



THE GREAT INVITATION

**A STUDY OF THE GREAT COMMISSION
FOR CHILDREN IN GRADES K-5**



WEEK 1: THE GREAT INVITATION

MINISTRY IS ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS! THE BEST WAY TO BUILD THOSE RELATIONSHIPS IS THROUGH CONVERSATION. AS KIDS ARRIVE, BRING THEM INTO THE CHAT USING THE CONVERSATION STARTERS BELOW. BEING HEARD HELPS KIDS FEEL CONNECTED AND CONVERSATION WILL HELP BREAK THE ICE! MAKE SURE YOU GET IN ON THE FUN AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS TOO!

Conversation Starters

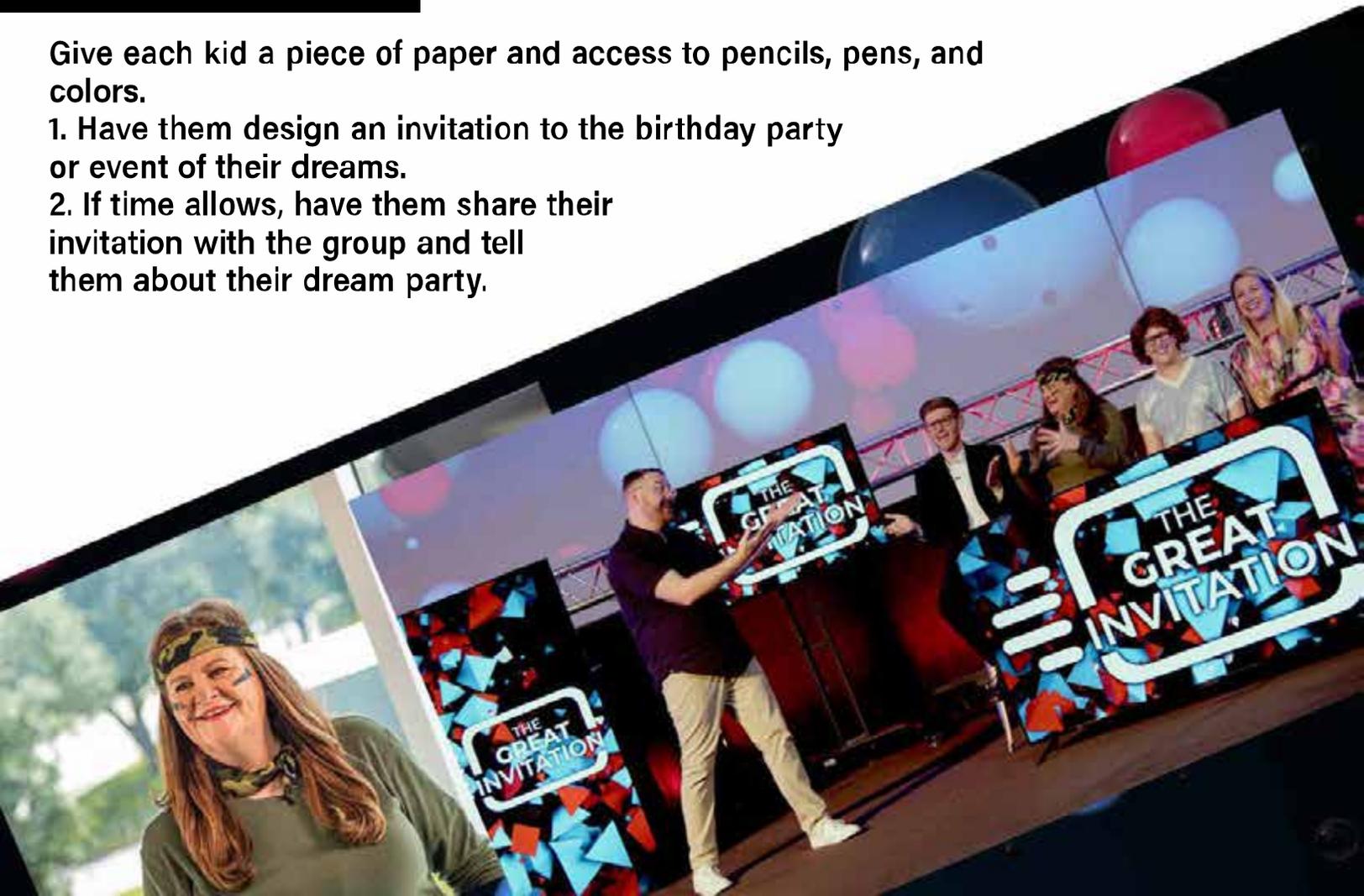
1. What was the best part of your week?
2. What was your least favorite part of the week?
3. What is your favorite flavor of birthday cake?
4. What is the coolest invitation you've received?
5. What is the best birthday party or event you have ever been invited to?
6. What was your favorite birthday and why?

ONCE THE MAJORITY OF THE KIDS ARRIVE, INVITE THEM TO TAKE PART IN THE GROUP GAME/GROUP ACTIVITY SO YOU CAN CONTINUE TO BREAK DOWN BARRIERS AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS.

Opening Group Activity

Give each kid a piece of paper and access to pencils, pens, and colors.

1. Have them design an invitation to the birthday party or event of their dreams.
2. If time allows, have them share their invitation with the group and tell them about their dream party.



WEEK 1: LARGE GROUP TEACHING

Introduction

Hello everyone and welcome to week one of The Great Invitation! Whether you know it or not, we have ALL been invited to take part in something great - the great commission. In a moment, we will learn more about that as we watch the first episode of The Great Invitation.

The Great Invitation follows four contestants that receive a mysterious invitation to take part in something great. To make it even more fun, each small group will be rooting for one of the four contestants!

Group 1, Are you ready to meet your contestant? Let's have a drumroll...you are TEAM BLUE! *show blue team slide*. Group 2, drumroll...you are TEAM ORANGE! *show orange team slide*. Group 3, drumroll...you are TEAM PINK! *show team pink slide*. And lastly, group 4, drumroll...you are TEAM GREEN! *show team green slide*.

Each week, as we watch our contestants compete, you will get to cheer for your champion! We will also have group competitions of our own. That being said, can I get the leader of the teams up here to start us off? Let's hear it for your team leaders!

Game

"Head, Shoulders, Knees, Invite!"

Supplies

-Two plain envelopes

-A third envelope that is decorated and has a coupon inside for one free high five.

This is a great invitation that grants the owner a prize. What do each of you think the prize might be? *Allow them to answer.*

The 4 of you will be competing to see who wins the invite. So are you guys ready to play? For the first round, pair up and stand facing your partner. Hold out your hands and make sure you are far enough apart that your fingers barely touch. I will place an invitation between each of you and am going to call out either "Head, Shoulders, knees, or invite." As I say each body part, place your hands on your head etc. Whenever I finally say INVITE, the first person to grab the invite gets to move on to the next round. *Play one time through, leaving you with two winners.*

WEEK 1: TEACHING (CONTINUED)

Game (continued)

Let's hear it for our two losers as they make their way back to their teams. Now we have our final champions! You know what to do! Pair up, stick out your hands, and get ready! *Play one more time.*

Why don't you open your invitation and see what your prize is? It is...a high five! From me! You can cash that in whenever you want. *Hold on to envelope for object lesson.* Let's cheer for our champion!

