

Small Group Leader Guide

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)
- Conversation Starter
- Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Application Activity: Take a Snapshot
2. Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions
3. Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You
4. Prayer Activity: Make It Personal with Prayer

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.

THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Elijah and the Prophets of Baal

1 Kings 18:16-45

Conversation Starter

What seems impossible to you?

Bottom Line

God can do the impossible.

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.

Proverbs 16:16 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
- ☐ "Image Cards" Activity Page
- ☐ Scotch tape



Inclusive Pro Tips



Instead of running, try this seated version:

- Give each kid a card and divide the group into two teams. Tell them not to show anyone yet.
- Teams take turns helping their teammates guess what's on their cards using clues.
- The first team to guess all of their cards correctly wins!

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 your confidence is grounded in Him, not in how capable or impressive you feel. Recall an age-appropriate story about a time when you felt outnumbered or unsure but chose to trust God anyway. Thank God for how He showed up! Ask God to meet preteens in their moments of self-doubt or peer pressure. Pray they would believe that trusting God when it's not popular is still worth it, and that He can do the impossible in their everyday lives.

1. Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high-five, fist bump, or a wave.
2. Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.

Play Together

1. Before you begin, show and name each "Image Cards" Activity Page card.
→ Fire, water, a log, and a jar.
2. Encourage the kids to stand in separate areas of your group space.
3. Tape one card (face out) on each kid's back. Tell the kid what is on their back, but try not to let anyone else see the card that is on the kid's back.
4. Share the goal:
→ "One at a time, one person will come to the center. All of the other kids will try to figure out what's taped to that kid's back by moving quickly enough to see it! If you're in the middle and someone shouts out what's on your back, you're out, and I will choose another kid to go."
5. Repeat until every kid has had a chance to play.

② What You Say

"You all are SO fast, and that was really fun! You had no idea what was on the other kids' backs, but you went for it! Water, fire, logs, and a jar?"

"This might've seemed like just a silly game, but we'll hear more about these things today in our true story from the Bible, where a man named Elijah showed us what it means to put our confidence in the one and only true God. Come with me!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/5

Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No supplies needed



Inclusive Pro Tips

For an option with less movement, complete this activity with everyone seated. The kids can point to their choices.

① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into three groups.

Imagine Together

1. Say, "I am going to share several scenarios. For each scenario, I'll also share two possible responses you could have to each scenario. I'll point to the side of the room that corresponds with each response. With your group, talk about what trusting God might look like in each scenario, and then as a group, travel to one side of the room or the other."
2. One at a time, call out the "What's My Move?" scenarios and point to the side of the room that corresponds with each response.
3. Give the groups a moment to think, talk, and travel to the side of their choice together.

"What's My Move?" Scenarios

1. I feel scared about trying something new.
→ Pray and wait on God OR try it even if I still feel afraid.
2. When I know someone who's hurting.
→ Send them a message OR go talk to them and let them know I care.
3. When I don't understand what God is doing.
→ Ask questions and look for answers in the Bible OR trust that I may not know right now and that's okay.
4. When you want to share your faith.
→ Invite someone to church OR be a good friend and let them see how much Jesus loves them by the way you treat them.
5. When life feels too hard or too big ...
→ Tell a trusted adult or friend what you're going through OR take some quiet time to talk it out with God.
6. A friend did something that hurt you.
→ Choose to forgive right away, OR take time to pray and ask God for help forgiving.

Talk Together

- *NOTE: Point out that all of those answers could've been the right move. Encourage the kids to listen to God, pray, and act boldly in confidence trusting that He goes with them in everything!*
1. Why didn't Elijah back down when everything else around him was hopeless?
 2. How does it help to know the Holy Spirit is in you if you've chosen to follow Jesus?
 3. Say: "God can do the impossible! Sometimes, you still might not know what to do next. And although your next choice may not be clear, there is one thing that is clear: following God and His ways is always the right move. Elijah didn't know how things would turn out, but he just followed God, and God showed up. That is all God asks of you too!"

GROUPS 2/5

Bible Story Extension

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ "Confidence Cards" Activity Page
- ☐ Floor tape
- ☐ Plain paper
- ☐ Pencils



① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into teams of 3-4.
2. Give every group:
 - One Bible
 - One plain piece of paper
 - One pencil
3. Use floor tape to mark a start line for each team.
4. On the opposite end of your group space, scatter the "Confidence Cards."

Move Together

1. Say: "Each team will take turns sending one kid to grab a card from the far side of the room. When you get a card, bring it back to your group. Read it out loud and work together to complete what it says."
2. Encourage each group to discuss the questions and follow the prompts to either:
 - Write or draw their response on paper.
 - Act it out.
3. Once their group finishes that card's challenge, the next teammate can go!
4. Continue until every kid gets a chance to grab a Confidence Card.
5. Gather the kids and review possible answers to each challenge.

