

SAINTS GLOBAL

# ACTIVITY PLAN

## CHURCH HISTORY

SPIRITUAL CORE

Version 2026.1



Companion to the BRC: a series of one-hour activity sessions for use on weekly activity night or at home. Each session declares which requirements it contributes to.

### THE CULMINATING EVENT

#### The site visit and primary-source read

Between Session 2 and Session 3, each saint visits a chosen Church history site in person or by virtual tour and reads the two primary sources he selected. He records five specific observations and identifies one detail in the sources that corrected a prior misunderstanding. Session 3 opens with the report and the teach-back.

ON-LOCATION AT THE CHOSEN SITE, OR A VIRTUAL TOUR AT HOME —  
LEADER CONFIRMS THE PLAN

4 SESSIONS IN THIS PLAN

## SESSION 1 · SPIRITUAL CORE

⌚ 60 min target

# Discover

*Read the first-hand account of the Restoration and pick five events that mattered then.*

**SESSION AIM**

Read Joseph Smith—History 1:5–17 aloud and let the saint name the problem Joseph could not solve from the Bible alone. Sort the early-Church timeline together and pick five events the saint will be able to defend. Close by picking one early leader the saint will study before Session 2.

**WALK AWAY WITH**

- Has named one problem in JS-H 1:5–17 that Joseph could not solve without revelation
- Has picked five early-Church events from the timeline and can say why each mattered at the time
- Has picked one early leader (beyond the prophets) to study before Session 2

**BRING / SET UP**

- Joseph Smith—History (printed copy or scriptures)
- Restoration timeline reference card (printed handout, one per saint)
- Pen and a notebook for the saint
- List of candidate early leaders (Eliza R. Snow, Brigham Young, Emma Smith, Wilford Woodruff)

**THE HOUR****BLOCK 1 · DISCUSSION Opener — A question you can't settle from the Bible**

⌚ 5 min

Ask the saint to name a question he has asked that he could not settle from reading the Bible by himself. Don't correct or improve the answer; just write it down. Tell him that Joseph faced a version of his question and that today's reading is where the Restoration begins.

**BLOCK 2 · SCRIPTURE Read JS-H 1:5–17 once through**

⌚ 15 min

1. Read JS-H 1:5–17 aloud, all the way through, with no stopping for commentary.
2. Ask the saint to name one specific problem Joseph faced — which church, by what authority.
3. Ask what reading the Bible by itself could and could not settle for Joseph.
4. Write the problem in the saint's notebook in his own words.

REQ 1A

## SESSION 1 · DISCOVER (PAGE 2 OF 2)

## THE HOUR — CONTINUED

BLOCK 3 · CREATIVE **Sort the early-Church timeline**

⌚ 20 min

1. Lay the Restoration timeline reference card on the table between you.
2. Walk the timeline once — First Vision, translation, Church organized, Kirtland Temple, Missouri persecutions, Liberty Jail, Nauvoo, martyrdom, exodus.
3. Ask the saint to pick five events he will be able to defend by the end of these four weeks.
4. For each of the five, have him write one sentence in his notebook: what was at stake at that moment.
5. If a sentence reads like hindsight ("This started the Restoration"), make him rewrite it from inside the moment ("They had no temple yet and no second city").

## REQ 1B

BLOCK 4 · SKILL PRACTICE **Pick one early leader to study**

⌚ 15 min

1. Read the candidate list aloud: Eliza R. Snow, Brigham Young, Emma Smith, Wilford Woodruff.
2. Have the saint pick one — the one he knows least about, not the most.
3. Together, name the trial that tested that leader's faith and what their response was.
4. Assign as homework: read one short biographical source on the chosen leader and bring one specific moment to Session 2.

## BY TIER

**ENTRY** Pick from the four-name list; read a children's Church-history biography or the Church history museum page.**ESTABLISHED** Pick a name outside the four-name list (e.g. John Taylor, Mary Fielding Smith) and find a primary-source paragraph from that leader.**MENTOR** Pick a leader whose trial is uncomfortable to read (Emma after Joseph, Brigham at Winter Quarters); be ready to discuss the discomfort honestly in Session 2.

## REQ 1C

BLOCK 5 · REFLECTION **Close — Set the leader homework**

⌚ 5 min

1. Confirm the leader name and the source the saint will read this week.
2. Write the source and the moment-to-find on the BRC margin so it doesn't get lost.

## AT THE CLOSE · DEBRIEF

1. Which of the five events was the hardest to write a "what was at stake" sentence for?
2. Which problem in JS-H 1:5–17 did you write down? Did it match the one you brought tonight?
3. Which leader did you pick, and what is the one source you'll read before next week?

