

Group

Teacher Guide

GRADES 5 & 6

Fall



Teach as
Jesus Taught!®



Grades 5&6

Teacher Guide • Fall
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Group resources really work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's:



Relational

Person-to-person interaction enhances spiritual growth and builds Christian friendships.

Experiential

What we experience through action and discussion sticks with us up to 9 times longer than what we simply hear or read.

Applicable

The aim of ministry is to equip people to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

Lifelong

Experiences transform the heart, moving faith beyond the walls of church and into everyday life for years to come.

We know you care about kids...

We do, too!

That's why we attempt to ensure that all crafts, toys, and gizmos meet or exceed national safety standards—and are produced by manufacturers that don't use child labor or abuse their labor force. You can order Group resources knowing that in addition to caring for *your* kids, you're also caring for children elsewhere.

Let's keep kids safe!

We strive to provide products that are mechanically reliable and hold together during normal, intended usage. Items are also checked for flammability, and both paint and surface coatings are checked for heavy metals—including lead.

You can help your children stay safe by seeing that toys and gizmos are used as designed, for the purposes designed, and that any broken pieces are disposed of promptly and properly. We value your feedback. If you become aware of a problem affecting the safety of any of our products, please inform us immediately.



Group

Hands-On Bible Curriculum®, Grades 5 & 6, Fall

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UNDERSTANDING YOUR FIFTH- AND SIXTH-GRADERS

MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ Have well-developed critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.
- ◆ Are beginning to question authority figures; prefer to reason things through for themselves.
- ◆ Are interested in how past and present world events affect their lives.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ Spend a lot of time with one best friend.
- ◆ Usually prefer to stick to same-sex friendships but may also begin to explore boyfriend-girlfriend relationships.
- ◆ Thrive on organized games and group activities.

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ Frequently get mixed messages about being children or being mature and ready to accept responsibility for choices and actions.
- ◆ Are subject to strong fears about losing parents, being abandoned, being rejected by friends, being victims of violence, or becoming ill.
- ◆ Are strongly influenced by heroes and role models.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ Have high energy levels and demand a lot of physical activity.
- ◆ Girls tend to be taller and more physically developed than boys.
- ◆ Boys often find this intimidating and tend to avoid physical contact with girls.



SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

- ◆ Want everything to be fair.
- ◆ Want to test what they've been taught about God against their own experiences.
- ◆ Are able to make choices about finding God's will and following it.

Welcome to the Adventure!

Whether you're a veteran or a novice teacher, fifth- and sixth-graders are full of surprises! You just can't predict whether they're going to be in their child mode or their adult mode. They've been exposed to more temptations and choices than we were at that age, and they're pretty savvy about the world! You have a major role at this significant development stage for these boys and girls as you help them grow in the most important relationship in their lives—their relationship with Jesus Christ.

These preteens need to discover the “why” behind what they are learning and to develop their emerging high-level thinking skills while still having fun. Using these active, hands-on, and participatory activities that involve you and them, learning can become an adventure. Our master teacher, Jesus, used active learning 2,000 years ago, and it still works today!

Preteens crave action, so we can get them on their feet and moving. They enjoy problem solving, so we can encourage them to think, to ponder, and to imagine. And they love to talk, an opportunity we can offer as we allow them to discuss and work together in pairs or small groups. Preteens want to be engaged in all forms of active learning: simulation games, service projects, experiments, construction projects, purposeful games, field trips, and, of course, the most powerful form of active learning of all—real-life experiences.

Here are a few helpful do's and don'ts to make experiential learning work best for you:

- **Do think outside the learning-space box!** Move tables so students can move around freely and work in groups. Scope out other areas, such as a foyer, a parking lot, or a fellowship hall, that could be used for activities.
- **Don't turn down the volume!** Recognize the difference between good “learning noise” and a situation needing your attention. Active-learning activities often are fast-paced and noisy.
- **Do take advantage of teachable moments.** An activity that bombs may provide a wonderful opportunity for learning if you ask questions such as “Why didn't this work?” “How is this like what happens in real life?” or “What can we learn from this experience?”
- **Don't show students the contents of the Learning Lab®** before they are used in the lessons. Keep them guessing what's coming next!
- **Do get to know your students.** Be aware of the attitudes they bring with them. They may be dealing with family, school, or relationship issues. Encourage students to share their feelings as they participate in activities.
- **Don't let the planned curriculum hinder ministry opportunities.** Listen to your students, encourage them, and address their questions.
- **Don't forget—experiential learning is fun and captivating!** A positive experience learning about God within the safe boundaries of your classroom will lead to more positive experiences with God outside the classroom. What a great way to encourage your students to discover the joy of the Lord firsthand and to grow in a relationship with Jesus Christ!



