

What You Need:

- Storyteller
- Bible
- Lots of empty cardboard boxes the Storyteller can use to build a wall around himself/herself while he/she is teaching (it's ideal if the boxes can all be the same size, such as banker's boxes)
- White paper flag (attached to a long dowel) that says "I'M SORRY"

Large Group Visuals:

- One Big Story Intro (Video)
- Blank Bottom Line Slide
- Bottom Line Slide

What You Do:

- You'll need enough boxes for the Storyteller to be able to create a semicircle (or full circle) around himself/herself, with the highest boxes right at face level.
- Place the boxes off to the side of the stage so they aren't a distraction before they're needed. Make sure the Storyteller can get to them easily.

3. Worship

What You Need:

- I Choose You
- Who You Say I Am

Step by Step

Bible Story: Step by Step (Jesus Teaches on Forgiveness) • *Matthew 5:1-2; 23-24*

Bottom Line: Take the first step to forgive others.

Memory Verse: *Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you. Colossians 3:13 (NIRV)*

Life App: Forgiveness—Deciding that someone who has wronged you doesn't have to pay

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*

Worship 1: I Choose You

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

Opener

HOST: "Hello, amazing people! Welcome to [your environment's name]. We're going to have a lot of fun today, so you are definitely going to be glad you came! My name is [your name], and I'm ready to get my D.I.Y. going. You know what I mean?"

"Well, maybe you don't know exactly what I mean. D.I.Y. means 'do it yourself'! D.I.Y. can mean fixing up a home . . . or it can mean fixing up a relationship—with forgiveness!"

CG: *Forgiveness Slide*

“Forgiveness is deciding that someone who has wronged you doesn't have to pay.

CG: Theme Slide

“Forgiveness is a great D.I.Y. project because it’s something you can choose to do yourself. When someone has wronged you, you can ask God to help you FORGIVE . . . or when you’ve been the one to mess up, you can be the first one to say you’re sorry. That’s how you ‘fix up’ your friendships. Trust me, it’s a whole lot better than living with anger and hurt and all those yucky feelings inside!

“We’ve got another great D.I.Y. game coming up, but first, I want to see if you can identify some D.I.Y. safety equipment. After all, when you’re working on a big project, you’ve got to stay safe!

“Does anybody know what these are?

Hold up a pair of safety goggles and pause for responses.

“Right! Safety goggles! What about this?

Hold up a face mask and pause for responses.

“Yep! A face mask. Okay, one more. What’s this?

Hold up a hard hat and pause for responses.

“Correct. A hard hat. We’ll use all of these safety items—and more—for our game today. It’s a safety relay! First, I need a few volunteers.

Choose three Small Group Leaders. Let each Leader bring up five kids from their group.

“Kids, when I say, ‘Go,’ you’ll go one at a time to get the safety equipment for your Leader. So the first kid will go to your group’s pile of safety items, grab one, and bring it back for your Leader to put on. The Leader will high-five the next kid, and then it’s that kid’s turn to grab another item and bring it back to the Leader . . . and so on. The first Leader to be properly wearing all five items wins!

(To contestants) “Contestants, get in a line so you know who’s going first. *(To audience)* Audience, let’s cheer them on, okay? Ready, set, go!

SFX: Fun music

Comment on the action and cheer for the contestants.

“Wow! Leaders, you’re looking great! I think you’re ready for ANY D.I.Y. project now. *(To audience)* Let’s give all of our volunteers a round of applause as they head back to their seats.

Dismiss contestants to their seats.

“Now let’s sing to our God who always loves us and forgives us. Everyone up on your feet!”

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

Worship 2: Who You Say I Am

Storyteller enters as Worship Leaders exit.

VIDEO: One Big Story Intro

CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide

SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “Hi, everyone! As we go through God’s Big Story, we find lots of amazing things that Jesus did . . . and lots of amazing things that Jesus said. (*Hold up Bible.*) Jesus taught in a way that helped people understand God’s love in a whole new way!

“One time Jesus was teaching on a mountainside. He told His friends, the disciples, about how important it is to make things right with others. Here’s what Jesus said.

Open the Bible to Matthew 5:23-24 (NirV) and read.

“Suppose you are offering your gift at the altar. And you remember that your brother or sister has something against you. Leave your gift in front of the altar. First go and make peace with them. Then come back and offer your gift.”

“Back then, people would bring gifts to God’s altar. It was kind of like what we do today when we come to church and pray and worship God. Jesus was saying that if we have a problem with someone—if we’ve hurt someone somehow—we should stop what we’re doing to go and make things right with them.”

As you talk through the next part of the story, slowly begin using the boxes to build a wall around yourself (in a circle or a semicircle). Make sure the audience can still see your face and hear you.

THE FIGHT

STORYTELLER: “We all get frustrated sometimes, don’t we? I mean, I argue with people every now and then. I don’t always get along with everyone.

“Sometimes I argue with my friends or my siblings because we disagree about something. Raise your hand if that’s ever happened to you. *(Pause for response.)* When that happens, we both usually get annoyed and frustrated.

