for tasty grubs or seeds to eat .



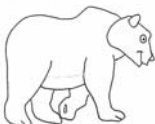
Photo source: Pierre Poulliquin



Photo source: rdvaark

These cockatoos live in families. Mum and dad stay together for life. While the female sits on eggs for a month, the male feeds her. They both care for their single chick that is dependant on them for nearly a year – a long time for birds.

Match the families up by drawing lines from parents to their babies.



Listen to God!

Colossians 3:18-21

Yellow tailed black cockatoos are good parents. They care for each other and their chicks. Every family is different, but it's God's plan that we live in families and care for each other too.

Talk to your family about things you do to care for each other.

Talk to God!

Thank your heavenly father for each person in your family. Tell him something you think is special about each of them.



Ladybird, Ladybird



Vicki and Kaylee love finding ladybirds in the garden. “They are so cute,” is always Vicki’s response when she finds one. But, ladybirds are not just cute. Even though they are tiny, they are very useful to us because they eat garden pests like aphids that damage plants, especially mum’s roses. A ladybird can eat 50 aphids a day. And they don’t even realise how helpful they are being.



Photo source: danny playanti



Photo source: eclectic echoes

.....
: We know that ladybirds are beetles, but did
: you know that baby lady birds look nothing like
: adults? They actually look more like tiny
: crocodiles. And like butterflies, they have to go
: through a pupa stage before becoming an
: adult.
.....

Listen to God! 1 Samuel 20:18-22, 35-39



David feared Saul wanted to kill him. His friend Jonathan helped him by arranging to give him a signal if this was so. David would then be able to escape. Jonathan had the help of a young boy to carry out his plan. It’s good to help one another.

Write down things you do to help

Family

Friends

At school

Talk to God!

Thank you God for those who help me every day. Thank you that I can be of help to others too. It doesn’t matter whether it seems important or not, I’m just glad I can be a helper.

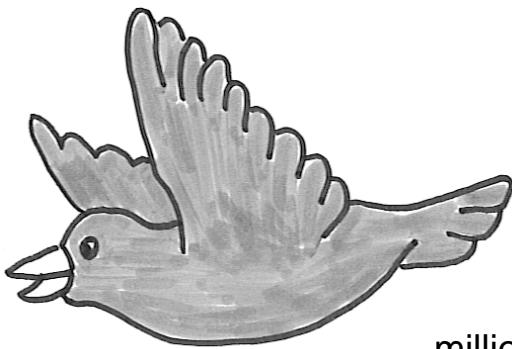


Be brave

There are often magpie larks on the lawn looking for insects, worms or snails. Grandma calls them mudlarks because they make a nest of grass and leaves and stick it all together with mud. Other people call them peewees because of the call they make. Why do you think they are also called magpie larks?



Magpie larks are small birds, but very courageous. They will often chase much bigger birds like wattlebirds, crows and magpies that are threatening their territory. As they bravely fly after other birds, they flap their wings and make lots of noise to scare them away.



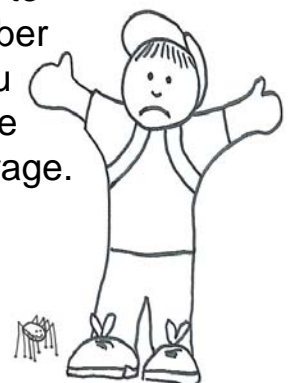
Listen to God!
Joshua 1:5-9

After Moses died, Joshua became the leader of the Israelites. He had to lead this nation of over one million, often rebellious, people into a new country. There would be powerful people there who would attack and try to kill them. Joshua needed lots of courage.

Talk to God!

In the square below, write what God told Joshua to do.	In the square below, write what God promised to do for Joshua.

Thank you God, that you are always with us and you can make us brave. When we are scared, or being bullied, help us to remember that you can give us courage.



Spitfires



Vicki screamed in fright. Her favourite climbing tree was covered in a mass of repulsive looking creepy crawlies. Mum came running. "They're sawfly larvae," she explained. "Don't get too close." Vicki had **no** intention of getting close to them! "We call them spitfires. Although they look like caterpillars, they are really related to bees and wasps," continued mum. "If you disturb them they will rear up together and "spit" or vomit blobs of yellow oily liquid at you. If it gets into your eyes, it really stings. That's why they're called spitfires.

They cluster together during the day for protection. At night they will spread out on the tree to feed on gum leaves. The name sawfly comes from the saw-like part females have for cutting a slit in leaves to lay their eggs in."



Photo source: Georgie Sharp

Listen to God!

Mark 8:22-25

We think being spat on is disgusting. Vicki certainly didn't want to be spat on by the spitfires. BUT Jesus sometimes spat on people when he healed them of blindness or deafness. We don't really know why. We **do** know that a man who was blind could now see.

How well can you see? Pick the differences in the spitfires. There are ten.

Talk to God!

Lord Jesus, sometimes we are surprised at the things you do. We are glad you gave the blind man sight. Help us to see what you are doing in our lives today.





Snails or sheep?

Sean has some pet snails. He keeps them in a clear plastic box with a lid that has air holes in it. Sometimes he forgets to put the lid on and the snails crawl out. Mum gets cross when she finds a snail crawling on the sofa or across the floor, but Sean doesn't care if he loses some. He just gets more out of the lilies in the garden. And he makes sure they always have plenty of moist leaves and grass in their box to eat.

Snails belong to the gastropod family (that means stomach foot). Their muscular foot helps them move. Snails leave a trail of mucous on the things they walk on – so they can slide easily, and also crawl upside down. Because the mucous is very thick, they can crawl across the edge of a razor blade and not get cut!

Listen to God!

John 10: 2-4, 11, 27-30

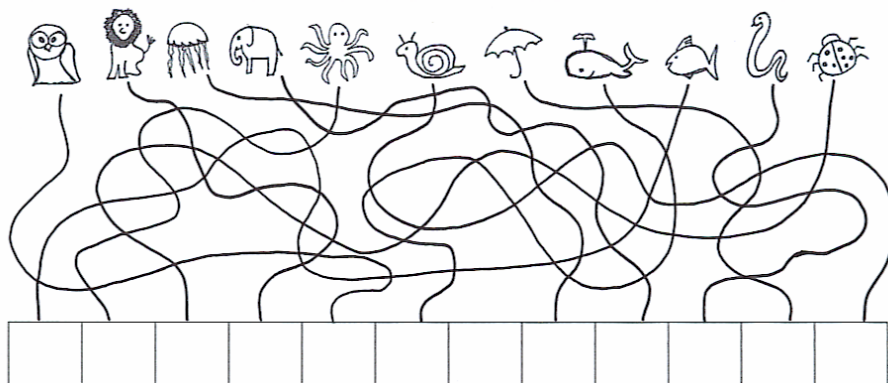
(or the whole chapter)

Snails are good at leaving trails, but not good at following. They don't even follow each other. Sheep (where Jesus lived) followed a shepherd who provided food and water, care and protection. The shepherd kept them safe.

How can we be sure that no matter what happens, we will be safe forever? What do we need to do? Follow the lines from each picture to a box. Put the letter it starts with in the box and see what is spelt out.

Talk to God!

Write down or discuss what the Bible verses say about Jesus, our shepherd, then thank him.



Outside my window

Kaylee was excited. A New Holland honeyeater had built a nest just outside her bedroom window. And two chicks had hatched. The mother had made sure she built the nest in the shade so her babies wouldn't get too hot.



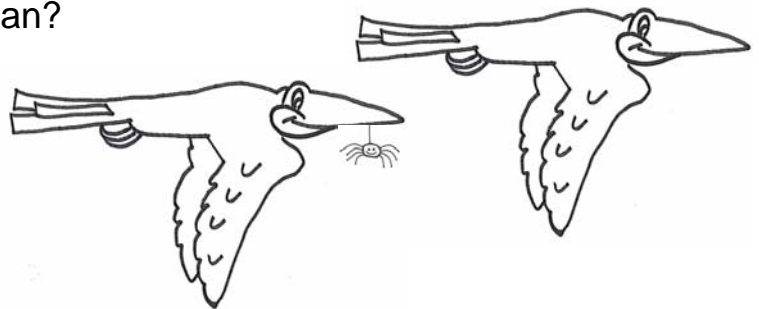
New Holland honeyeaters are clever little birds. They can catch a number of insects and line them up in their beak to carry back to the hungry chick. In calm weather they can hover in a swarm of insects and catch several in one go. With lots of insects and nectar, the young are always well fed.

