

# DANIEL AND THE LIONS' DEN







## THEMED PROGRAMME



### AIM

Explore the story of Daniel and his encounter with a lions' den, through a themed programme of activities. Find out who Daniel was, how he escaped the lions' den and what we can learn from his story.

### ACTIVITIES

-  Daniel and the Lions' Den Story Game
-  Feed the Lions
-  Daniel and the Lions' Den Jigsaw
-  Daniel and the Lions' Den
-  God's Protection Dodgeball
-  My Lion's Mane

# DANIEL AND THE LIONS' DEN

## » INTRODUCTION

Daniel and the Lions' Den is a Bible story in the Old Testament of the Bible.

It focuses on the story of Daniel, who was thrown into a lions' pit for continuing to pray to God after a law was created banning it. Whilst in the pit God sent an angel to protect Daniel and keep him safe from the lions, helping to show us that if we trust in God, he will always be there to protect us.

Daniel's story can be found in **Daniel 6:1-28**.


## ? DID YOU KNOW?

- Daniel doesn't just feature in one story in the Bible, he has a whole Book!
- The name Daniel means 'God is my judge' in Hebrew.
- God helped Daniel to work out the meanings to the dreams that the King was having.
- Throwing people into pits with lions was a punishment used thousands of years ago and people were often allowed to watch it happen as a form of entertainment.



## GET INTO THE BIBLE: MY BIBLE ADVENTURE DANIEL AND THE LIONS' DEN STORY GAME

Explore the story of Daniel and the Lions' Den in an active game.

- 1  A leader will need a copy of the story script. You will also need to label the four walls of your room 'Daniel', 'Lion', 'King' and 'God' using our template sheets or by creating your own. Make sure these signs are placed somewhere visible for the children to see.
- 2 Start all the children in the centre of the room. Explain that you are going to read out the story of Daniel & the Lions' Den. During the story they need to be listening for the four key words.
- 3 When they hear one of the key words children should run to the wall that matches. For example, if the word 'Lion' is mentioned then all children should run to the lion wall.
- 4 You can play this game just for fun or you could award a point for the quickest person each time.

**Top Tip:** When reading the story, make sure to keep the pace of the story going but leave a slight pause after each key word to allow enough time for the children to make it to the appropriate wall.





## GET ACTIVE: PLAYING GAMES

### FEED THE LIONS



Download and print the lion's mouth template. Stick this onto a cardboard box and then cut out the mouth of the lion, so it becomes a large hole in the box. You'll also need a collection of balls to throw. These could be crumpled up paper, ball pit balls, sock bundles etc. This game can then be played in one of the below ways:

**Individual:** Give each child 5 balls and challenge them to throw them into the lion's mouth from a couple of metres away. Keep a tally of the scores, with the highest score being the winner.

**Team v Team:** Create two lion mouth boxes. Split into two teams and give both teams two minutes to score as many points as they can. Alternatively play the game until the first team scores 10 points.

**Quiz:** Split into teams, with each team having a lion's mouth box and balls. Ask some quiz questions linked to the Bible story. Teams can buzz in to answer the question by successfully feeding a lion. The first team to do so can answer the question and get the point.



## GET LEARNING: PROBLEM SOLVING

### DANIEL AND THE LIONS' DEN JIGSAW

1



Download and print copies of the Daniel and the Lions' Den Jigsaw template for each pair / team.

2

Split the group into pairs / small teams. Complete the jigsaw activity in one of the below ways

**Team Obstacle Race:** Set up an obstacle course and place all the pieces at the far end of the course (keep each jigsaw separate, so teams only collect pieces belonging to their puzzle). Sit the children at the other end of the room. One at a time they should navigate the obstacle course, collect a piece, and return to their team to put the puzzle together. The quickest team wins.

**Treasure Hunt:** Hide the pieces around the room. Either as one big group or in small teams, challenge the children to find the pieces of the jigsaw. Once all the pieces have been found the group/teams should then try to complete the jigsaw and see what the picture creates.




## GET INTO THE BIBLE: MY BIBLE ADVENTURE

### DANIEL AND THE LIONS' DEN

1

Ask children what they know about the story of Daniel and the Lions' Den. Let children tell the story from what they can remember.

2

Now share with the group the animated video 'Daniel in the Lions' Den' by Saddleback Kids ([https://youtu.be/bEM\\_X25DWPk](https://youtu.be/bEM_X25DWPk)), or read the story in a children's Bible.  **Daniel 6: 1-28**

3

Afterward ask the group a few questions such as 'Daniel really loved God, how do we see that in this story?', 'How difficult do you think it would have been for Daniel, knowing that to continue praying to God might get him in lots of trouble?' and 'How did God protect Daniel when he was in the lions' den?'

4

The story of Daniel and the Lions' Den shows us that if we fully believe and trust in God then he will protect us and always look after us. Sometimes we might face times when it is difficult to trust God or obey him. It might be that school is really hard or someone might be picking on you or things always seem to be going wrong. However whatever is going on in our lives, even if we get thrown into a pit of lions, we can trust God that he will take care of us and protect us.

