



WEEK 2
God's Gift to Mary

Preparation:
Read Luke 1:26-56, using the Bible study notes to help you.

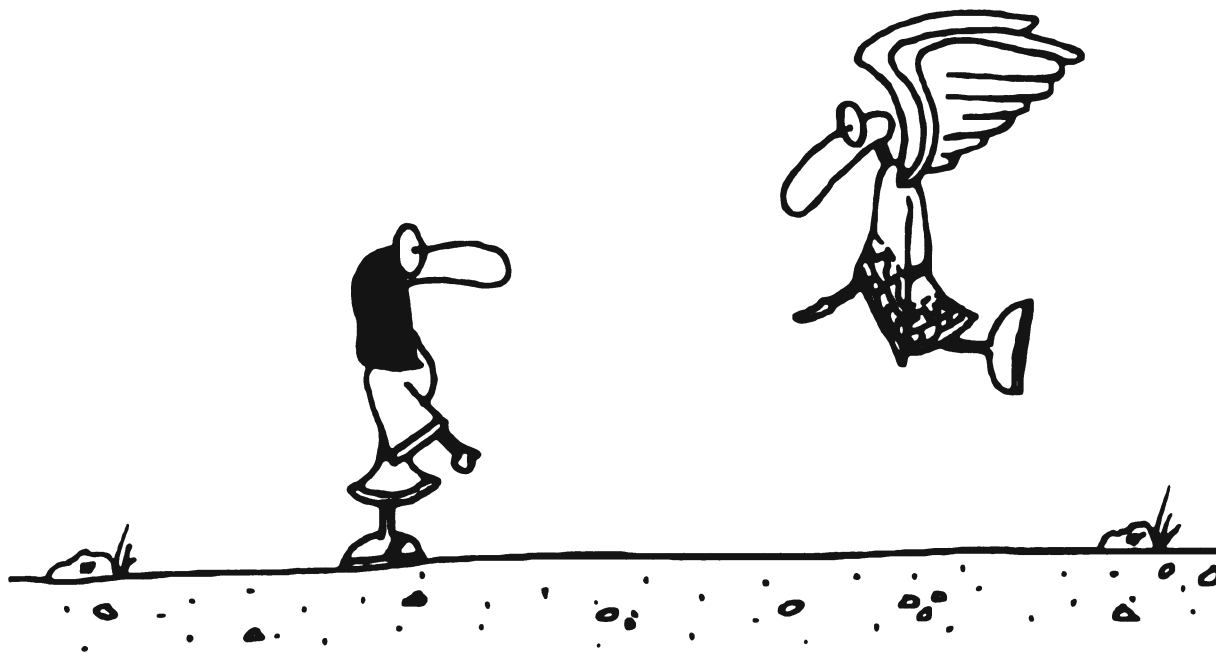
Lesson Aim:
To teach that Jesus was both man and God.



The gospels supply only limited details about the birth and early life of Jesus and the family of Mary and Joseph. This helps to prevent human interest from overshadowing the central aim of the gospels, which was not to write a biography, but to tell the history of the long-promised establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

- 1:26 The sixth month refers to Elizabeth's pregnancy.
Angel Gabriel is one of the two angels in the Bible who are named. He was also sent to Daniel to announce the Christ who was to come (Daniel 8:16; 9:21).
- 1:27 'Pledged' - this was as binding as marriage and could only be broken by divorce. It was in no way like our engagement. Bear in mind also that the concept of virgin birth is unique to Christianity. It has no parallel in other world religions and could never have been invented by contemporary Judaism, as it ran directly counter to all its preconceptions.

