

# I Am Thankful for the Day and the Night

## PURPOSE

To help each child understand that following Heavenly Father's plan, Jesus Christ created the day so we can work and play and the night so we can rest.

## PREPARATION

1. Prayerfully study Genesis 1:1, 3–5, 14–18; Helaman 14:1–13; and 3 Nephi 1:15–23.
2. Materials needed:
  - a. A Bible and a Book of Mormon.
  - b. Cutout 1-1, sun; cutout 1-2, moon; cutout 1-3, stars (similar cutouts can also be found in Primary Visual Aids Cutouts set 3).
  - c. Picture 1-21, Samuel the Lamanite on the Wall (Gospel Art Picture Kit 314; 62370).
3. Make the necessary preparations for any Enrichment Activities you want to use.

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### Attention Activity

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Tell the children that you are thinking of something that Heavenly Father planned and Jesus Christ created. Ask the children to guess what you are thinking of. Give the following hints, one at a time:

1. It makes us feel warm.
2. It is round and yellow.
3. It is in the sky.
4. Sometimes it seems to hide behind a cloud or a mountain.

After the children guess "the sun," display the cutout figure of the sun.

- Who made the sun?

### We work and play during the day

### Story

Tell the children the story of the creation of day and night from Genesis 1:1, 3–5 and the creation of the sun, moon, and stars from Genesis 1:14–18.

- Who created the day and the night?
- What did Heavenly Father have Jesus put in the sky to tell us when it is day?

Tell the children that the sun gives us light so we can see. The sun also warms us and helps the plants grow. We would not be able to live on the earth without the sun.

- What do we call the time when the sun is up? (Day.)

Explain that we can do many things during the day. We can work, play, and help others.

### Activity

Have the children tell about things they do when it is daytime, such as eating a meal, playing a game, or sweeping the floor. Have them stand and act out some of their ideas. You may wish to do some of the actions with them.

- What can you do to help someone during the day? (Answers may include picking up toys, washing dishes, or playing with a little brother or sister.)

### We rest during the night

- Do we see the sun all the time?

Explain that every evening the sun goes down and the sky gets dark. We cannot see the sun at night.

- What do we call the time when it is dark? (Night.)
- What did Heavenly Father have Jesus put in the sky to light the night? (Moon and stars.)

Have the children display the cutout figures of the moon and stars next to the cutout figure of the sun.

Activity

Have the children tell about or act out some of the things they do at night, such as saying bedtime prayers, listening to stories, brushing their teeth, or sleeping.

Explain that some people, such as doctors, nurses, and firefighters, work at night, but most of us use the night to sleep. Many animals also sleep at night.

- Why do we sleep?

Help the children understand that sleep is good for our bodies, and Heavenly Father and Jesus want us to take good care of our bodies. If we get enough sleep, we will feel better and be healthier. If we do not get enough sleep, we will be tired and cranky.

If the length of days varies greatly across seasons in your area, explain that night may last longer at some times of the year and shorter at other times. Our parents help us know when it is bedtime and when it is time to be awake and busy.

Activity

Have the children stand and do the following finger play:

This Little Fellow

This little fellow is going to bed (*raise one finger*).

Down on the pillow he lays his head (*lay finger on palm of other hand*).

Wraps himself in the blankets tight (*close fingers over first finger*),

And this is the way he sleeps all night.

Morning comes and he opens his eyes.

Back with a toss the cover flies (*open hand to show finger resting*).

Soon he is up and dressed and away (*raise finger up*),

Ready to smile and work and play.

### **Heavenly Father used the day and the night to announce the birth of Jesus**

Story

Tell the children that Heavenly Father used the day and the night to help tell about the birth of Jesus. Display picture 1-21, Samuel the Lamanite on the Wall, and explain what is happening in the picture. Explain that the prophet Samuel told the Nephites what would happen in the sky when it was time for Jesus to be born. The sun would go down, but the sky would not get dark. Explain that many people did not believe Samuel, but what he said did happen (see Helaman 14:1–13 and 3 Nephi 1:15–23).

Help the children understand that the birth of Jesus was so important that far away in America, where the Nephites and the Lamanites lived, Heavenly Father made the night when Jesus was born as bright as day.

- What important event was Samuel the Lamanite telling the people about?
- What did the Nephites see happen in the sky the night Jesus was born?

Testimony

Bear your testimony that Heavenly Father had Jesus Christ create the day and the night to help us. Encourage the children to thank Heavenly Father for both the day and the night.

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## **ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES**

Choose some of these activities to use during the lesson.

1. Obtain a sheet of white paper and a half sheet of black or dark blue paper for each child. Glue the dark half sheet onto one side of the white paper to represent a day and night scene. Cut out small circles of paper to represent the sun and the moon, and help the children glue them in the correct places. Use gummed or cutout stars to add to the night scene. Write on each child's paper *I am thankful for the day and the night*.

2. With the children, sing or say the words to “The World Is So Lovely” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 233), “Because God Loves Me” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 234), or the second verse of “The World Is So Big” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 235). Do actions to “The World Is So Big” as indicated below:
 

The world is so big and, oh, so round (*form a large circle with arms*),  
 And in it God’s creations are found;  
 Stars shining brightly through all the night (*straighten and wiggle fingers*),  
 Sun in the day so warm and so bright (*form a large circle with arms*).  
 The world is so big and, oh, so round.  
 God loves us all; our blessings abound (*grasp arms and hug self*).
3. Sing “Fun to Do” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 253), using the children’s suggestions for verses. Before singing each verse, ask the children whether the action they have suggested is done during the day or at night. Improvise actions as suggested by the words.
4. Make up a story about a brother and sister who were playing outdoors at the end of the day. Use names and situations the children in your class would be familiar with. Describe what the children did as they finished their day. Include details such as the sun beginning to set, their mother calling them to come in, and the children doing necessary chores, cleaning up, getting ready for dinner, helping wash dishes, getting ready for bed, hearing a bedtime story, and saying bedtime prayers. Describe how the brother and sister, other people, and birds, insects, and animals settle down and go to sleep.
 

Help the children understand that during the night, we should close our eyes and sleep so our bodies can grow healthy and strong. This is part of Heavenly Father’s plan for us.

Illustrate the story with cutout figures, or assign parts to the children and have them act out the story.

**ADDITIONAL  
ACTIVITIES FOR  
YOUNGER  
CHILDREN**

1. Show the cutout figures of the sun, moon, and stars. Ask the following questions:
  - Where do we see these things?
  - Do we see the sun at night?
  - Do we see the stars during the daytime?

Explain that Heavenly Father had Jesus make the sun to give us light and keep us warm during the day and the moon and stars to give us light at night.
2. Help the children do the actions to the following verse while you say the words:
 

God’s Creation

God made the moon (*make a circle with hands*)  
 And winking stars (*open and close hands*)  
 And put them in the sky (*reach up*).  
 He made the sun (*make a circle with arms overhead*)  
 And trees (*hold arms straight up*)  
 And flowers (*cup hands*)  
 And little birds that fly (*wave arms*).

(From *Fascinating Finger Fun* by Eleanor Doan. © 1951. Used by permission.)
3. Sing or say the words to “I Am like a Star” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 163) or “Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 60).