



GETTING READY

1. Welcome/Opener

What You Need:

- Host
- One kid volunteer from each Small Group
- One pool noodle for each volunteer
- One damp peanut sponge for each volunteer
- One protective eyewear for each volunteer

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

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

Large Group Visuals:

- Power Up Theme Slide
- Vintage Video Game Images: (See What You Do Below)
 - Mappy Video Game Screen Shot
 - Rampage Video Game Screen Shot
 - Q*Bert Video Game Screen Shot
 - Joust Video Game Screen Shot
- Noodle Joust Title Slide

Optional Videos (available for purchase through the 252 Media Package):

- Theme Loop Video
- Countdown Video
- Theme Video

What You Do:

- Locate a screen shot of the classic video games listed above from a search engine of your choice. Prepare the slides and have them ready to use.
- Place all the pool noodles and peanut sponges aside on the stage. Sponges should be lightly damp (not sopping wet), so they will sit better on volunteers.

2. Communicator Script

What You Need:

- Communicator
- Bible

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Upbeat music to use as kids exit the room

Large Group Visuals:

- Key Question Slide
- 8-Bit Bible Story Images

What You Do:

- Download the slides and have them ready to use. If you do not have CG capabilities, you have Orange's permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.

3. Worship

What You Need:

- Every Beat
- Through It All

Walking on Sunshine

Bible Story: Walking on Sunshine (Apostles are Treated Badly) • Acts 5:17-42

Bottom Line: Choose joy no matter what's going on.

Key Question: How can you choose joy even when you're not happy?

Memory Verse: *The fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind and good. It is being faithful and gentle and having control of oneself.* Galatians 5:22-23a, Nlrv **Life App:** Life App—What God is doing in you to change the world around you

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

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

Optional CG (Media Package): Theme Loop Video

Optional CG (Media Package): Countdown Video

Optional CG (Media Package): Theme Video

Host enters.

Welcome

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host discusses recent/upcoming events: Strawberry Rhubarb Pie Day, National Iced Tea Day, National Red Rose Day, Wimbledon Tennis Tournament, Stanley Cup Finals, NBA Finals, Father's Day, movie opening (Secret Life of Pets 2, Men in Black: International, Toy Story 4), a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening. The stage should be prepared for the game as kids walk into the large group room.

Opener

HOST: "Yo, Yo everybody! I've been thinking. Most would say I'm a little weird. I like to collect belly button lint, eat anchovy and peanut butter sandwiches, and am enthusiastically obnoxious about retro video games. One of my favorite things about a lot of retro games is how unabashedly WEIRD they are, which makes us a perfect pair. For example, the classic game Mappy has you playing a mouse policeman running around a house to catch car burglars . . ."

CG: Visual image of Mappy

" . . . Rampage has you take control of giant, anthropomorphic animals whose sole purpose is punching buildings to smithereens . . ."

CG: Visual image of Rampage

"And Q*Bert is . . . well . . . I'm not even sure . . ."

CG: Visual image of Q*Bert

“But by far my favorite weird retro game is JOUST.”

CG: Visual image of Joust

“Joust, conceptually, is simple: you play a knight riding on an ostrich, trying to knock your rival off of their stork while simultaneously avoiding incoming vultures. You know, totally normal stuff! In honor of this strange piece of gaming history, I’d like to bring Joust to life here on the *[Name of Environment]* stage in the form of a game call NOODLE JOUST.”

CG: Noodle Joust Title Slide

“I need ONE volunteer from each Small Group to come up to the stage. To make this game work, we will also need everyone else in this room to move to a wall for more room to play.”

Host brings one volunteer from each group to the stage and hands each volunteer a damp sponge and pool noodle. In addition, each volunteer should be given some protective eyewear. For kicks, give each volunteer a bird beak to wear for added flair. Host directs the rest of the room to move to the walls.

“All of our volunteers on the stage are going to be our jousters for today. Or maybe I should be more specific—all of you are going to be ostriches, and these slightly wet sponges are going to be the knights! Your job is to knock your opponent’s sponge off of his head using this pool noodle! You’ll start on opposite ends of the room and run past each other to the right. Each time you pass you’ll have an opportunity to take a swipe at your rival’s sponge! If your sponge falls off either by being knocked off by a noodle or falling off on its own, you are ELIMINATED and the other player advances to the next round! We will have two new volunteers until everyone has gone once. This will continue until we have a single NOODLE JOUST winner. Everyone understand the rules? Okay then . . . game on!”

SFX: High-energy game music

Host starts by giving everyone a chance to compete. Everyone who wins will advance to the next round. Losers go back to their seats. The second round will include only the winners.

“And that’s the game! Congratulations to all of our contestants! And a big round of applause to our NOODLE JOUST winner! That was some amazing jousting right there!”

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 and get a high-five! Your group leaders are here almost every week... they’re pretty amazing. 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. At the core of who we are as a church, we believe that **JESUS CHANGES EVERYTHING FOR EVERYONE!**

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

Share any/all announcements.

