

Small Group Leader Guide



Today's Suggested Schedule

1. Bible Story Review: Build It Story Review

2. Application Activity: Stand Up!

3. Memory Verse Activity: Isaiah 40:31 Crowns

- coloring supplies
- clear tape

4. Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Esther

Esther 1-10

Bottom Line

God can help you stand up for others.

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.

Isaiah 40:31 (NIRV)

Pray for your group before they arrive -> Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God that He places people in the right place at the right time for His purpose. Recall an age-appropriate story about a time when God gave you courage to speak up for someone else or do what was right to help them. Ask God to help each kid realize that their voice matters and that He can use them, even now! Ask God to help the kids learn how to hear and listen to His voice as He leads them through the places He's put them for such a time as this!



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.

GROUPS 1/4

Build It Story Review

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Prepared cardstock squares and triangles
- ☐ "Story Image Cards" Activity Page

Inclusive Pro Tips



Allow the kids to work in groups or independently.

Allow the kids to participate seated in a chair or another position.

What You Do

1. Divide the kids into pairs.
2. Give each pair 15 cardstock pieces.
3. Say, "Today we're going to build parts of the Bible Story using these shapes! Make your shapes into pictures as you hear each part of the story. I will show you a picture of what to make!"
4. Read each Story Prompt slowly and clearly (they're listed below), while displaying the card from the "Story Image Cards" Activity Page that matches.
5. Give the kids time to arrange their shapes after each Story Prompt.

Bible Story Points:

→ "King Xerxes was a powerful king. When his queen didn't listen, he decided to find a new one!" (HOLD UP THE STORY IMAGE OF THE CROWN. INVITE KIDS TO BUILD A CROWN.)

→ "A girl named Esther lived with her cousin Mordecai. She was kind and beautiful—and the king chose her to be queen!" (HOLD UP THE STORY IMAGE OF THE HOUSE. INVITE KIDS TO BUILD A HOUSE.)

→ "Haman was an evil man who worked for the king. He got really mad at Mordecai for not bowing to him and made a plan to get rid of all the Jewish people." (HOLD UP THE STORY IMAGE OF THE LETTER "H." INVITE KIDS TO BUILD AN "H.")

→ "Mordecai asked Esther for help. She was scared but brave! She said yes, and planned a way to help her people." (HOLD UP THE STORY IMAGE OF A CHECKMARK. INVITE KIDS TO BUILD A CHECKMARK.)

→ "Esther had two feasts with the king and Haman, and at the second one, she told them everything. She asked the king, 'Please save my people!' (HOLD UP THE STORY IMAGE OF THE BANQUET TABLE. INVITE KIDS TO BUILD A TABLE.)

→ "The king made a new law that the Jewish people could stay safe! Haman was punished, and Esther saved her people!" (HOLD UP THE STORY IMAGE OF THE TRUMPET. INVITE KIDS TO BUILD A TRUMPET.)

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GROUPS 1/4

Build It Story Review

Bible Story Review



Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Prepared cardstock squares and triangle
- ☐ "Story Image Cards" Activity Page

Inclusive Pro Tips



Allow the kids to work in groups or independently.

Allow the kids to participate seated in a chair or another position.

What You Say

"Amazing job building, friends! God made Esther queen, and He made her queen at the exact right time. Her people needed help! So Queen Esther trusted that God had a plan and stood up for her people! "You know what? God has put you in the exact time and place to help people too! You're in your class for that reason. You're on your team for a reason. You're in your family for a reason. You're in your church for a reason! There are people you will see in your life who need you to stick up for them.

"Just like Esther, God has put you exactly where you are to help! When you go on the playground, and you see someone being picked on, and you say something to stop it, that's standing up for someone! And God put you right there to help!

"When you go to lunch and you see someone forgot theirs that day, and you share yours, you're helping someone! And God put you right there to help!

