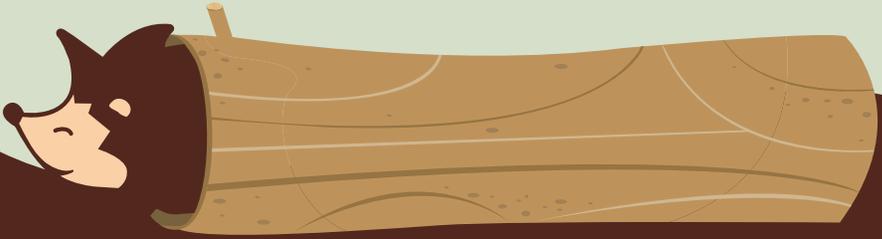
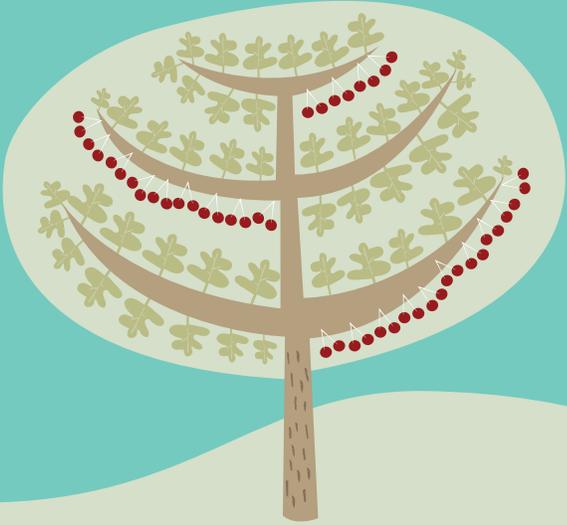




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**HOW IT WORKS**  
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# The TruBlessings Edition

**TruBlessings** is designed for three-year-old children based on three Foundational Truths **God made me, God loves me, and God is with me.**

## The How It Works Document

This document has been developed to walk through a typical TruBlessings lesson, explaining how each section is designed to function most effectively and to attempt to answer all your questions as you lead and learn the ins and outs of the Tru philosophy, giving you tips on how to most effectively transition into using Tru with your children's program. We intend for it to be a comprehensive source for this specific age level.

### FEATURES OF THE ONE-YEAR SCOPE & SEQUENCE

- **Repetition**—Each part of The Big God Story will be repeated two weeks in a row in the Scope & Sequence but will utilize different storytelling techniques and activities.
- **Interaction**—Children will use their senses to explore God's Word through a variety of visual, auditory, and other sensory activities.
- **Chronological**—Follows the sequence of The Big God Story meta-narrative.
- **Remember & Celebrate**—On the 13th week of every quarter (once per quarter), there will be a weekend to remember one of the three foundational truths and celebrate who God is.
- **Worship**—Kids will worship through music provided with TruBlessings and will be encouraged in the home as well.

### TRU MISSION STATEMENT

Tru helps leaders, children, and their families connect to God, find their place in His Big God Story, and respond to Him through the power of the Holy Spirit. Every Tru lesson, resource, and product is created for this purpose.

### TRU PHILOSOPHY

The Holy Spirit is God's chosen teacher. He is the One who makes spiritual growth and formation happen when and as He chooses. Our role, as ministry leaders, volunteers, and parents, is to create space for the Holy Spirit to meet with our children. How do we do that? Dr. Michelle Anthony spent a lot of time in prayer and combing through God's Word to see the kinds of ways He has interacted with His people throughout history. What emerged were 10 distinct ways—or, as we refer to them, environments—that God clearly uses to form His followers:

**STORYTELLING:** "God has a big story, and I can be a part of it!"

**IDENTITY:** "I belong to God, and He loves me!"

**FAITH COMMUNITY:** "God's family cares for each other and worships God together."

**SERVING:** "Asks the question, 'What needs to be done?'"

**OUT OF THE COMFORT ZONE:** "God transforms me when I step out in faith."

**RESPONSIBILITY:** "God has entrusted me with the things and people He created around me."

**COURSE CORRECTION:** "When I get off track, God offers me a path of healing."

**LOVE AND RESPECT:** "God fills me with His love so I can give it away."

**KNOWING:** "God knows me, and I can know Him."

**MODELING:** "I see Christ in others, and they can see Him in me."

God uses these environments as ways to meet with us. The 10 environments provide language that helps support the Ponder Point of each lesson, and the Ponder Point focuses on the character and nature of God.

