



LESSON IDEAS

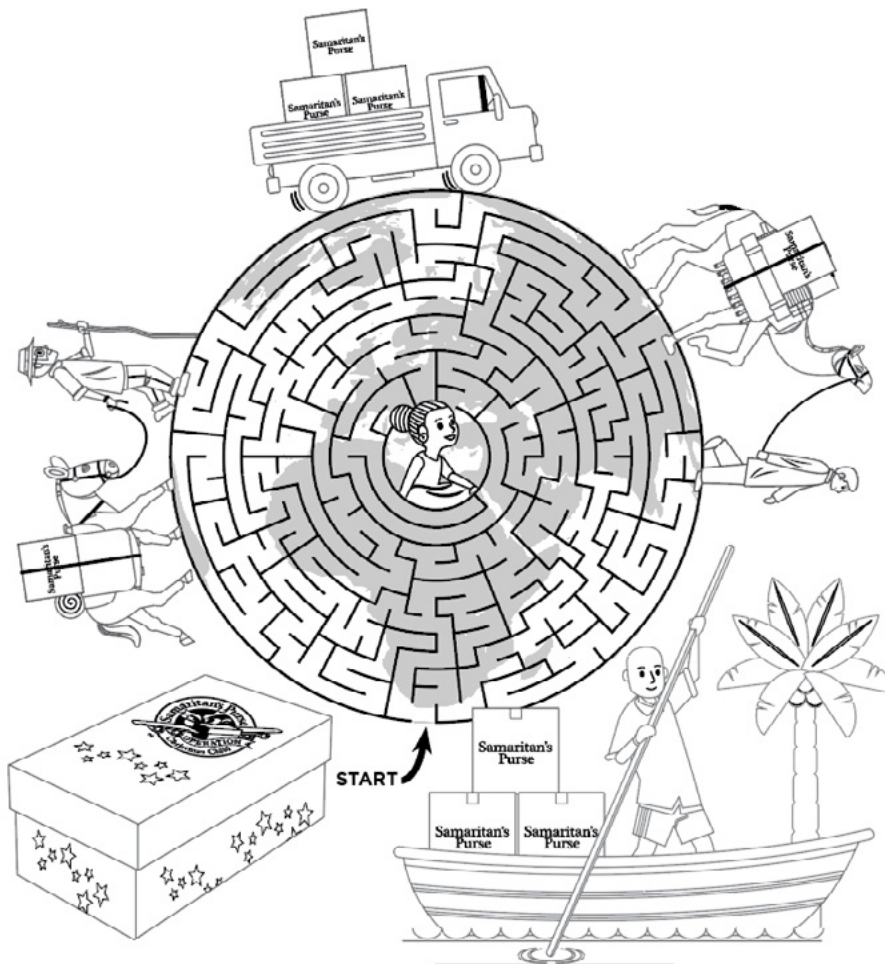
Operation Christmas Child Children's Ministry Resources

EXPLORE THE JOURNEY OF A SHOEBOX GIFT

Does your church or group pack Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts, or would you like to start? Help the children in your class understand the purpose of packing these gifts—so boys and girls around the world have an opportunity to hear about the Greatest Gift of All: Jesus Christ our Savior. Packing shoeboxes teaches your students about the importance of giving to others in the Name of Jesus. The resources below explain the journey each shoebox gift takes—from packing, collecting, and shipping to worldwide distribution, outreach events, and the discipleship and multiplication of followers of Christ. This is a great way to “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations” (Matthew 28:19) and “Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

RESOURCES AVAILABLE ONLINE

- **Journey of a Shoebox coloring sheet**
- **Shoebox Delivery maze coloring activity (pictured left)**
- **Take-home Journey of a Shoebox insert with 'How to Pack a Shoebox' instructions**
- **Journey of a Shoebox webpage**





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"WHAT GOES IN THE BOX IS FUN; WHAT COMES OUT IS ETERNAL!"

Help your class understand the eternal message of Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts by illustrating the concept, "What goes in the box is fun; what comes out is eternal!" Fill a shoebox with an assortment of toys, school supplies, and hygiene items. Fill another shoebox with items such as a cross, heart, drawing of a church, multiplication sign or flash card, and a small globe or ball.

Show the children the shoebox filled with toys and supplies first and talk about the types of items that go into an Operation Christmas Child gift. (Refer to our Gift Suggestions at samaritanspurse.ca/occ.) Next, show the class the second box of items representing God's gift to us—Jesus Christ—and explain how God can use a simple shoebox gift to impact lives for eternity.



Cross—Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.



Heart—Giving children joy, hope, and love. Many of these children have not received gifts before because their families can only afford to give them the basics of food and shelter.



Church—As local churches distribute shoebox gifts to children in their communities, they tell them about the Greatest Gift of All, Jesus Christ. Then, they invite them to a Bible study called The Greatest Journey to explain what it means to follow Jesus and tell others about Him.



Multiplication—The Gospel message is multiplied as children share their faith with family and friends.



Globe—As children and families join a local church, the church grows and is able to reach more people with the Gospel.



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FILL AN EMPTY SHOEBOX

Help the children in your class experience what it would be like to have never received a gift before. Describe what it might be like to live in a remote part of the world where there isn't ready access to the types of items included in shoebox gifts.

Ask them to imagine that people from a church visited them in this remote location to have a special event for children. People from the church performed skits, sang songs, and told them about Jesus. Ask the children: what would it be like to hear for the first time how much Jesus loves you and wants to be your friend? Tell the class that at events like this, children receive a gift of their very own and hear about Jesus, the Greatest Gift anyone can accept.

Show the children an empty shoebox and have them close their eyes to imagine the kinds of gifts that would be inside. Ask the boys and girls: what item would you hope you'd received if you didn't have anything? Have the children bring items to fill the shoebox. (Refer to our Gift Suggestions at samaritanspurse.ca/occ.) Show them a video of what it's like when children receive shoebox gifts (selections available at samaritanspurse.ca/occ-videos).

CANDY ILLUSTRATION: THE NEED FOR SHOEBOX GIFTS

Fill a large jar or glass bowl with candy, such as M&Ms or Skittles. Tell your class that currently there are 1.7 billion children under the age of 14 in the world. And, that last year, Operation Christmas Child collected shoebox gifts for 11.4 million of those children. As an illustration, scoop candies into a teaspoon. Tell the children that this teaspoon represents the 11.4 million children who received shoebox gifts last year, and the rest of the candies represent the rest of the children who haven't heard about Jesus through a shoebox gift yet.

The need is great! Africa is home to 435 million kids under the age of 14. If each of the 37 million people in Canada packed a gift-filled shoebox, Operation Christmas Child still wouldn't reach all the boys and girls in Africa.



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BEING A GOOD SAMARITAN

Read the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) and discuss these questions:

- When was the last time you were a Good Samaritan to someone you didn't know?
- When was the last time someone you didn't know helped you?
- What are some reasons why you think people do not help others in need?

Explain that packing shoebox gifts through the Samaritan's Purse project, Operation Christmas Child, is something your class can do together to show God's love to someone you don't know.

Be sure to have your children fill in a "Let's Be Friends!" coloring sheet to include in their shoebox gifts. These can be downloaded along with other coloring sheets from samaritanspurse.ca/childrens-resources.