

252 GROUPS

Curriculum Materials for 2nd and 3rd Grades

CREATE THE ENVIRONMENT:

This month we want to create a fresh environment that helps change the way kids play the game of life by using God's power to display some SELF-CONTROL.

The imagery we're using to communicate this truth is a video game controller. Try turning part of your stage into a TV or game room like you'd find in someone's house. Could you borrow anything from the middle or high school environments or know anyone with a specially decorated game room? Try borrowing a recliner or a gaming chair for the Host to sit in at the opening or close of most weeks. Or how about a big beanbag chair facing a TV?



GAME ON
CHANGING THE WAY YOU PLAY

**BEFORE KIDS LEAVE THE 5TH GRADE,
WE WANT THEM TO UNDERSTAND 3 BASIC TRUTHS:**

FAITH I can trust God no matter what.

WISDOM I need to make the wise choice.

FRIENDSHIP I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

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252 GOOD-TO-KNOW TERMS

SMALL GROUP LEADER

One consistent leader for the same 8-10 children all year

- We suggest you start and end in small group so kids connect relationally with one leader and other similar-aged peers.
- If you have multiple small groups meeting in one room, try using circle area rugs to give each group their own spot.
- Offer as many of the activities as your time, space, and resources allow.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

ABOUT GOD

God is the one and only true God, yet He exists in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is the Creator, so everything belongs to Him and is under His control. God is holy, so He is righteous, majestic, and loving. God is all knowing and purposeful, so He's at work to bring about His will. No person, thing, or idea compares to God.

ABOUT PEOPLE

People are made in God's image and for His pleasure. But everybody falls short of God's intention, or ideal, for people. In other words, everyone has sinned. As a result, we are all separated from Him, even though He wants an intimate relationship with each of us.

ABOUT THE BIBLE

God reveals Himself to us through the Bible, and it is 100% accurate, reliable, and authoritative.

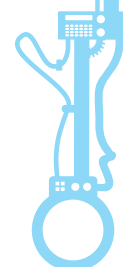
ABOUT SALVATION

That's why Jesus—God's Son—came and lived on this earth, died, and rose again. God offers His free gift of salvation to all who believe in Jesus and accept Him as Savior—the only way to be forgiven and reconciled to God. Anyone who accepts this gift is adopted as a son or daughter into God's family and will live with Him forever in heaven.

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Virtue:

SELF-CONTROL

Choosing to do what you should do, not what you want to do.

**FOR LEADERS ONLY****GOD VIEW: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SELF-CONTROL AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY**

Have you ever been so angry that you just wanted to scream until your lungs fell out? Or maybe someone said the meanest thing possible and you wanted to get even. We all feel angry sometimes. But can you imagine a world where everyone acted on their anger? Or said what they thought right away? What if the adults and kids all threw a tantrum each and every time they got upset? The world would be a pretty scary place to live.

That's probably one reason the Bible advises us to have self-control. But self-control means a whole lot more than not acting out or cutting up. Self-control means choosing to do what you should do—and not what you want to do. And that's hard for all of us.

The good news is that God doesn't ask us to do anything on our own. God promises to help us. In fact, 2 Peter 1:3 says God's given us everything we need to lead a godly life. And self-control is even the last fruit mentioned in the list found in Galatians 5:22-23. The fruit of the Spirit is just a fancy

way of saying that having self-control is a way to display that we have God in our life. And when we have God in our lives, He's present every hour of every day, ready to help us take control of our thoughts, words, and actions.

So, the next time you need a little self-control to help you hold your temper, to choose your words carefully, or to eat only one of your favorite treats, pause to pray and ask God for wisdom and help. Then you can make a wiser choice, instead of reacting in the moment. And remember: everyone benefits when we show a little self-control.

This month, let's think about how:

- (1) *We can display self-control as a response to God.*
- (2) *God empowers us with self-control to respond wisely.*
- (3) *God uses self-control in us to influence our families, friends, and neighbors.*

Remember: A virtue is something God does in us to change the world around us.

This week, we're discovering:

Do you know what can really get us in trouble? It's not just our temper or our words or our choices like we've talked about these other weeks. No, it's what comes *before* all that and can happen so fast that it's hard to catch. *Our thoughts* lead to all our actions.