In addition, each issue of **HomeFront Magazine: A Spiritual Parenting Resource** focuses on one of the 10 environments. This valuable resource equips parents to create the environments in their homes as they seek to be the spiritual nurturers of their children's faith. The 10 environments provide a common language that creates a bridge between church and home.

For a more in-depth look at each environment, read *Spiritual Parenting* by Michelle Anthony or visit [truministry.com](http://truministry.com).

## PARENT RESOURCES

### The Vision for Spiritual Parenting: The Class

In *Spiritual Parenting*, Dr. Michelle Anthony unpacks the 10 environments and their role in creating room in our homes and families for God to beckon our kids to Him. Spiritual parenting encourages parents to place their dependence upon God for raising their children and calls the reader to a heart posture of obedience and faithfulness. The end goal is a vibrant faith that is passed on from one generation to another. As Tru subscribers, available for download are the first video session and the digital leader guide of the *Spiritual Parenting DVD* series.

### The Vision for HomeFront Magazine: A Spiritual Parenting Resource

This monthly resource equips families with practical ideas for creating fun, spiritually forming times in their homes, setting aside a sacred space for family in the midst of their active, everyday lives. Each issue features articles and activities focusing on everything from marriage and family to recipes, crafts, and a blessing. This isn't about doing more; it's about framing the things parents naturally do while creating space for God to work.

As the new issue becomes available each month, you may choose to print them for families or encourage them to visit [www.HomeFrontMag.com](http://www.HomeFrontMag.com) to subscribe for a print or digital copy.

### The Vision for HomeFront Weekly

Provided as a parent resource with each week's lesson, HomeFront Weekly is designed to help your parents intentionally spend time in God's Word with their children before they come to church. This way, parents will be the first to introduce their children to the Bible content they'll hear at church, preparing them for the upcoming lesson. By providing this resource, the church is supporting parents as they spiritually nurture their children. The HomeFront Weekly mirrors the lesson and provides parents with fun facts and ideas that will Inspire, Equip, and Support parents: weekly preteaching of The Big God Story, child-development tips for parents that align with spiritual formation, and a blessing to pray over their children. Children will come to church prepared to receive and learn more from God's Word.

At the end of your lesson, be sure to send out the HomeFront Weekly resource for the next week's lesson, so parents can intentionally create space for God to meet with their families. The HomeFront Weekly can be emailed to parents or printed and distributed.

## LEADER PREP

### The Vision for Inspire, Equip, Support

Each week you'll find Inspire, Equip, and Support articles that will help you and your leaders personally and/or corporately engage with God and His Word and take time for yourselves before beginning your prep.

- The **Inspire** article contains personal stories of how God has worked in the lives of fellow ministry leaders, along with insights into that week's God Statement.
- The **Equip** article gives perspective and context as it introduces the lesson's Bible passage.
- The **Support** article provides a time of reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word as you prepare your heart to present the lesson to your children.

## NAVIGATING TRU ON DISCIPLR

### Lessons

Tru lessons are now delivered on our new digital platform, Disciplr. This technology saves time and money as files and resources no longer have to be downloaded. Customers have direct access to interactive, digital lessons that facilitate better planning, scheduling, and mobile-ready access. Planning lessons and coordinating with volunteers is a snap with the built-in teacher management and scheduling features. Other features include customizable materials lists, simple printing of leader materials, and web-based access that allows for easy use with third-party applications such as Evernote®, for ease of customizing and sharing of lessons. Videos and music included in Tru can be streamed to any device via Disciplr's reliable and fast media service. No more need to download and manage large files!

- **Lesson Overview:** Provides an easy-to-understand outline of each lesson.
- **Resource Library:** All lesson pieces, visual aids, and videos placed in one easily-accessed feature, including sort and simplified downloading of custom file bundles.
- **Materials List:** Shopping checklist pulled from lesson supply lists, allowing account admins to customize and share changes with volunteers.
- **Print Lessons:** Quickly print a professional-looking lesson while taking it easy on the ink, including customized information for your church!

To access Tru lessons on Disciplr, go to: <https://disciplr.com/app/signin>

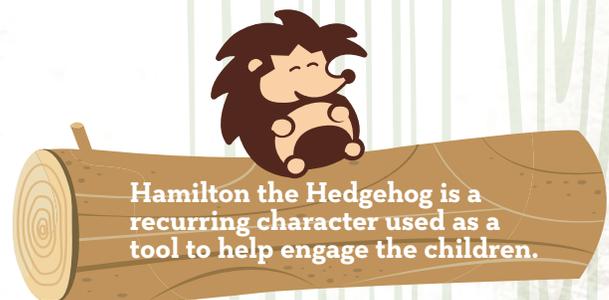
To reach the TruStore on Disciplr, go to: <https://disciplr.com/app/tru-ministry> For questions or to give feedback, refer to the blue Help button in the lower right area of the site.

