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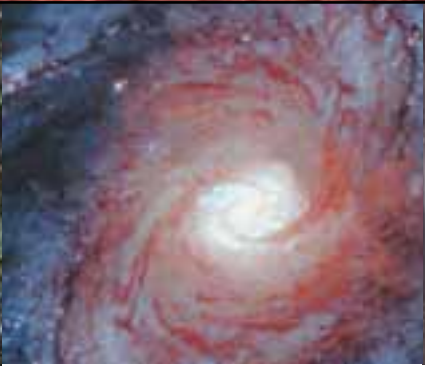
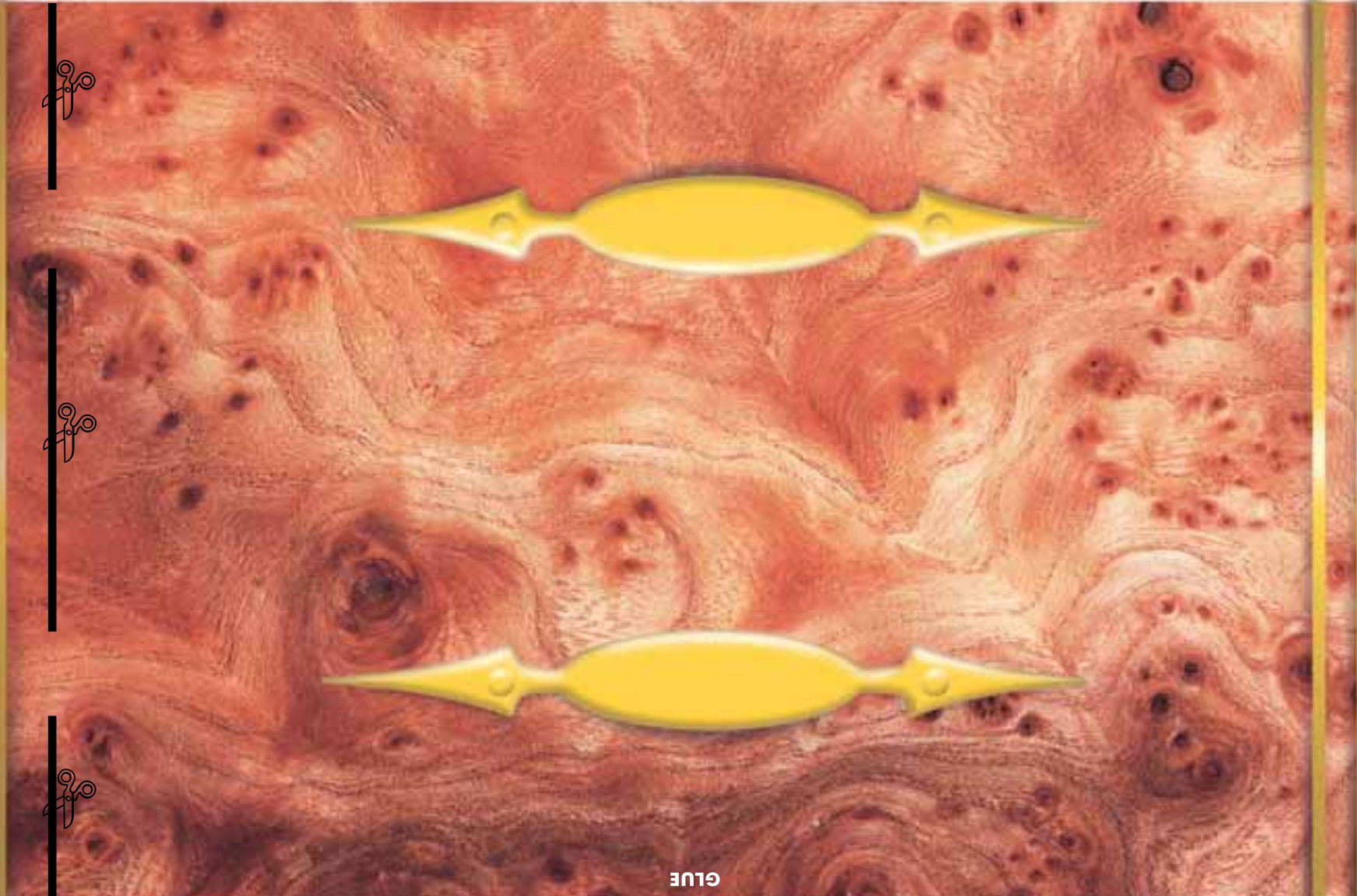
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I Know God's Plan

BY VICKI F. MATSUMORI

For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man (Moses 1:39).