Listen to God!

1 Kings 17:1-6

Elijah, a man of God, bravely told an evil king that, as a punishment, God was not going to send rain for several years. The king, his soldiers and other helpers were all unable to make it rain. They would run out of food. BUT God made sure Elijah had enough by sending ravens to feed him.

Most birds are good at feeding their young, but did you know that God once used birds to feed a man?



How much food did the crows bring in a week?

Sunday am	☞☞☞	Sunday pm	☞☞☞
Monday am	☞☞☞	Monday pm	☞☞☞
Tuesday am	☞☞☞	Tuesday pm	☞☞☞
Wednesday am	☞☞☞	Wednesday pm	☞☞☞
Thursday am	☞☞☞	Thursday pm	☞☞☞
Friday am	☞☞☞	Friday pm	☞☞☞
Saturday am	☞☞☞	Saturday pm	☞☞☞



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What day was there the least food -
most meat -
most bread -

Talk to God!

Thank God for some of the ways he cares for and provides for you. Ask mum or dad if God has ever cared for them in unusual ways.

Where are you hiding?



Photo source: mgjefries

before they were even in the door. "It's name's Twiggy, and it's a stick insect that I found in the back yard. You can't see it until the weekend because it's at school in Mrs D's special tank," continued Kaylee.

Mrs D had looked after stick insects before so she told the children to bring eucalyptus leaves to school for Twiggy to eat. She also told them about how good stick insects are at hiding from danger. The female lays her eggs into leaf litter on the ground where they can stay safely hidden for a year or two before hatching. When hatched, they look so much like twigs and sticks that they can hide from enemies just by sitting still on a bush.

Listen to God! Exodus 2:1-10

The Israelites (Hebrews) were slaves in Egypt. The king ordered that all of their baby boys be killed. One family hid their baby and he was safe.

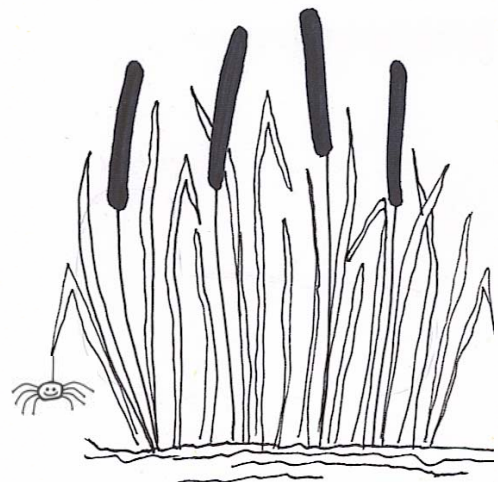
Fill in the gaps:

The baby's mother hid him for _____ months. Then she made a basket of _____ and covered it with _____.

The baby was placed in the _____ and it was hidden by the _____.

The baby's _____ watched over him. When the _____ found the baby, his sister offered to get their _____ to be his nurse.

This baby was Moses. God allowed him to be found and brought up by the daughter of the king who wanted him killed. God would later use Moses to lead his people out of slavery.



Draw the baby's basket hidden in the reeds

Talk to God!

Heavenly father, thank you for keeping Moses safe. Thank you for keeping us safe too.





HIDDEN HELPERS

“Sean, let’s help mum by putting compost onto the vegetable garden,” suggested Kaylee. The compost was full of earth worms, and they were great fun to play with. Earth worms don’t bite (they have no teeth) and don’t sting like some other creatures in the

garden so they are safe to pick up and handle. If one gets chopped in half, each half can regrow it’s missing end. Worms keep the garden healthy by eating plant material and turning it into food for other plants and living things. As they tunnel, they loosen the soil and let in needed air. They are the garden’s hidden helpers.

Listen to God!

Matthew 6:1-6

Jesus said that we don’t have to show off or boast, when we pray or do things to help others. If we do it in secret, God will reward us. One way he rewards us is by making us feel good about it.

Find the hidden ways we can help others in the word search.

Find these words:

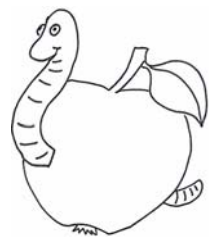
- Give (money)
- Help (others)
- Obey (parents)
- Listen (to teacher)
- Share (with others)
- Work (at school)
- Pray (for others)
- Tidy (belongings)
- Visit (friends)
- Encourage (others)
- Make (cards, gifts)

What do the unused letters spell out?

Did you know that in Gippsland, Victoria, there are giant earthworms that can grow two to three metres long. They are the largest in the world.

Talk to God!

Lord God, please show me ways I can be a good helper to those who need help.



G	t	i	d	y	p	o	d	h
e	n	c	o	u	r	a	g	e
s	w	v	b	i	a	l	i	l
h	l	i	e	r	y	e	v	p
a	w	s	y	m	a	k	e	a
r	l	i	s	t	e	n	r	d
e	y	t	o	w	o	r	k	u

Answer: God will reward you



Photo source: aardvaark

The best father



Vicki and Sean were riding their bikes down the bush track near home. Vicki saw a sudden shadow, felt a rush of air and then – crack!

A magpie had swooped and clipped her helmet with its beak.

Just as she screamed, it did it again. Dad who was following behind, came up just in time to grab her bike before she fell off in fright. “That’s so scary,” gasped Vicki. “Why do they do that?”

Dad explained that the magpie was a male who was defending his family. To him, people, animals or other birds in his territory could mean danger for the eggs or young chicks in a nearby nest. Magpie fathers not only fiercely defend their babies, but they bring food to the mother bird as she sits on the nest and help with rearing and feeding the young ones too. They are good fathers.



Vicki, Kaylee and Sean’s dad is a good dad, but he isn’t perfect. Sometimes he gets cross or impatient, or forgets things he has promised. But there is one father who is perfect

- God!

Listen to God!

Draw a line from each verse to what it says about God our father.

John 10:29	God our father, loves us greatly.
Isaiah 63:16	God our father, gives us good things.
Psalms 103:13	God our father, always keeps us in his care.
Matthew 7:11	God our father, always protects and rescues us.
1 John 3:1	God is our father through our faith (trust) in Jesus
Galatians 3:26	God our father, is kind.

Talk to God!

Tell God what you like best about the fact that he is our perfect father.



Come out of the dark



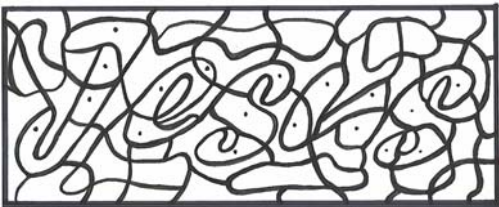
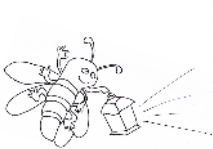
Dad was sawing up a dead tree with his chain saw. Vicki and Sean helped by collecting the logs and taking them to the wood shed. The tree had been lying in the garden for a long time and some branches were starting to rot. Under one branch, Vicki found some slugs. "Yuck!" she said, "they're so slimy."



Slugs make lots of slime to keep their skin moist and to help them move. It also protects them from predators as most animals (and people) find it disgusting. They spend all day in dark, damp places and then at night come out to raid the garden of juicy leaves and tasty treats like strawberries. Slugs sometimes live in shower plug holes and come out at night to eat mould that grows in the shower. They spend their whole lives in the dark.

Listen to God! John 3:19-21

It's hard to see in the dark. People who do bad things often do them in the dark. Jesus said this is because the light shows up what they have done wrong.



