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The Talking Donkey

The Israelites were nearing the Promised Land. But the surrounding nations had tried to stand in their way, forcing the Israelites to go to war with them. But God was on their side, and each victory sent a message.



Balak, the king of Moab, knew he didn't have any hope against that kind of strength. But then he remembered what he had heard about Balaam. Some said that whatever Balaam blessed was truly blessed. And whatever he cursed was cursed. If Balak could get Balaam to curse the Israelites, his army might have a chance. So he sent some messengers to bring Balaam to him. They took along a lot of gold, the money of their day. Balaam believed in God. He had once been a prophet. But he had become greedy and no longer served God. Yet, when the messengers came, Balaam asked God for instructions. The answer came back, "Do not go with them. You must not put a curse on those people, because I have blessed them." So Balaam sent the messengers home. But Balak sent more messengers, with even more gold. Balaam knew that God did not want him to go. So he said, "King Balak could give me his palace full of silver and gold. But I cannot disobey the Lord." God knew that Balaam really wanted to go, so that night God said to Balaam, "These men have come to ask you to go with them. Go. But only do what I tell you." So Balaam saddled his donkey and went with the messengers. Balaam didn't see the angel standing in the road to block his way. But his donkey did, and she turned off into a field. Balaam beat the donkey to get her back onto the road. The angel appeared a second time. And the donkey moved against a wall, smashing Balaam's foot. Balaam beat her a second time. The third time the angel appeared, there was no place for the donkey to go. So she lay down in the road.

It was after this third beating that the Lord made the donkey speak.

"What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?" she asked

Balaam. (See [Numbers 22:28-30](#).) Balaam was so angry that he answered without thinking. "You've made a fool out of me," he said. "You have ridden me for years," the donkey responded. "Have I ever done this to you before?" And that's when Balaam saw the angel. "If your donkey hadn't turned away from me, I would have killed you by now," the angel said. Balaam's life had been saved by his donkey! "I have sinned," responded Balaam to the angel. "If I am wrong, I will go back." The angel said, "Go, but you will only be able to say what the Lord wants you to say." When Balaam finally met Balak, he warned Balak. "I can only say what the Lord wants me to say." In three different places that day, Balak asked Balaam to curse the Israelites. But every time Balaam opened his mouth, blessings for the



After was

here

But

three times!" "Didn't I tell you I couldn't do anything against the command of the Lord?"

Balaam answered. "Before I leave, I will tell you what these people will do to your people." Then Balaam prophesied truly. "A ruler will rise from Israel. He will defeat the Moabites. . . . The Israelites will destroy the city." God taught Balaam that worship involves everything you do. It is living a life that is pleasing to God. Worship is listening to God's voice and following His commands. It is using our voices, our speech, and our actions to honor

God.



Israelites came out. the third time, Balak angry. "Go home!" he ordered. "I called you to curse my enemies. you have blessed them



The Talking Donkey Questions

How did Balaam disobey God's instructions?

What did God do to help Balaam obey?

What does this story tell us about obedience?

Balaam was tempted with money. What tempts people today?



The Talking Donkey Coloring Page



The Talking Donkey Craft



I will Carry God's Word Paper Backpack

You will need: construction paper of different colors, , pencil, crayon scissors, and glue stick.

