



PLAY WELL.  
FINISH STRONG.

WEEK  
**FIVE**  
JANUARY 2021

SMALL GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

## TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Say What You Need to Say**  
Use Words Wisely  
Ephesians 4:29

### TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

Why do your words matter?

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Use your words wisely.

### MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

**Suppose you can be trusted with something very little. Then you can also be trusted with something very large.**  
Luke 16:10a, NIV

### MONTHLY LIFE APP

**Responsibility—Showing you can be trusted with what is expected of you**

### BASIC TRUTH

**I need to make the wise choice.**

### 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**  
MIN

#### **SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction**

Early Arriver  
Opening Activity

### LARGE GROUP

**35**  
MIN

#### **STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways** **WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God**

Welcome/Opener  
Worship ("Jesus I Will Trust You" from *This Love*, "Wonderful" from *Can't Stop Won't Stop*, and "Who You Say I Am" from *Who You Say I Am* single)  
Bible Story  
Prayer  
Bottom Line

### SMALL GROUP

**25**  
MIN

#### **GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect**

Application Activity: Take a Snapshot  
Bible Story Review: Bible Story Review and Discussion Questions  
Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You  
Prayer Activity: Make it Personal with Prayer

### HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Parent Cue Card (print or email)  
GodTime devotional for kids  
Studio252.tv  
Parent Cue App



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PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES

### MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group



Before kids arrive, pray for each of the kids on your list by name, thanking God for the positive things each one brings to your group, using positive words to show your gratitude to God for your kids. Ask God to guide you as you speak to your students so you are able to model positive words to your kids.

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## 1. JUST FOR FUN

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container

#### WHAT YOU DO:

- Invite kids to place their offerings in the offering container.
- Stand together in a wide circle.
- Explain that kids will take turns tossing an imaginary object to someone in the circle. Only the first kid tossing it knows what it is.
- That kid will name someone in the circle, then realistically "toss" the object to them.
- The kid who catches it tosses it back in the same way and says what they think it is.
- If the guess is wrong, the original kid tosses it to someone else who then takes a guess and tosses it back.
- Continue until the object is guessed correctly or until all kids have had a turn.
- Play more rounds, changing the secret object each time.
- Use objects from the list below or let kids come up with their own ideas.
  - a bowling ball
  - feather
  - baseball
  - hot potato
  - raw egg
  - water balloon
  - snake
  - mud
  - baton
  - large, heavy box



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PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES

### MADE TO MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



## 2. OPENING ACTIVITY

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Beans, spoons, hand sanitizer, containers

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Form two teams and stand on one side of the meeting area.
- Set out a container of beans near each team and two empty containers (one for each team) at the opposite end of the room.
- Give one kid on each team a bottle of hand sanitizer and each of the remaining kids a plastic spoon.
- Explain the “Toxic Beans” game:
  1. Don’t touch the beans—they’re toxic.
  2. Scoop up a spoonful of beans without touching them and carry them across the room on the spoon to your team’s container.
  3. If you drop a bean, you must stop and pick it up, but you can’t move on until your team “Medic” (the kid with the hand sanitizer) comes with a pump of hand sanitizer to wash off the toxins.
  4. The team with the most beans in their container after two minutes is the winner.
- Switch players after each round and choose a new “Medic” then play again as time allows.
- Variations: (Same rules apply if a bean is dropped—kids must wait for the Medic and the hand sanitizer before proceeding.)
  - Transport the beans by placing several on top of their hand, foot, or head
  - Walk backwards while carrying the beans on a spoon.

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#### WHAT YOU SAY:

“Beans aren’t usually toxic or poisonous, but if they were, you guys would be the ones to call on for transporting them. The world is a safer place because of you! **[Transition] In real life, beans are not all that dangerous, but today in Large Group we’re going to take a look at something that can totally destroy if used in the wrong way. You might be surprised to discover just how toxic it is.**”

Lead your group to the Large Group area.