## CUSTOMIZING YOUR LESSONS

Disciplr will be adding a customizable lesson tool as an added feature. During this waiting period, some practitioners have found some free apps and software, such as Evernote®, that allow you to edit and customize lessons to be helpful. The lessons within Disciplr sync with Evernote®. This may be a tool you choose to use until the customizable feature is available. Evernote® is a trademark of Evernote Corporation and used under a license.

## ADDITIONAL TRUBLESSINGS RESOURCES (see Resources)

- [Tru Master Timeline with Characters](#)
- [Scope and Sequence](#)
- [Salvation Path for Children](#)
- [Artwork](#)
- [Additional CONNECT Options](#)



## Lesson Path: Seeing the Mission Statement in a Tru Lesson

Connects leaders to God ...	→	Inspire, Equip, and Support
Connects children and their families to God ...	→	HomeFront Weekly and CONNECT
... And His big story ...	→	GATHER
... And invites them to respond to Him ...	→	RESPOND
... Through the power of the Holy Spirit.	→	BLESS

## LESSON LANGUAGE

These are descriptions of the terms found throughout TruBlessings lessons:

**Tip, Note, Suggestion, and Helpful Hint:** Suggestions for programming and classroom management.

At the beginning of each TruBlessings lesson you will find a short summary of the portion of The Big God Story children will be exploring within the lesson.

**Optional:** Suggestions of ways you can adapt the activities and games to best fit your own church and group of children.

## ROLES (Note: These roles may be combined and shared between two people.)

**Host:** The Host offers the same spirit of hospitality, generosity, and inclusiveness to the children that the host of a party would offer to the guests in her home or gathering. They may set up the time, frame the expectations, and dismiss children.

**Small Group Leader:** The Small Group Leader shepherds the children through questions about the story and biblical truth, engages them in community-building activities, helps them create a remembrance of their experience, and blesses them before they leave. Ideally Small Group Leaders work week after week with the same group of kids, giving them the opportunity to develop lasting relationships with each child.

**Worship Leader:** The Worship Leader facilitates individual and corporate worship by listening to the direction of the Holy Spirit and inviting others into the worship experience.

**Storyteller:** After active involvement with the Scriptures and the lesson, the Storyteller recounts the Bible passage for the kids in an engaging way. He leads out of an overflow of his own life, telling personal stories as prompted, and guiding the children into a time of natural worship response.

## SAMPLE SERVICE OUTLINE

This sample outline offers flexibility for the timing of your service. The attention span and interest level of young children can change based on a variety of factors. You may find yourself allowing more time for one section of the lesson, and moving quickly through another depending upon the mood and dynamic of your class on any particular day.

Experience/Lesson Section	Minutes
CONNECT	15 min.
GATHER	25 min.
RESPOND	15 min.
BLESS	5 min.

### Programming Note

Always feel free to adjust the lesson to fit your service schedule. If you run out of time, consider cutting an activity. To fill time, consider using a game or activity, such as WANT MORE?. If you need to end a lesson early, consider jumping ahead to the BLESS section to send out the children with a sense of peace so they can be a blessing to others.

## Components of a TruBlessings Lesson

# CONNECT: 15 min.

*Children develop relationships with their leaders and one another through simple activities and conversation starters.*

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## CONNECT Stations May Include

**Option 1:** Activities provided in the lesson

**Option 2:** Storyboards with The Big God Story People (found with the lesson Resources)

**Option 3:** Sensory tables or bins

You may choose to use one or more of the options provided for your three-year-old activity areas. Consider setting up two stations each week. The first station would consist of the activities provided in the lesson. Then from week to week, rotate options 2 to 3 in your second station.

## Getting Started

Designate a space in your room or meeting space for CONNECT stations. Set up as many tables to be CONNECT stations as you would like to make available to the children. Purchase materials and supplies for the specific lesson activities and items that are staples and will be used on a regular basis (see suggested items below). Note: Please check with parents for any potential allergies.