Video

Alright, are you ready to meet the contestants and find out about the Great Invitation? Let's GO! *Play "The Great Invitation: Episode 1"*

Object Lesson

There was week one! Starting next week you will get to see your contestant compete in their first round of competitions.

The gameshow host is completely right - we have ALL been invited to take part in something GREAT. When we played our game earlier, none of the contestants knew what was in this envelope. It could've been \$100, a coupon for a high five, or something less than desirable - like an extra trip to the dentist. But, we know exactly what we are invited to do when we accept the Great invitation to take part in the great commission that can be found in Matthew 28:19-20.

Put verse on screen or read from Bibles distributed to the group.

Let's read this together:

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:19-20

WEEK 1: TEACHING (CONTINUED)

Bible Lesson

Before we can even talk about what the Great Commission is, let's talk about WHY the Great Commission is so important.

Genesis 1:1 tells us that "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." If you keep reading in Genesis you will learn that God created light, the sea, land, plants, the universe, the animals, and then He created two humans - Adam and Eve and placed them in a place called the Garden of Eden.

Everything was PERFECT. Adam and Eve lived peacefully in the Garden of Eden and even got to be in the presence of God. God let them be in charge of everything He created and only gave them one rule which can be found in Genesis 2:17: "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." God didn't mean that they would immediately die. He meant that they would no longer be immortal beings and would one day die. He also knew that if Adam and Eve ate from that tree, their eyes would be open and they would know EVERYTHING. Not just all the good things, but all the bad and sad and scary things too. They would also be separated from God - no longer living with Him in the Garden.

For a while, they obeyed and everything continued to be perfect. But then Satan, an enemy of God, twisted God's words and tricked Adam and Eve into disobeying God. As soon as they ate the fruit, their eyes were opened, and sin entered the world. Sin is when we disobey God. And everyone born after that, including all of us, have a sin problem. Romans 3:23 says that "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," That sounds like bad news, right? But, I have good news. Right after that, in Romans 3:24, it says "and all are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

You see, God did not want to leave us stuck with a sin problem, forever separated from Him. Instead, He sent His only son, Jesus, to live a perfect life on earth so that he could be the perfect sacrifice and take the punishment of ALL our sins. Jesus died a painful death on the cross and rose three days later - defeating death and giving us all a chance to have our sins forgiven and allow us to go to heaven when we die to be with God forever!

After Jesus died on the cross and rose again, he appeared to many people before returning to be with God. Does anyone know what the last thing Jesus says in the Bible? It is the Great Commission! Jesus charged or invited his disciples to go out and tell the world about Him. He wanted them to spread the Good News of Jesus so that anyone that hears and believes, will get to have their sins forgiven and live forever with God.

Telling others about Jesus is THE most important thing we can do. Do you think you're ready?? Over the next 5 weeks we will talk more about what the commission means AND help you prepare yourself so that you can say YES to the Great Invitation!

WEEK 1: WORSHIP & SMALL GROUP

Worship

We are going to sing a song that helps us memorize the Great Commission! Lets stand up and sing!

Play "Go" by Seeds Worship.

Dismiss to Small Groups

I will pray for us and then we will dismiss back to small groups so we can discuss what we just learned!

Small Group Time

Discussion

1. What does the word "commission" mean? (*an instruction, command, or duty given to a person or group of people*)
2. Why do you think we call this the GREAT commission?
3. What qualities or characteristics do you think the contestants on the Great Invitation might need to have to help them win?
4. How would you have responded if you got an invitation to do something GREAT? Would you accept it?
5. How does it feel to know that we are all invited to take part in the Great Commission?
6. What is sin?
7. Let's look up Romans 3:23-24 in the Bible.
 - How do you feel after reading verse 23?
 - How do you feel after reading verse 24?
8. How does it make you feel knowing that everyone is a sinner and needs Jesus?
9. How does it make you feel knowing that you have been invited to tell others about Jesus?
10. What about sharing about Jesus makes you scared? Nervous? Excited?

Group Game

Have kids pair up and play "Head, Shoulders, Knees, INVITE." Play until you have one big winner and then start over if time allows!

WEEK 1: SMALL GROUP (CONTINUED)

Bible Verse Review

Have the kids sit in a circle. Look up Matthew 28:19-20 in your Bible. Tell the kids how you are finding it to help them learn how to look up Bible verses. Pass the bible around the circle and have each kid read one word from the verse. Be patient as it will take time for each kid to locate the verse and the word we are at. If a kid doesn't want to read out loud they can pass. The goal of this is for kids to get used to finding a verse on a page.

Pick Up Time

Play "Head, Shoulders, Knees, INVITE" or let the kids work on their invites as they wait for parents to pick them up.



WEEK 2: GO

MINISTRY IS ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS! THE BEST WAY TO BUILD THOSE RELATIONSHIPS IS THROUGH CONVERSATION. AS KIDS ARRIVE, BRING THEM INTO THE CHAT USING THE CONVERSATION STARTERS BELOW. BEING HEARD HELPS KIDS FEEL CONNECTED AND CONVERSATION WILL HELP BREAK THE ICE! MAKE SURE YOU GET IN ON THE FUN AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS TOO!

Conversation Starters

1. What was the best part of your week?
2. What was your least favorite part of the week?
3. Where is your favorite place you have ever gone? Maybe a favorite vacation?
4. Where is your favorite place to go in in your city/town?
5. Where is your favorite place to go eat?
6. What's a place you have had to go that you didn't like?

ONCE THE MAJORITY OF THE KIDS ARRIVE, INVITE THEM TO TAKE PART IN THE GROUP GAME/GROUP ACTIVITY SO YOU CAN CONTINUE TO BREAK DOWN BARRIERS AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS.

Opening Group Activity

Say: Have you ever been stuck in the car on a long road trip and had to play car trip games? Let's play some of my favorite car trip games!

1 SPY

Pick one kid to be "it". They will pick an object in the room without telling anyone. They then say "I spy something _____" and list the color of the object. Each kid gets to take a guess as to what the mystery object is. The winner gets to be "it" next. If the winner has already had a turn, pick someone new.

2 Truths and a lie

Have everyone think of three facts about themselves. Two of them should be true and one should be a lie. Let each kid take a turn sharing the two truths and a lie (in random order) and have everyone vote on which "truth" is a lie.



WEEK 2: LARGE GROUP TEACHING

Introduction

Hello everyone and welcome to week two of The Great Invitation! Whether you know it or not, we have ALL been invited to take part in something great - the great commission. Last week we were introduced to this idea by the host of The Great Invitation, the game show where four contestants accept the invitation to see if they are ready to do something great.

Each of your small group will be cheering on one of the four contestants today as they compete in the first round of challenges. We have team BLUE, team ORANGE, team PINK, and team GREEN!

Video

Let's see what happens this week on The Great Invitation! *Play "The Great Invitation: Episode 2"*

Game

"Paper Airplane"

Supplies

-One sheet of paper per participant

Who would've thought that Carol would win round one? Let's hear it one more time from team ORANGE!

