

BON VOYAGE!



INSIDE:

visit 25+ countries

enjoy 50+ activities

experience an amazing adventure



WORLD EXPLORERS

TRAVEL GUIDE FOR PARENTS



ON OUR SAFARI WE SAW LIONS,
LEOPARDS AND CHEETAHS!



MILFORD SOUND WAS OUTSTANDING!

WORLD EXPLORERS

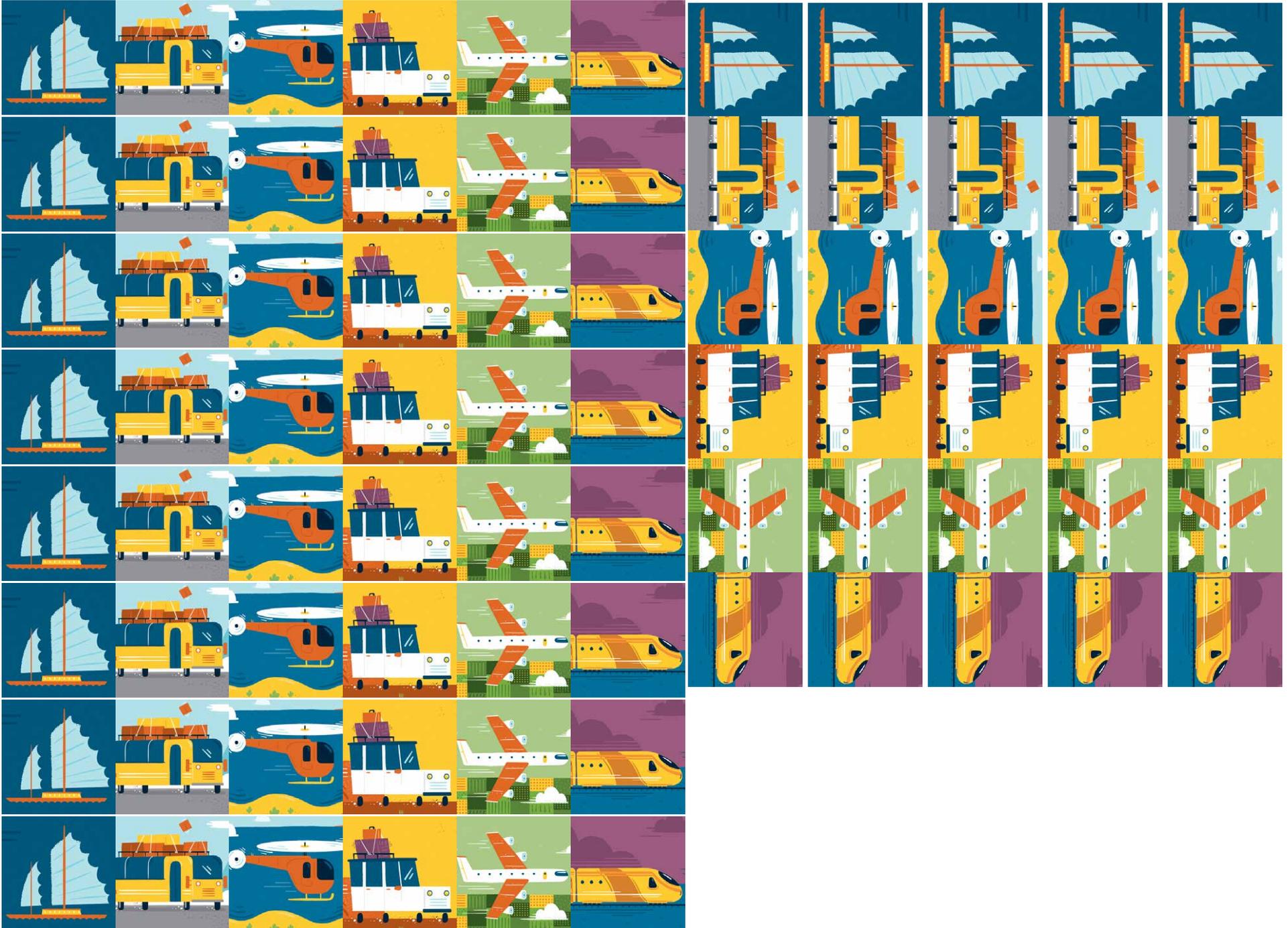


Circle the globe with Focus on the Family's "World Explorers" summer activity! Over the next two months, travel our colorful, diverse world, visiting 30 countries on six continents. Part of the fun will be figuring out where the next stop is, using five clues that reveal interesting facts about the next country. Once you've determined where you're going, use the games, activities and faith lessons to give your kids a glimpse into that country's unique culture. Then, as a family, pray for the needs of that country.

DIRECTIONS >

1. Print out this travel guide for parents, as well as one copy of the passport for each child. Download the World Explorers map from the same page where you found this guide and then print it out. Hang the map in a central location in your home.
2. On each country's page in the travel guide, start by reading the clues to your kids so they can guess the next destination.
3. Once they've correctly guessed the destination, let them mark that location on the map. (They can circle it with a pen or attach the airplane, bus or other fun map markers found on the next page.) Then, cut out that country's stamp and let your kids paste it in their passports.
4. As you spend two days in each country, help your children enjoy the fun activities, insights and games that will teach them a little more about the people who live there.
5. Pray for each country before you leave. Then, it's off to your next destination!

MAP MARKERS





WHERE ARE WE GOING?

READ THESE CLUES TO YOUR KIDS AND LET THEM GUESS THE COUNTRY.



PACK THIS >>

Warm clothes. The Southern Hemisphere is now preparing for winter. The ocean air keeps most places from freezing, but you'll get cold if you bring beach clothes!



WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

In a country with more sheep than people, lamb is often on the menu. McDonald's even tried selling a lamb burger here once!



TRAVEL TIP >>

Get outside and play. The outdoor lifestyle is very important to the people of this country. The raw beauty of Milford Sound makes it the country's top destination.



HELLO! >>

People here speak English, but also include words from the native Maori language. Canadians might think their accent sounds like a mix of Australian and British speech.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

The national symbol is the kiwi, a flightless bird. Kiwis are an endangered species but can still be seen around the country. People here are often called Kiwis.



DESTINATION > NEW ZEALAND

POPULATION / 4.4 MILLION CAPITAL / WELLINGTON

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

LOOKING AROUND >

There are few other countries on earth with such diverse landscapes as New Zealand. Mountains and beaches, farmlands and volcanoes, fjords and forests—the natural scenery will take your breath away.

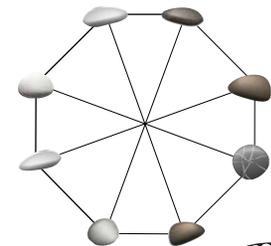
ACTIVITY >

New Zealand experiences a lot of earthquakes, around 17,000 a year, and nearly 200 of those are strong enough to be felt. On the next page, cut out the objects. Fold on the lines, then stand the objects on a box and tap the sides to create a mini "quake." God is still God even though the earth shakes (**Psalm 46:2**).

