



4th of JULY

for Kidmin!

DEVOTION | SNACK | GAME | SKIT | CRAFT | SONG | OUTREACH



UNTIED

As kids get untied from a knot, they learn about finding freedom in Jesus.

SCRIPTURE

Romans 8:2

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Bible

The Experience

SAY: On Independence Day we celebrate our freedom! To explore what it means to be free, let's see what it's like "knot" to be free.

Form a circle. Have kids put their right hand in the center and take hold of the right hand of another person. Then have kids put their left hand in the circle and grab the left hand of another person, but not the same person they're already holding hands with.

While kids are in the knot, have them attempt to scratch their heads, touch their toes, and rub their bellies. Have kids remain in the knot while you discuss the following.

ASK: Talk about a time you couldn't do what you wanted to do.

SAY: Years ago the people who started our country were a lot like you are now in this

circle. They weren't free. They were ruled by another country across the ocean.

ASK: How does our knot show what it's like to not be free?

Have kids work to unravel the knot without letting go of the hands they're holding. This will be difficult and take time for them to do. After a minute, have kids pause where they are.

ASK: What are some things you could do to set yourselves free right now?

SAY: Many countries in the world celebrate their independence with a big party. Have the kids shout hooray and let go of one person's hand.

SAY: Today there's another kind of independence we can celebrate, too. This one comes from the Bible. Open your Bible and read Romans 8:2.

ASK: What do you think it means to live free from the power of sin?

Have kids let go of the other person's hand and then jump around to celebrate their freedom. **SAY:** On Independence Day, we can celebrate because our country is free and we're free to live as Christians—free from sin!

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for the freedom we celebrate on Independence Day and every day. Thank you that you've set us free from the power of sin. In Jesus' name, amen.



PARADE WANDS

Kids create wands to celebrate how Jesus makes us free.

SCRIPTURE

John 8:36

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Bible
- paint sticks
- blue 3-inch foil stars
- red, white, and blue crepe paper
- wired star garland (available at craft stores)
- star stickers
- Avery 5160 mailing labels
- glue dots

The Experience

Before kids arrive, create vertical labels that say "Jesus Set Me Free," using an Avery 5160 label template onto Avery 5160 labels. (See sample below.) Print one per child. Pre-cut 12-inch lengths of red, white, and blue crepe paper and wired star garland.

JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS
SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET
ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME
FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE

JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS
SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET
ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME
FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE

JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS	JESUS
SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET	SET
ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME	ME
FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE

ASK: Describe what your family will do to celebrate Independence Day.

SAY: To be independent means to be free or to be able to do what you choose to do. On Independence Day, we celebrate our country being free to make our own choices. If you believe in Jesus, you're free, too. Read John 8:36.

ASK: What are differences between the people of our country being free and the way we're free through Jesus?

1. Spread out the craft supplies.

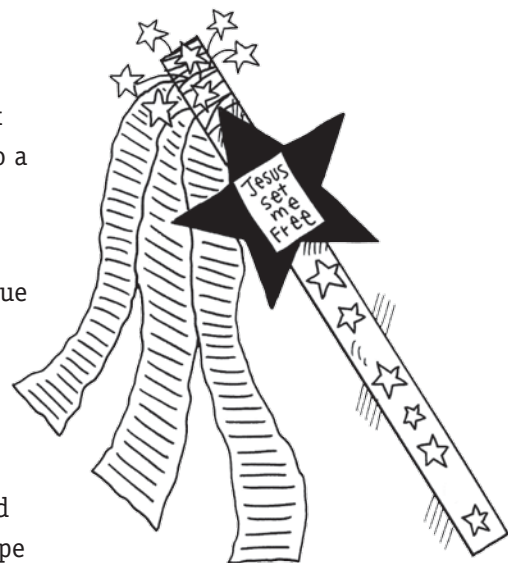
2. Have kids each stick their mailing labels onto a blue foil star.

3. Have kids use a few glue dots to stick the blue foil star to the paint stick, about an inch from the top.

4. Show kids how to twist the garland around red, white, and blue crepe paper and secure it to the top of the paint stick.