"One of the things we do each week to help us focus on God is to sing... some of you will know the words to the songs, so we want you to shout and sing them out really loud. If you don't know the words... they'll be on the screen for you. Feel free to clap, jump, sing and shout along with us! The best part about this is the message of the song and how good God is! Let's all stand up and sing together!"

Worship Leaders enter. Host exits.

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!

Every Beat

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!"

Through It All

WORSHIP LEADER: *PRAY*

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT

Introduction

COMMUNICATOR: "HAPPY day to all you! I am so HAPPY you are here. I hope all of you are having a HAPPY summer day today! I'm HAPPY to be standing in front of all these smiling, HAPPY faces!"

Communicator pauses to ponder.

"Hmm. 'Happy' is an interesting word. We use it all the time, right? We say 'Happy Birthday' to celebrate the day someone is born. We say 'Flaming Hot Chips make me happy' to let others know about the spicy awesomeness of our favorite snack. We say 'a good high-five makes me happy.' Come to think of it, that is a great idea. Everyone give your neighbor the best high-five you can muster."

Communicator allows a brief high-five break.

“See?! Don’t you feel happy? Raise your hand and answer this question for me: What makes YOU happy?
(Pause for response)”

Communicator calls on several kids. As the kids voice what makes them happy, Communicator plays devil’s advocate with worst-case scenarios. Obviously, keep the worst-case scenarios light and funny. Below are some examples of how to respond to possible responses.

(To kid) “Pepperoni pizza makes you happy? I bet pizza makes lots of people happy. But what if they get the pizza order wrong? If the pizza had soggy onions, anchovies, AND mushrooms, which, I might add, is a fungus—AND right smack dab in the middle there’s a long, blonde hair! If you got that instead of pepperoni, would you still be happy? (To everyone) What makes you happy?”

Communicator calls on another kid to respond.

(To kid) “Going to the beach makes you happy? Hey, you and me both! But what if you arrive at the beach only to find that the sand is all black and covered with tar, the water is full of jellyfish, and the skies are gray and cloudy and threatening rain? Would you still be happy at the beach? (To everyone) How about another one—what makes you happy?”

Communicator calls on another kid to respond.

(To kid) “Puppies make you happy? Well, of course! Puppies are the cutest and make EVERYBODY happy! But what if you snuggled up into bed with your puppy and just as you were drifting to sleep, the puppy erupted in a slurry of explosive vomit? Would you still be happy with a puppy?”

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: “Okay, while it is easy for everyone in this room to feel happy when things are going right, it proves to be a little more difficult to STAY happy when life goes wrong. Nobody is happy to have fungus on his or her pizza, rainy days at the beach, or puppies with explosive vomit. Think for a moment about how you feel when bad things happen. We may be feeling all sorts of emotions, but happiness certainly isn’t one of them. Why is this the case?”

“It’s simple. Our happiness is conditional. That’s just a big way of saying that the only way to feel happy is when things go exactly the way we want them to go. The pizza is fresh and covered with pepperoni. The weather and waves are perfect at the beach. The puppy only goes potty outside. Otherwise, our attitudes turn south.”

“This is rather sad news, isn’t it? If I can be honest with everyone, you will experience a lot of bad days over your lifetime. Friends will be mean. Family will disappoint. Pets will run away. This means there will be a number of times we will feel unhappy. But what if we need to find something other than happiness? What if we need to find a Fruit of the Spirit? Last week, we started looking at what Paul calls the Fruit of the Spirit. When we put our trust in Jesus, the Holy Spirit lives in us and produces Fruit like love, patience, and what we need to find today—joy.”

“But I think we need some help figuring this out because how is joy different than happiness? They sure sound like they’re super similar to each other. Well, how about we head to the place we find a lot of answers to tough questions: The Bible, where we can discover how Jesus’ disciples—also known as the Apostles—responded to some struggles they were facing. And believe me, they faced situations way worse than soggy pizza.”

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: “After Jesus rose from the dead, He gave his followers specific instructions. They were to go to all nations and make disciples, or more followers of Jesus, and baptize them. And that’s exactly what they started to do. Wherever they went, they told everyone about Jesus. They started in Jerusalem.”

“Along with teaching and preaching about Jesus, The Apostles also earned a reputation for helping people in need. God worked through them to help those who were sick, those who were hungry, and those who needed shelter. Through God’s power, the men even performed miracles. And you know what? More and more people began to believe in Jesus.”

“Although the people they helped were overjoyed, the religious leaders couldn’t see the joy . . . at all. They taught people to follow God by obeying lots of rules—but the Apostles were teaching a new way all about trusting Jesus. And as a result, the religious leaders wanted them stopped. So what did the religious leaders do to stop them? They arrested both Peter and John.”

CG: Religious Leaders “Shhh”ing

“However, this didn’t last long. With a stern warning to never speak of Jesus’ again, the leaders released Peter and John. But the apostles knew that their marching orders came directly from Jesus. On top of that, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help them get the job done. So the apostles refused to stay silent.”

