



TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Weighed Down

Jacob and Esau's Reconciliation
Genesis 31:3; 32:3-32; 33:1-17

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

What do people worry about?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

You can trust God even
when you're worried.

HOST SUPPLIES

- Host
- Two Small Groups
- Straws for each person in the two Small Groups

STORY SUPPLES

- Straws for each person in the room
- Two large cheer megaphones (plastic)
- One large "Esau" name tag (Optional)
- One large "Jacob" name tag (Optional)
- Week 4 Timeline Image, printed on cardstock from the LG Assets PDF

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

STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways **WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God**

Welcome/Opener
Worship ("I Can Always Trust You" from *Can't Stop Won't Stop*, "Over and Over" from *Everything to Me*, and "Even When" from *This Love*)
Bible Story (Communicator Script)
Key Question
Prayer

SMALL GROUP

25
MIN

GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Application Activity: Take a Snapshot
Bible Story Review: Bible Story Review and Discussion Questions
Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You
Prayer Activity: Make it Personal with Prayer

HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

Parent Cue Card (print or email)
Devotional for Kids
Parent Cue App



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PRETEEN

PRELUDE

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WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

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TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

What do people worry about?

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You can trust God even
when you're worried.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

"Trust in the Lord with all
your heart. Do not depend on
your own understanding."
Proverbs 3:5, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

Trust—Putting your confidence
in someone you can depend on

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:

AUDIO:

AUDIO:

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, movie opening (Puss in Boots: The Last Wish), a viral video on YouTube, holiday (Checkers Day, Elephant Appreciation Day, Punctuation Day, Comic Book Day, Good Neighbor 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. Host enters stage slurping on an enticing cold drink like a slushie or smoothie.

OPENER

HOST: (*rushed*) "Hi. Hello. How are you? Good. I'm great. Thanks for asking.



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“PHEW! So glad the salutations are over so we can move on to the GOOD STUFF! Each fall, carnivals and fairs and circuses take over America with their wild rides, deep fried cookies, and carnival games. On occasion, you find individuals daring to entertain the masses with crazy, dangerous stunts. There are some who juggle chainsaws, breath fire, and contort their bodies into painful positions!

“Well, today, we’re attempting a stunt . . . *(dramatic pause)* SO DIFFICULT . . . *(another dramatic pause)* it has never been attempted in the history of [Name of Environment]! This will make all the high wire acts seem like child’s play! To do this, I need two Small Groups who are brave enough to take on this challenge. Any gutsy groups want to give it a try? *(Pause for response.)*”

Host selects two Small Groups to play the game and brings them to the stage.

(To Small Groups) Your courage is spirited! But let’s see how it holds against a game we like to call The Fire Ring. *(To stagehand)* BRING OUT THE STRAWS!

SLIDE: “THE FIRE RING” TITLE

Communicator brings out enough straws for each person in the two Small Groups to have one. Host positions both Small Groups into two circles.

“Each person in the two circles needs to hold their straws against their pointer finger of their right hand. Criss-cross your arms—left over right. Press the tip of your pointer finger on your left hand against the end of your neighbors’ straw. No other part of your hand, other than your pointer fingers, can touch the straws at this point.”

Host pauses to confirm each group is ready to go. Once both groups are ready, host proceeds to explain the rules. If someone drops their straw, the group could either start over or be forced to pause until the straw is picked up and placed back in position.

“Great job. Now, throughout the game, I’ll give you specific tasks to do as a group. It’s your job not to drop any straws! The first team to complete the task without dropping a straw, wins a point for their team. If your team drops a straw, you must start over! The team with the most points at the end wins The Fire Ring! Any questions? *(Pause for response.)* Good! Side note, while there is not anything on fire here, your arms might start to burn a bit, which is where this game gets its name! Let’s get to it!”

AUDIO: UPBEAT GAME MUSIC

Host calls out a series of specific movements. The list could include jump three times in a row, form a triangle, direct the groups to make a complete rotation, and form a square.

“WOW! Excellent job! This game looks like it would be an easy task—in the same way tightwire walking looks like a breeze. However, each of our volunteer’s arms are feeling why the game is called The Fire Ring! Their arms are BURNING! Let’s give a round of applause to all their efforts. *(Pause for response.)* It would be a miss if we didn’t celebrate the team who scored the most points! Go crazy for our Fire Ring Champions! *(Allow rowdy response.)*”



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COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Communicator places both megaphones on opposite sides of the stage upon entering.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: “Hey, hey, hey! It’s so great to see so many of you today. Let’s have a show of hands. How many of you had a good week? *(Pause for response.)* Awesome! I love seeing so many hands go up. I want to hear from several of you: why your week was so good?”

Communicator calls on several volunteers to share the best part of their week.