5

Finish in prayer, thanking God that he is always there to protect us whenever we need it.



## GET ACTIVE: PLAYING GAMES

# GOD'S PROTECTION DODGEBALL

Play a game inspired by the story and God being there to protect Daniel, just like the angel who appeared in the den.

- 1 Ask for one child to be Daniel. They should stand at one end of the room.
- 2 Ask for one child to be Daniel's protector. They will need to stand 4 or 5 steps in front of Daniel at the same end of the room.
- 3 Everyone else has the job of being a lion. The lions should all be given a soft ball each (i.e. sponge ball) and stand at the other end of the room.
- 4 On go, all the lions should throw/roll their balls, attempting to hit Daniel. Daniel must stand still and cannot dodge the balls at all. The job of the protector is to try and stop all the balls from hitting Daniel. Can the protector stop all the balls or will one or two make their way to Daniel?
- 5 Play a few rounds, with different people taking the job of Daniel & his protector. Make the game easier or more difficult by changing the number of balls in play, the distance between Daniel and the lions or by changing the number of protectors in front of Daniel.
- 6 Afterwards discuss with the group how they got on. Was the job of being a protector difficult? Thankfully God is much better at being a protector than we are and is always there, just in front of us, protecting us from what gets thrown at us.



## GET CREATIVE: ARTY & CRAFTY

# MY LION'S MANE

Become a roaring lion by creating your very own lion's mane that you can wear.

- 1 Beforehand a leader should cut out the centre of the paper plate, leaving just the edge of the plate for the activity.
- 2 Using scissors, cut strips of yellow, orange and brown card. These should be roughly 3 or 4cm thick and 15cm long (these measurements are just a guide).
- 3 Glue the strips of card to the inside of the plate, so each one is pointing directly out from the centre.
- 4 Keep going all the way around the plate, using a mixture of the three colours, until you aren't able to see any of the plate. This will create a bright and bushy lion's mane.
- 5 The mane is now ready to wear. Encourage children to hold it up to their face, poking their head against the hole in the middle. You could attach a wooden skewer to the bottom of the plate to give children something to hold when wearing the mane. Who has the best looking mane? Who can make the biggest lion's roar whilst wearing their mane?



### What you'll need:

- Paper Plate
- Yellow, Orange & Brown Card
- Scissors
- Glue



# DANIEL AND THE LIONS' DEN STORY GAME SCRIPT

Many many years ago there was a man called **Daniel**. **Daniel** loved **God** and was very loyal to him.

The place where **Daniel** lived was ruled by a **King** who was a nice enough man but didn't understand about **God** and how important he was to **Daniel**.

**Daniel** worked for the **King**, alongside some other officials. These officials didn't like how **Daniel** seemed to be the **King's** favourite and got very jealous of this.

One day the officials decided they needed to find a way to get rid of **Daniel**, so they tried to use his love for **God** against him. They knew that **Daniel** would always pray to **God** three times a day as part of his commitment to his faith.

The officials decided to ask the **King** to make a new rule. The new rule was that anyone who prayed to a **God** should be thrown into a pit full of fierce and hungry **lions**. Now that wasn't very nice, but the officials had tricked the **King** into making the rule without him realising they were targeting **Daniel**.

The next day **Daniel** carried on with his life as he did every day. He knew about this new rule, but that wasn't going to stop him praying to **God**, because praying was really important to him. **Daniel** liked to pray by his window, so he opened up his window and starting his prayer to **God**. It was at this point that the officials could clearly see **Daniel** praying and ran straight to the **King** to tell him.

**Daniel** was summoned to the palace by the **King**. "I really like you **Daniel**" said the **King**, "But rules are rules and you'll have to be thrown to the **lions**". So at the **King's** command, **Daniel** was thrown to the **lions**.

The **King** felt awful. He really liked **Daniel**, and didn't want to throw him to the **lions**. That night at the palace the **King** couldn't eat any food and wasn't able to get any sleep. He felt really bad for what he had done to **Daniel**.

Little did the King know, but **God** had sent an angel to look over **Daniel** whilst he was in the **lions'** den. **Daniel** had always been loyal to **God**, so now **God** was protecting **Daniel**. The angel made sure the **lions** didn't hurt **Daniel** and kept him safe all night.

The next day, at the crack of dawn, the **King** ran straight to the **lions'** pit. "**Daniel**" the **King** shouted "Are you still alive? Did your **God** save you?"

"Hello **King**" **Daniel** replied "I'm still alive. The **lions** didn't touch me, my **God** protected me!"

The **King** was overjoyed that **Daniel** was still alive and pulled him out the **lions'** pit.

The End.

# DANIEL AND THE LIONS' DEN STORY GAME



**KING**



**GOD**

# DANIEL AND THE LIONS' DEN STORY GAME



**LION**



**DANIEL**

# FEED THE LIONS

⇒ ROAR! ⇐





# DANIEL AND THE LIONS' DEN JIGSAW



Cut out the above picture into 10 - 15 pieces to create a jigsaw for the activity.