- 1:28 Mary is troubled not so much by seeing the angel but by what he has said, that she has been graciously chosen by God. Her reaction seems to indicate her unself-conscious humility and the deeply spiritual receptiveness of her heart. The announcement to Mary is contrasted with the announcement to Zechariah in that it was not in the solemn grandeur of the Temple that Gabriel now appeared, but in the privacy of a humble home at Nazareth.
- 1:32-35 Jesus is both Son of God (Son of the Most High) and son of man (of the line of David). He is conceived by the power of God yet born a child. Holy here means divine rather than morally pure.
- 1:34 Zechariah was disbelieving whereas Mary was puzzled. She understood that Gabriel meant without human intervention.
- 1:38 Mary says she is God's servant (Greek = slave girl) and shows her complete obedience. This should not be underestimated. She would certainly carry a social stigma and suffer rejection by family and society, but she accepts God's will and is prepared to trust him.
- 1:39 The angel seems to have directed Mary to Elizabeth so that Mary could share her joy, both natural and supernatural. There must





have been tremendous relief in being able to open her heart to another woman, in all things like-minded, when such openness was not yet possible within her immediate family.

1:43-45 'My Lord ' shows that Elizabeth recognises Mary's child to be the Messiah. This is a personal understanding. John, her child, has to find out for himself and it is not until Jesus' baptism that he recognises Jesus as Messiah.

1:46-48 Mary's song is phrased largely in OT language. There are resemblances to Hannah's song (1 Samuel 2:1-10), but without the bitterness. There is also here a greater concentration on God's mercy. Mary knows she is a sinner and needs a Saviour.

1:49 Mary turns from thankfulness to think about God himself. She refers to three aspects of God's character: his power, his holiness and his mercy.

Additional notes

Teaching this story to children today is made more difficult by their perception of the miraculous and what it means. Their daily diet from comics and the TV screen is fantasy and the supernatural. We need to ensure that they understand that the Bible story is fact not fiction. The familiarity of the story can also lessen its impact on us as teachers. The reality of the holy Son of God coming into our sinful world, 'taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men' (Philippians 2:7), is staggering. It is the pivotal event in world history. It is not surprising, therefore, that Mary was overwhelmed when she realised she was to play a crucial role in this story.

Virgin birth. We should be sensitive to the levels of understanding of the children we are teaching. Emphasis should be on the fact of life rather than the facts of life!!

As this is the first proper lesson of the series, (the Nativity play may or may not have been performed), you need to start with an introduction. The next 4 lessons are about different gifts, so you could start by asking the children if they like presents. What do they like about presents? When do they get them? When and why do they give them? In today's true story from the Bible we will learn about a very special present. Ask the children to listen very carefully to discover who gave the present, what the present was and who received it. Go over those questions at the end of the story and then teach the memory verse. Next week we will find out about someone else who received a present.

Lesson Plan

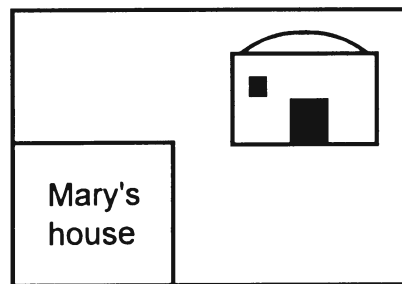


Make a frieze using flat figures or 3D figures. (For 3D figures see page 13.) Figures required - Mary, angel, Elizabeth.

Visual aids



Suggested layout for background:



Start with Mary inside her house visited by the angel. Then put Elizabeth in front of her house and move Mary to stand in front of Elizabeth's house.

For figures that need to move use bluetak to stick them onto the background.

Label the background with the class name at the top so that it is available for the next lesson.

3-5s

The children will make an angel. Follow the instructions on page 14.

Activities



5-7s

The children will make an angel. Follow the instructions on page 15.

7-9s

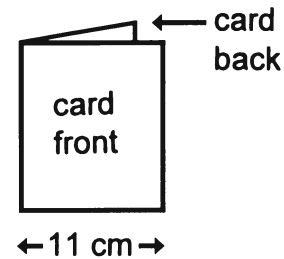
The children will make small gift boxes from old Christmas/greetings cards. This is a traditional origami design. Read the instructions carefully and make one prior to the lesson to show the children. Remember, when doing a paper folding activity make sure every child has completed the first fold **before** you demonstrate the next one. Do steps 1 - 4 for both box top and box bottom for each child prior to the lesson.

Requirements

1 greetings card per child, pencil, ruler, scissors, glue stick.

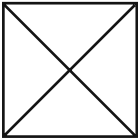
The card must be a minimum of 11 cm across when folded. The larger the card, the easier it is to make the box.

