Preschool–Grade 5

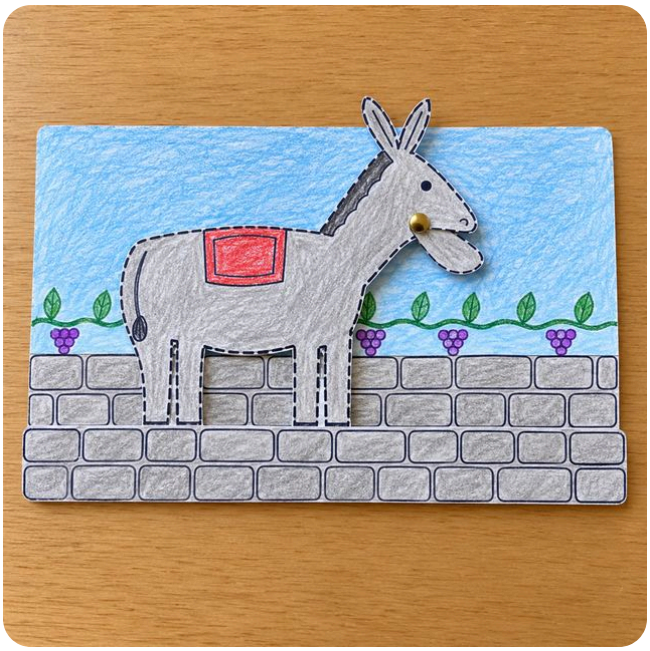
Balaam's Donkey Craft

The LORD opened the mouth of the ass · Numbers 22:21–35 · print page 2 for each child (and page 3 for the harder level)

What it looks like finished



Easy and medium



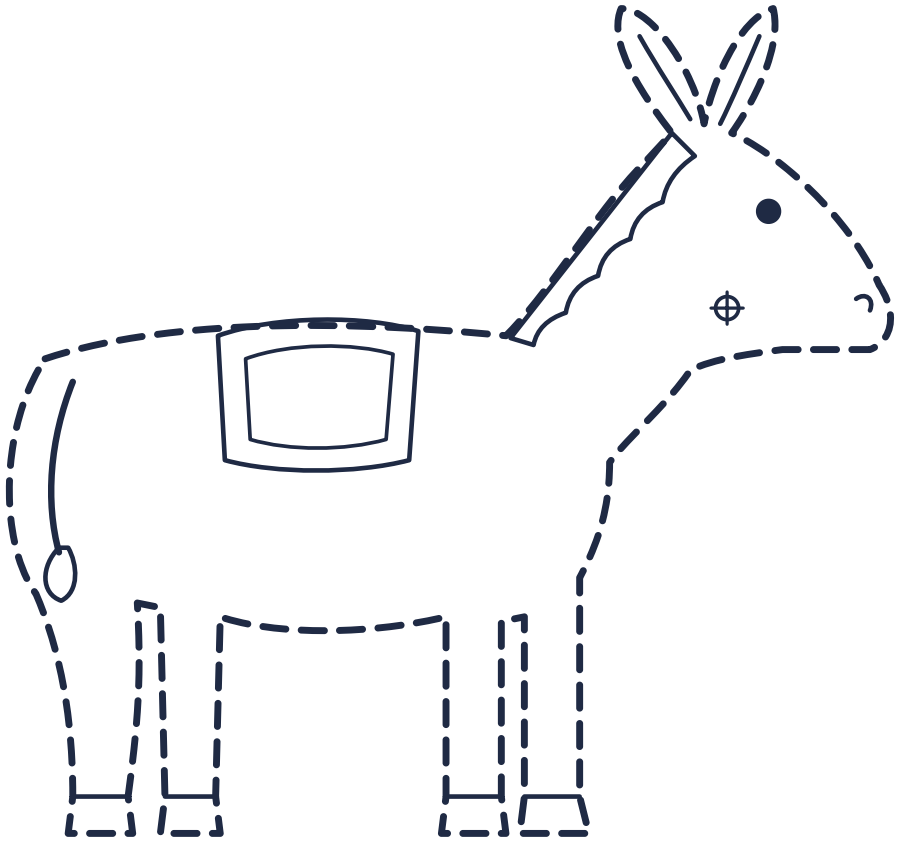
Harder

Both levels are a paper donkey (the Bible says an ass), colored gray with a dark gray mane and tail and a red saddle. Her jaw is held on with a brad, so her mouth opens and shuts, because "the LORD opened the mouth of the ass" (Numbers 22:28). Medium (left): the donkey. Harder (right): the same donkey glued between two stone walls, with grapevines along the back wall, "a wall being on this side, and a wall on that side" (22:24).