That's why we're finishing this month on self-control by talking through the biblical principle in **Philippians 4:8** of watching what you think about. Whatever we focus on most will take over and fill our minds. Sometimes one or two negative things might even stand out and stick more than all the other positive things going on.

That's why it's important to think even more about what's true and right, what's excellent and worthy of our praise. That's why you should (Bottom Line) **use the Bible to guide your thoughts**. What a great way to review what we've learned about the faith skill—**personalizing scripture**—from Proverbs and other verses that encourage us to grow in **wisdom**.

252 GROUPS

Curriculum Materials for K-5th Grades

JAN

WEEK
5

SMALL
GROUP
2-3

HERE'S A SNEAK PEEK OF WHAT YOU'LL BE DOING IN 2ND AND 3RD GRADE THIS WEEK:



PLUG IN

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES TO FOCUS THE ENERGY

- Ideas for Early Arrivers
- So Much to Think About



POWER UP

INTERACTIVE LARGE GROUP EXPERIENCE
TO ENGAGE THE HEART

- Worship
- Opener
- Bible story
- Prayer and Worship
- Closer



CATCH ON

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES TO MAKE THE CONNECTION
(CHOOSE TWO OR MORE OF THESE ACTIVITIES)

- What Are You Thinking About?
- Time to Think: Game On/Game Off
- His Clues #5
- Prayer

DISMISSAL

- Prayer, share and reflect on today's lesson before leaving

Virtue: SELF-CONTROL

Choosing to do what you should do, not what you want to do.

BIBLE STORY

Guide (what you think about) • Philippians 4:8

BOTTOM LINE

Use the Bible to **guide** your thoughts.

MEMORY VERSE

"My dear brothers and sisters, pay attention to what I say. Everyone should be quick to listen. But they should be slow to speak. They should be slow to get angry." James 1:19, NIV

BASIC TRUTH: I can trust God no matter what.

Virtue:**SELF-CONTROL**

Choosing to do what you should do, not what you want to do.



**WEEK
5**

PLUG IN
10-15 min

POWER UP
20-25 min

CATCH ON
25-30 min

GETTING READY**PLUG IN: FOCUS THE ENERGY** *(Choose one or both of these activities.)***Early Arriver**

- an interesting offering container

So Much to Think About

- Sticky notes; several stacks per Small Group
- Pencils or pens

CATCH ON: MAKE THE CONNECTION *(Choose as many of these activities as you like.)*

** If you don't have time to do all these activities, be sure to do activity #1. Activity #2 is particularly good for children who need to move in order to stay engaged (not just for boys).*

What Are You Thinking About? *(application activity / review the Bible story)*

- Crayons
- Large white art or butcher paper, about five feet per Small Group

Time to Think: Game On/Game Off *(application activity / great for boys)*

- 1 plastic pit ball or any kind of ball that won't hurt when thrown

His Clues #5 *(memory verse activity)*

- Bible (should be the size to fit in the lunch sack)
- Brown lunch sack

Prayer

- Bible

Additional Resources:

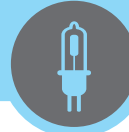
- Make copies on cardstock of this week's GodTime and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Studio252.tv** and the **Parent Cue app**. To find out more about these great resources, go to <http://www.Studio252.tv/leaders>.

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**WEEK
5**



PLUG IN
10-15 min



POWER UP
20-25 min



CATCH ON
25-30 min

**BIBLE STORY:
GUIDE**

Philippians 4:8

BOTTOM LINE:

Use the Bible to **guide** your thoughts.

MEMORY VERSE:

“My dear brothers and sisters, pay attention to what I say. Everyone should be quick to listen. But they should be slow to speak. They should be slow to get angry.” James 1:19, NIV

BASIC TRUTH:

I can trust God no matter what.

PLUG IN: FOCUS THE ENERGY

Focus the energy on today’s Bible story in a Small Group setting with an engaging discussion question and an interactive opening activity.

Before students arrive, pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your class for the first time. Pray that God would begin or continue to show the kids in your Small Group that what we think about matters a lot. Ask God to increase their motivation to want to understand what the Bible says so it can help guide their thoughts, since that leads to action and creating habits that can be hard to break.

1. EARLY ARRIVER IDEA

What You Need: an interesting offering container

What You Do:

Have early arriver kids help set up Small Group supplies. Invite them to drop their offering off in the offering container.

