

all Aboard **THE ANIMAL TRAIN**

Preschool for 2s and 3s

Second Edition



MY FATHER'S WORLD®

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All Aboard the Animal Train Package

Teacher's Manual

Student Sheets

Number Wall Cards

First Virtues

The Preschooler's Bible

A Big Treasury of Little Animals

My First 100 Words

Animal Tales

More Animal Tales

Discovery Shapes Set

Sing for Joy (online access)

Animal Cookie Cutters

2 Tweezers, preschool-sized (for Sensory Bin)

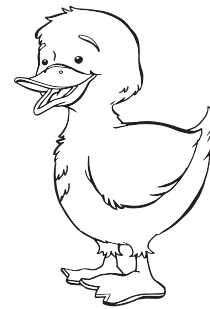
My First Crayola Washable Jumbo Watercolors and Brush, 4-color set (not in classroom packages)

For more than one child purchase additional Student Sheets and Watercolors.

Classrooms: See information on page 181.

All Aboard the Animal Train is very flexible and ideal for teaching one child at home or a group of children in a home or church/community setting.

If you are teaching your child at home, why not invite a friend to do preschool with you? You might even teach together once a week (or more) for twice the fun! Or reach out to a neighbor and offer to include their child in your daily teaching time.



Materials You Will Gather for the Year

For your convenience, this list is repeated in the Supply List on page 164.

- ☐ 4 magnets to hold small cards on the fridge (or use a bulletin board)
- ☐ construction paper in a variety of colors
- ☐ crayons in these 12 colors: **purple, orange, brown, green, red, black, yellow, blue, light blue, white, gray, pink**. Also consider washable markers.
- ☐ glue stick
- ☐ straws or large wooden craft sticks for puppet handles (15 per child; more for optional activities)
 - Keep in a special place so they're easy to find when needed.
- ☐ white paper plates (to cut for animal masks and other activities)
- ☐ 13 plastic page protectors and a 3-ring binder (for Story Time poem cards and unit posters)
- ☐ 5 activities children can do independently for Surprise Time (more for a classroom) (see page 7)
- ☐ 5 boxes (plastic storage boxes with lids work well) to store Surprise Time activities (more for a classroom)

All Aboard the Animal Train is a rich curriculum that will help children grow in many areas:

Spiritual Growth

- God loves us, so we love God and others.
- Twelve character traits – love, obedience, patience, kindness, sharing, thankfulness, politeness, friendliness, forgiveness, joy, truthfulness, doing your best
- Three Bible stories and a memory verse for each character trait

Reading and Math

- Read-aloud stories and poems to develop reading readiness and a love for books
- Literacy extension activities
- Print awareness, phonemic awareness skills (rhymes, etc.)
- Informal alphabet readiness – watch the adult read and write words and enjoy an optional alphabet art activity
- Numbers, colors, shapes – a variety of multi-sensory activities to develop true understanding

Science

- Twelve animals – what fun!

Music and Art

- Bible songs
- Preschool learning songs for animals, colors, and concepts
- Painting, coloring, and simple crafts



Cognitive Development

- Creative thinking, problem solving, imaginative play

Physical Development

- Gross motor skills – pretend to be animals, play outside, and more
- Fine motor skills – squeeze play dough, paint and color, and more
- Health – focus on nutrition by enjoying healthy snacks

You will enjoy 12 units this year, each focusing on a character trait, animal, number, and color. This program is flexible and simple to teach. Begin any time of the year. Do all the activities, or choose the ones best for you.

All Aboard the Animal Train is designed for three-year-olds and for two-year-olds who are ready for more focused learning activities and can understand the read-aloud books in the program.