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Name: _____

✂ Cut on the dashed lines



jaw



jaw: gray

donkey: gray
mane and tail: dark gray
saddle: red

+ = brad hole: a grown-up pokes it

verse strip: glue it on the back of the body

And the angel of the LORD said unto Balaam, Go with the men: but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak. So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.

Numbers 22:35 (KJV)

Color the pieces the way the labels say. Cut out the donkey, the jaw and the verse strip. You also need one brass paper fastener (brad) and a glue stick.

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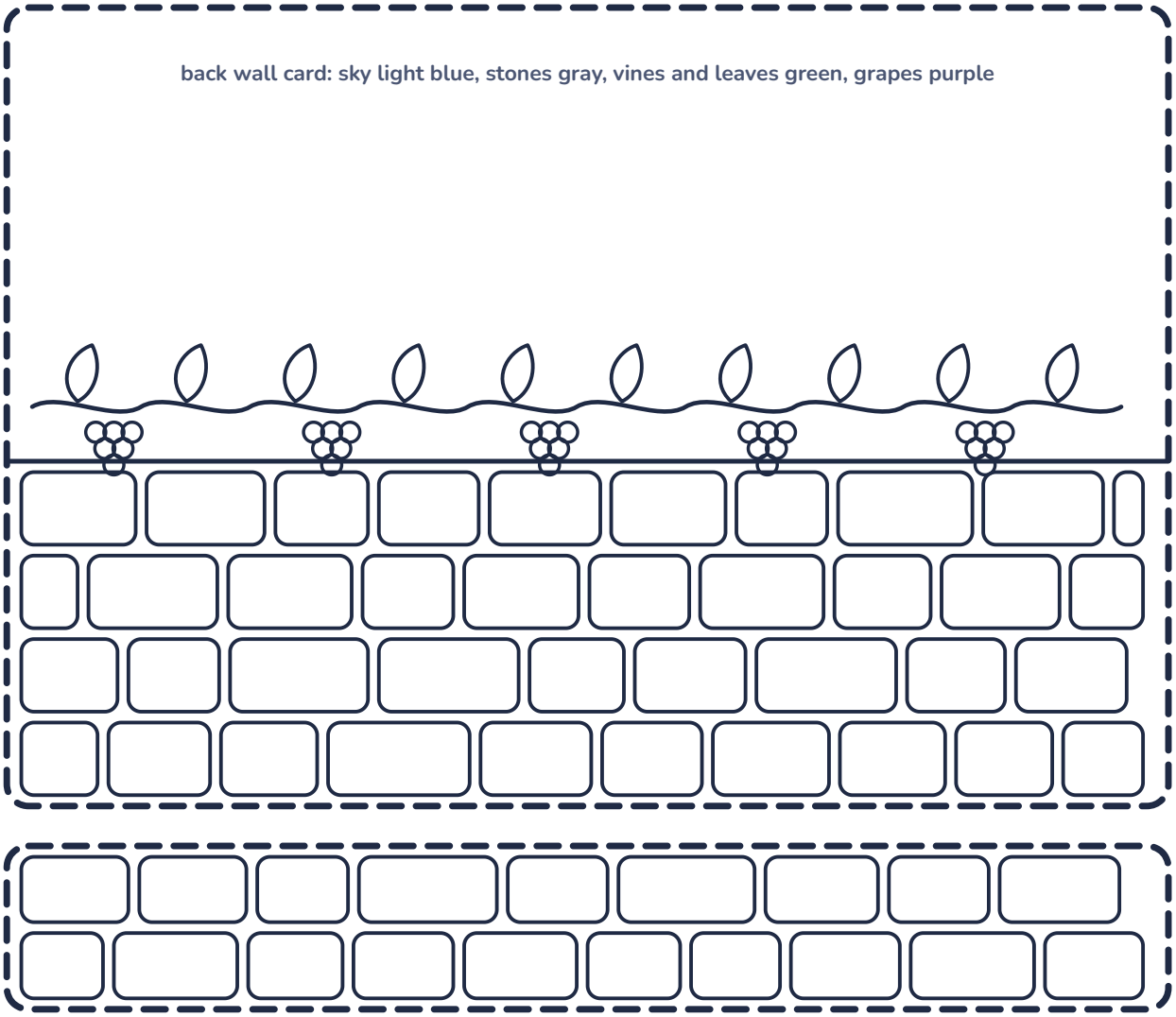
Name: _____

✂ Harder level

The path of the vineyards (harder level)

Cut on the dashed lines. A wall on this side, and a wall on that side (Numbers 22:24).

back wall card: sky light blue, stones gray, vines and leaves green, grapes purple



front wall: stones gray. Glue it across the bottom of the back wall card, over the donkey's hooves.

