



UPWARD BOUND

Director Guide

Contents

Upward Bound Overview	
Welcome	2
Overview Chart	4
A Typical Upward Bound Day	8
Going Deeper	9
Director's Responsibilities	12
Recruiting your Staff	16
Training your Staff	18
Sample Daily Schedules	20
Evaluation	22
Director's Planning Calendar	24
Trail Talk (Glossary)	25
Snack Ideas	26
The Reachout Adventures Story	28

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“...whoever hears my
word and believes him
who sent me
has eternal life
and will not be condemned;
he has crossed over
from death to life.”
John 5:24 (NIV)

UPWARD BOUND OVERVIEW



LOOK ONLINE
for additional resources
(music, artwork, and
publicity information) are
available on the Upward
Bound portal. Talk to
your Director for more
information or visit: [portal.
reachoutadventures.com](http://portal.reachoutadventures.com)

Welcome to the Trek!

Upward Bound is an incredibly rich and exciting spiritual adventure! Your Backpackers (students) will:

- ✿ encounter profound truths of the Word of God
- ✿ have great fun at the same time!
- ✿ want to come back every day (and year after year!)

What to Expect from Upward Bound

Children love Upward Bound; adults love its impact! By God's grace, here's what it will do in the lives of your children as you lead them to love and worship Jesus Christ:

- ✿ deepen their knowledge of and love for the Word of God
- ✿ increase their enthusiasm for memorizing Scripture
- ✿ teach them the Gospel and equip them to share it

Overall Focus and Bible Lesson Truth Summary

Written with a passionate desire for children to see Jesus as He truly is—to know, love, and trust Him as they never have before—Upward Bound focuses on Christ's astonishing incarnate journey to win our salvation.

Tracking Jesus' perilous footsteps from the Courts of Heaven to the cross and back again to the Summit, your VBS "Backpackers" will learn from the gospel of Luke that

- ✿ for Jesus, being Upward Bound meant fully doing His Father's will, every step of the way
- ✿ all people are born with an Earthly Bound attitude and need to repent and be saved by grace
- ✿ having an Upward Bound attitude requires moment-to-moment reliance on the power of the Holy Spirit
- ✿ because Jesus undertook this journey for them, they, too, can reach the Summit through faith in Him

Format

■ Staff

By dividing up the activities among different leaders, Upward Bound's format frees the classroom teachers to focus on getting to know their students and enables them to concentrate on discipling the children under their direct care.

■ Children's Grade Groups

Backpackers are divided into the following grade-group *Expeditions* for age-specific learning and activities:

- Expedition A Grades 5 & 6 completed
- Expedition B Grades 3 & 4 completed
- Expedition C Grades 1 & 2 completed
- Expedition D 4's–K completed
- Expedition E 2's & 3's (usually your Staff's toddlers)

■ Time Frame

Upward Bound is designed to be a five-day, three-hours-a-day program, ending with a final closing program celebration. With minor modifications, it can also be used in a variety of other ways.



Upward Bound “Trail Talk”

Upward Bound's lingo, which helps set the atmosphere of fun and adventure for the children, will be introduced and explained as you read through this guide. See page 25 for a full glossary of terms. We encourage you to use them throughout your planning process, while training your staff, and especially throughout the week itself.



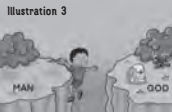
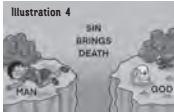

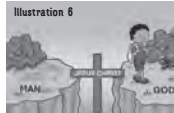


“We must not cease...

to wonder at the great marvels of our God....Our incarnate God is to be worshipped as ‘The Wonderful.’ ...It is a miracle of grace indeed, that Jesus should forsake the thrones and royalties above, to suffer ignominiously below for you. Let your soul lose itself in wonder....Who can be astonished at anything, when he has once been astonished at the manger and the cross? What is there wonderful left after one has seen the Saviour?”











