Jonah and the Great Fish Craft

Paper plate great fish · Jonah 1–2 · print page 2 for each child (and page 3 for the harder level)

What it looks like finished

Easy and medium

Harder

Both are a paper plate great fish with a tail, fins, an eye and bubbles, and Jonah praying in the belly window. For the harder level, kids add a lift-up belly flap over the window and three paper seaweed strands from page 3.

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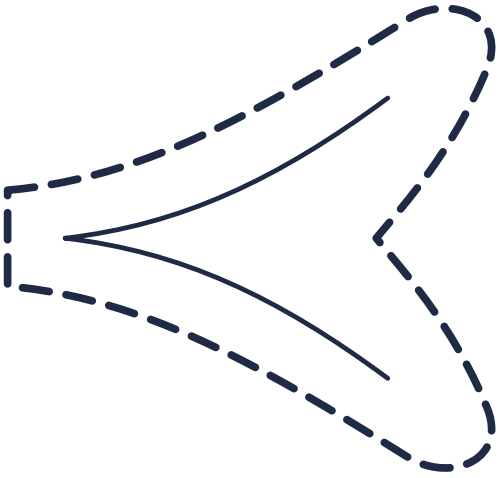
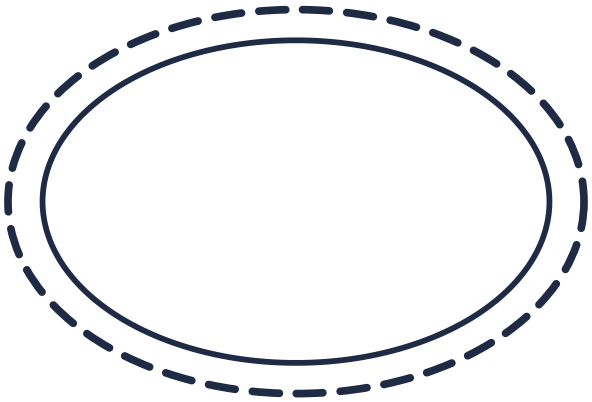
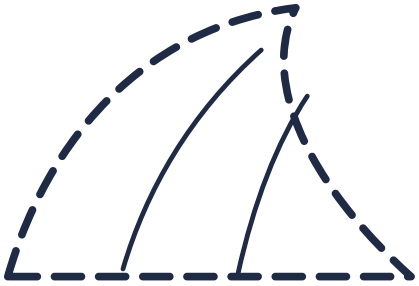
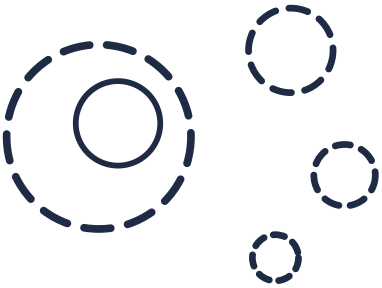
Name: _____

✂ Cut on the dashed lines









Tail · belly window · top fin · side fin · eye · bubbles. Draw Jonah praying inside the fish in the oval window.

"But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD."

Jonah 2:9 (KJV)

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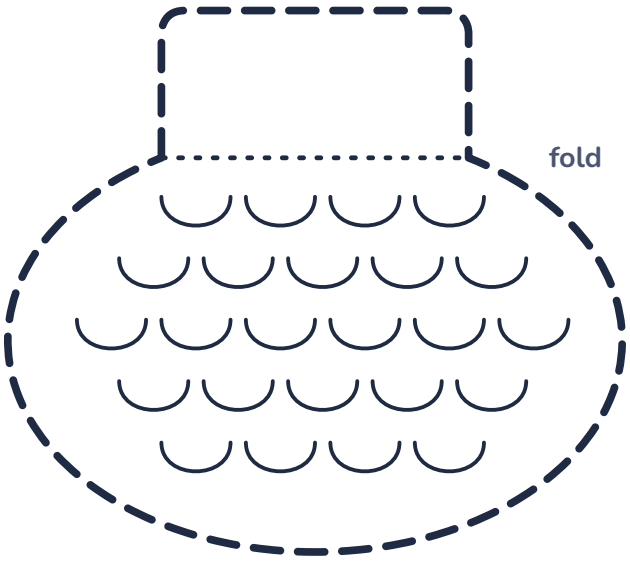
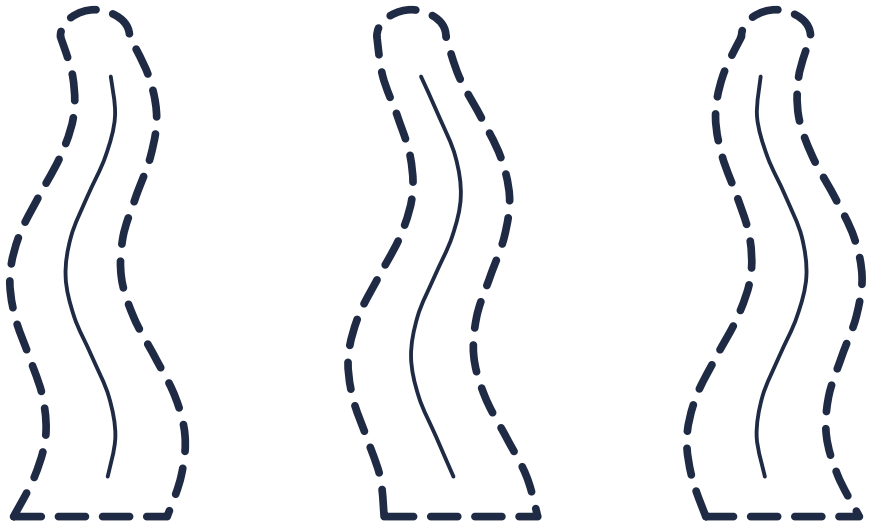
Name: _____ ✂ Cut on the dashed lines