How to add the walls: make the donkey from page 2 first, but glue its verse strip on the back of the back wall card instead. Color and cut out the back wall card and the front wall. Glue the donkey on the middle of the back wall card with its hooves at the bottom edge; glue only the body and legs, not the head, so the jaw still moves. Glue the front wall across the bottom of the card, over the hooves. Tell it: the angel of the LORD "stood in a path of the vineyards, a wall being on this side, and a wall on that side," and the donkey "crushed Balaam's foot against the wall" (Numbers 22:24–25).

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For the teacher

See it finished: a photo of the finished craft is at vbshq.com/crafts/balaam-craft
Time: 15 to 30 minutes, depending on the level · **Ages:** 3 to 11, in three levels · **Cost:** under 50 cents a child for the easy and medium levels
You need: page 2 printed once per child (cardstock is sturdiest), gray, dark gray (or black) and red crayons or markers, one brass paper fastener (brad) per child, scissors and glue sticks, and a pencil tip for poking the holes. For the harder level, also page 3 printed once per child and light blue, green and purple crayons.
Before class: for preschoolers, cut out the donkey, the jaw and the verse strip, poke the two brad holes, and glue the verse strip on the back of the body. For all ages, poke the brad holes ahead of time if you can: one at the + on the donkey's head and one at the + on the jaw.

Three ways to make it

- **Easy (preschool, ages 3–5), about 15 minutes, no scissors:** before class, cut out each child's pieces, poke the holes and glue on the verse strip. Kids color the donkey and the jaw. You push the brad through, and they open and shut the donkey's mouth while you tell the story.
- **Medium (grades K–2), about 20 minutes:** follow the steps below. Kids color, cut out and put the pieces together themselves. This is the craft in the first photo.
- **Harder (grades 3–5), about 30 minutes:** make the donkey like the medium level. Then add the path of the vineyards from page 3: the donkey goes between a wall on this side and a wall on that side (Numbers 22:24). This is the craft in the second photo.

Steps (medium level)

1. **Color:** color the donkey gray. Color the mane and the tail dark gray and the saddle red. Color the jaw gray.
2. **Cut:** cut out the donkey, the jaw and the verse strip on the dashed lines.
3. **Holes:** a grown-up pokes a small hole at the + on the donkey's head and at the + on the jaw.
4. **Brad:** put the jaw behind the donkey's head, with the two holes together. Push the brad through both holes from the front, and open its legs flat on the back.
5. **Verse:** turn the donkey over and glue the verse strip on the back of the body, not on the head. Read it together.
6. **Tell it:** three times the donkey saw the angel of the LORD and turned aside, and three times Balaam smote her (Numbers 22:23–27). Then "the LORD opened the mouth of the ass" (22:28): move the jaw down and up, and say what she said, "What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?"

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Questions to ask while kids work

- What did Balaam do in the morning? *(He rose up and saddled his ass, Numbers 22:21)*
- Who went with Balaam? *(The princes of Moab and his two servants, 22:21–22)*
- Who stood in the way? *(The angel of the LORD, 22:22)*
- Where did the donkey go the first time? *(Into the field, 22:23)*
- What happened at the wall? *(She crushed Balaam's foot against the wall, 22:25)*
- Open the donkey's mouth. Who made her speak? *(The LORD opened the mouth of the ass, 22:28)*
- Who opened Balaam's eyes, and what did he see? *(The LORD; he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, 22:31)*
- What did Balaam say? *("I have sinned," 22:34)*

Tips

- **Old Bible words explained:** an **ass** is a donkey; **saddled** means put a saddle on; **smote** and **smitten** mean hit; **thrust** means pushed hard; a **staff** is a walking stick; **wont** means used to; **nay** means no; **perverse** means not right; **thee** means you.
- **What the Bible says:** Balaam "saddled his ass" (Numbers 22:21), so the craft shows a saddle. The Bible doesn't describe the donkey's color or the saddle, so the craft keeps them simple.
- **Gentle, not scary:** tell the hitting briefly. The angel of the LORD asked Balaam why he did it (22:32), and the donkey's turning aside saved his life (22:33).
- **Never God or angels, and no people:** the craft shows only the donkey and the walls. The angel of the LORD and Balaam are told about, not drawn.
- **Teach the story first:** this craft goes with the free Balaam's donkey lesson and word search at vbshq.com/bible-stories/balaam.

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