5. Let kids add as many star stickers as they'd like to decorate the sticks.

6. After kids make their wands, go on a "Jesus Set Me Free Parade" by marching around the room and waving the wands as you repeat John 8:36 with kids.



Extra Special FACTOIDS

DID YOU KNOW...

The first Independence Day celebration in the United States was in 1776—but it was celebrated on July 8th, not the 4th.

DID YOU KNOW...

The names of those who signed the Declaration of Independence were withheld from the public for more than six months to protect the signers. Why, you wonder? If we hadn't actually achieved independence, the treasonable act of the signers would have, by law, resulted in their deaths.

STREAMER CELEBRATION



Kids play a high-energy twist on Tag, using streamers and celebration.

SCRIPTURE

Psalms 20:5, Jeremiah 31:13

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Bible
- mylar streamers (any color)
- crepe paper streamers (any color)

The Experience

SAY: On Independence Day, we celebrate our country's freedom—a long-fought battle and a huge victory. You know, the book of Psalms and the book of Jeremiah in the Bible tell us great ways to celebrate victory. Read aloud Psalm 20:5 and Jeremiah 31:13.

ASK: What did you hear in those verses that sounds like a celebration we might have today?

- What's your favorite way to celebrate?

SAY: Let's play a game to celebrate like these verses say. We'll celebrate our country's victory and the joy and freedom we have. And you'll look like a sky full of fireworks in the process!

Choose three kids to be "It," and tie a 3-foot strip of mylar streamer to the wrist of each It. Have each It roll up the rest of the streamer and hold it in his or her hand. Hand out two 3- to 5-foot pieces of crepe paper streamer to each remaining child. Explain that this game is a bit like Tag, except It has to tag the other kids by throwing and unrolling a mylar streamer. Whenever kids are tagged by a mylar streamer, they have to throw their streamers in the air and celebrate as the Scriptures previously read described. **SAY:** If you're tagged, celebrate loudly! Ready? Go!

Play this wild, firecracker game several times, switching kids' roles so everyone gets a turn to be It.



FRUIT FLAGS

Kids will make a fun flag snack as they learn about what the United States flag represents for our country and for our faith.

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 1:7; John 17:23

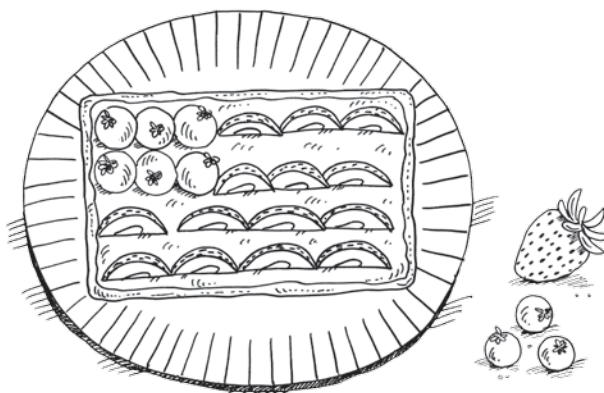
WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Bible
- graham crackers
- whipped topping or white frosting
- blueberries
- strawberries sliced into long, thin strips
- napkins or paper plates
- plastic knives
- small American flag



You know, the red strawberries remind me of something else that was red and brought us freedom. Read Ephesians 1:7.

Next, give kids the blueberries. **SAY:** The stars on the flag represent all the states that make up America. Go ahead and put a few blueberry stars in the corner of your flag. Pause. Those stars are reminders that one of the goals of our country is unity—that's why we're called the *United States*. Living in unity is just what Jesus wants us to do, too. Right before he died for us, he prayed for us. Read John 17:23.



The Experience

Distribute a napkin or plate with a graham cracker on it to each child. Hold up the small flag. **SAY:** Today we're going to make our own United States flags, but these will be special because when we're all done, we get to eat them. Help kids spread whipped topping or white frosting on the graham crackers.

SAY: First, we're going to make the stripes. There are actually 13 stripes, one for each of the 13 original colonies. You might not be able to fit 13 stripes, so just put on as many as you'd like to. Let kids put the strawberries on the crackers for the stripes. Those 13 original colonies are a big part of why we have our freedom today.

