

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.

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
- Bottom Line
- What's Our Part in the Story?
- Prayer

SMALL GROUP (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Bible Story Review: Super Boost
2. Application Activity: Jacob's Ladder Paper Chain
3. Memory Verse Activity: Assemble!
4. Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)
- Devotionals for Kids
- Parent Cue App and ParentCue.org

✦ Need activities for a K-5th group? Use this 2nd-3rd grade guide!

THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Jacob's Dream Genesis 28:10-22

(Supporting: Genesis 25:19-34;27)

Bottom Line

You can trust that God is with you.

Memory Verse

**Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of we do not see.
(Hebrews 11:1 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
- ☐ "Flying Contest" Activity Page
- ☐ "Paper Airplane" Activity Page
- ☐ Coloring Supplies



① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive. → Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Recall a time in your life when you experienced uncertainty, but you knew that God was with you. Ask God to give each child courage when they face uncertainty. Pray they will trust God even when they don't know what's next. Ask God to help the kids see that God is always working in their 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.
3. Give each kid a "Flying Contest" Activity Page.
4. Set out the coloring supplies.
5. Instruct the kids to color and decorate their superheroes.
6. Use the "Paper Airplane" Activity Page to show and demonstrate how to fold their "Flying Contest" Activity Page.
7. Give kids time to fly their paper airplanes.

② What You Say

"Great job with your paper airplanes, everyone! It was fun to see how far they could go! It's amazing what can happen when we trust God. Just like these superhero planes soared through the air, we can do incredible things when we remember that God is always with us. **[TRANSITION]** Today, in our true story from the Bible, we'll discover a guy, a twin brother, who made lots of bad choices, but God was always with him! Let's go find out more!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

Inclusive Pro Tips



Some kids might struggle to fold their paper airplanes. Assist the kids as needed, or have a few pre-folded paper airplanes so they can focus on decorating and flying them.

If any kids are overwhelmed by the excitement, let them fly their airplanes separately in a calmer space.

GROUPS 1/4

Silent Scenes

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ "Super Boost" Activity Page

① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into two teams.
2. Direct each team to sit together.
3. Explain the game:

- You will read a question out loud about the Bible Story.
- The teams will take turns answering the questions you ask.
- If a team answers correctly, they will get a "super boost."
The whole team gets a round of high fives!
- If a team answers the question incorrectly, the other team gets a chance to "save the day" by answering it correctly.

4. One at a time, ask a question about the Bible Story to one of the teams from the "Super Boost" Activity Page.
5. Continue asking questions until all of the questions have been asked and answered.
6. After all the questions have been asked and answered, ask:

- What was your favorite part of the story?
- How did Jacob show God was with him, even when he made bad choices?

② What You Say

Continued on the next page →

GROUPS 1/4

Silent Scenes

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ "Super Boost" Activity Page

MADE TO
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Play

② What You Say

"Jacob made a lot of mistakes and bad choices in his life. But God continued to be faithful to Jacob—and God continued working on His great rescue plan! In Jacob's dream, God spoke the promises to Jacob that He had made to Abraham and Isaac. But God also made another important promise to Jacob in his dream. God said this: 'I am with you.'"

"You see, Jacob had heard about God, but he didn't have the privilege of reading the Bible and learning all of these truths about who God is like we do. But God wanted Jacob to know that He was always with him, so God told him.

"And God has made the same promise to us: He is always with us.

"God is even with us in an even more incredible way! After Jesus' resurrection, when He went to heaven, He sent His Holy Spirit to live inside of His followers. When you become a follower of Jesus, the Holy Spirit came to live inside of you too! So the promise God made to Jacob is true of all Jesus-followers too! 'I am with you.'"

"So no matter what happens, **[BOTTOM LINE]** you can trust that God is with you too!"

[MAKE IT PERSONAL] Share how you are learning to trust that God is always with you. Share some of the prayers you are praying to ask God to help you learn to trust that He is with you. Share how you aren't a perfect follower of Jesus, but how you have seen God work for good even when you haven't been perfect.



Inclusive Pro Tips

Some kids might need extra time to process the questions. Be patient and give them a moment to process before moving on.

Some kids might be sensitive to touch. If they don't want a high five, give them a verbal cheer or a thumbs-up!

Consider adding movement to this game by inviting a kid on each team to run to you when they are ready to answer the question.

GROUPS 2/4

Jacob's Ladder Paper Chain



Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Jacob's Ladder" Activity Page
- ☐ Prepared Ladder Examples
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Construction Paper Strips
- ☐ Tape or Glue



Inclusive Pro-Tips

If writing is challenging for the kids, let them draw symbols to represent their ideas.

If a kid isn't comfortable sharing out loud, let them point to or hold up a strip they feel connected to.

Allow extra processing time for any kids who need it! Be patient and let them work at their own pace.

① What You Do

1. Use this [instructional video](https://bit.ly/4hv2AJ9) for a visual guide: bit.ly/4hv2AJ9
2. Instruct each kid to select two different colored strips of paper.
3. Set out the markers.
4. Explain the activity:
 - On one strip of paper, kids are to use the markers to write areas where we might make bad choices. (For example: being impatient, not sharing, always thinking about ourselves first, etc.)
 - On the other strip of paper, kids are to write God's promises. (For example: God will always love us, God is always with us, God made a way for us to be forgiven through Jesus, God gave us the Holy Spirit, etc.)
5. Display one of the prepared ladder examples to the kids.
6. Use the "Jacob's Ladder" Activity Page to show the kids how to put the strips together, alternating between our bad choices and God's promises, to show how God was always faithfully building despite our bad choices.
7. Ask: "How does this ladder remind you of Jacob's dream?"