“In [Name of Environment], it’s great to hear specific ways your week went well . . . before we make life just a bit more difficult for this entire room! That’s right! We want to challenge this whole group to attempt a very difficult challenge, but I think we can do it! Want to give it a try? *(Pause for response.)* Great! *(To stagehand)* BRING OUT THE STRAWS ONE MORE TIME!”

SLIDE: “THE FIRE RING” TITLE

Host brings out straws. Small Group Leaders help distribute one straw to each kid. Communicator instructs the entire group to stand in one, big circle.

“I want to see if we can accomplish a single task together while playing The Fire Ring. Just like before, hold your straws against your pointer finger of your right hand. Criss-cross your arms—left over right. Now, press your left-hand index finger against the tip of the straw standing next to you. Don’t forget, only your index fingers can touch your straws.

Communicator pauses to confirm the entire room is ready to go. If someone drops their straw, the group could either start over or be forced to pause until the straw is picked up and placed back in position.

“I will give this entire group a single task to complete together. The task alone is easy but much more difficult with the straws. Is everybody ready? *(Pause for response.)* I want this entire group to sit down without dropping a single straw. If a straw falls, we will all need to stand back up and start over. Make sense? *(Pause for response.)*

Communicator allows group to attempt the challenge. If the task is achieved quickly and time permits, challenge the group to stand back up without dropping a straw. If the task is not achieved after several attempts, applaud the effort and move on. Small Group Leaders collect the straws at the end of this activity.

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: “Great job to this entire group! This task required everyone to work together! Can anybody tell me what made The Fire Ring difficult? *(Pause for response.)* Yes, I agree. Your arms were burning. It was hard to keep your balance. Everybody had to work together! Your fingers had to maintain constant pressure on the straws. Each of those would make the activity really challenging. There is another requirement to be successful during The Fire Ring that’s important to point out—TRUST!”



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“Each of you trusted the person on your left and right. You believed they would work just as hard as you. You believed your partners wouldn’t push the straw too hard against your finger. You believed they would move in unison with you and the rest of the group! Without trust, this difficult task couldn’t be attempted! Success could only be achieved with trust! Thank you for trusting the people around you because this isn’t always easy to do.

“For many of us, though, trust is not always a given. In fact, trusting someone can be difficult when the relationship is difficult. I imagine that each person in the room has at least one example of a difficult relationship. These could include your brother or sister, a friend you’re fighting with, or some kids who ride your bus ride and are rude. Often, these relationships leave you upset and frustrated.

“Many of you have heard us talk about trusting God, but what does it look like to trust God with difficult relationships? How can we give those relationships and frustrations to God? If you have some people in your life who are difficult to get along with, a great place to discover how to respond to them is the Bible. The people who God inspired to write the different books of the Bible wrote about all sorts of relationships, including some that were pretty messed up. But we get to see how God showed up in each of these situations and how God can show up for you and me. Let’s check out one of those right now.”

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: “Since the beginning of August, we’ve been traveling through God’s One Big Story. Remember, in the beginning, God created a good world. But all of that changed when sin entered the garden. Nevertheless, God had a plan to bless the whole world through one family—Abraham’s! Though he was old, God gave Abraham a son named Isaac, who grew up to have a family of his own. Isaac had twin sons named Esau and Jacob, who didn’t exactly get along. Jacob tricked Esau out of his birthright and a special blessing! As a result, Esau planned to kill Jacob! To save his life, Jacob fled hundreds of miles away to live with his uncle. He ended up living there for more than 20 years!”

“Over the years, Jacob’s family and wealth grew. Goats, camels, and donkeys all flourished under Jacob’s care. Jacob eventually married and had kids of his own. Eventually, God gave Jacob some instructions that would move him away from his uncle. God said,”

Open the Bible to Genesis 31:3b (NIV) and read.

“Go back to your father’s land and to your relatives. I will be with you.”

“Jacob needed to move his family back home to the land of his father, Isaac. However, Jacob was worried. He didn’t know if Esau would still be angry with him. But God also reminded Jacob he wouldn’t be journeying alone—God would be with him!”

“Jacob packed up the family and hit the road. Playing it safe, he sent messengers ahead with word for Esau. The message from Jacob said . . .

Communicator picks up the “Jacob” megaphone and speaks the next line into megaphone at the direction of the “Esau” megaphone.

“I’ve been staying with our uncle! I’m a wealthy guy now! I hope I can please you!



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"The message was delivered! When the messengers returned, they had an update for Jacob about Esau! They explained . . .

Communicator picks up the "Esau" megaphone and speaks the next line into megaphone at the direction of the "Jacob" megaphone.

"Your brother got the message! He coming to meet you . . . with 400 men!