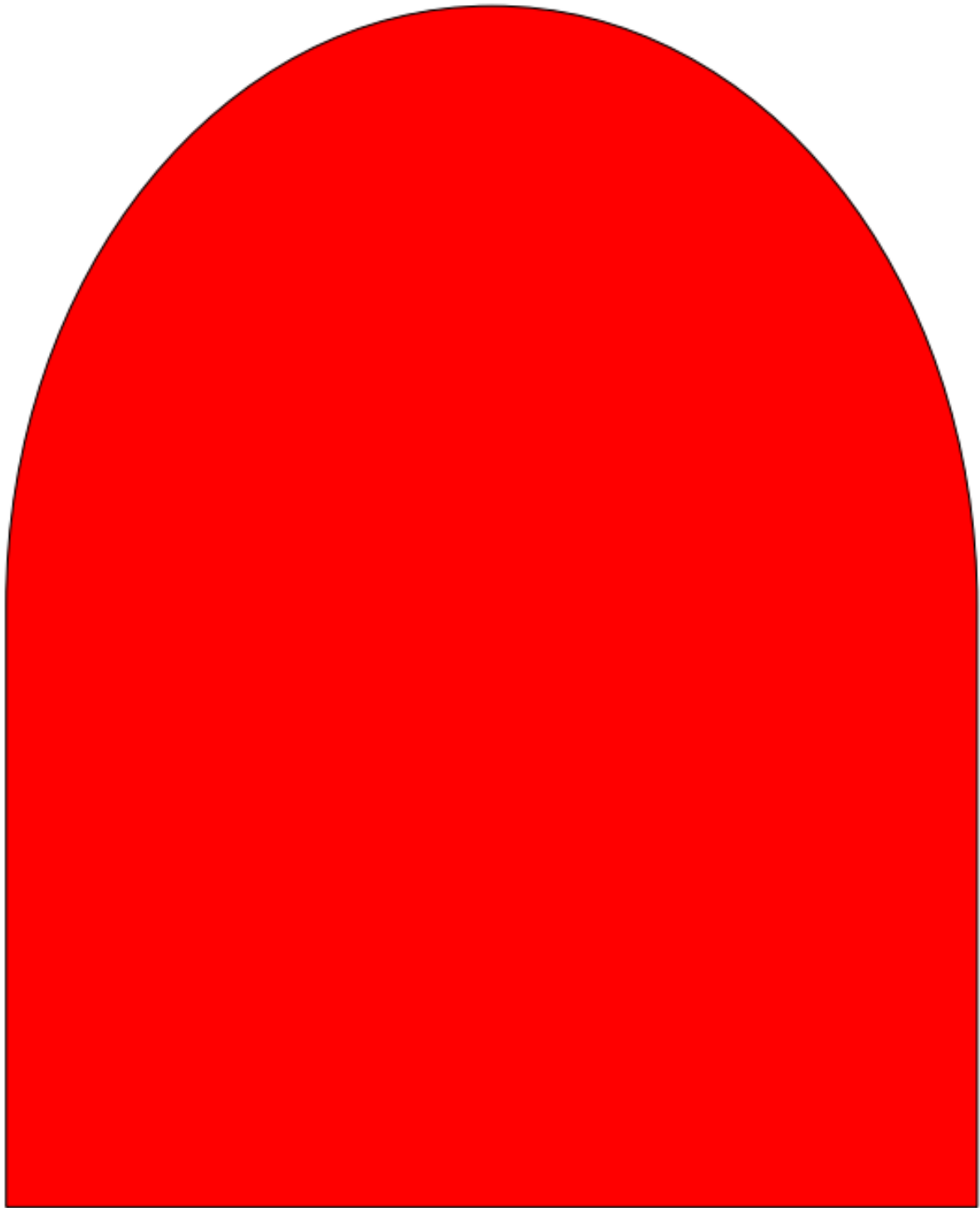
1. Print out the backpack pattern and verse card.
2. Cut the template out and glue the pieces together. Decorate as desired.

Place the verse card in the pocket of the backpack. Add different verse cards that may help you when you are feeling alone, sad, or confused.

This backpack should remind you to follow God's Instructions.

