

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: Joseph's Life Memory Match
2. Application Activity: Joseph's Faith Circle
3. Memory Verse Activity: Verse Master
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

Joseph Genesis 37, 39-25

Bottom Line

You can trust God when things get tough.

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



① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive. → Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Thank God for the true story of Joseph, a reminder that even when life feels tough or confusing, God is still at work! Reflect on a time you went through something tough and couldn't see how God was using it until later. Thank God for being faithful. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you communicate to kids they can trust God no matter what! Pray that your group would trust God with their big and small struggles. Pray that they would learn to look for how He is working even when life doesn't go as planned.

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. Say, "We're going to play Secret Message Telephone! It's like the regular telephone game, but instead of whispering a message, we'll act it out!"
4. Instruct the kids to line up, all facing forward.
5. Explain the game:
6. The last kid in line is to receive a secret message (acted out silently, not spoken) from you.
 - The last kid in line is to tap the shoulder of the kid in front of them, who turns around to watch and learn the action.
 - Each kid is to act out what they saw for the next kid.
 - This will continue until the action makes it to the front of the line.
7. Examples for you to demonstrate for the kids to act out:
 - Playing soccer
 - Taking care of a baby
 - Eating pancakes
 - Getting new sneakers
 - Taking care of a dog
8. After the last kid acts out the message, challenge the kids to see if they can guess what the original message was.
9. Share the original messages as the kids guess.
10. Continue to play as time and interest allow.

Inclusive Pro Tips



Consider the needs of your group. If you think some of your kids could get overwhelmed, play in smaller groups.

If any kids are hesitant to act out the scenario, invite another kid to join them or let them observe the game.

SOCIAL

Opening Activity

What You Need

- ☐ Offering Container



② What You Say

"It was so much fun playing the Secret Message Telephone game with everyone! It's always interesting to see how messages can change as they get passed along. **[TRANSITION]** Today, we're going to hear a true story from the Bible about someone who God sometimes gave 'secret messages' to through dreams. Let's go hear more!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

Inclusive Pro Tips

Consider the needs of your group. If you think some of your kids could get overwhelmed, play in smaller groups.

If any kids are hesitant to act out the scenario, invite another kid to join them or let them observe the game.

GROUPS 1/4

Joseph's Life Memory Match



Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Joseph's Memory Match" Activity Page

① What You Do

1. Divide kids into three groups.
2. Shuffle each set of "Joseph's Memory Match" Activity Page cards.
3. Give each group a set of cards.
4. Instruct each group to spread the cards out face down.
5. Explain how to play:
 - The kids will take turns flipping over two cards at a time, trying to find matching pairs.
 - The goal is to match a "bad" event in Joseph's life with the "good" God brought out of it.
 - Kids can use the colored borders to confirm they have a match.
 - Keep playing until all the cards are matched!
6. Once all the cards have been matched, gather the group and discuss.

② What You Say

"That was so much fun, and you all did a great job matching up the tough things that happened to Joseph with the good things God brought out of them. Joseph went through some really hard times in his life. But did Joseph ever give up? **(INVITE RESPONSES.)** No, he didn't! He kept trusting that God was in control. And God took Joseph from prison all the way to the palace, where he helped save thousands of people, including his own family.

"That's why faith is SO important. Faith is trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see. We can't always see how things will turn out, but we have seen that God is good—in Joseph's story, and in Bible story after Bible story. We've also seen Him be good in our own lives. And when we look at what we know about God, that He is good and He is always working for good, we can trust Him. So **[BOTTOM LINE]** you can trust God when things get tough."

[MAKE IT PERSONAL] Share an age-appropriate example of a tough time in your own life when God brought something good out of it. Maybe you felt like nothing was going right, only for God to step in at the last minute to turn it all around. Create a safe space to share, allowing kids to share more about their lives too.



Inclusive Pro-Tips

Be patient and allow kids time to process as they match the card. Walk around and help any of the kids who are stuck.

GROUPS 2/4

Joseph's Faith Circle

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ Soft Playground Ball


① What You Do

1. Invite the kids to sit with you in a circle.
2. Hold the ball and say: "Joseph trusted that God was with him, even when he was in prison. We are going to think about some ways we can trust God when things get tough too. I will get us started. When things are tough, I can remember that God loves me."
3. Pass the ball to one kid in the circle.
4. Instruct the kid who catches the ball to share one way they can trust God when things get tough.

→ If the kids are stumped, share examples, like: I can remember that God loves me, I can remember God is always with me, I can remember that God is good and He is always working for good, I can remember who God says I am, I can ask the Holy Spirit to help me, I can remember God's promises.

5. For kids who need more support processing, ask simpler questions like:

→ "What's something hard that you can trust God with?"

→ "Can you think of a time when God helped you?"

6. Continue passing the ball around the circle until every kid has shared.

② What You Say

"Amazing job, everyone! You did an awesome job thinking about how we can trust God when life gets tough! Joseph did the same thing. Joseph faced so many tough situations—like being betrayed by his brothers, being thrown into a pit, and even going to jail. But no matter what happened, Joseph chose to trust God. He chose to trust that God is good and had good plans for his life. And that helped him get through what he was facing.

"Just like Joseph, **[BOTTOM LINE]** you can trust God when things get tough. Maybe you're facing something difficult at home, school, or with friends. But remind yourself of these truths: God is good and He is always working for good, even if you can't see it. Remind yourself of God's promises, like some of the ones we talked about. Remind yourself that He is always with you, that He loves you, that you are precious to Him. Remembering who God is and what He promises will help you trust Him as you go through the tough thing you're facing.

"In fact, even Jesus, God's Son, had to trust God when He was facing something really hard, like being arrested and dying on the cross. But because Jesus knew God would bring good out of something tough, something amazing would come from it. Jesus paid for sin and broke the curse. Jesus made it possible for us to be in relationship with God forever!"



Inclusive Pro-Tips

Some kids might need extra time to think and process their answers. Be patient and don't rush them. Let another kid have a turn and come back to them later.

GROUPS 3/4

Verse Master

Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bible Marked at Hebrews 11:1
- ☐ "Verse Master" Activity Page
- ☐ Floor Tape

MADE TO
↓
Play

① What You Do

1. Before you begin, tape the "Verse Master" Activity Page cards around your group space (either on the walls or on the floor).
2. Open the Bible marked at Hebrews 11:1.
3. Call on a kid to read the verse aloud for the group.
4. Repeat the verse several times, and discuss any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
5. Before you begin, point to the words of the verse in order that are taped on the wall.
6. Encourage the kids to follow along.
NOTE: This gives visual learners a reference of the verse words.
7. Instruct the kids to separate and choose to stand near one of the words in the Memory Verse.
8. Select a kid to be the "Verse Master."
9. Explain the rules:

- The "Verse Master" is to attempt to take away parts of the Bible verse.
- The "Verse Master" is to close their eyes, count to ten, and call out one word from the verse.
- Any kids standing near that word are to be out for that round.
NOTE: Some words are listed multiple times, so there are multiple ways to get out!
- Each kid has a chance to stay in the game if they run to the center and recite the Memory Verse.

10. Once all the kids are out, play another round if time allows.
11. Recite the verse together one last time!

② What You Say

"That was intense! Now that we've had some fun, let's think about the verse we just practiced. Can you say it with me one more time? **(RECITE HEBREWS 11:1 TOGETHER.)**

"This verse is all about faith—the kind of faith Joseph had when he was facing tough times! Even when he was in prison, separated from his family, and sold by his brothers, Joseph still trusted that God was good and had a good plan for his life. He couldn't see how things would work out, but he trusted God.

"Keep this verse in your memory so you can be reminded at any time that faith in God doesn't require seeing—we can have faith, trust in God, even when we can't see what's next! We can always have faith because God is good and He has always been good. That's why **[BOTTOM LINE]** you can trust God when things get tough."



Inclusive Pro-Tips

Consider the needs of your group. Some kids might be overwhelmed by a fast paced game. Offer a slower version of the game, where kids can quietly read the verse and not have to rush to the words.

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

- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Coloring Supplies
- ☐ Pencils



① What You Do

1. Give each kid a piece of paper.
2. Set out the pencils and coloring supplies.
3. Encourage the kids to write or draw about a difficult situation or bad day they've experienced in the past.
4. If a kid struggles to think of something, offer examples like:
 - "Think of a day you felt sad or frustrated, or think of a time when something didn't go as planned, or you felt like giving up."
5. Once they're finished, encourage the kids to think about how God might have used the situation for good.
6. Lead the kids in prayer to ask God for help, understanding, and peace in their situation.
7. For the situations that haven't been resolved, encourage them to revisit their situation later and see how God answer their prayers.

What You Say

"God, thank You for always being with us, no matter what. When we are going through hard times, please help us to trust You, like Joseph did! Please help us to know that You will never leave us and You will always help us through. We want to learn to trust and rest in You. Thank You for always being there for us. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Transition → As adults arrive to pick up, ask kids to share this month's Memory Verse with them and what it means for them, personally!

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

Groups

Joseph's Life Memory Match

- ☐ Print "Joseph's Memory Match" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, three sets for each Small Group (Keep each set separate for three teams within the Small Group.)

*Joseph's Faith Circle

- ☐ Soft playground ball, one for each Small Group

Verse Master

- ☐ Print "Verse Master" Activity Page on paper and cut apart, one set for each Small Group
- ☐ Bible marked at Hebrews 11:1, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Floor Tape, one roll for each Small Group

Pray and Dismiss

- ☐ Paper, one piece for every kid
- ☐ Coloring supplies, enough for the Small Group to share
- ☐ 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**