

# The Holy Spirit at Pentecost

Grades  
5-6

## SPIRIT

ACTS 2:1-21

### What's happening in this story?

When Jesus ascended, he promised the apostles the Holy Spirit so they could share the gospel with others. They are not sure what their next step is—how do they go into the world to share the gospel? That's where the Spirit comes in. But it's not the "sweet, sweet Spirit" that the hymn describes; it's a violent wind carrying in tongues of fire and giving people the ability to speak in foreign languages! This story reminds us that God's Spirit is active, moving, and powerful—something to be in awe of.

### What does this story mean for kids?

Kids will gloss over the hard words and wonder about literal interpretations in this story, like how there could be flames on people's heads. They might ask questions about what it feels like to have the Holy Spirit. We might talk about a special feeling during prayer or a sense of something special we can't quite put into words. While these experiences point to the Holy Spirit, this text tells us that the Holy Spirit is God's continuing presence, empowering us to follow Jesus.

### Why this theme?

The theme of Spirit is quite abstract, and grade-school kids are largely concrete thinkers. Help them understand the Holy Spirit as God's presence surrounding them like a blanket or a hug, and filling them throughout their life—like breath or the water that makes up much of their body's cells.

### AGE LEVEL TIP

For kids this age, church can sometimes seem stale or boring. Today's story shows how exciting it was when the church was born with fire and languages at Pentecost. God may not always speak with flames and strong wind, but those things certainly grab our attention!



### GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Markers
- Clear tape
- Scrap paper
- Colored pencils
- Pens
- Paper squares (1-in. x 1-in; 10 per kid plus extra)
- Unsharpened pencils
- Scissors

### LESSON SUPPLIES

- Fan
- Streamers (red, 1-ft. lengths)
- Whiteboard with markers
- Pushpins
- Foreign language translations of today's reading

## Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Aim a fan toward the door so it blasts kids as they enter. On a whiteboard, ask, "Where have you experienced very strong wind?" Have kids write answers on streamers and tape them to the fan grille. (Make sure fan is unplugged when they do this.) Tell kids there will be a lot of talk of wind and fire today.

## Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

Do you enjoy chaotic environments? Lots of lights, noises, and action? Or do you prefer calm and quiet places? How do you react to both of these situations? Your group will probably include kids in both camps, and some will enjoy both under the right circumstances. **Today's story involves a lot of chaos and excitement. The Holy Spirit comes to the disciples for the first time in a spectacular fashion. The Holy Spirit comes to all of us. The Spirit connects us to God and gives us guidance and support—at chaotic times and at quiet times.**

Pray together: **Dear God, thank you for filling us with the Holy Spirit. Help us share your Spirit with everyone we meet. Amen.**

## Pass out leaflets, scrap paper, and colored pencils.

I'm going to ask a question. Don't answer out loud—write it on scrap paper. When I say the word *spirit*, what is the first word that pops into your mind? After kids have written their word, go around the class and have them say it out loud. Write the words on a whiteboard everyone can see. **The words on the leaflet are words we associate with the Holy Spirit. How are they similar or different from the words on the board?** Invite kids to use the words on the board and the leaflet to draw an image in the center of the leaflet that helps them imagine the Holy Spirit.



## Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

Reading and hearing stories about people filled with the Holy Spirit can be exciting. But it can also be disappointing if we don't seem to experience the Holy Spirit in the same way. It can even make us question whether the Holy Spirit lives in us at all. Those are normal feelings. Let's watch this video to see how Leo deals with it.

View Episode 10, "Holy Android," on the Year Gold Spring Grades 3–6 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- Why does Leo feel like he is, in his words, "missing something"?
- What does Leo hope to achieve with his invention? How successful was he?
- According to the Whirl kids, who is filled with the Holy Spirit?
- What does Ruby say the Holy Spirit does for us? What do you think?
- How have you experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit?



## Open your Whirl Kids Study Bibles.

Today's passage is from the book of Acts. It's in the New Testament in the Gospels and Acts section of the Bible. Invite kids to check out the book introduction and comic on page 1303.