Be aware that some children have food allergies that can be dangerous. Know your children, and consult with parents about allergies your kids may have. Also, be sure to read food labels carefully as hidden ingredients can cause allergy-related problems.

Making the Most of Your Hands-On Bible Curriculum®

⚠ WARNING:
CHOKING HAZARD—
 Learning Lab may
 contain small parts. Not
 for children under 3
 years.

Module Introductions Within each quarter of Hands-On Bible Curriculum, there are three modules. Each module has a theme that runs throughout the lessons. The introduction to each module includes an overview of the lessons and a chart listing the Bible Point and Scripture used in each lesson.

Bible Point There's one point that you want your children to take home at the end of your lesson. That's the Bible Point. You'll see it referenced in the margin as well as italicized and underlined in the lesson. We've designed for it to be repeated numerous times during the lesson so no one will miss it.

Bible Verse These words, straight from God's Word, show the biblical basis for the lesson. The Bible verse appears in boldface in the lesson.

Teacher Enrichment This part of the lesson is just for you. If you can, read it early in the week. It includes an explanation of the Bible passage and some suggested ways to pray during the week so you'll be prepared, heart and mind, for your important hour with your children.

This Lesson at a Glance This valuable chart shows you the big picture for your lesson. You can quickly see what supplies you'll need and what needs to be done before you begin. A minute on this page will save you 10 during your lesson!

The Jesus Connection To us, this is the most important thing—making the connection between the story and Jesus, the reason for the story. You'll find a Jesus Connection in every lesson, set apart in a box. We want children to find Jesus every week in your class, so don't miss this part of the lesson.

Hands-On Bible® Connection We want all kids to use their Bibles every week. The *Hands-On Bible* is, in our estimation, the best way to get kids into this important book. It's the Bible that kids not only read but also do! In every lesson, you'll find a quick, fun way to get your kids involved in using their Bibles. The tip is in a box that you can't miss.

Teacher Tips You'll find these in the margin throughout the lesson. They're just to give you additional ideas to enhance what you're doing. They vary from alternative ideas for activities to age-level insights.

"Takin' It Home" Papers These photocopiable pages suggest family activities that will reinforce what your students learned in class.

“There is only one thing worth being concerned about.”

—Luke 10:42

What is this one thing? It’s the whole reason for this curriculum—

it’s the whole reason for Sunday school. It’s what we (and you) want your kids to know! Check out what Thom and Joani Schultz (Group’s chairman and chief creative officer) have to say about the one thing and what it means in your life.

In Luke chapter 10, Jesus visits the home of Mary and Martha. As Martha worries about preparing dinner and being a busy servant, she gets upset because Mary isn’t helping. But Jesus tells her, “There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.”

Martha was doing good work. In fact, she was serving the Lord. But Jesus made his priority for us clear. He wants to have a loving relationship with us even more than he wants us to serve him.

Many might say Jesus is the one thing. But no, it’s a **growing relationship with Jesus**. Martha would have identified serving Jesus as the one thing. But Mary better understood the *real* one thing.