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

PLAY >

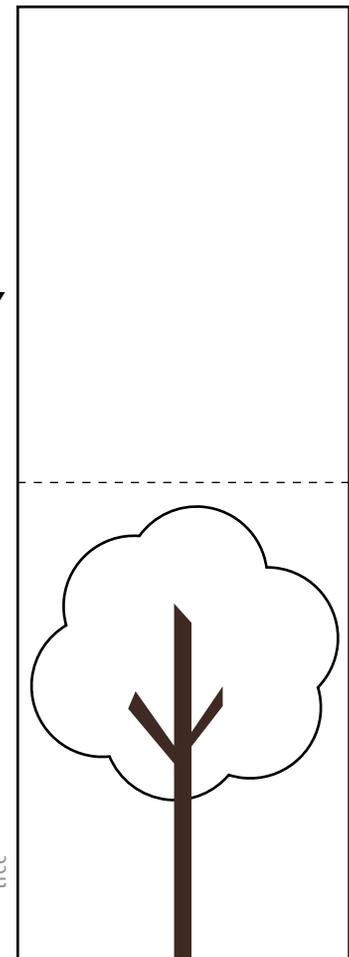
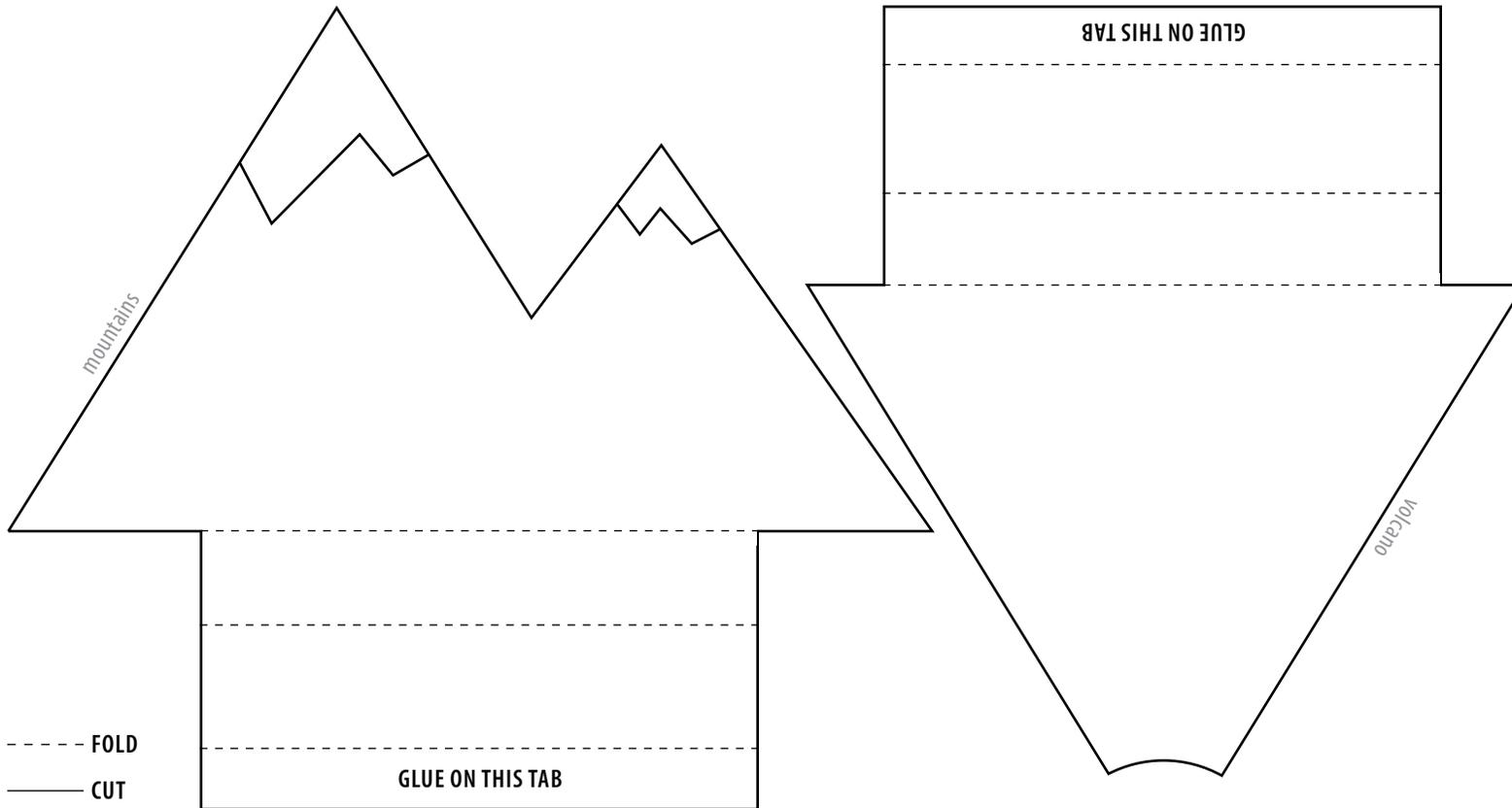
New Zealand's native Maori people have always loved games. One board game is Mu Torere. Play outdoors with chalk, four dark stones and four light stones. Create a game board that looks like the picture on the right. Players take turns moving their colored stones to adjacent empty points. They can only move a stone to the middle space if it is adjacent to an opponent's stone. A player wins when the other is unable to move.



REMEMBER
TO ADD YOUR
STAMP TO YOUR
PASSPORT!

PRAY >

Focus on the Family New Zealand's ACTIV8 program trains college students to build a strong Christian worldview. Pray that these young adults will be able to help their fellow Kiwis recognize the Creator who crafted their island paradise.

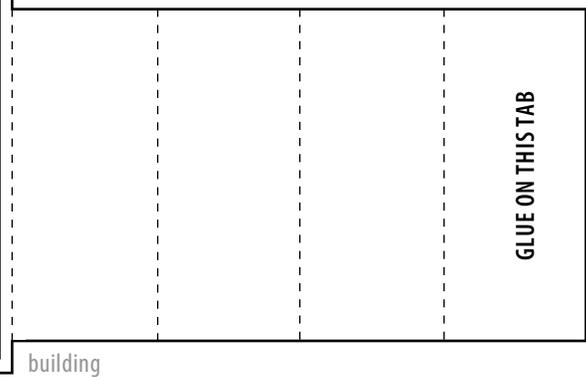
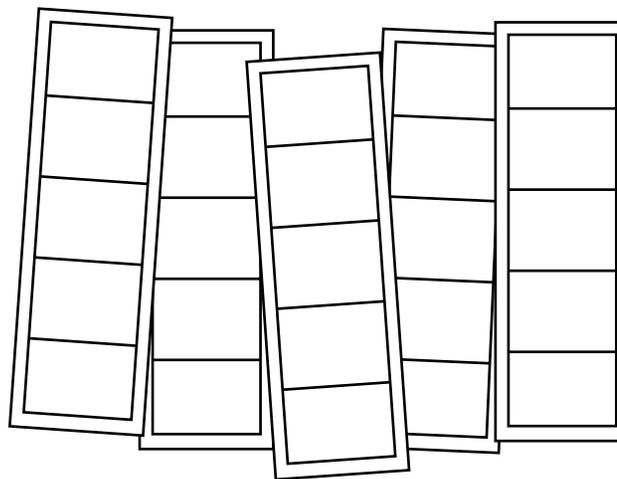
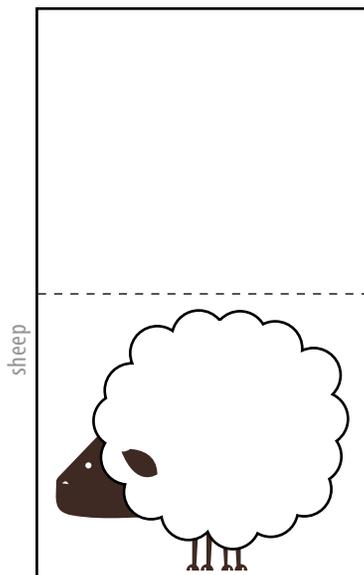
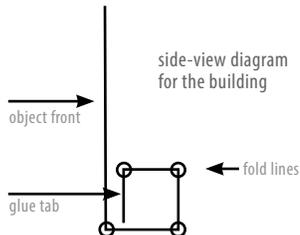
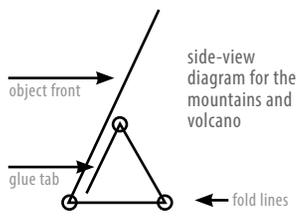


--- FOLD
 ——— CUT

MINI "QUAKE"

NEW ZEALAND ACTIVITY

Cut out the objects. Fold on the lines, glue the tabs, then stand the objects on a box and tap the sides to create a mini "quake."



sheep

building

tree

GLUE ON THIS TAB



WHERE ARE WE GOING?

READ THESE CLUES TO YOUR KIDS AND LET THEM GUESS THE COUNTRY.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

Looking at a playground, you'll see kids running with an oblong ball. The sport isn't American football or even rugby. People here play their own version of football.



PACK THIS >>

Sunscreen. This country has some of the best beaches in the world. There are miles of pristine, golden sand, and sometimes you can get a whole beach to yourself.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

There are many animal species here that exist nowhere else in the world, such as the platypus, the Tasmanian devil and the wombat. Snakes and spiders, too!



TRAVEL TIP >>

Get a map. This country is huge! It's only a little bit smaller than Canada (Canada is 1.3 times its size). It is the only country in the world that is also a continent.



WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

Kangaroo? It's the national animal, and the babies (called joeys) are cute. But in some areas, kangaroos outnumber humans—and make for a tasty steak.



DESTINATION > AUSTRALIA

POPULATION / **22.8 MILLION** CAPITAL / **CANBERRA**

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

LOOKING AROUND >

One of Australia's most incredible natural features is Uluru, an enormous rock rising from the red desert. At 1,142 feet tall and with a circumference of 5.8 miles, Uluru is the largest rock in the world. But as impressive as it is to stand at its base, geologists have found that the vast majority of Uluru is actually underground, hidden from those who visit it.

ACTIVITY >

To understand how big Uluru is, use clay to create a structure that is just over 1 inch high and with a perimeter of 30 inches. Put the model on a piece of cardboard, then draw a tiny dot on the cardboard to represent you. The mighty earth reveals God's glory (**Isaiah 42:5**).

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

LANGUAGE >

Canadians might think Australian English sounds like a more laid-back version of British English, but there are many unique expressions. Aussies like to make words as short as possible. An old story says that people needed to speak this way to keep flies from buzzing into their mouths.

ACTIVITY >

Read the Australian English words below and see if your kids can guess what they mean.

barbie — barbeque
mozzie — mosquito
roo — kangaroo
ta — thank you
broolly — umbrella

sparky — electrician
chippie — carpenter
garbo — garbage collector
Maccas — nickname for McDonald's
sunnies — sunglasses

PRAY >

Australians are busy people, and Focus on the Family is working to remind families how important it is to spend time together. Pray that families will recognize the importance of going through life together.



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WHERE ARE WE GOING?

READ THESE CLUES TO YOUR KIDS AND LET THEM GUESS THE COUNTRY.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Prepare for adventure! Traveling here feels like stepping into another world. The natural beauty and the hundreds of unique cultures offer a mosaic of experiences.



PACK THIS >>

An umbrella! This hot, tropical island nation gets lots of rainfall, and afternoon storms can drench you from head to toe.



FUN FACT >>

This country once held a contest to design its new flag. A 15-year-old girl named Susan won. The flag represents the country's colonial history.



WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

Lots of fruits and vegetables! Taro roots and sweet potatoes are common, as are several other delicious tropical fruits. Pork, chicken and seafood are the main meats.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Something new! This island in the South Pacific is one of the least explored countries in the world. Scientists think there are many undiscovered species in the thick jungles.



DESTINATION > PAPUA NEW GUINEA

POPULATION / 6.7 MILLION CAPITAL / PORT MORESBY

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

LANGUAGE >

There are hundreds of languages spoken here, but tribes living near each other need to communicate to do business, so a language known as Tok Pisin developed. Tok Pisin has roots in basic English, and over time it has become more sophisticated. Most children today learn Tok Pisin as their first language.