**Many amazing things happened at Pentecost. One of the amazing things involves languages—the disciples were suddenly able to speak the different languages of all the people present. Everyone heard God's word.**

Help kids find Acts 2:1-21 and read it in this creative way together: Bring in a few foreign language translations of the Acts passage. Include a major world language such as Spanish, but try to find at least one or two that are unexpected. You can find translations in a library and online. Distribute them and ask kids to read them at the same time. Ask if anyone can understand them. Then try one version at a time. Finish by reading from the Whirl Kids Study Bible. Have one volunteer read verses 1–13 and a second read verses 14–21.

Invite kids to check out what Ruby says about Acts 2:4-5.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- **How do you picture this scene? How many people are there? Describe the feeling of the wind. Is heat coming from the flames?**
- **Why do you think some people thought the others were drunk?**
- **Peter quotes the prophet Joel, saying that God will “pour out [God’s] Spirit upon all flesh.” How do you feel about that?**
- **Fire and wind can be destructive. Why do you think they were used by the Holy Spirit?**
- **If you could speak any other language, which one would it be? Why?**

## Make your mark on the Wall Chart.

Look at the chart and find the theme for today. Give kids time to find the word *Spirit*. Imagine what it would be like to have a flame over your head! The coming of the Holy Spirit as flames, wind, and the gift of languages was a dramatic scene for the disciples and the people of Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit enters us in loud and gentle ways. Invite a volunteer to draw a flame in the box by *Spirit*.



### BIBLE BIT

*Pentekostos* is a Greek word that means “fifty days.” Pentecost is celebrated on the fiftieth day after Easter. The Jewish holiday Shavuot is observed fifty days after Passover.

### WATCH IT AGAIN

If you watch the video again, invite kids to think about how they might reassure Leo even before he builds the Holy Helmet 5000.

### OUR CHURCH

What languages are spoken in your church? In the neighborhood around your church? In the kids' schools? How might kids welcome someone who speaks a different language?

# RESPOND 10

## Open leaflets and pass out pens and paper squares (10 per kid plus extra).

Tear off leaflet square. Set up a fan near the work space. (If you didn't do the Arrive Early activity, tape streamers to the grille.)

1. **In the video, Ruby explains that the Holy Spirit connects all of us to God and helps guide us. In the blanks on the top of the leaflet, write a 10-word sentence about the Holy Spirit that would offer encouragement to someone who needs guidance or support. Consider the images in the reading as you formulate your sentence.**
2. **Transfer that sentence onto the paper squares. Write one word on each square and arrange them on the blocks on your leaflet.**
3. **Take your leaflets, walk through the wind and “fire” from the fan, and let the wind blow the words away.** Wait until all kids have gone.
4. **Now, pick up any 10 paper squares. In groups of three or four, combine your word squares to build new sentences or phrases.**
5. **Arrange the new sentences in the squares on your leaflet and tape them down.** Groups should try to use all the words they pick up. Allow them to trade words among groups if they need to, and provide each person with one additional blank square to write a new word if necessary.
6. Have groups read their original 10-word sentences out loud, and then the new sentences or phrases they came up with. **The Holy Spirit is with us every day, even when there are no flames or wind around. How could you remember your sentence at times when you need the Holy Spirit?**

# LAUNCH 10

## Circle up with kids for a quick review.

We talked today about the exciting way the Holy Spirit filled the disciples at Pentecost. But sometimes the Holy Spirit is called the Breath of God. Take a deep breath and feel God's Spirit inside you in a quiet way. Pause. **What could you do, knowing you are filled with the Holy Spirit?**

## Return to the leaflet panels and pass out unsharpened pencils, scissors, and pushpins.

**Follow the instructions on your leaflet to make a Holy Spirit pinwheel.** When complete, have kids stand in front of the fan and let the “Holy Spirit” spin their pinwheels around. **How can you use your pinwheel to help describe the Holy Spirit to someone younger than you?**

## Send kids out with a blessing.

Circle up with kids. **God blesses all of us. And that means me** (place a hand on your chest). **And that means you** (place your other hand on the shoulder of the kid next to you). Each kid passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, **Go and bless the world.**

Thank kids for coming today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.