

RESPOND 10

Open the leaflets and pass out markers.

Let's tear and do the square!

1. What's a tall tale? Listen to kids' ideas. **Tall tales have really big characters, actions, and settings. It can be hard to believe what you hear.** Tell kids you'll work together to write tall tales. **Think of a name for the hero of your story. Write it in the title, "The Tale of _____."** Then describe something incredible about your town and write your town's name. Kids will fill in the blanks on each other's leaflets by passing them to the left after each sentence is completed..
2. **Now finish the next sentence describing just how heroic the hero is. What makes this hero so awesome? Is it strength? Breathing underwater? Be creative.** Pass leaflets to the left again.
3. **Finish the sentences about an impossible challenge that your hero faced.** Pass leaflets to the left.
4. **Finally, finish the sentences about the incredible way your hero overcame the challenge. Then pass the story back to the original person so they can write the hero's name and town again.**
5. Invite kids to read their tall tales aloud. **Can you believe any of these tall tales? Why or why not? What makes the story of Thomas so different from a tall tale?**

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Today you wrote some unbelievable stories. Thomas thought he was hearing an unbelievable story, too. **Instead of pretending to believe, he needed someone to answer his questions. What would you think if someone told you a person who was dead is now alive? How was Thomas doing a good thing by asking questions?** Take time to hear kids' responses.

Return to the leaflet panels.

Invite kids to come up with ideas for a few "tools" that help them move from questioning to belief when something unbelievable happens. **Write your suggestions inside the toolbox on the leaflet.** Here are a few ideas to get kids started: Ask a friend or trusted adult. Pray about it. Wait and see. To display their work, tape all their leaflet panels on the wall in the shape of a question mark.

Send kids out.

Invite half the kids to say, "Christ is risen," and the other half to respond, "Christ is risen indeed." This time the entire group ends by shouting, "Alleluia!"

Pray together: **God, thank you for giving us a world that has wonders we sometimes can't believe. Thank you for giving us your Spirit and people who can help us with our questions. Amen.**

Thank kids for the great questions they've asked today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.

Thomas Believes

BELIEVE • EASTER 2 • YEAR A

TODAY'S READINGS

Acts 2:14a, 22-32 Psalm 16 1 Peter 1:3-9 John 20:19-31

Grades
3-4



What is happening in this story?

Jesus appearing to his disciples immediately follows the Easter story in John. Thomas plays an important role. Traditionally cast as the doubter, we can understand Thomas as a follower of Jesus with some questions. Because he was not there when Jesus appeared to the others, Thomas had a hard time believing it was true. To believe, he needed to see and touch Jesus' wounds. Jesus gives Thomas exactly what he says he needs. Jesus' actions answer Thomas's questions. Thomas responds in faith, "My Lord and my God!"

Why does this story matter for kids?

Kids of all ages know what it is to be afraid or anxious about what will happen next, so they can grasp why the disciples in the locked room were scared and confused. They can identify with Thomas because they understand the need to question. Many may have questions about this story. Encourage them to ask! It is important for kids to know that Jesus encouraged questions in his teaching and storytelling. Critical thinking can be an important part of believing and growing in faith.

What is the lectionary connection?

During the 50-day season of Easter we explore many stories of Jesus appearing after he was resurrected. All of those stories include someone who does not recognize him right away. Thomas is not the only believer, then or now, to have questions.

AGE LEVEL TIP

Easter continues! This may be new information for your kids, who may believe that Easter lasts just one day of the year. Like Christmas Day begins the Christmas season, Easter Day starts the season of Easter.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Pencils
- Permanent markers
- Tape
- Markers

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Chart paper
- Sticky notes

WHIRL SUPPLIES

• WHIRL NRSV BIBLE

• DVD

• WALL CHART

• LEAFLETS

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Invite kids to think about questions they want to ask your pastor about Easter. Before kids arrive, write “Ask Pastor about Easter” on chart paper and tape it to the wall. They can add their questions on sticky notes.

Invite kids to look at the Wall Chart.

Point out the season (Easter) and color (gold). **Did you know Easter is not just a single day? It’s a season that lasts 50 days in the church. All season long, we’ll see the colors of gold and white. How did your family celebrate or decorate for Easter at home? Are Easter decorations still where you can see them? You can tell your family not to take the decorations down yet!** Invite each kid to draw a question mark with a permanent marker in the wedge on the Wall Chart. Tell kids the question marks are clues to what will happen today.

Each week during this Easter season we’ll remind each other why we celebrate. Ask half the kids to say, “Christ is risen!” and the other half to answer, “Christ is risen indeed!”

Pass out leaflets and markers.

Most kids have unanswered questions about different biblical people—did a real Noah build a real ark, did Jonah really live in a big fish for a few days, and so on. **On the stone next to the tomb, write the name of someone you’ve wondered about from the Bible.** Encourage kids to write down at least one person or story they’ve got a question about. Let them ask the question. If you don’t know the answer, try to find out for next time.

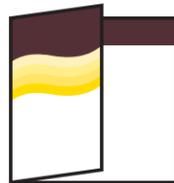
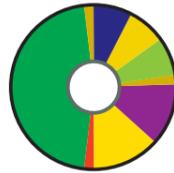
Gather kids around the screen where you’ll watch the video.

Today’s theme is BELIEVE. We’re going to watch a video about some kids talking about their favorite disciples! Let’s see what these kids believe.

View “Scary Queries.”

Ask kids these questions about the video.

- What was the conflict in this video?
- Imagine you were playing the game too. Who would be your favorite disciple?
- What did you learn that was new?
- Why do you think Leo picked Thomas?



Pass out Whirl NRSV Bible Samplers.

Let’s find today’s Bible story. Open your Bible Sampler with kids to the Preview Activity on page 6. Do it together and compare responses.

Read John 20:19-31 together. **Let’s listen for all the action in this story. When you hear an action verb that tells about someone doing something, mark it in your Bible.** Read the passage aloud, or invite kids to volunteer to read verses 19-23. **What action words did you hear?** Kids may have marked words like stood, showed, rejoiced, and breathed. Then read verses 24-29 and ask kids to circle the word *believe* each time it appears. *Believe* is said four times.

Ask these questions after you read the story.

- What kind of action is happening in this story? What does believing look like?
- What happened the first time Jesus appeared to the disciples in the room? What happened the second time?
- Have you ever missed out on something really big that your friends experienced? What was that like?
- When do you hear the words “Peace be with you” in your church?
- What do you need to see to believe?



BIBLE BIT

The word *doubt* translates to “unbelief” in the Greek language. We don’t believe all kinds of things until we know more about them. There’s nothing wrong with that!

WATCH IT AGAIN

Watch as Leo talks about his doubts. How would you describe him? Do you ever feel like Leo?

OUR CHURCH

Kids in your church might not know who to talk to when they have important questions! Introduce an older, trusted adult (or two!) and talk about how faith mentors help us explore our questions.