

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

- Welcome/Opener
- Worship
- Bible Story (Communicator Script)
- Conversation Starter
- Prayer

SMALL GROUP (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

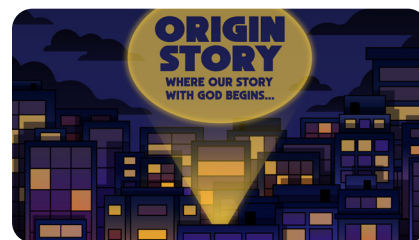
1. Take a Snapshot
2. Bible Story Extension
3. Discussion Questions
4. Verses to Take with You
5. Make It Personal with Prayer

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? Check out the 2nd-3rd guide.

THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Creation and the Fall Genesis 1–2:3, 3

Supporting Romans 5:8

Conversation Starter

How do you know you can trust God?

Bottom Line

You can trust God no matter what.

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

- ☐ Yarn pieces
- ☐ Masking tape
- ☐ Permanent marker



Inclusive Pro Tips

If any kids aren't comfortable over their shoulders, they can toss underhanded while facing forward. Celebrate every kid's attempt to toss the stuffed animals, so all kid feel included and engaged.

① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Ask God to remind every kid that God is with them, even when they don't feel ready. Pray that the kids would find the courage to try new things. Ask God to help the kids remember that even when it feels big or scary, God's plan is perfect!

1. Before you begin, place the pieces of yarn in a pile on the floor. Ensure the ends of each piece of yarn are visible around the edges of the pile.
2. Encourage the kids to get into pairs.
3. Invite the pairs to sit down around the pile of yarn.

Explain the goal

1. Each pair of kids is to find the ends of the same piece of yarn without touching or moving the pile.
2. Once they think they've found it, the pair is to pick up the ends to reveal if they identified the same piece of yarn.

Play Together

1. Show a visual example of how the game works as you explain the goal.
2. Encourage the pairs of kids to communicate and agree on which two ends belong to the same strand.
3. Emphasize that once the pair decides, they can't change their minds.
4. Tape the pair's chosen ends to the floor, and write their initials on the tape with a permanent marker.
5. Invite the next pair to make their choice, then mark the ends with tape and initial. *Note: It's okay if multiple teams choose the same piece. If another team picks the same ends, mark them with another piece of tape.*
6. Continue until all of the pairs have selected a piece of yarn.
7. Once everyone is ready, invite the pairs to pull their ends to see if they're correct.

Gather the entire group to discuss

1. How did you and your partner decide which ends to pick?
2. Was it easy or difficult to agree? Why?
3. If time allows, rearrange the yarn, direct the kids to partner up with another kid, and play again.

② What You Say

"Wow! You all had some great guesses about which tangled piece of yarn would match. This game reminds me of how God's good plan for us got all tangled up after what happened in the Garden of Eden. But there's more to the story! **[TRANSITION]** Because even from the beginning, our good God had a rescue plan to 'untangle' it all. Let's go find out more!"

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

- ☐ "Kaboom" Activity Page



① What You Do

1. Place the "Kaboom" Activity Pages on the floor in three different areas of your group space.
2. Ask the kids: "What does it mean to you to trust God?"
3. Share with the kids that when God created the universe and EVERYTHING in it, it was good because He is good. God is always good, so we can trust Him. We can trust God loves us no matter what and wants to guide us in the right direction, toward more goodness.

Explain the goal

1. The group will discuss various scenarios where the kids will indicate how easy or hard that situation would be for them to trust God by moving to one of the "Kaboom" Activity Pages.
2. Direct the kids' attention to each "Kaboom" Activity Page and explain what each stands for.
3. Instruct the kids to stand by the:
 - "Pfft" sign if kids think trusting God would be easy.
 - "Yikes" sign if kids think trusting God would be a little difficult.
 - "Kaboom" sign if kids think trusting God would be very difficult.

Imagine Together

1. Read the scenarios below one at a time.
2. After each scenario is read, give kids a chance to share why they chose that specific sound effect.
3. If kids faced something similar to a scenario read, invite them to tell their stories by asking:
 - What made it easy or hard to trust God in that situation?
 - How did God help you?

Pfft, Yikes, Kaboom Scenarios (*Adjust scenarios based on your few and what applies more directly to them.*)

1. Your parents don't want you to see a movie that all your friends are going to.
2. Your birthday party got canceled because you are sick.
3. You just found out that your family is moving to another state.
4. You didn't get invited to a classmate's birthday party.
5. Someone you love is sick and not getting better.
6. A friend made fun of you for following Jesus.
7. Your grown-ups are arguing a lot lately, and things aren't good at home.
8. Your sports team counted on you, and you missed the game-winning point.
9. All of your friends have their own cell phones except for you.
10. You really wanted to be picked for a role in the school play, but another kid got the part.

