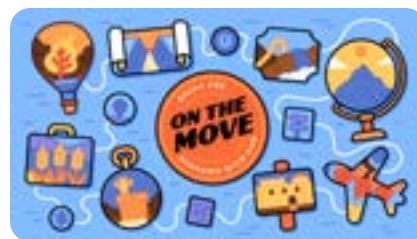


# Small Group Leader Guide



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.

### 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. Eye Spies Recap
2. Courage Under Pressure
3. Puzzle Race
4. 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

### Joshua and the Spies

Numbers 13-14

#### Bottom Line

**God can give you courage when others are afraid.**

#### Memory Verse

**"When I'm afraid, I put my trust in you."  
Psalm 56:3**

## 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

- ☐ Painter's Tape



### Inclusive Pro Tips

Consider the needs of your group and adjust the activity accordingly.

For an option with less movement, allow kids to describe the challenge instead of acting it.

Pair kids so they can act it out with a buddy.

If a kid doesn't want to be a "Brave Explorer," they can still help guess or whisper the challenges to other kids.

## 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 for already knowing each of their worries and the things they're facing. Whether they need courage at school, on the playground, or in their own homes—ask God to help the kids understand they never have to be brave alone because He is with them. Thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to help us and remind us of God's presence and His promises. Pray that God's Spirit would give the kids courage when they need it!

1. Before you begin, use the tape to create a wide, curvy path with a clear start and finish line.
2. Choose one kid to be the "Brave Explorer" for the first round.

### Play Together

1. Demonstrate and explain how to play:
  - You will quietly tell the "Brave Explorer" one of the challenges listed below so that no one else in the group hears the challenge.
  - The "Brave Explorer" is not to say the challenge out loud. Instead, they are to lead the entire group down the taped path using motions and sound effects to act it out!
  - The rest of the group is to follow along, copy the actions, and guess what the challenge is.
  - Reveal the correct answer, and then choose another "Brave Explorer."
2. Continue rotating until all the challenges have been guessed.
3. **[MAKE IT PERSONAL]** Join in the game! Be a "Brave Explorer" or shout out fun guesses to help break the ice.

### Challenges

1. Jumping from building to building: Take big leaps.
2. Crossing a wobbly bridge: Pretend to balance carefully as if walking on a shaky rope bridge.
3. Climbing a tall mountain: Use big arm and leg movements to "climb" up steep rocks.
4. Wading through a swamp: Pretend to step through thick, sticky mud.
5. Sailing through a storm: Pretend to hold onto a ship's wheel and sway back and forth.
6. Jumping over hot lava: Leap from one "safe" spot to another to avoid the imaginary lava.
7. Sneaking past a sleeping lion: Tiptoe quietly and freeze if the lion "stirs."
8. Escaping a swirling tornado: Run in zigzags and duck down to take cover.
9. Crawling through a dark cave: Stay low and carefully crawl through the "narrow" tunnel.
10. Marching through a jungle: Push aside tall "plants" and swat away "bugs" as you move forward

Continued on the next page. →

## SOCIAL

# Opening Activity

**What You Need**

- ☐ Painter's Tape

**Inclusive Pro Tips**

Consider the needs of your group and adjust the activity accordingly.

For an option with less movement, allow kids to describe the challenge instead of acting it.

Pair kids so they can act it out with a buddy.

If a kid doesn't want to be a "Brave Explorer," they can still help guess or whisper the challenges to other kids.

## ② What You Say

"That was so fun! Guessing the challenges was tough, but you nailed it! **[TRANSITION]** That reminds me of our true story from the Bible today. We're going to hear about some really brave spies. They weren't brave because they were the strongest, but because they knew God was and He was with them. So they trusted God with their big, brave mission. Let's go!"

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

## GROUPS 1/4

# Eye Spies Recap



## Bible Story Review

### Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

### What You Need

- ☐ "Story Review" Activity Page
- ☐ Index Cards
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Timer



### Inclusive Pro Tips

Consider the needs of your group and adjust the activity accordingly.

Repeat the question multiple times and give all kids time to process and think about the answer.

## ① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into teams of 3-4.
2. Give each team two index cards and a marker.
3. Instruct them to write large letters on the index cards:
  - Card 1: "A" on one side, "B" on the other
  - Card 2: "C" on one side, "D" on the other

### Play Together:

1. Say, "Here's how we'll play: I'll read a question about the Bible Story with four possible answers (A, B, C, or D). Each team will have 15 seconds to quickly discuss and choose an answer together. When the time is up, your team is to hold up the card with the letter of your chosen answer!"
2. One by one, read the questions and choices out loud from the "Story Review" Activity Page.
3. Set the timer for 15 seconds, and start it you've read all of the multiple-choice answers.
4. Award points for correct answers and celebrate teamwork!

