



Wonder Junction Jamboree

You don't want your community to miss out on this awesome VBS, so get the word out by hosting your very own promo event called the Wonder Junction Jamboree. This is a carnival-type event held two to three weeks before VBS so you can preregister children, build excitement, and spread the word throughout the community.

The Wonder Junction Jamboree will be a good time filled with games, crafts, activities, and snacks. Admission is free. Invite the community by setting up an event page on Facebook and by mailing or handing out ["You're Invited!" invitations](#) to church attendees, friends, sports teams, clubs, and family.

For a list and description of suggested [activities](#) to offer at your carnival, check the following pages.

Many of these suggestions can also be incorporated into VBS week or the closing program if not used prior to VBS.

Setup

- Decide if your event will be indoors or outdoors. If indoors, use a multipurpose room. If outdoors, choose a grassy area or a safe area of the church parking lot.
- Each activity should have its own space, a sign with its name, prize tickets, and a marker or stamp (1220930) to use on each child's master ticket.
- Use folding tables or large cardboard boxes for activities requiring a base. Drape each table with a colorful, thematic tablecloth, fabric, or sheet. Attach boards, PVC pipe, or long cardboard tubes to each side of the table. Stretch a colorful sign made from roll paper between the two boards and add some colorful balloons.
- A simpler option is to use rope, cones, or sidewalk chalk to mark individual activity spaces.
- Choose a few of the suggestions found in the decorating section of this guide.

- Keep it fun, colorful, and simple.
- Play VBS music.

Staffing

- Enlist at least one worker for each activity area. Church families may want to sign up to decorate, organize, and staff one activity each. This divides the workload into small, manageable pieces.
- Workers should dress in VBS T-shirts or Western-themed clothing.
- Friendly, costumed greeters can welcome the arriving families.

Registration

- Set up the registration area near the entrance to your event. Warmly greet each arriving family.
- Check everyone in.
- Copy extra [carnival master tickets](#) on brightly colored card stock. Cut apart. Give one to each child. This ticket enables children to participate in each activity once and will be marked or stamped at each location when it is completed.
- Sign up any unregistered children for VBS. Print [registration forms](#) or register online at myAnswers.com.

ACTIVITIES AND GAMES

Note: Some of the games need a start line, finish line, or throwing line. These can be made from painter's tape, masking tape, rope, cones, or chalk.

PAN FOR GOLD

SUPPLIES

- » Child's wading pool half-filled with water or play sand; rocks and coins
- » Tin pan with holes, child's sand sifter, or shallow colander



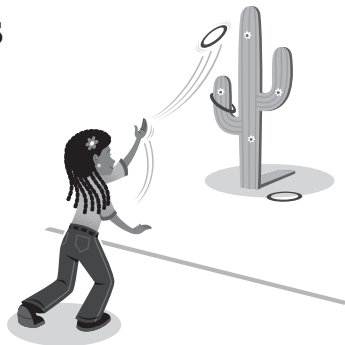
DIRECTIONS

- » Pan for gold by swishing the pan in the pool. Children get to keep whatever rocks or coins they find.

CAPTURE THE CACTUS

SUPPLIES

- » [Cactus cutout](#) made from corrugated cardboard
- » 3 pool rings



DIRECTIONS

- » Each child gets three chances to capture the cactus by tossing the rings over it.
- » Award one prize ticket for each ring that successfully lands on part of the cactus and an additional ticket for participating.
- » You can also make your cactus out of pool noodles. Check online for inspiration.

RIGHT SMART FACE PAINTING

SUPPLIES

- » Face paints
- » Paintbrushes
- » Wet wipes
- » [Face Painting Reference Chart](#)



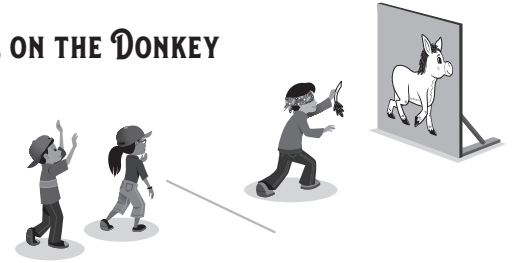
DIRECTIONS

- » Paint the kids' faces, using images on the Face Painting Reference Chart.
- » Give one prize ticket after completing this activity.