The card front is the picture half.

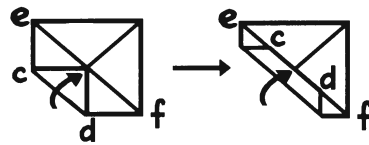




Instructions

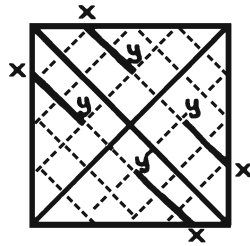
1. Cut the card in half along the fold line.
2. Measure the card across and write the measurement on the card back.
3. Using that measurement, cut off the excess to make a square with the part of the picture you want visible on the box top in the centre.
4. On the back of the card front use a ruler to draw in diagonal lines. 
5. In turn, fold in all 4 corners as follows:

Fold corner into centre then fold c-d to e-f.

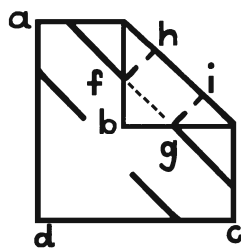


Open out the card and repeat with the other 3 corners. Finish by opening out the card.

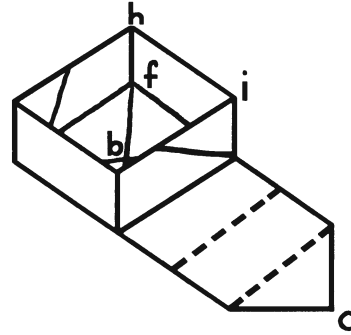
6. The card should now look like this (dotted lines indicate fold lines).



7. Cut along solid lines x-y.
8. Fold corner into centre. Fold again at f-g to make the side of the box. Fold in f-h and g-i to make ends. Do the same with point d.



9. Fold point c over the end of the box with the point ending at the centre of the base. This secures the end flaps. Do the same with point a. A dab of glue may be required to hold the points down. The top of the box is now completed.
10. The bottom of the box is made in exactly the same way, but the sides of the square must measure 1 cm less than the square used for the box top (i.e. for a box with the



top measuring 11 cm square before folding, the bottom before folding should be 10 cm square).

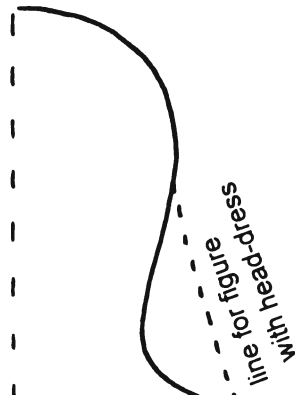
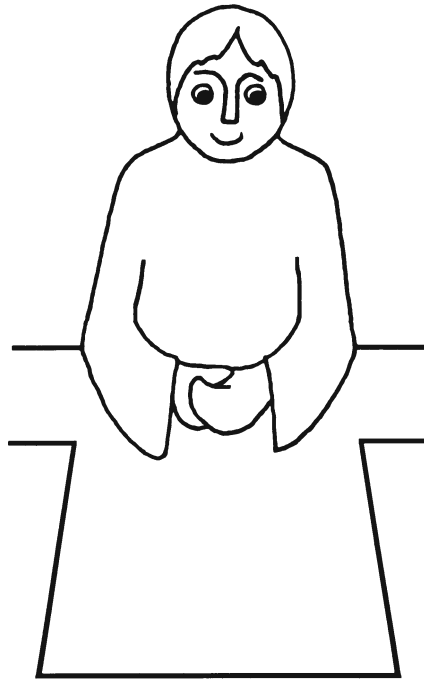
11. Write out the memory verse for each child on a piece of paper. This can be folded and placed in the completed box.
12. If the box is to be used for a decoration, make a hanging loop from gold string or thin ribbon