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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

### MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group



## 1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Cardstock, markers

### WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a sheet of cardstock and a marker.
- Tell kids to think of (but not say) what the following sentence means to them: "Use your words wisely."
- Tell them to secretly write their thought in the form of a short phrase, example, or sentence on their cardstock by drawing a blank line for each letter in each word and placing a space between words. (Similar to a game of Hangman.)
  - If they need help remembering the exact wording of their phrase, they can write the answer on the back of the card, making sure no one sees that side of the card.
- When finished, come together in a circle.
- Choose one kid to show their card to the others.
- Invite kids to take turns naming a letter.
- If the letter they guess is in any of the words, the card's "owner" fills in the blanks wherever that letter appears.
- If the letter is not in any of the words, the kid to the left of the first guesser takes a turn.
- Kids who guess a correct letter can take another turn or try to guess what's written on the card.
- Continue until the phrase or sentence on the card is guessed correctly.
- Repeat until each kid has had a turn sharing their card.
- As time allows, ask kids to talk about what they wrote and how it relates to using words wisely.

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

### MADE TO IMAGINE

an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates concrete application through role-play and reenactment

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## 2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Bibles, "Spell It" Activity Page, rope or tape

#### WHAT YOU DO:

- Use rope or tape to form the outline of two open mouths (basically just a half circle with a line on the top) on the floor in separate parts of your meeting area.
- Form two teams then ask each group to sit around one of the mouths.
- Give each kid a pump of hand sanitizer to clean their hands.
- Distribute each team's set of "Spell It" letters as evenly as possible among each team. It's okay if one or two kids have an extra letter.
- Let kids know that the blank squares can be used as any letter.
- Provide Bibles then invite one of the kids on each team to read aloud Ephesians 4:29 to the others.
- Direct teams to discuss the meaning of the verse together then come up with one or two words they feel best sums up the meaning of Ephesians 4:29. Tell them to share their letters to spell out the words they chose by placing them inside their team's mouth.
- Let teams share the word summaries they came up with and why they chose those words.
- Challenge teams to a "Spell It" race.
- Explain that you will ask a question about today's verse.
- Then teams will race to spell out an answer inside their team's mouth.
- Answers can vary but must accurately relate to the question. Kids can look back at the verse if needed.
- Ask a REVIEW question first then use the DISCUSS question next to prompt deeper conversation.
  - REVIEW: What is something good that words can do?
    - DISCUSS: Why do you think encouraging or positive words are so powerful?
  - REVIEW: What is something bad that words are able to do?
    - DISCUSS: Why are hurtful or negative words so powerful?
  - REVIEW: How does Ephesians 4:29 describe the words that should not come out of our mouth?
    - DISCUSS: When do you find it most difficult to not say something you shouldn't? What can help you stop yourself before that happens? (Remind kids that evil/unwholesome words are not just hateful or curse words. Lead them to consider how complaining, gossiping, and disrespect can be just as wrong.)
  - REVIEW: Fill in the missing word: \_\_\_\_\_ is showing you can be trusted with what is expected of you. (responsibility)
    - DISCUSS: In what ways does controlling what you say show responsibility?
  - REVIEW: Finish this sentence. "Use your words \_\_\_\_\_." (wisely)
    - DISCUSS: What are some ways you can use your words wisely this week?



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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

### MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding



### 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

Ask:

- Why do words matter so much?
- Think about times at home, school, or other places when it's hardest for you to watch your words. What sets you off? What can you do to respond the right way?
- If you're going to show God's love to those around you, how do you need to speak differently to those around you (family, friends, teammates, teachers, coaches, etc.)?
- There's an old saying that goes like this: "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me." Do you agree or disagree with that statement? Why?

