



GETTING READY

1. Welcome/Opener

What You Need:

- Host
- Five five-gallon buckets (or smaller)
- Bucket/box of tennis balls/sports balls
- Tape

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Upbeat music to use as kids enter the room

Large Group Visuals (downloadable from the website):

- Theme Slide

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

- Theme Loop Video
- Countdown Video
- Theme Video

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.
- Download music from a resource such as iTunes® and have it ready to play.
- Set a tape line starting point and then space out the five buckets in a straight row beyond the tape. The further the bucket, the more points. Determine ahead of time the number of tennis balls/sports balls that will be used so everyone gets the same number of shots.
- Create a VIP area for the small group that wins the Opener game. Stock it with water bottles, snacks, and whatever else you think would be fun for your kids. The area can be roped off, have a leader

standing outside of it as a bouncer, etc. You'll use this VIP every week as a special prize for the small group that wins the game.

2. Communicator Script

What You Need:

- Communicator
- Bible
- Scroll – God's Word
- Scroll – Darius' Word (two-sided)
- Music stand
- Binder clips
- Bible Story Images 1-3 (printable)

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Upbeat music to use as kids exit the room

Large Group Visuals:

- One Big Story Intro (Video)
- Picture of Van Gogh's *The Starry Night*
- Bible Story Images 1-3
- Key Question Slide

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.
- Download music from a resource such as iTunes® and have it ready to play.
- The One Big Story Intro Video is available with the monthly download. You can find it in the "Prelude" folder under "Monthly Planning."
- In your search engine of choice, find a picture of *The Starry Night* to show your preteens during the Communicator's introduction.
- Download the Bible Story Images 1-3 and print on cardstock. These can be found in the file labeled "1911_LG_Assets_Preteen_W4."
- Make two scrolls—both should look old. On one, write "God's Word" in bold at the top and then use indistinguishable writing to fill the scroll (Hebrew letters, etc.). On the other, write "Darius' Word" in bold at the top and then also fill the scroll with writing. On the back of the Darius' Word scroll, write the words of Daniel 6:26-27 (NirV) so that they can be seen at the end of the story.

3. Worship

What You Need:

- Only Way
- Wide Open

The Lion Sleeps Tonight

Bible Story: The Lion Sleeps Tonight (Daniel Is Thrown Into a Den of Lions) • Daniel 6

Bottom Line: Honor God by giving Him credit.

Key Question: How do you honor God?

Memory Verse: *Love one another deeply. Honor others more than yourselves. Romans 12:10 (NirV)*

Life App: Honor—Letting someone know you see how valuable they really are

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

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: *Trek Theme Slide*

Host enters.

Welcome

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening ([Frozen 2](#)), 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.

Opener

HOST: "What's going on my people! Such a good day in store for you. And it begins with our final Hall of Fame small group challenge. Today is inspired by James Naismith, who changed sports forever by hanging some peach baskets on a pole and created a game that's become a world-wide phenomenon! Of course, we're talking about basketball. But since we can't get five hoops in here, it's the bucket toss. I need one person from each Small Group to play today. Small Group Leaders, send your best free-throw shooter!"

Small Group Leaders each choose a participant from their group and send them to the stage.

"As you can see, there are five buckets in a row. You will stand at this tape line and throw five balls total. The closest bucket is worth two points. The next is three points, the next four points, the next five points, and the last is seven points. You make the call. How good is your shot, and how risky do you want to be? We will add up your score. The top score will send your small group to the last VIP experience of the month. Everybody get it?"

Be sure there are the same number of balls each time. If a ball misses, it counts for zero points.

Ad lib and comment as the game goes on. At the end, declare a winner and usher his or her small into the VIP experience area.

HOST: “That was a lot of fun! Now let’s stand and worship together!”

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

Worship

WORSHIP LEADER:

Communicator enters Worship Leaders exit.

Communicator enters

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT

INTRODUCTION

VIDEO: *One Big Story Intro*

COMMUNICATOR: “Hey everyone! Can you believe we are wrapping up November today? It’s been an awesome month, and today is certainly no exception. Check out this painting. I think this is a pretty famous one.”

CG: *The Starry Night by Vincent Van Gogh*

“How many of you have seen this painting before? *(Pause for response.)*”

“A lot of you! Okay. Now, does anyone know the name of it or the person who painted it?”

Pause for responses. If nobody knows, ask the small group leaders.

“That’s right. This is *The Starry Night* by Vincent Van Gogh. Van Gogh painted thousands of paintings, many of which you might recognize. And those paintings are valued in the millions today. But you want to know something crazy? When Van Gogh was alive, guess how many paintings he sold? *(Pause for responses.)* Good guess. He actually sold . . . one. One single painting. The rest of them sold after his death. While he was alive, he never really got much credit for being a good painter. Nobody really honored his work. But now, people give him tons of honor by shelling out loads of money to purchase his paintings! Funny how that works.”

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: “It makes me think of another question. When something good does finally happen—when someone does give you credit for something you’ve done or acknowledges you—what do you do with it?”

“See, I think there are a lot of things we do that we might consider ‘God-honoring activities.’ We just sang worship songs together. Soon we will open the Bible together. Maybe you pray on your own or give some of your money to help others. We often think about these types of activities as the ‘God-honoring’ type of activities. But can God be honored in other areas of our lives . . . maybe even the less obvious areas of our lives? Can we give God credit when we maybe wouldn’t normally consider it?”

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: “Great question. Let’s see what the writers of the Bible have to say about it. Today we head to the Old Testament of our Bible and a story that comes pretty close to the end of it. You see, the nation of Judah had been taken into captivity by the foreign enemy of Babylon. As God’s people live in this foreign land as captives, we have several stories in the Bible that speak of the challenges they faced as they tried to remain true to God.”

“Several of those stories follow a man name Daniel, a young Hebrew captive who faces some pretty tough stuff. I’m guessing you have probably heard about him and at least one of his stories, which we’ll be checking out in a moment.”

“Now one quick note: after the Babylonians took Judah captive, the Babylonians were defeated by the Persians. And when you defeat a country, you get their stuff, including their captives. So when our story starts, Daniel and the rest of the Israelites are now under Persian control, living in a foreign land. That’s where our story picks up.”

“So, King Darius the Persian appointed 120 royal leaders to rule his kingdom. And over these 120 leaders he placed three leaders. And one of those leaders was Daniel. That means that Daniel, a Hebrew captive, had worked his way up the ranks and had become a key leader in the Persian empire! Pretty cool, right?”

“Daniel did such a good job as a leader, even better than the other two guys, that the king planned on putting him in charge of the entire kingdom! Think Daniel was pretty happy about this? Yeah, well, not everybody was. Check this out.”

“*(Read directly from Daniel 6:4a, NIV) ‘But the other two leaders and the royal rulers heard about it. So they looked for a reason to bring charges against Daniel.’* Catch that? The other leaders look for a way to set Daniel up! They want to dig up some dirt on him to find some juicy details they can use against him to get him in trouble.”

“But there’s a problem. They can’t find anything! Seriously. They dig and dig and dig, but look what it says, *(Read directly from Daniel 6:4b, NIV) ‘They couldn’t find any fault with his work. He could always be trusted. He never did anything wrong. And he always did what he was supposed to.’*”

“So the other rulers resorted to plan B. *(Read directly from Daniel 6:5, NIV) ‘Finally these men said, “We want to bring charges against this man Daniel. But it’s almost impossible for us to come up with a reason to do it. If we find a reason, it will have to be in connection with the law of his God.”’*”

“You see, these men knew something was true about Daniel. Since he was a Hebrew, an Israelite, he was in a relationship with God. And a part of that relationship was following this . . .”

Communicator pulls out Scroll and unrolls to show “God’s Word.”

“God had a way that he had asked his people to live. These words went all the way back to Mount Sinai after God brought his people out of Egypt. This was the way God asked all his people to follow. And these men knew that Daniel was so committed to God’s Word—to God’s way—that they could use it to set him up. One of the laws God had given to his people was that they were to worship him only. They were not to bow down or worship anyone but God.”

Communicator clips God’s Word scroll to music stand.

“So the leaders went to Darius with a plan. They said, *(Read directly from Daniel 6:7, NIV) “All the royal leaders, high officials, royal rulers, advisers and governors want to make a suggestion. We’ve agreed that you should give an order. And you should make sure it’s obeyed. Your Majesty, here is the command you should make your people obey for the*

next 30 days. Don't let any of your people pray to any god or human being except to you. If they do, throw them into the lions' den.'"

"And so, Darius does it. He puts it into writing and it becomes Darius' Word."

Communicator takes out Darius' scroll and reveals it.

"Now you see why the leaders suggested this, right? They know that Daniel can't possibly keep this (*point to God's Word scroll*) and also keep this (*point to Darius' scroll while clipping it to music stand*). And that is exactly what they are counting on."

"Daniel heard about the law that Darius passed (*point to Darius' scroll*) and the big question was, what was he going to do? Check this out. (*Read directly from Daniel 6:10, NIRV*) *'Daniel found out that the king had signed the order. In spite of that, he did just as he had always done before. He went home to his upstairs room. Its windows opened toward Jerusalem. He went to his room three times a day to pray. He got down on his knees and gave thanks to his God.'*

"In other words, nothing changed for Daniel. Why? Because he was still completely committed to this (*point to God's word scroll*) despite this (*point to Darius' words scroll*). And that's exactly what the leaders were counting on. They went right to the king and reminded him of the decree and then informed him that they had somebody who completely paid no attention to the king's word. The king ordered him to be thrown into a lion's den, but what Darius didn't know was that it was Daniel. You see, Darius really liked Daniel, and when he learned of Daniel's fate, the king was extremely upset. But because he had signed it as a law, it could not be changed."

(Read directly from Daniel 6:16 NIRV) 'So the king gave the order. Daniel was brought out and thrown into the lions' den. The king said to him, "You always serve your God faithfully. So may he save you!"'

"This is a really powerful moment. Darius knew that there was very little hope for Daniel at this point. But then he talked about how Daniel was so faithful to God. And if anything was going to happen to save Daniel, it was going to have to be God that did it!"

"And that is exactly what happened. As many of you know the story, God sent an angel to shut the mouths of the lions so that Daniel was not harmed. In the morning, Daniel was lifted from the pit, and the men who set him up were severely punished—let's just say they get the lion's share of the consequences. But one of the coolest moments in the story is King Darius' response. Darius signed another decree that the people in his kingdom would respect and honor Daniel's God."

Flip Darius' Word scroll over to reveal Daniel 6:26-27.

(Read directly from Daniel 6:26-27, NIRV) "He is the living God. He will live forever. His kingdom will not be destroyed. His rule will never end. He sets people free and saves them. He does miraculous signs and wonders. He does them in the heavens and on the earth. He has saved Daniel from the power of the lions.'"

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: "Now in this story, one of the most obvious ways that Daniel honored God was his unwillingness to go against God's word and worship the king. Daniel knew that he would dishonor God if he were to do that. He couldn't keep this (*point to God's word scroll*) by bowing down and worshipping the king. But did you also notice Daniel's response the morning after he had been thrown into the lion's den? Darius rushed to the lion's den, rolled away the stone to see if Daniel somehow is miraculously alive, to which Daniel responds, 'Yes I'm alive! I am a black belt in karate and have

fought back the lions all night long. You should see my skills, bruh!' Ok, you know he didn't say that. No, he immediately declared 'It was God! I'm alive because of God. HE sent the angels. HE shut their mouths.' Daniel honored God by making it very clear where the credit belonged."

"But then there is even one more layer. Did you catch who else gave God credit for this whole amazing story? Darius! That's right . . . the Persian king put another decree into writing declaring that Daniel's God is the God who sets people free and does miraculous wonders (*point to new decree*). This is unbelievable. And it all started because Daniel was willing to honor this, above this (*turn Darius scroll back to original Darius' Word side*)."

"That was what Jesus did, too! For Jesus, everything He did was about pointing people back to God. Even when He died on the cross for us, Jesus knew it was all about bringing glory to His father, God. We follow Jesus' example when we show honor to God with the choices we make."

"Now the truth is most of us are not going to face a decree that is going to threaten to have us thrown into a lion's den if we pray to God. But the truth is we do face all sorts of choices where we might dishonor God and something He has asked us to do or not to do."

Clip a picture of a cell phone under the Darius' Word clip.

"Are there times where what we are tempted to do on this (*point to cell phone picture*) might cause us to dishonor this (*point to God's Word scroll*)? It might not even be WHAT we are doing even as much as the AMOUNT of time we're spending doing it. What do we choose in those moments, even if it costs us?"

Clip a picture of two kids gossiping.

"Are there times where the conversations we are having about other people (*point to the gossip picture*) might cause us to dishonor the way God has asked us to treat other people (*point to God's Word scroll*)? What do we choose in those moments, even if it costs us?"

Clip a picture of money or dollar sign.

"Or are there times where we can get so caught up in our stuff or our money (*point to the money picture*) that we might dishonor the way God has asked us to be generous towards other people in the way that we live? (*Point toward God's word scroll.*)"

"Honoring God isn't just about doing the real obvious 'God-honoring' activities like singing worship songs and reading the Bible. We honor God with all of our lives. Jesus said this too when He said that our lives are like lights that we shine before other people. And when we shine them, other people will see the good we do and then THEY will honor God, too. That is pretty awesome."

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: "Today, as you go to groups, I want you to think about this question:"

CG: Key Question Slide

"**How do you honor God?** Really think about it—go beyond the usual answers and consider some of the places in your lives right now where it can be harder to honor God. When you get back to Small Group, you'll have a chance to share

some of your ideas. Before you head there, let's pray and thank God for being so faithful to us. Let's ask God to help remind us of the times when we can show Him honor for all of the amazing things He does for us. Let's pray."

*Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard.
After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.*

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