Do you guys think you have what it takes to take part in the Great Invitation? I want to see how good you guys would do. I need two volunteers, one guy and one girl, from each team. You will all have 1 minute to fold a piece of paper into an airplane, and we will see which one flies the furthest! Let's start the timer right...now!

Have each kid make an airplane then stand in the same spot and throw them. Whoever goes the furthest wins!

Let's hear it for our winner!! You guys can head back to your seats.

WEEK 2: TEACHING (CONTINUED)

Object Lesson

As the game host told us, we are all invited to take part in the Great Commission. And the first step in the Great Commission is to GO! This is a call to action - not just "hey you should think about how important this is" but "hey, get up and go tell people about Jesus!"

Raise your hand if you have ever had to move. Sometimes you might be excited to move! How many of you were happy to move? Sometimes moving can be sad or scary. Who has been upset because you had to move? It can be a lot - learning a new city, going to a new school, and making new friends. No matter whether you want to move or not, when your parents say you have to go, you have to go.

Today we are going to talk about two different times in the Bible when someone was asked to GO and they obeyed - one example is from the Old Testament and the other is from the New Testament.

Bible Lesson

In the Old Testament, in Genesis 11, we are introduced to a man named Abram. When Abram was 75 years old, God spoke to Him and said, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you." (Genesis 12:1). The Bible says Abram "took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there." (Genesis 12:5). This means that Abram packed up his whole life and left what he knew to go into the unknown. He didn't know where he was going, he didn't know how long it would take, he didn't know anything. All he knew was that God told him to GO, and he trusted God and obeyed.

In the New Testament, Matthew 4, we have a similar story. Jesus was near the Sea of Galilee when he saw two brothers named Peter and Andrew. The Bible says "They were putting a net into the sea for they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, 'Follow Me. I will make you fish for men!'" (Matthew 4:18-19). What do you think they did? Let's keep reading, "At once they left their nets and followed Him" (Matthew 4:20). Once again, these guys were asked to leave everything they knew, the comfort of their homes, EVERYTHING and blindly follow Jesus. Jesus said "Go!" and they trusted and obeyed.

WEEK 2: TEACHING (CONTINUED) & WORSHIP

Bible Lesson (continued)

The Bible is full of people who trusted and followed God. And, as Matthew 28:19-20 tells us, we are also called to trust and follow God. Thankfully, we probably won't be asked to drop everything and go into the unknown. Let's read Matthew 28:19-20 together to remember what Jesus asks us to do.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20.

We are called to make disciples of all people. What is a disciple? (allow kids to give answers). A disciple is someone who believes and follows God AND helps others do the same. So the first step is to become a follower of God. This means that you:

1. Admit to God that you are a sinner. Last week we learned that sin is when we disobey God. We all have a problem with sin.
2. Believe that Jesus is God's son and that God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sin problem.
3. Confess that they believe in Jesus and want to make Him the ruler of their life.

Once you are a follower of God, you can grow closer to Him through reading your Bible, going to church, worshiping, and praying. You also can tell others about God - which is what the Great Commission is all about.

Worship

Let's all stand and sing our worship song together. This will help us memorize Matthew 28:19-20 while we Worship God!

Play "Go" by Seeds Worship.

Dismiss to Small Groups

I will pray for us and then we will go back to small groups so we can discuss what we just learned.

WEEK 2: SMALL GROUP

Small Group Time

Discussion

1. Which of the three challenges from today's video do you think you would be the best at? Why?
2. Which of the three challenges from today's video do you think you would be the worst at? Why?
3. Who do you think will win the most challenges?
4. How do you think Abram, Peter, and Andrew felt when they were asked to drop everything and GO?
5. How would you feel if someone asked you to do that?
6. Do you think you could drop everything and go on an unknown quest?
7. How does knowing who God is help you go and tell others about God?

Group Game

Say: Abram, Peter, and Andrew spent a lot of time traveling as they followed God. So let's play one more road trip game together!

The Alphabet Game:

1. Sit the kids in a circle. Agree on a destination (picnic, Disney world, the beach, etc). Each kid will then say their name and what item they are bringing. The catch is the item has to start with the same letter as their name AND make sense for the destination. After the first kid goes, the next kid will list what the first kid said and then add their own item to the list. Keep going until everyone has had a turn. Once everyone is done see who can remember what everyone said.
2. If time allows, pick a new location and start over. You can also have them use their last name initial for the second round.

WEEK 2: SMALL GROUP (CONTINUED)

Bible Verse Review

Break the kids into smaller groups and have them look up Matthew 28:19-20 in their Bibles. Give them a couple minutes to come up with hand motions for the verse that will help them memorize it. Share this with the group if time allows.

Pick Up Time

Let the kids pick their favorite of the two road trip games and play another round!



WEEK 3: REPRESENT

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Conversation Starters

1. What was the best part of your week?
2. What was your least favorite part of your week?
3. Have you ever gotten in trouble for something someone else did?
4. Have you ever let someone else get in trouble for something you did?
5. Have you ever had to do a group project? What is it like relying on others to do a good job?

ONCE THE MAJORITY OF THE KIDS ARRIVE, INVITE THEM TO TAKE PART IN THE GROUP GAME/GROUP ACTIVITY SO YOU CAN CONTINUE TO BREAK DOWN BARRIERS AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS.