Make It Personal → Tell the kids about an age-appropriate time you chose to trust God during a tough season. Did you move to a new city? Maybe choosing to trust God didn't make you feel better right away, but it made you feel stronger—because you knew God was with you!

Inclusive Pro Tips



Instead of running, give each team 3-4 cards and invite them to complete the challenges sitting at a table or on the floor.

Preteen

Small Group

November — Week 1

GROUPS 3/5

Discussion Questions



Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed

① What You Do

1. What's the difference between confidence in God and confidence in yourself? Can you think of a time when you needed both?
2. God burned up the soaked offering and the stones. Why do you think He wanted to put on such a show?
3. How will it make you more confident if you trust that God is with you in everything you face?
4. How can you help yourself remember that God is the strongest and He goes with you everywhere?

Inclusive Pro Tips



Be sensitive to kids who may need extra time to process their thoughts and respond. Be patient and create a safe space where everyone has a chance to share when they're ready.

Frequently check for understanding during discussion by asking questions like, "Can someone share in their own words what we're talking about?"

GROUPS 4/5

Verses to Take with You



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Plain paper
- ☐ Coloring supplies

Inclusive Pro Tips



If it's more comfortable for your kids to create motions to remember Isaiah 40:31, invite them to come up with a movement for each part of the verse.

① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into groups of two or three.
2. Give each group a Bible.
3. Invite them to look up Isaiah 40:31 using the Bible Navigation Tips below.
4. Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids, and repeat the verse together several times.

Create Together

1. Give each group a piece of plain paper.
2. Set out the coloring supplies.
3. Challenge each group to come up with 4-5 simple symbols (or emojis) that could represent key parts of the verse.
For example, if using NIV, encourage the kids to break the verse up like this:
 - 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.

If using the NIV, encourage the kids to break the verse up like this:

- Those who hope in the LORD
- will renew their strength.
- They will soar on wings like eagles;
- they will run and not grow weary.
- they will walk and not be faint.

4. Encourage the kids to work together to draw their symbols on plain paper with coloring supplies.
5. Once everyone is finished, invite several groups to share their symbols and why they chose them.

Talk Together

1. Ask:
 - What do you think it means to trust in the Lord?
 - Why do you think new strength is a gift God gives when you trust Him?
2. Say, "The symbols you made can help you carry Isaiah 40:31 with you everywhere you go. Whether you feel tired, alone, or hopeless, you can always trust God to give you strength!"

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders

- ① 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.
- ② When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers.
- ③ Once they find the chapter, explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

GROUPS 5/5

Make It Personal with Prayer



Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Large blocks
- ☐ Pens or pencils
- ☐ Sticky notes
- ☐ Device for playing worship music

① What You Do

1. Gather the kids together in a circle.
2. Begin playing the worship music softly.
3. Give every kid:
 - One block
 - One sticky note
 - One pen or pencil
4. Say: "We will all face things that feel tough or impossible."
5. Invite them to take a moment and think about something in their lives that feels that way.
 - Maybe they're struggling to make friends at a new school, or maybe they're ready to give up on learning a new skill.
6. Invite the kids to draw or write that "impossible thing" on their sticky note.
7. *NOTE: Use this opportunity to have a conversation about what it means to make a decision to follow Jesus! (bit.ly/4daxSUg) If you need help with what to say ask your ministry leader.*
8. Once they're ready, encourage each kid to:
 - Bring the block to the center of the circle.
 - Add it to the group tower or stack.
 - Whisper or silently say aloud a short prayer like, "God, I trust You with this."
9. *NOTE: Let them know they can place their block and sticky note face down on the tower if they prefer to keep it private.*
10. Close the group in prayer. Ask God to help the kids trust that He goes with them in everything they face. Ask God to help them remember that they can go through life confidently because the strongest goes with them! His presence with them in everything will be a firm foundation for each of their lives!

Inclusive Pro Tips



Create the tower on a tabletop or raised surface to meet the needs of your group.

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
- ☐ Print "Image Cards" Activity Page on paper and cut apart, one card for every kid
- ☐ Scotch tape, one roll for each Small Group

Groups

Take a Snapshot

→ No Supplies Needed

Bible Story Extension

- ☐ Bibles, one for every three kids
- ☐ Print "Confidence Cards" on paper and cut apart, two sets for each Small Group
- ☐ Plain paper, one sheet for every three kids
- ☐ Pencils, one for every three kids
- ☐ Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group

Discussion Questions

→ No Supplies Needed

Verses to Take with You

- ☐ Bibles, one for every two kids
- ☐ Plain paper, one for every two kids
- ☐ Coloring supplies, enough for each Small Group to share

Make It Personal with Prayer

- ☐ Large blocks, one for every kid
- ☐ Pens or pencils, one for every kid
- ☐ Sticky notes, one for every kid
- ☐ Device for playing worship music, one for each Small Group

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**