### STAPLE SUPPLIES

- Plastic trays (purchasing suggestion: Brawny Tough Plastic Art Trays, Item # 8WWARTRAY from [www.discountschoolsupply.com](http://www.discountschoolsupply.com))
- Play dough
- Play dough accessories (suggestions: child-sized rolling pins, cookie cutters, old rubber stamps, toy pizza cutters, toy kitchen utensils, small combs, and bubble wands)
- Water droppers (purchasing suggestion: Item # 8WWAP7209J from [www.discountschoolsupply.com](http://www.discountschoolsupply.com))
- Small bowls
- Small pitcher
- Easy-grip tweezers or strawberry pickers (purchasing suggestions: Item # 8WWAP1963J and 8WWAP7200J from [www.discountschoolsupply.com](http://www.discountschoolsupply.com))
- Salt
- Uncooked rice
- Large dried beans
- Shaving cream (non-menthol)
- Cotton balls and swabs
- Toothbrushes

### SENSORY TABLE IDEAS

1. Salt Designs: Cover a plastic tray with salt (just enough so you can't see the bottom). Draw simple designs on a couple pieces of paper and place them next to the salt tray. Encourage children to use their fingers to copy the design in the salt or to create their own designs.
2. Shaving Cream Hunt: Place several items (toy cars, toothbrush, comb, bubble wand, etc.) on a table or inside a bin. Cover the items with shaving cream. Encourage children to find the items that are lost in the foam.
3. Open and Close: Fill bags, boxes, or pouches with various themed objects. Encourage the children to figure out how to open the box and see what's inside. Ask them questions about the items they found.

### Transition Song

Use the "The Cleanup Song" as a means to transition from one activity to the next. This song is also a great cue to use as a signal for children that it's time to transition from CONNECT into GATHER, and as a helpful reminder that it's time to clean up.

# GATHER:: 25 min.

**Children experience and learn more about God through traditions, song, and storytelling from The Big God Story.**

Once children have helped to clean up, encourage them to find a Story Spot and place it in the storytelling area.

**Story Spots** refer to an item used to mark the place where the child will sit during the duration of GATHER. Consider using carpet squares, small circle-shaped rugs, or large, sturdy placemats. When children hear the transition song, they will be cued to clean up and choose a Story Spot, place it in the gathering space, and sit down. At the close of your time together in The Big God Story, encourage children to return their Story Spots to their original location.

## Hamilton the Hedgehog

As you begin the storytelling section of GATHER, have a volunteer available to be Hamilton the Hedgehog using the puppet you provide. Or you may choose to act as both the Storyteller and the puppeteer. Encourage Hamilton to come out of his house. Consider having a façade that is part of your stage/teaching area. This façade can act as a puppet stage to conceal puppeteers. However, if this is not an option and children see the volunteer with the puppet on her hand, encourage the volunteer to interact with both Hamilton and the children. The interaction will help children to see the puppeteer and puppet as individual characters.

## Purchasing suggestions for Hamilton the Hedgehog

- [www.jazams.com/Store/pc/viewPrd.asp?idproduct=731&IDCategory=16](http://www.jazams.com/Store/pc/viewPrd.asp?idproduct=731&IDCategory=16)
- [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

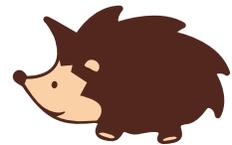
## Creating a House for Hamilton

Hedgehogs make their homes in leaves and woodpiles within the forest and gardens. You may choose to create a log or leaf pile for Hamilton's home. For ideas on how to create your own hedgehog house, visit: <http://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/faq.php> or [www.gardenersworld.com](http://www.gardenersworld.com) search: "hedgehog house."

## DID YOU KNOW ...

### Hedgehogs

- Are native to parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa. This little creature has been introduced to Southeast Asia, New Zealand, Australia, and North and South America.
- Curl up to go to sleep to protect themselves.
- Have prickly spines everywhere except on their face, legs, and belly.
- Root through hedges and undergrowth for food, which makes them welcome in many gardens.
- Eat insects, worms, centipedes, snails, mice, frogs, and snakes.



## Welcome

After children have placed their Story Spots in the gathering space, invite Hamilton the Hedgehog to join you in your time of GATHER and lead the children in singing the Bible song. Play the "TruBlessings Theme Song" and lead kids in dance and celebration.

## SAMPLE SUPPLIES

- Bible
- "TruBlessings Theme Song" (see Resources)
- Hamilton puppet
- Hamilton's house

The Big God Story is written for a three-year-old audience and can be told in its entirety, but may need to be shortened if the class is on the younger side.

**Bible Song** (sung to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb")

*Now it's time to hear God's Word,  
Hear God's Word,  
Hear God's Word.  
Now it's time to hear God's Word,  
So let's look in the Bible.*

When the song ends, have the children return to their Story Spots. The volunteer can return Hamilton to his house with his little face peeking out, or she may choose to have him model sitting quietly until it's time for him to participate in The Big God Story.