PIN THE TAIL ON THE DONKEY

SUPPLIES

- » Tape or sticky tack
- » Blindfold
- » [Pin the Tail on the Donkey backdrop](#)
- » [Laminated tails](#)



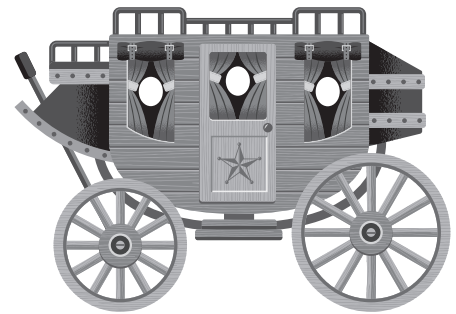
DIRECTIONS

- » Ahead of time, put up the backdrop and put loops of tape or sticky tack on the tails.
- » Have at least two players play each round.
- » One at a time, players are blindfolded, spun around, and sent off in the direction of the donkey backdrop with a tail in their hand. While blindfolded, they attempt to place the tail on the correct spot on the donkey's body.
- » Give one prize ticket after completing this activity. Give a bonus ticket for placing the tail in the correct spot.

STAGECOACH PHOTO SPOT

SUPPLIES

- » [Photo Spot Backdrop](#)
- » Optional: props such as bonnets, cowboy hats, etc.
- » Step stool for small children
- » Camera/phone camera



DIRECTIONS

- » Make or buy a backdrop and put it up. There is a [clip art](#) image on the Resource Download you may want to use to make your own.
- » Children stand behind the backdrop and put their face through the hole. Photograph them and print the picture (either at the carnival or later) to give to them. You may want to have a spot during VBS where they can pick them up.
- » Give one prize ticket after completing this activity.

HAPPY TRAILS HAT TOSS

SUPPLIES

- » 3 Hula-Hoops
- » 3 cowboy hats



DIRECTIONS

- » Place the hoops in a vertical line on the ground.
- » Players get three chances to toss the cowboy hats into the hoops.
- » If the hat lands in the hoop nearest to the throwing line, give one ticket. If it lands in the second hoop, give two tickets, and so on.

GOLD NUGGET TREASURE HUNT

SUPPLIES

- » Gold foil-wrapped chocolate candies

DIRECTIONS

- » Hide the candies around the playing area.
- » Kids search for the golden nuggets and get to keep up to five candies.



CATTLE DRIVE

SUPPLIES

- » Table
- » 3 plastic cups
- » Tape
- » Table tennis balls (colored to look like the spots on a cow)



DIRECTIONS

- » Tape the cups along one side of the table so the rims are even with the table top.
- » Kids try to herd their “cow” (the ball) into a cup by blowing it from one side of the table to the other.
- » Give a prize ticket for participating and an additional ticket for each ball that is successfully blown into a cup.

THERE'S A SNAKE IN MY BOOT

SUPPLIES

- » Rubber snakes
- » Cowboy boots

DIRECTIONS

- » Kids see how many snakes they can toss into the cowboy boot.
- » Give one prize ticket for participating and an additional one for each successful throw.
- » A fun variation is to have kids stand on a wooden crate and try to drop the snakes into the boot from above.



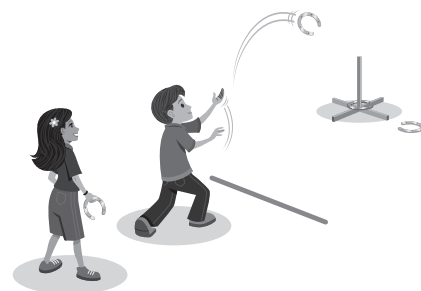
HORSESHOES

SUPPLIES

- » Plastic kids' horseshoe set or home-made horseshoe set (see directions below)

DIRECTIONS

- » Use a plastic horseshoe set. Or you can make one by cutting several “horseshoes” out of sponges or corrugated cardboard painted black. Use a sturdy stick for the horseshoe pit.
- » Kids throw their horseshoes, trying to ring the stick in the horseshoe pit.
- » Give one prize ticket for participating and an additional one for each successful throw.



'WATERMELON SEED SPITIN'



SUPPLIES

- » Watermelon slices (with seeds in them), 1 per plate
- » Long plastic tablecloth

DIRECTIONS

- » Place the plastic tablecloth on the ground. Have kids stand at the end of the tablecloth and take turns trying to spit their watermelon seeds as far as they can.
- » Give one prize ticket for completing this activity.

WANTED POSTER COLORING CONTEST

SUPPLIES

- » Photocopies of the [Wanted Poster Coloring Contest](#) page, 1 per child
- » Crayons or markers



DIRECTIONS

- » Children color a picture of themselves in the “Wanted” box. Collect the pictures and hang them somewhere during VBS week.
- » Announce winners during VBS week. If you have a lot of entries, you can have winners of various age categories. Return pictures to the children the last day of VBS.
- » Give one prize ticket after completing this activity.

PROSPECTOR'S PUTT-PUTT

SUPPLIES

- » Plastic or real golf balls
- » Rocks
- » Bucket
- » Plastic or inflatable pickax or a plastic golf club made into a pickax, using any available materials



DIRECTIONS

- » Ahead of time, place the bucket on its side and arrange some rocks around it as obstacles or guides.
- » Using the pickax, kids try to get the golf balls into the bucket in three strokes.
- » Give one ticket for participating and an additional ticket for each golf ball that successfully lands in the bucket.

KNOT TYIN'

SUPPLIES

- » Numerous short pieces of rope for tying or pieces of rope licorice



DIRECTIONS

- » Man this booth with someone who knows how to tie various knots, such as a square knot or bowline. Using either real rope or rope licorice, have him or her demonstrate and teach the kids how to make the knots. Make sure the rope is short enough so kids won't get tangled.
- » Give one ticket after completing this activity.

DRENCH THE DESPERADO

SUPPLIES

- » Bucket filled with water and sponges
- » Puppet stage with an opening big enough for the upper body of the “desperado” to show
- » Optional: chair
- » 1 willing volunteer dressed in thematic clothing



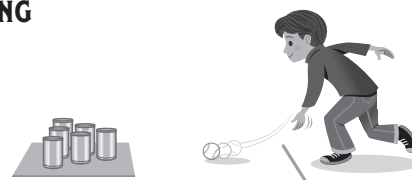
DIRECTIONS

- » Man this booth with someone who is willing to be the “desperado.” Kids get one try to throw the wet sponge at the desperado who is sitting behind the puppet booth.
- » Give one ticket for participating and an additional ticket if the sponge hits the desperado.
- » If you are doing this during or after VBS, the stars of the drama make great targets!

BUCKAROO BOWLING

SUPPLIES

- » Baseball or similar-sized ball
- » 6 empty soup cans with smooth rims



DIRECTIONS

- » Set up the cans in a triangle shape like a bowling alley.
- » Players roll the baseball toward the cans and see how many they knock over.
- » Give one ticket for each can that gets knocked over.

STAND 'EM UP, KNOCK 'EM DOWN

SUPPLIES

- » Hay bale
- » 5 empty soup cans with smooth rims
- » Water gun and bucket of water



DIRECTIONS

- » Put the cans on the hay bale.
- » Kids have five chances to spray the water gun, trying to knock the tin cans over or off the hay bale.
- » Give one prize ticket for each can that is knocked over.