ACTIVITY >

You probably couldn't follow a Tok Pisin conversation, but if you focus on a few simple phrases, you can likely guess their meaning. Can you figure out what these phrases mean?

Welkam
Gutbai
God blesim yu!
Mi sori
Plis

Tenkyu
Mi lavim yu
Skius
Hepi berthde
Gut nait

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

PLAY >

To celebrate their diversity, tribes gather to participate in festivals called "sing-sings." People dress in colorful costumes, then dance and sing to demonstrate their tribe's uniqueness. Have a family sing-sing. Dress in a way that shows something special about you, and sing your favorite songs. God loves to hear your songs of praise (**Psalm 47:7**).

PRAY >

Papua New Guinea has many Christians. The church has been able to provide many tribes with schools, hospitals and basic needs such as clean water. Pray that the church can continue ministering to these groups and that the Bible can be translated into the many languages.



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WHERE ARE WE GOING?

READ THESE CLUES TO YOUR KIDS AND LET THEM GUESS THE COUNTRY.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Get ready to meet lots of people! This nation has the largest population of any country. As you might expect, there are a number of distinct cultures here.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

Students here spend lots of time learning to read. Fourth graders are expected to know 2,000 symbols, or “characters,” of their written language.



WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

You've probably eaten lots of this food. Enjoy noodles, rice, dumplings and sizzling stir-fry dishes with more flavors than you can shake a chopstick at.



BRING THIS >>

A Mandarin phrase app or book. More people speak Mandarin as their first language than any other language in the world.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

More than 2,000 years ago, the empire that ruled this area built a wall approximately 5,000 miles long to protect itself from northern invaders.



DESTINATION > CHINA

POPULATION / 1.4 BILLION (YES, BILLION) CAPITAL / BEIJING

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

LANGUAGE >

In the Chinese language, words are composed of symbols called “characters.” Sometimes characters are combined to form a new character. For example, the character for *righteousness* is made up of “lamb” placed above “me.” This tells a story: “The lamb over me is righteousness” (**John 1:29**). Although most people in China are not Christian, the truth of salvation is hidden in their language.

ACTIVITY >

Using watercolors, draw the Chinese character for “righteousness” (found to the right) on a piece of paper.

義

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

PLAY >

Chinese kids often play a simple hand game called “Five Ten Fifteen Twenty.” Two players hold out two fists. On a count of three, they both shout out a number—zero, five, 10, 15 or 20—and open one, both or none of their hands. If a player predicts the correct total number of fingers displayed by both players, then he or she wins that round. If both guess correctly, or incorrectly, then the round is a tie. Caution: If you're slow to open your hands, you lose that round.

PRAY >

In recent history, the Chinese government has been hostile to Christianity. Still, many people are becoming Christians. Pray that people's hearts will be open to Jesus. Pray also that Focus on the Family China can continue to help.



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WHERE ARE WE GOING?

READ THESE CLUES TO YOUR KIDS AND LET THEM GUESS THE COUNTRY.



TRAVEL TIP >>

This country runs on schedule. Trains are very punctual. The average delay is 34 seconds, and if a train or bus is a few minutes late, passengers can get an apology note.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

Children work hard and are independent. They'll walk or take the subway to school. Students even clean the classrooms and bathrooms—no janitors around!



BRING THIS >>

Shoes that come off easily. Many places in this country—including homes, inns, historic sites and restaurants—require you to remove your shoes before entering.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

This country has three famous mountains, including Mount Fuji, which has been the subject of poems and paintings for centuries.



WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

Sushi! People here enjoy lots of fresh seafood, rice and vegetables, preparing many foods with attention to appearance. Every plate looks like a painting!



DESTINATION > JAPAN

POPULATION / 127 MILLION CAPITAL / TOKYO

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

You might think Japanese etiquette is pretty complicated. There are “rules” for visiting homes, exchanging gifts, using chopsticks, riding on trains—just about everything. And that’s before you get to the bowing. When Japanese greet or thank someone, they often bow as a sign of respect, especially when the other person is older or has a higher social status.

ACTIVITY >

Have fun greeting and bowing to one another all day today. See who can bow the lowest without falling down, or who can perform the most unique bow! One day every knee on earth will bow at the name of Jesus (**Philippians 2:9-11**).

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

ACTIVITY >

A popular activity in Japan is origami. The goal is to fold a square sheet of paper into a finished artwork. Origami artists discourage the use of cutting, gluing or marking the paper. Everything is done by folding and bending.

Fold a paper crane! For instructions, visit FocusOnTheFamily.ca/OrigamiCrane. A crane is a symbol of long life in Japan. Some Japanese believe that folding 1,000 origami cranes will bring them good luck and long life; however, Scripture assures us that there is only one path to eternal life (**John 14:6**).

PRAY >

There aren't many Christians in Japan. The vast majority of Japanese practice Shinto or Buddhism. Pray that God would help Japanese Christians be a reflection of God's love at their jobs and schools.



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WHERE ARE WE GOING?

READ THESE CLUES TO YOUR KIDS AND LET THEM GUESS THE COUNTRY.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

What's that stadium for? Cyber sports! Professional video gaming is popular in this country.



PACK THIS >>

Church clothes. Visit a Yoido Full Gospel Church, which boasts the world's largest congregation. Don't worry if you sleep in a bit on Sunday. There are seven services.



TRAVEL TIP >>

You'll want to avoid the area between this country and its northern neighbor. After a war, this country split into two. People on both sides would love to see peace.



FUN FACT >>

Wait, how old are you? In this country, you're considered a 1-year-old immediately when you're born.



WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

If the spicy cabbage dish known as *kimchi* isn't your thing, you might enjoy all kinds of sweet potato-flavored foods, including breads, desserts and pizza.



DESTINATION > SOUTH KOREA

POPULATION / 51 MILLION CAPITAL / SEOUL

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

Just ask any South Korean student—competition is a big part of life. But people here also treasure lighthearted fun. Long ago, *Tu Ho* ("Pitch Pot") was played between royal family members throughout Asia. Today, the game is very popular in Korea. In *Tu Ho*, players carefully toss arrows or sticks into a quiver or narrow container from a specified distance.

ACTIVITY >

Make your own *Tu Ho* game: Make six arrows with straight sticks. Weight one end of the arrows with a small handful of sand wrapped in cloth and attached to the shaft with strong tape. Use a small trash can for the target, with players standing about seven paces back. The player landing the most arrows after five rounds wins.



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LAYOVER > DAY TWO

TRADITION >

Legend has it that a Korean queen's army once used a burning kite to trick people into believing that a shooting star was over their city. These days, kite flying is more of a leisure activity. On breezy days, kites at parks fill the skies. During New Year's celebrations, South Koreans cut loose their kites, a symbol of last year's bad luck flying away.

Build it: It's easy to make your own kite. Here's the key: *Strong* but *lightweight*. Plastic coffee-stirring sticks make good frame pieces, and you can slide one inside another to make the pieces longer. Use lightweight clear tape to attach thin plastic to the frame, and use strong thread for a line.

PRAY >

Take the time to pray that God's church in South Korea keeps growing. Approximately one third of the population here is Christian. Pray that God's love and truth will continue to influence the Korean people.





WHERE ARE WE GOING?

READ THESE CLUES TO YOUR KIDS AND LET THEM GUESS THE COUNTRY.



BRING THIS >>

An umbrella. Or maybe a boat! Summer is the time for monsoons—the seasonal winds that sweep months of rain across the land.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

Kids here play a game where they hit a ball with a paddle-like bat. It's cricket, the most popular sport in this country.



WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

You could live in this country for years, traveling from region to region, and still not sample all the spices and foods. Start with warm flatbread and a bowl of curry.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Watch out for cows! Respect for animals is part of this country's beliefs. Cows are especially protected. They can do whatever they want, even wander the streets!



LOOK FOR THIS >>

In 1631, the emperor Shah Jahan lost his beloved wife. In his grief, he commissioned the massive white marble Taj Mahal. It may be the world's most beautiful tomb.



DESTINATION > INDIA

POPULATION / 1.3 BILLION CAPITAL / NEW DELHI

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

PLAY >

Seven Stones is a dodgeball-style game played by Indian children. Collect seven stones that can be stacked in a column. You'll also need a soft playground ball.

Make two teams. Draw a line 15 feet from the stack of stones. Standing behind the line, players on the first team take turns throwing the ball at the stones. Once they hit the pile, the other team controls the ball. The first team now tries to reconstruct the stack while the other team throws the ball at them. Players of the stacking team can scatter, but are "out" if hit by the ball.

If the stacking team completes the pile without all being hit, they win the round. If not, the throwing team wins.

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

CULTURE >

In India, many people get around the crowded streets by hiring three-wheeled, motorized carts called rickshaws. Passengers have to trust their driver's ability to navigate obstacles.

Explore this type of transportation. Form partners, having one person as a rickshaw, and the other a passenger. Passengers close their eyes, hold on to their partner's shoulders and hope their driver can navigate the obstacles of your yard. Trusting others is hard, but we can *always* trust in God (**Proverbs 3:5-6**).

PRAY >

The vast majority of Indians believe in Hinduism or Islam. Pray that Focus on the Family's new India office can help people recognize their need for the Gospel in a land plagued by oppression and poverty.



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WHERE ARE WE GOING?

READ THESE CLUES TO YOUR KIDS AND LET THEM GUESS THE COUNTRY.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Use your elbows! You're used to standing in line in our country. But there are no lines to stand in here. You'll need to work your way to the front of a crowd.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

The former Soviet Union sent minorities and Russians to live here. That history means children here enjoy friendships with kids from many cultures.



WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? >>

There's plenty of meat and milk on the menu. People here once worked as herders raising sheep, camels and horses. That heritage still influences the cuisine.



BRING THIS >>

A Russian phrase app or book. Although Russian isn't the country's official language, it is used for official communication because of this country's Soviet past.



[DON'T] LOOK FOR THIS >>

The ocean! This country is the largest without a border on an ocean. However, it does border the Caspian Sea—earth's largest inland body of water.



DESTINATION > KAZAKHSTAN

POPULATION / 18.2 MILLION CAPITAL / ASTANA

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

Kazakhstan sure loves its fruit! Fruit markets are everywhere. But Kazakhstan is perhaps best known for its apples. The wild apples growing on Kazakhstan's Tian Shan slopes are believed to be the ancestor of today's domestic varieties.

ACTIVITY >

How many different fruits can you name? Make a fruit salad together, thanking God that He has given us so many wonderful fruits to eat (**Genesis 1:29**).

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

PLAY >

Kids here have long played games that use the anklebones of sheep or goats—one of the earliest forms of dice. You can play a version of "anklebone shooting" if you have a bunch of modern dice:

One player drops all dice and then looks for matches. If there are matching dice, the player "flicks" one dice so that it hits its match without either dice striking others. If successful, the player keeps one of those two dice and continues flicking until he misses or there are no more matching dice. Player two then takes a turn rolling and shooting with the remaining dice. The player with the most dice collected at the end of the game is the winner.

PRAY >

Pray that God's truth, freedom and love can be communicated to the Kazakh people in a way they can understand and share with others, especially their Muslim neighbors.



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WHERE ARE WE GOING?

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BRING THIS >>

Your church clothes! This country was the first nation to officially endorse Christianity, and towns here have some of the oldest and most beautiful churches in the world.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Don't turn down the apricots. The people here love apricots and have invented hundreds of foods and drinks using this tasty little fruit.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

Reading, writing, math and . . . chess? Chess is a mandatory subject in schools here. Students are tested on it, and some of the world's best players come from here.



WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

People here would never think to have a meal without bread. The tasty, chewy *lavash* flatbread is baked in small underground ovens. It can keep for about a year.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Mount Ararat—the national symbol of this country—can be seen from the capital city. People believe it is the biblical Mount Ararat—the resting place of Noah's ark.



DESTINATION > ARMENIA

POPULATION / 3.1 MILLION CAPITAL / YEREVAN

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE MOMENT >

As you travel Armenia, you'll notice unique letters that look nothing like our English alphabet. For a Canadian, they look a bit like an alien language! The alphabet was created 1,600 years ago so that Armenians could read God's Word in their own language. The first sentence that scholar Mesrop Mashtots translated was Proverbs 1:2—“To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight.”

ACTIVITY >

An old story says that the Armenian alphabet is arranged as a prayer—beginning with A as Astvats (God) and ending with K as Kristos (Christ). Pretend that you are responsible for re-ordering the English alphabet. Can you create a simple prayer with words that start with each of the 26 letters?

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

PLAY >

Egg jousting is a simple game the children of Armenia play at Easter. Give two children an unpeeled hardboiled egg. Kids then “joust” by tapping the small ends of their eggs together until someone's egg cracks. The winner's eggshell remains solid. Now play on the large ends. The game requires steady hands, and players must stand firm and not flinch. We can stand firm in our faith, too, knowing that God is always with us (**1 Corinthians 15:58**).

PRAY >

Pray that Armenian Christians would seek God's wisdom and truth, that they would let the Holy Spirit lead them as He led their ancestors, so they may stand firm in their faith.



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KIDS & CULTURE >>

Kids here may not smile at you. Don't worry; they're not being rude. A smile is a more intimate response not given to strangers. You have to be friends first!



WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

A bowl of borscht. Every chef has a version of this popular beet soup. Loaded with vegetables, beef and topped with sour cream, borscht is their most famous dish.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Enjoy the trains! This country has one of the world's largest rail systems. Millions ride the subways. This country has the longest single railway on the planet.



BRING THIS >>

A calculator. Prices here look really expensive, until you do the math. A soup-and-sandwich lunch with a price tag of 540 rubles is only about \$8.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Find the bright colors and onion-shaped domes of Saint Basil's Cathedral. Now a museum, this structure is sometimes confused with the Kremlin, the president's home.



DESTINATION > RUSSIA

POPULATION / 142 MILLION CAPITAL / MOSCOW

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE MOMENT >

Russia is huge. As the world's largest country in terms of land area, Russia is 1.7 times larger than Canada. Russia has 11 time zones, more than any other country. So while some people in Russia are eating breakfast, others are getting ready for dinner!

ACTIVITY >

Pretend you are in a Russian time zone today by having dinner foods for breakfast (and vice versa) or wearing your pajamas during the daytime. No matter what time zone we are in, God knows when we lie down and when we get up (**Psalm 139:1-3**).

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

PLAY >

Russian children have long played games that involve throwing sticks and balls. Gorodki (literally "little cities") is a lawn game in which players take turns throwing batons at each other's "little cities"—built from different arrangements of wood pins. The winner is the one who knocks apart all of his opponent's cities with the fewest throws. Play a simple version of this game using soup or soda cans to build the cities and throwing balls, sticks or bean bags. Stand about 20 feet apart on flat ground or even pavement. (Thick grass hurts low throws.)

PRAY >

There are many beautiful and ornate churches in Russia. Some house vibrant communities of faith, while many others are empty or serve as museums. Pray that the Russian people will be attracted to the love of Jesus.



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WHERE ARE WE GOING?

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FUN FACT >>

This country's existed for nearly 4,000 years, having many different governments. Many scholars say that Byblos is the oldest continuously habited city on earth.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Baalbeck is home to magnificently preserved ruins. The ancient Romans (and before that the Greeks) built temples atop massive stones.



WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? >>

You'll love *shawarma*—shredded meat served in bread and topped with chopped vegetables and a garlic sauce. Look for stacks of meat roasting on a rotating spit.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

Schools here are growing, although not always for good reasons. A civil war in neighboring Syria has brought many families—and kids—into this country.



BRING THIS >>

Good boots. Hike through beautiful cedar forests. The cedar is this country's symbol, and during Bible times, cedars were highly desired by carpenters (Psalm 92:12).



DESTINATION > LEBANON

POPULATION / 6.2 MILLION CAPITAL / BEIRUT

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

Traditionally in Lebanon, girls don't play sports. But in recent years, girls' involvement in sports, especially soccer, has become more popular. And soccer is allowing Lebanese girls to develop relationships with children from different religious and cultural backgrounds. Throughout the Middle East, team sports are helping children build bridges to new friendships.

PLAY >

With a soccer ball or any lightweight ball, try to juggle it as many times as you can with your feet, legs, chest, head . . . any part of your body but your arms and hands. See who in your family can keep it airborne the longest. (The world record is over 24 hours.)

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

LANGUAGE >

The main language used throughout Lebanon is Arabic, and the Arabic expression *Alhamdulillah* (pronunciation: al-ham-doo-lee-lah)—“praise to God”—is commonly spoken by both Christians and Muslims. The Lebanese use this phrase throughout their daily activities to offer thanks to God. Today, be intentional about praising God—saying *Alhamdulillah*—throughout your activities. This evening, talk with each other about some of the things each member of your family thanked God for today (**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**).

PRAY >

In the past, violence has hurt Lebanon and its mostly peace-loving people. Pray that God will help Lebanese Christians be peacemakers and give them love for their Muslim neighbors.



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WHERE ARE WE GOING?

READ THESE CLUES TO YOUR KIDS AND LET THEM GUESS THE COUNTRY.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Get to know the people. They often compare themselves to the *sabra*, a desert cactus fruit. They're prickly on the outside, but soft and sweet on the inside.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

Many kids here are good with technology. They can look forward to working in the world's second biggest concentration of high-tech companies.



BRING THIS >>

Your Bible. This country is the home of many historical sites from the Bible, including many locations of Jesus Christ's earthly ministry.



WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? >>

You may notice a lot of "kosher" restaurants, which means that these places stick to Old Testament dietary laws—no pork, shellfish or rabbit here.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in the Old City of Jerusalem, is the traditionally observed location of Jesus Christ's burial and resurrection.



DESTINATION > ISRAEL

POPULATION / 8 MILLION CAPITAL / JERUSALEM

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

LANGUAGE >

Hebrew was a language used during Bible times—and then it gradually died off. For nearly 2,000 years, Hebrew was out of everyday use. But today it is the national language of Israel. Worldwide, nearly 9 million people speak Hebrew—quite a revival for a language that once was nearly extinct.

Interestingly, the Hebrew alphabet has no vowels. Jewish scholars like to say that letters are the body of their language, while vowels are the *soul*—unseen, but the very spirit of the language.

ACTIVITY >

Can you read without seeing the "soul" of a word? Try deciphering a few common English Bible verses.

N th bgngng, Gd crtd th hvns nd th rth. (Genesis 1:1)

Trst n th LRD wth ll yr hrt, nd d nt ln n yr wn ndrstdng; n ll yr wys cknwldg Hm, nd H wll mk strght yr pths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Fr Gd s lvd th wrld, tht H gv Hs nly Sn, tht whvr blvs n Hm shld nt prsh bt hv trnl lf. (John 3:16)

Lv s ptnt nd knd; lv ds nt nvy r bst; t s nt rrgnt. (1 Corinthians 13:4)

Thrfr, f nyn s n Chrst, h s nw crtn. Th ld hs pssd wy; bhld, th nw hs cm. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

PLAY >

"Hold the rope" is an old Israeli game that emphasizes teamwork. Put a cap for each person in the middle of a circle. With both hands holding a rope, players can use any body part except their hands to help each other get hats on heads! Everyone must work together to accomplish the goal (**1 Corinthians 12:12-31**).