Where do you live? In the city? The country? A suburb? Do you live on an island or in the middle of a desert? Can you see mountains or an ocean from your home?

Who lives with you? Are you the only child in your family, or do you have many brothers and sisters? Do your parents, grandparents, or aunts and uncles live with you?

Did you know that before you came to earth to live, you lived in heaven with Heavenly Father? It was there that you, “with many others, received [your] first lessons in the world of spirits and were prepared to come forth [to the earth] in the due time of the Lord” (D&C 138:56).

But there were more than just lessons while we lived in heaven. Elder Gary J. Coleman of the Quorum of the Seventy says, “God’s plan included our premortal existence, the creation of this world, a time in the Garden of Eden for Adam and Eve, and the fall of man into mortality” (*Ensign*, Feb. 1996, 15).

Heavenly Father told us during the Council in Heaven about a great plan of happiness. He said that an earth would be created; a Savior would be provided; and we would be given agency, or the freedom to choose between good and evil.

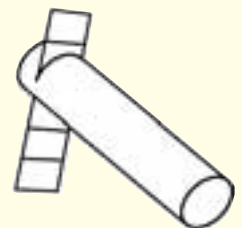
Some of the premortal beings did not want to follow this plan, and there was a War in Heaven. However, we chose to support Heavenly Father’s plan, so we were given bodies and sent to many different places on earth to learn about the Savior and to keep the commandments.



Because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, if we choose the right, we will one day be able to return to live with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ again.

Plan of Happiness Viewer

1. Mount page 32 on heavy paper; then cut out the large rectangle and the picture strip. Cut slits on the heavy black lines marked on the rectangle.
2. Roll the rectangle into a tube with the slits at one end, and glue the tube together.
3. Slide the picture strip through the slits in the tube. Look through the tube to see pictures illustrating Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness.



Sharing Time Ideas

(Note: All songs are from *Children's Songbook (CS)* unless otherwise indicated; GAK = Gospel Art Kit; TNGC = Teaching, No Greater Call)

1. Use a puzzle to help children learn about the Savior. Post a picture of Him on the wall. Cover the picture with a large piece of paper that has been cut into puzzle pieces. Label each piece with one of the following: 1) scriptures that testify of Christ, such as Matt. 3:17, JS—H 1:17, John 6:69, Matt. 16:15–16, 3 Ne. 11:9–10, John 4:25–26; 2) songs about the Savior (see CS, pp. 34–83); 3) paragraphs from “The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles” (*Ensign*, Apr. 2000, 2–3).

Have the children take turns choosing and removing a puzzle piece, then looking up and reading the scripture; leading the song (optional—you may prefer the music leader to do it); or reading the “Living Christ” paragraph. Once the children have guessed whose picture is under the puzzle (or after all the pieces have been removed), challenge them to think about ways they can be like Him. Share Moro. 7:48, and bear your testimony of Jesus Christ.

2. Help the children understand how knowledge is important to agency. In large letters on pieces of paper, write instructions such as “Repeat the first article of faith”; “Choose an adult to say the fourth article of faith”; “Sing a solo of your favorite Primary song”; “Lead the Primary in singing ‘I Lived in Heaven’ ” (p. 4); etc. Place the papers in a large container so that they can easily be seen and read. Blindfold a child and have him/her take a paper, then complete the activity. Invite other children to choose, blindfolding some and letting others choose by reading which activity they wish to do. Discuss how they had a better opportunity to make a good choice when they knew what they were choosing. Challenge them to listen to their parents and Primary leaders so that they can learn about choices that will lead them back to Heavenly Father.

