

LESSON 2: BUILDERS TRY TO BUILD A GREAT TOWER

Leader Guide for Grades 5 & 6

Classroom: Deeply Rooted

 Genesis 11:1-9

08/25/2019

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Genesis 11:1-9
- In This Passage: Everyone lives in the same area and speaks the same language. They decide to build a great city with a tall tower that will make them famous. God sees their hearts; he confuses their language and then scatters them all over the world. God is the greatest, and we don't need to be.
- Bible Point: God is the greatest...
- Application: ...and we don't need to be.
- Summary Verse: "Have you never heard? Have you never understood? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth. He never grows weak or weary. No one can measure the depths of his understanding" (Isaiah 40:28).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *God is the greatest.* This story can be a bit confusing for kids. They've been taught to try their best and work well in teams. So why does God get so mad about people working together to do something great? Help kids see that their motivation to become famous was self-focused instead of focused on God's greatness. We don't need to try to show everyone we're the best, because we're not! God is the greatest, and we can point to him when we do our best work.
- Think About: What are some things you're really good at? How can you point to God's greatness when you do those things?

Dig In to Prayer

- Pray that God would give each of your kids a spirit of humility and that others would see *God's* greatness through each child's accomplishments.

Quick Tip

- As you teach Dig In, prepare for the unexpected! If during an activity things don't seem to go as planned, enjoy the adventure anyway. Your kids will respect your ability to go with the flow. And you'll demonstrate that teaching isn't about your skills...it's about letting God lead. That's a great way to point to his greatness.

This Lesson at a Glance



OPENING

Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



OBJECT LESSON

Kids determine the greatest chemical reaction.

Supplies

- baking soda (1 container per classroom table)
- vinegar (1 container per classroom table)
- dish soap (1 container per classroom table)
- food coloring (optional)
- disposable plastic bowls (2 per child)
- 16-ounce disposable plastic cups (2 per child)
- 3-ounce paper cups (2 per child)
- straws or coffee stirrers (1 per child)
- tablespoons (1 per classroom table)



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids try to build tall newspaper towers, but face obstacles.

Supplies

- Bibles
- newspapers
- tape



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids try to build funny shapes quickly.

Supplies

- large mix of buildable/stackable items such as books, blocks, craft sticks, boxes, crates, and cups
- masking tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Place the stackable supplies you've gathered in the center of the room.
- Tape boundary lines around the supplies, about 10 to 15 feet away from them.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids try to find four matching cards but are forced to scatter periodically.

Supplies

- playing cards (2 decks for every 15 kids)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Remove the Jokers from the decks of the cards.
- Shuffle all the decks together well.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids use a formula to represent that God is greater than we are.

Supplies

- paper
- pens



CRAFT

Kids make foam fingers that celebrate God as #1.

Supplies

- craft foam (one 8½x11 piece per child)
- pencils
- scissors
- permanent markers
- stapler

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.

**Marked supplies are also used in Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



OPENING

Welcome

[5 min]

Supplies

- Bible

Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have kids high-five three of their friends.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having kids say “happy birthday” in the voice of their favorite cartoon characters.
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we’re going to learn that God is the greatest. In the Bible, some people wanted to do something great because they wanted to be famous. Let’s talk about famous people.**

Share

- Tell kids about *your* favorite famous person and why you like that person.
- Have kids form pairs. Ask kids to share about *their* favorite famous people and why they like those people.
- After partners have discussed, ask two or three kids to share with the whole group what they talked about with their partners.

Summarize

Open a Bible to Genesis 11, and say: **The people we just shared about aren’t bad just because they’re famous. But in the Bible, people wanted to be famous instead of pointing to God’s greatness. He didn’t like that! Let’s see what happened in the Bible, God’s special book. That’s one way God shows us his greatness. Plus, here’s something great about God: he’s here right now, ready to talk to you! Let’s talk with God now.**

Pray, praising God for being the greatest.



OBJECT LESSON

The Greatest Reaction

[10 min]

Supplies

- baking soda (1 container per classroom table)
- vinegar (1 container per classroom table)
- dish soap (1 container per classroom table)
- food coloring (optional)
- disposable plastic bowls (2 per child)
- 16-ounce disposable plastic cups (2 per child)
- 3-ounce paper cups (2 per child)
- straws or coffee stirrers (1 per child)
- tablespoons (1 per classroom table)

Tips

- We used clear 16-ounce cups so kids could see the chemical reaction bubbling up inside. But solid colors work, too!
- If you're concerned about the cost of supplies, have kids work in pairs. But it's more fun for kids to create their own reactions!

Mix Baking Soda and Vinegar

Say: **Combining vinegar and baking soda makes a great reaction. But don't take my word for it—let's experiment and see for ourselves!**

- Place vinegar, baking soda, and food coloring on each table so they're easily accessible.
- Give each child two 16-ounce cups, two 3-ounce paper cups, and two bowls.
- Have kids place their large cups inside each bowl to catch overflowing liquid.
- To make the reaction more colorful, help kids add two drops of food coloring to each large cup.
- Invite each child to scoop 1 tablespoon of baking soda into a 3-ounce paper cup and then fill the other paper cup two-thirds full of vinegar. If possible, assign an adult or teen helper to each table to pour vinegar.
- Have kids each dump the baking soda into one of their large cups and then quickly pour the vinegar on top of the baking soda. It will bubble up and over the sides of the cup. Adding more vinegar will make it react again, but the bubbles will soon dissolve and disappear.

