

PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION  
15 MINUTES

### MADE TO PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group



*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 loving us and making a way to fill our lives with joy despite what we face. Ask God to help the kids in your group to look to the things God has done as sources of joy, even when they don't feel joy.*

### TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

**Over and Over**  
Feast of Booths  
Deuteronomy 16:13-17

### 1. EARLY ARRIVER

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Offering container

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Welcome the kids by name as they arrive.
- Encourage kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Invite a kid to create a celebration rhythm.
  - For example, they can create rhythms by: using a combination of their voice and/or body to clap, snap, stomp, dance, jump, etc.
  - Provide a few examples to get kids thinking, if needed.
- Instruct the rest of the kids to copy the celebration rhythm.
- Continue until everyone has had a chance or interest fades.

### TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

**Make a habit of choosing joy.**

### MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

**"A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up."**  
Proverbs 17:22, NIV

### MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing**

### BASIC TRUTH

**I need to make the wise choice.**

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

**MADE TO REFLECT**  
an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

**TODAY'S BIBLE STORY**  
**Over and Over**  
Feast of Booths  
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**TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE**  
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**2. CELEBRATE YOUR JOURNEY TIMELINE**  
[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** "Milestone" Activity Page, and opaque bag

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Place all of the cards from the "Milestone" Activity Page in the bag.
- Choose one kid to reach in the bag and remove one of the cards from the "Milestone" Activity Page.
- Instruct the kid who chose the card to discreetly look at the picture and text on the card.
- Invite the kid to stand in the front of the group and act out the milestone depicted on their card.
- Encourage the rest of the group to guess the milestone.
- Once the kids correctly guess, ask anyone from the group to share a brief story or memory related to that milestone (if they have one).
- Repeat so that each kid gets a turn to choose and act out one of the cards.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**  
"Great job acting out and guessing all those things! Does anyone realize what all of those cards had in common? (*Invite responses.*) They represent different milestones we've learned to do, or maybe are still waiting to learn to do. I'm impressed with all the amazing things you've learned to do!"

"But let's be real—learning some of these things were more difficult than others, right? Did anyone run into some challenges or setbacks along the way? (*Invite responses.*) How did you conquer those obstacles? (*Invite responses.*)"

"When you're in the middle of learning something new and it feels like you're struggling, it's not always easy to feel joyful, right? But guess what? That's when we can remember to celebrate along the way. We've already learned and achieved things that we do every day. Just imagine the endless possibilities ahead. As you grow older, you will learn to do so many new things—like driving a car!"

"When we hit the pause button to remember and find joy in all the incredible things God has done and is doing in our lives, it helps us remember that God is always by our side helping us do new things and overcome obstacles. So, let's **make a habit of choosing joy** every day."

**CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES**

**MADE TO EXPLORE**  
an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery



**3. JOYFUL VERSE**  
[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]  
**WHAT YOU NEED:** Bibles, and "Verse Actions" Activity Page

- WHAT YOU DO:**
- Make sure each kid has a Bible.
  - Together, look up Proverbs 17:22 using the Bible

Navigation tips below.

***Finding verses with 2nd and 3rd graders:** Guide them 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 Proverbs in the list under "Old Testament." When the kids find Proverbs, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Proverbs. Help the kids find the page. When they find Proverbs, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 17. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 22 in chapter 17.*

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**MONTHLY VIRTUE**

**Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing**

**BASIC TRUTH**

**I need to make the wise choice.**

- Read through the verse a few times together as a group.
- Instruct the kids to pair up.
- Give each pair a card from the "Verse Actions" Activity Page.
  - If there are more kids than cards, do groups of three instead of pairs of two.
- Instruct the pairs to practice reciting the verse using the celebration directions on their card.
- Allow the kids to use their Bibles to remember the verse as they are practicing their celebration directions.
- After kids have finished practicing, invite the pairs to take turns reciting the verse in front of the group with the celebration direction on their card.
  - Allow the pairs to use their Bibles if needed.
- After each pair reads the verse in the celebratory way, invite the rest of the group to echo the verse and actions that they just observed.
- Repeat until each pair has reviewed the verse.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**  
"That was amazing! King Solomon, the author of this verse, was telling us that being happy is like good medicine for our hearts. It means when we choose to be joyful, it can make us feel better inside. So, when we **make a habit of choosing joy**, it's like taking good medicine for our hearts every day!"

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**MADE TO REFLECT**  
an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application



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**4. PRAY AND DISMISS**  
[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]  
**WHAT YOU NEED:** Prepared "Joy Journal" Activity Pages from previous week; additional prepared, blank "Joy Journal" Activity Pages; markers; and pencils

- WHAT YOU DO:**
- Give each kid their "Joy Journal" from last week.
  - Set out the pencils.
  - Give blank "Joy Journal" Activity Pages to any kids who you don't have a journal for.
    - Encourage them to write their names on the front cover.
  - Direct the kids to turn to page 3.
  - Read the Bottom Line, and invite the kids to recite it with you a few times.
    - **Make a habit of choosing joy.**
  - Read the prompt to the group: "Draw a picture that shows a habit you want to develop that can bring you joy."
  - Invite kids to share habits that can make them feel joyful.
    - For example: Reading a favorite book, spending more time at church, spending time with family, playing a favorite game, etc.
  - Set out the markers.
  - Instruct kids to draw the habit they want to develop in the space provided.
  - If time allows, give kids who were not present for previous weeks some time to draw something that brings them joy—from the previous pages in the "Joy Journal."
  - Collect the journals and store them for the following weeks.
  - Close your group time in prayer.

*NOTE: Kids will be adding to their journals each week this month. Be prepared to collect and store them each week. Prepare extra copies for kids not present in previous weeks. If preferred, don't staple the pages—send individual pages home each week.*

**WHAT YOU SAY:**  
"Dear God, thank You for the big story You're telling—where we can see times of celebrations. Help us choose joy every day. When things are hard, help us to remember You are with us and find joy in that. Thank You for teaching us that celebrating is not just for special times, but something we can do every day. It's medicine to our bodies! That is why we want to **make a habit of choosing joy.** We love You and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to share the Memory Verse in the style of one of the celebration directions from earlier.