



# LESSON PLANS



*Children*  
**HAPPY TRAILS**

*We are*  
**Mission KY!**



## **EBO MISSION STUDY FOR CHILDREN**

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*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9 ESV*

### **SESSION GOALS**

Children will learn how Happy Trails Ministries uses horses to share the gospel.

They will pray for and be challenged to give to the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions.®

They will discover ways to use their own interests to share the gospel.

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

Chris Clarke is the president/chaplain of Happy Trails Ministry, based in Nortonville, Kentucky. Chris and his horse, Chip travel Kentucky and Tennessee sharing spiritual truths at horse shows and cowboy church events. Chris describes Happy Trails Ministry as a “sowing and watering” type of ministry. The ministry has served to strengthen the faith of Christians as well as introduce many to the gospel. Chris encourages those who attend horse shows and cowboy church to find and attend a church when they return home. If folks live in western Kentucky, he invites them to Kentucky Lake Cowboy Church in Draffenville where he pastors.

Happy Trails Ministry receives funding from the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions®. EBO funds are used to purchase cowboy Bibles, diesel fuel for the ministry truck, and liability insurance.

Happy Trails Ministry is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> year of equestrian ministry this year!

### **SESSION PREPARATION**

- Before the session, invite children to come to the meeting dressed as cowgirls or cowboys.
- Preview the EBO video of Happy Trails Ministry ([kywmu.org/ebomedia](http://kywmu.org/ebomedia))
- Set up 2 sets of 3 barrels (cones or chairs will do). See the pattern at the end of these plans.
- Purchase 2 stick horses or gather 2 brooms/mops/pool noodles for barrel race.
- Display a map of Kentucky.
- Gather Bibles.

- Print these words on a whiteboard or chart: Believe, Trust, Obey, Surrender.
- Print photos: “Chris and Shelia Clarke” and “Chris and his horse, Chip”
- Gather rubber horseshoes or bean bags. Print each of the following prayer requests on index cards:
  1. Please pray for good health for Chris and his wife, Shelia.
  2. Please pray for safety as Chris travels to ministry events.
  3. Please pray that the Holy Spirit prepares the hearts of those who will be hearing the good news of Jesus and his love.
  4. Pray that many people will give to the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions.

Mark a starting line on the floor with painter’s tape. Tape the prayer request cards on the floor, about 10 feet from the starting line.

- Collect plastic containers for each child. Provide construction paper, scissors, glue, tape, yarn, markers, and google eyes.
- Provide horse-themed refreshments. **Post allergy alert chart.**
- Discuss with your church leadership the possibility of hosting an outreach, such as a pet or art show. (See Mission Project.)

#### OPENING ACTIVITY (5-10 minutes)

1. Say: *Tonight we will be learning how horses are used to share the good news of Jesus!*
2. Forms two teams. Each team forms a line behind a starting line.
3. Demonstrate the pattern for barrel racing, using a stick horse. (See pattern at the end of these plans.)
4. Lead kids to complete the barrel race in relay race style.
5. Ask: *How could horses be used to share the gospel?* Lead kids to group meeting area.

#### SESSION PLANS (40-45 min.)

1. Ask a volunteer to find Nortonville and Draffenville on the map of Kentucky. Say: *Missionary Chris Clarke lives in Nortonville. He leads a ministry called “Happy Trails Ministry.” As you watch the video, listen to find out what Chris does in Draffenville.*
2. Show the Happy Trails Ministry video.
3. Ask: *What does Chris do in Draffenville? (Kentucky Lake Cowboy Church) What did you find interesting about Chris and Happy Trails Ministry?*
4. Say: *Chris’ purpose is to share the good news of Jesus.* Lead kids to find and read our theme verse, 1 Peter 2:9.
5. Say: *Chris gives New Testaments that include cowboy stories related to faith. Chris shares the gospel in a way that people who love horses understand. As he*

*rides Chip, his horse, he demonstrates how to follow God. (Refer to the words on the whiteboard or chart.)*

- *Before Chris mounts Chip, he says, “I believe this horse will hold me.” We believe Christ will save us. Ask a volunteer to read Romans 10:9.*
  - *Chris and Chip trust each other. Chris trusts that Chip won’t hurt him and Chip trusts that Chris won’t steer him in the wrong direction. We trust that God is faithful and will do the right thing. Ask a volunteer to read Psalm 145:13b.*
  - *Chris guides Chip with voice commands and reins. Chip obeys Chris’ commands. If we have put our trust in God, we should obey him. Ask a volunteer to read Galatians 5:25.*
  - *A horse surrenders his will to the rider’s will as the horse follows the rider’s commands. We must surrender our will to God’s will. Ask a volunteer to read Mark 12:30.*
6. Give each child an opportunity to throw a horseshoe or bean bag to the prayer request cards you have set up. Pray for each request.
  7. Make an offering bank for EBO. Give each child a container. Invite them to decorate their containers to look like a horse, using art supplies. (See sample at the end of these plans.) Lead kids to print “Eliza Broadus Offering” on their banks. Encourage kids to save money in their banks for the Eliza Broadus Offering.
  8. Say: *This year is the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Happy Trails Ministry. Serve refreshments. Say: Chris uses his interest in horses to help others learn about Jesus. What interests do you have? How could you use your interests to tell people about Jesus?*

