

# 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. Check out our Pinterest page here <https://bit.ly/447HSZi> for a visual on some of the activities.

### 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)
- Prayer

### Small Group (25 minutes)

#### Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Bible Story Review: Act It Out!
2. Application Activity: God Is My Shield
3. Memory Verse Activity: Verse Dash
4. Prayer Activity: 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

## Daniel and the Lions' Den

Daniel 6

### Bottom Line

**God is always with you.**

### Memory Verse

**Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak.**

Isaiah 40:31 NIV



### Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a special need, learning difference, or disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro tips.

## SOCIAL

# Opening Activity

## What You Need

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ Device for playing music
- ☐ Floor tape

## Inclusive Supplies

- ☐ Table
- ☐ Yellow pom-poms
- ☐ Mini figures



## Inclusive Pro Tips

For an option with less movement, on a table, use the tape to create a "safe zone." Spread the ten yellow pom-poms randomly across the table. Give each kid a mini figure. Encourage the kids to navigate their mini figure safely to the "safe zone" without touching any "lions" (pom-poms).

## 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 that He is with you at all times. Think about an age-appropriate time when you faced something more confidently because you know God was with you in it. Ask God to help the kids see that He is always with them, and to teach them how to live confidently because God goes through every single moment of life with them.

1. Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive!
2. Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
3. Use tape to outline a large box on the floor. This is the "safe zone."
4. On the opposite side of your group space, use the tape to create a starting line that's long enough for your group to stand behind.
5. When enough kids arrive, select one to be the "lion."
6. Instruct the rest of the kids to gather behind the starting line.

## Play Together

1. Explain how to play
  - Say: "When the music starts, your job is to get across the room and try to make it to the safe zone without being caught moving."
  - The "lion" will stand on the front edge of the safe zone with their back turned.
  - When the music stops, the kids are to freeze, and the "lion" will spin around.
  - If the "lion" spots someone moving, that kid who has been spotted must return to the starting line.
  - Play various rounds and allow multiple kids to be the "lion."

## ② What You Say

"That was so fun! And it was so hard to keep calm when the 'lion' turned around!"

"In our true story from the Bible today, we're going to hear about a man named Daniel who came up against a lot of lions. It was really scary, but he was used to trusting God—during scary times and all the time. He knew he didn't face those lions alone. Let's go discover more about who Daniel put his confidence in!"

**Transition** → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/4

# Act It Out!

## Bible Story Review

### Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

### What You Need

- ☐ "Story Images" Activity Pages



### Inclusive Pro Tips

For an option with less movement, allow the kids to discuss the Bible Story points and what took place in their story image from a seated position with their groups.

## ① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into three teams.
2. Give every team a set of six "Firm Foundation" Activity Page blocks.

### Imagine Together:

3. Divide the kids into groups of 2-3.
4. Give each group a card with an image from the "Story Images" Activity Pages.  
→ Make sure all of the cards from the "Story Images" Activity Page are given to groups. It's okay if certain groups have more than one card!
5. Say: "We're going to review the story of Daniel together! I'll pause and invite different groups to act out certain parts of the story based on your image."
6. Give the groups a few minutes to observe the image on their card(s) and come up with a skit.
7. After you read each Bible Story point, invite the assigned group to act out their part.
8. Encourage the kids to have fun with their expressions and actions!
9. Continue until all the images have been reviewed.

### Bible Story Points:

1. Daniel becomes a leader in the kingdom.  
→ Call on the group with the image of Babylon.
2. Jealous advisors trick the king into making a new law.  
→ Call on the group with the image of the scroll.
3. Daniel keeps praying, even when it's dangerous.  
→ Call on the group with the image of Daniel praying.
4. Daniel is thrown into the lions' den.  
→ Call on the group with the image of the lions' den.
5. God sends an angel to shut the mouths of the lions.  
→ Call on the group with the image of an angel.
6. King Darius sees Daniel is safe and praises God!  
→ Call on the group with the image of King Darius praising God.