If you are teaching a **two-year-old** you have two options:

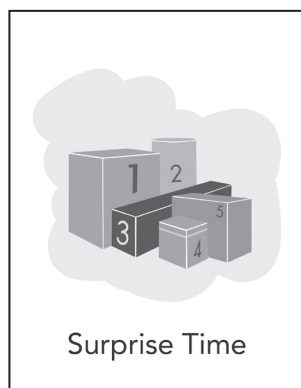
- Teach *All Aboard the Animal Train* **twice**: once when the child is two, and the following year when they are three.
 - The first time through, skip the weekly Optional Art Activity for the alphabet and some of the more difficult number activities. Use some of the Ideas for Two-Year-Olds on pages 114-116.
 - When the child is three, repeat the program but do all the activities and add some of the Additional Activities for each unit. You will be able to use higher level language and expect a bit more from the child this time. Young children are not bored by repetition—they love to hear the same story over and over.
- Teach *All Aboard the Animal Train* **once** but stretch it out.
 - Begin with the Ideas for Two-Year-Olds on pages 114-116.
 - Then use *All Aboard the Animal Train* every other day.

Especially if your child is a young two-year-old, we suggest using Ideas for Two-Year-Olds on pages 114-116 before beginning this curriculum. Many children will better understand the character concepts in *First Virtues* and the content of other books if they are at least 2½. You might look over the first unit and read the first chapters in *First Virtues* and *A Big Treasury of Little Animals* to your child to help determine readiness.

Four Daily Activities



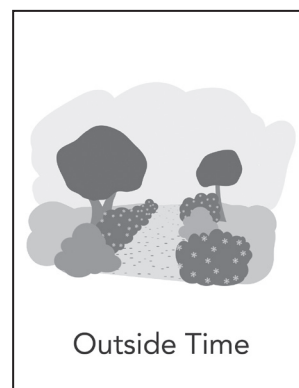
Activities from the lesson plans



Five boxes you prepare



Stories and poems from the lesson plans



Health and large motor development

To prepare, cut apart the student sheet with four cards for these activities. Each day, place these four cards on your fridge with small magnets (or use a bulletin board). Flip the card over when you complete an activity, so you and the children can see at a glance which activities haven't been finished.

1. Clean-Up Time/Together Time

Begin your day by working together on simple chores. It will take more time, but doing these tasks together as part of a routine will make sure you have time to get them done, as well as train your children. They will learn to help with a smile. As they get older, they will be able to help more and more.

Be sure to keep Clean-Up Time fun. You might sing or dance or put on music. Remind them that after cleaning up is Together Time—a great reward for being a helper.

Home: We suggest starting with three tasks to complete together:

- **Kitchen** – Clean up after breakfast. Spray and wipe the table.
- **Beds** – Make the beds and make sure everyone is dressed for the day.
- **Floors** – Pick up toys, clothes, and stuff from the floors in bedrooms and shared spaces.

Classroom: You might include these tasks:

- Coats, lunches, etc. all neatly stored

- Any free time boxes or toys put away
- Clean the table after breakfast. Spray and wipe tables.

Right after Clean-Up tasks are completed, reward children with Together Time. Each day, a fun interactive Together Time activity is scheduled in your daily lesson plans. As you enjoy special time together, children are informally developing important cognitive skills such as auditory memory and visual discrimination. They will gain large motor and fine motor skills, as well as grow socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

Hint for home: Be sure to do Together Time at the beginning of the day before you get busy with other tasks. Taking time each day to connect with your preschooler with one-on-one time will make him feel loved and more willing to cooperate the rest of the day. If older children are present, assign them independent work while you and your preschooler enjoy Together Time. After Together Time, take breaks as needed to care for an infant or attend to other responsibilities.



2. Surprise Time

To prepare for Surprise Time, gather five activities children can do independently and store them in five boxes that you keep out of sight, only to be used for Surprise Time. (Classroom: Gather one activity per child.) See page 108 for other ideas you can use throughout the year.

1. Animal Match (from Student Sheets) – See ideas on page 111. (Classroom: You will have multiple sets. Use several the first month; replace with new ones later in the year.)
2. Discovery Shapes Set (from Preschool Package).
3. Blocks or nesting/stacking cups.
4. A simple puzzle or several pages from a coloring book and crayons.
5. Sensory Bin with rice, pitcher, cup – Plan to do this all year, changing the contents for each unit. See page 110 for more about sensory bins.

Label each Surprise Time box with a number from the “Number Cards for Surprise Time” student sheet. Cut out the remaining cards and place them in a plastic sandwich bag labeled “Surprise Time.” Mark a second bag “Picked.” (Classroom: Make additional number cards beyond 5 as needed. For ten children make number cards 1-10 and set up ten different Surprise Time activities. Or make two sets of number cards 1-5 and plan for two children per activity.)