PRAY >

Israel is a thriving, modern country. But it is often at the center of political and religious unrest. Pray that leaders will have wisdom to live in harmony with their neighbors. Pray that Christians here can be a clear testimony of God's love and peace.



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KIDS & CULTURE >>

“Want to go to the park in the morning?” Don’t pencil in an exact time. People here are less precise about time. “Morning” can be between 6 a.m. and 4 p.m.



WHAT’S FOR DINNER? >>

Long a cultural crossroads, this country has plenty of exotic dishes. One of the most popular foods is *ful medames*—seasoned fava beans with bread and eggs.



BRING THIS >>

Sunglasses! Most of this country sits in the blazing desert, although northern areas get some rain. Water comes from the Nile, the world’s longest river.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Ride a camel! Camels are native to this country, and their bodies are uniquely designed to deal with the climate. They can go for a week without drinking water!



LOOK FOR THIS >>

The famous Great Pyramid of Giza was built as a burial site for Khufu, a pharaoh. Built from limestone blocks, the pyramid is taller than the Statue of Liberty.



DESTINATION > EGYPT

POPULATION / 88.5 MILLION CAPITAL / CAIRO

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

Like kids everywhere, Egyptian children enjoy different ball games. Some scholars believe that Egyptians were the world’s first to enjoy ball sports. Pictures on ancient monuments portray what seem to be field hockey, golf, handball and other sports. But these pictures rarely included rules, leaving historians to wonder how these games were played.

ACTIVITY >

Without rules, sports would be difficult! Combine sports equipment from around your house and imagine that rules haven’t been created yet. Invent a new way of playing together—making it fun and fair for everyone.

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

ACTIVITY >

Five thousand years ago, the ancient Egyptians had a sophisticated system of writing that used pictures and symbols to express ideas. Make Egyptian “cartouches” together—ancient name tags made of pictures. For every letter in your name, draw a simple symbol or picture that represents you in some way. Consider birth order, things you like, talents that God has given you, favorite subjects in school, favorite foods, etc. Mix them up and see if you can guess whose cartouche belongs to whom (**Proverbs 22:1**).

PRAY >

Religious persecution is common in this part of the world. Pray for the safety of Christians, and that Focus on the Family Middle East can minister to our brothers and sisters who suffer.



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LOOK FOR THIS >>

Underground churches. In the 12th century, King Lalibela led the construction of 11 Coptic churches. But these churches are unique—they're carved out of solid rock.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

Kids usually have to walk a long way to school. And because kids here often have to work to help support the family, they may not go to school past fifth grade.



WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? >>

A traditional meal here will have plenty of *injera*, a spongy sourdough flatbread, which is used to scoop up flavorful meat, bean and vegetable dishes.



FUN FACT >>

The Danakil Depression is one of the hottest, driest places on earth. The active volcanoes and alien landscape will make you wonder if you're even *on* earth.



TRAVEL TIP >>

This country has its own system of keeping time. Dawn (6 a.m.) is known as 12 o'clock, and dusk (6 p.m.) is also 12 o'clock. This means you'll eat breakfast at about 1 o'clock.



DESTINATION > ETHIOPIA

POPULATION / 99.5 MILLION CAPITAL / ADDIS ABABA

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

Ethiopian children enjoy singing, dancing and playing, but they also work hard. One chore kids are given is fetching their family's water. This isn't easy—kids may have a long walk over rugged terrain.

ACTIVITY >

Set up a "water route" in your yard, with the destination being an outdoor faucet. Place stepping stones, build simple bridges and incorporate challenging landscape features. Give your children empty jugs and challenge them to fetch your day's supply of water. Can your family make it for 24 hours using only the water your children carry? Thank God that He is the true source of "living water" (John 7:37-39).

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

ACTIVITY >

Most children in Ethiopia don't have LEGO sets, fancy dolls or the latest video games. But they do have resourcefulness. Ethiopian children can make toys, balls and other playthings using materials that most of us would just throw away.

Collect and clean plastic jugs, sturdy cardboard boxes and jar lids. Have a contest to see who can use these materials to create the best toy.

PRAY >

Frequent drought in Ethiopia means that there is often not enough food. Pray that God will help families have resources to care for themselves and that leaders will make wise, honest choices.



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FUN FACT >>

The name of this country means “great houses of stone” in the native language. This name comes from an ancient stone city, once the capital of the kingdom.



WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

Maize is a staple food for most people. Maize is ground into flour and used to make thick, delicious porridges, served with different meats and vegetables.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

In recent years, kids here are enjoying their country's renewed focus on education. Schools are growing and more and more kids are learning to read.



TRAVEL TIP >>

You must go on a safari. You'll see lions, leopards and cheetahs while driving on the savanna, and hippos and crocodiles while boating on the Zambezi River.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Victoria Falls is the world's largest sheet of falling water. The native name in the Shona language is *Mosi-oa-Tunya*, which means “the smoke that thunders.”



DESTINATION > ZIMBABWE

POPULATION / 14.2 MILLION CAPITAL / HARARE

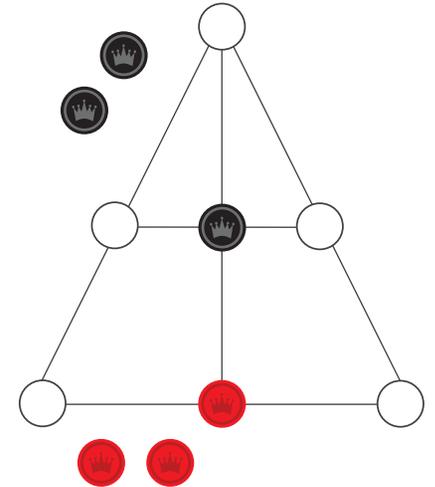
CHECK IN > DAY ONE

PLAY >

“Tsoro Yematatu” is an old Zimbabwe game that looks similar to tic-tac-toe. But there's a twist: Pieces can jump over each other.

Using sidewalk chalk, draw the triangular board. Each player chooses three game markers of the same color. (Checkers work well.) Players take turns placing their markers at vacant intersections. There will be one empty spot left.

Players now take turns moving, in two ways: They can move to an empty adjacent spot, or they can jump over any marker to an empty space. The player who gets three markers in a row is the winner.



LAYOVER > DAY TWO

ACTIVITY >

Quirky stacked rocks are a famous feature of the Zimbabwe landscape. The stacks occur naturally, when wind and water erode the softer lower rocks, leaving the top ones balanced in place. These stacks may look easy to push over. But many have tried without success. Their massive size and perfect balance mean these stone stacks are here to stay (**Isaiah 26:4**).

Collect rocks of different sizes and have a family stone stacking contest. Flat rocks work best. Can your stack withstand a strong breath? A stream of water from the hose?

PRAY >

Pray for the leaders of Zimbabwe, that they would make honest decisions that help families thrive.



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WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

Fun to eat, fun to say. *Bobotie* is made of spicy minced meat baked with eggs. Some locals say *bobotie* is the national dish because it's rarely found elsewhere.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Stop to smell the roses! The Cape Floristic Region has over 9,000 plant species. Nearly 70 percent of these plants and flowers are found nowhere else on earth.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

This country is called "the rainbow nation." There is a lot of cultural diversity. An average classroom might have children from a dozen different cultures.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Kruger National Park is one of the world's best wildlife parks. The numbers of animals are unparalleled. It's a great place to see elephants, lions, rhinos and buffaloes.



FUN FACT >>

A handful of countries around the world have more than one capital city. This country has three: Cape Town, Bloemfontein and Pretoria.



DESTINATION > SOUTH AFRICA

POPULATION / **53.7 MILLION** CAPITALS / **CAPE TOWN, BLOEMFONTEIN AND PRETORIA**

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

LANGUAGE >

South Africa has 11 official languages. In the Xhosa language, the way to say *hello* is *molo*. In Setswana, you would say, *dumela*. In Afrikaans, which is based on Dutch, you would say, *hallo*, and in Zulu, the most common language, you would say, *sawubona*. While English is the language of business, entertainment and most government work, everyday life throughout South Africa is carried on in a variety of languages.

ACTIVITY >

Pretend that family members are new friends who do not speak your language. Take turns demonstrating ways to communicate without using words. Can your family members guess what you're trying to tell them?

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

CULTURE >

South Africans sometimes joke that their national sport is the *braaivleis*—which isn't a sport at all, but a form of barbecue. A *braai* is a major part of the South African lifestyle. Friends gather around the fire, cooking, sipping cool beverages and enjoying the lovely African evenings. Families might *braai* several times a week, celebrating everything from a long weekend to a wedding party. The *braai* is one activity that truly transcends this country's races, cultures and traditions. Lifelong relationships are forged around the fire (**Acts 2:46-47**).

ACTIVITY >

In every culture, mealtimes can strengthen relationships. Pick a local park that allows cooking and invite neighbors or other families from church to an evening *braai*. Cook some tasty food, play some music and have no agenda besides making a memory.

PRAY >

Pray for Focus on the Family's Tales of Hope program, which works to help families who have been forced to survive without their parents.



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WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

Many traditional foods evolved from this country's poorer past. For example, no part of the pig goes to waste—people here use “everything but the grunt.”



TRAVEL TIP >>

Don't turn down a spot of tea. The people here are famous for their tea-making and enjoyment of this afternoon beverage with friends.



