



This or That / Week 1

SO HOW DOES THIS WORK?

You've probably noticed the whole world has changed in different ways. And, your group time may be changing, too. This adaptation is a tool to help you integrate teaching time with small group time so that the message is broken up and discussed along the way.

IF YOU ARE USING A TEACHING VIDEO

The speaker will pause at key moments and questions will appear on screen. Remember, to pause the video and give your group time to discuss. Your church may give you a specific amount of time or leave it up to you. When the conversation is ready to transition, start up the video again.

For this video, you will pause for small group conversation at the following times:

0:30
3:42
6:49
9:57
12:36
12:46

After the video, be sure to wrap up with more discussion if needed or prayer time. And don't forget to check out the "Try This" section of your Small Group Leader Guide.

IF SOMEONE IS COMMUNICATING LIVE

The speaker will pause at key moments and give your groups time to discuss. Whether you're meeting digitally or in a small group in person, the communicator should give you an idea of how long you have to chat and which questions to discuss. **This information can be found in the Digital and Home Group Option of the Communicator Guide.**

After the talk, be sure to wrap up with more discussion if needed or prayer time. And don't forget to check out the "Try This" section of your Small Group Leader Guide.

DON'T FORGET

READ AHEAD

No matter where or how you lead your group, it's important to spend a few minutes preparing. Take time to read the THINK ABOUT THIS section which will set you up to meet your students right where they are. And don't forget the GOAL OF SMALL GROUP which will point your conversation in the right direction.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Remember, nobody knows your group quite like you. Just because a question appears on a piece of paper or on screen doesn't mean you have to ask it or use the same words. Ultimately, YOU are guiding the conversation for your group. So feel free to add, delete, or adapt questions to meet their needs.

LET THEM KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING

Chances are, your few are curious what group will look like if you're changing formats. At the beginning of group time, give them an idea how the format may have changed so they will know what to expect.

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

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BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

God doesn't compare you to others.

SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 10:12 NLT; 2 Corinthians 10:18 NLT;
Proverbs 4:23 NLT

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To encourage students to shift their focus away from wanting to be like someone else, and instead focus on who God made them to be.

THINK ABOUT THIS

Identifying what they like about other people—things they wish they had in themselves—is probably going to

be easy for most middle schoolers. That's because they think a lot about that! The way they see themselves is influenced primarily by their peers in this phase, so it's easy for them to identify something they see in a friend or fellow student that they don't see in themselves. It's more difficult for middle schoolers to recognize things in themselves that they like or that make them unique. That's because most middle schoolers lack self-awareness, and that makes seeing themselves realistically a challenge. And if they do recognize those good things, they may be hesitant to say them for fear of being made fun of or sounding like they're bragging.

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here.

DURING GROUP

ICE BREAKER

Let's start with a quick game of "This or That!" I'll give you two options, and you pick your favorite out of the two:

- Books or movies?
- Billie Eilish or Taylor Swift?
- Kanye or Chance the Rapper?
- PopTarts or Toaster Strudels?
- Pizza or ice cream?
- SnapChat or Instagram?
- YouTube or TikTok?

DISCUSS THIS

Transition: Great choices! When it comes to things like that, it's probably fun to choose this or that! But when we're comparing this in our lives to that in someone else's, it isn't as fun, is it?

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how often do you think most middle schoolers wish they had what somebody else had?
2. What's one example of something (a talent, a quality, an ability, a possession, a personality trait, etc.) a middle schooler might wish they had that someone else had?
3. Why do you think we want what other people have sometimes?
4. What's one word you would use to describe how it feels to want what someone else has?
5. What's one word you would use to describe when somebody else wants what you have?
6. How does it feel to know God doesn't want you to be like anyone else?
7. This week, what's one thing you can do when you're tempted to focus on what you don't have or what you aren't?

DO THIS (EXPERIENCE)

Play a game of "hot potato" using a toss-able random item (like a stuffed animal, a shoe, a dog toy, or a random discount store item). When a student catches the item, they'll answer the question:

"What's something you often get complimented for...."

- In the way you treat others?
- At school?
- When it comes to something you are good at?
- When you aren't around?