"You probably won't have to go before a powerful king ... but there are going to be times when God wants you to help, to stand up for others. When it feels scary, ask God to help you. He loves to! God can help you stand up for others!"



H



GROUPS 2/4

Stand Up!

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

To adjust to the movement needs of your group, do this activity sitting down in chairs or on the floor.

If any child is uncomfortable speaking aloud, allow them to whisper their answer to a leader or give a thumbs-up/down when they agree with an answer.

① What You Do

1. Instruct the kids to sit in a circle.
2. Say, "I'm going to read a few scenarios. If you have an idea of how you might stand up for someone in the scenario, stand up and raise your hand high!"
3. One at a time, read a "Stand Up Scenario" listed below.
4. Pick one kid who is standing to share what they would do to help.
5. After their answer, lead the whole group to repeat the Bottom Line together: "God can help you stand up for others!"
6. Instruct the kids to sit back down and read the next scenario.

Stand Up Scenarios:

1. You see someone sitting alone at lunch and looking really sad.
2. A kid on the playground is being made fun of for their shoes.
3. Someone is being picked last for a game, and you know they feel left out.
4. Your younger sibling is crying because someone wasn't kind to them.
5. A kid in your class speaks a different language and is having trouble joining the group.
6. A friend is telling a lie about someone else and asks you to agree with them.

② What You Say

"Great ideas, friends! Each of those moments is a chance to stand up for someone else.

"And the thing is, when you are standing up for the people in your life, you're not just being like God, you're showing who He is!

"God is fair. So when you're fair, when you stand up for someone who is being picked on, you're not only being like God, you're showing the world who God is! God is kind, so when you sit with a kid who is alone or you're kind to someone who is different than you, you're not only being like God, you're showing the world who God is!

"You don't have to do that on your own. You can stop to pray and ask God for help, because He's ALWAYS right there and He loves to help. Remember, God can help you stand up for others!"

GROUPS 3/4

Isaiah 40:31

Crowns

Memory Verse Activity

MADE TO
↓
Create

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bible marked at Isaiah 40:31
- ☐ "Isaiah 40:31 Paper Crowns" Activity Page
- ☐ Clear tape
- ☐ Jewel stickers
- ☐ Markers

Inclusive Supplies:

- ☐ Prepared paper crown pieces



Inclusive Pro Tips

Use prepared, pre-cut crown pieces for kids who may need extra support with scissors or fine motor skills.

What You Do

1. Open the Bible marked at Isaiah 40:31.
2. Read the verse aloud to the group.
3. Demonstrate the following motions to the kids and repeat the verse together several times.

These are the motions:

- Those who trust (HOLD PALMS OPEN AND UP TO THE SKY.)
- in the LORD (POINT BOTH HANDS UP TOWARD HEAVEN.)
- will receive (PULL YOUR HANDS IN TOWARD YOUR CHEST LIKE YOU'RE REELING SOMETHING IN.)
- new strength. (SHOW YOUR MUSCLES—FLEX BOTH ARMS WITH A STRONG FACE.)
- They will fly as high as eagles. (FLAP YOUR ARMS SLOWLY AND GRACEFULLY LIKE WINGS.)
- They will run (RUN IN PLACE.)
- and not get tired. (CROSS YOUR ARMS IN FRONT OF YOU IN AN "X.")
- They will walk (TAKE SLOW, STEADY WALKING STEPS IN PLACE.)
- and not grow weak. (CROSS YOUR ARMS AGAIN IN AN "X.")
- Isaiah 40:31 (OPEN PALMS TOGETHER LIKE A BIBLE.)

Create Together:

1. Give every kid an "Isaiah 40:31 Paper Crown" Activity Page.
2. Set out the markers and jewel stickers for the group to share.
3. Point out the words from the verse printed on the crown.
4. Direct them to:
 - Cut out the crown pieces.
 - Use coloring supplies and jewel stickers to decorate it.
 - Tape the pieces together so the crowns fit.
5. Help the kids write their names on their crown.