## **MISSION PROJECT**

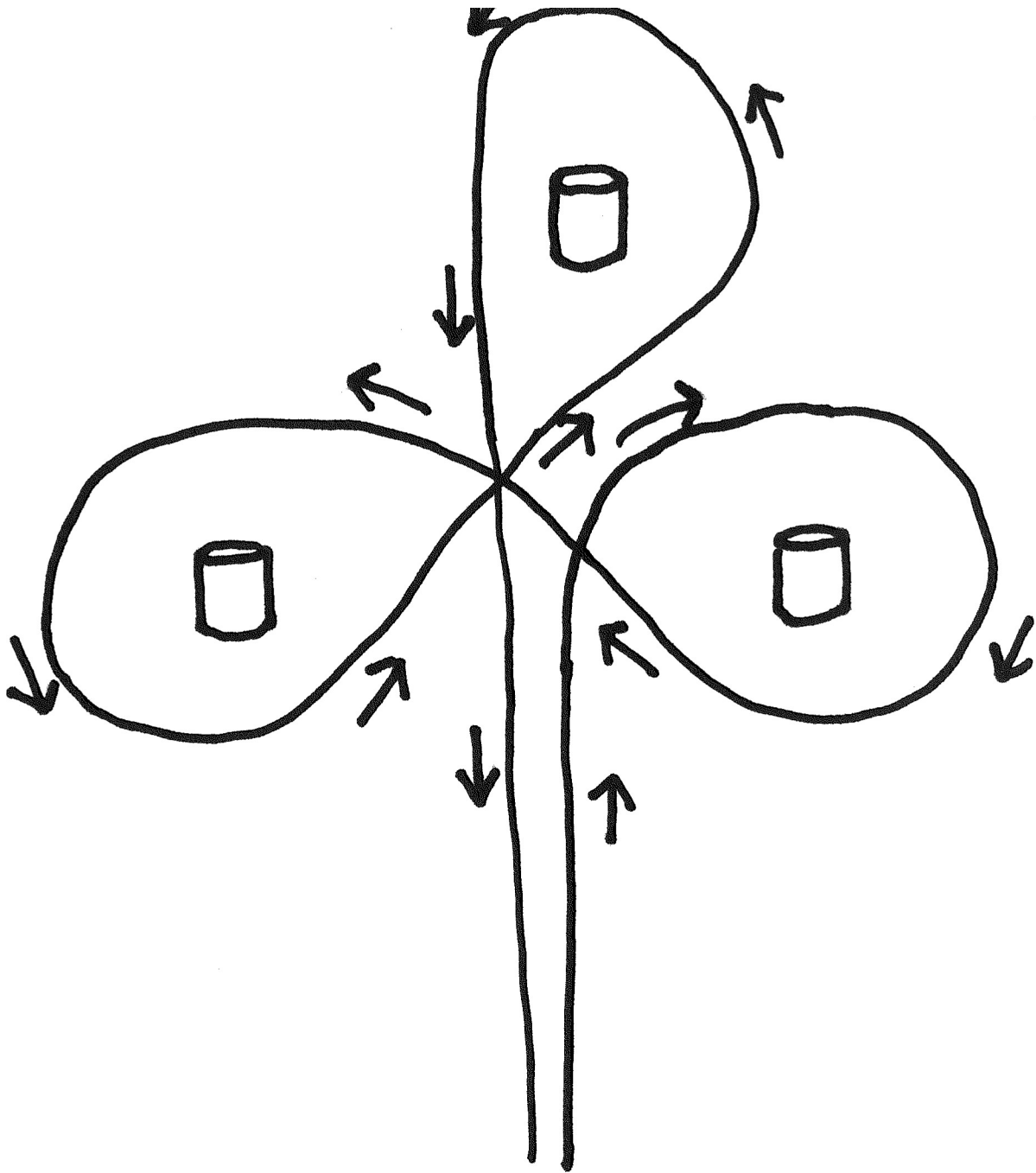
List ideas on a whiteboard or chart paper. Talk with your group about hosting a “show” based on their interests. For example, a pet show, an art show, or a kickball game.

Discuss ideas:

1. What type of show should your group host?
2. Who will you invite?
3. Where will your show be held?
4. What permission do you need?
5. How will you publicize your event?
6. How will you share about Jesus?
7. What will you share about Jesus?
8. What will each person do?

Set a time and date to continue planning for your event.

Barrel Racing Pattern



Eliza Broadus Offering Bank Sample



Chris and Shelia Clarke



Chris and his horse, Chip