Continued on the next page →

Inclusive Pro Tips



Offer a seated option for this activity. Instead of moving to a sign, allow kids to point to or call out the sound effects ("Pfft", "Yikes", "Kaboom") instead of moving.

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

☐ "Kaboom" Activity Page


(Continued)

[MAKE IT PERSONAL] Share an age-appropriate time when you or someone you know had to trust God in a significant way. How did God show up in that situation?

Talk Together

1. Share with kids that it can feel hard to trust God when they can't see what's next or when they think they know what's best.
2. Explain that even though people disobeyed God, sinned, and ushered in a curse that infected everyone's hearts and did awful things to the world, God never left us alone. He loves us and He wants to be close to us! God sent Jesus to rescue us, to break that awful curse, and make a way for us to be friends with God again!

Inclusive Pro Tips



Offer a seated option for this activity. Instead of moving to a sign, allow kids to point to or call out the sound effects ("Pfft", "Yikes", "Kaboom") instead of moving.

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

- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Foil
- ☐ Timer
- ☐ Prepared foil rod

*Consider using these passages:

- ☐ Genesis 1:1, 3
- ☐ Genesis 1:9-10
- ☐ Genesis 1:20-21
- ☐ Genesis 1:25
- ☐ Genesis 1:26-27
- ☐ Genesis 3:2-3
- ☐ Genesis 3:6
- ☐ Romans 5:8

Inclusive Pro-Tips



Allow extra time for any kids who may need it to finish shaping their foil rods or to respond after each verse.

Pair up kids who might benefit from some extra support to help them during the activity and encourage communication.

① What You Do

Create Together

1. Give each kid a 3-foot piece of aluminum foil.
2. Show kids the prepared foil rod as an example. (This will help them visualize what they're going to make.)
3. Direct each kid to roll their piece of foil along the longest edge to create a 3-foot foil rod.
4. Explain that you will read several verses from today's Bible Story, and they'll shape their pieces of aluminum foil into something that reminds them of the creation story.
5. One at a time, read a passage from the Bible that's from the Bible Story.*
6. Whenever you pause after reading a Bible passage, start the timer for 30 seconds and encourage the kids to shape their foil rods into something that reminds them of the creation story during the time.
7. For example, if you read about the creation of humans (Genesis 1:26-27), kids might shape their foil rod into a heart or stick figure.
8. After each 30-second period, invite the kids to share what they created with the group.

Prompt discussion with the kids by asking:

- What characteristics of God can we see in creation? (Affirm the kids' answers. God is good—He made good things like grass that's soft to walk on, a different beautiful sunset each night. God is creative—He made the duck-billed platypus and creatures that shine at the ocean depths! God provides—everything has all of its needs met, like honeybees and flowers, and we have the exact recipe of air we need! God has infinite wisdom—He put the planets spinning in motion, and they're all exactly where they need to be!)
- In what way does knowing those things about God help you trust Him?
- How did God make a way to fix the mess that people made when they sinned against God? (God sent Jesus.)
- We can't actually see God with our eyes, but what other evidence does God give us to help us know He's real and near? (The Bible—God gave us the Bible so we can know Him; we can see what God has done and what He has made, etc.)

Talk Together

1. Explain to kids that even though people turned away God, God NEVER gave up on them. He loves us and wants to be our close friends! From the beginning, God had a plan to restore the world through Jesus.
2. Encourage the kids that they can trust that nothing will ever change God's love for them. God loves you so, so much! Anyone who believes and follows Jesus can be friends with God!

Note → Be sensitive to kids who might have questions about following Jesus. Follow your church's policy for having conversations with kids about salvation. Involve families in this discussion or decisions as well.

Preteen

Small Group

August — 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

Ask

- How do you know you can trust God?
- What do you think it means to trust God with something you can't see or control?
- When you're having a hard time trusting God, what can you do? Who can you talk to?
- What would you tell someone who doesn't believe God exists?

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

MADE TO
Explore

Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Cups
- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Pens

Note

Before you begin, consider watching a demonstration of the activity here:

bit.ly/4im8gq0


Inclusive Pro-Tips

Print the "Memory Verse" Activity Page to provide a printed visual of the Bible verse. Some kids process information better when they see it rather than just hearing it.

Kids may need extra time to process the verse and respond to discussion questions. Be patient and give them space to think and speak without pressure.

If necessary, consider adapting the game's structure. For example, you can modify the speed or process of taking turns to help kids with physical or processing challenges succeed.