"Yikes! That was a lot of men! Jacob did not believe Esau was sending a welcome party. He feared his brother was coming to wipe out his family and wealth. Jacob had to think quickly. Out of fear, Jacob divided his family and wealth into two groups. This would allow one group to escape if Esau attacked.

Communicator moves next to the "Jacob" megaphone.

"Then Jacob took a moment to pray and asked God for help. He prayed,"

Open the Bible to Genesis 32:9-12 (NirV) and read.

"You are the God of my grandfather Abraham. You are the God of my father Isaac. Lord, you are the one who said to me, "Go back to your country and your relatives. Then I will give you success." You have been very kind and faithful to me. But I'm not worthy of any of this. When I crossed this Jordan River, all I had was my walking stick. But now I've become two camps. Please save me from the hand of my brother Esau. I'm afraid he'll come and attack me and the mothers with their children. But you have said, "I will surely give you success. I will make your children as many as the grains of sand on the seashore. People will not be able to count them."

"Jacob was clinging to God's promises.

"The next morning, he selected goats, rams, camels, cows, and donkeys as gifts for his brother. Servants were sent ahead with the gifts to be delivered to his brother. Jacob gave the first servant some specific words for Esau. He said . . .

Communicator picks up the "Jacob" megaphone and speaks the next line into megaphone at the direction of the "Esau" megaphone.

"Tell Esau the livestock belong to your brother Jacob. These are gifts for you! Jacob is coming behind us.

"So Jacob sent over 500 livestock as a peace offering to his brother hoping for a welcome and not worse! He even sent his family ahead thinking Esau would not harm them, while Jacob spent the night alone wrestling with God. Literally. But that's another story.

"The next morning, Jacob woke up to a startling sight. Esau approached with 400 men! Jacob went ahead and bowed down seven times as a sign of respect. This was the moment Jacob feared! Jacob was unsure how Esau would respond to seeing his brother for the first time in years.

"The fear was for nothing. Esau rushed to meet Jacob and gave him a warm embrace! They both cried tears of joy at the reunion!



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Communicator picks up the "Esau" megaphone and holds the megaphone.

"Esau wanted to know all about the people Jacob brought with him.

Communicator picks up the "Jacob" megaphone and holds the megaphone.

"Jacob was able to introduce his whole family for the first time to his brother.

Communicator picks up the "Esau" megaphone and holds the megaphone.

"Esau asked about all the animals Jacob sent ahead. What were they for?

Communicator picks up the "Jacob" megaphone and holds the megaphone.

"Jacob was able to explain the animals were a gift! Although Esau refused, Jacob insisted! So Esau returned home with lots more livestock while Jacob camped with his family in Canaan!"

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: "This story was intense for Jacob. He had a difficult relationship with his brother, Esau. For 20 years, Jacob lived away from the land of his father for fear Esau would kill him! However, God had a plan for Jacob requiring him to go back to the land of Isaac. Can you imagine the worry Jacob must have felt? If he returned, harm could come not only to himself but also his entire family! The risk was high! My favorite part of the entire story was when God reminded Jacob that he wasn't going back alone. God would be with Jacob! When the two brothers finally met face-to-face, there was no war or battle or yelling or screaming. Rather, there was a joyful reunion!"

SLIDE: GOD'S BIG STORY TIMELINE

SLIDE: WEEK 4 TIMELINE IMAGE

If you're making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today's timeline image on the clothesline.

"For Jacob to push past his worry and face his brother, he needed complete trust in God! Jacob recognized God had a plan for his life. Even though he didn't know the details, Jacob obeyed God's instructions.

"So many of us have difficult relationships at home, on the sports teams, or at school. I don't know anyone who enjoys dealing with difficult people who treat them poorly. It's terrible when that happens. And it's easy for us to worry in those situations. When Jacob faced an uncertain future, he did something WAY more helpful than panicking. He remembered to talk to God. How Jacob responded gives us a picture of what it might look like to depend on God when we're facing worries of all sizes!

"When you look at the life of Jesus, He did the same thing! Jesus talked to God when He knew He'd be arrested. Even after Jesus was arrested, He trusted His Father would be with Him through it all.

"Talking to God is a huge part of trusting God! Maybe your best friend stopped hanging with you because of something you did. You can ask God to give you the words to help you apologize. Or you got selected to join a team with none of your friends. You can ask God to give you the confidence to make new buddies!"



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LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: “Everyone will face different worries and fears. But every worry and fear, whether big or little, is an opportunity to trust God! As you prepare to head to our Small Groups, think about this one question:

SLIDE: KEY QUESTION

“What do people worry about?” That’s a good question! People worry about all sorts of things, most of which never happen the way they might imagine. You’ll talk more about this with your Small Group. Before we head out, how about we pray and ask God to for help with our worries? Let’s all remember to trust God no matter what. Let’s pray.”

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

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS EXIT.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP