

Small Group Leader Guide



THIS MONTH



Today's Suggested Schedule

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.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing time for fun interaction

1. Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God

Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

- Opener
- Worship
- Bible Story (sections about God's Big Story are listed as optional)
- What's Our Part in the Story?
- Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Stick or Shift
2. Map to Wisdomland
3. Focus and Follow
4. Pray and Dismiss

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- Devotionals for Kids
- Parent Cue Card (print or email)
- [Parent Cue App](#) and [ParentCue.org](#)

✦ Need activities for a K-5th group? Check out the 2nd-3rd grade guide.

Today's Bible Story

David and the Psalms

Psalms 1:1-4

Bottom Line

If you want to be wise, focus on God.

Memory Verse

"It is much better to get wisdom than gold. It is much better to choose understanding than silver."

Proverbs 16:16 NIV



Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro-tips. Check out the Special Needs Resource Kit for more ideas for adapting each segment.

SOCIAL

Opening Activity

What You Need

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ Construction Paper
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Scissors



① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God for helping your group grow in wisdom together. Ask God to help the kids slow down, even just for a moment, to understand how much they need His Spirit every day. Ask God to give you the words to speak as you help kids see that true wisdom comes from focusing on God.

1. Welcome kids with a high five, fist bump, or a wave as they arrive.
2. Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
3. Give each kid two pieces of construction paper, scissors, and a marker.

Create Together

1. Instruct the kids to draw two hearts, one on each piece of paper.
2. Encourage them to use the scissors to cut the hearts out.
3. On one heart, ask them to write or draw something they love.
4. On the second heart, instruct them to write or draw something they want to understand better about God, or something they want to learn to be wise about.
 - For example, maybe they want to learn how to be a better friend.
 - Or maybe they have a question about the Holy Spirit.
5. While they work, spark conversation and ideas with the following questions:
 - "Have you ever needed help making the right choice or knowing what to do?"
 - "Is there something about God or the Bible you'd love to understand more?"

② What You Say

"I loved getting to hear your questions and the ways you want to grow in wisdom!"

"Let's go hear about someone who wasn't perfect, but made knowing God and being His friend the biggest focus of his life!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/4

Stick or Shift

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bible marked at Psalm 1
- ☐ Floor tape
- ☐ "Stick or Shift" Activity Page



① What You Do

1. Mark a straight line with floor tape down the center of your group space. The line should be long enough for every kid to stand on it.
2. Invite the kids to line up on the tape line.

Move Together:

1. One at a time, read the "Stick or Shift" Activity Page scenarios.
2. After each scenario, give the kids a chance to respond.
 - If the person in the scenario is making a wise choice (God's way), encourage the kids to stay on the tape line and stomp their feet.
 - If the person in the scenario is making an unwise choice, encourage the kids to take one big step to either side.
3. Continue until all scenarios have been read and discussed.

Talk Together:

1. Open the marked Bible to Psalm 1.
2. Select a kid to read Psalm 1:1-4 to the group.
3. Ask:
 - What do you think it means to be like a strong tree planted near a stream of water?
 - What kinds of things help you grow your faith roots deep in God?
4. Share with kids that Psalm 1 teaches us that people who stay close to God and follow His ways are like strong trees planted by a stream.

Explain to kids that this verse reminds them that when they focus on God (reading the Bible, praying, learning from Jesus, and trying to make wise choices) they're like that tree. They're soaking up God's truth like water! It means when hard things happen, like someone is unkind or they don't know what to do, they don't fall apart, they can stay rooted and ask God for wisdom along the way. They can keep trusting God, and He will help them stand tall, just like that tree! If they want to grow wise and live a strong life that honors God, focus on Him!"

Continued on the next page. →

Inclusive Pro Tips



For an option with less movement, allow the kids to sit and lean to one side or the other to communicate their choice.

GROUPS 1/4

Stick or Shift

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

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Pray to God

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Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bible marked at Psalm 1
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- ☐ "Stick or Shift" Activity Page



Inclusive Pro Tips

For an option with less movement, allow the kids to sit and lean to one side or the other to communicate their choice.

② What You Say

"Awesome job, friends! When we choose God's way (**STAND ON THE LINE AND STOMP**), we are choosing the way that will make us strong and our roots go down deep!

"We just read some of Psalm 1. We don't know if David wrote the psalm we just read, but we do know that he wrote many, many psalms—and we know he knew the truth of Psalm 1. He knew that God is good and that His ways are good.