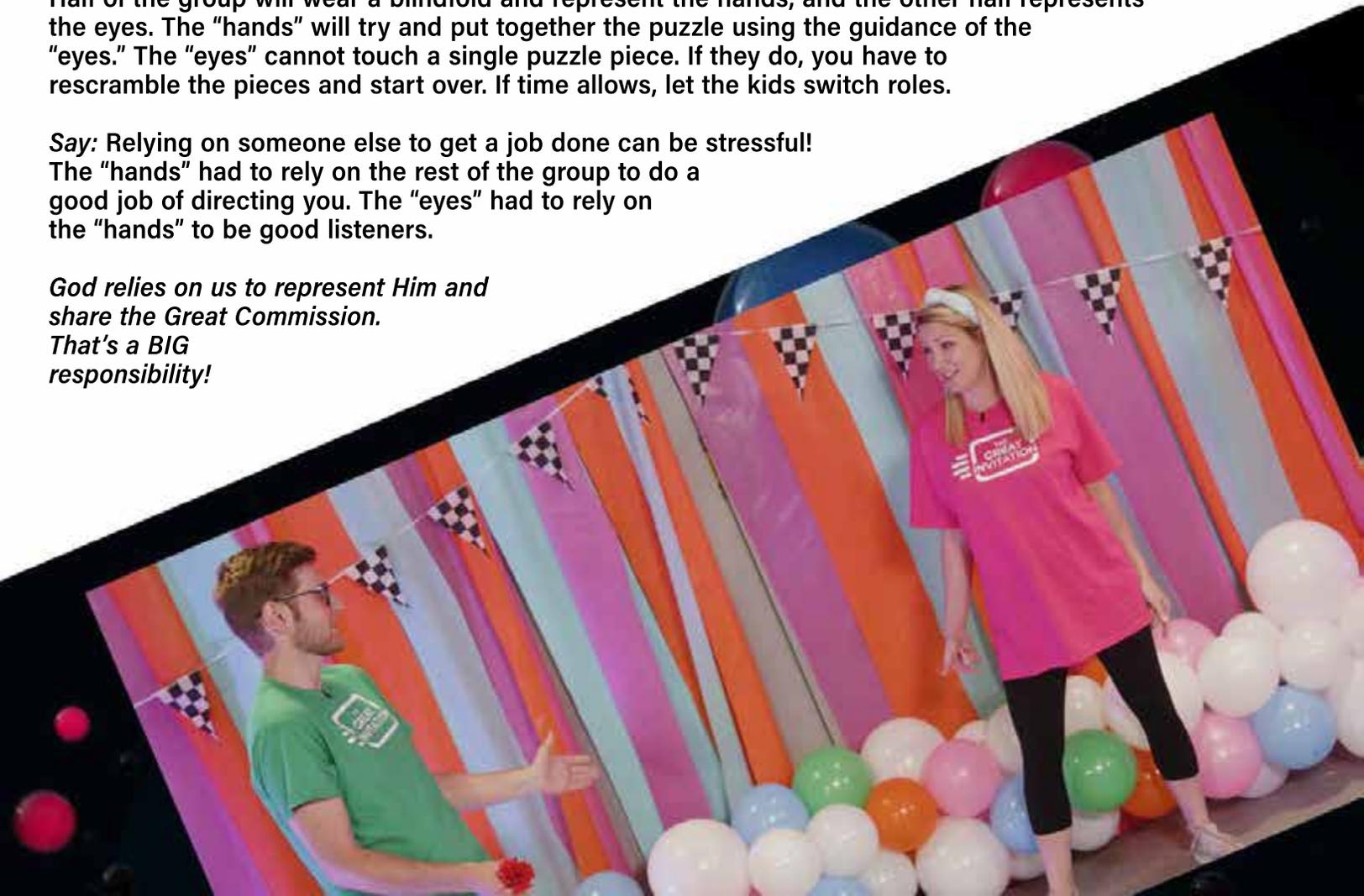
Opening Group Activity

Say: Today you will have to rely on others to complete a task as we play "Caution: Construction Zone."
Supplies: enough blindfolds for half of your group and a simple puzzle.

Half of the group will wear a blindfold and represent the hands, and the other half represents the eyes. The "hands" will try and put together the puzzle using the guidance of the "eyes." The "eyes" cannot touch a single puzzle piece. If they do, you have to rescrumble the pieces and start over. If time allows, let the kids switch roles.

Say: Relying on someone else to get a job done can be stressful!
The "hands" had to rely on the rest of the group to do a good job of directing you. The "eyes" had to rely on the "hands" to be good listeners.

*God relies on us to represent Him and share the Great Commission.
That's a BIG responsibility!*



WEEK 3: LARGE GROUP TEACHING

Introduction

Hello everyone and welcome to week three of The Great Invitation! Whether you know it or not, we have ALL been invited to take part in something great - the Great Commission. Two weeks ago we were introduced to this idea by the host of The Great Invitation, the game show where four contestants accepted the invitation to see if they are ready to do something great. Last week we saw Carol, the orange contestant, win the first round of challenges. Who do you think will win this week? Do you think it will be Orange again? Pink? Green? Blue? Well let's see.

Video

Play "The Great Invitation: Episode 3"

Game

"Balloon Stomp"

Supplies: String and one balloon for each player.

We now have our second winner - BEN! Way to go team green! Green team, do you think you can win our in-person challenge today too? Let's find out! I need two volunteers from each team, one boy and one girl. Make sure you haven't already had a chance to come up and play.

Tie a balloon to each kid's ankle (give them coordinating colors with their team). When you say GO, kids will try and stomp on each other's balloon while protecting their own. They cannot use their hands. The last kid with a balloon standing wins.

Let's give our participants and winners a round of applause as they head back to their seats!

WEEK 3: TEACHING (CONTINUED)

Object Lesson

Supplies: Ladder or step ladder. Climb to the third step of your ladder.

Say: The whole goal of the Great Commission is for everyone to make Jesus the leader of their life. But before they can get to the top step, they have to first hear about Jesus. (*Go down a step.*) But in order for them to hear about Jesus, someone has to TELL them about Jesus. (*Go down another step.*) And in order for someone to TELL them about Jesus, someone has to be SENT to Represent Jesus. (*Go down to the ground.*)

Bible Lesson

As we have learned in the Great Commission, we are already sent to tell others about Jesus! Let's look at a few verses in Romans to help us understand what it means to represent Jesus.

"How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful the feet of those who preach the good news!'" Romans 10:14-15.

Let's look at this verse backwards.

"And how are they to preach unless they are sent?"

We know that we have been sent to preach thanks to the Great Commission - *"Therefore GO and make disciples of all nations."* (Mt. 28:19). There is no denying it!

"And how are they to hear without someone preaching?"

When we hear the word "preach" we often think of pastors standing in front of a church on Sunday mornings. But this verse just means that we are all supposed to tell others about Jesus! You don't have to be a pastor in front of a church, you can tell others about Jesus on the playground, in the cafeteria, on the soccer field, and anywhere else you spend time.

WEEK 3: TEACHING (CONTINUED) & WORSHIP

Bible Lesson (continued)

"And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?"

What are some ways that you can tell others about Jesus? *(Allow some kids to answer.)* Those are great! You can tell people about God and share with them stories and verses from the Bible. You can also SHOW people Jesus through your actions. When you treat others the way that Jesus treats us, they can see who Jesus is. You can invite your friends to church with you on Sundays or Wednesdays. And there are countless other ways - you can be creative.

"How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed?"

Even though we are tasked with representing God to others, the good news is we are not responsible for making people believe in Him. Only God can do that. It is still very important that we tell others about God, because how can they believe in Him if they haven't heard about Him? But we don't have to worry about what they do when they hear about God. We just need to continue to tell others about God and pray that they hear and believe!

Now what about this "beautiful feet" part? Do you think Jesus was talking about pedicures and painted toenails? No! Jesus is saying that in order to GO, you have to move your feet. So "beautiful feet" are feet that are in motion - carrying the good news of Jesus to the ends of the earth.

Worship

Let's all stand and sing our worship song together. This will help us memorize Matthew 28:19-20 while we Worship God!

Play "Go" by Seeds Worship.

Dismiss to Small Groups

I will pray for us and then we will go back to small groups so we can discuss what we just learned.

WEEK 3: SMALL GROUP

Small Group Time

Discussion

1. What challenge do you wish you could play from today's video?
2. What challenge do you think you would lose from today's video?
3. Who do you think will win next week's challenge?

Have everyone look up Romans 10:14-15

4. What is the main problem in these verses? (*How can someone believe in God if they have not heard about God?*)
5. What is the solution to that problem? (*We are called to preach the good news to everyone.*)
6. Where are some places that you can tell others about God?
7. How can you tell others about God?
8. Is it our job to make people believe in God and the Bible? (*No it is only our job to TELL them about God. God is the only one who can make someone believe.*)
9. What are some things that keep you from telling others about God?

Group Game

Say: It's important to be careful what we say and how we say it because everything is an opportunity to share about God.

Telephone Game:

Have players sit in a circle. They need to be close enough that whispering is possible, but not so close that players can hear each other whisper. Pick someone to be first and give them a word or phrase and let them whisper it in the ear of the person sitting to their right. Players whisper the phrase to their neighbors until it reaches the last player. The last player says the word or phrase out loud so everyone can hear how much it has changed from the first whisper at the beginning of the circle or line.