Colour in every shape with a dot to see what the fire fly's light shows up.

- Fill in the gaps from these words:
- darkness, light, come, shine, me, all, world, trust.
- I have _____ as a _____
- to _____ in this dark
- _____ so that _____
- who put their _____ in
- _____ will no longer remain
- in _____
- John 12:46 New Living Translation

Talk to God!

Lord Jesus, thank you that you are a light that shines in the world's darkness. Thank you that by trusting in you we have your light. Help us to NOT live in the dark, but the way you want us to.



I can't wait!

"Grandpa, come and look out my bedroom window," said Vicki excitedly. From her window, Vicki could see across to the neighbour's house. In their window was a big sign that said, '1 sleep to go'. "What's that?" asked grandpa. "It's only one sleep to my birthday; Vicki told him. "Connor's mum started putting a sign up when it was six sleeps and she has changed it every day." Vicki was very excited about this birthday. It was a special one. She was turning ten.

We all look forward to special things like birthdays. Many years ago people waited with excitement for a very special occasion. Good things are worth waiting for.



Listen to God! Luke 2:22-33

Simeon knew that God was going to send the Lord Jesus to be our Saviour. He had been waiting for a long time.

Wait and see what the following Bible verse says. Use the code.

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
☼	☼	☼	✱	✓	✱	✱	✱	✱	✱	✱	●	○
n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
■	✚	☆	□	□	▲	▼	◆	◇	◐	∣	∣	∣

☆▲☼●○ 130:5

----- 130:5

✱ ◐ ☼ ✱ ▼ ✓ ☼ ☆ ✓ □ ● ∣ ✱ ✚ □ ▼ ✱ ✓ ● ✱ ✓ ● ☆

Talk to God!

Lord, when Simeon saw Jesus he praised and thanked you. We want to thank you for all the good things we can celebrate.

We thank you especially for sending the Lord Jesus to be our Saviour.



"What is all that noise?" asked mum. Kaylee and Sean were yelling at each other. "Sean is dropping earwigs onto my jumper," complained Kaylee. "I hate them. They give me the creeps. Those pincher things they have on their tails are scary." "I admit they look scary," agreed mum, "but they are actually harmless. The pinchers are called cerci and they use them to feel with."

Earwigs actually have something amazing that most people don't even know about. They have very large wings, but so that they can get through narrow places, the wings can fold up tightly. They have up to 40 hinges so they can fold up and disappear under a strong wing case with a simple flick. No professor of mathematics or master of origami could think up such a clever and complicated design. Only God could do that."

That's Amazing



Photo source: l0faesofa

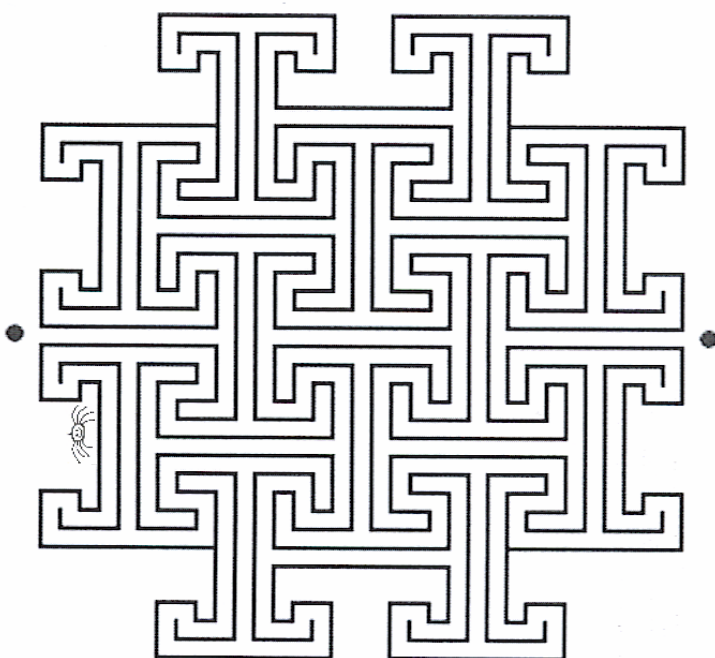


Photo source: snccann

Listen to God

Ecclesiastes 11:5

God created everything from the most simple creature to the most complex. There are still many things in his creation that even the cleverest scientists can't understand.



Try to work your way through the maze from dot to dot. It is very complicated so use a pencil you can rub out if you go the wrong way.

Talk to God

Creator God, how can anyone explain all you do? Your world is amazing. You have filled it with so many complex things. We praise you.



Get wise!

As they walked home from the school concert in the dark, the family could hear the call of a Boobook owl. “Bo-book, bo-book” it called quietly. “I wish I could see it,” whispered Sean as he searched the dark shadows in the trees.

“Why do people say owls are wise?” asked Vickie. “I’m not really sure”, said Grandma, “but there is an old nursery rhyme that says –

***'A wise old owl lived in an oak.
The more he saw, the less he spoke.
The less he spoke, the more he heard.
Why can't we all be like that wise old bird.'***

I think people taught it to children to teach them the wisdom of listening.”



Photo source: aardvark

Wise – making good sense,
making good use of what you know.

Listen to God! Proverbs 2:1-13

All wisdom comes from God but we must seek it. The best place to find wisdom is God's book the Bible.

As you read the verses in Proverbs, see if you can work out what you get by being wise and what wisdom will help you keep away from.



























Talk to God

Lord God, thank you
that you are wise and
can make us wise.
Please help us to listen
to what you say in the
Bible. Help us to learn
from it and become
wise.

See how wise you are
- crack the code.

The Bible says in
Colossians 3:16



a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
												
n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
												

[illegible]



JUMPING BEETLES

Something jumped up out of the garden and startled mum as she was picking strawberries. It was a click beetle. They can arch their back and leap high into the air. This is possible because they have a stiff rod under their body that acts like a spring that releases when the beetle arches it's back. When this happens you can hear a clicking sound like a wind up toy. Sean liked to play with them and see how high they could jump.



Listen to God! Acts 3:1-10

God made click beetles able to jump. One day he made someone else able to jump too.

Circle yes or no.



Peter and John went to the temple at midday.	Yes	No
The temple gate was called Beautiful.	Yes	No
A man who was blind sat there begging.	Yes	No
He asked Peter and John to heal him.	Yes	No
John said, "In the name of Jesus, get up and walk".	Yes	No
The man jumped up and walked.	Yes	No
He kept walking and jumping and praising God.	Yes	No
People weren't interested in what had happened.	Yes	No



Talk to God!

Thank you Lord Jesus Christ that you made click beetles so they could jump. Thank you that you gave the man at the temple the ability to walk and jump too. Thank you that you give us all the different abilities that we have.



Please don't hide

The family has a fish tank with gold fish and some other cold water fish, but for a long time now, Kaylee had been hoping for another pet. She would love a dog or a cat, but the back yard has no fences to keep a dog in, and mum and dad don't want a cat that might chase the birds away. Kaylee's hoping that they might agree to some guinea pigs one day. Meanwhile dad decided they could have some yabbies, so he bought two for the fish tank.

The trouble with yabbies is they are very shy. They hide under the rocks in the fish tank as soon as anyone comes near. There are yabbies living in the creek too, but all the children ever see of them is their holes.



Photo source: fatling_away

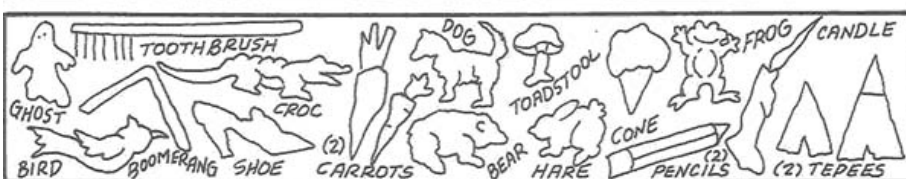
Listen to God Matthew 5: 14-16



Jesus said that those who follow him are NOT to hide, but to be like lights showing others what God is like. So don't hide your light away. Show it by telling others about Jesus and sharing his love.

Talk to God

Lord Jesus, please help me to be a light shining for you. Help me to tell my friends about you. Help me to do things for others that show your love. Help me to obey what you tell me in the Bible.



Find the things hidden in the picture

I can fly!

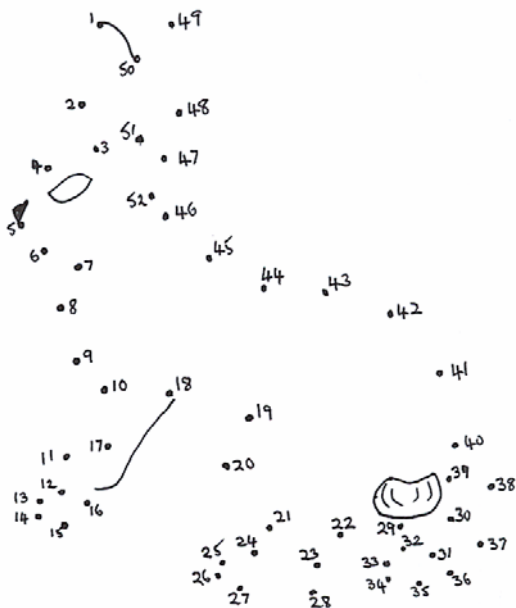
Dad made the children a flying fox that goes right across the backyard. Even grandpa and grandma have had a go on it. One day Vicki and Kaylee were talking about how cool it would be to be able to fly anywhere like birds can. Mum was listening to them talking and she said, "There is a special verse in the Bible that talks about how God can give us strength just like eagles that can fly high over the earth."



Listen to God!

Isaiah 40:27-31

Follow the dots to see what the eagle can see from up in the sky. It may be a tasty lunch!



Talk to God!

Thank God for the things he gave you energy for today.





They're everywhere,



Photo source: mjeffries



Photo source: play4smee

but they don't scare!



Sean loves collecting beetles and bugs in his bug catcher. There are over 350,000 different kinds of beetles. They live everywhere in the world, in water and on land. The only places you won't find beetles is in the sea and on ice. All beetles have 6 legs and 2 pairs of wings (a tough pair protects a delicate pair). The biggest beetles in the world are Goliath beetles from Africa – as big as a man's hand. Can you guess why they are called Goliath beetles?



Goliath beetle



Photo source: alanning

Listen to God!

1 Samuel 17:4-11, 41-50

Goliath in the Bible had everyone scared except one teenage boy. Read the story and fill in the missing words.



A giant Philistine
named _____
challenged the Israelite
army to _____ him. David
answered _____'s
insults by saying, 'I come in the
name of _____ _____.
_____ took a _____
and slung it at Goliath. It
hit _____ on the
_____ and he
fell down _____.



If you don't have a bug catcher, try this

- dig a hole in the garden and place an icecream container (or similar) into it with the rim level with the ground. Put some bait into the container eg. cheese, apple, meat, biscuit crumbs. Put stones or sticks around the top edge and cover it with a piece of wood or tin to keep out the rain and large animals. Leave overnight. In the morning, check what you have caught. Different bait will attract different creatures. Let them go after you have examined them.



Talk to God

Thank you God that I always have you to help me. I want to remember that when I'm scared. I want to remember that even big bullies can't win against you.



I'm going to run away

Vicki and Kaylee were making Sean take turns on the flying fox. "I'm going to run away from home," shouted Sean. "I'm sick of always being told what to do! Mum and dad tell me what to do, and now I've got bossy big sisters telling me what to do too."

Listen to God Jonah 1:1-4, 15-17 and 2:7-10

(or read all of chapters one to three)

Jonah didn't want to do what God told him to do so he ran away. From reading Jonah's story, circle the sentences that are correct and cross out the ones that aren't.

God told Jonah to go to Tarshish

Jonah went in the opposite direction

He joined a camel train going across the desert.

Jonah thought he could run away from God.

God sent a violent storm.

The sailors threw Jonah into the sea.

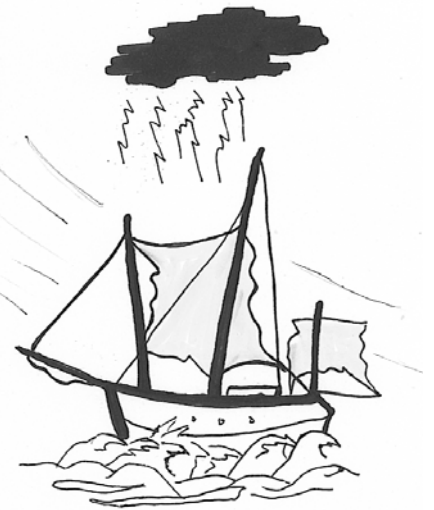
But the storm didn't stop.

Jonah was swallowed by a very large fish.

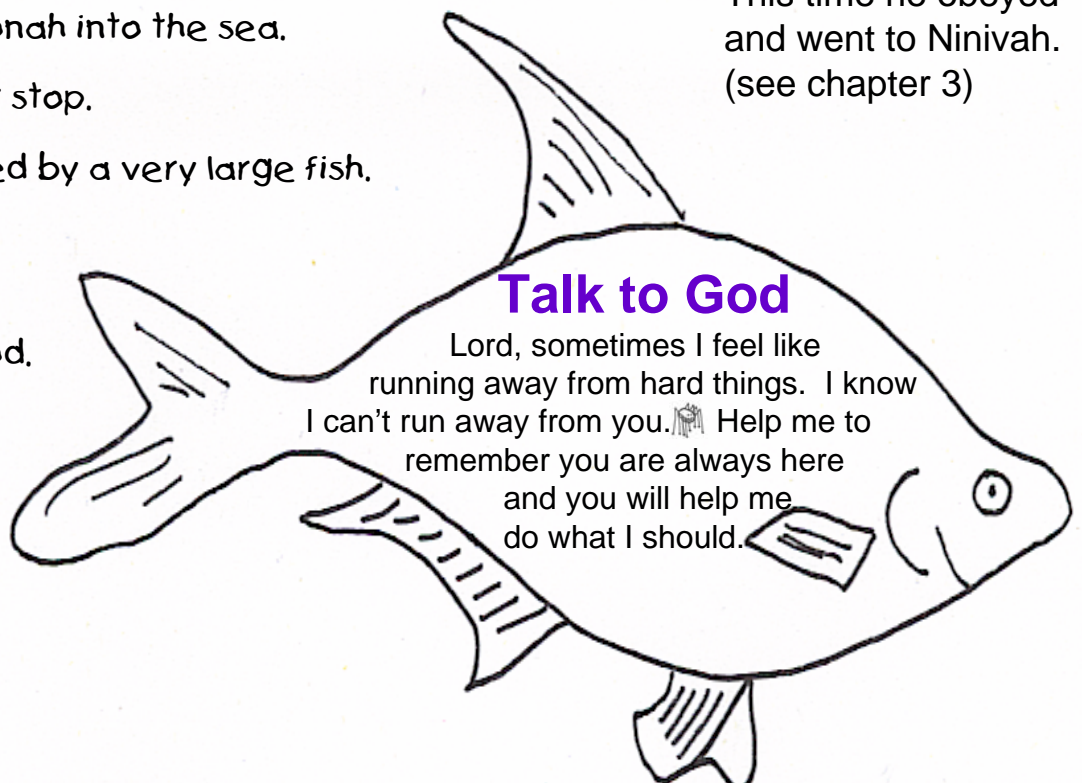
He was inside the fish for two weeks.

Jonah prayed to God.

God ordered the fish to spit Jonah out and it did.



God gave Jonah a second chance. This time he obeyed and went to Ninivah. (see chapter 3)



Talk to God

Lord, sometimes I feel like running away from hard things. I know I can't run away from you. Help me to remember you are always here and you will help me do what I should.

That's not what I wanted!

Vicki really, really wanted a special pair of jeans for Christmas. She dropped lots of hints to mum and dad. She even told grandma which shop was selling them. When Vicki didn't get the jeans, she got a bit sulky, but soon got over it after opening her other presents.