Home: Each day, let your child draw out a number from the “Surprise Time” bag, and read the number to him. Together, find the activity box with the matching number. (This provides daily, informal exposure to numbers.) Move picked numbers into the “Picked” bag until each number has been chosen. Then return all the numbers to the “Surprise Time” bag to use again.

Classroom: Give children numbers and help them find the activity box (or center) with the matching number.

Surprise Time is a great opportunity to train children to follow rules and play independently. Choose a defined location for Surprise Time. Make sure they understand that Surprise Time has rules. For example:

- Stay on this mat (or this chair) until you are finished.
- If you walk away from the activity, we will put it away.
- When you are done playing, come tell me.

Supervise Surprise Time closely for the first few weeks to help children learn the rules and learn to work independently. The first week, sit with the children while they explore the activities. The second week, do the activity with them, showing them how to complete it.

After a few weeks, start training children to work independently. Give a specific task like, “Can you put the train together? Put the pieces where they belong.” Or let them explore the activity on their own. Walk away, but stay close to make sure they follow Surprise Time rules. Soon you should be able to trust them to follow the rules and play on their own with you close enough to watch that they are safe and playing well.

Surprise Time does not always need to be an independent time. Some children will need much more adult guidance and teaching than others. Sometimes you can sit with a child and guide him in an activity; sometimes you can let him lead the play and participate with him.



3. Story Time

Story Time is when you read the story or poem scheduled in the lesson plans. You can also read other books that you own or borrow from the library. (See the appendix for an optional library book list.) Keep this collection of books in a special place for Story Time.

At the beginning of the year, set aside the books included in the package. Wait to read them until they are first scheduled. This keeps them new and special. Once they are introduced, add them to your Story Time collection. You can read them over and over and over again!

Remember this is an enjoyable time. Read at a leisurely pace, taking time to talk about what is happening in each picture.

You may have tangible wealth untold;
Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold.
Richer than I you can never be –
I had a Mother who read to me.

—Strickland Gillilan

As you go through the program, you will make a Story Time binder with poems and unit posters. Put each poem card in a page protector in a 3-ring binder as you learn it. At the end of each unit, also add the unit poster (love, etc.) to the same binder. Keep the binder with your other Story Time books, and occasionally review what you've learned.

Classroom: Make one Story Time binder for classroom use, using the teacher's Student Sheets.



4. Outside Time

Playing outside is very important for a child's development. Gross motor skills (running, jumping, climbing) learned now are a foundation for the future. AND, the best way to learn about nature is by experiencing it. Some of the best science lessons can be learned at a park or in the backyard.

It might be tempting to skip this activity, but it is too important to skip. Find gear so children are comfortable no matter the weather, and provide special outdoor activities to make going outside more fun. Go to a park, take a walk in your neighborhood, play in the yard, look for leaves or acorns – the possibilities are endless.





Love Week 1

Together Time and Story Time Activities

Hint: Check off activities on the chart as you finish them.

Red Snack Ideas Weeks 1-3

red apples, strawberries, raspberries, cherries, cranberries, tomato juice, red pepper, tomatoes, sauce and cheese on English muffins (pizza), spaghetti, tomato soup