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GROUPS 3/4

Isaiah 40:31

Crowns

Memory Verse Activity

MADE TO
↓
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What You Need

- ☐ Bible marked at Isaiah 40:31
- ☐ "Isaiah 40:31 Paper Crowns" Activity Page
- ☐ Clear tape
- ☐ Jewel stickers
- ☐ Markers

Inclusive Supplies:

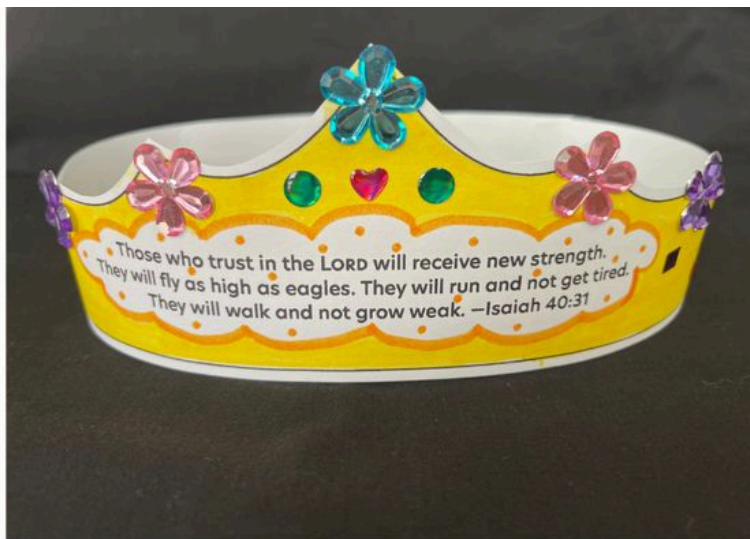
- ☐ Prepared paper crown pieces

② What You Say

"Isaiah 40:31 reminds us that everything we need comes from God. When we trust in God, He gives us strength just like Isaiah 40:31 says. He helps us keep going, even when it's hard.

"Esther wore a real crown because she was queen, but you're like a royal too because God has appointed you to live in this exact time and in this exact place just like her!

"Just like Esther was chosen to be queen, God calls YOU chosen too! He made you on purpose for a purpose. God will give you the strength you need to stand up for the people in your life! So whenever you wear this crown, remember: God can help you stand up for others."



Inclusive Pro Tips



Use prepared, pre-cut crown pieces for kids who may need extra support with scissors or fine motor skills.

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

→ No Supplies Needed

Inclusive Supplies:

- ☐ Index cards
☐ Coloring supplies



Inclusive Pro Tips

Offer index cards and coloring supplies for kids who may prefer to draw or write their prayers to God instead of praying silently! This gives visual and kinesthetic learners a hands-on way to reflect and connect with God.

① What You Do

1. Invite the kids to sit together with you in a circle.
2. Instruct the kids to hold up their left hand in an "L" shape (pointer finger and thumb).
3. Encourage kids to turn and look at the friend sitting on their left. This is the friend they will pray for today!
4. Invite the kids to pray silently or repeat after you as you guide them in praying to God:
→ "God, please help [kid's name] have confidence in You this week. Help them to stand up for others even when it's hard. In Jesus' name, amen!"
5. After a moment of silent or guided prayer, invite all the kids to stand, link arms, or place arms on shoulders.
6. Close in prayer.

② Prayer

"God, thank You for the story of Esther. We want to stand up for others too! Help us treat others the way we want to be treated. When we feel nervous or unsure, remind us that we can come to You for help. Thank You for giving each of us a special purpose. Show us how to help the people in our lives. We want to show the world how good You are! We love You, God, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Make It Personal → Share a short story of a time when you prayed for someone else, or someone prayed for you, and how that made a difference.

Transition → As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to show off their paper crowns as they remember that God can help you stand up for others.