

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Don't Stop
Renew Your Mind
Romans 12:2

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

How are you wiser
than you used to be?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Never stop growing in wisdom.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

If any of you needs wisdom,
you should ask God for it. He will
give it to you. God gives freely to
everyone and doesn't find fault.
James 1:5, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Wisdom—Finding out what you
should do and doing it

BASIC TRUTH

I need to make the wise choice.

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

DIVE DEEP

There's Always More to Explore

WEEK
FOUR
AUGUST 2024

SMALL GROUP
PRETEEN

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



Before kids arrive, take a few moments to sit quietly and pray for your kids today. Ask for the wisdom to know how to lead the conversations so your kids will grasp what it looks like to grow in wisdom as they renew their minds.

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1. JUST FOR FUN

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container, prepared containers, notecards, pens

WHAT YOU DO:

- Greet kids as they arrive for group.
- Invite anyone who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Ask kids what they know about sharks.
- Share some ocean trivia about sharks with the kids.
 - There are sharks in every ocean and even some lakes and rivers.
 - A shark's skeleton is not made of bones but of thick tissue like what's in our ears and nose.
 - Most fish have only one gill slit on both sides of their head. Sharks have up to fourteen.
 - There are over 400 different kinds of sharks.
 - Some species of sharks are so small they can fit in your hand, while others are as large as a school bus. They can be over 40 feet long and weigh more than 200 people.
 - A shark's skin feels rough like sandpaper.
 - Most of a shark's brain is dedicated to its sense of smell. Some can detect the smallest amount of blood of a wounded fish from a great distance. If one teaspoon of blood was placed into a swimming pool, a shark could smell it.
- Set out the prepared containers.
- Give each kid a notecard and pen.
- Challenge kids to test their sense of smell in a game called "Smell Like a Shark!"
- Invite kids to guess the contents of each numbered container just by smelling it, without removing any of the lids.
 - If they think they know what's inside, they should write it on their index cards next to the number that corresponds with the number on the container.
- After everyone has guessed the contents of each container, remove the lids and let kids check to see how many they guessed correctly.

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION
15 MINUTES

MADE TO CONNECT

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



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2. OPENING ACTIVITY

WHAT YOU NEED: "Wisdom Mash-Up" Activity Page, pens

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a pen and two cards from the "Wisdom Mash-Up" Activity Page. (Be sure each kid gets one question card and one solution card.)
 - If you have more than 10 kids, pair some kids up.
- Invite kids to silently read their question, then write a one-sentence solution or answer on the solution card.
- When kids are finished writing, collect the cards, keeping the question and solution cards separate.
 - If you have fewer than 10 kids, give an additional question and answer card to those who finish first.
- Shuffle the "Wisdom Mash-Up Solution" cards.
- Choose a "Wisdom Mash-Up Question" card, then read a random answer from the "Wisdom Mash-Up Solution" cards.
 - You'll end up with some very funny scenarios.
- Continue choosing questions, then pairing them with random solutions until all the cards have been read.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Life is full of questions. Being wise means knowing the best or wise answer and then doing it. Unlike our mismatched answers in this activity, God always has the right answer. Searching and finding God's wisdom never ends. We're always growing from the inside out when we choose to follow Jesus. **[Transition] Let's go to Large Group and learn how God's wisdom can help us THINK the right thoughts so we can DO the right things.**"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Shower luffas (or softened sponges) and prepared targets

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a "jellyfish" (shower luffa or softened sponge)
- Form a circle around the two targets you've prepared.
- Explain that you will read a "wise" saying.
 - If kids think it is wisdom from the Bible, indicate which of the targets they should toss their jellyfish into.
 - If they don't think the wisdom is from the Bible, tell them to toss it into the other target.
- Read a statement from the list below. As needed, stop and explain any of the statements.
- Invite kids to toss their "jellyfish," then reveal if the statement is from the Bible or not.
- Tell kids to retrieve a "jellyfish" after each statement is read.
- When kids correctly identify wisdom from the Bible, congratulate them for recognizing true wisdom.