☑ Mark Req 1a and 1b after this session. Req 1c is in progress — mark it once the saint reports back on the leader's trial in Session 2.

## SESSION 2 · SPIRITUAL CORE

⌚ 60 min target

# Plan

*Pick a site, find two primary sources, and write three honest questions.*

**SESSION AIM**

Open with the leader homework from Session 1. Pick a Church history site tied to a real question the saint wants answered. Find two primary sources connected to that site — not after the visit, before it. Workshop the three questions until they are honest and open.

**WALK AWAY WITH**

- Has reported one moment from the leader he studied between sessions
- Has chosen one Church history site connected to persecution, sacrifice, or revelation
- Has two primary sources in hand connected to that site or event
- Has three workshopped questions about faith, leadership, or opposition for the visit

**BRING / SET UP**

- Site Selection & Question Card (printed handout, one per saint)
- Internet access (Church History Library, Joseph Smith Papers, FamilySearch)
- Pen and notebook
- List of candidate sites with one-line summaries

**THE HOUR****BLOCK 1 · DISCUSSION Opener — Report from the leader study**

⌚ 5 min

Ask the saint to share one specific moment from the leader he studied this week — a sentence the leader wrote, a decision the leader made, a hard thing the leader faced. Don't let him summarize the leader's life; press for one moment in time.

REQ 1C

**BLOCK 2 · DISCUSSION Pick the site**

⌚ 12 min

1. Read the candidate sites aloud: Sacred Grove, Carthage, Far West, Liberty Jail, Winter Quarters, Kirtland Temple, Nauvoo.
2. For each, name in one sentence what happened there.
3. Ask the saint: which site is connected to a question you actually want answered?
4. Write the site name on the Site Selection & Question Card.
5. Confirm whether the visit will be in person or by virtual tour, and write the date on the card.

REQ 2A

## SESSION 2 · PLAN (PAGE 2 OF 2)

## THE HOUR — CONTINUED

## BLOCK 3 · SKILL PRACTICE Find two primary sources

⌚ 20 min

1. Explain the difference between a primary source (a journal entry, a letter, a contemporaneous minute) and a secondary one (a textbook, a Sunday-school manual, a video).
2. Walk the saint through one search at the Joseph Smith Papers or the Church History Library: search by site name, filter to "documents," open a journal entry.
3. Have the saint find the first source himself with you watching.
4. Have him find the second source on his own; you sit back.
5. Print both sources or save them to a folder the saint controls.
6. If a chosen source turns out to be a secondary summary, name what went wrong and find a real primary source before moving on.

## REQ 2B

## BLOCK 4 · CREATIVE Workshop the three questions

⌚ 18 min

1. Have the saint write three questions about faith, leadership, or opposition that he wants the visit to answer.
2. Write them in his own voice — not the phrasing of a Sunday lesson, not a question he has heard an adult ask.
3. Read each one aloud. Ask: can this be answered yes or no? If yes, it is too closed — rewrite it.
4. Pick the most honest of the three and sharpen it together. Make the verb more specific.
5. Copy the final three questions onto the Site Selection & Question Card.

## REQ 2C

## BLOCK 5 · REFLECTION Close — Confirm the visit

⌚ 5 min

1. Confirm: site name, visit date, in-person or virtual, the two primary sources, the three questions.
2. Tell the saint to bring the card and his notebook to the visit, and to read both sources before he goes.

## AT THE CLOSE · DEBRIEF

1. Which question of the three sounded most like something an adult would ask? How did you rewrite it?
2. Which primary source did you find on your own? Where did you find it?
3. What about the site you picked makes you want to go — what specifically?

📝 Mark Req 2a, 2b, and 2c after this session. Req 1c was marked once the saint shared the moment from his leader study in the opener.

## SESSION 3 · SPIRITUAL CORE

⌚ 60 min target

# Act

*Debrief the site visit, name what the sources corrected, and teach one event to another person.*

**SESSION AIM**

Saint arrives having visited the site and read both primary sources between Session 2 and now. Open with five observations and one correction from the reading. Then he teaches the event to a real audience and prepares to deliver it once before next week.

**WALK AWAY WITH**

- Has reported five specific observations from the visit and one correction from the primary sources
- Has taught a Church history event once aloud in session, focused on faith under pressure
- Has scheduled the real audience and date for the teach-back delivery before Session 4

**BRING / SET UP**

- The Site Selection & Question Card from Session 2 (with observations added)
- Both printed primary sources
- The saint's notebook
- Pen and paper for sketching the teaching outline

**THE HOUR****BLOCK 1 · DISCUSSION Opener — Five observations from the visit**

⌚ 5 min

Ask the saint to read his five observations from the card. Push back on any that sound like impressions — "felt the Spirit," "it was peaceful" — and ask for the specific thing he saw, smelled, or read on a marker. If a textbook could have given him the observation, it doesn't count.

