

Outback Rock

Reviewed by Sally Benton

Outback Rock: Snapshot



[Outback Rock](#) is not one of Building Faith's top picks for VBS for 2024. This curriculum is designed to be a short, weekend-length VBS. Its message revolves around how God is always with us, and it includes flexible activity options and a mission focus that enables children to do a service project for their wider community. We did not include it among our recommendations, though. We had concerns about the curriculum's cultural sensitivity in its treatment of Australia as a backdrop. We also had concerns about the emotional weight of its lesson on Jesus's death and resurrection for children.

Outback Rock: The Basics

- **Theme:** “Where Kids Venture into Solid Faith”
- **Publisher:** [Group](#), 2024 (independent)
- **Intended ages/grades:** grades pre-K – 5 with youth and adult leaders
- **Format:** onsite
- **Number of sessions:** 2 plus a Sunday celebration (a weekend program)
- **Types of activities:** opening and closing gatherings, small group rotations with Bible stories, outreach projects, and games
- **Starter kit cost:** \$119.99

Outback Rock: Scope & Sequence

- **Day 1: God Is with Joseph**
Genesis 37:1—45:15
- **Day 2: Jesus Dies and Comes Back to Life**
Matthew 26:26—28:30
- **Sunday Celebration: Rock the House**

Outback Rock: Where It Shines

A plug-and-play VBS program

This curriculum can take the guesswork out of VBS programming. It has a plug-and-play design for a weekend program, and the activity options within the rotation stations can be adapted to fit the needs and schedules of different contexts.

Theme of God's presence with us

As an abbreviated program, the curriculum keeps a single focus on the theme that God is always with us. The lessons include both Old and New Testament stories and highlight God's presence through time.

A focus on mission

This curriculum includes a focus on mission. It offers options for community outreach and service projects for children to do during VBS.

Outback Rock: What We Miss

More cultural sensitivity in its treatment of Australia

The curriculum's preview materials raised concerns for us about potential cultural stereotyping in how the curriculum engages Australia.

Attention to the emotional weight of the story of Jesus's death

The New Testament story focuses on Jesus' death and resurrection. This can be a heavy concept for young children, and there is a possibility that some of the conversation focuses on "being saved."

References to God without gender

This curriculum is full of masculine pronouns for God. You could still make the decision to use non-gendered terms, but it would need to be an intentional decision that is communicated clearly with all leaders because of the way the provided material is written.

**Outback
Rock: Overall
Assessment**

**Curriculum Not
Recommended
for 2024**

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