"God is the wisest! That means that His ways to live are best. If we follow His ways, which He tells us in the Bible, we will be like a strong tree, with strong roots.

"So David spent his whole life working on his friendship with God. He wasn't perfect, but he focused his life on growing closer to the wise One.

"And God wants all of us to live wisely too. One of the reasons He gave us the Bible is so we can learn about Him and His wise ways.

"So, be like King David, and be like the psalmist, and get to know God and His ways! You will find that as you follow Him, you'll be a strong tree with deep roots. As you get to know the wise One, you will grow wise. If you want to be wise, focus on God!"

Make It Personal → Share an age-appropriate example of a time you needed God's wisdom to make the wise choice. Maybe it was in a conversation with a friend. Did you pray, read Scripture, or talk to a trusted friend who follows Jesus? Share how God provided the wisdom you needed.

GROUPS 2/4

Map to Wisdomland

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ "Map to Wisdomland" Activity Page
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Coloring Supplies

Inclusive Pro Tips

Read the verses aloud to your group as they travel around the room.



① What You Do

1. Give every kid a "Map to Wisdomland" Activity Page and a pencil.
2. Divide kids into groups of 2-3.
3. Give each group a Bible.

Explore Together:

1. Say, "Each stop on your map has a special verse that gives us wisdom from God. One of the reasons God gave us the Bible is to help us find wisdom! Think of this map like an amusement park. Each ride or station teaches us something true and helps us discover how to live with some of the wisdom God has given us."
2. Lead the groups to "travel" around the map, read about the situation listed, and look up the Bible verses to see how God's wisdom from the Bible can help in each situation.
3. Refer to the "Station Answers" to help kids fill in their maps correctly.
4. Continue until every group has reviewed each area of the map.
5. Set out the coloring supplies where everyone can access them.
6. Invite the kids to decorate their map with coloring supplies.
7. Encourage the kids to write their names on their paper.
8. Invite the kids to fold their "maps" on the two light lines to create a trifold "map."

Station Answers:

9. **Trust Tower:** I can *trust* in the Lord because His understanding is greater than mine.
10. **Patience Plunge:** I can wait *patiently* because God's timing is always right.
11. **Courage Coaster:** I can be *strong* because God is with me wherever I go.
12. **Kindness Carousel:** I can be *kind* because Jesus has been kind to me first.
13. **Wisdom Wheel:** I can ask *God* for wisdom and He will help me make the right choice.
14. **Forgiveness Food Court:** I can *forgive* because Jesus forgives me every time.

*Finding verses with 2nd-3rd graders

- ① Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. **(HOLD UP A BIBLE OPENED TO THE TABLE OF CONTENTS TO SHOW THE KIDS WHAT THE PAGE LOOKS LIKE.)**
- ② When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find the name of the book in the list.
- ③ When they find the book, lead them to look at the page number beside it. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find that book. Help the kids find the page.
- ④ When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find the correct chapter.
- ⑤ Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find the correct verse in that chapter.

GROUPS 2/4

Map to Wisdomland



Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ "Map to Wisdomland" Activity Page
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Coloring Supplies



Inclusive Pro Tips

Read the verses aloud to your group as they travel around the room.

② What You Say

"That was so fun! Didn't it kind of feel like we were at an amusement park? There are so many different rides at an amusement park, and as we saw, God has given us wisdom for so many different situations!"

"Have you ever been on a roller coaster before? It's full of ups, downs, bumps, twists, and turns. Life can feel that way at times. But the truth of our lives is this: God is with us through every high and low. And He wants us to live wisely no matter what we face in the ride of life! That's part of the reason why He gave us the Bible, to give us the direction we need to follow His ways!"

Ask your group this question → Who do you listen to? Explain to the kids that wise people spend time with wise people who follow God! Think about the people in your everyday life (friends, family, leaders) who you listen to. Who do you go to when you need advice or help?

"So when you're facing something confusing, getting ready to have a hard conversation with a friend, deciding what's right when everyone else is doing the wrong thing, or needing to take a deep breath before saying something you might regret—pause! Ask God for help. Ask Him to remind you of His truth and wisdom in the Bible. Talk to a trusted adult who follows Jesus. If you want to be wise, focus on God!"

*Finding verses with 2nd-3rd graders

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- ② When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find the name of the book in the list.
- ③ When they find the book, lead them to look at the page number beside it. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find that book. Help the kids find the page.
- ④ When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find the correct chapter.
- ⑤ Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find the correct verse in that chapter.