Tip If you're in a country outside the U.S., simply choose other kinds of fruit to re-create your flag. Give kids information about the significance of each aspect of the flag as you go.

ASK: Why do you think it's important to be unified?

- What are ways you can be unified with your friends?
- How do we demonstrate Jesus' love when we're unified with others?

SAY: Look at your flag and think about all the freedoms we have—in our country and also because of Jesus. And think about how you can show unity with others. Let's pray about those things.

PRAY: Dear God, we're so thankful to have the freedom to worship you however we choose. Help us to show your love by being united with other people. In Jesus' name, amen.



THE IN-DEEP PEN DANCE

This skit puts charades in the hands of the audience.

SCRIPTURE

None

PROPS

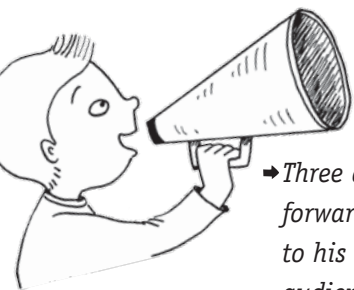
- none needed

CAST

- 3 actors

BEHIND THE SCENES

This is a different kind of skit, where the audience has to guess collectively what the actors are doing—like large-group charades. The actors need to be animated and full of energy. The script offers suggestions for charades, but feel free to add your own spin!



Action!

→ Three actors stand at center stage. One steps forward, claps four times, and puts a hand to his ear as if to listen for a response. If the audience doesn't respond with four claps in rhythm, the actor claps again, and motions for the audience to repeat. Once the audience has caught on that they're to repeat the rhythm, the actor then changes up the rhythm. For example, two soft claps and then two loud, or two claps and two stomps. The actor can make up a rhythm and end on an involved mixture of stomps and claps that the audience has no way of repeating.

After the clapping, a second actor steps forward. She holds up her hands to quiet the audience.

ACTOR ONE

Today, we celebrate freedom!

ACTOR TWO

Today, we celebrate liberty!

ACTOR THREE

Today, we celebrate charades!

→ *The first two actors turn to the third actor with a puzzled look.*

ACTOR THREE

Yes! Jesus died on the cross so that we could be free—and play charades! It's in Matthew. Look it up.

ACTOR ONE

No, it isn't!

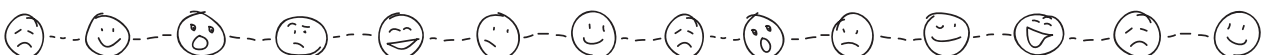
ACTOR THREE

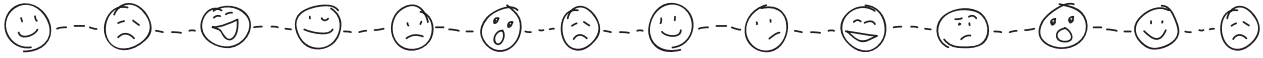
Well, it should be. *(Said in a sing-song-y voice and rhythm)* "Jesus died for all of us that we may have our..." *(Pause.)* Argh. I can't tell it any other way than charades. *(To the other actors)* Can you help?

→ *The other two actors shrug and agree.*

ALL THREE ACTORS

(To audience) Can you help?





ALL THREE ACTORS

CHARADES!

➔The three actors then start by doing three simple charades, one at a time. The first is "PLAYING BASEBALL." The second is "BAKING A CAKE." The third is "WATCHING A MOVIE." Throughout, the actors encourage the audience to shout out collectively what they think it is.

Once the audience is warmed up to playing the game, ACTOR THREE steps forward.

ACTOR THREE

TRY THIS!

➔All three actors gather on the left end of the stage. They're going to act out the word "INDEPENDENCE" in four parts, reading from the audience's left to right.

The three actors first act out the word "IN." This can be done with two actors joining hands in a circle, while the third actor gets "in" and "out" of the circle. Once the audience guesses "IN," the actors move over.

They then act out the word "DEEP." This can be done by two actors waving their arms like water, and the third actor "wading in." The water actors get higher and higher, until the third actor is underwater, going deeper and deeper. Once the audience guesses "DEEP," the actors move over.

They then act out the word "PEN." This can be done by all three actors pretending to write something. Maybe the pen runs out of ink. Maybe it's a quill pen. Once the audience guesses "PEN," the actors move over.

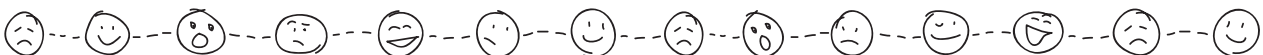
They then act out the word "DANCE." This can be done by, well, dancing! Once the audience guesses "DANCE," the actors move back to where they acted out "IN."

Then, rather quickly, they act out each of the four words in succession. Running back and forth from one end of the stage to the other, the actors act in such a way that the audience can say "IN...DEEP...PEN...DANCE! IN...DEEP...PEN...DANCE!" faster and faster until the audience is shouting "INDEPENDENCE!"

ALL ACTORS

Yes! (In the same sing-song-y voice and rhythm) **Jesus died for all of us so we could have our...** (They indicate to the crowd, prompting them to say the next word all together) **independence!!**

➔Once the crowd gets the final word, all three actors collapse on stage.





THE FLAGS ON THE BOAT



A song about Independence Day, sung to the tune of "The Wheels on the Bus." Feel free to add your own verses, or encourage kids to make up their own, based on their experiences with Independence Day. For other countries' days of independence, simply change "fourth" to whatever day you celebrate!

SCRIPTURE

John 8:36

Sing It!



The flags on the boat go back and forth

(Kids wave their hands back and forth),

Back and forth, back and forth.

The flags on the boat go back and forth

All on the Fourth!

(Kids clap three times on the beat—once on "All," once on "on," and once on "Fourth!")

The fireworks shoot and pop, pop, bang!

(Kids use hands to imitate fireworks going off.)

Pop, pop, bang! Pop, pop, bang!

The fireworks shoot and pop, pop, bang!

All on the Fourth

(Kids clap three times on the beat—once on "All," once on "on," and once on "Fourth!")

Jesus, he has set me free

(Kids close hands as if in prayer, and then open; repeat each time they sing "Set me free"),

Set me free, set me free.

Jesus, he has set me free

Thanks to you, Lord!

(Kids clap three times on the beat—once on "Thanks," once on "you," and once on "Lord!")

**Extra Special
FACTOID**

DID YOU KNOW...

161 nations around the globe celebrate some kind of independence day, according to aglobalworld.com.



FREE FOR ALL



Kids discover that the best things in life are free—from the free gift of forgiveness Jesus offers to the free water they give away this Independence Day!

SCRIPTURE

Galatians 5:13

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Bible
- bottled water
- mailing labels
- coolers
- wagons
- extra adult volunteers to accompany kids distributing water

The Experience

Find an Independence Day related-event in your area, such as a parade or fireworks show, and plan with kids to give away bottles of water for the event. Determine how much water you need based on the size of the event, and ask church members to sponsor or donate a case of water to offset the cost. Print labels for the water bottles with your church name and contact information, along with a message such as, "The best things in life are free! Enjoy your complimentary water." Or "Freedom isn't free—but this water is! Compliments of [your church]."

Gather coolers and wagons as a way to transport the water if you want to walk through the crowd, or set up a table at a busy intersection for foot traffic or a popular viewing spot. As a courtesy, a couple of weeks prior to the celebration, confirm your plan with the event organizers.

As kids gather and prepare to serve, prepare their hearts by reading Galatians 5:13. **SAY: As Christians, we're called to live free from sin. And we also get to live in a free country. This verse says to use our freedom to serve others in love, so let's do just that!**

Encourage kids to be friendly and outgoing as they hand out the water bottles. Have plenty of extra adult volunteers to accompany kids.

Extra Special
FACTOID

DID YOU KNOW...

Canada remained part of the British Empire until July 1, 1867, when under the British North America Act, Canada East (Quebec), Canada West (Ontario), Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick united to become the Dominion of Canada. Canadians have been celebrating Canada Day every July 1st since.



INDEPENDENCE DAY