REQ 3A

**BLOCK 2 · SKILL PRACTICE Read both sources side by side**

⌚ 15 min

1. Lay the two primary sources next to each other on the table.
2. Underline points where the two sources disagree or where one source corrects an assumption the saint had brought to the visit.
3. Have the saint name one detail that corrected a prior misunderstanding — not a confirmation, a correction.
4. Write that one detail in the saint's notebook and on the BRC margin.
5. Hold the tension where the sources disagree without picking a side too fast.

REQ 3B

## SESSION 3 · ACT (PAGE 2 OF 2)

## THE HOUR — CONTINUED

BLOCK 3 · CREATIVE **Sketch and rehearse the teach-back**

⌚ 25 min

1. Pick the audience: a younger sibling, a peer, a family member, a Junior Saints group. Write the name on the card.
2. Pick one Church history event from the saint's five and write the angle: faith under pressure. Tell the events in order, but keep the focus on faith under pressure.
3. Outline the teach-back on a single page: three to five beats, each one a moment the audience can picture.
4. Deliver the teach-back once aloud to the leader as the rehearsal audience. Time it.
5. Cut anything that needed a textbook to understand. Keep what stands on its own.
6. Lock the delivery date with the real audience before Session 4 and write it on the card.

## REQ 3C

BLOCK 4 · DISCUSSION **Coach the delivery**

⌚ 10 min

1. Ask the saint: where did your voice slow down in the rehearsal? Where did it speed up?
2. Mark the slowest part of the outline — that is usually the hardest beat and the one to practice once more on his own.
3. Confirm the audience name, the date, and where the delivery will happen.

BLOCK 5 · REFLECTION **Close — Lock the teach-back**

⌚ 5 min

1. Confirm: event chosen, audience named, delivery date on the calendar, outline in hand.
2. Remind the saint to bring the audience's reaction back to Session 4.

## AT THE CLOSE · DEBRIEF

1. Which of your five observations would you not have found in a book?
2. What did the two primary sources disagree about? Which side, if either, do you currently lean to?
3. Which beat of your teach-back outline is the slowest one for you?

☒ Mark Req 3a and 3b after this session. Req 3c is in progress — mark it after the saint delivers the teach-back to the real audience before Session 4.

## SESSION 4 · SPIRITUAL CORE

⌚ 60 min target

# Reflect

*Trace one decision long-term, account for opposition, and write the testimony down.*

## SESSION AIM

Open with the teach-back report. Trace one historical decision forward to a present-day practice the saint experiences. Account for how opposition shaped the Church without flinching from the cost. Close with the saint bearing testimony in his own words — short, written, his.

## 🎯 WALK AWAY WITH

- Has reported on the teach-back delivery and the audience's reaction
- Has traced one historical decision to a present-day practice he experiences
- Has named one place where Church history shows God allowing opposition rather than preventing it
- Has a signed BRC, or an outstanding-requirements plan with deadlines

## 📦 BRING / SET UP

- The Site Selection & Question Card with the teach-back date and audience
- The saint's notebook
- BRC and a pen
- A short, pre-selected list of decision pairs (Word of Wisdom, polygamy ended, temple recommend interview)

## 🕒 THE HOUR

BLOCK 1 · DISCUSSION **Opener — The teach-back report**

⌚ 5 min

Ask the saint who he taught, when, and what the audience said. Don't accept "it went well" — ask what the audience asked back, what surprised them, what they got wrong before he corrected it.

REQ 3C

BLOCK 2 · CREATIVE **Trace one decision forward**

⌚ 18 min

1. Read the decision list: Word of Wisdom, ending polygamy, the temple recommend interview, the priesthood revelation of 1978.
2. Have the saint pick one decision and write what alternatives existed at the time it was made.
3. Trace the decision forward to a present-day practice the saint experiences directly — fast Sunday, a temple recommend interview, a Word of Wisdom check.
4. Write the chain in the notebook: the decision, the alternatives, the present-day practice.
5. If the chain skips a generation, fill in what carried the practice through.

REQ 3D



## SESSION 4 · REFLECT (PAGE 2 OF 2)

## THE HOUR — CONTINUED

BLOCK 3 · REFLECTION **Account for opposition**

⌚ 15 min

1. Give the saint two minutes of silence before he answers.
2. Ask: in the events you studied, name one place where God allowed opposition rather than preventing it.
3. Ask what that opposition produced — not as a justification, just as an honest account.
4. Listen. Don't correct. If the saint says "I don't know," sit with it.
5. Write his answer in his notebook in his own words.

