

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. Take some time to be quiet, then ask God to help you take notice of things and people around you as reminders of what God has given you. Ask God to help the kids of your group to remember to do the same.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Look Around
Joy in the Psalms
Psalms 8, 16, and 19

1. EARLY ARRIVER

WHAT YOU NEED: Offering container, butcher paper, marker, sticky dots, and blindfold

WHAT YOU DO:

- Greet the kids by name as they arrive.
- Encourage the kids who have brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Draw a large face on the butcher paper with a nose, mouth, and ears.
- Choose one kid to go first.
- Instruct them to put on a blindfold.
- Give the kid two sticky dots to hold (“eyes”)—one in their right hand and one in their left hand.
- Tell them to stick the eyes where they think they belong on the face on the paper when blindfolded.
- Write the kid’s name on the dots when they finish.
 - If the dots are too small, distinguish the dots by colors or initials.
- Repeat with each kid—drawing additional faces if more room is needed.
- When done, take a moment to celebrate everyone’s creation!

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Find joy in what you see around you.

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 CONNECT

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



1. JOYFUL INTRODUCTIONS

[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]

WHAT YOU NEED: Nametags, and markers

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid a nametag and a marker.
- Instruct each kid to write their name on the tag.
- Encourage the kids to add a small drawing or symbol that represents something unique or joyful about themselves.
 - For example: a smiley face, a heart, or a symbol that represents a favorite activity.
- Once everyone has their nametag on, instruct the kids to sit in a circle.
- Going around the circle, ask each kid to introduce themselves, share their name, and briefly explain the symbol or drawing on their nametag.
- After you've gone around the circle, choose one kid in the circle to name one of the symbols someone else in the circle has.
- Ask the kid who has that symbol one of the review questions below.
- Repeat until all questions have been answered.
 - What book of the Bible did we hear about today? (*Psalms*)
 - Who wrote about half of the book of Psalms? (*David*)
 - When David was a shepherd, what are some of the things he noticed around him from God's creation? (*heavens, moon, stars, sky, sun*)
 - What are the five senses we can use to find joy? (*sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell*)
 - Why did David find joy and wonder in the people around him? (*God made us each unique; we can care for what God made in different ways*)

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"It was so fun to learn more about each other! Just like David found joy in the incredible creation and people around him, we can find joy in God's creativity shown in each other's amazing uniqueness too. David saw how special and wonderful everyone was.

"Who is someone in your life who is special to you? Why are they special? (*Invite responses.*) They bring joy to your life! And guess what? You're all part of that wonderful creation too! So no matter what is happening in our lives, we can look around, take it all in, and be reminded that God is good and wants us to find joy in the things around us. When we're following Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to help us pay attention and find joyful moments. When you **find joy in what you see around you**, it's like opening a gift from God."

[Make It Personal] (*Share with the group how you find joy in the things around you. Maybe you take walks and enjoy God's creation, enjoy hearing people's stories and getting to know them, or maybe reading the book of Psalms and learning about how amazing God is.*)

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO EXPLORE

an activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery



*** 2. DISCOVERY SCAVENGER HUNT**
[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Application Words" Activity Page, "Scavenger Hunt List" Activity Page, pens or pencils, and prepared scavenger hunt items

WHAT YOU DO:

- Ask all of the kids to close and cover their eyes.
- Hide (or randomly place) all of the labeled items around your group space.
- Invite kids to uncover and open their eyes.
- Give each kid a "Scavenger Hunt List" Activity Page and a pen or pencil.
- Read through the criteria on the "Scavenger Hunt List" Activity Page.
- Invite kids to search around the group space for one item with a word label attached to it.
- Instruct the kids to write the word they find attached to each item beside it on the "Scavenger Hunt List" Activity Page.
- After they find all the items, challenge kids to form a sentence using the words they found by filling in the blanks at the bottom of the "Scavenger Hunt List" Activity Page.
- Choose one kid to read the sentence they created: *Find joy in what you see around you.*

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WHAT YOU SAY:

"How did using your senses allow you to find the hidden items? (*Invite responses.*) When you pay attention to the world around you, like David did, you can **find joy in what you see around you.**

"One of the best ways to find joy around you is to use your senses! They're an amazing gift from God. We can use our senses to notice all the amazing things and people around us that God gave us to experience joy. Some senses may be stronger for you than others, but all of these senses—see, hear, smell, touch, and taste—are like tools to find joy! And, oh, the book of Psalms! Reading the psalms in the book of Psalms is like a playlist of encouragement, reminding us that God can turn any situation into something good."

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

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY
Look Around
Joy in the Psalms
Psalms 8, 16, and 19

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid their "Joy Journals" from the previous weeks.
- 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 5.
- Read the Bottom Line, and invite the kids to recite it with you a few times.
 - **Find joy in what you see around you.**
- Set out the markers.
- Read the first prompt to the group ("I can find joy when I see _____."), discuss some possible ideas, pause to give kids time to write their response, then repeat with each prompt.
 - I can find joy when I see . . . (Suggestions: the smiling faces of family and friends, the beauty of nature that God created, a sunrise painting the sky with warm colors, acts of kindness, etc.)
 - I can find joy when I hear . . . (Suggestions: words of encouragement from loved ones, birds singing outside my window, a favorite song, etc.)
 - I can find joy when I touch . . . (Suggestions: a handwritten note or card, a gift from someone special, something I make for a friend, etc.)
 - I can find joy when I smell . . . (Suggestions: fresh flowers, a delicious homemade meal, perfume or cologne of someone special, etc.)
 - I can find joy when I taste . . . (Suggestions: cookies made by someone I love, ice cream or cake during a birthday party of a friend, etc.)
- If time allows, give kids who were not present for previous weeks some time to fill in any blank, previous pages.
- Collect the journals and store them for the following week.
- Close your group time in prayer.

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE
Find joy in what you see around you.

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.

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

WHAT YOU SAY:
"Dear God, thank You for the wonderful gift of our senses. Help us to find joy in the unique and beautiful things we see around us every day. Open our eyes to the wonders of Your creation and the people You have made. Help us to see the good even in challenging situations. Teach us to use our senses to find joy in the simple moments of life. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

MONTHLY VIRTUE
Joy—Choosing to celebrate what God is doing

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(4. PRAY AND DISMISS, CONTINUED)

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to explain their nametags and what they think is unique or joyful about themselves.