3. Discuss how Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ created the earth and all forms of life. Assign each class a scripture about something the Lord created: Gen. 1:11 (grass, herb, tree), Gen. 1:16 (sun, moon, stars), Gen. 1:21 (everything that lives in water and in air), Gen. 1:25 (animals on the earth, everything that creeps on the earth), Gen. 1:26–27 (man, male and female), Amos 4:13 (mountains, wind), John 1:3 (all things), Mosiah 2:23 (you). Have the children locate the scriptures, then take turns reading them aloud while you list the creations on the chalkboard.

Weather permitting, and if safety is not an issue, have the children take a walk around the church to look for other creations. Or sing “All Things Bright and Beautiful” (p. 231) or “The World Is So Big” (p. 235).

Give each child paper and a pencil to draw something that the Lord created. Show and discuss the pictures by collecting them from the children and using a pretend fishing pond. Have the children take turns “fishing” out each other’s pictures. As a picture is drawn out, invite the child to tell something that he/she could do to treat that creation with respect. Invite the children to share their drawings with family members and discuss ways they can show respect for all of God’s creations.

4. Help the children understand the importance of families by having three older Primary children read and tell the meaning of Prov. 22:6 (“train up a child”), 1 Cor. 13:11 (“when I was a child”), and Matt. 18:2–3 (“become as little children”).

Divide the children into groups of varying sizes to represent

family units. Within each group, assign some children, one or more parents, a grandparent or aunt and uncle, etc. Each group should have children and adult family members. Discuss how being part of a family can strengthen individuals and provide guidance for children.

On pieces of paper, write the names of songs the children know that teach about Jesus Christ, such as “Beautiful Savior” (pp. 62–63), “He Sent His Son” (pp. 34–35), “I Feel My Savior’s Love” (pp. 74–75), “I’m Trying to Be like Jesus” (pp. 78–79), “Love One Another” (pp. 136–137), “The Church of Jesus Christ” (p. 77), “When Jesus Christ Was Baptized” (p. 102).

Cut the song titles into puzzle pieces. Place each title in a separate envelope and give each “family” an envelope and enough blindfolds for the “children” in the family. Explain how parents or adult members of the family can help children because they often have a better perspective and can see things the children cannot.

Blindfold the children in the family and have them try to put the puzzle together by themselves while the pianist plays one verse of “I Lived in Heaven” (p. 4). Have the children continue to work on the puzzle with the “adults” in the family giving verbal directions. The adults should not take over and do the puzzle themselves. Keep track of the order in which the puzzles are completed and sing the songs in that order.

Invite a parent to visit Primary and express their desire to help their children live the gospel.

5. *Song presentation*: Use questions to help teach “I Lived in Heaven” (p. 4). Make a number of cards with one of the following words written on them: *Who*, *What*, *When*, and *Where*. Have the children pass the cards down the rows while the pianist plays the first line of the song. When the pianist stops playing, have the children who are holding the cards keep them. Ask them to listen while you sing, and to think of a question starting with the word they are holding that can be answered by the first line of the song.

Sing the first line, have the children with the cards ask their questions, and have the entire Primary sing the answer. E.g., “Who lived in heaven?” (“I lived in heaven.”) “What did I do?” (“I lived in heaven.”) “When did I live in heaven?” (“I lived in heaven a long time ago.”) “Where did I live?” (“I lived in heaven.”)

Repeat the process for each line, but have the children holding the cards with questions that are being answered stand and sing the answer. If a card question was not asked (line 2 probably would not have a *When* question, for instance), those holding that card would not stand.

For the second and third verses, remove the *When* cards and substitute *Why* cards. The children with them might ask, “Why did Jesus give His life?” (“so we all could return there above”). Or, “Why was Jesus chosen?” (to conquer “evil and death through his glorious name”).

Express your gratitude for your knowledge of living in a pre-mortal world and for the opportunity to return to live with Heavenly Father after this life.

6. Additional *Friend* resources: Sharing Times—Dec. 2001, pp. 20–22; Feb. 2000, pp. 12–14; Apr. 1999, pp. 12–13, 26; Feb. 1999, pp. 46–47, 26. “Creation Presentation,” Feb. 1999, pp. 18–19. See also: “Teaching Our Children the Plan of Salvation,” *Ensign*, Sep. 2001, pp. 32–39; “Special Witnesses of Christ,” Apr. 2001, pp. 2–21.