CANDY COUNTIN' CONTEST

SUPPLIES

- » Large, clear plastic jar full of jelly beans or other old-fashioned candy
- » Index cards cut in half
- » Markers or crayons
- » Small basket or metal bucket



DIRECTIONS

- » Children guess how many jelly beans are in the jar. They write their guesses and their names on the index cards and place them in the basket/bucket.
- » The closest guesser gets to keep the jar of candy at the end of the event.

PAINT A PET CACTUS

SUPPLIES

- » Washable paint
- » Paintbrushes
- » Mini terra-cotta pots
- » Oblong stones, 3 or more inches tall, 1 per child
- » Pot filler (small pebbles, sand, dirt, etc.)
- » Water and paper towels for clean up



DIRECTIONS

- » Each child paints a stone to look like a cactus. (See illustration.) Add a face to it if desired. Once dry, put the stone in the pot and add some filler to keep the stone erect.
- » As a variation, you could paint the stones ahead of time and have children decorate their pots with paints or colorful permanent markers.

TRADING POST PRIZES

- » Set up an area called Trading Post Prizes with various souvenirs worth different numbers of tickets.
- » Children turn in their tickets to receive prizes.
- » Check Oriental Trading Company or Rhode Island Novelty for inexpensive prize possibilities.
- » The following are some possible suggestions:
golden chocolate coins, bandanas, cowboy hats, boot-shaped pencil topper erasers, train whistles, Western-themed key chains, horseshoe beaded necklaces, rubber or plastic snakes, horse finger puppets, barnyard bubble bottles, stretchy cowboys and cowgirls, fake mustaches, mini train maze puzzles, cow print slap bracelets, sheriffs' badges, North American TOOB animals, horse bouncy balls, play handcuffs, bandana pencils, cowboy hat pens, Western sticker sheets, barnyard animal squish toys, train stampers, sticky lizards, and Old West candy (e.g., licorice, rock candy sticks, lemon drops, gummy bears, or horse-shaped lollipops in mini draw-string bags).
- » Another option is to give prizes at each location. If this option is chosen, children will need bags of some kind to keep their prizes in as they move from activity to activity.



FANDANGO FOOD BOOTH

Set up the Fandango Food Booth area and choose one or more fun snacks from the suggestions listed below. Make signs that announce the name of each snack. Place food in cowboy hats or bandana-lined baskets.

Note: There are also lots of additional great ideas in the *Snack Guide* and the Training Workshop section of this guide. You may want to make some of the snacks you will be serving during VBS week.



BROWN COWS OR PURPLE COWS

- » Sarsaparilla (similar to root beer) was a favorite drink in the Old West. Serve up brown cows (root beer and vanilla ice cream) or purple cows (grape soda and vanilla ice cream).

MA'S MINI MUFFINS

- » Make your favorite muffin recipe, either in mini size or regular.

CITRUS CIRCLES

- » Citrus fruits were in high demand for miners because they didn't want to develop a disease called scurvy. The vitamins in citrus helped prevent this disease. Miners would pay big bucks for an orange or other citrus fruit. Cut oranges horizontally, slicing them into circles, reminiscent of wagon wheels.

SOURDOUGH SNACKERS

- » Experienced miners were nicknamed "sourdoughs" because of their experience and, more literally, because sourdough bread was a staple of their diet. Serve sourdough pretzels or other sourdough snacks.

OLD WEST COOKOUT

- » If you want to offer a meal, host an Old West cookout. Serve food from the era, such as stew, chili, pigs in a blanket, or finger-lickin'-good chicken nuggets. Add baked beans, chips, coleslaw, biscuits, and corn on the cob. Top it off with some homemade ice cream for dessert.

DRINKS

- » Lemonade: Serve up this favorite drink from the Old West.
- » Water: Wrap water bottles with [labels](#) that say "Well Water."

ADDITIONAL IDEAS

- » Hire a square-dance caller and have a real Western hoedown.
- » Arrange to have pony rides for the kids.
- » Make balloon animals such as prairie dogs, bears, rattlesnakes, and donkeys.
- » Enlist church members to dress in thematic costumes to greet families as they arrive.