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
☐ Introduce Love Poster** (The ** tells you to use a student sheet; see notes below.) Find the Rabbits** (see notes) “Eensy Weensy Spider” – <i>Sing for Joy</i> #1 (See p. 18 for a spider craft; see p. 125 for lyrics; access music this year at mfwbooks.com/media .) “Bunny Loves Others” p. 51 in <i>First Virtues</i> – Take time to talk about each page.	☐ Red Color Hunt** (see notes) Red Popsicles (see notes) Make a Cereal Box Animal Train (see notes) “The Rabbit and the Turtle” p. 4 in <i>Animal Tales</i> (See p. 18 for Literacy Extension activities.)	☐ Love – Together , make something nice for someone. Bake cookies, draw a picture, etc. Wrap it as a gift. (Add photo or simple drawing w/ caption to poster.) “God Made Me” – <i>Sing for Joy</i> #13 “God Makes Wonderful Things” p. 10 in <i>The Preschooler’s Bible</i> (see notes) “God Makes Adam and Eve” p. 16 in <i>The Preschooler’s Bible</i> Aa Optional Art Activity (see p. 112)	☐ Number 1** (see notes) Rabbit Coloring Card** – Give simple directions. (Hold up a red crayon and say, “Color one heart red” etc.) Use crayons, markers, or paint. “The Little Rabbit” in <i>A Big Treasury of Little Animals</i> – May read half now and finish later. Classroom: Send home Unit 1 Parent Letter (see appendix), Love Poster, and My Story Time Book cover sheet.	☐ Make Red Play Dough (see notes) Use two cookie cutters to make one rabbit and one other animal. Set one rabbit on a plate and watch how it changes each day. “I Am a Rabbit” Poem** – Enjoy reading and acting out. Put poem in plastic page protector in a 3-ring binder. Keep with Story Time books. (Classroom: Make a Story Time binder for classroom use, using the teacher’s Student Sheets.)

Also complete Surprise Time and Outside Time and you’re done for the day!

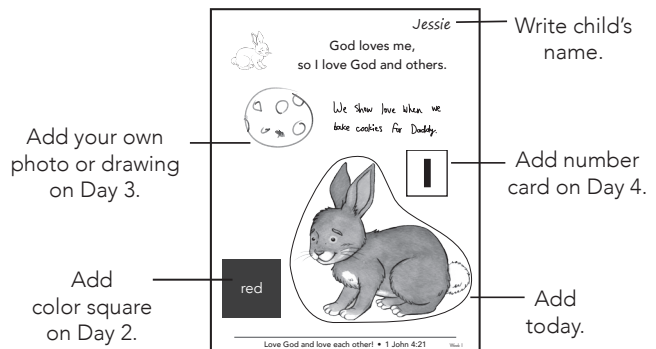
Notes

Introduce Love Poster

You will make a poster for each unit. Today use the Love Poster from the Student Sheets. Write your child’s name on the poster. Explain what the poster says. Glue the rabbit on the poster as shown. Display it on your fridge or other visible location for the next three weeks during the Love unit.

When you complete the character trait activity on Day 3, add a photo or simple drawing (of a cookie or whatever your activity was) to the poster, and write a caption such as, “We show love when we bake cookies for Daddy.”

Classroom: For each unit, make one poster to display on your classroom wall using the teacher’s student sheet. Then help each child make their own poster.

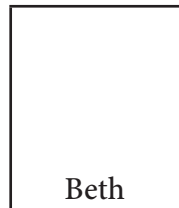


Find the Rabbits

* Cut red paper about 4½" x 6", one per child. Write each child's name on their paper. Cut out the five rabbits and number from the student sheet.

Hide the rabbits. Let the children find them, placing them in one pile in a central location.

After playing the game, help each child find the red paper with their name. Help them count and glue or tape 1 rabbit and the number 1 square on their paper.



Use the remaining rabbits any way you wish.

Red Color Hunt

* Cut out the two red squares from the student sheet.

Have the children watch as you point to and read aloud the word *red* on the squares. This introduces pre-reading skills such as print awareness.

Poster: Help each child use a glue stick to glue one red square on their Love Poster. Read aloud the words and Bible verse on the poster.

Color Hunt: Let each child hold a red square. Search inside and/or outside for things that are red. Give as much help as needed.

Red Popsicles

Freeze in popsicle molds:

100% fruit juice (red)

small chunks of strawberries (optional)

You'll notice many simple cooking projects in these plans. Most kids really enjoy helping in the kitchen. At the same time, they are naturally developing important skills – listening, patience, math, fine motor. It may take more effort to let children help, but it's worth it!

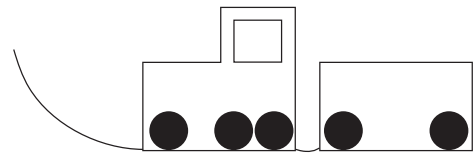
Make a Cereal Box Animal Train

* need an empty cereal box

Making a simple train from cereal boxes is a fun optional craft to begin now and add to each unit.