HELLO! >>

English is widely spoken here, although it has a unique flavor. Canadians might confuse the accent with Scottish English.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Drive the Ring of Kerry, a circular road trip that takes visitors past ancient monuments, stone castles, spectacular gardens and charming villages.



BRING THIS >>

A raincoat. The Atlantic Ocean brings plenty of rainfall to this country. The result is lush greenery. They don't call this place the Emerald Isle for nothing.



DESTINATION > IRELAND

POPULATION / 4.8 MILLION CAPITAL / DUBLIN

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

You may know that St. Patrick's Day originated in Ireland, but do you know why? Patrick, a Roman citizen in England, was kidnapped at age 16. He was a slave in Ireland until he escaped at age 22. Later, he returned as a missionary to this Emerald Isle where he used the shamrock to teach about the Trinity (three in one concept). Some think the shamrock is the symbol of Ireland, but it's not. The national symbol is the harp.

PLAY >

“Mr. Fox” is a version of tag. One player is Mr. Fox, while others stand in a line about 20 feet away from Mr. Fox, whose back is turned. The players ask, “What time is it, Mr. Fox?” Fox replies, “1 o'clock.” Players step forward, repeating the question each step they take until Mr. Fox answers, “Dinner time!” The players scatter, with Mr. Fox chasing them. The first person tagged is the Fox. Thank God for laughter and fun times together (**Proverbs 17:22**).

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

LANGUAGE >

What would life be without such simple words as *yes* and *no*? In the Irish language, those two words don't exist. People need to restate the verb used in the question. If someone asks whether you've had lunch, you wouldn't say, “Yes!” Instead, you'd say, “I ate lunch at home,” or something similar. Answers are more detailed.

ACTIVITY >

As a family, try going a whole day without using “yes” or “no.” You might find yourself saying more to each other than you normally do!

PRAY >

There are sure a lot of beautiful cathedrals in Ireland. Sadly, many are no longer used to worship God. Pray for Focus on the Family Ireland as it strives to help Irish people recognize that life is a gift from God.



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READ THESE CLUES TO YOUR KIDS AND LET THEM GUESS THE COUNTRY.



FUN FACT >>

This country completely surrounds two smaller independent states.



KIDS AND CULTURE >>

In this country, it's very common for children to keep living with their parents after they're married, up to age 30 or so.



TRAVEL TIP >>

One famous city in this country has no cars. Everything is connected by canals, and you'll need a boat—a water taxi—to get around.



WHAT'S FOR LUNCH >>

Many foods your family takes for granted—such as pizza, pasta and pretzels—are popular here.



PACK THIS >>

A swimsuit! This country has about 4,720 miles of coastline with beautiful beaches. Seen from space, all that shoreline looks like a boot!



DESTINATION > ITALY

POPULATION / 62 MILLION CAPITAL / ROME

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

Italy loves art and museums to display that art. The Renaissance period of history—a “rebirth” of art, culture and learning—began in Italy. You’ve probably seen Leonardo da Vinci’s famous painting of Jesus’ last meal with His disciples. Many great Italian artists created works for churches to make them beautiful places to worship God.

ACTIVITY >

God is a creative God, and He has made us to be creative, too. Use your creative talents to worship God. Pick a favorite event from the Bible and draw, paint or construct a scene inspired by that story.

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

PLAY >

Here’s a favorite Italian children’s game. In *Lupo Mangia Frutta* (“Wolf That Eats Fruit”), one child is the wolf, while other players each choose a fruit type. The “fruits” line up a short distance from the wolf, who calls out, “Knock, knock.” The others answer, “Who’s there?” The wolf replies, “The wolf, and I want to eat a _____.” If anyone’s fruit is called, that person must run to a designated “fruit bowl” safe spot. If the wolf tags the child before he or she reaches the safe space, that child becomes the new wolf.

PRAY >

Many Italians would probably say their country is a Christian nation, but only about one third of Italian people attend church. Pray that more Italians will embrace God’s love and choose to live for Him.



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KIDS & CULTURE >>

The government pays families of high school students about \$187 a month to attend school. College tuition is free, although other expenses can be very high.



HELLO! >>

Although not the country's official language, almost 90 percent of the population speak English fluently. This is due to all the foreign movies and TV shown here.



BRING THIS >>

A boat? Well, you can't bring a boat. However, a water vessel, such as a ferry, is a good way to get around the 14 islands that comprise this country's capital.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Scattered throughout this country is the world's largest model of the solar system. The entire collection of sculptures can be seen by traveling the length of the country.



WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? >>

Lingonberry jam is the most popular condiment here, accompanying everything from meatballs to porridge and pancakes. But this jam is not usually eaten on bread.



DESTINATION > SWEDEN

POPULATION / 9.8 MILLION CAPITAL / STOCKHOLM

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

PLAY >

Long ago, Swedish fathers carved wooden toys for their children. Many of those toys were horses, since the horse was a critical part of life. Today, horses aren't necessary for transportation or work, but a little red wooden horse, known as a Dala horse, has become a symbol of Sweden.

ACTIVITY >

Draw and cut the shape of a horse from red construction paper. Find pictures online to paint your horse with the traditional floral *kurbit* pattern. According to tradition, the *kurbit* symbolizes Jonah's vine. Read the story in Jonah 4 about the compassion we should have for those who do not know God.

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

LANGUAGE >

Can you be polite without saying "please"? The word *please* doesn't exist in the Swedish language. If you want to ask for something politely, you need to say it differently: "Could I have that, thanks?" or "Would you kindly remove your feet from the table?"

ACTIVITY >

As a family, try being more creative with your polite requests. Can you go a whole day thinking of other ways to say "please"?

PRAY >

Looking at the way Swedes celebrate births, weddings and Christmas, you might think that this is a land of believers. But few Swedes take God seriously. Pray that He will soften the hearts of Swedish people to His love and truth.



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KIDS & CULTURE >>

Kids, behave well, and your parents may get a medal! Since 1920, the government has given medals to parents who have raised “children with dignity.”



TRAVEL TIP >>

Learn some of the language. People here are proud of their language and don't like it when guests start speaking English. But they'll rescue you if you struggle.



BRING THIS >>

Your good manners. Politeness reigns supreme here. In one coffee shop, leaving out “hello” and “please” when you order means you will be charged more.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Driving across the Millau Viaduct, you'll feel like you're flying. One of the towers on this bridge is the tallest structure in this country—taller than the Eiffel Tower.



FUN FACT >>

It was once illegal for women to wear pants in this country's capital, although police never enforced the law. (Hint: This country's name rhymes with *pants*.)



DESTINATION > FRANCE

POPULATION / 67 MILLION CAPITAL / PARIS

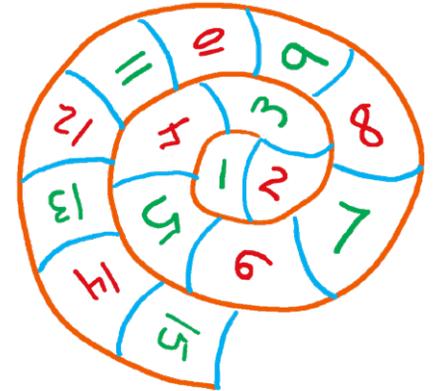
CHECK IN > DAY ONE

PLAY >

In France, *escargot* (snail) is a food, but it's also the name of a hopscotch-style game. Draw a spiral with chalk. Big ones are more challenging. Divide the spiral into segments, each large enough for a foot.

Players take turns hopping on one foot through the spiral and back. If players switch feet or step on lines, their turn ends. If they make it all the way, they mark one segment with their initials. Players can rest with both feet on boxes that have their initials. Other players must jump over those segments.

The game ends when it is impossible to hop through the spiral. The player with the most boxes then wins.



LAYOVER > DAY TWO

CULTURE >

In French, *déjeuner* (lunch) is more than a meal. France basically shuts down for a couple of hours. Businesses take a break. Kids go home to enjoy time with families—and a big meal. About 2 p.m., everyone goes back to work or school, refreshed and ready for action.

ACTIVITY >

Take a long midday break together, making lunch your main meal. Pack finger foods and go to the park, a nearby walking trail or another relaxing place (**Mark 6:31-32**).

PRAY >

As in much of Europe, there are a lot of empty churches in France. But some people are turning back to God. Pray that the love of Jesus will shine through these people's lives.



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KIDS & CULTURE >>

When not playing soccer, kids here continue their fancy footwork with a *fucji* ("foot bag"). They perform dozens of tricks, all without letting the *fucji* touch the ground.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Don't plan to drive on Sundays. Most big city roads are shut down and turned into paths for people to enjoy riding bicycles, walking and skating.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

While you're sightseeing, take advantage of the many, many fruit and juice vendors all over the coast. It's a fruit lover's paradise!



BRING THIS >>

A bird book, and maybe some binoculars. The rainforests in this country are home to the largest number of bird species in the world.



FUN FACT >>

Dozens of languages are spoken here, and while English is one of them, it is not very common. But if you can speak Spanish, you can talk with most people.



DESTINATION > COLOMBIA

POPULATION / 47 MILLION CAPITAL / BOGOTA

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

In Spanish, the word for "elder" is *mayor*, which is understood as "higher person." Older people are seen as being wise and worthy of great respect. You will always see the oldest person at a meal served first. Colombians expect the most senior person, whether at home or at work, to make decisions.

ACTIVITY >

Invite grandparents or older friends from church to your home for a special evening meal. Serve the group in order from oldest to youngest (**Leviticus 19:32**).

