

OUT OF THE ARK

You will need an 'olive twig' (e.g. a sprig of bay), a raven (e.g. a black sock-puppet or cardboard cut-out), a dove (ditto) and two copies of the script.

Before you begin, put the 'olive' twig somewhere for the dove to find at the appropriate point in the script, and choose choose one child to be (i.e. to carry) the raven and another to be the dove. An adult will guide them through their actions ('flying' around the hall and back to the narrator) and read out their words.

Welcome to my Ark! I bet you're wondering why I built this big boat, and what we're all doing inside it.

It all started when God looked at the world he had made, and felt sad. Everyone was behaving very badly, breaking his rules and hurting each other. God decided to send a great big flood as a punishment.

He said to me, "Noah, you're the only person who loves and obeys me. You must build an Ark, a huge boat, so that I can save your family and all the animals from the flood."

God told me exactly how to build my Ark. It took a VERY long time. Then we had to load it with food and water for us and all the animals.

Just as we were carrying on the last load, huge clouds blocked out the sun. I looked up, and a few drops of rain fell on my head. Then I

looked towards the hills and I saw every kind of animal and bird in the world coming towards me!

They all came aboard my Ark, and then it really began to rain. It rained and rained for 40 days and nights. The Ark floated away on a huge new sea, with everyone safely inside. Outside, the water rose until it covered the very tops of the mountains.

Can you imagine being inside that huge boat, floating on all that water? We were all nice and safe and dry in here, but outside the rain was pouring down.

The flood lasted for many months. Then the water began to go down a little. For 40 days the waters went down and down.

We were still floating, but I had an idea. I chose one of the birds on the Ark, and sent it out to see what it could find.

“Off you go, Raven!” I said. “Go and find some dry land.”

RAVEN: I flew a very long way, Noah, but I couldn't find any dry land.

Never mind. We'll wait a bit longer and then send out another bird.

[pause]

Off you go, Dove! Go and find some dry land.

DOVE: I flew a very long way, Noah, but I couldn't find any dry land.

Never mind. We'll wait a bit longer and then you can try again.

[pause]

Off you go, Dove! Try again to find some dry land.

DOVE: Look what I found! It's a twig from an olive tree!

Well done! That means there's dry land and things are growing again. Let's wait a little while longer and see what else you can find.

[pause]

Off you go, Dove! Go and find some more dry land.

[pause]

But the third time, the dove didn't come back. She must have found plenty of dry land where she could live. Then we knew that it wouldn't be long before we could all leave the Ark.

But that's not the end of the story. Have you ever seen a rainbow in the sky? When the flood was over, God sent a rainbow as a sign of his promise NEVER to flood the whole earth again. Even though people are still naughty, and break God's rules and hurt each other, God has promised always to give us another chance to try again.

Whenever we get things wrong, we can say sorry. If we really mean it, then God gives us a fresh start and helps us to try again.