Visual Aid Template

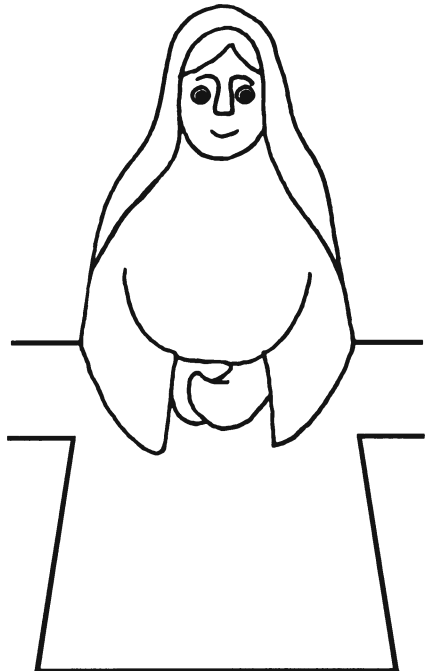
Angel



Instructions

1. Fold sheet of A4 paper or card in half.
2. Draw 1 side of figure (as template).
3. Cut round drawn figure, including tab.
4. Open out and draw in detail of face, arms, etc.
5. Colour with bright pens.
6. Fold tabs and secure behind so that figure is 3D.

Mary and Elizabeth - give Elizabeth grey hair to show she is old.



fold line

fold line

tab





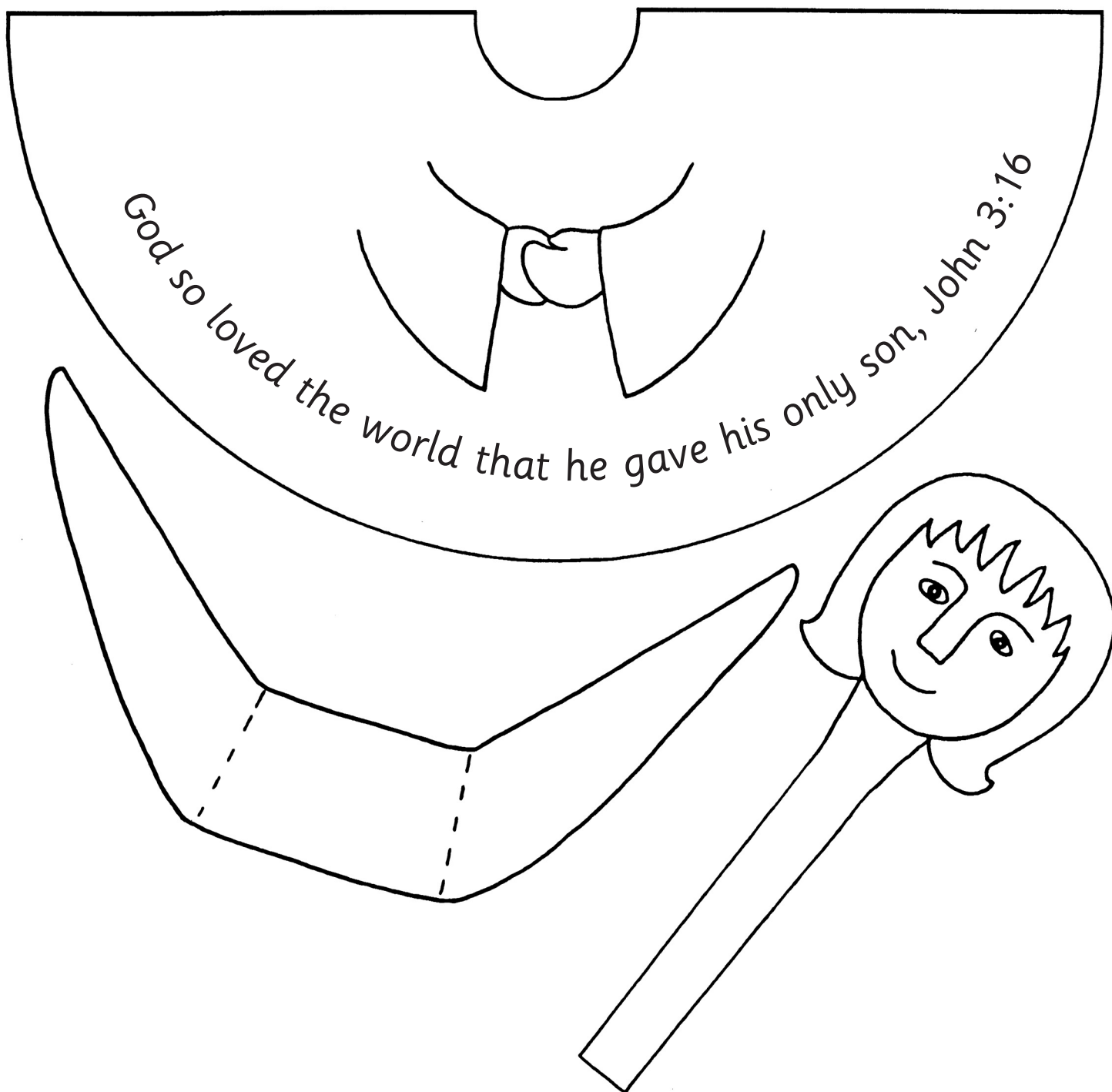
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Activity for 3-5s