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

PLAY >

Colombian kids love playing with spinning tops. In one popular top game, a player spins his top into a chalk circle, while other players attempt to knock it out with their tops. No tops? You can make one from a flat piece of plastic, such as a coffee can lid or an old CD. Hot-glue a marble in the center of one side, and a milk jug lid for a handle on the other side. Spin away!

Even when we are knocked down by others, God is always with us (**2 Corinthians 4:8-9**).

PRAY >

Poverty is a serious issue in Colombia. Pray that leaders will make decisions that help people rise out of poverty.



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KIDS & CULTURE >>

If you looked on a world map, you probably wouldn't guess that kids in school here are taught in Dutch, the official language of this country.



FUN FACT >>

If you're under 30, you need your parent's permission to get married. Family is a big part of life, and parents often need to approve of a fiancé's extended family.



WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? >>

If you are invited to a birthday celebration, you will most likely be served *pom*, a delicious dish with layers of chicken pieces between shredded potatoes.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Visit Saint Peter and Paul Cathedral, the largest and tallest wooden structure in the Western Hemisphere. The inside is made entirely of unpainted cedar.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Head to a local park on Sunday for a "birdsong competition." The competing birds are trained to sing complex songs. It's a quirky sport, but it's beautiful to listen to.



DESTINATION > SURINAME

POPULATION / 580,000 CAPITAL / PARAMARIBO

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

Surinamese kids—and adults—love their drums. *Kaseko* is a popular form of music in Suriname. This fusion of African, Asian and European music combines quick rhythms on a large *skratji* drum with call-and-response vocals. Sometimes saxophones, trumpets and trombones are added.

ACTIVITY >

Make drums by stretching fabric circles over empty cans and securing the fabric with rubber bands. Then play the drums and take turns singing lines for everyone to repeat. Sing to the Lord a new song (**Psalm 96:1**)!

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

CULTURE >

The Creole people of Suriname have a common expression in their language that reveals the heart of their culture: *no span*, which means, "keep cool, don't worry." Homes have a relaxed atmosphere, and visitors remove their shoes when entering a friend's house.

ACTIVITY >

Write several things you are anxious about on a piece of paper, and tape it to the bottom of your shoe. Bring these worries to God in prayer. Then kick off your shoes—and your worries—and relax with your family (**Philippians 4:6-7**).

PRAY >

Nearly 80 percent of Suriname is covered in thick rainforests. Pray for God's Word to travel across this lush, beautiful landscape.



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BRING THIS >>

Some air! This country has one of the highest cities in the world, at 11,942 feet, so the air is pretty thin here. Many people live at over 10,000 feet.



TRAVEL TIP >>

You can't come here without a visit to the Amazon rainforest. Motor down the river in a canoe, while piranhas, monkeys and birds of every color surround you.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Salar de Uyuni is the world's largest salt flat. When dry, it's a perfect grid of hexagons, stretching to the horizon. When wet, it's the world's largest mirror.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

With 36 native cultures, kids here are exposed to diverse cultures. This country has some of the largest representation of indigenous people groups on the continent.



WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? >>

As in many South American countries, people here enjoy guinea pigs—not as pets, either. They are a local delicacy. (But you can have some tacos, if you like.)



DESTINATION > BOLIVIA

POPULATION / 10.8 MILLION CAPITAL / SUCRE

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

In Bolivia, a *balero* toy is a wooden barrel-shaped block and a peg, which are connected by a string. Holding the peg, kids try to fling the block in the air and land it on the peg.

ACTIVITY >

Make your own simple version of a balero. Tie a string through a hole in the bottom of a paper cup. Attach a plastic spoon to the other end of the string. Hold the spoon, swing the cup and try to land the cup on the spoon. Be patient; you'll get it! God asks us to wait patiently for the reward waiting for us in heaven (**Galatians 6:9**).

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

ACTIVITY >

Bolivia has two national flags—a traditional flag that represents the whole nation, and the *wiphala*, a checkered, rainbow flag that represents Bolivia's different cultures. Make a flag together that represents all the different talents and personalities in your family.

PRAY >

Bolivia is the poorest country in South America, yet it is blessed with incredible natural resources. Pray that leaders make good decisions in developing the country, and that children can go to school to learn skills to help them and their families have a better life.



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READ THESE CLUES TO YOUR KIDS AND LET THEM GUESS THE COUNTRY.



FUN FACT >>

The locals here like to call themselves “Ticos,” which some people say is short for *hermanitico*—the Spanish word for “little brother.”



TRAVEL TIP >>

Don’t let the bugs bug you. About 750,000 species of insects are here, and more than 10 percent of all the world’s butterflies live here.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Volcanoes! There are over 120 volcanic formations here, with six active ones. Arenal Volcano National Park is home to the still-smoking Mount Arenal.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

In this country, nearly every child can read. Even in poor areas where kids may not have good schools, Spanish lessons are taught on a national radio program.



WHAT’S FOR LUNCH? >>

Try a soda for lunch! But it won’t be a sweet beverage. A *soda* here is a small, family-run restaurant that serves simple, inexpensive meals of chicken, rice and beans.



DESTINATION > COSTA RICA

POPULATION / 4.8 MILLION CAPITAL / SAN JOSÉ

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

Although its land area is tiny for a country, Costa Rica contains a stunning 5 percent of the world’s plant and animal species. Costa Rica’s thick forests, sprawling wetlands and misty mountains teem with life. Scientists are still discovering new species here. Just recently, they announced the discovery of a species of frog that looks a lot like Kermit!

ACTIVITY >

How well do you know the diversity of God’s creation near your home? Grab a notebook and explore your neighborhood or a nearby park. Can you write the correct name to the first 10 creatures you see on trees, on the ground and flying around? If you get stumped, research these critters to find the correct name.

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

ACTIVITY >

Jesus loves every person throughout the entire world, and He wants us to share that wonderful news every chance we get. Try singing “Jesus Loves Me” in Spanish, the main language of Costa Rica, as a reminder that God’s love crosses all language barriers.

Cristo me ama

Cristo me ama, bien lo sé,
Su Palabra me hace ver.
Que los niños son de aquel,
Quien es nuestro amigo fiel.
Chorus: Si, Cristo me ama; Si, Cristo me ama;
Si, Cristo me ama; La Biblia dice así.

PRAY >

Pray for the efforts of Focus on the Family’s Costa Rica office as it ministers to schools throughout Central and South America. Last year, nearly 2,000 children accepted Jesus as Savior.



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LOOK FOR THIS >>

There are more animal species here than in any other country: jaguars, sloths, anteaters and the famous toucan are just a few of the exotic animals here.



WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? >>

You have to try *feijoada*, this country's most famous dish. It's a stew of beef or pork and beans, served with rice.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Avoid rush hour. Some of the world's worst traffic jams happen in this country's biggest city, Sao Paulo.



FUN FACT >>

They have Amazon here? No, not the online store. The Amazon is the world's biggest river, along with the world's largest rain forest.



SPORTS & CULTURE >>

This country produces some excellent soccer teams. They've won the FIFA World Cup five times, more than any other country.



DESTINATION > BRAZIL

POPULATION / 208 MILLION CAPITAL / BRASILIA

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

People in Brazil sure know how to have fun. Brazil has a big party every year called Carnival, three days of play and celebration before Lent, the weeks leading to Easter.

ACTIVITY >

"Hit the Coin" is a simple game Brazilian children enjoy. Push a stick into the ground, draw a circle about 5 inches in diameter around the stick, and balance a small object like a coin or button on top of the stick. Take turns throwing coins or pebbles at the small object, first trying to knock it off the stick, and then out of the circle.

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

LANGUAGE >

In many ways, Brazilian Portuguese is a reflection of the friendly, fun-loving personality of the Brazilian people. You'll never fully understand Brazilians without experiencing a bit of their language.

ACTIVITY >

Try matching the Brazilian expression (translated to English) with its approximate meaning. (answers below)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Where Judas lost his boots | a) A special person |
| 2. A potato is baking | b) To show off |
| 3. The last cookie in the box | c) Being very angry |
| 4. Carrying an upside-down shovel | d) A place that's really far away |
| 5. Peel a pineapple | e) Face a difficult problem |
| 6. Blocking sun with a sieve | f) Something bad is about to happen |
| 7. Saint of hollow wood | g) A quick fix that doesn't work well |
| 8. Wear a watermelon on one's head | h) A hypocrite |

PRAY >

Christ the Redeemer, a huge statue of Jesus, overlooks Rio de Janeiro, one of the nation's largest cities. But not everyone recognizes that God reigns over Brazil. Pray that the Brazilian people will love and trust the King of everything.



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LOOK FOR THIS >>

Waterfalls. Hike through tropical rainforest to stand under the gentle cascades. Then, hold your breath for a moment to see the beautiful underwater caves.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

It's a real privilege to go to school in this country. Kids must wear clean shoes and uniforms and even pass a test after eighth grade to determine if they can continue.



WHAT'S FOR BREAKFAST? >>

One famous dish here is *ackee* (a fruit) and saltfish (salted cod), which is usually eaten for breakfast. It's often served with rice, coleslaw or dumplings.



FUN FACT >>

Farmers once brought the mongoose to this island nation to rid sugar cane fields of rats. They wiped out the rats, but also killed off the population of snakes.



BRING THIS >>

Your running shoes. This country is known for having fast sprinters. The world's fastest man—appropriately named Usain Bolt—comes from here.



DESTINATION > JAMAICA

POPULATION / 2.9 MILLION CAPITAL / KINGSTON

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

PLAY >

Dandy shandy seems a lot like dodgeball, but there are some differences. An individual wins the game, not a team. And kids often use homemade balls—usually juice boxes with the corners rounded and the insides stuffed with newspaper.