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MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Wisdom—Finding out what you
should do and doing it**

BASIC TRUTH

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Wisdom Statements:

- You can't teach an old dog new tricks. *(not in Bible)*
- Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me. *(not in Bible)*
- A man is innocent until proven guilty. *(not in Bible)*
- It is better to be safe than sorry. *(not in Bible)*
- Pride goes before destruction. *(Proverbs 16:18, NIV)*
- Man does not live on bread alone. *(Deuteronomy 8:3, NIV)*
- Do to others what you would have them do to you. *(Matthew 7:12, NIV)*
- If you play with fire, you will get burned. *(not in Bible)*
- You are what you eat. *(not in Bible)*
- Cleanliness is next to godliness. *(not in Bible)*
- First take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. *(Matthew 7:5, NIV)*
- Two people are better than one. *(Ecclesiastes 4:9, NIV)*
- You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink. *(not in Bible)*
- A watched pot never boils. *(not in Bible)*
- Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm. *(Proverbs 13:20, NIV)*
- The squeaky wheel gets the oil. *(not in Bible)*
- If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again. *(not in Bible)*
- A good name is more desirable than great riches. *(Proverbs 22:1, NIV)*
- Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. *(Matthew 6:21, NIV)*
- If any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. He will give it to you. *(James 1:5, NIV)*

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



2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bible, Play-Doh®, prepared Play-Doh® shape

WHAT YOU DO:

- Ask kids what "immortal" means (*the ability to live forever*.)
- Share some interesting facts about the immortal jellyfish:
 - It's called *immortal* because it has two life cycles.
 - The first is the polyp stage. It doesn't look anything like what we think of when we picture a jellyfish. It looks more like a soft coral.
 - The polyp buds into the second stage, the medusa stage, where it looks more like the jellyfish we recognize.
 - As the jellyfish gets old, injured, or feels threatened, it can go back to the polyp stage again. From there, it can enter the medusa stage, then the polyp stage, then the medusa stage, and so on. (It's like if we could grow up, become an older person, and then become a baby again, then do that over and over.)
- Clarify that for the jellyfish to keep going through these cycles, it must stay healthy and not get eaten by a hungry fish. There are limits to its immortality. If it dies, it's done.
- Ask kids to name some ways a follower of Jesus is like the immortal jellyfish. Try to elicit the following connections:
 - God continues to shape and mold us to be more like Jesus.
 - Being wise is an ongoing, never-ending, learning process.
 - We need to stay on the watch for anything that would cause us harm, not only to our bodies but our thoughts as well.
 - When we follow Jesus, we will live forever in heaven.
- Give each kid a container of Play-Doh®.
- Show kids the Play-Doh® shape you made ahead of time, then give them about one minute to form their dough to match yours as closely as they can.
- Read Romans 12:2 from the Bible then ask:
 - What can happen to our thoughts when we don't focus on what's true and wise? (*We can get confused—our thoughts are misshapen or distorted.*)
 - What does Romans 12:2 suggest we do (or not do) to guard our way of thinking?
 - In what ways might a follower of Jesus need to think differently from those around us who don't follow Him?
- Invite kids to reshape their Play-Doh® into a smooth ball.
 - How does memorizing God's Word help you change or reshape your thoughts?
 - What are some healthy, true, and right thoughts we can focus on each day?
 - What can you do on a regular basis to make sure your way of thinking is not going the wrong way or taking on the shape of those who don't follow Jesus?

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MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Wisdom—Finding out what you
should do and doing it**

BASIC TRUTH

I need to make the wise choice.

DIVE DEEP



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FOUR
AUGUST 2024

SMALL GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

(2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION, CONTINUED)

- Close by reminding kids that God gives those who follow Jesus the Holy Spirit to help them grow to live more like Jesus lived. God also gives trusted adults and friends who can help them make wise choices if they keep asking God for wisdom.

DIVE DEEP

There's Always More to Explore

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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:

- Would you say that you are growing in wisdom? How are you wiser than you used to be?
- What can you do to give your mind good and right things to think about so that your choices and actions are wise?
- What wisdom would you offer about the following topics?
 - How we think of ourselves
 - How we treat people we don't particularly like or get along with
 - How we spend our money
 - How we spend our time
 - How we respond to those in authority

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25 MINUTES

MADE TO PLAY

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



4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles, crepe paper, markers, timer

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a Bible and ask them to look up Philippians 4:8 using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Don't Stop
Renew Your Mind
Romans 12:2

***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

How are you wiser than you used to be?