① What You Do

1. Invite kids to get into pairs.
2. Give each pair a Bible and direct them to look up this month's Memory Verse, Hebrews 11:1.
3. Use the Bible Navigation tips below to help kids find the verse.*
4. Repeat the verse together several times.

Ask

- What do you think it means to be "sure of" what you do not see? (Or, to have "confidence in" what you do not see—for the NIV.)
- What things do you know exist even though you've never seen them? (Kids might say air or wind, love, Wi-Fi, germs, etc.)
- What do you know is true about God even though you've never seen Him?

Explore Together

1. Pause after asking kids each question to give them time to process and respond.
2. Give each group four index cards, five cups, and a pen for each kid.
3. Direct the kids to divide Hebrews 11:1 into four parts and write one part of the verse on each index card.
4. For example, if using NIV:
 - Faith is being sure of
 - what we hope for.
 - It is being sure of
 - what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1
5. For example, if using NIV:
 - Now faith is confidence in
 - what we hope for
 - and assurance about
 - what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1
6. Create a model cup tower for the kids to reference as they build their own.

Continued on the next page →

*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 4/5

Verses to Take with You

MADE TO
Explore

Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Cups
- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Pens

Note

Before you begin, consider watching a demonstration of the activity here:

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Inclusive Pro-Tips

Print the "Memory Verse" Activity Page to provide a printed visual of the Bible verse. Some kids process information better when they see it rather than just hearing it.

Kids may need extra time to process the verse and respond to discussion questions. Be patient and give them space to think and speak without pressure.

If necessary, consider adapting the game's structure. For example, you can modify the speed or process of taking turns to help kids with physical or processing challenges succeed.

(Continued)

Walk the kids through the following steps to create the cup tower:

1. Set one cup upside down on the floor, and place the first index card (with the first part of Hebrews 11:1 face up) on top of the cup.
2. Place another cup on top of that card, then add the second index card on top of that cup.
3. Continue stacking cups, alternating with index cards in verse order.

Explore Together

1. As the kids successfully stack the cups, they must recite the portion of the verse on the index card they pulled out.
2. Check the kid's towers to ensure the cups are being stacked upside down.
3. Once each cup tower is complete, challenge the groups to take turns pulling an index card from the cups as fast as possible so that the cup drops onto the one underneath it.
4. Encourage the kids to re-build their tower if the cups fall off.
5. Play a few rounds before inviting the kids to place their verse cards in order and recite the verse together again.

Preteen

Small Group

August — Week 1

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

No supplies needed

① What You Do

1. Invite the kids to stand in a circle, arm's length apart.
2. Instruct the kids to take a step forward into the circle each time you pause to indicate they are praying along with you.
3. Close the group in a prayer similar to the following, pausing for kids to add their own words:

Dear God, thank You for the amazing world You've created and all the ways it shows us Your goodness, Your creativity, and Your love. (PAUSE. INVITE KIDS TO WHISPER OR SAY ONE THING THEY'RE THANKFUL FOR THAT GOD CREATED.)

Help us to trust You this week no matter what comes our way. (PAUSE. INVITE KIDS TO SILENTLY THINK OF ONE THING THEY NEED TO TRUST GOD WITH.)

Thank You for the plan You had from the very beginning to show Your love by sending Jesus to make a way for us to be close to You again. (PAUSE. INVITE KIDS TO SILENTLY OR QUIETLY THANK GOD FOR SOMETHING SPECIFIC ABOUT JESUS.)

We love You and want to follow You. Help us see ways we can trust You more every day. (PAUSE. INVITE KIDS TO SAY, "GOD, I TRUST YOU," IF THEY FEEL COMFORTABLE.)

We pray these things In Jesus' name. Amen.

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

- ☐ Yarn, one roll for each Small Group
- ☐ *Before group time: Cut 15 pieces of yarn, each measuring 24 inches in length.*
- ☐ Tape, one roll for each Small Group
- ☐ Permanent marker, one for each Small Group

Groups

1. Take a Snapshot

- ☐ Print "Kaboom" Activity Page on paper or cardstock, one set for each Small Group

2. Bible Story Extension

- ☐ Bible, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Aluminum foil, one 3-foot piece for every kid and Small Group Leader
- ☐ Timer, one for every kid
- ☐ *Before group time: Create an example of the foil rod by rolling a piece of aluminum foil along the longest edge.*

3. Discussion Questions

→ No supplies needed

4. Verses to Take with You

- ☐ Bible, one for every two kids.
- ☐ Index cards, four for every two kids
- ☐ Plastic cups, five for every two kids
- ☐ Pens, one for every kid

5. Make it Personal with Prayer

→ No supplies needed

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**