Continued on the next page. →

GROUPS 1/4

# Eye Spies Recap



## Bible Story Review

### Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

### What You Need

- ☐ "Story Review" Activity Page
- ☐ Index Cards
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Timer

### Inclusive Pro Tips



Consider the needs of your group and adjust the activity accordingly.

Repeat the question multiple times and give all kids time to process and think about the answer.

## ② What You Say

"Can you imagine being sent on a secret mission? That's what happened when 12 spies went to explore the land God had promised His people. It was exciting, and also a little scary. For 40 days, they saw two big things—the land was amazing with lots of food, but the people and their cities were BIG and strong!

"Most of the spies came back and said, 'Nope. No way! The people are too big!' BUT Joshua and Caleb trusted that God was with them and that He was bigger and stronger than any people they faced. They focused on God, and their view of Him got bigger and bigger, while their fears got smaller and smaller. And that helped them have courage even when everyone else was afraid.

"God was with Joshua and Caleb, and He is also with you. When you choose to follow Jesus, He gives you a helper, the Holy Spirit, who lives in you. So you are never alone, and you don't have to work up courage on your own.

"This week, you might end up around people who are nervous, or scared to do the right thing. But you don't have to be! Focus and focus on God, ask the Holy Spirit to help you, and to give you the courage to face the difficult things you're facing. Remember, **[BOTTOM LINE]** God can give you courage when others are afraid."

**NOTE:** Look for opportunities to have conversations about what it means to make a decision to follow Jesus! **(IF YOU NEED HELP WITH WHAT TO SAY, ASK YOUR MINISTRY LEADER.)**

GROUPS 2/4

# Courage Under Pressure



## Application Activity

### Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

### What You Need

- ☐ Beach Balls
- ☐ Pin
- ☐ Masking Tape



### Inclusive Pro Tips

Consider the needs of your group and adjust the activity accordingly.

Let the kids know ahead of time that the beach ball will be popped, so no one is startled or overwhelmed by the sound.

Allow kids to observe from a comfortable distance.

## ① What You Do

1. Before you begin, inflate a beach ball and secure it closed.
2. Gather the group together and show the kids the pin.

### Talk Together:

1. Ask: "What do you think will happen if I poke this beach ball?"  
(INVITE RESPONSES.)

### Explore Together:

1. Stick the pin into the beach ball.

### Talk Together:

1. Say, "Wow, that's what it can feel like when fear gets the best of us. We lose courage and feel 'deflated' like this beach ball. Let's see what happens next."

### Explore Together:

1. Blow up another beach ball and secure it closed.
2. Read the scenarios below one at a time, and call on kids to respond to them.
3. For each kid who shares an idea, encourage them to press a small strip of masking tape firmly onto the same spot of the beach ball.  
→ The end result will be that the beach ball has several pieces of tape on the same spot.)
4. After all the scenarios, poke the beach ball through the taped spot with the pin. This time it should not pop!
5. End by explaining how, when we ask God for courage, He gives us strength to face difficult things—just like the tape gave the beach ball strength.

### Scenarios:

1. You are starting at a new school and don't know anyone. Do you ask God for courage to introduce yourself to new people, or do you stay afraid and keep to yourself?
2. Most kids at lunch are laughing at someone behind their backs. Do you ask God for courage and stand up for them, even when others aren't?
3. Everyone in your Small Group, including you, feels nervous about praying out loud. Do you ask God for courage to go first, or do you stay quiet?
4. Your team doesn't want to include the new kid at practice because they're different. Do you ask God for courage and invite them to join you, even if your teammates say no?

Continued on the next page. →

GROUPS 2/4

# Courage Under Pressure



## Application Activity

### Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

### What You Need

- ☐ Beach Balls
- ☐ Pin
- ☐ Masking Tape

### Inclusive Pro Tips



Consider the needs of your group and adjust the activity accordingly.

Let the kids know ahead of time that the beach ball will be popped, so no one is startled or overwhelmed by the sound.

Allow kids to observe from a comfortable distance.

## ② What You Say

"Have you ever felt nervous or afraid? Like you just want to deflate and hide? **(INVITE RESPONSES.)** Fear can sneak in during lots of moments, like when you're the only one choosing what's right, when you need to speak up, or when you're trying something new.

"Did the second beach ball pop when we added tape? **(INVITE RESPONSES.)** Nope! That's because the tape gave it strength. And when we follow Jesus, God gives us the strength to face anything! God is the biggest! He is the strongest, the mightiest, the most powerful—and He lives inside of us! And when we know the strongest is with us, that can give us courage to face whatever difficult thing has come our way. Others may be afraid, and that's okay! God can give us the courage to do what is right when others are afraid.

"This is why I'm so glad God sends the Holy Spirit to help us! Not only does He make us stronger, like the tape on the beach ball, He can guide us in how to be more like Jesus in every situation. So He can help us see what to do AND give us the courage to do it.