- Invite any kids who would like to read the verse out loud.
- Ask:
 - What are some of the words you read in Philippians 4:8 that describe good and healthy thoughts?
 - Give some examples of thoughts that fit into those descriptions. (*Name words from Philippians 4:8 as needed.*)
 - Which ones do you think are the hardest to think about? Why?
 - If you could choose one of these words as most important, which would it be and why?
- Give each kid a 3-foot length piece of crepe paper and a marker. (Make sure half of the group has one color crepe paper and the other half has a different color.)
- Ask kids to carefully write some of the words from Philippians 4:8 that they want to remember on their length of crepe paper.
- If anyone is willing, invite them to share the words they chose and why.
- Instruct kids to tie their crepe paper to their ankles, leaving a long strip at the end.
- Divide the group into two teams based on the two colors of crepe paper.
- Explain that once kids begin moving around the room, they will need to protect their own paper strips while also trying to remove the paper strips from kids of the other team. (You might designate a small area so kids are forced to stay in close proximity to one another.)
- Explain that neither team can use their hands to protect their crepe paper strip or pull off someone else's.
- Set the timer for one minute and tell the kids to begin. Remind them to "guard" their crepe paper strips as the opposing team attempts to step on and remove theirs.
- When time is up, bring kids together and ask:
 - What are some ways you can guard or protect your thoughts as diligently as the crepe paper?

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James 1:5, NIrV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

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DIVE DEEP



There's Always More to Explore

WEEK
FOUR
AUGUST 2024

SMALL GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

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GROUPS

HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

(4. VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU, CONTINUED)

- When you need to change a wrong or unhealthy thought, what can you replace it with?
- **[Make it Personal]** *Share a verse you've memorized that is a particular favorite. When does it come to mind most often? How does it help you get your thoughts back on track?*
- Remind kids that wise choices start with wise thinking. Just because a thought pops into your head doesn't mean that it's true! When you follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to live with you and guide you.

DIVE DEEP

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WEEK
FOUR
AUGUST 2024

SMALL GROUP
PRETEEN

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HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
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: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

- Encourage kids to share their biggest wisdom takeaways from this month.
- Prompt ideas by asking questions such as the following:
 - What's one thing you learned about God?
 - What did you learn about yourself?
 - What is something you learned that will help you to be wiser?
 - How are you showing more wisdom today than you did in the past?
- Close by asking kids to thank God for the things they have learned and to help them where they still need to grow in making wise choices.
- Encourage them to pray silently or out loud about that thing, asking God to help them discover the wisdom they need through God's Word and the wise people God has put into their lives.

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Offering container
- Notecards, one for each kid
- Pens, one for each kid
- Opaque containers with lids (or use cups and foil), 5-10 for each Small Group
- Before group time:
 - Put a small amount of a distinct-smelling item in each container. For example:
 - Scented oil or wax
 - Banana
 - Lemon
 - Pickle juice or vinegar
 - Ground cinnamon
 - Onions
 - Orange
 - Baby powder
 - Tuna
 - Fabric softener sheet
 - Make small holes in the lids so kids can smell what's inside but cannot see what it is.
 - Write or tape a large number on the outside of each container.

2. OPENING ACTIVITY

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Print "Wisdom Mash-Up" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, one set for each Small Group
- Pens, 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 Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Inexpensive shower luffa or sponge, one for each kid
 - If using sponges, dampen them with water before group time so they are soft (but not too wet) during the activity.
- Targets (hula-hoops, towels, squares taped to the floor, or similar), two for each Small Group

2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bible, one for each Small Group
- Play-Doh, one container for each kid and one container for each Small Group Leader
 - Before group time: form one container of Play-Doh into an odd shape with dents, holes, and pieces sticking out (Simple enough for kids to duplicate in a minute or so).

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



WEEK
FOUR
AUGUST 2024

SMALL GROUP
PRETEEN

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

GETTING READY

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

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

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

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bibles, one for each kid
- Crepe paper, 2 rolls of different colors for each Small Group
- Markers, one for each kid
- Timer, one for each Small Group

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.**