Keep letting people take turns being first.

WEEK 3: SMALL GROUP (CONTINUED)

Bible Verse Review

Supplies: any handheld object

Have the kids sit in a circle and give one kid an object. The person with the object says the first word of Matthew 28:19-20. Then they pass it to the next person who will say the second word of the verse. Keep going until you have said the full verse. Let different people be the first to start the verse, go in reverse order, and see how quickly you can do it. Let friends know that they can help remind each other if someone forgets the words.

Pick Up Time

Play Telephone or the blindfold puzzle game again.



WEEK 4: EMPOWERED

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Conversation Starters

1. What was the best part of your week?
2. What was your least favorite part of your week?
3. When was the last time someone helped you with something? Did it make things easier?
4. When was the last time you helped someone out with something?
5. Has anyone ever tried to help you with something but it made things worse?
6. Have you ever tried to help someone but accidentally made things worse instead?

ONCE THE MAJORITY OF THE KIDS ARRIVE, INVITE THEM TO TAKE PART IN THE GROUP GAME/GROUP ACTIVITY SO YOU CAN CONTINUE TO BREAK DOWN BARRIERS AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS.

Opening Group Activity

Check out the craft instructions on the next page (original located at <https://www.jesus-without-language.net/pentecost-acts-2-craft-1-2/>) and print enough copies for your group, supplying scissors for everyone. Have each member of the group make the craft before transitioning to large group time.

Say: Today we are talking about the Holy Spirit. Can anyone guess why we made this craft? We will find out exactly why in large group!





You'll need:

Scissors.



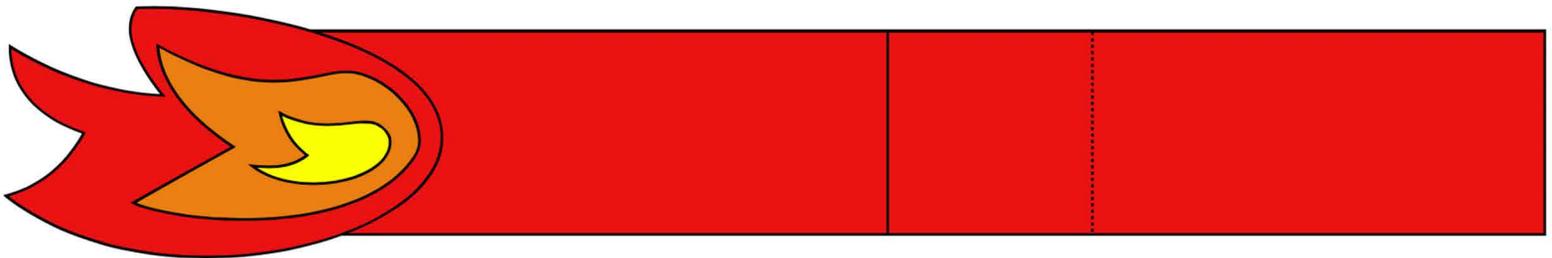
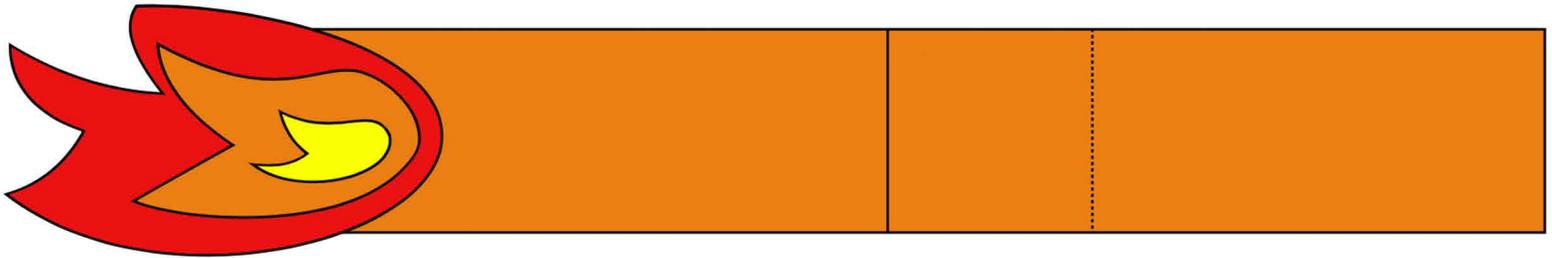
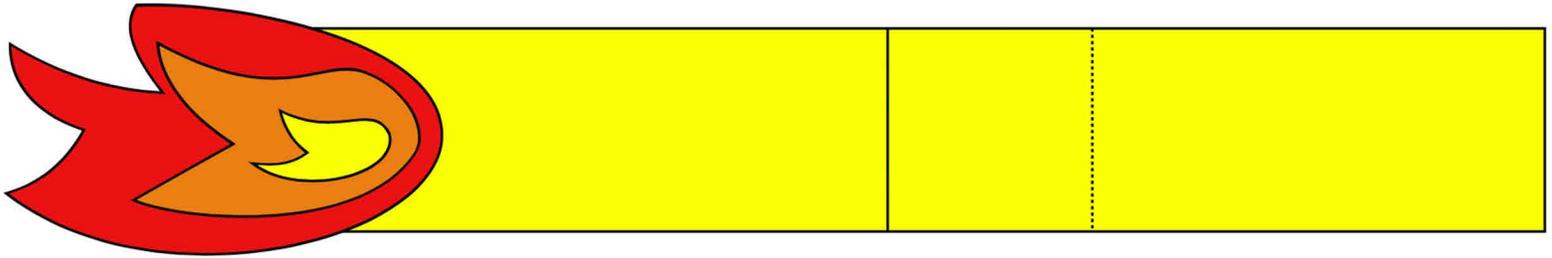
Instructions

- Cut each strip
- Fold so the solid black line is on the outside.
- Keeping it folded, fold again so the dotted line is on the outside.

We need to interlock these folds:

- Open out the yellow strip.
- Wrap the orange strip round the yellow one.
- Wrap the red strip round the orange one wrap.
- The loose yellow strip round the red one.
- Thread the end of the yellow strip through the orange loop.

Drop from a height and watch it spin.



WEEK 4: LARGE GROUP TEACHING

Introduction

Hello everyone and welcome to week four of The Great Invitation! Whether you know it or not, we have ALL been invited to take part in something great - the Great Commission. Three weeks ago we were introduced to this idea by the host of The Great Invitation, the game show where four contestants accepted the invitation to see if they are ready to do something great. So far we have seen Carol, the orange contestant, win the first round of challenges and Ben, the green contestant, win the second round. Who do you think will win this week? Do you think it will be Orange? Pink? Green? Blue? Well let's see.

Video

Play "The Great Invitation: Episode 4"

Game

"Cotton Ball Challenge"

Supplies: 4 large spoons, 4 large bowls, and enough cotton balls to cover the playing area.

We now have our third winner - BEN! Way to go team green! Green team, do you think you can win our in-person challenge today too? Let's find out! I need two volunteers from each team, one boy and one girl. Make sure you haven't already had a chance to come up and play.

Today we are going to recreate the cotton ball challenge! We will first do all the boys and then all the girls. Let's have the girls go first!

Blindfold each girl and give them a spoon and a bowl. Play music for 1 minute and let them see how many cotton balls they can get into their bowl. Count the number of cotton balls each one has. Next, have the boys play and add the number of cotton balls to their teammates score from round one. Whichever color team has the most cotton balls wins.

Let's give our participants and winners a round of applause as they head back to their seats!

WEEK 4: TEACHING (CONTINUED)

Object Lesson

Supplies: Tea bag, round pan, match/lighter, scissors

Check out this link (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kInWnfWHP98>) or search "How to Make a Flying Ghost Emily's Wonder Lab" on YouTube.

Cut the top off the bag, empty the contents, unfold the bag into a cylinder, and stand it straight up in the pan.

Say: Today we will be learning about the day that God's Holy Spirit filled the disciples and followers of Jesus. This day was known as Pentecost. The Bible tells us that on that day, it looked like tongues of fire rested on each person who was there that day and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. I bet it was a CRAZY thing to witness! It might've looked something like this:

Light the top of the tea bag. As the flame burns down, the ashes of the tea bag will lift up into the air.

Say: This is just like how God's Holy Spirit fills us! It can help fill us up and give us strength and guidance as we tell others about God.

Bible Lesson

If you had the choice of cleaning your room alone or having your friend come over and help you - which would you choose? If you had the option to take a test without the textbook or WITH the textbook - which would you choose? Why would we do anything alone if we could have help?

When you first hear about the Great Commission, it can seem scary and overwhelming. But, the good news is, we are not alone.

Soon before Jesus died on the cross, he began to warn his followers that he would not be around for much longer. This saddened and worried his disciples - what would they do without Jesus? The Bible tells us that Jesus knew how this made his followers feel and he said:

"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you." (John 16:7)

WEEK 4: TEACHING (CONTINUED) & WORSHIP

Bible Lesson (continued)

This helper that he is talking about is the Holy Spirit! After Jesus died on the cross, rose again, and went to heaven, God's followers were gathered together when;

"Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." (Acts 2:2-4)

All of a sudden, God's followers were speaking in different languages. That would be like you all of a sudden speaking in French! There were Jews from every nation staying nearby when this happened. When they realized they could all understand what the disciples were saying, a crowd gathered. They were in shock! How could this be happening? Some of them tried to come up with an excuse or explanation. But Peter stood up and told the crowd all about Jesus, what He did, and how the Bible told everyone that the Holy Spirit would come. Because of this, the Bible says that about three thousand believed what they heard and made God the ruler of their lives!

So after Jesus gave the Great Commission and went back to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit - our Helper - so that we wouldn't have to do it all alone. The Holy Spirit helps us to know what is right and wrong, it helps us to understand the Bible, and it empowers us to tell others about God. And that's not all!

After the day of Pentecost, those who believed in Jesus came together and started the first church. They worked together, helped each other out, and gave so that others could hear the Good News. So not only do we have the Holy Spirit, but we also have the Church. This is why churches send groups of people out on mission trips, host VBS and other camps, and meet every week. So that we can work together to accomplish the Great Commission.

Worship

Let's all stand and sing our worship song together. This will help us memorize Matthew 28:19-20 while we Worship God!

Play "Go" by Seeds Worship.

Dismiss to Small Groups

I will pray for us and then we will go back to small groups so we can discuss what we just learned.

WEEK 4: SMALL GROUP

Small Group Time

Discussion

1. What challenge do you think you could've won today?
2. What challenge do you think you would've lost?
3. Who do you think will win the final challenge before the grand finale?
Look up Acts 2:2-4 together to help kids find answers.
4. What happened when the Holy Spirit showed up? (*A violent wind filled the whole house and tongues of fire rest on each of them.*)
5. What happened next? (*The disciples began to speak in other languages.*)
6. How would you react if you were in a foreign country and all of a sudden understood what everyone was saying?
7. How does technology help us tell people about Jesus even if they don't know the same language?
8. What can we pray and ask before we tell someone about Jesus? (*We can pray and ask for the Holy Spirit's help.*)
9. How can your friends at church help you spread the gospel?
10. How does it make you feel knowing that you don't have to do the Great Commission alone?

Group Game

Say: If the Holy Spirit had not helped the disciples speak in different languages, then the 3000 new believers would've heard gibberish and not been able to hear the Good News! Let's play the game "Gibberish" to see what that might've been like.

Gibberish:

Supplies: Cards from the game "Mad Gab" or create your own with index cards and suggestions from the internet. Search "Mad Gab Flashcards" for ideas. Make sure all clues are age/church appropriate.

Show the group a card that has gibberish on it. Anyone can guess what the card is supposed to say, but must raise their hand first. Kids will be allowed to guess based on the order in which they raise their hands until someone guesses correctly.

WEEK 4: SMALL GROUP (CONTINUED)

Bible Verse Review

Help everyone find Matthew 28:19-20 in their Bibles. Read the verse together and then give anyone who wants the chance to practice saying the verse from memory.

Pick Up Time

Play more rounds of Gibberish, or have the kids make up their own Gibberish clues.



WEEK 5: ALL

MINISTRY IS ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS! THE BEST WAY TO BUILD THOSE RELATIONSHIPS IS THROUGH CONVERSATION. AS KIDS ARRIVE, BRING THEM INTO THE CHAT USING THE CONVERSATION STARTERS BELOW. BEING HEARD HELPS KIDS FEEL CONNECTED AND CONVERSATION WILL HELP BREAK THE ICE! MAKE SURE YOU GET IN ON THE FUN AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS TOO!

Conversation Starters

1. What was the best part of your week?
2. What was your least favorite part of your week?
3. What is the furthest state you've traveled to?
4. How many countries have you traveled to?
5. Where is one place you really want to visit in the future?
6. Do you know any languages other than English?

ONCE THE MAJORITY OF THE KIDS ARRIVE, INVITE THEM TO TAKE PART IN THE GROUP GAME/GROUP ACTIVITY SO YOU CAN CONTINUE TO BREAK DOWN BARRIERS AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS.

Opening Group Activity

Supplies: coloring sheet maps of the US and enough colors or markers for the group. Make sure states are labelled on the sheets you use.

1. Give each child a blank map and colors.
2. Instruct children to color all the states they've lived in with one color, all the states they've visited with a different color, and the states they want to visit with a third color.
3. Let them share the maps with each other when they are done.

Remind them that its okay if they haven't traveled as much as others.



WEEK 5: LARGE GROUP TEACHING

Introduction

Hello everyone and welcome to week five of The Great Invitation! Whether you know it or not, we have ALL been invited to take part in something great - the Great Commission. Last week we saw Ben, the green contestant, win AGAIN! Who do you think will win this week? Do you think it will be Orange again? Pink? Green? Blue? Well let's see.

Video

Play "The Great Invitation: Episode 5"

Game

"Keepy Uppy"

Supplies: One balloon for every player.

We now have our last winner before the finals - CAROL AGAIN! I don't think any of us saw that coming! Let's see if Orange can win our in-person challenge today too! I need two volunteers from each team, one boy and one girl. Make sure you haven't already had a chance to come up and play.

The concept is simple - each team is working to keep BOTH of their balloons in the air the longest. You and your teammate must work together to keep your balloons from touching the ground. Once your balloons have both fallen, you are out. Be careful - because the other teams are allowed to try and sabotage your balloons.

Play until you have a winner.

Let's hear it for the winning team!

WEEK 5: TEACHING (CONTINUED)

Object Lesson

Supplies: A small bag of M&M's and a blindfold.

Say: I need a leader to come up and help me today! Let's have the green leader since your contestant won this week's challenges on the Great Invitation! I am going to blindfold you and hand you M&M's. I want to see if you can correctly guess which color of M&M's you eat. Ready?

Blindfold your volunteer and give them one M&M at a time - making sure to show the kids which color it is before they eat it.

Say: Let's hear it for our volunteer! As you can see - it is hard to guess which color M&M you are eating. Even though each M&M looks different, they're all the same on the inside. We see each other as we see M&M's - everyone is different. Some of us are tall, some of us are short, some of us have blonde hair, some of us have brown hair, some of us are from this state, some of us are from different states, and some of us are even from different countries. But God doesn't see us that way. To Him, it doesn't matter what we look like or where we are from. We are all God's children!

Bible Lesson

Today's Bible story is from the New Testament book of Acts. The book of Acts comes after Jesus gave the Great Commission. But, to understand this story, we need to look at the Old Testament first.

The first thing you need to know is that in Leviticus, God talks about what the Jewish people are not supposed to eat because they are considered unclean and would make God's people unholy. Some food that was considered unclean were ham/bacon, rabbits, web-footed birds, shell fish, eels, snails, and snakes. So no matter how hungry God's people were, they were not supposed to eat anything unclean.

The second thing you need to know is that Jewish people considered anyone who was not Jewish to be unclean because they ate unclean things and did not follow the Bible. This means that God's people did not spend time with others, and they would've likely thought that God sent Jesus to only save themselves.

WEEK 5: TEACHING (CONTINUED) & WORSHIP

Bible Lesson (continued)

With those two things in mind, let's jump into today's story! There was a gentile man named Cornelius. The Bible says that *"He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly"* (Acts 10:2). Cornelius had a vision where he saw an angel of God! The angel told him that God heard Cornelius' prayers and urged him to send for a man named Peter to come and see him. So Cornelius sent three people to get Peter.

Who knows who this Peter was? He was one of the 12 disciples. This means that Peter had walked with Jesus, seen his ministry, witnessed miracles, and been invited to take part in the Great Commission.

The next day, Peter fell into a trance and had a vision of his own. He saw what looked like a large sheet lowering down to earth containing unclean animals. Then, the Bible tells us *"Then a voice told him, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.'" (Acts 10:13)*. This confused Peter. He knew that the Old Testament forbid him from eating unclean food so he said *"Surely not, Lord!...I have never eaten anything impure or unclean."* (Acts 10:14). The voice then says *"Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."* (Acts 10:15). While Peter was trying to figure out what his vision meant, the three men sent by Cornelius arrived and said, *"We have come from Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people. A holy angel told him to ask you to come to his house so that he could hear what you have to say,"* (Acts 10:22). Peter invited the men into the house and then went with them to Caesarea the next day.

Peter was speaking to a large gathering of people when he realized what the vision meant. Have you guessed yet? Peter says *"You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean."* (Acts 10:28). Peter later says, *"I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right."* (Acts 10:34-35). Peter told the crowd all about Jesus and how he died on the cross for their sins. As he spoke, those who heard believed and received the holy spirit.

God does not care what someone looks like, what language they speak, or what country they are from. The Bible tells us that ANYONE who believes in Him can have their sins forgiven and live forever with God in heaven. We are all God's children. This means that when the Great Commission says to take the good news of Jesus to ALL, he means ALL. It isn't our job to pick and choose who we tell about God. We are supposed to tell everyone about Him!

Worship

Let's all stand and sing our worship song together. This will help us memorize Matthew 28:19-20 while we Worship God! Play "Go" by Seeds Worship.

WEEK 5: SMALL GROUP

Small Group Time

Discussion

1. What challenge do you think you could've won today?
 2. What challenge do you think you would've lost?
 3. What book of the Bible did today's lesson come from? (*Acts*)
 4. Can you remember some of the foods that God said were unclean? (*ham/bacon, rabbits, web-footed birds, shellfish, eels, snails, and snakes*)
 5. Why did the Jewish people think that others were unclean?
 6. Who were the two main people in today's story? (*Cornelius and Peter*).
 7. What vision did Cornelius have? (*An angel told him that his prayers were heard and to send for a man named Peter so he can learn more about God*).
 8. What vision did Peter have? (*He saw a sheet coming down from heaven holding unclean foods and was told to kill and eat*).
 9. Why did this vision confuse Peter? (*these were foods he had never been allowed to eat*).
 10. What did Peter's vision end up meaning? (*That God sent Jesus to die for everyone – not just the Jewish people*).
 11. Who are we supposed to talk to about God? (*everyone*)
 12. Why should we tell others about God even if they are mean to us?
 13. Why is this hard?
 14. What should we do if we find ourselves struggling to tell someone about God? (*Pray, ask for help, read Acts 10 as a reminder*).
- Have kids look up Acts 10:34-35 and read aloud as a reminder.*

Group Game

Say: The Great Commission truly is a team assignment. For our closing game, we are going to work together on teams to achieve a goal.

Team Keepy Uppy:

Supplies: 5 balloons for each team.

Split the kids into two groups and give each group 5 balloons.

When you say go, they should throw all 5 balloons in the air and work together to try and keep them ALL in the air.

Whichever group keeps their balloons up the longest wins. Play several rounds.

WEEK 5: SMALL GROUP (CONTINUED)

Bible Verse Review

Help everyone find Matthew 28:19-20 in their Bibles. Read the verse together and then give anyone who wants the chance to practice saying the verse from memory.

Pick Up Time

Play more rounds of Keepy Uppy.



WEEK 6: TO THE ENDS OF THE AGE

MINISTRY IS ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS! THE BEST WAY TO BUILD THOSE RELATIONSHIPS IS THROUGH CONVERSATION. AS KIDS ARRIVE, BRING THEM INTO THE CHAT USING THE CONVERSATION STARTERS BELOW. BEING HEARD HELPS KIDS FEEL CONNECTED AND CONVERSATION WILL HELP BREAK THE ICE! MAKE SURE YOU GET IN ON THE FUN AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS TOO!

Conversation Starters

1. What was the best part of your week?
2. What was your least favorite part of your week?
3. What was your favorite mini game that the contestants played on The Great Invitation?
4. What was your least favorite mini game that they played?
5. What do you think the grand prize will be?
6. Who do you think will win?

ONCE THE MAJORITY OF THE KIDS ARRIVE, INVITE THEM TO TAKE PART IN THE GROUP GAME/GROUP ACTIVITY SO YOU CAN CONTINUE TO BREAK DOWN BARRIERS AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS.

Opening Group Activity

Supplies: Letter beads "G" and "O" (enough for everyone to have one of each), other assorted beads, bracelet string or wire, keychain rings.

Say: This is our last week doing the Great Invitation. But that doesn't mean we can forget about the Great Commission! We are supposed to spend our whole lives telling others about Jesus.