For this first unit, make a train engine. Cut an empty cereal box, using the bottom third to make a train engine. Cover with colored paper and glue black wheels near the bottom of the box. Add a yellow window on each side.

For more fun, make a paper rabbit by tracing the rabbit pattern from the appendix onto colored construction paper. (Or use an extra rabbit from Find the Rabbits on Day 1.) Your child can place the rabbit engineer in the engine.



For each unit, make a new car for your train from another cereal box and add paper animals. To form a train, tie the boxes together with bits of string. Tape a piece of string to the front bottom of the engine so your child can gently pull the train. (Hint: The train is more stable if you attach the string at the bottom edge of the boxes.)

"God Makes Wonderful Things" and "God Makes Adam and Eve"

After reading the stories, talk about love: God made everything special because He loves us. He made it all for us to enjoy – red and yellow and orange flowers, tiny ladybugs, and huge elephants. God made a special garden for Adam and Eve with friendly animals and yummy fruit on trees. Wouldn't that have been an amazing place to live! God makes everything special because He loves us so much!

Number 1

* Cut out the number square from the student sheet.

Hold up the square and say, "This is number one." Hold up 1 object and say, "One. I have one (object)." Repeat with several objects. Then ask, "Can you give me one (object)?"

Poster: Help each child use a glue stick to glue number 1 on the Love Poster. Read aloud the words and Bible verse on the poster.

Red Play Dough

Combine in a saucepan:

1 c. flour

$\frac{1}{4}$ c. salt

1 T. cream of tartar

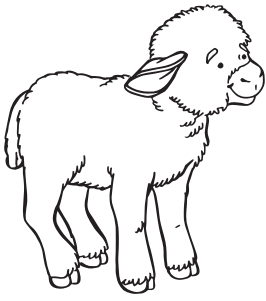
1 c. water

1 T. cooking oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ t. food coloring (or 2 packages unsweetened cherry Kool-Aid® for color and scent)

Cook over medium heat 3-5 minutes, stirring constantly until mixture pulls away from the side of the pan. Let cool slightly and knead. Store in a plastic bag.

Hint: Dough will last longer if stored in the fridge.



Joy Week 29

Together Time and Story Time Activities

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
☐ Bible Verse Sheep** – Cut out the Bible Verse Sheep. Point to and read aloud the words. Memorize the verse (reference is optional). Pretend to Be Sheep (see notes) 🎵 “If You’re Happy and You Know It” – <i>Sing for Joy</i> #10 📖 “Lamb Is Joyful” p. 171 in <i>First Virtues</i>	☐ White Crayon Art (see notes) 📖 “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” p. 2 in <i>More Animal Tales</i>	☐ Joy – Pretend to be a shepherd finding a lost sheep (your child). Talk about how much you love your sheep. Be really joyful when you find it! 🎵 “The Lord Is My Shepherd” – <i>Sing for Joy</i> #22 📖 “Finding Lost Sheep” p. 324 in <i>The Preschooler’s Bible</i>	☐ Number 10 Card** 📖 “The Little Lamb” in <i>A Big Treasury of Little Animals</i>	☐ Sheep Sandwich – Make an open-faced sandwich using a sheep cookie cutter. Top with Chicken Salad. (see notes) 📖 Sheep Poems

Notes

Pretend to Be Sheep

Act out this story as you read it aloud. You may be Mother Sheep and the children may be Baby Lambs. (Mother Sheep is a ewe.)

Baby Lamb was just born. He lives on a sheep farm with many other sheep. Baby Lamb stands up. He looks for his mother. He wants a drink of milk. Baby Lamb grows and grows.

Now Baby Lamb is five weeks old. Baby Lamb chews grass and clover. What good food!

Baby Lamb likes to play. He runs around the field with the other lambs. The lambs play “King of the Hill.” Baby Lamb likes to be on top of the hill. He also likes to climb on top of his mother’s back. Mother Sheep is strong. What fun it is to climb on Mother Sheep’s back!

Baby Lamb likes to follow his mother. He walks just where she does, playing “Follow the Leader.” The other lambs come, too. Lambs and sheep like to follow a leader.

