



TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Build Your Kingdom Here
Ezra and the
Rebuilding of the Temple
Ezra 3:10-13

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

What is something that took longer than you wanted it to?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Celebrate each step of the way.

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



WEEK
THREE
JUNE 2024

SMALL GROUP
PRETEEN

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

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO CONNECT

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



Before kids arrive, pray for a few minutes about the time you'll be spending with your preteens today. Ask God to give you a posture of openness as you talk about their lives and struggles, and help them see how God is moving in their lives and still giving them reasons to celebrate because of Jesus.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

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1. JUST FOR FUN

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering Container, paint sticks or rulers, cotton balls, duct tape; *Optional: floor tape*

WHAT YOU DO:

- Greet kids by name as they arrive.
- Direct those who brought an offering to place it in the container.
- When enough kids have arrived, pair each kid with a partner.
- Give each pair a paint stick or ruler and 10 cotton balls.
- Pass out the duct tape to share and show kids how to wrap the end of their rulers or paint sticks with duct tape, sticky side out.
 - They will need to cover 4-5-inches on one end of the ruler.
- Tell one kid in each pair to hold the taped paint stick or ruler and the other to hold the 10 cotton balls.
- Direct partners to stand about 5-6 feet apart, facing each other.
 - *Optional: Create two lines of tape on the floor to provide kids with a boundary line.*
- Explain that the kids with the cotton balls will toss them one at a time to their partner who will try to "catch" the cotton balls on the sticky end of the ruler or paint stick.
 - If a cotton ball is not caught, it can be retrieved and thrown again, but both players must remain 5-6 feet apart.
- Give teams 60 seconds or so to play. The team with the most cotton balls stuck to their ruler wins.
- If the end of the ruler is no longer sticky, kids can remove the duct tape and replace with another fresh strip midway through the game or as often as needed.

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MONTHLY VIRTUE

Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing

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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: Marbles, forks

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a marble and a fork.
- Instruct kids to try to use the fork to scoop up the marble with the following guidelines:
 - They can only use their hand that is holding the fork.
 - Once the marble is on the fork, they must balance it there for 3 seconds.
 - The first kid to do this is the winner. (This is a difficult challenge that they will most likely not be able to do.)
- After kids have made several unsuccessful attempts, allow them to use a wall or other flat surface to nudge the fork up against to scoop the marble. (This will still be a challenge but should make it possible.)
- Give the group some time to complete this challenge then congratulate them for not giving up.

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"During this game, I could hear sounds of excitement as some of you accomplished a tricky challenge. It reminds me of the way God wants us to find joy each step of the way—in the small, everyday things as well as the huge, amazing things. **[Transition] Today in Large Group, we'll hear about how God's people found joy during each step of a project that was even harder and took a lot longer than balancing a marble on a fork.**"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.



Start the Party

Celebrate the Good News

WEEK
THREE
JUNE 2024

SMALL GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT [LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY] WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

- Direct the group to sit in a circle.
- Share one of the following prompts and challenge kids to go around the circle taking turns to respond:
 - Describe joy using 2 rhyming words.
 - Define joy using a word that begin with "H."
 - Talk about joy using a sentence containing the word "anyone" in it.
 - Share a word that ends with "L" and reminds you of joy.
 - Name something that is the opposite of joy.
- When kids run out of ideas or repeat words, move on to another prompt from the list above.
- Ask kids questions or invite them to explain more about their responses throughout the game.
- **[Make it Personal] Share your definition of joy and a way God helped you find it in a situation that took longer than you wanted.**

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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

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



2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Timeline" Activity Page, "Timeline Key" Activity Page, rope, clip style clothespins, chairs; *Optional:* wall tape

WHAT YOU DO:

- Prepare a "clothesline" by tying and stretching the rope across two chairs or something similar, and set out the clothespins nearby.
 - *Optional:* If your space is not conducive to a "clothesline," kids can tape their cards to the wall or simply line them up on the floor.
- Shuffle the cards from the "Timeline" Activity Page and give each kid a card.
 - If you have fewer than 10 kids, give some kids more than one card.
 - If you have more than 10 kids, pair some kids up.
- Choose one kid to read their card first, out loud, to the group. Direct that kid to clip their card toward the middle part of the rope.
- Choose another kid to read their card then clip it to the left or right of the first card, depending on when they think the event occurred in today's Bible story.
- Repeat until all cards have been clipped to the rope in story order.
- Adjust the placement of the cards to create more space to the right/left on the clothesline, as needed.
- When all the cards have been clipped, read them out loud in the order kids have clipped them.
- Invite a discussion, asking if any cards should be adjusted. (Check the correct story order using the "Timeline Key" Activity Page.)
 - *Optional:* Let your group know how many cards should be moved and invite them to share which ones they think should move.
- After the timeline is complete, ask kids to identify key events that were cause for celebration along the way. Invite kids to share how God's people may have felt during those times of celebration.
- Ask:
 - If you created a timeline of your life from this past week, what are some things God helped you accomplish day by day?
 - If there was a timeline of your whole life, what are some big, important accomplishments God has helped you with?
 - Why is it important to celebrate the little things God does for us each step of the way?
- Remind kids that even though they won't be constructing a city like in the story today, they will still have big projects to complete in their lifetime and important work God will give them to do. Along the way, with each step, every day, they can find something to celebrate.
- Encourage kids to remember that God is with them and gives us the Holy Spirit to help us. When we stop and take notice of the big as well as small things God is doing, we will find joy every day.

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Start the Party

Celebrate the Good News

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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's your favorite way to celebrate and worship God?
- If someone said to you, "I don't have anything to be joyful about," what would you say to help them realize that they do?
- What is something that took longer than you wanted it to? How might it help in those situations to celebrate small steps of progress along the way and thank God for them?

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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

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, empty water bottles, prepared water bottle caps, funnels, salt or dry sand; *Optional:* Stopwatch

NOTE: If time or supplies are limited, create one water bottle timer as a demonstration. Make it a shared experience by allowing kids to take turns participating in the process.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

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WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a Bible and invite kids to look up then read Colossians 4:2 using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

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

What is something that took longer than you wanted it to?

- Invite the kids to say the verse together a few times then put Bibles aside, and challenge anyone who would like to try to recite it from memory.
- Discuss the verse.
 - What is the writer of Colossians 4:2 encouraging us to do with our time and energy?
 - God continually shows up in small, everyday ways. What would help you to stay watchful and not miss an opportunity to praise and celebrate?
 - How might prayer help you with this?
 - What are some things that always seem to take longer than you'd like? When that happens, how might the challenge of Colossians 4:2 be a helpful reminder from God?
- Give each kid two water bottles and a prepared set of the attached bottle caps.
- Invite kids to create a water bottle timer by following the steps below. (*Optional: Lead a group demonstration making one timer, inviting different kids to complete each step.*)
 - Sharing the funnel, let kids take turns filling ONE of their bottles about ¾ full of salt or sand using the curve on the neck of the bottle as a guideline.
 - Attach the prepared caps to the top of the filled bottles then tighten them securely.
 - With the filled bottle on the bottom, screw on the empty bottle to the other cap end.
 - Tightly wrap a strip of duct tape around the lids where the caps come together.

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

(4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU, CONTINUED)

- *Optional: Use a stopwatch to let kids determine the time it takes for the sand or salt to fall from one bottle to the other.*
- Challenge kids to turn their bottle timers over then say Colossians 4:2 before the salt or sand finishes filling the bottle.
- Invite kids to take the water bottle timers home and use them as a reminder to spend time looking for the evidence of God's care for them in big and small ways. When they see it, remind them to take time to celebrate.



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25 MINUTES

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: Water bottle timers from "Verses to Take with You"

WHAT YOU DO:

- Invite kids to use the sand or salt timers they made earlier to time their prayers.
- Give kids a prayer prompt (some ideas below) then invite them to turn their water bottle timers over and pray until the sand or salt falls from the top to the bottom. Repeat as time and interest allow.
 - Thank God for a small accomplishment you completed recently.
 - Pray for help to be watchful for ways God shows up in your life.
 - Pray to say thank You for something big God has done for you, your family, or someone you know.
 - Think about how much God loves you, and the way God sent Jesus to rescue us.
 - Pray about something you love most about God and want to celebrate.
- Close your group time in prayer, encouraging kids to be on the lookout for evidence of God's love and care each day this week.

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PRETEEN

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Offering container
- Ruler or paint stick, one for every two kids
- Cotton balls, 10 for every two kids
- Duct tape, a few rolls for the group to share
- *Optional:* Floor tape, one roll per Small Group

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Marbles, one for each kid
- Forks, one for each kid

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- No supplies needed

2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "Timeline" Activity Page one cardstock and cut apart, one set for each Small Group
- Print "Timeline Key" Activity Page on paper, one for each Small Group
- 10-foot length of light rope or heavy string, one for each Small Group
- Chairs, two for each Small Group
- Clothespins (clip style), 10 for each Small Group
- *Optional:* wall tape

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bibles, one for each kid
- Water bottles (empty, dry, 8 oz.), two for each kid
- Salt or sand, enough to fill one bottle $\frac{3}{4}$ full for each kid (approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ cups per kid)
- Funnel (that fits the bottle opening), one or a few for kids to share
- Duct tape, a few roles for each Small Group
- Super glue or similar strong glue, one for each Small Group
- Drill or hammer and nail, one for each Small Group
- Before group time, prepare a set of water bottle caps for each kid:
 - Glue the caps of two water bottles together (top to top) using a strong glue such as Super Glue or similar by making a circle of glue on the top of the cap while avoiding the center where a hole will be drilled.
 - Allow the glued caps to thoroughly dry.
 - Punch a hole through the middle of the glued-



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GETTING READY

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

together caps using an electric drill or a hammer and nail. NOTE: If the caps have a plastic disk inside, use a flat screwdriver to pop it out before drilling the hole. Determine how large the hole needs to be to allow the sand or salt to pass through slowly. The larger the hole, the faster the sand will flow through it.

- *Optional: Stopwatch*

NOTE: If time or supplies are limited, create one water bottle timer as a demonstration. Make it a shared experience by allowing kids to take turns participating in the process.

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:

- Water bottle timers from the "Verses to Take with You" activity

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.**