

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 some of the things God has done in your life. Ask God to help the kids of your group to discover that God can help them keep going and be joyful all throughout their lives.*

**TODAY'S BIBLE STORY**

**Build Your Kingdom Here**  
Ezra and the Rebuilding of the Temple  
Ezra 3:10-13

**1. EARLY ARRIVER**

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Offering container

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Greet kids by name as they arrive.
- Encourage kids who have brought an offering to put it in the offering container.
- As kids arrive, ask: "What makes you laugh?"
- When enough kids have arrived, ask the kids to circle up.
- Invite a kid to stand in the middle of the circle and move around to each kid in the circle as they say "Ha," "Ho," or "Hee," to each kid.
- Determine anyone who laughs to be out and instruct them to step outside the circle.
- Declare the last kid in the circle as the winner!
- If several kids remain in the circle after a few minutes, choose a new kid to take their place in the middle.
- Continue playing multiple rounds until everyone has had a chance to stand in the middle.

**TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE**

Celebrate each step of the way.

**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 can trust God no matter what.

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

**MADE TO CREATE**  
 an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing



**1. PAUSE TO CELEBRATE**  
 [TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

**WHAT YOU NEED:** “Hidden” Activity Page, “Hidden” Activity Page Key, “Script” Activity Page, streamers, markers, and a device for playing high-energy music

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Give each kid a “Hidden” Activity Page and two long pieces of streamers.
- Instruct the kids to use the key at the bottom of the “Hidden” Activity Page to color each box to reveal a picture.
- Say: “As you color, I’m going to review the Bible Story and randomly play music. When you hear the music, stop coloring, stand up, and dance/wave your streamers to celebrate!”
- Set out the markers.
- Instruct the group to color in the squares using the color code on the “Hidden” Activity Page.
- As the kids color, review the Bible Story using the “Script” Activity Page, playing music when it’s time to celebrate, and asking the kids to pause and join in on the celebration.
- Invite kids to share what picture they have revealed after completing the “Hidden” Activity Page.
  - Reference the “Hidden” Activity Page Key for additional guidance if needed.

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**TODAY’S BOTTOM LINE**  
 Celebrate each step of the way.

**MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE**  
**“A cheerful heart makes you healthy. But a broken spirit dries you up.”**  
 Proverbs 17:22, NIRV

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

**BASIC TRUTH**  
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**WHAT YOU SAY:**  
 “Great job celebrating, everyone! How did it feel to stop what you were working on and dance around? (*Invite responses.*) Celebrating isn’t just about having a good time—it energizes us! It’s like giving ourselves a high five for all the awesome things we’re doing with God.

“Can you remember why the Israelites were taken away to Babylon? (*Invite responses, like: they turned away from God, they were taken captive.*) The amazing part is that 70 years later, God kept the promise to bring them back home. Was everything perfect when they got back? (*Invite responses.*) What was wrong? (*Invite responses, like: the city walls and the temple were in ruins*) But they didn’t give up!

“They had a whole temple and city to rebuild! They started by building the altar of the temple and then the temple’s foundation. The new temple’s foundation wasn’t as impressive as the first one. God’s people still had a long way to go to build the temple—it would take them a couple more decades to finish the temple. But they were filled with joy that they’d completed one big step along the way. They praised God with shouts of joy because they knew they worked to honor God and **celebrate each step of the way.**”

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

**MADE TO MOVE**

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body



**3. VERSE TAP**

[HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles

WHAT YOU DO:

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

Navigation Tips below.

**TODAY'S BIBLE STORY**

**Build Your Kingdom Here**

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*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.*

**TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE**

Celebrate each step of the way.

- Choose a kid who would like to read the verse to the group.
- Invite others who would like to read the verse to the group.
- Instruct the kids to circle up.
- Select one kid to start the game.
- Instruct that kid to walk around the circle while tapping each kid's head as they recite the words of the verse.
  - If they struggle to remember the words, encourage the group to recite the verse together, using their Bibles if needed.
- When the kid walking around the circle gets to the reference, instruct the kid they tap to get up and chase the tapper around the circle until one of them sits back down in the empty spot.
- Instruct the last kid standing to start a new round.
- Repeat as time and interest allow.

**MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE**

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

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Let's give a big cheer for ourselves to **celebrate each step of the way** towards memorizing this month's Memory Verse! (Allow time for kids to cheer.) We've made big progress on learning this month's Memory Verse. Celebrating our progress not only makes us happy inside, but it also makes our bodies strong—it's like medicine for the body! So let's learn to **celebrate each step of the way** when we do things!"

**MONTHLY VIRTUE**

Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing

**BASIC TRUTH**

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CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT  
25 MINUTES

**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:** Prepared “Joy Journals” from previous weeks, additional prepared, blank “Joy Journal” Activity Pages, markers, and pencils

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Give the kids their “Joy Journals” from the previous 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 4.
- Read the Bottom Line, and invite the kids to recite it with you a few times.
  - **Celebrate each step of the way.**
- Read the prompt to the group. “Think about new steps for new skills you have learned or tried recently. Write or draw about one of each step above.”
- Set out the markers.
- Draw the group’s attention to the steps visual.
- Ask the kids to draw or write about something significant on each step, representing a step they’ve taken recently.
  - Some suggestions could be: learning a new skill, making a new friend, not arguing with a sibling, or overcoming a challenge.
- Give kids time to fill in their journals.
- 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 reminding us of the things we have overcome and achieved. Help us to remember not to get stressed when we struggle to complete things or when they don’t go the way we think they should. Help us to remember that we will never be completely finished in this lifetime with all the things we might want to do or learn. Help us enjoy and celebrate the steps we accomplish and trust You to be with us as we keep going. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to show them the “Hidden” Activity Page and explain how they paused to celebrate.

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**TODAY’S BOTTOM LINE**  
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