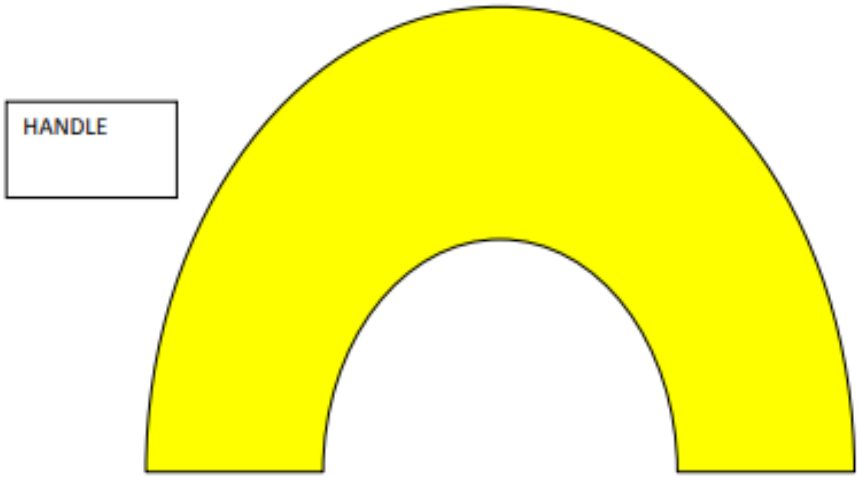


BAG PACK TEMPLATE



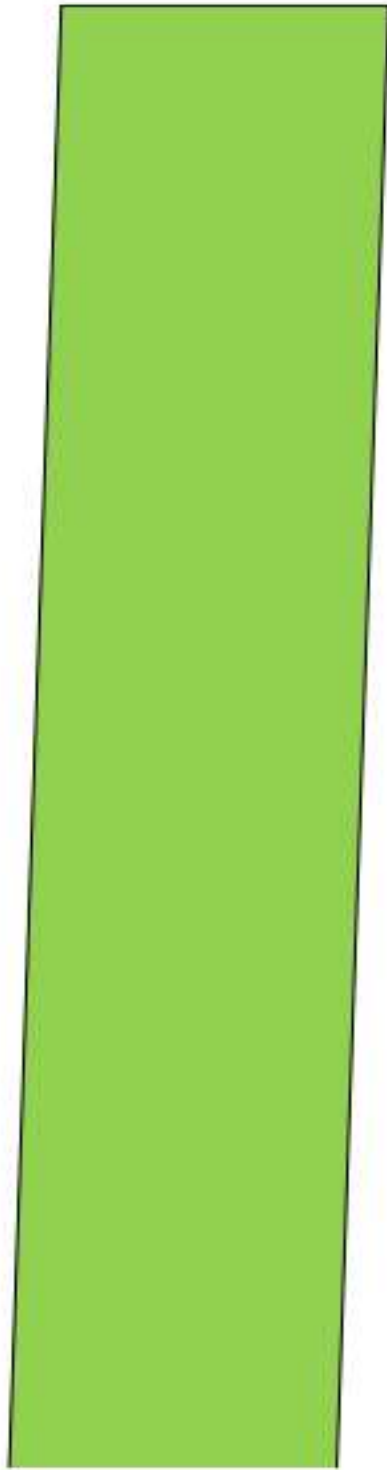
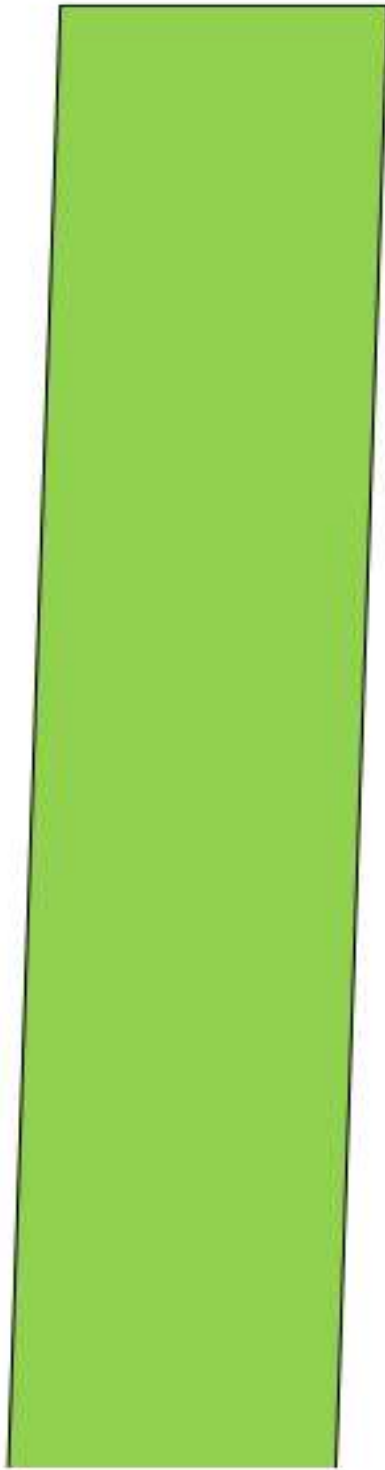
BODY