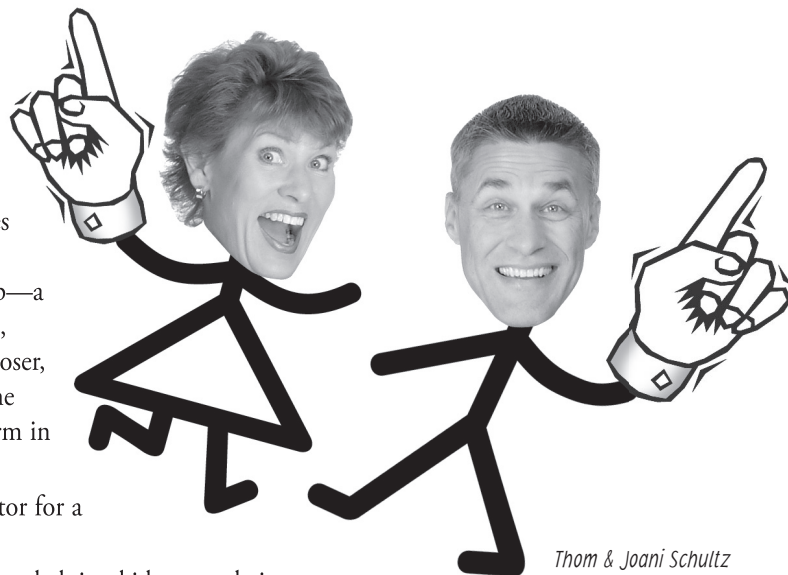
We believe that the church, like Martha, is often distracted by many things. It tends to deprioritize the one thing. Many other well-intentioned things get in the way. Churches and Christians can get sidetracked with an emphasis on rules, political positions, appearances, social action, secondary goals, theological disputes, solemnity, rituals, and more. To the spiritually hungry, churches often seem more preoccupied with these distractions than the one thing.

If the church wishes to pursue a growing relationship with Jesus, it will need to rethink and reprioritize its ministry. A one-thing ministry emphasizes relationship. And we believe a relationship with Jesus resembles in many ways a human-to-human relationship—a friendship. The process of attraction, getting acquainted, enjoying one another’s company, having fun, growing closer, and forming a bond of love and devotion is a natural one that lends clues to how a one-thing relationship may form in the context of church ministry.

How can we build a church that becomes an incubator for a one-thing relationship, for *real* friendship with Jesus?

That’s what Hands-On Bible Curriculum is all about—helping kids grow their friendships with Jesus. As they experience the Scriptures and do the activities, they’re building that relationship in a real and relevant way.

What’s the most important thing your church can do for kids? Help them choose the one thing. And use tools like Hands-On Bible Curriculum to make it a reality.



Thom & Joani Schultz

Friendships

In a national survey of Christian kids, the number-one topic kids wanted to learn more about was “knowing how to make friends and be a friend.”

As they stumble into their teenage years, fifth- and sixth-graders find themselves in a maelstrom of mixed feelings toward their peers. Friends one minute and enemies the next, kids need to learn skills that will help them establish stable, positive peer relationships.

These four lessons will help kids discover scriptural principles for building and keeping healthy friendships.

Four Lessons on Friendships

| Lesson | Bible Point | Page | Bible Basis |
|--------|---|------|-------------------|
| 1 | God helps us develop good friendships. | 11 | Romans 12:9-18 |
| 2 | God helps us be open and honest with friends. | 25 | Ephesians 4:25-32 |
| 3 | Our faith can affect our friendships. | 37 | Romans 15:7-12 |
| 4 | God-pleasing friendships take work. | 49 | Proverbs 17:17 |

The Signal



During the lessons on friendships, your signal to get kids back together during activities will be sounding the *slide flute*. In response to hearing the *slide flute*, kids should stop what they’re doing and focus on you.

Tell kids about this signal before the lesson begins. Explain that it’s important to respond to this signal quickly so the class can do as many fun activities as possible.

The Time Stuffer

This module’s Time Stuffer will encourage preteens to practice acts of kindness and friendship, both in class and out. Cover a wall with blank paper, and designate a section for each student to write and draw on. During their free moments, students can go to the wall and write down what they would like to do for their friends during the

coming week. Along with their written intentions, they should draw a symbol of this act of service, such as a book to indicate they want to help a friend with studying, or a basketball to remind them to teach a buddy to shoot hoops. The next week, after they have accomplished the task, kids can write their initials over their written statement with a marker.

By the end of the month, your class will have created a fun montage of symbols illustrating their acts of friendship.