Photocopy this page on card for each child. Prior to the lesson cut out the body, small wings and head. Fold the body into a cone and glue down the back.

Instructions

1. The children decorate the body with gold and silver stars, being careful not to cover the Bible verse around the bottom.
2. Bend the wings at the dotted lines, then cover with silver foil. Glue the wings to the back of the angel so that they face slightly backwards.
3. Colour the head then put the tab through the slot at the top of the body. Glue the bottom of the tab inside the body at the front.





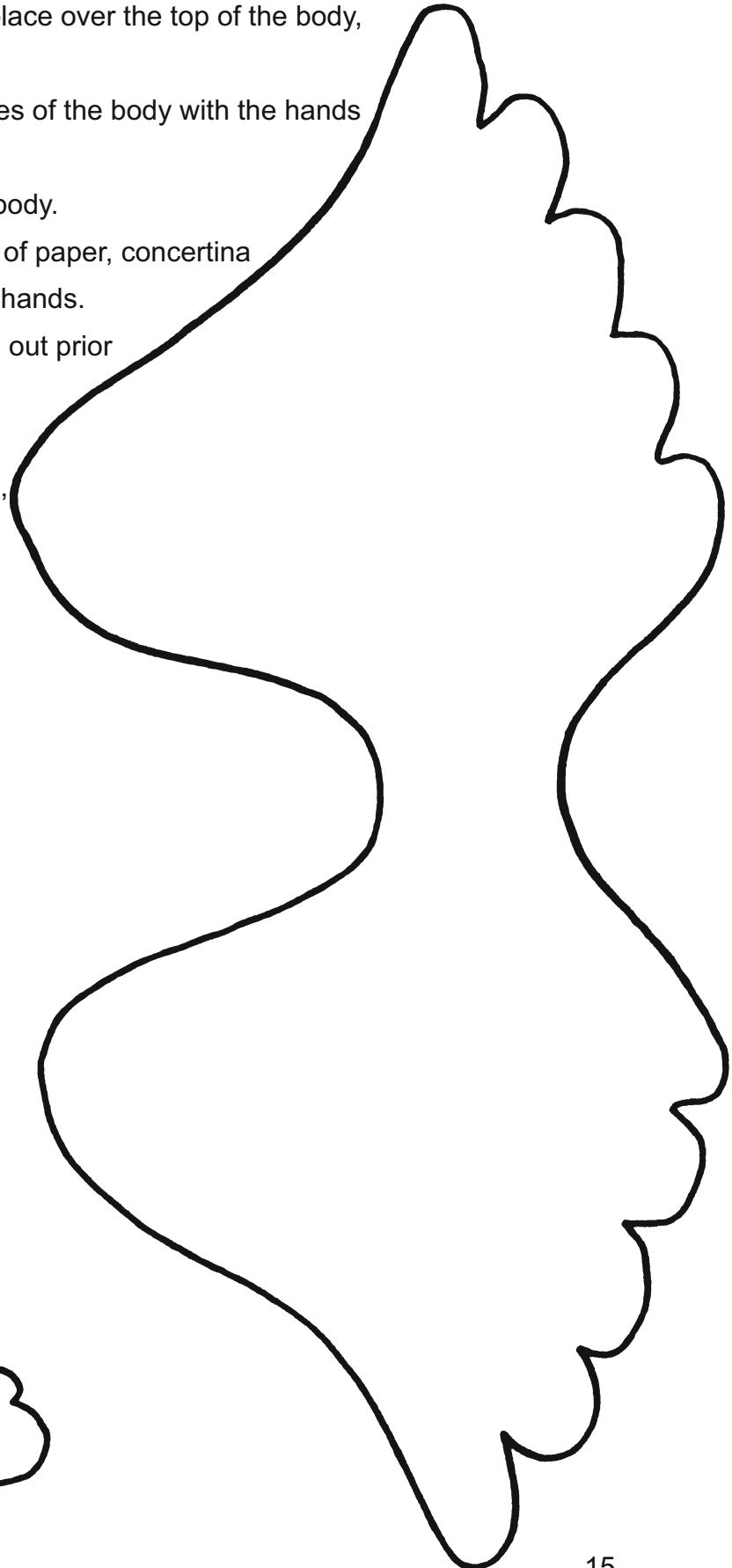
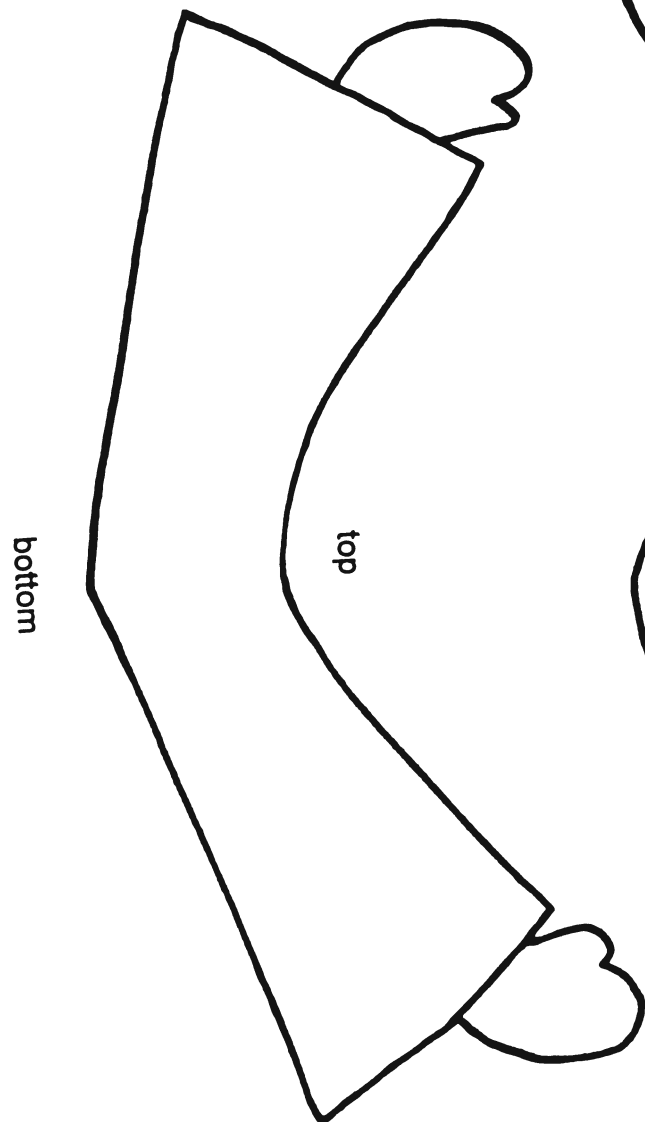
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Activity for 5-7s

Each child requires pages 15 and 16 photocopied on card. Prior to the lesson cut out the body, arms, head and wings.

Instructions

1. Fold the body into a cone and glue down the back.
2. Glue the head tabs together and place over the top of the body, gluing in place.
3. Glue the arms to the back and sides of the body with the hands facing up.
4. Glue the wings to the back of the body.
5. Write the memory verse on a strip of paper, concertina fold and glue between the angel's hands.
(The verse may need to be written out prior to the lesson.)
6. Decorate, if time, with gold and silver stars, pieces cut from doilies, etc.



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Activity for 7-9s