What You Say:

“Do you ever find yourself gazing off and day dreaming about stuff? Do you think about different things during the day? Sometimes when my mind wanders, I’m thinking about my grocery list or what I am going to make for dinner. The things I think about now are different than the things I thought about when I was a kid. We really do have so much to think about, when we stop and think about it! We have lots of choices in what we think about too! Think for a minute about all the things you think of and then I have something fun for us to do, I think!”

2. SO MUCH TO THINK ABOUT

What You Need: sticky notes, pencils or pens

What You Do:

Talk to kids about how you sometimes use sticky notes to write down important things that you are thinking about and don’t want to forget! Tell them that they are going to write down things that they think about on the sticky notes. Then ask them to stick them on the wall closest to the group.



Apply
go and do



Impress
impress this upon their minds



Personalize
a personal story from the heart



Recycle
important things to say over and over




Transition
making a transition from one leader to another

Virtue:

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**WEEK
5****PLUG IN**
10-15 min**POWER UP**
20-25 min**CATCH ON**
25-30 min**What You Say:**

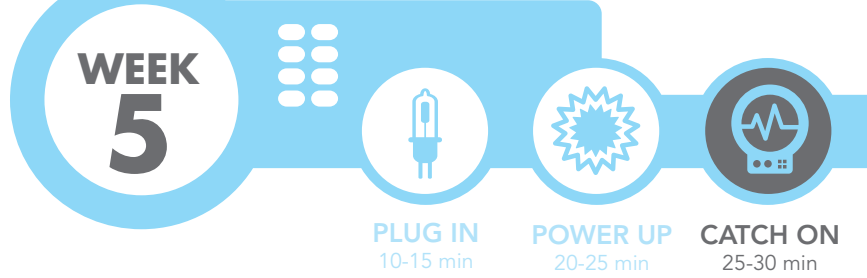
"Wow! Look at our wall full of things we think about. Let me read a few of these—(examples might include dancing, math, chores, homework, soccer, etc.) You all think of LOTS of things each day and during the week. Did you know that God gave us specific directions all through the Bible about what we should and shouldn't think about?  **Let's go to Large Group to learn more about the things that God wants us to have in the brains of ours!"**

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

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BIBLE STORY:
GUIDE

Philippians 4:8

BOTTOM LINE:

Use the Bible to **guide** your thoughts.

MEMORY VERSE:

“My dear brothers and sisters, pay attention to what I say. Everyone should be quick to listen. But they should be slow to speak. They should be slow to get angry.” James 1:19, NIV

BASIC TRUTH:

I can trust God no matter what.

CATCH ON: MAKE THE CONNECTION

Make the connection of how today’s Bible story applies to real life experiences through interactive activities and discussion questions.


*** 1. WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?** *(application activity / review the Bible story)*

What You Need: crayons, art or butcher paper

What You Do:

Unroll the white paper and have the kids sit around the sides of it. Tell them that they are going to make a mural of as many good things as we can think of. Challenge them to fill up the whole page and to leave as little white as possible! Read the verse to them (or ask for a kid volunteer to read) and then brainstorm ways to illustrate the things that God tells us we should think about.

What You Say:


“The Bible has a lot to say about what we think.  **We can choose what we want to fill our minds with—good stuff or bad stuff. God wants our minds to be filled with good things that honor Him because He knows that these things will bless us and help us live good, healthy lives.** Let’s listen to this verse that tells us some things that we should think about. *(Read Philippians 4:8 to the group.)* This verse tells us that you can **use the Bible to guide your thoughts.** What kinds of thoughts do you think God’s telling us, through the Bible, to have?”

2. TIME TO THINK: GAME ON/GAME OFF *(application activity / great for boys)*

What You Need: ball that won’t hurt when thrown

What You Do:

Have the kids circle up then spread out a bit, but not too far. Tell them that you are going to read them some questions. The kids will toss the ball to each other around the circle as you read the questions—like Hot Potato. Whoever is holding the ball when you finish reading the scenario answers whether or not the situation shows the person using self-control or not—

-  **Apply**
go and do
-  **Impress**
impress this upon their minds
-  **Personalize**
a personal story from the heart
-  **Recycle**
important things to say over and over
-  **Transition**
making a transition from one leader to another

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**WEEK
5**

PLUG IN
10-15 min


POWER UP
20-25 min

CATCH ON
25-30 min

“Game On” or “Game Off”! When you are finished asking these questions, have the kids think up a few of their own to play the game a bit longer!