Digging Into the Bible



Every lesson in each four- or five-week module focuses on a key Bible verse that relates to the Bible Point of the lesson. In addition, each lesson points to a related activity in the *Hands-On Bible* to further illustrate your Bible teaching with fun and action. Since kids tend to remember only 10 percent of what they hear but recall 90 percent of what they do, working in a *Hands-On Bible* experience with each lesson is a great way to get them to remember what they've learned long after class has ended.



Bible Point

God helps us develop good friendships.

Bible Verse

“Live in harmony with each other. Don’t be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don’t think you know it all!” (Romans 12:16).

Growing Closer to Jesus

Students will

- learn how to overcome their fears of meeting new people,
- discover God’s standards for Christian friendship, and
- learn how to say loving things to their friends.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Making Friends

Romans 12:9-18



The Apostle Paul wrote his lengthy epistle to the Romans to introduce himself to the Christians in Rome and to share with them the good news about Jesus Christ. The early church in Rome, which had probably been formed by the Romans who were at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, may have included some of Paul’s own converts and intimate friends (Romans 16).

The book of Romans emphasizes the grace of Jesus Christ in saving us from our sins. Chapter 12 in particular deals with the transformed life that comes as a result of that saving grace. The early Christians took this to heart and lived it out in their daily lives. The breaking of bread to which they were devoted was more than just eating together; it most likely refers to their regular meetings to celebrate the Lord’s Supper.

All the things the believers did together apparently developed in them a true sense of unity and concern for one another. Their sharing with one another to meet needs was a demonstration of that unity seldom seen in the history of the world. They met daily. And the love those early Christians showed to one another made their faith something that others wanted to learn more about. In fact, God blessed what they were doing as new followers were added each day!


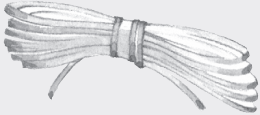


Prayer

- Read Hebrews 10:24-25.
- How does God help you to develop good friendships?
- Pray: Lord, making new friends can be challenging. Please help my students and me learn how to be better friends with one another by...

Before the Lesson

- Collect items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed in the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Takin’ It Home” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your students.
- Pray for your students and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

| | What Students Will Do | Classroom Supplies | Learning Lab Supplies |
|---|---|--|---|
| Attention Grabber | Making New Friends — Compare various responses to meeting people. | “Making New Friends” handout (p. 20), bag, scissors, newsprint, marker, tape | |
| Bible Exploration & Application | Friendship Breakers — Perform friendship problem skits, and examine Philippians 2:1-4 and Romans 12:9-18. | Bibles, “Friendship Breakers” handout (p. 22), scissors |  |
| | Path to Forgiveness — Learn how forgiveness played a part in Joseph’s relationship with his brothers in Genesis 37:5-11; 41:1-38; and 45:3-10. | Bibles, “Path to Forgiveness” handout (p. 21), red marker, black marker | |
| | Circle Comfort Zone — Discuss their comfort zones in meeting new people, and explore Acts 15:35-41 and Genesis 37:17-24. | Bibles, paper, pencils, newsprint, markers, masking tape, scissors |  |
| Closing  | Friendship Builders — Brainstorm loving statements that can build friendships, and then celebrate friendships in song. | Index cards, pencils, CD player |  |

Welcome



Welcome students as they arrive, and teach them the signal for the quarter. Tell kids that whenever you blow the *slide flute*, they’re to stop what they’re doing and look at you without talking. Explain that when you have everyone’s attention, you’ll continue the lesson.

Attention Grabber

Making New Friends

SUPPLIES: “Making New Friends” handout (p. 20), bag, scissors, newsprint, marker, tape

Before the lesson, photocopy, cut apart, and fold in half the slips from the “Making New Friends” handout. Place the slips in a bag.

Say: **Welcome, class! I’m going to assign you instructions for meeting new people. In this classroom, your job is to make friends exactly as you’re instructed. How you are to meet new people is a secret until you actually start meeting them.**

Pass the bag around the room, and instruct kids to take only one slip of paper each. Ask kids not to look at the paper until you instruct them to. After everyone has a slip of paper, tell the kids to look at their slips of paper, and give them three minutes to wander around the room and do what their slips of paper tell them to do.