Baby Lamb does not walk off by himself. He stays with the herd of sheep – the rams, the ewes, and the

other lambs. Baby Lamb likes to be together with all of them.

During the day, many of the sheep sleep. Baby Lamb looks around. Some of the ewes and some of the rams have their huge round eyes open. They are watching and watching. Baby Lamb is so happy to be with the other sheep because they keep him safe. Baby Lamb goes to sleep.

White Crayon Art

Have your child color with a white crayon on a sheet of white paper, pressing firmly. Describe what you see.

Use red and/or blue watercolors to paint the whole surface of the paper (you can leave the outside inch unpainted if you like). Talk about what happens.

Chicken Salad

1 can white meat chicken, drained (or cooked chicken cut into small pieces, 5 ounces or more)

handful of grapes, cut in fourths

handful of chopped nuts

mayonnaise, salt, pepper to taste

Mix all ingredients together. Then ask, “What white foods did we use to make this?” (chicken, mayonnaise, salt) Cut slices of bread with a sheep cookie cutter and top with chicken salad.

Classroom Information

The following information and parent letters are for those teaching a group of children.

1. Purchase one *All Aboard the Animal Train Package* per room; it can be reused each year. The teacher uses the set of Student Sheets in the package to demonstrate activities.
2. Purchase Student Sheets and Watercolor Paints – one per student. Also purchase several extra sets of Animal Cookie Cutters.
3. At the beginning of the year, send a parent letter home to introduce the program (see the next page).
4. Every three weeks send a parent letter and the child's completed unit poster home on Day 3 of the first week of each unit. See the following pages; unit numbers are at the top of each page.
5. The 12 units each have three weeks of plans – read aloud books (in package), songs (in package), and other hands-on activities.

Hints for parent letters: Make one master copy; cover the spiral while photocopying or cut it off your sheet afterwards. Add your signature and any additional notes to your parents in the white spaces, and then make copies for all parents.

Classroom Scheduling Options

Nine Month Programs

Use the plans as written – there are 36 weeks of plans.

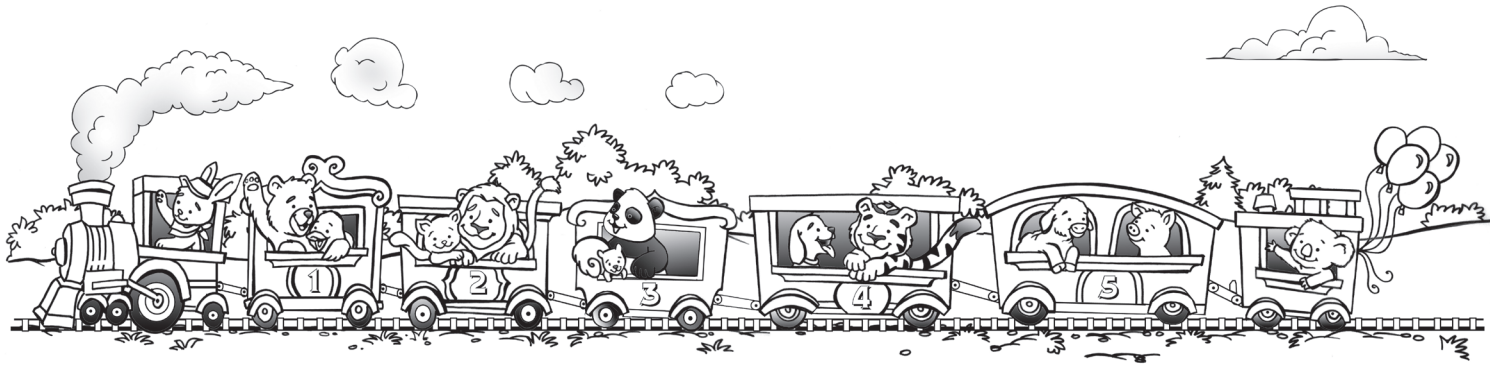
12 units x 3 weeks for each unit = about 9 months

Full Year Programs

If your classroom meets year round, adjust the plans to teach each unit for one month.