Pick two players to be throwers. The others are dodgers. The throwers pass to each other and throw at the dodgers, trying to eliminate them. Once a player gets hit, he or she joins the throwers. The last player to get hit is the winner. If there are only three players, take turns being the lone dodger. A point is scored for every shot dodged. Highest score wins.

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

CULTURE MOMENT >

Although English is Jamaica's official language, people here speak to each other in *Patois*. Some think of *Patois* as "broken" English, but it is its own language, influenced by English, various African languages and Spanish.

ACTIVITY >

You probably couldn't easily follow a Patois conversation, but you can figure out many words. Read the Patois expressions to your kids, and see if they can guess the meanings.

Yah mon!	Yes
Whata gwaan?	What's going on?
Howdi do?	How are you?
Gud mawnin	Good morning
Ova deh	Over there
Big Massa	God Almighty

Tenk yuh	Thank you
Siddung steady	Please sit and be quiet
Ounu ready?	Are you ready?
Kip di change	Keep the change
Di beach did nice	The beach was nice
Mi no wah dat deh one	I don't want that one

PRAY >

Pray for the safety of Jamaican Christians, who often live in cities with high crime rates.



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FUN FACT >>

This may be the only country where you can swim with pigs. No one really knows how pigs started living on Exuma Island, but they'll be happy to swim with you.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Don't touch the goods—especially the fruit. You might be used to squeezing fruit before you buy it, but sellers here don't like customers to manhandle the fruit.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

Many kids grow up here with an interesting hobby: sailing. Sloop sailing (sailing with one mast) is the national sport, and children as young as 8 participate.



WHAT'S FOR DINNER? >>

Conch is the most famous seafood here. But if you're feeling adventurous, try *souse*, a flavorful soup with chunks of bull's tail, sheep's tongue and pig's feet.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

Treasure chests! The first governor was a pirate, and the capital city was once a popular haven for pirates. Apparently, they liked to hide their treasure here.



DESTINATION > BAHAMAS

POPULATION / 325,000 CAPITAL / NASSAU

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

When Africans arrived in the Bahamas, they brought many traditions with them. One was storytelling. Spoken language developed before writing, and this was how culture was passed to the next generation. Modern technologies have devalued oral traditions, but throughout the Bahamas, travelers can still gather around a campfire to hear a tale from long ago.

ACTIVITY >

Have a family story night. Around the dinner table, a campfire or on the living room floor, take turns telling stories about a part of your life that other family members might not know about. Or pass on stories from your extended family.

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

ACTIVITY >

For Bahamian children, the ocean is often a second home. Many fathers make a living as commercial fishermen or fishing guides. Cut out paper fish. Place a metal paperclip on each fish's head. Put the fish in a bowl. Make a fishing pole with a stick, a string and a magnet attached to the end of the string. Take turns "catching" fish. Jesus wants us to become "fishers of men" (**Matthew 4:19**).

PRAY >

The natural beauty of the Bahamas draws many tourists. Pray that leaders will use their resources wisely. Pray that Christians here will be a reflection of God's love to the many travelers who visit this beautiful island paradise.



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TRAVEL TIP >>

Don't panic in the capital. You'll notice many buildings are slightly leaning. This city is sinking a few inches every year as it uses up the water from the lake underneath.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

No Christmas presents? It's true. Kids here actually open presents on Jan. 6, the date when many Christians celebrate the arrival of the wise men.



LOOK FOR THIS >>

The city of Chichén Itzá, built by the ancient Mayan civilization, is home to the El Castillo "step" pyramid, one of the New Seven Wonders of the World.



FUN FACT >>

The Chihuahua—the smallest dog breed in the world—was named after Chihuahua, the largest state in this country.



WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? >>

You probably eat food inspired by this country's cuisine all the time, but did you know that this country introduced chocolate, corn and chilies to the world?



DESTINATION > MEXICO

POPULATION / 122 MILLION CAPITAL / MEXICO CITY

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

PLAY >

Families in Mexico play a pencil-and-paper category game called *Basta* ("enough"). Every player draws a grid and lists seven categories across the top. Categories can be anything—foods, animals, famous people, things found in a classroom—but everyone writes the same labels. Pick a starting letter by having one player say the alphabet very quickly, with another player saying "basta" to stop that person. Now every player tries to write down words that start with this letter under each category. Work quickly! A player can stop the round by saying "basta para mí, basta para todos" (enough for me, enough for you). Score answers, giving five points per unique answer and three points for answers that others have, too.

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

CULTURE >

In Mexico, *comida* (lunch) is special. It's the main meal of the day, eaten in midafternoon. People come home from school or work to eat and relax for a couple of hours. The meal is often quite a feast!

ACTIVITY >

Have a midafternoon *comida*. Make a few simple Mexican dishes and a cool fruit drink. *Comida* is a time to relax. Make sure no one eats and runs!

PRAY >

Parts of Mexico have experienced increased crime and violence. Pray for the safety of families, and pray that leaders would have the wisdom to address these issues.



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LOOK FOR THIS >>

You'll feel like you're in a painting at Banff National Park. Hike to Moraine Lake, set against the Valley of the Ten Peaks. Creation's beauty will take your breath away.



KIDS & CULTURE >>

Kids here play outdoors a lot—even in the frigid winds of winter. It pays off. This country holds the record (14) for the most gold medals won at a Winter Olympics.



WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? >>

This country has many ethnic foods from around the world. But you can also try a few local delicacies. The bacon and maple syrup are second to none.



TRAVEL TIP >>

Join the summer stampede! Over a million people participate in a 10-day rodeo and carnival. People from all around the world dress up as cowboys and cowgirls.



FUN FACT >>

A bear cub from this country's city of Winnipeg was sent to the London Zoo, inspiring a father to write a story for his son about a bear named Winnie-the-Pooh.



DESTINATION > CANADA

POPULATION / 35 MILLION CAPITAL / OTTAWA

CHECK IN > DAY ONE

CULTURE >

We've all experienced conversations where everyone tries to talk at the same time. What a mess! Many First Nations peoples in Canada use a "talking stick," which gives everyone at a meeting the right to speak. The talking stick is passed around, and only the person holding the stick can speak. Others listen.

ACTIVITY >

Make a "talking stick" that your family can use during meetings. Be creative! A talking stick can take many forms. It just has to represent a group's differences, as well as the qualities that bind them together.

LAYOVER > DAY TWO

CULTURE >

Everyone knows Canadians love ice hockey. It's the national winter sport. But somewhere along the line, Canadians thought it might be nice to have the fun of hockey even when all the equipment wasn't available. Enter broomball, in which players wearing boots run around on the ice using a broom or a broom-like stick to hit a ball.

PLAY >

You can play a form of broomball in your yard. Form two goals with cones or other markers and give each player a broom. Whoever "sweeps" a ball into his opponent's goal first scores a point.

PRAY >

Pray for God's wisdom, protection and strength as the Focus on the Family Canada office serves and strengthens families in a culture that is increasingly hostile toward Christianity.



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WELCOME BACK!

During your summer adventure, you've discovered lots of fun games, foods, traditions and beautiful locations from all corners of the globe. We live in such a colorful world! But that's true of Canada, as well. Our country is a land of diversity, and it would look very different today if it weren't for the contributions of countless people who arrived here from other countries, bringing their culture, talents and traditions with them.

In other words, your World Explorers adventure doesn't have to end just yet. Throughout the year, you can celebrate and show respect to the various cultures that make up the Canadian experience. Use the following list for ideas on getting started.

ARTSY SMARTSY > Research art styles from Canada's different cultural heritages. Have a family art night where you try to copy each style using paints, pencils and crayons.

WHERE DID THAT COME FROM? > Are french fries really from France? You'd be surprised at the history of everyday objects and customs. Find 10 random objects around your house and garage, and then research how many originally came from different countries. A great resource you can find at the library is *Extraordinary Origins of Everyday Things*.

WHAT'S FOR DINNER? > Next time you dine out, try visiting a neighborhood and restaurant that features foods from an unfamiliar culture. To get a good variety, have each person in your family order a different dish, and then eat family-style like you would at home.

WHERE ARE WE FROM? > Celebrate the diversity found in your own family by researching your family tree, focusing on the different cultural influences that have built your family. Are there family traditions or recipes that come from another culture? Take time at extended family gatherings to talk about and celebrate this rich heritage.

APPRECIATE EACH OTHER. > No matter our heritage, we take the time to appreciate each other's traditions. Depending on the size of the city you live in, there can be many local opportunities to celebrate diversity, be it fun food and art festivals, concerts or educational events at libraries and schools. During the following months set aside time to celebrate different heritages (see list to the right), and check out what your town has to offer.



FEBRUARY >>

African-American Heritage/Black History Month

MARCH >>

Greek-American Heritage Month

Irish-American Heritage Month

APRIL >>

Arab-American Heritage Month

Tartan (Scottish-American) Heritage Month

MAY >>

Asian-American and Pacific-Islander Heritage Month

Haitian Heritage Month

Jewish-American Heritage Month

JUNE >>

Caribbean-American Heritage Month

National Indigenous History Month

JULY >>

French-American Heritage Month

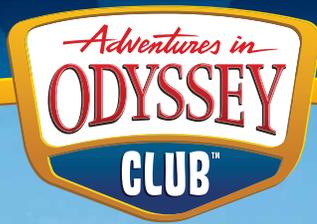
SEPTEMBER 15 - OCTOBER 15 >>

Hispanic Heritage Month

OCTOBER >>

German-American Heritage Month

Italian-American Heritage Month



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