When time is up, blow the *slide flute* to get everyone’s attention. Have students form three groups according to their “Making New Friends” assignments. Write the following questions on newsprint taped to the wall, and have groups discuss them.

- **What did you like most or least about your way of meeting new people, and why?** (It was easy because we were told to do it; I kept getting ignored.)
- **How does it feel to meet new people?** (Scary; good; exciting.)
- **Is it easy for you to meet new people? Why or why not?** (Yes, I like talking to people; no, I’m shy.)

When groups are finished, ask for volunteers to share reactions to the questions.

Say: **In this class, I gave you instructions for making friends. Just like in the real world, these ideas don’t always work. But God gives us ideas that do work. Let’s look in the Bible for those ideas as we learn how ► God helps us develop good friendships.**



It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.



Bible Exploration & Application

Friendship Breakers

SUPPLIES: Bibles, “Friendship Breakers” handout (p. 22), scissors



Form three groups. Assign one group **Philippians 2:1-4** and Skit One from the “Friendship Breakers” handout. Assign the second group **Romans 12:14-18** and Skit Two, and assign the third group **Romans 12:9-13** and Skit Three. Have each group choose a Reader, two Actors, a Director, and a Reporter. Give the actors photocopies of their skits. If you have fewer than 15 kids in your class, assign each student more than one role.

Say: **In each group, the Reader will read the Bible passage, the Actors will rehearse the skit, and the Director will lead the discussion about how to respond to the problem based on the Scripture passage. The Reporter will summarize the discussion for the rest of the class. Everyone in the group must brainstorm ideas about how they think the situation should be handled. You may use any of these Learning Lab items as props in your skit. Be inventive!**



Encourage active participation in the discussion by following up kids’ answers with questions such as “What did you mean by that?” and “What else can you tell me?”

Send groups to different sides of the room, and give them some time to discuss and create. After groups have rehearsed their skits and discussed their problems, bring everyone together. Have the Actors from the first group perform their skit. Then have the Reporter summarize the group's discussion about how to respond to the problem. When the first group finishes, have the second group make its presentation, and then the third.

Ask: • **Does showing real love in these situations guarantee that things will turn out well for the person who is acting unselfishly? Why or why not?** (No, things might still be difficult, but God will help that person get through it; yes, maybe it will because God is on that person's side.)

BIBLE VERSE ►

Say: **Our Bible verse this week, Romans 12:16, tells us to ►“live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!”**

Ask: • **How does our Bible verse relate to these situations?** (We need to get along with people, even when they bug us; nobody is better than anyone else.)

• **What information in the Bible helped you to know how to handle your conflict?** (Instead of being mad, I learned to pray for people who hassle me about being a Christian; I tried to do the right thing even though it was hard.)

• **How can you apply these ideas about God's power and love to your life?** (I can ask God to help me forgive someone today for criticizing me unfairly; I can pray more.)



BIBLE POINT ►

Say: ► ***God helps us develop good friendships.* As we saw in the skits and the Bible passages, in order to be good friends to each other, we need to build each other up rather than tear each other down. We need to spend time growing our friendships, just like we're going to grow this little friendship tree.** Show the crystal growing tree from the Learning Lab.

Ask: • **What does a tree need in order to grow?** (Water; sunlight; dirt.)

Say: **Right. Those are the types of ingredients to grow a tree.**

Ask: • **What are some ingredients needed to grow a friendship?** (Trust; patience; kindness.)

Say: **If we apply those ingredients to our friendships, they will grow stronger. Let's “grow” this little tree with water to help us remember that ►*God helps us develop good friendships.***

Have students open their Bibles to **Romans 12:4-18**. Say: **Each of you will read a verse and then squirt a little bit of water in the tree's tray.** Cut open the water packet. Lead students by reading the first verse and then squirting a little water. Carefully pass the water packet around so that everyone has a chance.



BIBLE POINT ►

Say: ► ***God helps us develop good friendships* and friendships sometimes take a little while to grow, just like this little tree will take a while to grow. We'll watch this tree and see how it grows by the end of our time together today. It will grow even more by the time we come back next week.**



BIBLE POINT ►

■ Path to Forgiveness

SUPPLIES: Bibles, “Path to Forgiveness” handout (p. 21), red marker, black marker

Have kids form four groups. Give each group a Bible and a “Path to Forgiveness” handout, and have them select one person within the group to mark the group's answers on the handout. Have students within their groups look up **Genesis 37:5-11**

and take turns, each reading one verse. Say: **Let’s explore Joseph’s story in more detail. Please work together to answer the first two questions on the handout. As you are doing so, I will come around to all of your groups with this special red marker, and the person designated in your group may use it to mark the answers on the paper. One more thing—if you don’t get an answer right, your group is eliminated from continuing in the activity.**

Circulate quickly from group to group, allowing students to mark their papers with the red marker. Be sure they shade in the boxes completely.

After all students have marked their boxes,

Say: **I’m going to come through the groups again. If you chose an answer I didn’t expect, I will cross it out with this black marker. If you get black marks in the red area, it means your group can’t continue.**

Circulate through the groups again. Mark each red-shaded box with the black marker, no matter what answer a student chooses. Once all boxes have been crossed off, address the class again.

Say: **None of you selected the answers I expected from you. But you know what? I’ve decided I’m going to give all of you another chance to continue with the activity anyway. So let’s read more about Joseph and his brothers.**

Have the groups turn to **Genesis 41:1-38** and **45:3-10** and take turns reading through the verses; then have the students answer the next two questions on the handout.

Say: **I’ll be coming around again with the markers. But this time if you get an answer wrong, your group will be eliminated from moving on.**

Circulate again from group to group, allowing each group a chance to mark their papers with the red marker. Immediately cross off each red-shaded box with the black marker, no matter what answer the group chooses. Once all boxes have been crossed off, address the class again.

Say: **None of you selected the answers I thought you would. But that’s OK. I’ve decided to give you all another chance. Let’s do the last question on the handout together.**

Have the groups join together, and read aloud the last question on the handout along with the two possible choices. Then ask the class what they think the answer is: A or B. No matter what they respond, assure them that they have chosen the correct answer.

Ask: • **How did it make you feel to be given more chances every time you gave an answer I didn’t like?** (I felt we deserved more chances because the questions weren’t fair; I hoped we’d get more chances because the questions were so hard.)

• **What must Joseph’s brothers have felt when they found out Joseph was alive but would give them another chance?** (Relieved that he didn’t want to get even; grateful that he would forgive them for what they did to him.)

• **Why should you give friends or family members who have hurt you another chance?** (Because God wants me to; because God gave me another chance when I didn’t deserve it.)

• **What does our relationship with Jesus Christ have to do with our ability to forgive?** (God showed us his forgiveness through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross; Jesus tells us to forgive one another as many times as it takes.)



Say: **Just as we can give others a second chance, Jesus gave us a second chance through his death and resurrection. Joseph listened to God and gave his brothers a second chance, and that strengthened their relationship. By offering us forgiveness, ► God helps us develop good friendships, even within our own families.**

HANDS-ON BIBLE

Set out an empty cardboard tube and a rubber band for each student. Make wax paper and scissors available to the entire group. Say:

Let's take a deeper look at the conflict between Joseph and his brothers. Open your *Hands-On Bible* to Genesis 37. Follow the instructions in the "Well, Well, Well" activity, using the supplies I've provided.

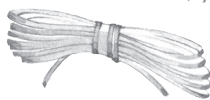


When students finish their well crafts, ask:

- **Is there someone you need to talk to about jealousy?** (Yes; I don't know.)
- **If so, what are you going to say?** (I'm sorry; I was wrong.)

■ Circle Comfort Zone

SUPPLIES: Bibles, paper, pencils, newsprint, markers, masking tape, scissors



Have kids form two groups, and cut a 5-foot length of *plastic lacing* for each group. Have each group lay its *plastic lacing* in a circle on the floor and use masking tape to hold it in place.

Say: **These circles represent friendship comfort zones. A comfort zone is a school or social environment that we have grown used to and are comfortable staying in without making changes. It could be a group of people we hang out with or a routine we like to stick to, such as doing the same thing with the same people every day after school.**

Usually it's easier to stay in our comfort zones. Let's see how comfort zones relate to our friendships.