1. Give each child a "G" and an "O."
2. Instruct them to make a bracelet or a keychain featuring the word "go."

Let them know that this is to serve as a reminder to GO and make disciples, and they will have time at the end to finish their craft.



WEEK 6: LARGE GROUP TEACHING

Introduction

Hello everyone and welcome to our final week of The Great Invitation! Whether you know it or not, we have ALL been invited to take part in something great - the Great Commission. Last week we saw Carol, the orange contestant, win AGAIN! Who do you think will win the finale? What do you think the grand prize will be? Let's find out!

Video

Play "The Great Invitation: Episode 6"

Game

"Balloon Obstacle Course"

Supplies: One balloon for each team with "Good News" written on it. Obstacle course and/or "track" around the room with a clear start and finish.

Well that was quite a shock! Not only was there not a grand prize but there also wasn't an overall winner! I guess it does make sense, the Great Commission isn't a race or a competition. The Great Commission is a lifelong adventure that we are supposed to do together.

That doesn't mean we can't have one final competition here though! Let's bring up one girl and one guy from each team. Make sure you haven't had a chance to compete yet.

We are going to see which pair can take the "good news" to the ends of the age! The trick is, you cannot hold the balloon AND you can only touch it once at a time. You and your partner will hit it back and forth to each other as you make your way to the finish line. If the balloon touches the ground, you hit it more than once before your partner hits it, or you catch it, you have to start back at the beginning.

If space does not allow for all to race at once, do a time trial with each team running the course on their own. Fastest time (or first to finish) wins.

Way to go everyone! Let's hear it for our final winners!!

WEEK 6: TEACHING (CONTINUED)

Object Lesson

Supplies: Dominoes or similar blocks.

Say: We have spent the last several weeks learning about the Great Commission through The Great Invitation.

As you make each point below, set up a domino. In the end you will tip the first domino so that it knocks over the rest.

- First you have to admit that you have a sin problem - which means you disobey God.
- Then you have to believe that the Bible is true and that God sent His son Jesus to die for our sins.
- Next you have to confess that you believe in God and ask Him to be the ruler of your life.
- After that, you receive the helper or the Holy spirit.
- Now you have to GO and take part in the Great Commission!
- You have to REPRESENT God in your life by telling others about Him and showing others who Jesus is by acting like Him.
- You don't have to worry because you are EMPOWERED by the Holy Spirit and can get help from the church.
- You have to make sure that you aren't picking and choosing who you tell about God - the good news is for ALL people.
- Lastly, you have to keep telling others about Jesus, TO THE END OF THE AGE.

When you follow those steps in order, it creates a ripple or domino effect and helps you take part in the Great Commission! *Knock over the first domino so that each one falls.*

Bible Lesson

So we have told you that you've been invited to be a part of the Great Commission. *"Therefore GO..."*

We have told you that a disciple is someone who has made God the ruler of their life, works to grow closer to God, and helps ALL others do the same. *"...and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."*

WEEK 6: TEACHING (CONTINUED)

Bible Lesson (continued)

We have told you that it is our job to teach others about God as His representatives.
"...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you..."

And lastly we encouraged you by reminding you that we don't have to do this alone!
"...And lo, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

So the next question is - how? What does this look like in your everyday life? I am going to give you 6 steps to help!

Step 1: Become a Christian by accepting Christ as your Lord and Savior

The Great Commission is a call for Christians. So, are you a Christian? Have you accepted that you have a problem with sin? Do you believe that Christ died for your sins? Have you confessed all of this and invited God to be the leader of your life? If so, then great! You are ready for step 2. If not, that's okay too! Maybe this is the first time you've heard about this, maybe you've heard about it a lot but still have questions, or maybe you're just not ready yet. I will give you a chance to talk with someone at the end of large group today if you would like to discuss taking this first step!

Step 2: Grow Closer to God

We can't tell others about God if we don't know Him very well ourselves! The more we get to know Him and the more we learn about Him, the easier it will be to tell others and answer their questions. So how do you get closer to God?

You can:

- Read the Bible: these are God's words! When you read the Bible you learn who He is, you learn that He loves us, and you learn how He wants you to live your life.
- Pray: Praying is talking with God. You can pray anywhere at any time. God loves to hear from you. He wants to know when you're sad, scared, worried, happy, excited, and even bored.
- Go to Church: Church is a great tool for getting to know God better! In community groups you get to learn a lesson from the Bible while also getting to know other Christians. If you go to big church, you get to see what it looks like to be a part of big church and worship God with your parents!
- Worship: Worship songs are full of wonderful truths about God. Plus the Bible calls us to worship Him.
- Get Creative: There are countless ways to spend time with God and grow closer to Him! You can use your imagination and be creative.

WEEK 6: TEACHING (CONTINUED) & WORSHIP

Bible Lesson (continued)

Step 3: Practice Makes Perfect

This one will feel weird BUT it is super helpful. You have to practice! Would you go play in a piano recital or play a game of football without ever practicing? Would you go and take a big test without ever learning about the subject? Of course you wouldn't! This is no different. You should practice telling others about God.

- You can practice with friends who are also believers.
- You can write out practice "scripts" of telling other people about God.
- Practice memorizing and saying scripture.
- Watch others talk about God!

Step 4: Pray

You can pray that God prepares you to tell others about Him, you can pray that the Holy Spirit helps you tell others about God, and you can pray for opportunities to tell others about God. Any time I have ever asked God to give me an opportunity to talk about Him, I have gotten one!

Step 5: GO!

Now you just have to do it! It might feel awkward at first, and you will make mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes! The good news is, God is stronger than our mistakes. And as we talked about before, it isn't our job to convince people to believe in God, only to tell them about God!

Step 6: Repeat

You can never spend too much time with God, you can never practice too much, you can never pray too much, and you can never tell others about God too much!

You don't have to go through a game show and a bunch of mini games! God made you to be part of the Great Commission!

Worship

Let's all stand and sing our worship song together. This will help us memorize Matthew 28:19-20 while we Worship God! *Play "Go" by Seeds Worship*

Dismiss to Small Groups

Before dismissal, let the kids know that if anyone wants to talk more about becoming a Christian, they can stay back and meet with you or another leader.

WEEK 6: SMALL GROUP

Small Group Time

Discussion

1. What part of the relay would've been your favorite?
2. What part of the relay would've been your least favorite?
3. Were you surprised that there wasn't a big winner or prize?
4. How many steps are there to take part in the Great Commission? (6)
5. What was step 1? (*Becoming a Christian*)
6. What was step 2? (*Grow closer to God*)
7. How can you grow closer to God?
8. What was step 3? (*Practice*)
9. How can you practice?
10. What was step 4? (*Pray*)
11. How does praying help with the Great Commission?
12. What was step 5? (*Go*)
13. How can you start living out the Great Commission now?
14. What was step 6? (*Repeat*)
15. Why is it important to keep doing all of these steps?

Bible Verse Memory

Supplies: candy or prizes for those that have the verse memorized.

Allow anyone who wants to present Matthew 28:19-20 by memory to do so. Award prizes to those who are successful.

Pick Up Time

Finish their bracelet/key chain or allow them to make more with the leftover supplies.