12 units x one month for each unit = 12 months

For the fourth week each month, select some of the unit activities to review. Also use the Additional Activities provided for each unit and the Ideas for Two-Year-Olds (and older children too!) in the appendix.



Dear Parents,

Our preschool class will enjoy a hands-on learning adventure this year. We'll be using *All Aboard the Animal Train*, a curriculum from My Father's World. Children learn about 12 animals through stories, activities, games, songs, art, finger plays, and creative play.

The fun, character-focused lessons also include corresponding Bible stories. Through the year, children will experience spiritual growth, cognitive development, reading and math readiness, and a love of learning.

Our themes this year (each is 3 weeks long):

1. Love	rabbit	1, red, heart
2. Sharing	lion	2, green
3. Obedience	bear	3, black, circle
4. Kindness	cat	4, purple
5. Patience	duck	5, yellow, square
6. Thankful	squirrel	6, brown
7. Polite	panda	7, blue, triangle
8. Make Friends	dog	8, light blue
9. Forgiveness	tiger	9, orange
10. Joyful	sheep	10, white
11. Truthful	pig	pink
12. Do Your Best	koala	gray

We'll be going outside most days, so be sure your child is dressed for the weather.

Looking forward to a great year,

P.S. We'll be reading *First Virtues* by Dr. Mary Manz Simon all year to introduce the character traits. Consider getting your own copy to read at home and reinforce what we'll learn in class.



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All Aboard the Animal Train

Unit 1

Dear Parents,

We are learning about love, rabbits, number 1, hearts, and red for the next three weeks.

Here are some of the things we will do:

- make a poster about love
- read “Bunny Loves Others” in *First Virtues*
- read Bible stories: Creation, Jesus Blesses the Children, Jesus’ Resurrection
- sing “Eensy Weensy Spider” and “God Made Me”
- read about rabbits
- learn about number 1 and hearts
- play red games and enjoy red snack foods

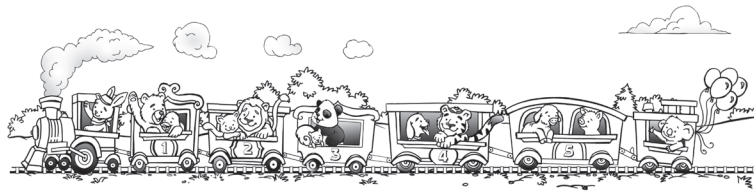
Home Activities for LOVE

- We are sending a Love Poster home. Find a handy spot for it on your fridge or bulletin board. Use it as a reminder to discuss and encourage thoughts and actions of love for the next three weeks.
- We are sending the My Story Time Book cover sheet home. You can put it at the front of a binder to keep the poems for each unit and enjoy reading with your child.
- Together with your child, do something nice for Daddy or someone special. You might bake his favorite cookies or help your child make a card. Let your child help wrap the present and give a surprise gift of LOVE.
- If you have *First Virtues*, read “Bunny Loves Others” numerous times over the next few weeks.

Bible Verse

- Love God and love each other! 1 John 4:21





All Aboard the Animal Train

Unit 10

Dear Parents,

We are learning about joy, sheep, number 10, and white for the next three weeks.

Here are just some of the things we will do:

- make a poster about joy
- read “Lamb Is Joyful” in *First Virtues*
- read Bible stories: Jesus Our Good Shepherd, Finding Lost Sheep, Singing Songs to God in Jail
- sing “If You’re Happy and You Know It” and “The Lord Is My Shepherd”
- read about sheep
- learn about number 10
- play white games and enjoy white snack foods

Home Activities for JOY

- We are sending a Joy Poster home. Find a handy spot for it on your fridge or bulletin board. Use it as a reminder to discuss and encourage thoughts and actions of joy for the next three weeks. Place the Forgiveness poster displayed already on your fridge into your child’s Story Time binder.
- Pretend to be a shepherd finding a lost sheep (your child). Talk about how much you love your sheep. Be really joyful when you find it.
- If you have *First Virtues*, read “Lamb Is Joyful” numerous times over the next few weeks.

Bible Verse

- Always be joyful. 1 Thessalonians 5:16