“I mean, why can’t I just pick the movie we’re going to watch? Why do YOU have to take the last chocolate chip cookie?”

“Can you think of some more situations where people might argue or disagree? Raise your hand if you have a situation to share.”

Call on some kids to give their answers. Repeat the answers out loud if they’re especially good ones. If an answer is inappropriate or off topic, just say, “That’s good,” and move on to the next one. Continue to build the wall of boxes as you take their answers.

DIGGING IN

STORYTELLER: “Those were some good answers. I think all of us have had disagreements like that. So what happens **AFTER** you have an argument with someone?”

“Maybe if your mom or dad or teacher hears you arguing, they’ll come and ask what’s wrong. You tell them your side of the story.

“It’s not **MY** fault.

“**SHE** started it.

“**SHE** hurt my feelings!

“It’s easy to think about what the other person did wrong. It’s easy to think about all the things we think we’ve done right.

“We might even try move on and act like it never happened, but the truth is, there’s something that has come between us and the other person. We might even go on to school or practice or even church and try to pretend that everything’s fine. But if we can’t admit when we’re wrong, everything is NOT fine.

Finish building the wall of boxes, putting the last one in place in front of your face.

“It’s almost like we’re building a prison around ourselves when we can’t apologize for what we’ve done wrong. We’re building a prison around ourselves when we don’t forgive.”

MAKE THE FIRST MOVE

STORYTELLER: “Jesus said that before we do anything else, we should make things right with that other person. We need to make the first move to ask for forgiveness. And it usually starts with saying those two words that can be so tough to say: ‘I’m sorry.’

Lift the “I’M SORRY” white flag above the boxes.

Remove the box that’s in front of your face so the kids can see you again.

“You know what happens when we’re willing to apologize? I’m not talking about when your mom or dad or teachers tell you to say it, and you’re like, (*sullen, under your breath*) ‘I’m sorry.’ I’m talking about deciding FOR YOURSELF that you really are sorry for what you did and said.

“Let me hear you say, ‘I’m sorry,’ and I’ll SHOW you what it can do!

Put the last box back in front of your face.

“One . . . two . . . three!”

KIDS: “I’m sorry!”

Bust out from behind the box wall. Knock the boxes in every direction so they end up looking like a mixed-up pile of rubble.

STORYTELLER: “Oh, yeah! That felt good!”

(Looking at the broken-down wall) “Do you see what happened here? When we’re willing to take the first step toward someone, it’s like we break down the prison walls that were built up around us. It allows us to see each other. It allows us to forgive each other . . . and to BE forgiven, too.

“Maybe you’ve said some things that you wish you hadn’t said. Maybe you raised your voice, or you acted in a way that you regret. When you say you’re sorry, you can make things right in the relationship, because you’re giving the other person a chance to forgive.”

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “Remember, Jesus said it was really important for us to make things right with each other. He said that we should stop everything else and work hard to try to fix our relationships. Maybe that means saying you’re sorry. Maybe it means forgiving your friend for what they’ve done or said to you. Probably it’s a little of both.

“You don’t have to wait for someone to TELL you to apologize. You don’t have to have someone TELL you to forgive. You can work toward forgiveness by taking the first step and choosing to make peace.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

“So, [Bottom Line] take the first step to forgive others. You’ll be so glad you did!

“Let’s pray and ask God to help us [Bottom Line] take the first step to forgive others.”

CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide

Pray

STORYTELLER: “God, thank You for showing us what real forgiveness looks like. Thank You for sending Jesus to pay the price for our sin, so we could experience Your love and forgiveness for ourselves. When we have arguments or disagreements with our friends or family members, please help us take the first step to make things right. Help us to say, ‘I’m sorry,’ when we need to. And please help us to be quick to forgive. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name, amen.”

Host enters as Storyteller exits.

Closer

HOST: “When it comes to forgiveness, SOMEONE has to go first. You can be the first to go and make it right.

CG: Timeline

“We have the perfect example of this in Jesus. You see, people used to have to make sacrifices at the temple to make things right in their relationship with God. But when Jesus came and lived on earth and then died on the cross for our sins, HE was the sacrifice FOR us. He made things right with God FOR us. He made the first move to forgive us.

CG: Today’s Story Image

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

“We can follow Jesus’ example and do what He taught His disciples to do. We can forgive first. We can forgive quickly. We can say, ‘I’m sorry,’ . . . and really mean it.

“Even if it feels impossible to forgive, pick one thing you can do to take a step toward the other person.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] “Take the first step to forgive others.

“Don’t let things build up. Be the first one to apologize. And if someone hurts your feelings, decide to forgive and let it go. [Basic Truth] Treat others the way you want to be treated. Be quick to say you’re sorry and quick to forgive. That’s how you take what’s wrong and make it right.

“You’ll get to talk some more in Small Group about how you can [Bottom Line] take the first step to forgive others. Have fun!”

Dismiss kids to their small groups.

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

CG: Theme Slide