

Grace Bible Church



Parent Booklet

2023 – 2024

gbsanmarcos.org/wp/ministries-2/awana-new/sparks

Welcome, Parents! What a blessing it is to have your child in the AWANA Sparks program.

This booklet is designed to provide you information specific to Sparks. Please take a few minutes to read through it. For general information about the AWANA program at Grace Bible Church, please refer to the [AWANA Handbook](#) located on the main AWANA page.

This is going to be a wonderful and exciting year. I can't wait to get to know your child better and help him/her grow and learn more about Christ.

Becca Schultz
Sparks Director

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General Information

Sparks is a three-year program for children in Kindergarten through 2nd grade. Children will have the opportunity to explore and understand the truths found in the Bible.

Parents are welcome to stay with their children during the meeting or to come and visit at any time.

Spark Bags

The first year that your child is in Sparks, he will receive a Sparks bag. This is his to keep and should be used for carrying the AWANA handbook and papers while in the Sparks program. If the bag needs to be replaced, please contact the Sparks director to find out the current cost and to request a new bag.

Awards

Awards are a part of the Sparks program. For completing sections in their handbooks, children can earn Rank Patches, Red Jewels, Green Jewels, Review Patches, and an Extra Credit Pin. Children who have earned these awards are recognized during the Closing Ceremony. Children must be wearing their vest to receive the award.

Blue Jewels can be earned just by showing up at club. A jewel is earned each quarter if the child has not been absent more than 1 time during the quarter. These are also awarded during the Closing Ceremony. Children must be wearing their vest to receive the award.

At the end of the year there is an AWANA Award Ceremony. Any child completing a handbook will receive a Book Award at this ceremony. There are medallions on lanyards for completing the first and second books. For the third book completed, a child is awarded the Sparky Plaque Award.

AWANA Shares

AWANA Shares, also known as AWANA Bucks, can be earned by children for positive behavior, good attitudes, wearing their vest and appropriate attire, and saying sections in their handbooks. With these AWANA Shares, children are able to purchase items at the AWANA Spark events that are held in December and again in May. Shares not spent in December or in May must be given back to the leader.

Handbooks

The Sparks program uses self-paced handbooks that have character development stories, Bible verses to memorize, Bible biographies, and various activities. The handbooks are designed to be used at home during the week in preparation for the AWANA meeting on Sunday. During AWANA the children will review the handbook work they did at home as well as recite the verses they learned to their leader. The handbooks are typically completed in 20 – 30 weeks, depending on the child and parental involvement.

The 3-year program has an aviation theme. For children who are new to Sparks, there is a Flight 3:16 entrance booklet. For children who have completed the Flight 3:16 booklet, there are 3 handbooks – Hang Glider, Wing Runner, and Sky Stormer. There is also a Frequent Flyer book which contains review verses as well as new activities and challenges for Sparks who have completed their handbooks. More detailed information about each of the books follows.

Flight 3:16

This booklet is given to children who are new to the Sparks program. It contains a story as well as 6 sections to be completed. A child should work on memorizing / completing the sections at home and come to AWANA on Sunday prepared to recite what has been memorized. Children are allowed 2 helps per section. Refer to the Reciting Verses section on page 8. It typically takes a child 2 – 3 weeks to complete the booklet with parental involvement.

Upon completion of the Flight 3:16 booklet and paid AWANA registration, a child will receive his membership card and a Hang Glider book. These are his to keep.

Hang Glider, Wing Runner, Sky Stormer Handbooks

Hang Glider is for the first year Spark, Wing Runner is for the second year Spark, and Sky Stormer is for the third year Spark. Each book has character stories, Bible verses to memorize, Bible biographies, and various activities. A digital download that reinforces the handbook is available from the Sparks director.

Book Sections

Book sections are identified on the upper right-hand corner of the odd pages. There are specific instructions in each section on what needs to be done to complete a section. A leader will sign the section as completed once the child has met the requirements for completing it.

The first 8 sections will earn the child his Spark vest and/or Rank patch. See the back of the child's handbook for vest awards and placement. Once the Rank patch is earned, children start working on their Red and Green Jewels. Each Jewel consists of 4 sections. When those 4 sections are completed, the child earns his Red / Green Jewel. When the first Jewel is earned, the child gets his Wings (with Jewel). This is to be worn on the vest. Subsequent Jewels that are earned are added to the Wings.

Sections are to be completed in the order they occur in the book except for the following which can be done any time during the year:

Book	Bring a Friend	Missionary Activity	My Life Activity
Hang Glider	No longer required	Green Jewel 2:1 – 2:4	Green Jewel 4:3
Wing Runner	No longer required	Green Jewel 2:1 – 2:4	Green Jewel 4:3
Sky Stormer	No longer required	Green Jewel 2:1 and 2:2	Green Jewel 4:2

Reciting Verses

When children are reciting verses, they must give the Bible reference as well as saying the verse. Children are allowed 2 helps per section when reciting. A help consists of the leader telling the child a small phrase, a significant word, or giving them a hand signal that will help the child remember the verse. A section may consist of multiple verses so don't forget that it is 2 helps *per section*, not per verse. To complete a section, the entire section must be recited in one seating.

With some verses there are definitions for words which children may not be familiar with. Children are not required to recite the definitions, but understanding the meanings will help in understanding the verse they are memorizing.

Completing Books

Children should be able to complete a handbook within the AWANA year if they work on the book and memorize their verses at home. There are a total of 40 sections in each book. If a child sets a goal to complete 2 sections each week, he will be able to complete the book and receive a book award at the end of the year.

Children who are in kindergarten and have completed their Hang Glider handbook before the year is over may start work in their Frequent Flyer handbook. First and Second graders are to start working in the Wing Runner handbook. If the Wing Runner handbook is completed and there is still time in the year, first graders may start work in their Frequent Flyer handbook. Second graders are to start working in their Sky Stormer handbook. When the Sky Stormer handbook is completed, second graders can start working in their Frequent Flyer handbook.

Frequent Flyer Handbook

This handbook is divided into 2 parts. The first part consists of all the verses the children said in their completed handbook. These verses, with their Bible reference are to be repeated to the leader with no helps. Upon completing this part, the child earns a Review Patch to put on his Spark vest.

The second part has additional activities and verses. Completion of this will earn the child an extra credit pin that is placed on the Review Patch.

Tips for Completing a Handbook

We encourage parents to help their child set a goal for the year such as:

- Completing the handbook (40 sections)
- Completing the handbook and frequent flyer review book (a total of 55 sections)
- Completing the handbook, frequent flyer review book, and the extra credit book (a total of 75 sections)

There are 28 weeks in the AWANA year. Not all sections require memorization and a number of sections are review sections. With careful planning you should be able to develop a schedule that will help to ensure that your child reaches his goal for the year.