



GETTING READY

1. Opener/Closer

What You Need:

- Host
- Two male Small Group Leaders
- Two female Small Group Leaders
- Two plungers (new/unused)
- Two rolls of toilet paper (new/unused)

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Upbeat music to use as kids enter and exit the room
- Upbeat music to play during the game

Large Group Visuals:

- Theme Slide
- Initiative Slide
- Blank Bottom Line Slide
- Bottom Line Slide

What You Do:

- Put the two toilet paper rolls on the ends of the two plungers.

2. Bible Story

What You Need:

- Storyteller
- Six gray boxes from Week One
- Three action figures representing bad guys (must be able to stand on their own)
- One action figure representing a good guy (must be able to stand on its own)
- Random construction toys
- Lots of random dolls, action figures, and stuffed animals

Large Group Visuals:

- Blank Bottom Line Slide
- Bottom Line Slide

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Villain theme (suggestion: “Despicable Me” instrumental by Ameritz Countdown Karaoke)
- Superhero theme (suggestion: “Superman Theme” by John Williams)

What You Do:

- Place five of the six boxes center stage. They should look like a partially constructed wall. One of the boxes can be loose, next to the wall.
- *NOTE: Be sure to keep these boxes, because you’ll use them again next week.*
- Place the dolls, action figures, and stuffed animals behind the wall so you can access them easily during the story.

3. Worship

What You Need:

- Alive
- Never Gonna Stop Singing

He Came in Like a Wrecking Ball

Bible Story: He Came in Like a Wrecking Ball (Nehemiah and Sanballat) • *Nehemiah 2:19-20; 4; 6*

Bottom Line: Stay focused on what needs to be done.

Memory Verse: “Work at everything you do with all your heart. Work as if you were working for the Lord.” *Colossians 3:23a, NIV*

Life App: Initiative—Seeing what needs to be done and doing it

Basic Truth: I need to make the wise choice.

Story: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 35 minutes)

Engage kids’ hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

SFX: *Play high-energy music as kids enter.*

CG: *Theme Slide*

Host is on stage, welcoming the kids as they enter.

Opener

HOST: “What’s up, everybody? I’m [Host’s name] and I’m so glad you’re here at [your environment’s name]—the coolest place on Earth! It’s the coolest place on Earth because all of YOU are here!

“All month long we’ve been talking about initiative. If you’ve never heard that word, or if you’ve heard it and you don’t know what it means, let me help you out.

CG: *Initiative Slide*

“Initiative is seeing what needs to be done and doing it.

“Any time you see a job that needs to be done and you do it without being asked—that’s initiative. Any time you help someone in need without being asked—that’s initiative. Any time you do anything good, helpful, or friendly without being asked . . . you guessed it—that’s initiative!

SFX: *Upbeat game music*

“You know what that music means? It’s time for our ‘dirty job’ game of the week! Some jobs are so yucky that you need to have a TON of initiative to do them. That’s why we say, ‘It’s a dirty job, but somebody’s got to do it.’

“Let me get four Small Group Leaders up here to play our game: ‘Plumb Focused’!

Bring two female and two male Leaders up on stage. Put the two female Leaders and the two male Leaders together on opposite sides of the stage.

“The ladies are challenging the guys today to see who would be better plumbers. Plumbers help keep our toilets working. Talk about a dirty job! One Leader from each team will hold the plunger with the toilet paper on it. (*Demonstrate.*) The other Leader will grab the end of the toilet paper. (*Demonstrate.*) The one holding the plunger will walk around and around the other Leader, wrapping them like a toilet paper mummy. (*Start to demonstrate.*)

“The first group to finish their toilet paper roll wins. But there’s a catch! If your toilet paper roll breaks, you have to put your forehead on the tip of the plunger and spin around 10 times before starting again. Let’s see how ‘plumb focused’ you can be after THAT!

(*To audience*) “Audience, cheer for your team, okay? Ladies, cheer for the ladies. Guys, make some noise for the fellas. (*To contestants*) One, two, three, go!

SFX: Bring up music

Cheer on both teams as they go. When the first group finishes, announce the winner.

(*To audience*) “Let’s hear it for the winning plumbers today! (*To contestants*) All of you are awesome. You can head back to your seats.

Dismiss all four contestants to their seats.

“But don’t sit down, because it’s time to sing some fun songs to our amazing God. Let’s all stand up and sing together!”

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

Announcements

Use this as an example of what to say. Make it your own and help the kids feel welcomed. Then take a moment to share any/all announcements.

HOST: “I’m so excited to be here with all of you today and get a little crazy! If it’s your first time here, I want to welcome you and I would love to have a chance to meet you, get a high five and show you around. Here at Mission, we believe that this is a place for you and you belong here no matter who you are or what you believe. Mission is for YOU!

I have just a few announcements for you all today...

Share any/all announcements.

Now let’s all stand up, get close, give someone a high five and let’s sing and worship together!

Host exits and Worship Leader enters.

Worship

WORSHIP LEADER: “Thank you, *[Name of Host]*. Let’s get up and get loud as we sing and dance for who God is and what he’s done for us!

Alive

WORSHIP LEADER: “That was amazing! (*Take a moment to say something about the next song*). So let’s give everything we have and worship God together!

Never Gonna Stop Singing

Storyteller enters as Worship Leaders exit.

CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide

SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “Hey, everyone! I’m so excited that we get to continue the story of Nehemiah today. (*Hold up Bible.*)

“Let’s quickly go over what’s happened so far. Nehemiah was living in a place called Susa when he heard that his family’s hometown, Jerusalem, was in bad shape. The walls of Jerusalem were broken down and the city gates had been burned by fire. So Nehemiah traveled from his home to Jerusalem. He gathered the people to start rebuilding.

“Everything was going great. But then the surrounding cities started hearing about the wall, and they weren’t so happy. See, the wall would make Jerusalem safe again. It would make them a powerful city. It would make them hard to conquer.

Walk over to the partially constructed wall of boxes and stand behind it.

“We already know that Nehemiah had enough initiative to START rebuilding the wall. But would he have enough initiative to keep going even when things got tough? Let’s find out!”

SANBALLAT AND TOBIAH TAUNT NEHEMIAH

STORYTELLER: “Like I said, some of the people in nearby cities started hearing about what Nehemiah was up to. Two of those guys were named . . .

Take out two of the “bad guy” action figures and place them on the wall.

“. . . Sanballat and Tobiah.

SFX: Villain theme

“They approached Nehemiah and they laughed at him. They made fun of him. They asked: *What do you think you’re doing?* (*Nehemiah 2:19, NIRV*)

“Enter . . . our hero, . . .

SFX: Superhero theme

“Nehemiah.

Place the “good guy” action figure on the wall.

“He wasn’t worried about these two troublemakers. Listen to what he told them.

Open the Bible to Nehemiah 2:20 and read.

“The God of heaven will give us success. We serve Him. You don’t have any share in Jerusalem. You don’t have any claim to it. You don’t have any right to worship here, (NIRV).

“Talk about courage! Nehemiah wasn’t afraid of Sanballat and Tobiah.

SFX: Villain theme

“He wasn’t afraid, because he knew God was with him!

SFX: Superhero theme

Knock over the two “bad guy” action figures.

“So Nehemiah ignored Sanballat and Tobiah. He stayed focused on the important work he was doing. He divided up the work between families in the city so they could all rebuild the wall together.”

SANBALLAT AND TOBIAH TELL THEIR FRIENDS

“But Sanballat and Tobiah became very angry and upset.

SFX: Villain theme

Stand the two “bad guy” action figures on the floor in front of the wall. Put a few other dolls, action figures, and stuffed animals with them.

“Sanballat went to his friends and began talking badly about Nehemiah. Again, they made fun of Nehemiah and the wall. Tobiah was on Sanballat’s side. He joined in making fun of the wall. He said: *Suppose a fox climbs on top of it. Even that will break it down! (Nehemiah 4:3, NIRV).*

(To the “Tobiah” action figure.) “Really, Tobiah? A fox?”

(To audience) “Anyway—back to our hero.

Pick up the “good guy” action figure.

SFX: Superhero theme

"When Nehemiah heard that Sanballat and Tobiah were STILL making fun of them and spreading bad words about him and the wall, he decided to pray.

"He and the people continued to build.

Have the Nehemiah action figure "pick up" the loose box and put it into place in the wall.

"They worked and worked and worked until the wall was half as high as they wanted it to be.

Point to the group of "bad guys" on the floor.

"Sanballat and Tobiah heard about their progress. They began spreading the news to nearby towns. They were angry because they didn't want Jerusalem to be protected. They didn't want Jerusalem to have any power. So they made evil plans to come and fight Jerusalem.

SFX: Villain theme

"But Nehemiah prayed. And he decided it was time to defend the wall they were building.

Place random dolls, action figures, and stuffed animals on the wall. Spread them out at even intervals.

"Half of the workers built the wall, and half of the workers guarded it. They worked, and they worked. Despite the threats—despite the danger—the wall was almost finished. (*Point to the dolls, action figures, and stuffed animals on the wall.*) These heroes had almost done it!"

SFX: Superhero theme

SANBALLAT SUMMONS NEHEMIAH

STORYTELLER: "Jerusalem's enemies were getting more and more angry and more and more nervous that Nehemiah might actually succeed in getting the wall built. So they decided to send him a message.

Use one of the random stuffed animals on the floor as Sanballat's messenger, moving from "Sanballat" to "Nehemiah" during this next section.

Open the Bible to Nehemiah 6:2 and read.

"They said: *Come, let's talk with one another. Let's meet in one of the villages on the plain of Ono (NirV).*

"But Nehemiah knew they were planning to harm him. So he sent messengers back to THEM with his answer.

Use one of the random stuffed animals on the wall as Nehemiah's, moving from "Nehemiah" to "Sanballat" during this next section.

Open the Bible to Nehemiah 6:2 and read.

"Listen to what he said: I'm working on a huge project. So I can't get away. Why should the work stop while I leave it? Why should I go down and talk with you? (NirV)

"They sent him the same message four times. Every time, he gave them the same answer: I'm working on a huge project. So I can't get away. Why should the work stop while I leave it? Why should I go down and talk with you?"

"Then Sanballat sent his messenger a FIFTH time—with the same message as before AND a letter with some made-up lies about Nehemiah.

SFX: Villain theme

"Nehemiah was like, 'You're just making this up to try to scare us.' He prayed and asked God to make him stronger. Nehemiah and his crew worked day and night, and 52 days after they started, despite every effort by the evil villains, the wall of Jerusalem was whole again!

SFX: Superhero theme

"How about a big hand for our actors?"

Make the dolls, action figures, and stuffed animals do some quick bows. Pick up the "Nehemiah" action figure and carry him to the front of the stage.

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: *(Holding up the "Nehemiah" action figure)* "Nehemiah stayed focused on the work that needed to be done. He didn't let other people's threats distract him. He believed in God, and he believed in what he was doing. After more than 100 years, the walls were finally complete, and Jerusalem and the Israelites were finally protected from their enemies.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

*"You and I can learn a lot from Nehemiah. We can **[Bottom Line] stay focused on what needs to be done.** Can you say that with me?"*

STORYTELLER and KIDS: ***[Bottom Line] "Stay focused on what needs to be done."***

STORYTELLER: "That's what Nehemiah chose to do. We can choose to do that, too. Let's pray and ask God to help us."

CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide

Pray

STORYTELLER: “God, it’s amazing to see how Nehemiah was so focused on You! He refused to be distracted because he had his mind set on the work You had given him to do. Because of that, he protected an entire city of people. Please help us to live like he did. Help us to see what needs to be done and then do something about it. Help us stay focused on what You want us to do. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus’ name, amen.”

Host enters as Storyteller exits.

Closer

HOST: “There are so many ways we can get distracted, right? Tablets, phones, computers, TV, hanging out with friends, sports, activities—there’s nothing wrong with those things. But they can become not-so-good things in our lives if they distract us from doing what needs to be done.

“Remember, Nehemiah prayed and asked God for help when other people were trying to distract him. You can pray and ask God to help you, too. You can ask Him to keep you from getting distracted. You can also ask a friend or your parent to help you focus on what you need to do. **[Basic Truth] Make the wise choice**, like Nehemiah did.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] “Stay focused on what needs to be done.

“If you’re hanging out in your room and you notice that the floor is super messy, but you can ALSO hear that your big sister is watching a TV show in the living room, you have a choice to make. Are you going to go out there and watch the show and leave your room a big mess? Or will you take the time to focus on your room **FIRST**, and pick up all the laundry and stuffed animals off the floor? If you **[Bottom Line] stay focused on what needs to be done**, you can finish the stuff that **HAS** to be done a lot faster. Then, when the work’s all done, you can relax and have fun!

“I know this can be tough for us to do sometimes. But when we choose to say no to the distractions, we can focus on the things that are **BEST** for us—like homework, chores, reading our Bibles, and listening to our friends and family.

“You’ll get to talk about this some more back in Small Group. And you know what? It’s time to head there right now. I’ll see you later!”

Dismiss kids to their small groups.

SFX: Play high-energy music as the kids exit.

CG: Theme Slide

Optional CG (Media Package): Theme Loop Video