## REQ 4A

BLOCK 4 · CREATIVE **Write the testimony down**

⌚ 17 min

1. Tell the saint to write a short testimony of the Restoration and modern prophets — three to six sentences, in his own handwriting.
2. Speak from what he knows, not what he should say. If he can't say it from his own study, leave the sentence out.
3. Read it aloud once to the leader.
4. If a sentence sounds borrowed from a talk or a meeting, rewrite it in plainer words.
5. Sign and date the page in the notebook.

## REQ 4B

BLOCK 5 · REFLECTION **Close — BRC sign-off**

⌚ 5 min

1. Walk the BRC together and confirm each requirement is marked or has a deadline.
2. For anything outstanding, write the next step and the date on the BRC margin.

## AT THE CLOSE · DEBRIEF

1. Which decision did you trace, and what is the present-day practice it produced for you?
2. Where did you land on the opposition question? What did you write down?
3. Which sentence in your testimony did you rewrite because it sounded borrowed?

☒ Mark Req 3d, 4a, and 4b after this session. Any requirement still outstanding gets a concrete next step and a deadline written on the BRC.

# Restoration Timeline Reference

Lay this on the table during the timeline-sort block. The saint picks five rows and writes what was at stake at each moment in his own notebook.

## Pick five events you can defend.

*Write what was at stake then, not what we know now.*

1820	<b>First Vision</b> Joseph asks which church is true; the answer is none of them.
1827-29	<b>Translation of the Book of Mormon</b> Plates in hand; manuscript at risk; the lost 116 pages teach trust.
1830	<b>Church organized in Fayette</b> Six members on the rolls; a new church in a crowded religious country.
1836	<b>Kirtland Temple dedicated</b> First temple built by a poor people; keys restored inside its walls.
1838	<b>Missouri persecutions; Extermination Order</b> A governor signs an order to remove or kill the Saints in his state.
1838-39	<b>Liberty Jail</b> Joseph held five months without trial; D&C 121-123 written from inside.
1839-46	<b>Nauvoo built on a swamp</b> A second city, a second temple, and the endowment received here.
1844	<b>Martyrdom at Carthage Jail</b> Joseph and Hyrum killed; succession unsettled for weeks.
1846-47	<b>Exodus to the Salt Lake Valley</b> Sixteen thousand leave Nauvoo; Winter Quarters takes the first cost.

Write five "what was at stake" sentences in your notebook before next session.

## HANDOUT 2 OF 2

## FROM SESSION 2 — FIND TWO PRIMARY SOURCES

# Site Selection & Question Card

Use during Block 2 and Block 4. Print one per saint so the site choice, source list, and three questions stay on a single sheet between sessions.

## Pick the site you will actually visit.

Write the date, find the sources before you go, and bring the three questions with you.

CANDIDATE SITES	PRIMARY SOURCES	THREE QUESTIONS
<p><b>Sacred Grove</b> Palmyra, NY. The First Vision.</p> <p><b>Kirtland Temple</b> Kirtland, OH. First temple; keys.</p> <p><b>Far West</b> Caldwell County, MO. Cornerstones laid.</p> <p><b>Liberty Jail</b> Clay County, MO. Joseph held five months.</p> <p><b>Winter Quarters</b> Council Bluffs / Omaha. Exodus camp.</p> <p><b>Nauvoo</b> Hancock County, IL. Second temple city.</p> <p><b>Carthage Jail</b> Carthage, IL. The martyrdom.</p>	<p>A journal entry, a letter, a minute, or a contemporaneous account from the site. <i>Not a Sunday-school manual. Not a video.</i></p> <p><b>SOURCE 1</b> _____ <i>author, document, year</i> _____</p> <p><i>where you found it</i> _____</p> <p><b>SOURCE 2</b> _____ <i>author, document, year</i> _____</p> <p><i>where you found it</i> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Both sources read before the visit.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> One detail in the sources surprised you.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Both sources brought to Session 3.</p>	<p>Write them in your voice, not the phrasing of a Sunday lesson. No yes-or-no questions.</p> <p>1. _____ _____</p> <p>2. _____ _____</p> <p>3. _____ _____</p> <p><b>SHARPEST OF THE THREE</b> _____ _____</p>
<p>SITE PICKED _____ VISIT DATE _____</p>		

Bring this card to the visit. Bring it back to Session 3 with the observations written in.

Print this handout for in-person reference during session 2 — find two primary sources.