Lift-the-flap pieces (harder level)

Color the flap the same color as your fish. Fold the tab on the dotted line.
Glue only the tab, just above the window, so the flap lifts up.



Belly flap



Seaweed: glue one on each side of the window and one below it (Jonah 2:5)

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For the teacher

See it finished: a photo of the finished craft is at vbshq.com/crafts/jonah-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: 1 paper plate per child, page 2 printed once per child, crayons or markers, scissors, glue sticks. Optional: a craft stick and tape per child for a puppet. For the harder level, also page 3 printed once per child.
Before class: for preschoolers, cut out the pieces and verse strips ahead of time.

Three ways to make it

- **Easy (preschool, ages 3–5), about 15 minutes, no scissors:** before class, cut out each child's pieces and verse strip. Kids color the paper plate fish and draw a mouth, color the pieces and draw Jonah praying in the oval window (help them draw a simple person with folded hands if needed). They glue on the tail, top fin, window, side fin, eye and bubbles. Glue the verse strip on the back for them and read it together.
- **Medium (grades K–2), about 20 minutes:** follow the steps below. Kids color the fish, color and cut out the pieces, draw Jonah praying in the window, glue everything on and glue the verse strip on the back. This is the first craft in the photos.
- **Harder (grades 3–5), about 30 minutes:** make the medium fish first. Then cut out the belly flap and the three seaweed strands on page 3. Color the flap the same color as the fish and color the seaweed green. Glue one seaweed strand on each side of the window and one below it, standing up like seaweed growing (Jonah 2:5). Fold the flap's tab on the dotted line, put glue on the tab only, and stick the tab on the plate just above the window so the flap hangs down over Jonah. Lift the flap to show Jonah praying inside the fish. Glue the verse strip on the back and say the verse from memory.

Steps (medium level)

1. **Fish:** on the bottom side of the plate, color the great fish any color. Draw a big mouth near one edge.
2. **Pieces:** color the tail, fins, eye and bubbles. In the oval window, draw Jonah praying inside the fish (Jonah 2:1).
3. **Cut:** cut out the pieces and the verse strip on the dashed lines.
4. **Tail and top fin:** glue the straight end of the tail behind the plate, on the side away from the mouth. Glue the straight edge of the top fin behind the top of the plate.
5. **Front:** glue the window in the middle of the fish, the side fin under it, the eye near the mouth and the bubbles above the mouth.
6. **Verse:** glue the verse strip on the back and read it together. For a puppet, tape a craft stick to the bottom.

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Questions to ask while kids work

- God told Jonah to go to Nineveh, but Jonah ran the other way on a ship going to Tarshish (Jonah 1:2–3). Is it hard to obey God sometimes?
- The LORD prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights (Jonah 1:17). God was in control the whole time.
- Jonah prayed to the LORD from inside the fish, and God heard him (Jonah 2:1–2). Then the fish put Jonah out on dry land (Jonah 2:10), and this time Jonah obeyed and went to Nineveh (Jonah 3:1–3). You can pray to God anywhere, too!
- **Harder level:** Jonah said "the weeds were wrapped about my head" (Jonah 2:5). Even down in the deep, God heard his prayer. When you lift the flap, what is Jonah doing?

Tips

- **Old Bible words explained:** sacrifice = give to God, thanksgiving = saying thank You, vowed = promised, salvation = being saved and rescued.
- **Preschool:** pre-cut everything and use glue sticks, not liquid glue. Hold up a finished fish so they can see the goal.
- **Harder level:** check that kids glue only the tab of the belly flap. If the whole flap gets glue on it, it won't lift. Crease the fold line hard with a thumbnail first.
- **Older kids:** on the back of the plate, write one thing to thank God for, like Jonah's "voice of thanksgiving," and say the memory verse from memory to take it home.
- **Puppet retelling:** with a craft stick on the bottom, kids can "swim" their fish and retell the story: the storm, the great fish, Jonah's prayer and the dry land.
- **Teach the story first:** this craft goes with the free Jonah Sunday school lesson and word search at vbshq.com/bible-stories/jonah.

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