Nearly every one knows the story of Jonah being swallowed by a big fish because he tried to run away from God. Many people know that after that, Jonah did what God had told him to do. But how many people know that Jonah got the sulks (got very angry in fact) because God didn't act the way Jonah would have liked?

Listen to God!

**Jonah 3:3-5,
10 and 4:1-11**

(or all of chapters 3 and 4)

Jonah was angry. He wanted to die.
He sulked and he grumbled and then he asked why.
He'd forgotten God's goodness was also to him,
His view on what happened was nothing but grim.



Unjumble the words:

Ninevites to mercy the showed God.

Jonah mercy God to showed.

saved God drowning from Jonah

God another Jonah gave chance.

Jonah God let didn't die.

gave God shade Jonah.

Jonah taught God mercy his about.

change chance had the Jonah to.

Colour the picture

Talk to God!

Dear God, I'm sorry for the times I am selfish or angry.
Please help me remember you forgive me and everyone
who is sorry for what they do wrong.



Photo source: chrissy downunder

They're laughing at me

Kaylee came home from school in tears. "I got into trouble for mucking around in class, and when Mrs D told me off, the other kids laughed at me; even Taylor and Chloe. And they're supposed to be my friends. And now that kookaburra above the clothes line is laughing at me too," she cried.

Australian kookaburras are known all around the world for their laughing call. It can start with a short chuckle and end up in a long and loud koo koo hoo hoo hoo hoo haa haa haa. Some people call them Laughing Jackasses. A jackass is a fool, and like people who laugh at the wrong times, they can sound like fools.

Listen to God

Obadiah verses 11,12 and 15

God's people in Judah had done wrong and God was punishing them. Their neighbours in Edom just stood by and laughed. God said Edom would be punished for treating Judah like that. Have you ever been laughed at when you were in trouble? Have you ever laughed when someone else was in trouble?

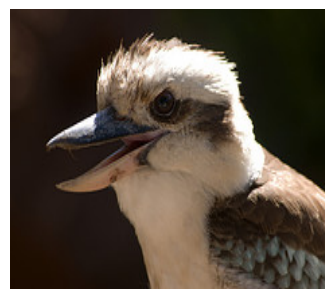


Photo source: Raean

Talk to God

Dear heavenly father, I'm sorry for the times I have laughed or teased other people in trouble. Please help me to treat others kindly and lovingly.

Make a list of how NOT to treat others.	Make a list of how to treat others. (see Colossians 3:12-14 for ideas)






Getting a name

“Grandpa, what’s that?” asked Sean when he found an interesting green and black beetle. “It’s a long nosed beetle,” was the reply. “Is it really called that?” responded Sean. “No, I just made that up,” teased Grandpa. “It’s actually a Botany Bay Diamond Weevil. This is the first time I’ve

ever seen a live one. They are quite famous because they are the first beetle found and named by naturalists who came to Australia with Captain Cook in 1770. I’m sure aboriginals already had a name for them though,” said Grandpa.

Weevils are beetles with “noses”. The “nose’s” proper name is the “rostrum”. It has jaws at the end that are strong enough to bore holes in tree branches where females lay their eggs. The beetles antennae are attached to the sides of the rostrum. 



Can you name these Australian flowers?

Listen to God!

Genesis 1:27-31, 2:19

After God had made all living things, he gave Adam the job of naming them and caring for them. Names are important. When parents are choosing names for a new baby, they take a lot of care. Names often have special meanings. Do you know what your name means?

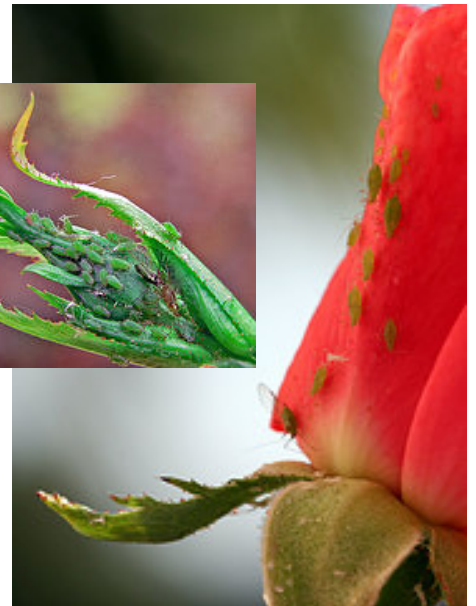
Talk to God!

Lord God thank you for all the living things you have made. It’s amazing that everything has a special name. Thank you for the special name my parents chose for me.



Change for life

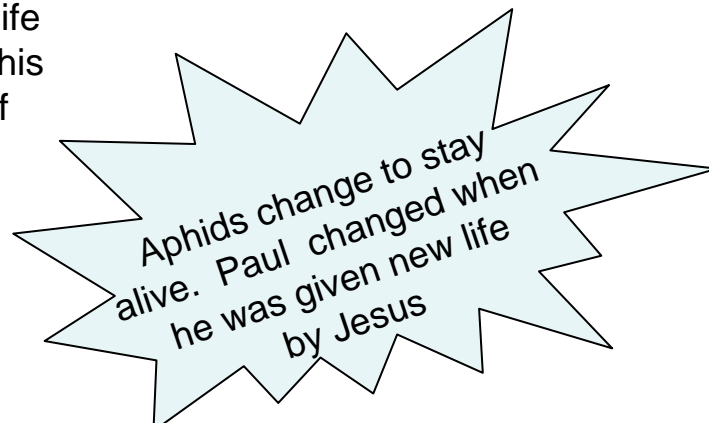
Mum was surprised by how many aphids were on her roses. Aphids drink the sap of plants. Roses are one of their favourites. They are usually born without wings and live their whole life (about 7-10 days) on one plant. But if the plant is overcrowded or dying, the aphids will be born with wings so they can fly to another plant and have a better chance at life. This is an amazing change. Imagine if we could do that.



Listen to God! Acts 26:10-18

Paul is a person in the Bible whose whole life changed when he came to know Jesus as his Saviour. We learn about him in the book of Acts and also in letters he wrote that are in the Bible.

Match up some of the changes that happened to Paul by drawing lines from what he was like before to after he met Jesus.



Before	After
Tried to hurt and kill Christians	Loved Christians and started new churches
Hated Christians and churches	Told Gentiles the good news about Jesus
Put Christians in prison	Became a follower of Jesus – a Christian
Wouldn't have anything to do with Gentiles (non-Jews)	Risked his life so others could become Christians
Was a strict Jew – A Pharisee	Was in prison for being a Christian

Talk to God!

Look up 2 Corinthians 5:17

The Bible says we change into new people when we put out trust in you Lord Jesus and become Christians.

If you are a Christian, thank God for the new life he has given you.

"Dad, guess what we saw today?" the children said to their father as soon as he

came home from work. "A ringtail possum came and drank water out of the bowl we put out for the birds.

"They aren't usually about in the daytime," replied dad. It must have been so thirsty that it couldn't wait till dark." It was the middle of a heat wave and the temperature was 45 degrees. All living things need water. Without it they will soon die in such heat.

So thirsty!



Listen to God! John 4: 7-14

Jesus told this woman that she needed "living water" that only he could give. What was this "living" water? It obviously wasn't water we drink. It was the Holy Spirit, given to us when we believe in Jesus. This "water" gives us spiritual life and means we will live forever.

We can't see the Holy Spirit but he is real. Find the following words that describe him.

comforter encourager teacher helper God spirit holy water wind oil fire breath dove

Write out the left over letters to find where the Holy Spirit lives.

e	n	c	o	u	r	a	g	e	r
i	h	o	l	y	e	n	d	#	s
a	l	m	l	e	h	#	n	w	p
f	h	f	v	o	c	#	i	b	i
l	i	o	e	l	a	i	w	e	r
v	d	r	b	r	e	a	t	h	i
w	a	t	e	r	t	e	n	i	t
n	r	e	p	l	e	h	e	#	J
e	s	r	G	o	d	u	s	#	#

Did you know that both ringtail and brushtail possums live in most people's back yards. Ringtails make nest's in tree hollows or branches called dreys. Brushtails live in dens in hollow logs, tree branches or even the roof of your house.

Talk to God!

Thank you Holy Spirit that you give eternal life to all who trust in Jesus.

Thank you that you can live in me and help me every day.





Can't sit still, can't wait

"Kaylee, will you please sit still?" begged mum. Kaylee was going to her best friend's birthday party and mum was trying to braid her hair. "You're just like that willy wagtail I can see in the back yard," added mum. It never stays still either."

"But I can't wait. I'm so excited!" exclaimed Kaylee

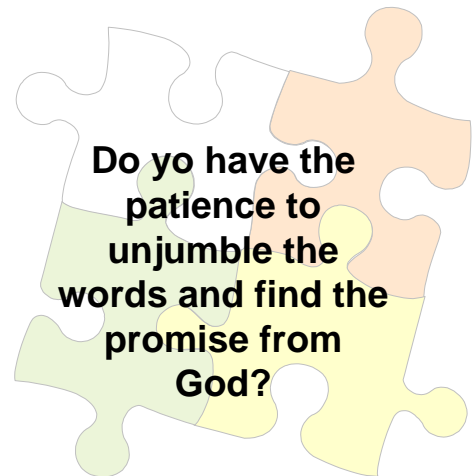
Sometimes it's really, really hard to wait for a special event, or a promise to be kept. But, the Bible says it's important for us to learn to wait.

Grandma's bird book describes willy wagtails as "busy birds, flitting about restlessly, constantly darting from one place to another. Even when resting, it is continually swaying it's body and tail from side to side."

Listen to God!

Romans 8:23 – 25

These verses tell us that one day everything will be perfect for those who trust in God – no suffering or sadness. But, right now we still have to live with these things, and so we must wait patiently for that wonderful time. Remember God has promised, and he never breaks a promise.



heT	oLdr	si	onredwullfy	ogdo	ot	hseot
owh	itwa	orf	imh	dna	skee	mhi

Talk to God!

Lamentations 3:25



Lord God, we often want things straight away. Help us to wait patiently for all the good and exciting things you want to give to us.

Food in hard times

Grandma and grandpa have two big liquidamber trees that Vicki likes to climb when she visits. Galahs like to visit these trees too. They sit in the high branches, break off a fruit (seed case), hold it in their foot, tear it open and eat the seeds, and then drop it. You have to watch you don't get hit by these hard and spikey objects. Each fruit has 20-50 capsules that contain one or two seeds. They are good food for galahs and other parrots. God has given galahs sharp



Photo source: aardvark



Photo source: pierre pouliquin



Liquidamber seed case

Photo source: Maggie_and_her_camera

claws and specially shaped strong beaks that help them get into seed cases. They are able to find seeds even in hard times like droughts or after fires.

Listen to God! Deuteronomy 8:2-3

When God's people were in hard times in the desert, God gave them food called manna. In these verses he reminded them that just as they needed the manna to feed their bodies, they needed God's words to feed their souls. We need it too. That's why we need to read the Bible.



Read Psalm 119:103

What food does it say God's words are like? _____

Draw your favourite food.

Write a favourite Bible verse.

Talk to God!

Thank you God, for your words to us in the Bible. We need food every day to keep our bodies healthy and help them grow. We want to read your words in the Bible every day so our souls will be healthy too.



Photo source: bert m. b

Hiding under a mother's wings

Three days ago the eggs that one of the hens had been sitting on hatched. There were now five fluffy chickens running after their mother. When she sensed any danger, (like Sean getting too close) she lifted her wings and the chicks ran underneath. Under her wings they were warm and dry and safe from any danger.

Vicki once read a story about a hen house that burned down. As the farmer sorted through the wreckage, he found one hen lying dead by the door. As he bent down to pick up the dead hen, he felt some movement. The hen's four chicks came scurrying out from beneath her burnt body. The chicks survived and were safe because they were protected by her wings.

Listen to God!

Psalm 57:1-2

In this Psalm and others, David wrote about God being like a mother hen protecting her chicks. David was hiding from Saul who was trying to kill him. He knew God would protect him no matter what happened.

Jesus once talked about how he wanted to protect the people in Jerusalem like a hen gathering her chicks under her wings, but they wouldn't let him.

Draw some chicks under the hen's wings and write your name, and names of friends or family members under them.



Talk to God! Ask God to help you stay close to him so you can know his protection. Pray for the people whose names you have written too.



Keep on Praying

Sean found a praying mantis in the garden. Praying mantises get their name from the way they hold their front forelegs. They look like they're praying. A mantis's head is shaped like a triangle with a large eye on each side. It is the only insect that can turn its head 180c (half way around). This and the large eyes mean these insects have excellent sight – even seeing things 35 metres away. Mantises also have excellent hearing. Good sight and hearing means they are always alert to what's happening around them.

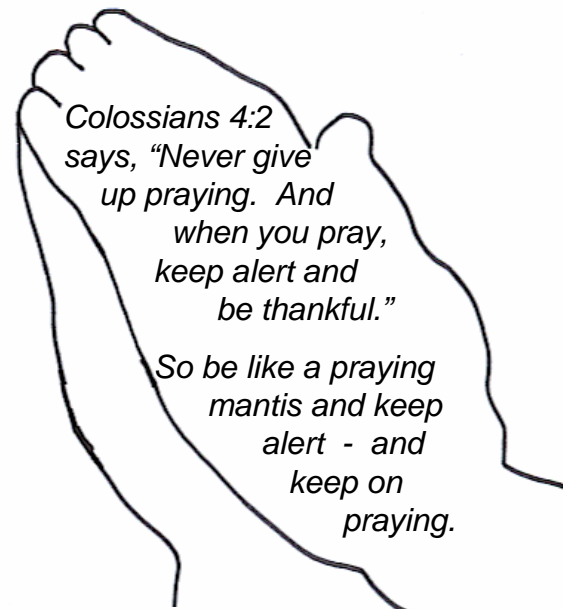
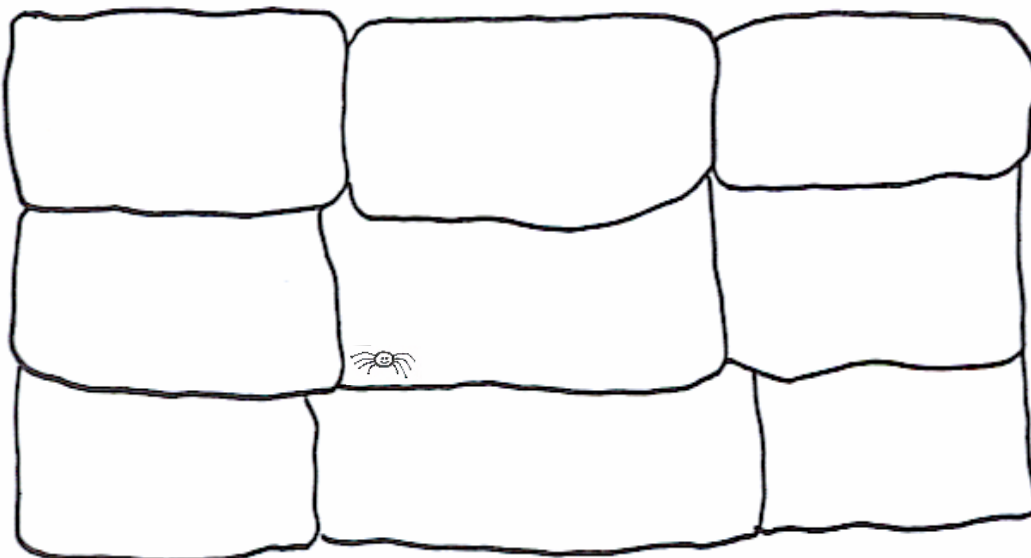
Listen to God!

Nehemiah 4:6-9 & 6:15-16

Many years ago, the people of Jerusalem began rebuilding the city wall that had been destroyed earlier by an enemy army. Now other enemies tried to stop the building. Nehemiah, the man in charge, prayed and got the people to pray. They also kept working but at the same time stayed alert and watched for enemy attack. God answered their prayers.

Talk to God!

Write a prayer in each brick. Some could be for yourself, some for other people. Then remember to pray them.

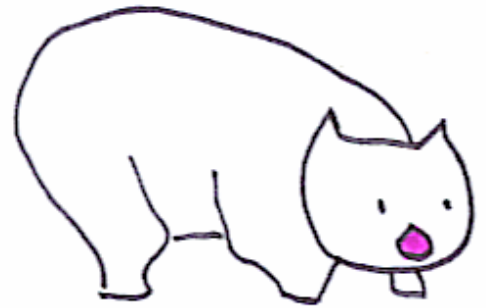


When bad things happen.



The Australian bush is home to many wonderful birds, animals and plants. During summer there were very bad bush fires. People died, many homes were burnt and many animals and plants were destroyed. It was a very sad and scary time. One of the fires came close to Vicki, Kaylee and Sean's house and backyard. When the danger was past and the family was safe, Kaylee told grandma about it and asked, "why does God let things like fires happen?"

"The Bible tells us that when sin came into the world things started to go wrong. Bad things happen to people and nature. One day God will put it all right again but for now there is lot's we don't like or understand in the world", grandma explained. "Let's read my favourite Bible verses", she added.



Listen to God! Isaiah 43:1-5

As you read, change Israel/Jacob to your name, then write the promises and things God says to you in the animals.

The river and fire God talks about here are not physical. People do get drowned and burnt sometimes, but God promises that our spirits can never be destroyed.

Talk to God!

Heavenly father, help me to always remember that you made me, you know me by name, you love me, and will always be with me, no matter what happens.





My job's important

Kaylee was stung on the foot by a bee. "Serves you right for walking around without shoes," teased Sean. "Why do we have to have bees anyway?" grizzled Kaylee. "My foot hurts, and it's hot and swollen and hard to walk on."

Honey bees are important in our gardens. They live in colonies (large groups) where every bee has a special job and every bee is needed for the colony to survive. The drones (usually 100s) are males who fertilize the eggs. The eggs are laid by the queen bee (usually one). Everything else is done by worker bees (usually 1,000s) – collecting food and water, feeding the drones, queen and babies (larva), building honey comb, raising the babies, cleaning, repairing and defending the nest or hive and keeping it at the right temperature.



Listen to God!

1 Corinthians 12:5-7 and 27



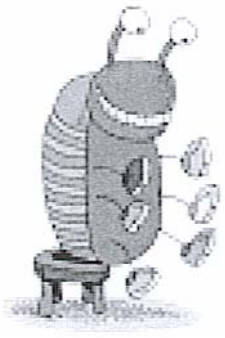
The Bible calls the church a body – Christ's body - of which we are all a part. Some do the work of eyes or ears or mouth or hands or legs. Like a colony of bees, the church wouldn't work if people didn't do their special job and help each other. What if there was no mouth to read the Bible and teach us? What if there was no ear to hear music and share it with us, or no legs to sweep the floor and put out the rubbish?



**Write on and around the man things that people do in the church.
Colour him in.**

Talk to God!

If you belong to a church, thank God for some of the people who do special jobs there.



Walk this way

The girls were growing flowers in pots on the deck. As Vicki moved a pot, a huge black centipede ran out from under it and made her jump. "If I had that many legs, I would trip over them all the time," she exclaimed.



The name centipede means 100 legs but the number can range between 15 and 191 depending on the type it is. The first pair at the head contain poison to inject into prey such as insects and worms. The last pair turn backwards and can hold prey or fight off attackers. Centipedes regularly clean their legs by passing them over their mouth. For centipedes to move, all the legs have to work together and go in the same direction.



Listen to God! Psalm 86:10-13

Your Bible may be a little different, but in the NIV version of the Bible, verse eleven says



“TEACH ME YOUR WAY,
O LORD, AND I WILL
WALK IN YOUR TRUTH”

Colour in the words and pictures.



We can only walk (go) the right way in our lives if we are following God and learning from him.

Talk to God!



Dear Lord, We want to follow you. You teach us the truth. Help us to read your book, the Bible, and talk to you in prayer every day. We want to trust you and show our thanks and praise to you every day too.

You know everything about me.

Kaylee was reading her school reader. “What is a Kultarr?” she asked. “I have no idea. I’ve never heard of it,” replied mum. “Neither have I,” added dad. Mum Googled and found out that Kultarrs are rare marsupials that live in the Australian desert. Not much is known about them. The description was full of words like – maybe, possibly, appears, and not know precisely. “Well, God knows **everything** about it,” said Kaylee, “after all he made it.”



Listen to God! Psalm 139:1-6



God knows everything about the Kultarr – where it lives, what it eats, how it breeds, whether it digs a burrow or not. God knows everything about us too. He knows everything we think, everything we do and say. This knowing everything is called omniscience. Can you see another word related to knowing things in the word omniscience?

God knows everything about you. How much do you know about God? Circle true or false.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. God has no beginning and no end. | T | F |
| 2. God is a spirit. | T | F |
| 3. God only lives in heaven. | T | F |
| 4. God is everywhere. | T | F |
| 5. God only loves us when he feels like it. | T | F |
| 6. God cannot do anything wrong. | T | F |
| 7. God is powerful. | T | F |
| 8. God is kind. | T | F |
| 9. God tells lies sometimes. | T | F |
| 10. God never changes | T | F |



Talk to God!

Thank you God that you know everything about me and you always know and understand how I think and feel.



Such hard workers

Sean and the boys from next door had spent all day building a cubby house down by the creek. Dad was very proud of their hard work . “You have been as busy as the ants in the nest by my shed,” he told them.

Did you know that ants live in colonies like underground cities? They have tunnels joining different parts and each ant works hard to keep the colony running. After it rains, teams of ants clean the dirt out of the tunnels and pile it up outside.

Ants work hard together to gather food too. They lay down a chemical trail to make a highway along which they travel to and from the colony. Heavy food items are carried by a team. Ants even have farms. Some collect leaves and allow them to rot to make fertilizers for growing mushrooms. Others “milk” aphids to get sweet honeydew that they feed to other ants.



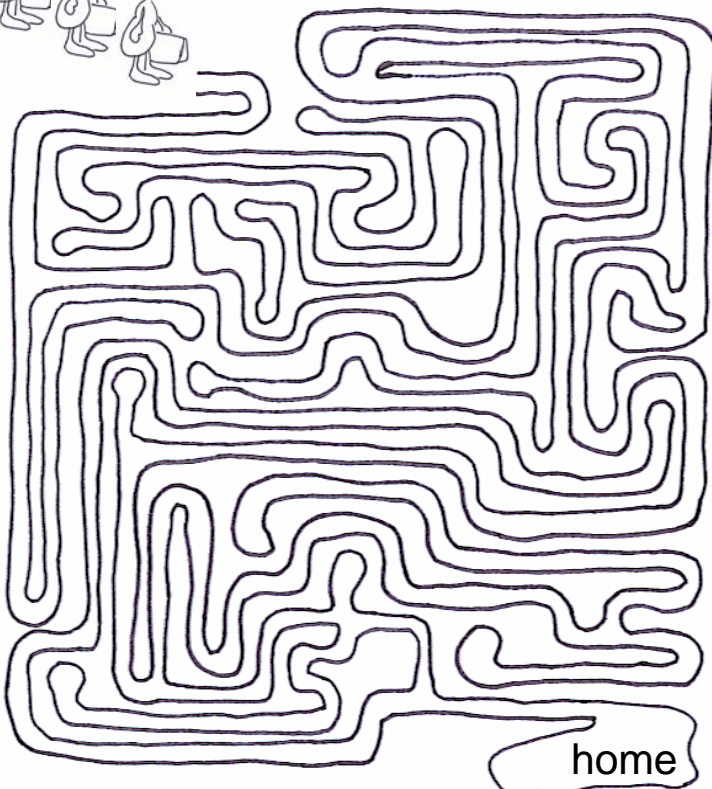
Photo source: betta designs



Photo source: Pierre Poulquin



Help the ants find their way home from work.