ZIPPER

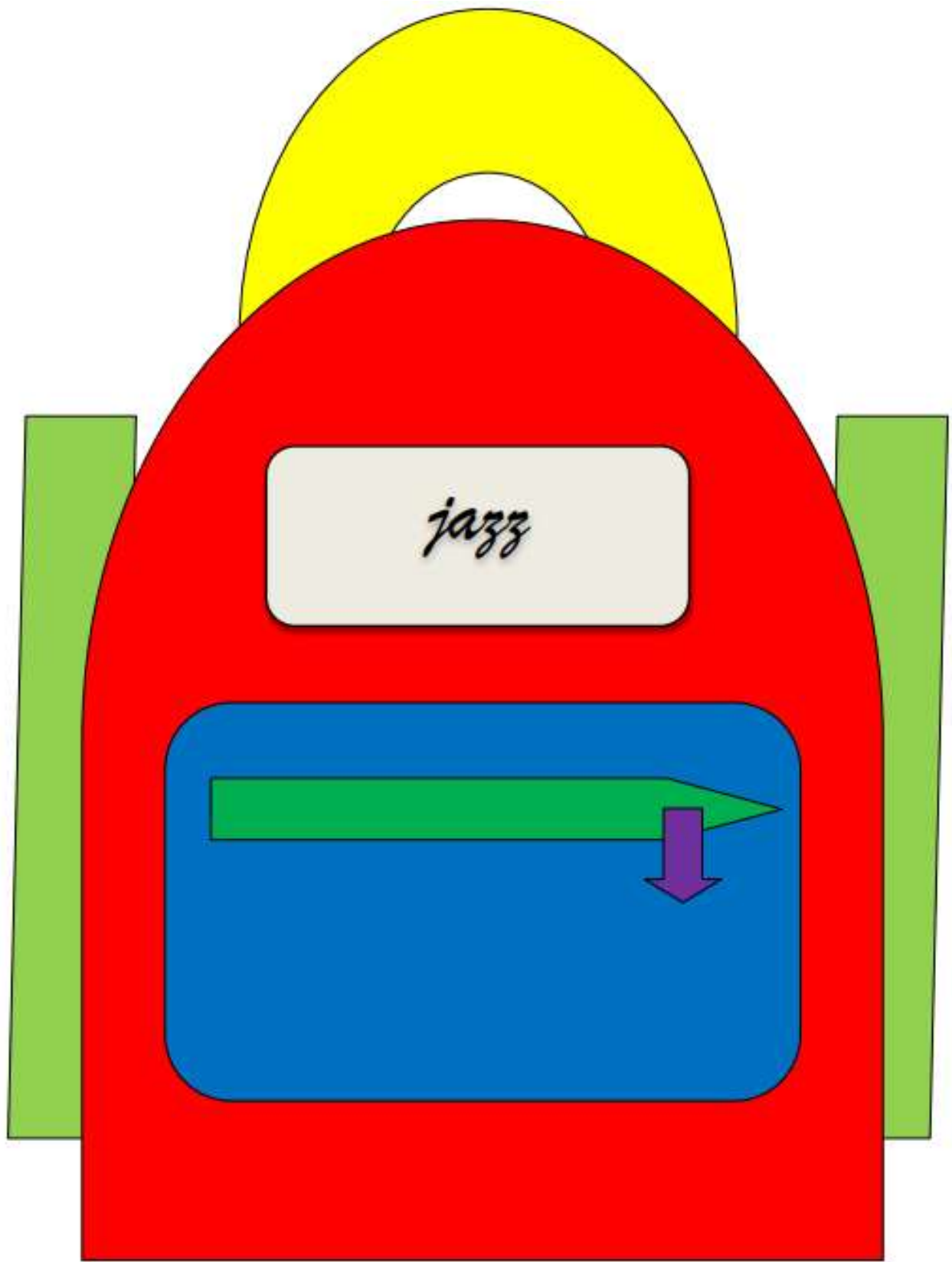




NAME TAG

STRAPS

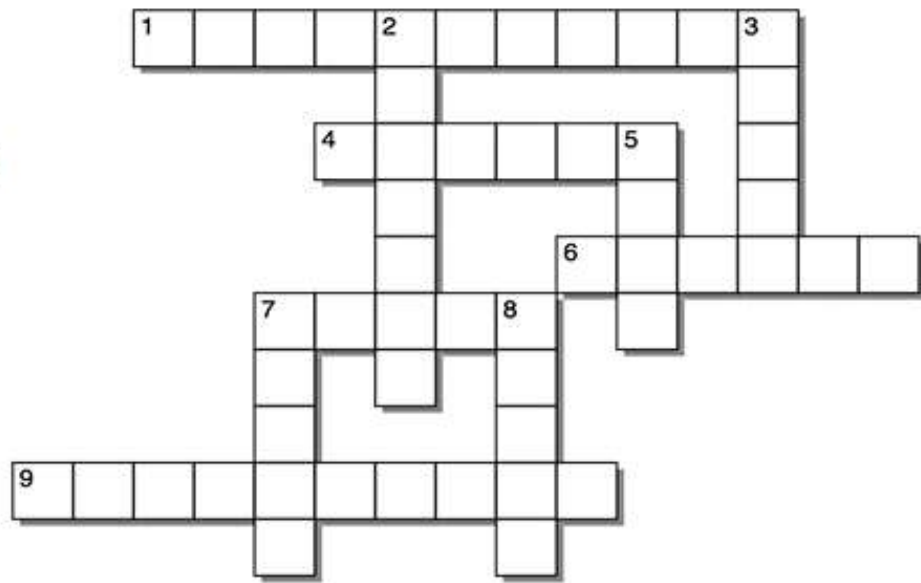




The Talking Donkey Puzzle



BALAM'S DONKEY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1) The land where Balaam lived
- 4) Balaam rode a _____ to the land of Moab.
- 6) How many tribes of Israel?
- 7) YHWH told Balaam to _____ the people of Israel.
- 9) The name of the Israelites' enemies.

DOWN

- 2) Balaam was a _____ for hire.
- 3) Balaam met an _____ on the pathway.
- 5) Name of the God of Israel.
- 7) Name of the king of Moab.
- 8) King Balak burned _____ bulls and rams on an altar.