② What You Say

"Wow! You all did a great job making your Jacob's Ladder paper chains! This paper chain reminds us of Jacob's dream when he saw the stairway with angels going up and down and God standing beside it. God made a connection between heaven and earth—Jesus came down to Earth to restore people's relationship with God. God was working and working on that plan for a long, long time.

"We also made those ladders personal. On one piece of paper, you wrote down some of your bad choices. On the other are some of the promises God made to us as His friends. These promises are truths about God! God will always love us! He is always with us! He always forgives us!

"Take these home and remember: even though we all make bad choices, God's promises are always true. Because we are Jesus' friends, God will always love us, God will always forgive us, and God will always help us. You can always trust that God is with you, even when things are hard or we mess up.

"God is building a beautiful friendship with you, always, despite whether or not you make good choices, because He is good.

"Should we aim to be more like Jesus every day? Yes! Will we be perfect? No! The Holy Spirit will help us daily when we choose to follow Jesus. But hold onto these truths: No matter what, you can trust that God loves you, you can trust that God is always on your side, and **[BOTTOM LINE]** you can trust that God is with you!"

GROUPS 3/4

Assemble!

Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Assemble!" Activity Page
- ☐ Floor Tape
- ☐ Timer

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Move

① What You Do

1. Place a line of tape in the center of your group space.
2. Set two sets of "Assemble!" Activity Page Memory Verse cards on the line of tape.
3. Divide the kids into two teams.
4. Create a start line for each team a few feet from the tape line.
5. Direct each team to line up behind their team's tape line.
6. Let each team know which color set of cards is theirs.
7. Explain how to play:
 - You will start a timer and kids on each team will take turns running to the tape line, picking up one verse card in their color, and running it back to their team.
 - The teams are to continue sending one kid at a time until they've collected all their verse cards.
 - Once all the verse cards are gathered, each team is to work together to put the verse in order.
8. Instruct the teams to shout, "Assemble!" and strike a superhero pose!
9. Declare the first team who says, "Assemble!" to be the winner.
10. Cheer the other team on together until they finish.

② What You Say

"Whoa! You all worked so well together to assemble this month's Memory Verse! Our verse, Hebrews 11:1, reminds us what faith means—it's trusting in what you can't see because of what you CAN see.

"Even though you couldn't see the finished verse until you worked together, you trusted that each piece you picked up would help you complete it. That's what faith is like!

"We may not 'see' God, but we can look at all the things God has done and trust what He has said to be true.

"God says He loves us. We can trust that to be true. God says that He forgives us. We can trust that to be true. And there's another thing God says: He is with us! Because God is always trustworthy, **[BOTTOM LINE]** you can trust that God is with you!"



Inclusive Pro-Tips

You can modify the running by offering different pace options like hopping, rolling, etc. You can allow various participation styles by letting some kids be the "assemblers" while the other kids retrieve the pieces.

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

☐ LEGO® or Building Blocks

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Reflect

① What You Do

1. Set LEGOs or building blocks in the center of your group space.
2. Invite the kids to quietly and independently build a tower at their own pace.
3. As the kids build, talk about how trusting God is like building a tower. Each time we trust God, we add a block to our tower.
4. Encourage each kid to think about one way they can trust God. Ask them to say it aloud as they add a block to their tower.

→ For example: trusting God for their family, when they're scared, with friendships, at school, with hobbies, when they're trying something new, when unsure what's coming next, etc.

→ NOTE: Let the kids repeat answers, what's important is that it's meaningful to them.

5. Once their towers are built, take turns praying aloud. Encourage kids to share one thing they're trusting God with.
6. Close in prayer.

② What You Say

"Dear God, thank You for loving us so much! You promised that You are with us, please teach us how to trust that You are with us every second of our lives. Lord, we want to trust You with everything, all of these things we said as we built these towers, and we want to connect with You as You are with us every second as we go throughout our lives. Teach us how to connect with You over everything we face in our lives. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Transition → As adults arrive to pick up, ask the kids to share their Jacob's Ladder paper chains and what they represent!

Inclusive Pro-Tips



Consider allowing kids to work in pairs or smaller groups to support anyone who might find it hard to focus.

If some kids prefer not to speak their prayer out loud, let them know they can pray silently!

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 "Flying Contest" Activity Page on paper, one for every kid
- ☐ Print "Paper Airplane" Activity Page on paper, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Coloring supplies, enough for the Small Group to share

Groups

Super Boost

- ☐ Print "Super Boost" Activity Page on paper, one for each Small Group Leader

*Jacob's Ladder Paper Chain

- ☐ Print "Jacob's Ladder" Activity Page on paper, one for each Small Group Leader
- ☐ Construction paper in various colors, about 10 pieces for each Small Group
- ☐ Clear tape, one roll for each Small Group
- ☐ Markers, enough for the Small Group to share
- ☐ Before group time:

- Cut long strips of colorful construction paper (approximately 1" wide)
- Make 1-3 examples of the ladder to show the kids

Assemble!

- ☐ Print "Assemble!" Activity Page on colored paper and cut apart, two different color sets for each Small Group
- ☐ Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group
- ☐ Timer, one for each Small Group

Pray and Dismiss

- ☐ LEGO®s or building blocks, enough for the Small Group to share

*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**