Listen to God! Proverbs 6:6-11

The Bible tells us not to be lazy, but to be like hard working ants.

Here is some work for you to do. Look up what else the Bible says about laziness in these verses:

Proverbs 10:26, 12:24, 13:4,
15:19, 18:9, 19:24

Talk to God!

Thank you God that we can learn from everything around us, even ants. Help us learn to work hard at all we do at home and school.

Magic writing?



“Mum, mum come and look at this,” shouted Sean excitedly. Mum ran outside. “Look, there is magic writing in the sky.” “Well, it’s not actually magic Sean,” mum told him. “It’s called sky writing. Can you see the plane flying just in front of the writing. As he flies in the shape of the letters, the pilot is injecting oil into the exhaust pipe that makes smoke. That’s what we can see. People use it to advertise something or display a special message.” As they watched, it spelled out “JoJo marry me?” but the wind soon blew it away. “I hope JoJo saw it,” laughed mum, “that’s obviously a **very** special message for her.”



Listen to God!

Daniel 5:5-6 and 23-30

King Belshazzar of Babylon held a party. He and his guests drank from cups stolen from God’s temple. Suddenly strange writing appeared on the wall. The king’s magicians and fortune tellers couldn’t tell him what it meant. Finally, Daniel, a man who loved and trusted God was called. He told Belshazzar what the words meant. It was a special message from God to King Belshazzar.

Fill in the gaps in the message

1. Belshazzar you used the cups from God’s _____.
2. You praised gods made of _____

3. You did not _____ God who controls everything.
4. _____ is going to take your kingdom away from you.

Talk to God!

Lord God, we know the Bible is your special message to us. Help us to learn from it and obey what you tell us.

Vicki heard a noise outside her bedroom window as she was getting ready for bed. When she and dad went to investigate, they found a brushtail possum sitting at the base of a tree. It was bleeding and hurt – probably after being attached by a cat. Brushtail possums are common in the back yard. The family often hear them growling or running across the roof as they take a short cut between trees.

SAVED



Photo source: Pierre Pouliquin

“We have to save him,” cried Vicki. Dad told her, “we won’t be able to save him if he runs away into the dark or up the tree.” But the possum sat quietly and let dad pick him up in a towel. Dad and the children drove to the Veterinarian who reassured them the possum would live after some treatment from him and care from the local possum carer. Vicki and dad had saved it’s life.

Listen to God! John 3:16-17

We are a bit like that possum. We have been wounded and hurt by sin. If we let him, Jesus will heal us and give us eternal life. But some people still run away from him. Have you let Jesus save you?

JESUS SAVES

Fill in the gaps

Colour

God loved _____

God gave _____

Everyone who believes (has faith) in him will have _____

Jesus didn’t come to condemn (judge) the world, but to _____



Talk to God!

Thank you God for sending your Son Jesus to save us and give us eternal life. Thank you that you did this because you love us.

A safe and secure home

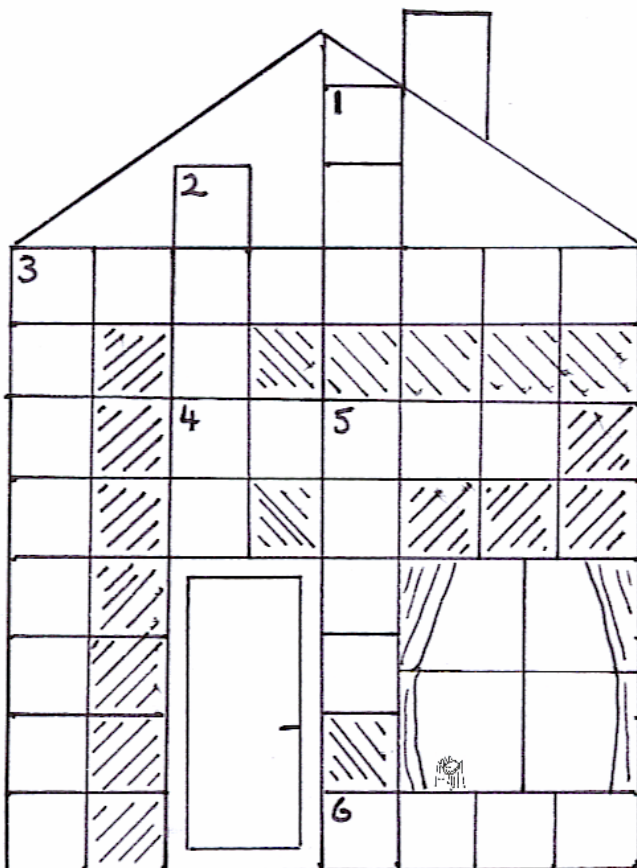
Grandma has a case moth living in her back yard. Every time the children visit, they check to see where it has moved to. They wonder what adventures it has been having. Sometimes it's attached to the house, sometimes to the fence or a bush in the garden. During the day it stays inside it's case, but at night it puts it's head and front feet out and crawls off to look for some tasty leaves.

Case moths are sometimes called bag worms. In their pupa (baby) stage they make a bag or case of sticks that are woven together with silk. They can live in this safe and secure home for several years before changing into a moth. Even then, only the males leave their safe, comfortable and cosy home.



Listen to God! Deuteronomy 6:4-7

God wants us to have safe homes like the case moth does; homes where he is loved and his commands are taught. What do you do in your home to learn about God and show your love for him?



Crossword clues. The answers are in the Bible verses.

1. The Lord is our _____
- 2 . Talk about him morning and _____
- 3 down. Never forget God's _____
- 3 across. Teach God's commands to your _____
4. Love the Lord with all your _____
5. Talk about God's commands when you are _____ (not at home)
6. Talk about them at _____ (another word for house)

Talk to God!

Lord God, please make our home a place where we learn about you and how you want us to live.



Best bedtime story



The children love Thursday nights. Grandpa comes to visit and tells them crazy bedtime stories that he makes up as he goes along. Sometimes they are serials that go on for weeks. There was the magic dragon that went to flying school to learn how to fly. And the one about the pixie who lived in the back yard. Vicki, Kaylee and Sean are often characters in Grandpa's stories.



There is usually a Bible story too. Sean loves the gruesome ones like Jael hammering a tent peg into Sisera's head! (Yes, that's in the Bible.)

Kaylee's favorite is the story of Ruth and Naomi because Naomi is Kaylee's middle name.

Listen to God!

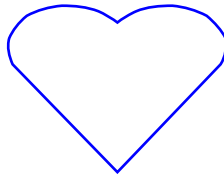
Ruth 1:16-18 and 4:13-17

Naomi's husband and two sons had all died. Naomi was living in a foreign land with no family except her daughters-in-law. She decided to return to her own country and told her daughters-in-law to go back to their families. But Ruth stayed with Naomi. God blessed them and they became a happy and loving family.

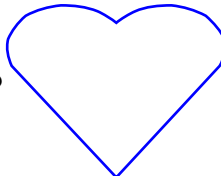


Write answers to these questions in the hearts.

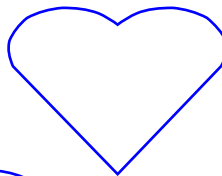
1. Who married Ruth?



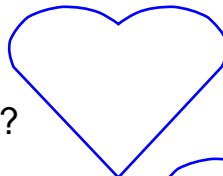
2. What was their baby's name?



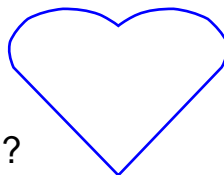
3. Who took care of the baby?



4. Who loved Naomi?



5. Who was Obed's grandson?



Talk to God!

Heavenly father we thank you that you love us and want us to have a happy family. That's the best bedtime story we can hear!