

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES

## MADE TO CONNECT

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding



*Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Thank God for the meaningful conversations you've had all month and for the ones you will continue to have as you talk about using words wisely. Pray that God will give you the right words to say so that you can be an encouragement for your kids today.*

## TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

### Say What You Need to Say

Use Words Wisely  
Ephesians 4:29

## TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Use your words wisely.

## MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

**"Suppose you can be trusted with something very little. Then you can also be trusted with something very large."**

Luke 16:10a, NIRV

## MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Responsibility—Showing you can be trusted with what is expected of you**

## BASIC TRUTH

I need to make the wise choice.

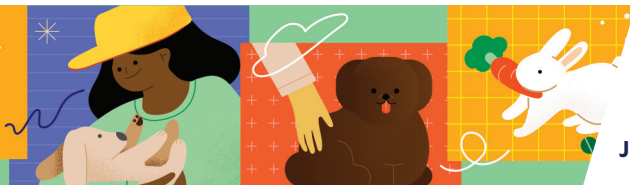
## 1. EARLY ARRIVER

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Pronunciation Guide" Activity Page and offering container;  
*Optional: device with internet access*

### WHAT YOU DO:

- Welcome kids to small group by name with a high five or fist bump!
- Invite kids who brought an offering to put it in the offering container.
- Choose to use either the "Pronunciation Guide" Activity Page or a translator website on a smartphone to learn how to say "hello" in different languages.
- If using the "Pronunciation Guide" Activity Page:
  - Give each kid a "Pronunciation Guide" Activity Page.
  - One by one, read the different ways to say "hello."
- If using the smartphone option:
  - Type in "Google™ translate" in your web search bar.
  - Type in "hello" and click on a language that is different than your own.
  - Click on the megaphone icon to play the translation out loud for the group.
  - Practice saying, "hello" together in different languages.
- Ask:
  - Does anyone speak a different language?
  - If so, how do you say "hello" in the language you speak?
- If time allows, discuss how different pets say hello.
  - Dogs wag their tails when they're excited.
  - Llamas sometimes spit.
  - Cats rub against your leg.

NOTE: This week centers around using words wisely. Be sensitive to any non-speaking kids in your group. Look for places to include wise words in the form of writing, thoughts, and expressions through actions. See the Special Needs Adaptation Small Group plans to support kids with disabilities in your inclusion Small Group. See the Special Needs Resource Kit for alternate activity ideas and overall further support ideas.



PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES

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## 2. OPENING ACTIVITY

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Animal sticker-by-number pages and/or animal-themed puzzles

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Invite kids to choose a sticker-by-number page or puzzle to work on.
- Allow kids to work in pairs.
- Continue as time and interest allow.

## TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Say What You Need to Say**

Use Words Wisely  
Ephesians 4:29

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

"I love seeing your creations! We really have to be wise and intentional about what pieces we use in these puzzles or our pictures don't quite work the way they should, right? **[Transition] Today in Large Group, we'll hear about some simple directions God gave us to help us live wisely.**"

## TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Use your words wisely.

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

## MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

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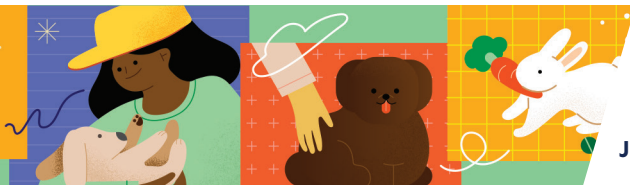
Luke 16:10a, NIRV

## MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Responsibility—Showing you can be trusted with what is expected of you**

## BASIC TRUTH

I need to make the wise choice.



## MADE TO EXPLORE

an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery



## 3. CONTROL YOUR WORDS

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Bibles, index cards, painter's tape, and small toy car;

### WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide kids into pairs.
- Give each pair an index card and a Bible.
- Together, look up Luke 16:10 in the Bibles using the Bible Navigation tips below.