— C.H. Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening*

Overview Chart

Day	Setting Up Camp <i>see Base Camp Assemblies Manual & Gospel Presentation Manual</i>	Daily Bible Reading <i>see Trail Log insert pages</i>	
Day 1	<p>Lesson-Specific Song: <i>Jesus, Jesus</i></p> <p>General Songs to be sung throughout the week: <i>Upward Bound, At the Name of Jesus, Toward the Summit, Philippians Prayer</i></p> <p>Skit Plot Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collin sleeps in while others search for him; eventually emerges from tent in pajamas • Boys argue about Collin's sandwich in Caleb's torn backpack • Collin has bad attitude 	Philippians 2:5–8	
Day 2	<p>Lesson-Specific Song: <i>Jesus, Where are You?</i></p> <p>Skit Plot Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caleb expresses enthusiasm/need for Bible as guidebook; Collin has no interest • Boys go hiking; Collin leaves backpack and Bible behind 	<p>Gospel Presentation:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Crossover to Life</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Illustration 1</p> <p>MAN GOD</p> <p>"...God made mankind upright..." — Ecclesiastes 7:29 (NIV)</p> <p>In the beginning, God made people happy and holy</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Illustration 2</p> <p>SIN SEPARATES MAN GOD</p> <p>"but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear" — Isaiah 59:2</p> <p>Our sin has separated us from God</p> </div> </div>	Luke 2:51–52
Day 3	<p>Lesson-Specific Song: <i>If You Really Are the Son of God</i></p> <p>Skit Plot Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collin fakes injury; Trail Guide assigns him Trail Treat duty 	<p>Gospel Presentation:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Crossover to Life</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Illustration 3</p> <p>MAN GOD</p> <p>"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." — Ephesians 2:8–9</p> <p>We are not able to get back to God</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Illustration 4</p> <p>SIN BRINGS DEATH MAN GOD</p> <p>"...death spread to all men, because all sinned." — Romans 5:12</p> <p>Our sin brings death and judgment to us</p> </div> </div>	Luke 3:21–23a, 4:1–2
Day 4	<p>Lesson-Specific Song: <i>The Way, Truth, Life</i></p> <p>Skit Plot Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caleb refuses to forgive Collin, angrily stomps off. • A repentant Collin decides to "become good," then hears Crossover and responds with saving faith 	<p>Gospel Presentation:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Crossover to Life</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Illustration 5</p> <p>MAN GOD</p> <p>"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" — John 14:6</p> <p>God has made a way back to Him for us</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Illustration 6</p> <p>MAN GOD</p> <p>"...whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life." — John 5:24</p> <p>We cross over from death to life by believing and trusting in Jesus Christ</p> </div> </div>	Luke 23:13–16, 21
Day 5	<p>Lesson-Specific Song: <i>He Has Overcome</i></p> <p>Skit Plot Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boys describe their personal times in the Word 	<p>Crossover to Life Review and Conclusion</p>	Philippians 2:9–11

<p>Bible Lessons see Bible Lesson Curriculum</p>	<p>Breaking Camp see Base Camp Assemblies Manual</p>
<p>The Surprising Journey — Born in the Likeness of Men <i>Luke 1:26–28; 2:1–40</i></p> <p>Character: <i>Gabriel the Angel</i> Alternate Character: <i>Zechariah or Elizabeth, the parents of John the Baptist</i></p> <p>Main Theme: In the most wonderful and surprising journey ever taken, God the Son purposed with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit to leave the glories of Heaven to become a little baby in this broken world to rescue sinful people.</p>	<p>Skit Plot Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collin skips clean up, goes swimming with Spot • Bear shows up
<p>The Humbling Journey — The Form of a Servant <i>Luke 2:41–50</i></p> <p>Character: <i>Mary, the mother of Jesus</i> Alternate Character: <i>Joseph, Jesus’ earthly father</i></p> <p>Main Theme: Jesus had one driving purpose in his life: to do the will of his Heavenly Father. He humbly lived every moment of every day loving and learning to obey God his Father, and loving and serving the people around Him, even as a child!</p>	<p>Skit Plot Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collin returns injured, describes misadventures
<p>The Obedient Journey — Humbled Himself by Being Obedient <i>Luke 3:21–23; 4:1–15</i></p> <p>Character: <i>Gilead the Gecko, “Gill”</i> Alternate Character: <i>(none)</i></p> <p>Main Theme: In all Jesus did, God the Father was fully pleased with Him. Jesus never, ever sinned or gave in to Satan’s temptations. Because of his settled purpose to do the will of the Father, his having fed on the Word of God throughout his life, and his complete dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was able to be fully obedient.</p>	<p>Skit Plot Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caleb discovers Collin’s deception • Collin’s conscience finally stirs
<p>The Painful Journey — Obedient to Death on a Cross <i>Luke 22:47–Luke 23</i></p> <p>Character: <i>Simon of Cyrene</i> Alternate Character: <i>Alexandra, the wife of Simon of Cyrene</i></p> <p>Main Theme: Jesus’ complete obedience to the Father and selfless love for us led him to the Cross where he took our sins on Himself and died the painful death we deserved.</p>	<p>Skit Plot Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The brothers forgive each other, rejoice in Collin’s salvation
<p>The Joy of the Journey — God Has Highly Exalted Him <i>Luke 24:1–12; 50–53</i></p> <p>Character: <i>Mary Magdalene</i> Alternate Character: <i>Peter the apostle</i></p> <p>Main Theme: Jesus rose from the dead, conquering it forever, and returned to Heaven as the victorious God-man, where He reigns as King and Lord of all with the “name that is above every name” (Phil. 2:9).</p>	<p>Skit Plot Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boys, Trail Guide discuss evangelism, daily repentance, sanctification