Add Dish Soap to Vinegar

Say: **You made some great reactions, but now they're gone! Let's see if we can make an even greater reaction with foam that doesn't dissolve so quickly. We'll need one more ingredient.**

- Add a container of dish soap to each table.
- Invite each child to add another tablespoon of baking soda to one 3-ounce cup and fill the other 3-ounce cup two-thirds full of vinegar again.
- Tell kids to squirt a little dish soap into the cup of vinegar and use a straw or coffee stirrer to mix it.
- Have kids each dump the baking soda and then the vinegar mixture into their second 16-ounce cups and watch the reaction.
- Encourage kids to count and see how long the foam lasts this time. It'll take longer to dissolve.

Talk About It

Ask: • **Compare the reactions with and without the dish soap. What was different?**

Say: **The reactions were great without the dish soap, but they disappeared before we knew it.**

When we added dish soap, the reactions became even bigger and lasted longer.

Ask: • **How is God like the dish soap in our experiment?**

Say: **In our Bible story, people were trying to build the greatest tower on their own. But they left God out of the process! We may be able to do some great things on our own, but God is the greatest. When we depend on him and his greatness, he'll help us do amazing things that point to his greatness.**

**Builders Try to Build a Great Tower (Genesis 11:1-9)**

Supplies

- Bibles
- newspapers
- tape

Act Famous

Say: Today we're going to learn that God is the greatest. We'll see that the people in our Bible story wanted to be the greatest—they wanted to be famous!

It seems like these days, anyone can become famous. You don't have to be rich or have connections to earn fame. With YouTube and other sites on the internet, any one of us could become famous overnight!

Let's think about that. If I became famous, I'd want it to be for... Tell kids what you'd want to be famous for, and act it out (you may talk or make sound effects if you want).

Say: Now it's your turn. Act out what *you'd* want to be famous for. You're all going to act at the same time, so try to get other people to pay attention to you while you're acting. You can make noise while you act. Allow about a minute for chaotic acting as kids all try to be the center of attention.

Ask: • What happened to our room when everyone was trying to be the center of attention?

• What did it take to be the most famous in our room?

Say: Since I told you to try to get other people to pay attention to *you*, your focus was probably more on yourself than others. That's what happens when we try to be the greatest. Our focus is on me, me, me. We want everyone to pay attention to us!

Let's explore why God is the greatest, and we don't need to be. We can keep our focus on *him*!

Build a Tower

Say: Let's see what the people in the Bible wanted to be famous for.

Read Genesis 11:1-4.

Have kids form groups of five and work with their groups to crumple newspaper into wads, which they'll tape together to build the tallest tower. Allow about three minutes for kids to work collaboratively.

Say: Wait! Pause what you're doing! Something happened as the builders in the Bible were seeking fame. God saw what they were doing and didn't like it.

Ask: • Tell about a time *you* got in trouble with a group of friends. Share your own example first. Then have kids share in their groups.

Say: As I said, God didn't like why they were doing what they were doing. So he decided to confuse the builders by making them speak different languages. That would make it harder to build a great tower together! God limited the builders by confusing their languages. So I'm going to limit you by telling you that you can no longer talk to your group members...and you can use only your pinkie fingers to work.

Allow time. Some kids may lose interest, or they may get frustrated and give up. If there are still kids building after about three minutes, stop them.

Ask: • Compare the ways you tried to build the tower: talking and not talking; using your hands and using only pinkies.

• Think about building a real-life, huge tower without being able to understand each other. If you were one of the builders, what would you do?

Say: Let's see how the Bible-times builders reacted when God confused their language. Make everyone stand far away from their group members as you read Genesis 11:8-9.

Talk About It

Say: God is the greatest, and we don't need to be. But this story is a little confusing. Let's talk about it.

Ask: • **Based on this story, do you think being famous is bad? Explain.**

• **If you were famous, what could you do to help people see that God is the greatest...even greater than you?** Encourage kids to think of real athletes or celebrities who give glory to God.

Say: **Another thing that's confusing about this story is that God didn't want people to work together. But usually we encourage you to work well with others.**

Ask: • **When can unity be a bad thing?** Examples may include cliques that exclude other people or people working together to do something wrong.

Say: **When we remember that God is the greatest, we don't focus on people. We focus on God! We don't know all the details of what the people in the Bible did wrong, but we do know they wanted to make a name for themselves. It seems like their focus was on themselves, not on God.**

When we do our best and work with others to do good things, we can still focus on God and point to how he's the greatest. And when we don't do things perfectly, we can let go and trust God because we know he's the greatest.

Ask: • **What's one way you can point to God instead of yourself this week?**

Have kids come back to stand together in the center of the room. Say: **Let's practice right now by telling God what he's the greatest at. For example, "God, you're the greatest at showing love!" You can shout out your praise any time you want to.** Allow time for kids to praise God.