***Finding verses with 2nd and 3rd graders:** Guide kids to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like. When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find "Luke" in the list under "New Testament." When the kids find Luke, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Luke. Help the kids find the page. When they find Luke, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 16. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 10 in chapter 16.*

- Read the verse out loud.
- Assign each pair of kids a different piece of the memory verse to write on their card so the entire memory verse is written among the group's cards.
- Tape a five-foot road or track on the floor of your space.
- Tape the index cards with verse phrases along the painter's tape road in random order so the order is mixed up.
- Give one kid the toy car.
- One by one, instruct the kids to take a turn driving the car up and down the track to try and complete the memory verse in order.
  - For example, direct the kid to "drive" the car to the first part of the verse on the track, then to the next, etc.
  - If a kid needs to go backward to reach the next part of the verse, instruct them not to turn around, but to drive in reverse!
- If the kid drives the verse in the incorrect order, direct them to go to the back of the line and give the next kid a turn.
- Continue until all kids have had a turn.

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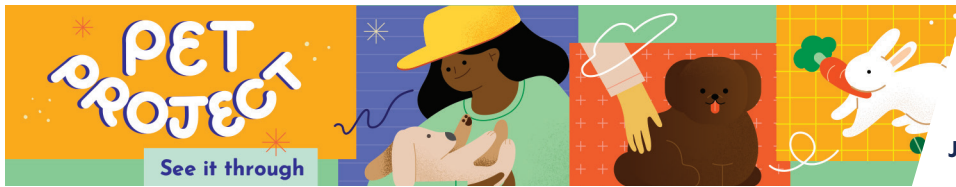
**Responsibility—Showing you can be trusted with what is expected of you**

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### WHAT YOU SAY:

"Wow! You have some amazing driving skills. Did you notice that it was more work to go backwards when you needed? (*Invite responses.*) Sometimes, controlling our words will take more work. You can make someone's day—or ruin it—with just one sentence. One of the best ways to show you're following Jesus is to use your words wisely.



WEEK  
**FOUR**  
JANUARY 2024

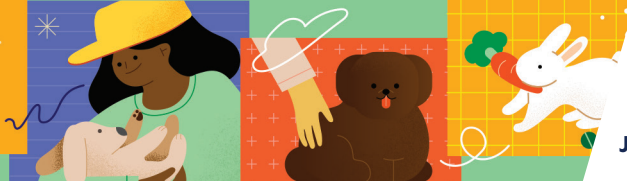
SMALL GROUP  
**2-3**

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

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

### (3. CONTROL YOUR WORDS CONTINUED)

“Have you ever experienced a time when you didn’t use your words wisely? *(Invite responses.)* We’ve all been there! There’s not one perfect person in this group. That’s why we need Jesus. When you believe in Jesus, you have the Holy Spirit to help guide you to **use your words wisely**. When we begin to obey the Holy Spirit’s guidance, God can trust us with more.”



## MADE TO REFLECT

an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



## 4. PRAY AND DISMISS

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** No supplies needed.

### WHAT YOU DO:

- Invite kids to sit in a circle with you.
- Say, "Let's go around the circle and each say something nice about the person sitting to the left of us."
- Remind kids of the different kinds of helpful words they can use: encourage someone, celebrate someone, serve someone, and thank someone.
- Say something kind about the kid on your left to start the conversation.
- Invite that kid to do the same for the person on their left, and so on.
- Close your group time in prayer.

### WHAT YOU SAY:

"Dear God, please help us see people the way You see them. Give us opportunities to be wise with our words. Through a compliment, encouragement, even a simple hello, we know that You will help us be responsible with how we show care to the people around us. It can be as simple as looking to the person to our left and saying something nice. Give us an excitement and passion as You remind us to **use your words wisely** this week. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, ask the kids to show off their "When Words Hurt" page. Remind them that this week they have the opportunity to show responsibility by using wise words to paint our world a more beautiful place!

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