



WEEK FOUR – JULY 2019 – PRETEEN

Bible Story: *More than Words • James 3:3–10*

Key Question: *What can happen when you lose control?*

Memory Verse: *“God began a good work in you. And I am sure that he will carry it on until it is completed. That will be on the day Christ Jesus returns. Philippians 1:6, NIV*

Life App: *What God is doing in you to change the world around you*

Basic Truth: *I need to make the wise choice.*

Summary: In James 3:3–10, we’re reminded that our words have power. James uses practical images like a horse bit, a ship’s rudder, and a flame to show us just how powerful they are. We can use words to encourage and help others, or we can use our words to hurt them.

PRE-SERVICE ACTIVITY

1. Get Your Head in the Game

Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Gather kids in a circle.
- Select a volunteer and ask him to sing a song to the group while holding his lips shut.
- Challenge the group to guess what song he is singing. The first kid to guess gets to be the next volunteer.
- If needed, select a song from the list below to give to kids.
- Potential songs:
 - “Row, Row, Row, Your Boat”
 - “Happy Birthday”
 - “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”
 - “This Little Light of Mine”
 - “Jesus Love Me”
 - “The Wheels on the Bus”

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

LARGE GROUP

OVERVIEW:

Key Question: *What can happen when you lose control? Our actions have consequences, especially when we aren't able to get a handle on our emotions. We'll ask this question to help preteens think through how they respond when things don't go the way they expect. We pray they'll discover something about themselves and create a plan for how to rely on God's power to help them control their words and actions.*

SMALL GROUP

1. Take a Snapshot

[Application Activity]

Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play

What You Need: “Speech Bubble Cards” Activity Page, “Say What? Cards” Activity Page, pencils or markers

What You Do:

- Ask: When are times we might lose control of our words? If necessary, prompt with:
 - What about bragging? Do you think bragging is an example of losing control of your words? Why or why not?
 - What about lying?
 - How about when you are mad at someone or something?
 - What about when someone says something that hurts your feelings?
 - Or when you are embarrassed?
- Read a scenario from the “Say What? Cards”
 - For each scenario read, ask: What are some things you might say if you didn’t have self-control?
 - Encourage kids to write their examples on the “Speech Bubble Cards.”
 - *Note: You will revisit the scenarios on the “Say What? Cards” in the “Verses to Take With You” Activity.*
- Discuss the “Speech Bubble Cards” and the effect of the words.
 - How might you feel if you were talking like this?
 - How might you feel if someone spoke to you like this?
 - Do you have to be yelling and mad to lose control of the words you choose?
 - What can happen when we lose control of our words?

2. Discussion Questions

[Application Activity]

Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- Ask:
 - When it is hard to have self-control?
 - How can we recognize we are about to lose control? What are some signs you might be close to losing your cool?
 - What are some other things we might need to have control over, besides just our words?
 - Just because something is true does it need to be said? Can you think of an example for when you might hold your tongue and not say something that was true?
 - What can we do when we feel like we might lose control?

3. Verses to Take With You

[Memory Verse Activity]

Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play

What You Need: Bible, Poppers, “Say What? Cards” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Read James 1:19.
- Give each kid a “popper.”
- Allow kids time to press their “poppers” onto flat surfaces, ideally a table, and wait for them to “pop” up.
- Explain a “popper” is a great gadget to demonstrate self-control. Ask: Does anyone want to guess why? (Just like we need to wait for the “popper” to “pop” we should wait, or be slow, to speak or get angry.)
- Explain kids are going to practice responding with self-control to a situation.
- Read a scenario from the “Say What? Cards.”
 - When you finish reading, tell kids to press their poppers on the table.
 - Instruct kids to try to be the first to give an idea for how to react with self-control in that scenario, but they have to wait to speak until their popper pops up.
 - If a kid starts sharing his idea before his popper pops, he’s out for that round!

4. Make It Personal with Prayer

[Prayer Activity]

Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: Poppers from the Take a Verse with You Activity

What You Do:

- Tell kids you are going to do a “popper” prayer together.
- Say a prayer starter sentence. Examples are listed below:
 - God, You are . . .
 - Thank You, God, for . . .
 - Help me, God, to . . .
- Instruct one of the kids, after you say the prayer starter sentence, to press her popper to the table.
 - When the “popper” pops up, everyone finishes the sentence at the same time.
 - Encourage kids to think about what they are going to say while waiting for the “popper” to spring up.
- Close the prayer time for the group.

What You Say:

“God, thank You for making a way for us to have a relationship with You, and thank You for giving us the power of Your Spirit when we accept that gift. Help us to have better relationships with the people You put in our lives by having the power to control our words. Even more, thank You for helping us choose words that bring life and encourage others, instead of words that tear down and words that we’ll regret.”