



## TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Brand New**  
Renew Your Mind  
Romans 12:2

### TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

How are you wiser  
than you used to be?

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Never stop growing in wisdom.

### MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

If any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. He will give it to you. God gives freely to everyone and doesn't find fault.  
James 1:5, NIRV

### MONTHLY LIFE APP

Wisdom—Finding out what you should do and doing it

### SUPPLIES

- Two air cannons or AirZookas
- (Optional) Five hula hoops
- (Optional) Streamers
- Three containers of play dough or modeling clay
- Table
- Clay garden pot

### 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.

### SMALL GROUP

**15**  
MIN

#### SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Just for Fun  
Opening Activity

### LARGE GROUP

**35**  
MIN

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- MONTHLY CHALLENGE - WISDOM
  - Shares stories each week with your groups that showed someone who was wise.

#### WORSHIP:

- THE BEST IS YET TO COME
- GRAVES INTO GARDENS

### SMALL GROUP

**25**  
MIN



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

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

**TODAY'S BIBLE STORY**

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Renew Your Mind  
Romans 12:2

**TODAY'S KEY QUESTION**

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should ask God for it. He will  
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**MONTHLY LIFE APP**

Wisdom—Finding out what you  
should do and doing it

**BASIC TRUTH**

I can trust God no matter what.

**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 STUDENTS ENTER.**

**SLIDE: THEME**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**

**WORSHIP**

*Worship Leaders enter*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** "I'm so excited for this time to sing God's praise. God is always faithful. He is always working in our lives and helping us grow to be more and more like Him. Say, 'God's still working on me.' (Pause for response.) Say it again. (Pause for response.) That's so good. Let's sing.

**AUDIO: THE BEST IS YET TO COME**

**AUDIO: GRAVES INTO GARDENS**

*Host enters . . .*

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

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME**

**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 (2020 Summer Paralympics, 2021 US Open), movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, holiday (National Peach Pie Day, National Dog Day, National Cherry Popsicle Day, National Beach Day), 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.

*Before you start, take a photo of the kids that you can use during the story.*



WEEK  
**FIVE**  
AUGUST 2021

LARGE GROUP  
**PRETEEN**

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## OPENER

**HOST:** "Hello, one and all! My name is [Name of Host], and welcome to *Mission*, where every single time we gather it is an adventure. Speaking of adventure, many times an adventure requires us to face the best and worst of nature! Sometimes it rains. Other times it is really hot. Occasionally, the wind gusts. Today, we decided to harness some of nature in the form of a game we like to call HEADWIND."

### SLIDE: HEADWIND TITLE

"Anybody want to play? (Pause for response.)"

*Host brings up one boy volunteer and one girl volunteer to the stage. Both are handed an air cannon. If the audience sits separated by gender, consider mixing the genders to make the game more difficult.*

"Each of you has an air blaster. These bad boys can produce a gust of wind powerful enough to mess with your hair. To win this game, that's exactly what these two will need to do! Each of you will have five chances to shoot air at the faces of the crowd. Your goal is to blast someone in the face. If the air hits somebody in the audience on the head, including ear, hair, face, chin, etc., they should stand up. It is possible to blast multiple people with the same blast of air. After each volunteer gets five shots, the person with the most people standing in the audience wins! Any questions? (Pause for response.) Awesome! Then let's play HEADWIND!"

### AUDIO: UPBEAT GAME MUSIC

*Host allows game to play. Volunteers on stage should alternate after each shot. Host maintains high energy throughout the game to keep it exciting.*

"YES! This far exceeded my expectations! Incredible job to both of our volunteers! However, only one truly harnessed the power of the wind! Give a loud round of applause for our HEADWIND CHAMPION as both volunteers take a seat. (Pause for response.)"



## COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

### SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

*Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.*

### INTRODUCTION

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Hey, everybody. Thanks for being here! How about a show of hands? How many of you have a grandparent, an uncle, a neighbor, or somebody else who says *(best elderly voice)* 'I remember when you were a "wee wittle baby. Now you're getting so big!"' *(Pause for response.)* Yes! They probably still pinch your cheek, too! Sorry about that; it's just a part of life. You start out in this world an adorable, crying, wrinkled baby, and you grow into young men and women. Then people older than you will comment on how much you've grown!"

"Obviously, we can all spot a baby human when we see one, but I'm wondering if you can identify other creatures before they grow up. On the screens, I will place an image of a baby critter. Within your small groups, we want you to quickly discuss to identify it! Make sense? *(Pause for response.)* Great! Here's the first image."