Build It

Supplies

- large mix of buildable/stackable items such as books, blocks, craft sticks, boxes, crates, and cups
- masking tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Place the stackable supplies you've gathered in the center of the room.
- Tape boundary lines around the supplies, about 10 to 15 feet away from them.

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the album [here](#).

Build Quickly

Say: **The builders of Babel wanted to build the best city with the tallest tower and to be known for what they built. Let's play a game where you'll try to build the best tower creation.**

- Form small teams of two to four.
- Have teams each pick a spot behind the boundary lines you taped around the supplies.
- You'll call out something for teams to build, and they'll have to build it using only eight supplies from the pile.
- Teammates will take turns running to get one supply at a time to build their tower creation—working as fast as they can to build.
- When teams have finished building, you'll decide which tower creation looks the most like what you called out and then move on to the next item.
- Call out long, tall, or towering things for kids to build, such as:
 - a giraffe
 - a rocket
 - a Christmas tree
 - a whale
 - a skyscraper
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids build.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What was it like to have your creation picked as the best?**

• **What do you like about winning or being the best?**

• **What's something you want to be the best at in your life?** Share an example from your own life, such as earning Employee of the Month.

Say: **It's human to want to be the best, but we can get stuck focusing on ourselves. The people of Babel did that, so God confused them and changed their focus. We don't need to worry so much about being the best or the greatest, because God is the greatest.**



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Scatter!

Supplies

- playing cards (2 decks for every 15 kids)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Remove the Jokers from the decks of the cards.
- Shuffle all the decks together well.

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the album [here](#).

Find Four Cards With the Same Number

Say: **Today we read about the people who built the Tower of Babel. God scattered or confused the people building the tower. Let's play a fun game where your efforts will get confused and scattered!**

- Scatter the cards facedown on the floor throughout the room.
- On your cue, kids will quickly make their way around the room picking up and sorting through the cards to find four cards with the same number—the suits don't matter.
- No one can have more than four cards in his or her hand at a time, so as new cards are picked up, kids need to discard other cards facedown to keep the total at four cards each.
- If you'd like, play music in the background as kids work on finding four matching cards, and every few minutes yell out "Scatter!"
- When you yell "scatter," everyone will redistribute the cards around the room and start a new round.
- Anyone able to find four matching cards before you signal a new round gets a point.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What made it easy or hard to get four matching cards before I yelled "scatter"?**
• **What could have happened if I never interrupted in the game?**

Say: **You were very focused on the goal of the game, and you might have forgotten I was even here if I didn't interrupt your focus.**

Ask: • **Have you ever been so focused on one thing that nothing and no one else could get your attention? Tell about it. Maybe you were really into a TV show or movie, or you were playing and you couldn't hear someone trying to get your attention.** Share an example from your own life to help kids think of their own.

Say: **We can get busy focusing on our own efforts to be the best and forget about the more important things or people in our lives—like God. God is the greatest; he's far more important than even good things we might get busy doing. It's important to take time to refocus on God's greatness rather than our own.**



Supplies

- paper
- pens

Learn a Formula

- Write this formula on a piece of paper: He > I.
- Show kids the formula, and have them each write it at the top of a piece of paper.
- Tell kids that the formula reminds us that God is greater than we are, and the good things we do can point others to God's greatness.
- Have kids think of things they can point to God's greatness for and write them as prayers below their formulas. For example: God, thank you for helping me remember what I studied so I could ace my test this week.

Pray

Pray: **Dear God, thank you that you are the greatest. Help us remember that even when we do great things, we can point to you. You're the one who made us with all of our talents and abilities! We praise you for your greatness! In Jesus' name, amen.**

Thank kids for coming, and encourage them to come back next week.



Supplies

- craft foam (one 8½x11 piece per child)
- pencils
- scissors
- permanent markers
- stapler

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Make Foam Fingers

Show kids the sample craft you made. Set out supplies to share, and have kids follow these instructions to make foam fingers.

- Using a pencil, draw a large hand on your foam piece. It should look like a hand holding up the index finger to make a number one hand signal.
- When you're happy with your hand shape, cut it out.
- Write "He's #1!" on the foam hand using a permanent marker.
- Cut another piece of foam that's identical in shape to your first foam piece.
- Staple both pieces of the foam hand together. This should hold it firmly in place when you put it over your hand.

Make Up Cheers

- Think of common cheers or chants people use to cheer on sports teams. For example, "Let's go, (team), let's go!" or "Charge!"
- Use those cheers or chants as inspiration to cheer on God while holding up your foam fingers.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What would it look like to cheer on God when you do something great?**

• **Why would you do that?**

Say: **God is the greatest, and we don't need to try to show off how great we are. In fact, when we do our best at something, we can point to God's greatness instead of our own! He's the one who gives us all of our skills and abilities, so we can give him the credit for all the things we do well.**

Have kids take their foam fingers home and show their friends and families their chants or cheers, as a reminder that God is the greatest and we can point to his greatness instead of our own.