“More people heard about Jesus. More people were healed. Large crowds coming from towns around Jerusalem would gather to watch and listen. The religious leaders were mad these apostles did not heed their first warning. And at the same time, the leaders completely jealous of the attention and respect the apostles were receiving. So they tossed them in jail and called it a day.”

CG: Apostles in jail

“Now, trust me when I say the public jail would have been absolutely horrible. Imagine the apostles trying to get comfortable in the corners of the damp, chilly prison. But then something crazy happened. Check this out. A doctor and historian by the name of Luke wrote about what happened in the book of Acts. Check out what he says (*Read directly from Acts 5:19-20 NIV*) ‘*But during the night an angel of the Lord came. He opened the doors of the jail and brought the apostles out. “Go! Stand in the temple courtyard,” the angel said. “Tell the people all about this new life.”*’”

CG: Angel opening the jail cell

“An angel opened the doors and led the men out! But even after spending a brief stint in jail, the men were not tempted to stay silent because God’s power was working through them. At daybreak, the apostles went to the temple when it would have been bustling with people. Folks would be there to pray and worship. As people arrived, the apostles greeted them by teaching them all about Jesus with great joy in their voices!”

CG: Sanhedrin gathering

“Meanwhile, the high priest and his associates called together the full assembly of leaders of 70 men called the Sanhedrin. They gathered for the trial of the apostles to decide their fate. Unaware the apostles were no longer held captive, they sent for the men. However, the officers could not find them anywhere in the jail. The jail was securely locked, the guards standing at the door . . . but no apostles.”

CG: High Priest confused and angry

“No doubt the high priest would have been upset. Then, someone came to him with news explaining the apostles were back at it, teaching in the temple! The men were doing the same thing that landed them in jail in the first place. The captain and his officers retrieved the apostles and brought before the Sanhedrin for questioning.”

“The high priest wanted to know why the men deliberately disobeyed their strict orders. This is when Peter and the others spoke up with bold confidence. Listen to what they said. *(Read directly from Acts 5:29-32 NIV)* “We must obey God instead of people! You had Jesus killed by nailing him to a cross. But the God of our people raised Jesus from the dead. Now Jesus is Prince and Savior. God has proved this by giving Jesus a place of honor with him. He did it to turn Israel away from their sins and forgive them. We are telling people about these things. And so is the Holy Spirit. God has given the Spirit to those who obey him.””

CG: Gamaliel addressing the council

“Obviously, this made the leaders even more angry. So angry, in fact, they wanted to put the apostles to death! However, a Pharisee named Gamaliel removed the apostles from the room and reminded the council of the past. They’d seen many leaders gather up rowdy crowds, but when they die, their followers die. Gamaliel continued by pointing out IF the plans and actions of the apostles were only coming from people, they would fail. But if the plans and actions of the apostles were from God, they would be unstoppable.”

“Gamaliel’s speech persuaded the high priest to release the men after a whipping and another stern warning to not speak of Jesus again.”

CG: The apostles rejoicing and dancing

“Although the apostles paid a high price for speaking about Jesus, they left the Sanhedrin more than happy. Luke records it this way: *(Read directly from Acts 5:41 NIV)* ‘The apostles were full of joy as they left the Sanhedrin. [emphasis ours]’ And each day they returned to the temple courtyard to teach about Jesus.”

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: “The apostles had a rough experience with some of the most powerful people in the city. They were arrested, locked in jail, publicly shamed, and even beaten. But here is something to think about . . . were the men happy? Based on their circumstances . . . probably not. But they had something greater than happiness. They had something not dictated by whether or not life was going well for them. Jesus’ friends had JOY! Even though their circumstances were hard and difficult, they still managed to walk away from this whole experience rejoicing!”

“But like we said, JOY is a Fruit of the Spirit. It’s something that the Holy Spirit gives you when you follow Jesus. Joy is seeing God’s goodness in everything rather than focusing on all of the bad. When we understand that Jesus died on a cross for us and three days later came back to life, we can find JOY in all situations. This is especially awesome. This means we find JOY even when we are not happy. We can find joy when your pizza order is messed up, it’s a rainy day at the beach, or the puppy has an accident on your bed.”

“Maybe you’ll find joy when you read a particular book of the Bible or listening to a particular artist sing about God’s goodness. Maybe you find joy through listening to a pastor or having a conversation with your Small Group Leader. Whatever helps you find joy, it’s important to remember that JOY is a gift from God. It’s something God’s doing in us to change the world around us.”

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: “After hearing about the apostles’ reaction to a tough situation, think about this question as you head to Small Group today.”

CG: Key Question Slide

“How can you choose joy even when you’re not happy?” Because each of us is different, how we find joy might look different from other people we know. It’s good to think about the ways we can trust God to help us find joy, even when life isn’t going according to what we had in mind. But if you’re struggling for ways to find joy, don’t worry—your Small Group Leader can help! Before you head to groups, let’s all pray together. Let’s thank God for being the source of our joy and ask Him for help finding joy, even when it’s hard. Let’s pray.”

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard then dismisses them to small group.

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

Optional Video (Media Package): Theme Loop