GROUPS 3/4

Focus and Follow

Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ "Focus and Follow" Activity Pages



Inclusive Pro Tips

For an option with less movement, allow the kids to clap or pat their knees instead of spinning around.

① What You Do

1. Give every kid a Bible.
2. Lead them to find Proverbs 16:16 using the Bible Navigation Tips.
3. Repeat the verse together several times and review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.

Play Together:

1. Place the "Focus and Follow" Activity Page cards face-down all around your group space.
2. Say, "When I say, "Go!" everyone will work together to flip cards over, find the correct words, and put the verse in the right order.
3. "If you find a card with a word that's not in Proverbs 16:16, spin around three times before picking up another one!"
4. Play until the kids place the words from Proverbs 16:16 in the correct order.

② What You Say

"Way to go, everyone! When you picked up a word that wasn't in our Memory Verse, you spun around. Life can be like this. So many things can try to pull our attention away from God (**BUSYNESS, WORRIES, EVEN FUN STUFF!**) But you stayed focused and found the truth in God's Word. That's what we need to do every day!"

"I love this verse SO much, it reminds us that wisdom is so precious! And God wants to give us something so precious! He wants to show us the best way—that's one of the reasons why He gave us His Word. When we focus on God, the wise One, and the truth from the wise One in the Bible, we will get wise! So, if you want to be wise, focus on God."

*Finding verses with 2nd-3rd graders

- ① Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (**HOLD UP A BIBLE OPENED TO THE TABLE OF CONTENTS TO SHOW THE KIDS WHAT THE PAGE LOOKS LIKE.**)
- ② When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find the name of the book in the list.
- ③ When they find the book, lead them to look at the page number beside it. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find that book. Help the kids find the page.
- ④ When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find the correct chapter.
- ⑤ Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find the correct verse in that chapter.

GROUPS 4/4

Pray and Dismiss

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Map to Wisdomland" Activity Pages from "Map to Wisdomland" Activity (Application Activity)
- ☐ Pencils



Inclusive Pro Tips

Instead of writing, allow kids to draw or verbally communicate the names of their three wise people.

① What You Do

1. Give each kid their "Map to Wisdomland" Activity Pages from earlier.
2. Give every kid a pencil.
3. Say, "God gives us wisdom through His Word, the Holy Spirit, and through people who love and follow Him!"
4. Direct the kids to turn the map over and write three wise people they know who follow Jesus.
5. Help them think through their answers by asking:
 - Who do you know who follows Jesus and loves others?
 - Who's someone you know who feels safe to ask for help when you don't know what to do?
 - Who is someone who prays with you or helps you learn about God?
6. Encourage the kids to thank God for those people as they write!

② What You Say

"Dear God, thank You for being the source of ALL wisdom! Thank You that You gave us the Bible because You want us to be wise. And also thank You for putting people in our lives who follow You because You want us to be wise. Help us to be like David and to focus our lives on our friendship with You. We want to be close to You and wise like You are! Teach us to listen to You and the people who know You well. We love You, God, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Transition → As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to share their page from the "Map to Wisdomland" Activity. Encourage them to point out the Scripture that stood out to them the most today.

Getting Ready

Social

Welcome the kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Use this time to create space for them to connect with you and with each other by playing age-appropriate games, asking fun questions, and encouraging friendly interactions. This is a great moment to help kids feel seen, known, and ready to experience today's story.

Groups

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.

Social

Opening Activity

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ Construction paper, two pieces for every kid
- ☐ Markers, enough for each Small Group to share
- ☐ Scissors, one pair for every kid

Groups

Stick or Shift

- ☐ Bible marked at Psalm 1, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group
- ☐ Print "Stick or Shift" Activity Page on paper, one for each Small Group

Map to Wisdomland*

- ☐ Bibles, one for every 2-3 kids
- ☐ Print "Map to Wisdomland" Activity Page on paper, one for every kid
- ☐ Pencils, one for every kid
- ☐ Coloring supplies, enough for each Small Group to share

Focus and Follow

- ☐ Bibles, one for every kid
- ☐ Print "Focus and Follow" Activity Page on paper and cut apart, one set for each Small Group

Pray and Dismiss

- ☐ "Map to Wisdomland" Activity Page from "Map to Wisdomland" Activity (Application Activity)
- ☐ Pencils, one for every kid

*If you don't have time to do all, be sure to do the starred activity.

Home

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