**The Big God Story**

As you transition children into the storytelling portion of GATHER, lead the children in a Prayer of Release.

A Prayer of Release is a prayer asking God to remove any distractions that would get in the way of hearing from and responding to Him. As we pray, we dedicate this time to the Lord and ask to be filled with knowledge and understanding from Him, giving God His rightful role as Teacher.

We can begin to model this posture of prayer with the children in our care. To lead three-year-old children, pray a simple prayer thanking God for His presence and asking Him to teach you as you gather together. For example: "Thank You, God, for being with us. We ask that You would teach us today."

After the Prayer of Release, you will begin storytelling from The Big God Story. The supplies will vary from week to week, but may include provided resources such as The Big God Story images. Hamilton will be cued to participate in the storytelling. At the end of the time, have the children say good-bye to Hamilton as he goes back into his house. Thank him for coming and being a part of The Big God Story.

**RESPOND::** 15 min.

***Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond through worship, creative activities, and games.***



As children leave their time in The Big God Story, they will have the opportunity to RESPOND to God as they celebrate Him through music and song along with those in their faith community.

**BLESS::** 5 min.

***Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing can be a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.***



### The Vision for BLESS

Every Tru lesson concludes with a blessing. The word benediction means to speak well over someone. This is a time for parents and leaders to speak truth over and into children's lives. The children have just had the experience of encountering God and His Word; the idea of the blessing is to bless them and what God is doing in them. Allow them to receive this. As they've been blessed, they will in turn be used to bless others. Even children at this young age can begin to understand the concept that everything that comes from God is a gift to us. This is the time to remind children they can freely give away the joy, love, truth, and grace they've received from God.

A blessing can be a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words of encouragement and guidance. A blessing can be offered in order to ask God's Spirit to overflow from the child's life in such a way that blesses others, while it can also be prayed over a child for the purpose of declaring God's protection, joy, or wisdom. Explain that a prayer is talking to God, while a blessing is speaking to a person. Concluding your time together with a blessing enables them to leave from the strength of being encouraged and built up with Godly words of life and truth spoken over them.

### SAMPLE SUPPLIES

- Bible (for the blessing)
- Snack

Within each lesson a simple blessing is provided along with a portion of Scripture that reinforces the spiritually forming concepts introduced within the lesson. For example:

**Children, may you remember that God made our world and all the earth will worship Him.**

Open the Bible and read Psalm 19:1 over the children.

**The heavens declare the glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.**

**Snack:** You may choose to enjoy a snack as children share in this time of blessing. Snack ideas may be provided to connect the snack to the lesson. Be sure to consider any food allergies or check with parents ahead of time.

# WANT MORE?

*Children are encouraged to further engage through games, songs, manipulatives, sensory activities, and art. These activities are used to help reinforce what they experienced in CONNECT.*

The WANT MORE options are specifically aimed at three-year-old children and can be used when you need to extend service time or play time.

## Hamilton's Box of Fun

This is a recurring activity that can be used each week. Some options have been provided to help you create your own "box of fun." Each quarter the suggested supplies will be refreshed. Be sure to check the Resources each week for updated Coloring sheets.

Hamilton's Box of Fun will encourage kids to interact with one another as they practice sharing toys and using their imaginations with the different items inside the box. You may choose to use this at the beginning or end of the service, as time permits.

Invite your children to the circle time area and sing together:

**Hamilton's Box** (sung to the tune of "Oh Where, Oh Where Has My Little Dog Gone?")

*Where, oh where is Hamilton's Box?*

*Oh where, oh where can it be?*

*It's full of fun toys that we sure like a lot!*

*Oh where, oh where can it be?*

When the song ends, encourage the children to work together to find Hamilton's Box of Fun. Consider hiding the box in a new location each week to pique the children's curiosity and excitement.



## Components of TruBlessings

# Remember & Celebrate 15-30 min.

Every quarter, we take time to pause and remember who God is and all He has done. As we remember, we celebrate Him together as a faith community. The TruBlessings Remember & Celebrate lesson is a time to stop and celebrate all the things God has been teaching us through the lessons of the previous weeks. The children review the things God has been teaching them about who He is. Each quarter focuses on one of the following foundational truths: **God made me, God loves me, or God is with me.**

The Remember & Celebrate lesson contains the familiar sections of CONNECT, GATHER, RESPOND, and BLESS. There are also WANT MORE? activities provided, or feel free to bring back favorites from previous weeks.