### SLIDE: ANIMAL 1A: BABY PANDA

*Communicator allows 30 seconds to let groups to discuss. If time permits, Communicator calls on groups to guess. Communicator reveals adult image after discussion.*

### SLIDE: ANIMAL 1B: PANDA

"Good guesses. The image is that of a baby giant panda! It definitely looks different as a newborn! Let's move to the next picture."

### SLIDE: ANIMAL 2A: BABY FLAMINGO

*Communicator allows 30 seconds to allow groups to discuss. If time permits, Communicator calls on groups to guess. Communicator reveals adult image after discussion.*

### SLIDE: ANIMAL 2B: FLAMINGO

"Believe it or not, that is a baby flamingo! It looks way different without the pink feathers and really long legs. How about this one?"

### SLIDE: ANIMAL 3A: LADYBUG LARVAE

*Communicator allows 30 seconds to allow groups to discuss. If time permits, Communicator calls on groups to guess. Communicator reveals adult image after discussion.*

### SLIDE: ANIMAL 3B: LADYBUG

"This one caught me off guard. I was expecting a butterfly. Regardless, good guesses. It is a ladybug larvae. And



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finally, how about this baby?"

**SLIDE: ANIMAL 4A: NEWBORN HEDGEHOG**

*Communicator allows 30 seconds to allow groups to discuss. If time permits, Communicator calls on groups to guess. Communicator reveals adult image after discussion.*

**SLIDE: ANIMAL 4B: HEDGEHOG**

"This little guy looks like it had a run-in with a cactus, but it's a newborn hedgehog! It sort of looks cute."

### TENSION

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Thanks for guessing the images. Each one of those creatures grows into something that looks completely different. The baby giant panda starts out small and helpless, but it grows into something big and furry that can eat up to 84 pounds of bamboo every day! It doesn't happen overnight; rather, it happens over time. I want to show you one more photo. See if you can identify the creatures."

**SLIDE: LARGE GROUP PHOTO OF KIDS IN YOUR ENVIRONMENT**

"Any guesses? (Pause for response.) Yeah! Obviously, it is a picture of you. You ARE getting tall like the older people in your life point out! And you know what else? You will continue to grow! Your feet will get wider. Your arms will get longer. Your voice may even change! Everybody in this room has thought about growing up. You wonder what it will be like driving. You think about what sports you'll be playing in a few years."

"Pondering these things is good and normal. But have you ever thought about what it looks like to grow in wisdom? Is it possible to grow wiser in your thoughts and actions in junior high? Impulsively, we want to answer yes! If so, then how? How do we grow wiser tomorrow than we are today? Many of us want to make better choices, but how do we know we can make the wise choice?"

"Well, we can find wisdom in all sorts of places, but the first place we should look when it comes to questions like this is the Bible. Today we'll do just that. In just a second, we'll head to the New Testament to find out something pretty great about growing in wisdom."

### TRUTH

**COMMUNICATOR:** "Before we get to that, I need three Small Group Leaders to join me on stage to help me with a few projects."

*Communicator calls up three leaders. Give each leader a bit of modeling clay or play dough and to stand behind a table on the stage. Without letting the kids hear, assign each leader a different shape: crown, thumbs up, and trophy. Instruct them to start molding them out of the clay.*

"When you look at all the individuals throughout history who've helped tell the story of Jesus, few have had an impact like Paul, the apostle. Before Paul, also known as Saul, was an apostle, he was a Pharisee who was convinced he knew the right way to live. Like other religious leaders, Paul did not believe Jesus is the Messiah or the Son of God. Rather, he felt like Christianity was dangerous to the Jewish faith and did everything in his power to stop the spread."



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"While Paul was on his way to arrest Christians in Damascus, Jesus came to him on the road and everything changed. Paul realized Jesus is the Son of God, and his life changed. Paul worked tirelessly to share Jesus with as many people as possible."

"During Paul's travels, he started and visited churches to help people in different communities to know Jesus and grow in their relationship with Him. It was impossible for Paul to be present at all the churches all the time. To stay in touch, Paul wrote letters to the churches he started and to those he wanted to visit."

"One church Paul heard about but had never visited was in the city of Rome. Paul felt a connection with the Christians in Rome even though he hadn't been there yet. He wrote a letter to them, and we can read it in the New Testament of the Bible in the book of Romans."

"Listen to what Paul wrote,"

*Open the Bible to Romans 12:2 (NirV) and read.*

*"Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect."*

"Paul understood God's path is much different than the world's path. Wisdom from God is not always compatible with what the world says is true. If we're not careful, we can let the world change us into something God did not intend. If we're not careful, we can let the world define who we are."