## ② What You Say

"Great acting, friends! Daniel didn't wait until he was in trouble to start trusting God. He talked to God every single day, he trusted God every single day, so Daniel was able to trust God when he faced the lions. And God was right there in the lions' den with Daniel! He NEVER left Daniel, and He won't leave you.

"No matter what you face—big feelings, tough decisions—God is always with you! God goes with you every single step of your life! Everything you face, you face with Him.

"Remind yourself God is always with you by making a habit of talking to God throughout the day. He is with you every minute!"

## GROUPS 2/4

# God Is My Shield



## Application Review

### Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

### What You Need

- ☐ "Shield" Activity Page
- ☐ "God Is My Shield" Activity Page
- ☐ Coloring supplies
- ☐ Foil
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Glue sticks
- ☐ Prepared shield example

### Inclusive Pro Tips



Allow the kids to decorate their shields in pairs.

Provide adaptive scissors.

## ① What You Do

1. Give every kid a "Shield" Activity Page.
2. Set out the coloring supplies, foil, glue sticks, and scissors.
3. Show the kids the shield example and remind them: God is always with you!
4. Invite the kids to decorate their shield however they'd like.
5. Encourage the kids to use symbols, colors, or drawings that remind them that God is always with them.  
→ NOTE: Kids could draw a time when they needed to trust God, just like Daniel.
6. Set out the "God Is My Shield" Activity Page stickers.
7. Let the kids choose and place their stickers on their shield.

### Explore Together:

1. Say: "This paper shield is something you can take home, but do you think it can really protect you like a real shield? (Pause for answers.)"
2. Say: "That's right! It can't—it's just a reminder. But God really is your shield, friends. He surrounds you, protects you, and is always with you."

**Make It Personal** → Share an age-appropriate time when you were nervous or afraid, but you remembered God was with you. How did trusting God help you stay strong?

**Continued on the next page.** →

## GROUPS 2/4

# God Is My Shield



## Application Review

### Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

### What You Need

- ☐ "Shield" Activity Page
- ☐ "God Is My Shield" Activity Page
- ☐ Coloring supplies
- ☐ Foil
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Glue sticks
- ☐ Prepared shield example

### Inclusive Pro Tips



Allow the kids to decorate their shields in pairs.

Provide adaptive scissors.

## ② What You Say

"Awesome job creating your shields! These shields are cool to look at, but they also remind us of something really important: we don't have to face anything alone. God wants to protect us—like a real shield!"

"Daniel trusted God even when things were scary. He didn't stop praying, and he didn't stop believing that God would be with him even in the lions' den!"

"Daniel was God's friend. He talked to God. He asked God for help. And when Daniel was in the lions' den, God answered. God was like, 'My friend asked Me for help. I will help him!'"

"Here's the best news: That same God is with YOU too! But how? When you choose to believe in Jesus, you are saying, 'God, I trust You. I believe Jesus died for my sins and came back to life so I can be close to You forever.'"

"And when you do that, God gives you His Holy Spirit to live inside you! It is God's very Spirit! God moves in closer than close to you! He is God with you, He goes with you everywhere you go, and He is your shield. He will help you when you ask."

"So if you've never made the decision to follow Jesus, maybe today's the day! You can talk to me, a grown-up, or another leader, and we'll help you understand what it means to say, 'Yes, Jesus, I want You to be my Savior! I want to be Your friend forever!'"

## GROUPS 3/4

# Verse Dash

## Memory Verse Activity

### Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

### What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Cones and various obstacle course items
- ☐ Floor tape
- ☐ "Isaiah 40:31" Activity Page

### Inclusive Pro Tips



For a version with less movement, place the verse cards face down on a table.

Let teams flip one card per turn to find the next word or phrase in the verse. If it's not next, flip it back, and let the next kid try.

Allow kids to point, tap, or guide others if physical participation is limited.

## ① What You Do

### Before you begin:

- Create a challenging obstacle course with cones, floor tape, and other supplies you have on hand.
  - Place the cards from "Isaiah 40:31" Activity Page on the floor along the obstacle path.
  - Mark a start line and a finish line for the course.
1. Divide the kids into two teams.
  2. Give each team two Bibles.
  3. Invite them to look up Isaiah 40:31 using the Bible Navigation Tips.