"Maybe there's a new kid at school or a teammate who feels left out, and no one is making an attempt to help. How might the Holy Spirit lead you to take a brave step and help them feel welcomed? **(INVITE RESPONSES.)** And what about when you see someone being treated unfairly and no one else is willing to do what's right? What could you do to help? **(INVITE RESPONSES.)** That's right!

"The Holy Spirit can help you know what to do AND give you the courage to do it! You're never alone when you follow Jesus. The same God who helped Joshua and Caleb is with YOU! You can always trust that **[BOTTOM LINE]** God can give you courage when others are afraid."

**Make It Personal** → Share an age-appropriate time when God gave you the courage to help someone when other people were afraid to help them. Maybe you stood up for a friend when no one else was. Or perhaps you helped someone whom everyone else was ignoring or walking past.

GROUPS 3/4

# Puzzle Race

## Memory Verse Activity

### Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

### What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ "Verse Pieces" Activity Page



### Inclusive Pro Tips

Consider the needs of your group and adjust the activity accordingly.

Work in pairs or as a whole group.

## ① What You Do

1. Give each kid a Bible.
2. Direct the kids to look up Psalm 56:3 using the Bible Navigation tips below.
3. Repeat the verse together several times.
4. Take a moment to explain any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.

### Move Together:

1. Review the verse motions from Week 1.
- The NlrV is:
- When I'm afraid, (Make a frightened face.)
  - I put my trust (Cup hands together.)
  - in you. (Point both fingers to the sky.)
  - Psalm 56:3 (Hold hands like an open Bible.)
- The NIV is:
- When I am afraid, (Make a frightened face.)
  - I put my trust (Cup hands together.)
  - in you. (Point both fingers to the sky.)
  - Psalm 56:3 (Hold hands like an open Bible.)

### Play Together:

1. Divide the kids into two teams.
2. Give each team a mixed-up set of puzzle pieces from the "Verse Pieces" Activity Page.
3. Say, "When I say 'Go!', your team is to race to put the puzzle together. Once the verse is in order, recite it out loud as a team."

Continued on the next page. →

### \*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.



## GROUPS 3/4

# Puzzle Race

## Memory Verse Activity

### Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

### What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ "Verse Pieces" Activity Page



## ② What You Say

"Awesome job, everyone! I loved seeing you all work together. Psalm 56:3 was written by a man named King David. Sometimes people were chasing David, so he had plenty of experience with fear. But instead of letting fear take over, David made a choice. He said, 'I put my trust in You, God.' And guess what? You can do the same. This verse reminds us that when we feel nervous, afraid to stand up for what's right, or even left out, we can trust God! We can stop, breathe, and ask God to give us courage. This week, when everyone around you is afraid, choose to take a step and trust God **[BOTTOM LINE]** God can give you courage when others are afraid."

### Inclusive Pro Tips



Consider the needs of your group and adjust the activity accordingly.

Work in pairs or as a whole group.

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

☐ Optional: Index Cards and Pencils



### Inclusive Pro Tips

Consider the needs of your group and adjust the activity accordingly.

Be mindful of kids who may not want to pray out loud. Assure them that God hears every prayer—even the ones that aren't spoken aloud!

## ① What You Do

1. Invite the kids to sit in a circle.
2. Remind the kids that prayer is a conversation they can have with God anytime, anywhere, about anything!
3. Ask: "What do you need courage for this week?"
  - For example, kids might say: "to stand up for a classmate who's being mistreated," or "to apologize to a friend."
  - Optional: Set out index cards and pencils for kids who might prefer to write or doodle their prayer requests.
4. Close in prayer, pausing to pray for each kid by name.

## ② What You Say

"Dear God, thank You for each of my friends here today. **(NAME EACH KID IN YOUR GROUP AND PRAY A SENTENCE PRAYER FOR EACH ONE AS THE HOLY SPIRIT LEADS YOU.)** Fill us with courage! You, God, are bigger than anything we face! That means You are bigger than any fear. Help us believe that You are the biggest! Give us courage to do and say what's right and stand up for what You would even when other people are afraid. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

**Transition** → As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to share this month's Memory Verse, Psalm 56:3, and why it matters!

# 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

- ☐ Painter's tape, one roll for each Small Group

## Groups

### Eye Spies Recap

- ☐ Print "Story Review" Activity Page on paper, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Index cards, two for every 3-4 kids
- ☐ Markers, one for every 3-4 kids
- ☐ Timer, one for each Small Group

### \*Courage Under Pressure

- ☐ Beach balls, two for each Small Group
- ☐ Safety pin or long needle, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Scotch tape, one for each Small Group

### Puzzle Race

- ☐ Bibles, one for every kid
- ☐ Print "Verse Pieces" Activity Page on cardstock and cut apart, two sets for each Small Group

### Pray and Dismiss

→ *Optional: Index cards and pencils*

\*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**