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### MADE TO CREATE

an activity that explores ideas through the process of drawing, building, designing, and problem-solving



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## 4. VERSE TO TAKE WITH YOU

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles, sandpaper, cotton balls

#### WHAT YOU DO:

- Give kids a piece of sandpaper, several cotton balls, and a Bible (or let them use a Bible app).
- Ask:
  - How would you describe the way sandpaper feels?
  - How would you describe the way cotton balls feel?
  - Name some words that remind you of sandpaper. (*hurtful, mean, angry, disrespectful, lies, griping, harsh, put downs, gossip*)
  - Name some words that remind you of cotton balls. (*quiet, calm, kind, thoughtful, encouraging, helpful, loving, gentle, affirming, instructive*)
- Assign each kid a verse from the list below. It's okay if some kids have the same verse.
  - Proverbs 12:18
  - Proverbs 15:1
  - Proverbs 21:23
  - Proverbs 29:20
  - Psalm 19:14
- Ask kids to look up and read their verse then attach the cotton to the sandpaper to create an image that illustrates the verse.
  - They can tear apart the cotton into smaller pieces to create an image, word, or scene. The cotton should adhere to the sandpaper due to friction.
- After a few minutes, invite kids to take turns reading the verse they were assigned, then sharing what they created and how it illustrates the verse.
- Ask:
  - Which of the verses that were shared will help you most this week as you ask God's help to use your words wisely? In what ways will it help you?
  - What would you say is the most important thing to remember from all that we learned today about the way we use our words?
- Encourage kids to take the sandpaper and cotton with them as a reminder to watch what they say this week.



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25 MINUTES

### MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space  
for personal processing  
and application



## 5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER [PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Checkers, checkerboard

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Remind kids that their words have the power to help or hurt. Under God’s control, the things they say can make someone’s day better. Through their words, others can come to know and follow Jesus or simply be encouraged and feel better about whatever is going on.
- Give each kid a checker piece.
- Tell kids to place their checker on the corner of the checkerboard that best fits the way they would finish the following sentence – “This week I need God’s help to . . .”
  - use words that build others up instead of tearing them down (point to a corner)
  - talk less and listen more (point to a corner)
  - tell others about Jesus (point to a corner)
  - apologize for something I said (point to a corner)
- Allow kids a few minutes to share any details they’d like about their choices.
- Encourage them to pray aloud or silently for themselves and others in the group.
- Close with prayer

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### BASIC TRUTH

**I need to make the wise choice.**

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

“Dear God, we all know the difference between wise and unwise words. We know what it feels like to be hurt by words as well as to be encouraged. Since the things we say can be powerful, we ask that you give us the courage and wisdom to watch what we say especially when we are upset, angry, or feel like getting even. Please give us the help we need to live, speak, and act in ways that show others we can be trusted with what is expected of us. Amen.”





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## GETTING READY

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET READY FOR THIS WEEK

### SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION (15 MINUTES)

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

**(Choose one or both of these activities.)**

#### 1. JUST FOR FUN

*Made to Play:* an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Offering container

#### 2. OPENING ACTIVITY

*Made to Move:* an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Large bags of dried beans; two for each small group
- Plastic spoon; one for each kid
- Pump bottles of hand sanitizer; two for each small group
- Bowls or containers large enough to hold one bag of beans; four for each small group
  - Pour each bag of beans in a bowl and leave the other two bowls empty

### GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT (25 MINUTES)

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.)**

#### 1. TAKE A SNAPSHOT

**[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]**

*Made to Play:* an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Cardstock; one for each kid
- Markers

#### 2. BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

**[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]**

*Made to Imagine:* an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates concrete application through role-play and reenactment

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Bibles
- Print the "Spell It" Activity Page on different colored cardstock; two copies for each small group
  - Cut the letter tiles apart and place in a sealable bag or envelope for each team.

#### 3. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]**

*Made to Connect:* an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- No supplies needed

#### 4. VERSE TO TAKE WITH YOU

**[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]**

*Made to Create:* an activity that explores ideas through the process of drawing, building, designing, and problem-solving

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Bibles
- 9"x11" sheets of course sandpaper; one for each kid
  - If budget allows, give each kid his or her own sheet or to minimize expenses, cut each sheet into 4 squares.
- Cotton balls; 5-10 for each kid

#### 5. MAKE IT PERSONAL WITH PRAYER

**[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]**

*Made to Reflect:* an activity that creates space for personal processing and application

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Checkerboard; one for each Small Group
- Checker; one for each kid

#### HOME: PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

- Print on cardstock or email this week's GodTime devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Studio252.tv** and the **Parent Cue app**.