### Move Together:

1. Pick a team to go first.
2. Say, "Your team's goal is to gather all the pieces from Isaiah 40:31 and put them in order!"
3. One at a time, the kids from the first team will move through the obstacle course, grab one verse card, and return to their team.
4. When the first kid returns to their team, the next kid on that team is to go until all of the cards of the verse have been returned to the team.
5. The team that went first is to work together to rebuild the verse in the correct order.
6. Once they're finished, instruct them to read the verse aloud together.
7. Reset the course with the cards and let the other team take a turn.

### 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.

Continued on the next page. →

## GROUPS 3/4

# Verse Dash

## Memory Verse Activity

### Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

### What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Cones and various obstacle course items
- ☐ Floor tape
- ☐ "Isaiah 40:31" Activity Page



### Inclusive Pro Tips

For a version with less movement, place the verse cards face down on a table.

Let teams flip one card per turn to find the next word or phrase in the verse. If it's not next, flip it back, and let the next kid try.

Allow kids to point, tap, or guide others if physical participation is limited.

## ② What You Say

"Isaiah 40:31 reminds us that when we trust in God, He gives us strength no matter what we face. Daniel knew that truth! Even when he was thrown into a den of lions, he trusted that God was right there with him. So if you ever feel afraid, tired, or unsure ... pause and remember:

(NIRV)

*But those who trust in the LORD  
will receive new strength.*

*They will fly as high as eagles.—Isaiah 40:31a*

(NIV)

*But those who hope in the LORD  
will renew their strength.*

*They will soar on wings like eagles.—Isaiah 40:31a*

"Remember, God is always with you!"

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

→ No Supplies Needed

### Inclusive Supplies

- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Pencils



### Inclusive Pro Tips

Allow the kids to write or draw their prayers to God using an index card and a pencil.

## ① What You Do

1. Gather the kids together in a seated circle.
2. Say, "Today we discovered that God is ALWAYS with us! Before we go, let's take a moment to talk to God. Prayer is how we talk to God anytime, anywhere, about anything! And since God is always with you, you can talk to Him anytime! Right now, you can pray out loud or quietly."
3. Prayer starter prompts:
  - "God help me be brave when I'm scared."
  - "God help me to put my trust in You!"
  - "Thank You, God, for always being with me!"
4. Close in prayer.

## ② Prayer

"God, thank You for loving us and always being with us. You were with Daniel in the lions' den, and You are with us too. Teach us how to go through life with You aware of Your presence. Fill us with confidence no matter what we face because You are with us. We love You, God, and we pray these things in Jesus' name! Amen!"

**Transition** → As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to show off their shields and share one way they can remember: "God is always with me!" Challenge them to tell someone at home the story of Daniel this week.



# 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.**

## 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**

## Social

### Opening Activity

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ Device for playing music, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group

### Inclusive Supplies:

- ☐ Table
- ☐ Yellow pom-poms, 10 for each Small Group
- ☐ Mini figures, one for every kid

## Groups

### 1. Act It Out!

- ☐ Print "Story Images" Activity Page on cardstock, one set for each Small Group

### 2. God Is My Shield\*

- ☐ Print "Shield" Activity Page on cardstock and cut out, one for every kid
- ☐ Print "God Is My Shield" Activity Page on vinyl sticker paper (like this: [bit.ly/4hIUOfT](https://bit.ly/4hIUOfT)), 3-4 stickers for every kid
- ☐ Coloring supplies, enough for each Small Group to share
- ☐ Foil, one roll for each Small Group
- ☐ Scissors, one pair for every kid
- ☐ Before group time:
  - Use the supplies to create a shield example to show the kids.

### 3. Verse Dash

- ☐ Bibles, four for each Small Group
- ☐ Cones and various obstacle course items, enough to make one obstacle course
- ☐ Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group
- ☐ Print "Isaiah 40:31" Activity Page on paper and cut apart, one set for each Small Group

### 4. Pray and Dismiss

- No Supplies Needed

### Inclusive Supplies:

- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Pencils

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