



TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Help!

Nehemiah Helps the Poor
Nehemiah 5

PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Look for ways to
make things right.

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Early Arriver
Opening Activity

LARGE GR SUPPLIES

- Large, oversized beach ball
- Hula hoop
- Masking or gaffer's tape (see "What You Do")

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- MONTHLY CHALLENGE - INITIATIVE
 - Shares stories each week with your groups that showed someone who has initiative.

STORY SUPPLIES

- Table
- Prop box containing:
 - An action figure to represent Nehemiah that's different from all the other action figures you use
 - A group of action figures that will represent the people (such as Little People®); if possible, with varying heights so that some of them can represent the children
 - Two other action figures to represent the officials (these can be villain characters)
 - Toy food (or canned food, etc.)
 - Big stack of play money

WORSHIP:

- THROUGH IT ALL

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SMALL GROUP

25
MIN



PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Help!
Nehemiah Helps the Poor
Nehemiah 5

LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS KIDS ENTER.
SLIDE: THEME
OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Look for ways to
make things right.

WORSHIP

Worship Leaders enter

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

Work at everything you do with
all your heart. Work as if you
were working for the Lord.
Colossians 3:23a, NIV

WORSHIP LEADER:

AUDIO: THROUGH IT ALL
AUDIO: THERE'S NOTHING THAT OUR GOD CAN'T DO

Host enters.

MONTHLY LIFE APP

Initiative—Seeing what needs
to be done and doing it

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN (30- OR 60-SECOND VERSION)
OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME

OPENER

HOST: "Hi, everyone! Today is a great day because we've got LOTS of fun things planned! My name is [your name], and I'm so glad you're here today at [your environment's name]. This month, we're talking about initiative.

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way
want to be treated.

SLIDE: LIFE APP
OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME TRANSITION TO LIFE APP

"Initiative is seeing what needs to be done and doing it.

SLIDE: THEME
OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): LIFE APP TRANSITION TO THEME

"When you take initiative, that means you're ready for launch! You're always on the lookout to see what needs to be done around you. You notice when there's a mess you could clean up . . . when one of your friends needs some cheering up . . . or when you see something wrong that you could help make right. God made us to take initiative—and we can do it with His help!



WEEK
TWO
SEPTEMBER 2021

LARGE GROUP
K-3

PRELUDE	SOCIAL	STORY	WORSHIP	GROUPS	HOME
		25 MINUTES	10 MINUTES		

“For our game today, I thought we’d get all of our Small Group Leaders to show a little initiative. Come on up, leaders!

Have all the leaders join you on the stage.

(to audience) “Now, I’ve got a question for all of you. Raise your hand if you’ve ever heard of the planet Saturn. (Pause for response.)

SLIDE: PICTURE OF SATURN

“Saturn has these rings around it that make it easy to recognize. Today, our leaders will try to make this beach ball (point to the large beach ball) look like Saturn. They’ll each have a turn tossing this hula hoop toward the beach ball. Whoever gets the hula hoop to land around the beach ball moves on to the next round! Are we ready to play? Let’s cheer for our leaders!

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

AUDIO: FUN INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Leaders take turns tossing the hula hoop at the beach ball. After each round, those who succeed will move on to the next round. For each new round, move the beach ball or make the toss more of a challenge. For example, move the ball farther away or have the leaders toss the hula hoop with their eyes closed or with their back turned.

Once you have a champion (or champions), dismiss the leaders to their seats.

“That was so much fun! Let’s give all our leaders a hand for a great game! Everyone, you can stand up now, because it’s time to sing and praise God together.”



25 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Storyteller enters as Worship Leaders exit.

SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "Hi, everybody! Today we're looking at another amazing example of initiative as we continue the story of Nehemiah. *(Hold up Bible.)*

Set the box with the action figure characters on the table. Hold up the action figure representing Nehemiah.

"Nehemiah *(reference the action figure)* had traveled all the way from the king's palace in Persia to see the broken-down city of Jerusalem. With God's help, Nehemiah got the people of Jerusalem to help him repair the city wall.

Begin setting out the group of similar action figures (representing the people) on one side of the table. If possible, some figures should be tall and some should be short, with the shorter ones representing the children.

"Each family or group took a different part of the wall to work on. They had everything they needed as they started the work.

Place the toy food (or canned food, etc.) and the stack of fake money next to the "people."

"But the job wasn't easy! People from other cities and countries made fun of God's people and yelled at them as they worked. Still, Nehemiah and the people found a way to ignore those mean words and keep working.

"It seemed like nothing could stop their rebuilding project . . . until new trouble showed up. But the trouble didn't come from outside the city walls. This problem was on the INSIDE."

THE HITS JUST KEEP COMING

STORYTELLER: "The families who were helping rebuild the wall began to complain. Let me read you what they said.

Open the Bible to Nehemiah 5:2-4 (NIRV) and read.