Overview Chart, cont'd

Day	Recreation <i>see Recreation Packet</i>	Crafts <i>see Craft Curriculum</i>
Day 1	Critter Cascade Bear Hunt Plains Races Bee Swat Ant Camp	<p>2's & 3's: The Angel Gabriel Figure</p>  <p>4's-Grade 6: Upward Bound Backpack</p> 
Day 2	Blister Blues Rock Hop Upset the Fruit Basket Hiker Hook-Up Lap Mountain	<p>2's & 3's: Philippians 2:10 Door Hanger</p>  <p>4's-Grade 6: Philippians 2:5-11 Picture Frame</p> 
Day 3	Drop the Bandana Rock Hop Suspension Bridge Walk Walk Boulder Ball	<p>2's & 3's: "Jesus is My Compass" Action Picture</p>  <p>4's-Grade 6: My Bible Log</p> 
Day 4	Climbing to the Summit Duck-Duck Bear Bear Hunt Thirsty Hiker Rocky Cliffs Relay	<p>2's & 3's: "Jesus Died to Save Us!" Cross Necklace</p>  <p>4's-Grade 6: Stained Glass Cross</p> 
Day 5	Treasure Hunt Dizzy Mountain Top Round-Up Water Balloon Toss	<p>2's & 3's: "Jesus Has Risen from the Dead" Action Picture</p>  <p>4's-Grade 6: "Focus on Jesus" Binoculars</p> 

4's–K Lesson Handwork <i>see Craft Curriculum</i>	Snack Ideas
<p>The Angel Gabriel Figure</p> 	<p>Campfire Cupcakes</p> 
<p>The Temple Action Picture</p> 	<p>Dirt Cups</p> 
<p>“Christ is My Compass” Action Picture</p> 	<p>Campfire Snacks</p> 
<p>“Jesus Died to Save Us!” Cross Necklace</p> 	<p>Ants on a Log</p> 
<p>“Jesus Has Risen from the Dead” Action Picture</p> 	<p>S'Mores Trail Mix</p> 

A Typical Upward Bound Day

Each Upward Bound day generally includes the following components for Grades 1–6. Times listed reflect a schedule for churches with two or more Storytellers, allowing for Bible lesson times to overlap for different grade levels. 4’s–K and 2’s & 3’s Expeditions follow a different schedule. See pages 77–79 in Additional Resources for sample schedules for all grade levels, plus a sample schedule for churches with one Storyteller.

(shaded areas indicate rotating activities)

Activity	Time	Description
Staff Prayer	Pre-Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prayer team leads those who are available time of prayer.
Registration	Pre-Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration team registers arriving children. Expedition staff greet and welcome children and parents; direct children into the base camp (assembly room).
Setting Up Camp <i>(opening assembly in Base Camp)</i>	25 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trail Guide directs lively assembly that includes singing, offering, skits, Crossover to Life (daily portion of the Gospel presentation, beginning on Day 2), and Trail Instructions (daily announcements).
Trail Blazing <i>(Trail Log work in Outpost classrooms)</i>	30 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backpackers go to their Outposts (classrooms) and meet with their Guides and Assistant Guides, where they begin their day together, practice Scripture memory verses, review Bible Exploration (daily Bible reading in Training Log), discuss opportunities to serve others, and receive stickers.
Bible Lesson <i>(Bible Lesson at Bible Lesson Site)</i>	20 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backpackers head to the Bible Lesson Site where costumed Storytellers specifically chosen for that task alone present the Bible lesson. What the children hear during the Bible lesson is the central focus of Upward Bound and the foundation of all that happens during the week!
Trail Log Entry <i>(Trail Log work in Outposts)</i>	20 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backpackers return to their Outposts and meet with their Guides and Assistant Guides to discuss and complete Bible lesson application worksheets in their Trail Logs.
Trail Recreation	20 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backpackers go to Recreation Site for theme-related games.
Trail Treats	10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children head to Snack Site for theme-related snacks.
Trail Crafts	20 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backpackers go to craft site for theme related crafts.
Breaking Camp <i>(closing assembly in Base Camp)</i>	30 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breaking Camp closes out the Backpackers’ day with all Expeditions gathering in Base Camp for singing, a brief reminder of the day’s Bible lesson truths; and a closing prayer to end the day.