*Communicator instructions first Small Group Leader to show off their creation while communicator talks about the molds.*

"Take a look at this creation. Anybody know what it is? (*Pause for response.*) This is a crown. Today, it will represent beauty. The world may tell you to be beautiful you must look a certain way, maybe like a fairytale prince or princess. I doubt there are any kings or queens of a sovereign country in this room, but the world often says you may need to have a specific haircut and color or dress in stylish clothes. The world might say you need to be a certain height or skin color, but God doesn't say this at all. Paul warned us not to conform to the patterns of this world or to fall into the trap of believing we need to be like someone else. Instead, we must recognize our beauty is not in our outward appearance. As our wisdom grows, we realize our beauty is found in a heart that fully belongs to God."

"Let's read the verse together:"

**SLIDE: ROMANS 12:2**

*Open the Bible to Romans 12:2 (NirV) and read.*

*"Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect."*

*Communicator instructs second Small Group Leader to show off their creation while*



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*communicator talks about the molds.*

“Let’s move to the second piece of clay. Anybody want to take a guess? *(Pause for response.)* That is a hand giving a thumbs up. It represents acceptance. To be accepted by this world, we may feel pressured to use inappropriate language, play video games your parents wouldn’t approve of, or hang around a specific crowd. Again, Paul was reminding us the world has a view very different than God’s view. To be accepted by God, we don’t have to do anything first. God loves us regardless of our past, present, or future. We should think about what God wants for us, not what this world wants for us. Remember,”

*Open the Bible to Romans 12:2 (NirV) and read.*

“*Don’t live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.*”

*Communicator instructs second Small Group Leader to show off their creation while communicator talks about the molds.*

“Finally, we have this object. Anybody know what our Small Group Leader has shaped? *(Pause for response.)* It’s a trophy representing success! The world will try to convince you the trophy of life is earned by your victories on the sports field or the report card you bring home. To the world success looks like a lot of YouTube or social media followers. Paul wrote not to let the world allow you to believe it. Success has already been achieved on the cross! Death was defeated and Jesus came back proving He is the Son of God! He has a perfect plan for you to follow Him!”

“Let’s read this together one more time.”

**SLIDE: ROMANS 12:2**

*Open the Bible to Romans 12:2 (NirV) and read.*

“*Don’t live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.*”

*Communicator thanks and dismisses volunteers to their seats.*

**APPLICATION**

**COMMUNICATOR:** “We are called to live differently than the world. When you look at the life of Jesus, that’s exactly what He did. While the world said to hate your enemies, Jesus said to pray for them. While the world said the person with the most power is the most important, Jesus said the greatest person is the one who serves. For us to live differently, we must completely change our thinking.

Like we read in Proverbs 3:5,”

*Open the Bible to Proverbs 3:5 (NirV) and read.*

“*Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Do not depend on your own understanding.*”



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"In other words, trust and depend on God more than any other voices in your life. When we do that, our thoughts will shift towards God and what He says is true!"

*Open the Bible to Romans 12:2b (NIRV) and read.*

*"And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect."*

*Communicator pulls out clay pot.*

"Here we have a clay pot. Now, this is made out of similar material as the molding clay, but it has been fired and toughened. It knows its purpose. What is a purpose of a pot? *(Pause for responses)* Yes, to hold soil and a flower or plant. You might push on the sides, but the shape won't change. Why? Because it's been made with a purpose in mind. You also have been made with a purpose in mind. When you know and believe God made you for His purposes, to do what God has for you, it's more likely that you will look to please Him instead of following the pattern of the ups and downs of this world."

"Throughout your life, you'll face difficult situations. When something difficult happens, you can stand strong and ask God to show you what to say and what to do. The more you invite God to shape what you believe and think in your head, the more you'll grow in wisdom. As long as you continue to seek God and His ways, you will never max out on wisdom. We never want to stop pursuing God."

## LANDING

**COMMUNICATOR:** "All of you have grown over the years. No longer are you a baby needing to be burped after each meal. Many of you burp on your own hourly. Your parents don't swaddle you to help you sleep. Yes, you've grown physically, but we want to ask this question as we head to Small Groups . . ."

### SLIDE: KEY QUESTION SLIDE

**"How are you wiser than you used to be?"** Think about the decisions you make now. How are they different than the sorts of choices you made last year? How do they show you're growing in your relationship with God? If you're not sure how you'd answer that question, that's OK, too. You'll chat more about it in Small Group. Before you head to groups, let's pray and ask God to help us keep growing in wisdom and our relationship with Him."

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

*Dismiss students to their Small Groups.*

**AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS EXIT.**

**SLIDE: THEME**

**OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP**