

WEEKS 3 & 4

BIBLE NAVIGATION GUIDE

LEARNING TO FIND YOUR WAY THROUGH GOD'S WORD

Grades 4–8 (9-12) Weeks

1. GETTING TO KNOW YOUR BIBLE

The Bible is not one single book. It is a **library of 66 books**, written by many human authors under the inspiration of God.

It has two main sections:

Section	Books	What it tells us
Old Testament	39	Creation, God's people Israel, God's Law, history, wisdom, and the prophets
New Testament	27	Jesus Christ, the early Church, Christian teaching, and the fulfillment of God's promises

Navigation Tip: When looking for a Bible passage, your first question should be: **Is this book in the Old Testament or New Testament?**

2. The Books of the Bible

Old Testament — 39 Books

The Law — 5

Genesis • Exodus • Leviticus • Numbers • Deuteronomy

History — 12

Joshua • Judges • Ruth • 1 Samuel • 2 Samuel • 1 Kings • 2 Kings • 1 Chronicles • 2 Chronicles • Ezra • Nehemiah • Esther

Poetry & Wisdom — 5

Job • Psalms • Proverbs • Ecclesiastes • Song of Solomon

Major Prophets — 5

Isaiah • Jeremiah • Lamentations • Ezekiel • Daniel

Minor Prophets — 12

Hosea • Joel • Amos • Obadiah • Jonah • Micah • Nahum • Habakkuk • Zephaniah
• Haggai • Zechariah • Malachi

New Testament — 27 Books**The Gospels — 4**

Matthew • Mark • Luke • John

History — 1

Acts

Paul's Letters — 13

Romans • 1 Corinthians • 2 Corinthians • Galatians • Ephesians • Philippians •
Colossians • 1 Thessalonians • 2 Thessalonians • 1 Timothy • 2 Timothy • Titus •
Philemon

General Letters — 8

Hebrews • James • 1 Peter • 2 Peter • 1 John • 2 John • 3 John • Jude

Prophecy — 1

Revelation

3. How to Read a Bible Reference

A Bible reference is like an **address**.

JOHN 3:16

JOHN = Book

3 = Chapter

16 = Verse

Think of it this way:

BOOK → CHAPTER → VERSE

If you see:

Matthew 5:1–12

Find:

1. **Matthew**
2. **Chapter 5**
3. **Verses 1 through 12**

What about Matthew 5:1, 8?

That means read **verse 1 and verse 8**.

What about Matthew 5:1–3, 7–9?

That means read **verses 1–3** and **verses 7–9**.

4. The Fastest Way to Find a Passage**STEP 1 — Find the Book**

Use the Table of Contents if you need it.

There is no shame in using the Table of Contents!

Good Bible navigation begins by learning where things are.

STEP 2 — Find the Chapter

Chapter numbers are the **large numbers** on the page.

STEP 3 — Find the Verse

Verse numbers are the **small numbers** within the text.

STEP 4 — Check Yourself

Before reading, look again:

Right Book? → Right Chapter? → Right Verse?

5. Bible Navigation Landmarks

Instead of trying to memorize 66 locations at once, learn some **landmarks**.

Genesis — First book of the Bible

Psalms — Near the middle of the Bible

Isaiah — Major prophet

Malachi — Last book of the Old Testament

Matthew — First book of the New Testament

John — Fourth Gospel

Acts — Immediately after the Gospels

Romans — First of Paul's letters

Revelation — Last book of the Bible

Navigation Challenge

If you can quickly find **Genesis, Psalms, Matthew, Acts, and Revelation**, you already have five excellent landmarks for navigating your Bible.

BIBLE NAVIGATION GAMES

These can become **5–10 minute opening activities** throughout the year.

GAME 1 — Bible Sword Drill

Everyone holds a **closed Bible**.

Teacher announces:

"Ephesians 6:10!"

Students repeat the reference.

Teacher says:

"Ready... FIND!"

Students locate the passage.

When they find it, they place a finger on the verse and raise their other hand.

The first student ready reads the verse aloud.

Important rule: Accuracy beats speed. A student does not win by opening to the wrong passage first!

GAME 2 — Find the Book

Call out only a book:

"HABAKKUK!"

Students race to find the beginning of Habakkuk.

Then ask:

Old or New Testament?

Prophet, Gospel, History, Wisdom, or Letter?

This is especially good for learning the smaller books.

GAME 3 — Before or After?

Teacher calls out three books:

Matthew — Mark — Luke

Then ask:

What comes after Mark?

Luke!

Try:

What comes before Acts?

John!

Harder:

What comes before Micah?

Jonah!

This teaches the **order of the books** rather than simply finding a page.

GAME 4 — Bible Scavenger Hunt

Give students clues rather than references.

Find...

1. The first book of the Bible.
2. The last book of the Old Testament.
3. The first Gospel.
4. The shortest Psalm.
5. The book immediately after the four Gospels.
6. The book containing the Ten Commandments.
7. The book telling about David and Goliath.
8. The book containing the story of Jonah.
9. The final book of the Bible.
10. The Gospel that begins, "In the beginning was the Word."

Bonus: Students must show the passage that proves their answer.

GAME 5 — Old Testament or New Testament?

Make two signs:

OLD TESTAMENT

NEW TESTAMENT

Place them on opposite sides of the room.

Call out:

Genesis!

Students move to the correct side.

Romans!

Move again.

Isaiah!

Move again.

For older students, add categories:

LAW • HISTORY • WISDOM • PROPHETS • GOSPELS • LETTERS

Now they must identify both the Testament **and** the type of book.

GAME 6 — Human Bookshelf

Write Bible book names on cards and give one to each student.

Tell them:

"You are now books of the Bible. Put yourselves in the correct order!"

Start small:

Matthew • Mark • Luke • John • Acts

Then:

Genesis • Exodus • Leviticus • Numbers • Deuteronomy

Eventually mix them:

Romans • Psalms • Acts • Genesis • Revelation • Matthew • Isaiah

They must arrange themselves according to where their books appear in Scripture.

GAME 7 — Mystery Passage

Give students only clues.

"I am looking for a passage in the New Testament."

Then:

"It is in a Gospel."

Then:

"It is in the first Gospel."

Then:

"Chapter 6."

Finally:

"Verses 9–13."

Students should arrive at **Matthew 6:9–13 — the Lord's Prayer**.

This is a wonderful bridge between Bible navigation and the **1928 Book of Common Prayer**.

GAME 8 — Bible Relay

Divide students into teams.

Place Bibles on a table across the room.

Give the first student on each team a reference.

Psalms 23:1

They go to the table, find the passage, show the teacher, close the Bible, return, and tag the next student.

Next reference:

John 3:16

Continue until everyone has participated.

Rule: No running with an open Bible.

GAME 9 — Who Am I?

Give a person and students must locate a passage about that person.

Noah → Genesis

Moses → Exodus

David → 1 Samuel

Jonah → Jonah

John the Baptist → Gospels

Peter → Gospels/Acts

Paul → Acts/Letters

Older students can be asked to find an **actual passage**, not merely the book.

GAME 10 — Beat the Teacher

This one usually gets them.

Teacher chooses a reference:

Philippians 4:13

Teacher and students begin with closed Bibles.

Someone else calls:

"FIND!"

Can a student find it before the teacher?

As their skills improve, use increasingly difficult books:

Nahum 1:7

Zephaniah 3:17

Philemon 1:4

Jude 1:3

And, naturally, the teacher is absolutely forbidden from mysteriously becoming slower as the weeks go on. 😊

7. Bible Navigation Challenge Levels

I would make this progressive so your 4th graders aren't competing directly against experienced 7th–8th graders.

Explorer

I can:

- Find the Old and New Testaments.
- Use the Table of Contents.
- Find a Bible book.
- Identify chapter and verse.

Navigator

I can:

- Find the Gospels.
- Find Psalms.
- Find Acts.
- Find a passage using book, chapter, and verse.
- Identify whether a book is Old or New Testament.

Pathfinder

I can:

- Find most books without the Table of Contents.
- Recognize Law, History, Wisdom, Prophets, Gospels, and Letters.
- Find unfamiliar passages quickly.
- Help another student navigate the Bible.

Master Navigator

I can:

- Navigate both Testaments confidently.

- Find difficult books.
- Explain a Bible reference to someone else.
- Locate Scripture used in worship and the Prayer Book.
- Use my Bible respectfully and confidently on my own.

8. Five-Minute Weekly Bible Challenge

This is the part I especially like for your 4th–8th grade program: **don't teach Bible navigation once and then leave it behind.**

Use five minutes each Sunday.

Week 1: Genesis 1:1

Week 2: Psalm 23:1

Week 3: Isaiah 40:31

Week 4: Matthew 5:1

Week 5: Luke 2:1

Week 6: John 3:16

Week 7: Acts 2:1

Week 8: Romans 8:28

Week 9: Ephesians 6:10

Week 10: Philippians 4:13

Week 11: Hebrews 11:1

Week 12: James 1:22

Week 13: Revelation 22:21