1. Your mom makes cupcakes for dessert. She says you can have one after dinner. You think it would be a good idea to sneak into the kitchen and eat two cupcakes before you even set the table! (“Game Off”)
2. It is your favorite time of the day! You finally get to play your video game! But you didn’t realize that your little brother has been waiting patiently for his favorite show to start. You think it would be a good idea to let him watch his show, and you decide to play video games later. (“Game On”)
3. At recess, you don’t get the swing that you LOVE! You have been waiting for that swing all week! You stomp over to the kid on YOUR swing and push him off! (“Game Off”)
4. Your sister wants to work on a puzzle with you but she can’t get any of the pieces to connect. She is not helping you. You could tell her to go upstairs and play her own game but instead you let her keep working with you. (“Game On”)
5. Your older brother is helping you learn to tie your shoes. You are getting very frustrated because you just aren’t learning fast enough! You think you should just give up but your brother tells you that you are doing a great job and with more and more practice, you will learn how to tie your shoe in no time! (“Game On”)
6. A new kid starts at your school. He has a different backpack—one that you have never seen before. You think that you for sure don’t want to be his friend because only weird people would have a backpack like that! (“Game Off”)
7. Your sister got scared from a commercial on TV. You think it would be really funny to hide in her room and crawl under her bed and jump at her when she comes into her room. (“Game Off”)

What You Say:

“God gives us opportunities every day to practice self-control. We can think of all kinds of things—good things and bad things—about ourselves or other people.  **Sometimes, what we think determines what we do. God knows that when you use the Bible to guide your thoughts, you’ll make wise decisions.** That is why it is so important to trust God no matter what and know that He will help us make the wise choice. He will help us think of good things—lovely things, noble things, and pure things. He is there to help us whenever we need it. We just have to ask, and we will for sure be ‘Game On!’”

3. HIS CLUES #5 (memory verse activity)

What You Need: Bible in a brown lunch sack

What You Do:

Place Bible in brown lunch sack. Be careful not to reveal the Bible before the clues are given. Gather the kids in a circle and give the clues. After the kids have guessed the Bible, take the memory verse card (Activity Page) and show it to the group.

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**WEEK
5**

PLUG IN
10-15 min



POWER UP
20-25 min

CATCH ON
25-30 min

1. This can be large or small.
2. You can find them at churches or in homes and at bookstores.
3. It can be an app for your smart phone.
4. Some are made especially for girls and some are made especially for boys.
5. Some have pictures, and some just have words.

Once the kids guess the Bible, reveal the Bible from the bag. Then guide kids to pass the Bible around the circle but their arms should be behind them so they are passing from one kid to the other with their hands behind their backs. Tell them that they are going to chant “power, pause, select, stop, guide” as they pass. Whoever is holding the Bible when the word guide is said, that kid will try to repeat the memory verse from memory. If they need help remembering, they can quickly look in the Bible or ask a friend for help.


What You Say:

“Do you know how we learn to do what James is telling us to do? How we learn to be ‘slow to speak’ and ‘slow to get angry’?  **We fill our minds with good things! When we feel ourselves starting to get angry with our best friend for not coming over to play when we wanted her to, we should think about something that we really like about her, instead of acting out in anger. That’s a great way to  use the Bible to guide your thoughts.”**

PRAY AND DISMISS


What You Need: Bible

What You Do:

Ask the kids to look at some of the things you’ve talked about today—on the Post-It notes or the mural.  **Which of these good things do they want to fill their minds with this week? Ask them to think of a good thing that starts with the same letter as their first or last name.** Go around the circle and share that word. For example, “My name is William and I will think about worship.” When the kids are finished sharing, close in prayer.

What You Say:

“God, thank You for all the good things we have in our lives. Thank You for the Bible that is full of good words and stories for us to fill our minds with. Thank You for the wise people in our lives who help us live better. This week, please help us to remember to fill our minds with the good things You have for us. Thank You for Your Son, Jesus, Amen.

“As you go to school, soccer practice, or as you’re just hanging out at home, make sure to  **use the Bible to guide your thoughts!”**

Give each child a GodTime card. Pass out Parent Cue cards as adults arrive to pick up their child(ren).