"Some of them were saying, 'There are now many of us. We have many sons and daughters. We have to get some grain so we can eat and stay alive.' Others were saying, 'We're being forced to sell our fields, vineyards and homes. We have to do it to buy grain. There isn't enough food for everyone.' Still others were saying, 'We've had to borrow money. We needed it to pay the king's tax on our fields and vineyards.'

"Uh oh. That doesn't sound good. The people were upset because there wasn't enough food for everyone.

Put most of the toy food (or canned food, etc.) back in the box.

"And they were upset because they had to sell their fields and vineyards to buy grain.



25 MINUTES

Hold up the stack of fake money.

“The people had to borrow money to pay the king’s taxes . . . and the officials charged them EXTRA money to borrow the money they needed.

Pull out the two action figures representing the officials. Place them on the opposite side of the table from the rest of the people, and set the stack of money next to them.

“Some of the people even had to send their children to work for the officials since they owed them so much money.”

Move one or two of the “children” across the table so they’re next to the “officials.”

PAYBACK

STORYTELLER: “Nehemiah saw what was happening, and he knew that it wasn’t right. So he took initiative! He called the officials to a meeting.

Move “Nehemiah” and the “officials” together. If possible, raise Nehemiah’s arms.

“He told the officials that what they were doing was wrong. They didn’t have to make things hard on the people by making them pay all that extra money!

“Nehemiah told the officials that he and his relatives were lending money and grain to the people, but they were NOT charging extra money. He told the officials to give back what the people had paid—including the extra money they had taken.”

IT’S ALL COMING BACK TO ME NOW

STORYTELLER: “The officials did as Nehemiah said.

Make the “officials” nod up and down.

Open the Bible to Nehemiah 5:12 (NIRV) and read.

“‘We’ll give it back,’ they said. ‘And we won’t require anything more from them. We’ll do exactly as you say.’

“They gave back the people’s vineyards and the extra money they had charged.

Move the stack of fake money across the table, next to the “people.” Set the toy/canned food next to the “people” as well.

“They let the people’s children return home.

Move the figures representing the children back across the table, so they’re with the “people.”

“Once the officials had made things right, the people once again had what they needed . . . and they began working on the wall again.”



WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “All the other governors had made the people give them silver, food, land, and anything else they had. But not Nehemiah! (*Hold up the Nehemiah action figure.*) Nehemiah didn’t want to make things difficult for the people. He kept his focus on the job they had to do—and he made sure the people had what they needed to do their part, too. He even invited 150 people to eat the food at his own table!

Set the Nehemiah action figure down and walk in front of the table as you wrap up.

“It was important for Nehemiah to take care of the people. So when he saw that they were treated unfairly, he took initiative. He spoke to the officials and asked them to make things right.

“We can do the same thing. When we see that people are being treated unfairly or when we see something happening that we know is wrong, we can . . .

SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE

“look for ways to make things right.

“You can always ask an adult if you’re not sure HOW to help. But the important thing is that we can take initiative—together—and work to make things right for others. Let’s pray and ask God to help us do that.”

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

PRAY

STORYTELLER: “God, thank You for the story of Nehemiah. Thank You for helping us see how we can **look for ways to make things right.** When we see a problem that needs to be fixed or someone who’s not being treated well, give us the courage to step up and do something to help. Please show us how we can make things better for the people around us. We love You, and we ask these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”



WEEK
TWO
SEPTEMBER 2021

LARGE GROUP
K-3

PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES

CLOSER

Host enters as Storyteller exits.

HOST: “Nehemiah had a big job to do. He was trying to lead the people to rebuild the city wall of Jerusalem. But he still wasn’t too busy to notice that something was wrong. He looked around and saw that some of his people were being treated unfairly because they were poor. So he did something about it! He stood up for the people and worked to make things fairer.

“That’s something we can do, too. We can stand up for people who are being treated unfairly because of the way they look, where they’re from, how much money they have, or what they believe. We can think about what the people around us are going through . . . and if we notice something that needs to change, we can be PART of that change. We can step up and work to make things right for others.

SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE

“We can **look for ways to make things right.**

“That takes some initiative, doesn’t it? That’s **seeing what needs to be done and doing it.** It’s not always easy for us to pay attention to other people and think about what THEY need, but God is always there to help us. He is always good. He always does what’s right. When we work to make things right for others, we can be part of the important work God is doing all around us, every day!

“Think about how Jesus treated people when He lived on Earth. Jesus really SAW people. He showed them how valuable they were by loving them, no matter what. And Jesus helped people see how they could love others, too. He helped people understand that each day they could choose to **[Basic Truth] treat others the way they’d want to be treated.**

“So how do we **look for ways to make things right?** That’s what you get to talk about in Small Group! I’ll see you next time, friends!”

Dismiss kids to their small groups.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS THE KIDS EXIT.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP