



GETTING READY

1. Opener/Closer

What You Need:

- Host
- Inflatable musical instruments (ideally a wide variety, so you have a different instrument for each small group); one for each small group

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Upbeat music to use as kids enter and exit the room
- Fun music for the game

Large Group Visuals:

- Theme Slide
- Love Slide
- Blank Bottom Line Slide
- Bottom Line Slide
- Blank Memory Verse Slide
- Memory Verse Slide
- “Hot Potato Musical Mayhem” Slide

2. Bible Story

What You Need:

- Storyteller
- Host
- Bible
- Host's phone

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- "Feel It" by TobyMac (from 0:42-1:15)
- "A Friend Like You" by Andy Grammer (from 0:45-1:15)
- "Brother" by NEEDTOBREATHE (from 0:35-1:02)

What You Do:

- Create song clips using the start and end times indicated above. (You can set the start and end times in iTunes by going to Edit / Song Info / Options.)
- Ask your Storyteller to come prepared with a personal story of how he/she has experienced Jesus' love. If possible, collect a few photos to illustrate his/her story and have them ready to show on screen.
- Make sure your Host is familiar with the songs and knows all the lyrics (from the selected clips) by heart.

3. Worship

What You Need:

- Alive Again
- Good Grace

You're the Inspiration

Bible Story: You're the Inspiration (No Greater Love) • *John 15:12-13*

Bottom Line: Love others because Jesus loves you.

Memory Verse: *Here is what love is. It is not that we loved God. It is that he loved us and sent his Son to give his life to pay for our sins.* 1 John 4:10 (NIRV)

Life App: Love—Choosing to treat others the way you want to be treated

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: *Theme Slide*

Host enters, nodding to the music.

Opener

HOST: "Hello, everyone! How are all of my favorite friends? I love that we get to party with music this month. It's like we get to be our own radio station—our very own playlist!"

SFX: *Bring up music*

Dance to the music.

“I just love music. Do you? What kinds of music do you like? *(Pause for response.)* Wow. I love it! Well, all month long we’re having fun with music and playlists. We’re putting love in the mix!

CG: Love Slide

“Love is choosing to treat others the way you want to be treated.

CG: Theme Slide

“You see, love is more than just feelings and cards and candy. Love is about how you treat others and what you do for them. For example, your family does a lot for you. You might not think about it. But I’d guess that most of you don’t make your own dinner and do all of the chores around the house and pay all of the bills. Your family does that for you because they love you. When we love people, we **[Basic Truth] treat them the way we want to be treated.**

“Now, before we get to our awesome story, you know we like to have a little fun to start things off. I’ve got a great music game for you called ‘Hot Potato Musical Mayhem’!

CG: “Hot Potato Musical Mayhem” Slide

SFX: Fun music

Make sure small groups are sitting together and then pass out the inflatable musical items (one per small group).

“All right. Each small group has an awesome musical instrument. This is a game of ‘Hot Potato’ BETWEEN groups. So when the music starts, [Leader #1]’s group will toss their [instrument] over to [Leader #2]’s group, then [Leader #2]’s group will toss it over to [Leader #3]’s group, and so on. You’ve got to keep going and going until the music stops.

“Here’s the twist. For this round, this [instrument] right here is like the ‘hot potato.’ When the music stops, whichever group ends up with the [instrument] has to do the ‘musical mayhem’ challenge. As a group, you have to act out that instrument and make that sound together.

“Let’s give it a try. Ready, set, go!

SFX: Fun music

Play the music for a while and then stop it at an arbitrary time.

(Whoever is controlling the music should do this without looking.)

When the music stops, whichever group is holding the designated “hot potato” instrument has to do the challenge. For example, if it’s an inflatable electric guitar, then the group needs to play air guitar while making wailing electric guitar sounds.

“All right—for the next round, the hot potato is the [instrument]. Let’s play!

SFX: Fun music

Play four or five more rounds, ideally giving lots of different groups a chance to do the challenge. Use a different instrument as the “hot potato” each time.

“Great job, everyone. That was really fun. Next time we’ll play with real musical instruments. Just kidding! All right, let’s keep the music going as we sing and worship God together.”

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

Worship

SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “Hey, everyone! I am so happy to be here to talk about love. You know, Jesus had a lot to say about love. (*Hold up Bible.*) In fact, just before He was going to give up His life on the cross, He had a conversation with His disciples about it.

“Jesus explained to His friends how they needed to stay joined to Him—like branches are joined to a vine. He gave them a command:

Open the Bible to John 15:12-13 (NirV) and read.

“Love one another, just as I have loved you. No one has greater love than the one who gives their life for their friends.”

“Let me read that again.

“Love one another, just as I have loved you. No one has greater love than the one who gives their life for their friends.”

“Jesus wanted the disciples to understand that they could follow His example in loving others. After all, Jesus was about to give His LIFE for them—and for us. He knew He was about to die on the cross so that ALL of us could be forgiven of our sins—the things we’ve done that are wrong. It was the greatest example of love the world has ever known!”

IT'S PERSONAL

STORYTELLER: “Really, Jesus had been showing love to His friends all along . . . just like He shows His love to you and me today. His love is personal. He does important things for each one of us. Here’s a part of my story and how Jesus has loved me.”

Take a minute or two to share some personal examples of times when Jesus demonstrated His love for you. These should be simple, kid-friendly, age-appropriate examples of ways that you’ve experienced His love—such as forgiveness for your sins, the peace and strength that He gives you each day, and all the gifts in your life that come from Him. You can explain how you’ve put your faith in Jesus and what prompted you to make that decision.

If possible, use photos of people and places that are important in your story.

CG: *Photos of the Storyteller’s personal examples (optional)*

HOW SHOULD WE TREAT OTHERS?

STORYTELLER: “Those are just some of the ways Jesus has loved me in my own life. His love has CHANGED me. When I think about how Jesus has loved me, it makes me think about how I treat others. If Jesus loves me, shouldn’t that change the way I treat the people around me?”

Host runs out. He’s holding up his phone, super excited to (pretend to) play music from it.

HOST: “[Storyteller’s name], stop right there! I am ready to put love in the mix with my new playlist.” *(Hold up phone.)*

STORYTELLER: *(Hesitant)* “Your new playlist?”

HOST: “Yep—it’s going to be perfect! You were out here talking all about how Jesus has loved you . . . so I thought I’d put together some songs to help with the rest of the story.”

STORYTELLER: “We’ll, that’s great! Let’s see how it works.

(To audience) “Now, like I was saying . . . when we know how much Jesus loves us, that can change the way we treat others. You see, if we’re not careful, we can start to think only about ourselves. We think about what WE want and how we want others to treat us. It’s easy to put ourselves first.

“But Jesus taught us a different way. Remember—He told us to ‘love one another.’ You can ‘love one another’ by thinking about the people in your life—your family, friends, neighbors, and kids in school or on your sports team. When you think about THEM instead of thinking about yourself, you start to see all kinds of ways that you can show love.

(To Host) “[Host’s name], do you have a song on your playlist for that?”

HOST: “Yes! When you think of others, you can definitely feel the love. You feel it in your HEART. You feel it in your SOUL. Like this!”

Host pretends to play the song on his phone, then lip-syncs and does motions along with the lyrics.

SFX: “Feel It” by TobyMac (from 0:42-1:15)

STORYTELLER: “Yes! That’s really great! We’re ‘never going to be the same again’—all because of God’s love.

“When you start to think of others first—when you come up with ways to show them that you love them—you can show them a small glimpse of the love of Jesus. When people see that you treat people with kindness instead of being mean or selfish, they’ll want to know what God has done for you to make you act differently. They’ll know that YOU are a friend who will always be by their side.”

HOST: “For sure. If you follow Jesus’ example, you’ll be such a good friend that your buddies wouldn’t know what to do without you! Like this . . .”

Host pretends to play the song on his phone, then lip-syncs and does motions along with the lyrics.

SFX: “A Friend Like You” by Andy Grammer (from 0:45-1:15)

GIVE YOUR LIFE FOR YOUR FRIENDS

STORYTELLER: “That’s right! Remember, Jesus talked about the BIGGEST way we can show love.

Open the Bible to John 15:13 (NIRV) and read.

“No one has greater love than the one who gives their life for their friends.”

“Of course, Jesus put us first by dying for us. He actually gave His life for our sins. The best way we can follow His example is by putting others first . . . by finding ways to serve them and do things FOR them.

“For example, if you know someone is having a really hard day, you could tell them something encouraging to cheer them up. Maybe you could help a friend understand a hard lesson at school or teach them a new trick on the soccer field. Whenever we take the time to help someone else and put them first, we’re following Jesus’ command to love others.”

HOST: “Totally true. When you put others first, you’re telling them that they can count on you! That reminds me of this super-cool track.”

Host pretends to play the song on his phone, then lip-syncs and does motions along with the lyrics.

SFX: “Brother” by NEEDTOBREATHE (from 0:35-1:02)

STORYTELLER: *(To Host)* “You know what? Those were some pretty spot-on song selections, my friend. Thanks for caring enough to help me out today!”

HOST: “No problem!”

Host exits.

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “There’s a reason why we should choose to love others and put them first. We love others because Jesus loved us first. He led the way!

“That might mean you choose to give up your own plans for something that matters more. It might mean that you let your friend take a turn in the game to show him that he’s important to you. It might mean helping your sister with her chores, even though you don’t have to and you’re all done with yours.

“Jesus did the most amazing and wonderful thing for us to show us that He loved us. He died on the cross for our sins! It’s our job now to follow Jesus’ example and show other people that we love them.

CG: *Bottom Line Slide*

[Bottom Line] “Love others because Jesus loves you.

“Jesus’ love is the greatest example of love. It’s because of His great love that we should love others. Let’s pray and ask Him to help us do that.”

CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide

Pray

STORYTELLER: “God, thank You for showing us what real love is. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to die for us. Thank You for reminding us that we should love others because of the way Jesus loved us first. Help us to look for ways that we can love and serve the people in our lives. We love You, and we ask these things in Jesus’ name amen.”

Host enters as Storyteller exits.

Closer

HOST: “WHY should you love people? Because Jesus loves you—no matter what! There is NOTHING that you could do to cause Jesus to stop loving you. His love is so amazing that we want to share it with everyone we know!

“Remember what Jesus said:

Open the Bible to John 15:12-13 (NirV) and read.

“Love one another, just as I have loved you. No one has greater love than the one who gives their life for their friends, John 15:13 (NirV).

CG: Today's Story Image

Optional: Place Today's Story Image on your timeline.

"Jesus really did give His life when He died on the cross for our sins. And then He rose from the dead three days later.

CG: Timeline

"The love Jesus showed us is so important, especially when we look back at God's Big Story. Since God made people at the very beginning, they've wanted to know how to live. God gave people His laws through Moses. People tried to follow them, but they couldn't measure up. But God always had a plan. He sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior—and Jesus made a way for us to have a relationship with God, once and for all. We know what real love is because Jesus gave us the greatest example EVER!

"So here's what we need to do:

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] "Love others because Jesus loves you.

"You can give your time—like spending time with a friend, doing what THEY want to do, and letting THEM pick the game you play or the show you watch.

"You can give your talent—like using your awesome math skills to help someone with their homework or playing soccer with them to help them try out for the team.

“You can give your stuff—like maybe giving some toys to a friend in need or giving some of your money or allowance to help someone who really needs it.

“You could even make a playlist for someone, with songs that you know that they like. Whatever you do, **[Bottom Line] love others because Jesus loves you.**

CG: Blank Memory Verse Slide

“Our memory verse this month comes from 1 John 4:10. Let’s take a look.

CG: Memory Verse Slide

“Here is what love is. It is not that we loved God. It is that he loved us and sent his Son to give his life to pay for our sins, 1 John 4:10 (NIRV).

“God loved us first, and that’s why we love others. This week, look for ways that you can show love by treating others the way you want to be treated. I’ll see you later!”

Dismiss kids to their small groups.

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

CG: Theme Slide