



# Start the Party

Celebrate the Good News

WEEK  
**FOUR**  
JUNE 2024

SMALL GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

## TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Look Around**  
Joy in the Psalms  
Psalms 8, 16, and 19

### TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

When is it hard to find joy?

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Find joy in what you see around you.

### MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"A cheerful heart makes  
you healthy. But a broken  
spirit dries you up."  
Proverbs 17:22, NIV

### MONTHLY VIRTUE

Joy—Choosing to celebrate  
what God is doing

### BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

### PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today.

In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZi> for a visual on some of the activities.

### SMALL GROUP

15  
MIN

#### SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Just for Fun  
Opening Activity

### LARGE GROUP

35  
MIN

#### STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

#### WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

Welcome/Opener  
Worship  
Bible Story (Communicator Script)  
Key Question  
Prayer

### SMALL GROUP

25  
MIN

#### GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Application Activity: Take a Snapshot  
Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and  
Discussion Questions  
Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You  
Prayer Activity: Make it Personal with Prayer

### HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Parent Cue Card (print or email)  
Devotionals for Kids  
Parent Cue App



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**PRELUDE**      **SOCIAL**      **STORY**      **WORSHIP**      **GROUPS**      **HOME**

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES

### MADE TO EXPLORE

an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery



Before kids arrive, pray that your kids will experience joy while they're with you and their friends today. Ask God for wisdom to guide conversation toward helping them recognize small things in their lives that can bring them joy.

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## 1. JUST FOR FUN

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Offering container, twisting balloons, balloon air pumps;  
*Optional:* device for streaming a video

#### WHAT YOU DO:

- Greet kids by name as they arrive.
- Direct those who brought an offering to place it in the container.
- Set out the twisting balloons and the air pumps.
- *Optional:* Show kids a tutorial video for making party hats from the twisting balloons.
  - <https://bit.ly/49aO0Df>



- Show kids, step-by-step, how to pump air into a balloon then twist it to form a party hat.
- *Optional:* Look up other tutorials on YouTube and let the kids try additional balloon shapes.



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**PRELUDE      SOCIAL      STORY      WORSHIP      GROUPS      HOME**

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES

### MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group



## 2. OPENING ACTIVITY

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Plastic cups, prepared sandwich bags with wet cotton balls

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Direct each kid to pair up with a partner. (Form a team of 3 if needed.)
- Tell pairs to stand as far apart from each other as your group space allows.
- Give one kid from each pair an empty cup and direct them to hold it out in front of them with both hands, arms straight.
- Give the other kid from each pair a sandwich bag with five wet cotton balls.
- Challenge the partner with the cotton balls to toss (not throw) the cotton balls toward their partner in an effort to land them in the cup.
  - The kid with the cup can't use their hands or move their arms from the straight-out position but can move their body around to try to catch.
- The pair that catches the most cotton balls is the winner of that round.
- Switch roles and play again.
- Kids can pair up with new partners and repeat as time allows.

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**WHAT YOU SAY:**

"Getting hit with a cold, soggy cotton ball is probably not everyone's idea of fun. And yet, you guys had a blast in the midst of flying blobs of water. Did you know that it's possible to have joy even when life isn't fun? Even when life is challenging? **[Transition] Let's go to Large Group and discover more about finding joy, even when it's not easy to spot.**"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.



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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

### MADE TO IMAGINE

an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment



### 1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT [LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY] WHAT YOU NEED: "Find Joy" Activity Page, pens

#### WHAT YOU DO:

- Direct the kids to form a circle.
- Give each kid a "Find Joy" Activity Page and a pen.
- Read the first line and ask kids to fill in the rest with the description of a type of person, such as a teacher, dad, bus driver, farmer, etc.
- When kids have finished filling in their first line, tell everyone to fold down the page on the dotted line to cover up what they wrote then pass their paper to the kid on their right.
- Read the second line and ask kids to fill in the prompt, fold the page as shown, and pass to the right again.
- Continue until all the lines on the paper have been filled in.
- Collect the papers and unfold them.
- Remind kids that we all have days and times when joy seems far away and very hard to find. That's when we need to open our eyes and look a little harder. There is plenty in the world around us that we can celebrate if we are looking.
- Give each kid one of the completed "Find Joy" Activity Pages.
- Let kids take turns reading the unusual scenarios.
- Remind kids that joy—choosing to celebrate what God is doing—is something that takes work. It doesn't just happen. We might have to listen, smell, taste, touch, and look carefully around at God's creation to find joy.
- Ask:
  - In what ways does your trust in God make a difference in the way you feel about the situations you go through?
  - Name times when it's hard for you to be joyful. What can you do that will help get your thoughts and attitude focused on God?
- **[Make it Personal] Share about a time when you were struggling to find joy but then God showed up in a special way and gave you something to celebrate—even though the struggle didn't magically disappear.**

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

### MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



## 2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Bibles, "Sensory Charade" Activity Page, prepared slips of paper, die, and pens

### WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide your group into two teams.
- Give each team a Bible, 5-10 slips of paper, and pens to share.
- Assign one team Psalm 8 and the other Psalm 19.
- Explain that each team should look up their assigned Psalm, read it together, then write things mentioned in their Psalm that could prompt joy when looking at the world around us on separate slips of paper.
  - Suggest that kids think about their five senses as they read and pay attention to anything that can be seen, heard, tasted, touched, or smelled.
- When both groups are finished, collect the slips of paper and shuffle them with the "Sensory Charade" Activity Page strips.
- Place the slips of paper in a pile, facedown.
- Explain that kids will take turns drawing one slip of paper then roll a die. The number rolled will determine how they will describe what's on their paper for the rest of the group to guess.
- Use the list below to determine how they give clues. If the card they chose is impossible to describe using the sense they rolled, they can roll again.
  - 1 = sight (describe what it looks like)
  - 2 = sound (describe the sounds it makes or that are heard when experiencing it)
  - 3 = taste (describe what it might taste like)
  - 4 = touch (describe what it feels like)
  - 5 = smell (describe what it smells like)
- 6 = all senses (describe what it looks, sounds, tastes, smells, and feels like)
- Give one point if the team can correctly guess within 30 sec each round. Celebrate the team with the most points at the end of the game.
  - Adjust the time limit if needed.
- After the game, ask:
  - In what ways are our senses a gift from God?
  - When you're stuck in a bad mood or just need some help finding joy in the world around you, what can you do?
  - What is the best thing you've ever seen? How can you celebrate God for it?
  - What about the best thing you've ever heard . . . tasted . . . touched . . . and smelled? Why are those things worth celebrating and thanking God for?
  - People are the best part of God's creation—each of us is different and unique. How can paying attention to people's individuality give you a reason to celebrate?
- Challenge kids to take closer notice of all the amazing things and unique people that God has placed around them. Even if their day isn't going as well as they'd like, they will see that God is still at work all the time and in every place. When we look around and use our senses to explore everything God created, we'll discover there is always joy to be found.

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

### MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding



### 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS [TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW] WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

#### WHAT YOU DO:

##### Ask:

- What do you think are the main reasons people are not joyful?
- Do you think we can be joyful even when we don't *feel* happy? Why or why not?
- What's the best way to change an unhappy attitude to a joyful one?
- If God had only given us one or two senses, which ones do you think are most helpful to finding joy? If someone doesn't experience all five senses, can they still discover the evidence of God around them? How?

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### MADE TO CREATE

an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing



### 4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU [HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Bibles, scratch art paper, wooden stylus

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Give each kid a Bible.
- Invite kids to look up and read Psalm 16:11 using the Bible

Navigation Tips below:

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Look Around**

Joy in the Psalms  
Psalms 8, 16, and 19

***Finding verses with 4th-5th graders:** Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they're looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.*

### TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

When is it hard to find joy?

- Give each kid one scratch art paper and a wooden stylus.
- Tell kids to use the stylus to write a phrase or short sentence that summarizes Psalm 16:11 then etch a design or drawing to illustrate it.
- Read the verse to your group again before they get started. Invite conversation as needed to help kids come up with their ideas.
- As kids work, ask:
  - What do you see around you that brings you joy?
  - According to Psalm 16:11, where does joy come from?
  - How does our relationship with God affect our joy?
- When finished, let kids share their etchings and say Psalm 16:11 together.
- Point out that on tough days, we can look and feel about as joyful as the dark, blank paper they are drawing on. But, just like the bright colors came through as they drew, there is always joy to be found if we look around and really pay attention.
- Remind kids that when we follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to guide us. Joy is a gift from the Spirit! Paying attention to what's around us is a great way to receive that gift.

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### MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



### 5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

- Review or teach kids the Five-Fingers-of-Joy to prompt a prayer of gratitude and praise for the ways God shows up all around them.
- Invite kids to hold up five fingers and look around them. (Alternatively, you might invite kids to close their eyes and picture themselves in one of their favorite places—not to suggest that their Small Group isn't their FAVORITE place.)  
Think of FIVE things you can SEE.  
Think of FOUR things you can HEAR.  
Think of THREE things you can SMELL.  
Think of TWO things you can TOUCH or FEEL.  
Think of ONE thing you can taste.
- Challenge them to acknowledge ways the things they thought of bring them joy.
- Encourage kids to talk to God (silently or aloud) to say thank you for the evidence that God is at work all around them and uses it to bring joy.
- Close in prayer.

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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

## GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

### SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION (15 MINUTES)

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

**(Choose one or both of these activities.)**

#### 1. JUST FOR FUN

**Made to Explore:** an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Offering container
- Twisting balloons (for making balloon animals), at least one for each kid
- Balloon air pumps, several for kids to share
- Before group time: Review a tutorial video for making a twisting balloon into a party hat; be ready to help/show kids how to form their own.
  - Suggestion: <https://bit.ly/49aOODf>
- Optional: device for streaming the video to watch with the group
- Optional: Look up other twisting balloon videos for kids to try.

#### 2. OPENING ACTIVITY

**Made to Play:** an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- For every pair of kids:
  - Plastic cup, one for each pair
  - Cotton balls, 5 for each pair
  - Sandwich bags, one for each pair
- Before group time: Lightly soak the cotton balls in water (not dripping). Place five in each sandwich bag and seal it.

### GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT (25 MINUTES)

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

**(Choose as many of these activities as you like.)**

#### 1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

**Made to Imagine:** an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Print "Find Joy" Activity Page on paper, one for each kid.
- Pens

#### 2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

**Made to Reflect:** an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Bibles, two for each Small Group
- Print "Sensory Charade" Activity Page on paper and cut apart, one set for each Small Group
- Die, one for each Small Group
- Pens, enough for the group to share
- Paper
- Before group time: Cut 10-20 slips of paper the same size as the "Sensory Charade" strips

#### 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

**Made to Connect:** an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- No supplies needed

#### 4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

**Made to Create:** an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Bibles
- Scratch art paper, one for each kid
- Wooden stylus (or skewers/toothpicks), one for each kid



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## GETTING READY

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### 5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER [PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

*Made to Reflect:* an activity that creates space for personal processing and application

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- No supplies needed

### HOME: PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resource: **Parent Cue app.**