Have groups each pick one person who will stand in the center of the circle. Have the remaining kids circle around the *plastic lacing*. Instruct kids that the person in the center of the circle is to do his or her best to stay inside the circle while kids on the outside of the circle should try to move the person outside the circle. Kids may use their shoulders only to nudge the person outside the circle, and they should not try to squish the person in the center between two people. The person in the middle, likewise, should not push back at anyone with his or her hands.

Give kids three minutes to try this. If they are able to successfully get their person outside the circle, have them pick another person and start again.

Ask: • **What did you enjoy most or least about being the person inside the circle?** (I liked the challenge of staying inside the circle; I felt surrounded because everyone was coming at me at once.)

• **What about being outside the circle?** (It was easier to be part of the crowd on the outside; I felt bad for the person in the middle, like we were ganging up on him or something.)



Encourage your students to take today's classroom lesson on making friends outside the classroom. Challenge them to approach five new people between now and next week, introduce themselves, shake hands, and find out three new things about that person. Then have them report back their experiences the next week.

• **What bothered you the most or least about being “forced” to move out of your comfort zone?** (It irritated me; I struggled a lot trying not to be moved.)
Why? (I felt out of control; I felt off balance.)

• **Like the person standing in the middle who was forced out of the circle, when have you been forced to get outside your circle of friends and meet new people?** (When my family moved and I had to change schools; when my best friend moved away.)

Say: **Some of us are comfortable taking risks in friendship—others are not. ►God helps us develop good friendships.** However, if we want to develop good friendships, each of us needs to take some risks, like meeting new people or sticking up for a friend when it’s tough. And things are harder for all of us when we don’t try to get along with each other. Now let’s look at some examples of people who had some rough spots in their friendships.

Return the *plastic lacing* to the Learning Lab for use in later lessons. Have kids get in groups of four. Assign half of the groups **Acts 15:35-41**. Assign the other half **Genesis 37:17b-24**. Have each group choose a Reader who reads the Bible verses, a Scribe who writes the group’s responses to the discussion questions, a Reporter who shares the group’s responses, and an Encourager who encourages everyone to participate. Give each Scribe a sheet of paper and a pencil, and ask the Reader to read the group’s Bible verses.

When groups look like they’re finished, say: **Now that you’ve read the passage, I’d like you to look for specific relationship issues that are in each passage. For example, in Acts we read about a disagreement between friends; in Genesis, we learn about jealous feelings one group of brothers had toward another brother.**

Write these questions on newsprint for groups to discuss:

- **Were these relationships good or bad? Why?** (Good at first when Barnabas and Paul got along, but later they argued; bad, because Joseph’s brothers were out to get him from the start.)
- **What, if anything, went wrong in these relationships?** (Barnabas and Paul argued; Joseph’s brothers were jealous of him and took it out on him.)
- **How were the people in your group’s story forced to step outside their comfort zones?** (Barnabas and Paul had to continue their mission work alone; Joseph was left to fend for himself.)
- **If you were one of the people in the story, what would you do to help that friendship?** (I might be willing to forgive the other person; I’d try not to blame my brother just because it seems like my dad is playing favorites.)



If your group is very active or aggressive, watch to make sure no one is getting shoved around or knocked over. If you see an activity starting to get out of hand, stop it immediately and use the teachable moment to debrief.

Bible Insight

Paul's life is a perfect example of how God's love provides the key to successful relationships, which is a relationship with Jesus Christ. Because of God's love, Paul went from zealously persecuting Christians to just as zealously preaching the message of Christ, not only to Jews but to Gentiles as well. When Paul spoke of real love, he knew firsthand that such love can come only from Jesus Christ.



BIBLE POINT ▶



Say: **Jesus came from heaven to earth and became a man. Now that's what I call leaving a comfort zone! He often spent time with people who weren't considered popular. And like Joseph, Paul, and Barnabas, Jesus moved outside the comfort zone of being with the "in" crowd so that everyone—even the most unpopular people in society—could receive God's message of hope. We might be called one day to step out of our comfort zones so that we can share Jesus Christ with others—even if that makes us unpopular.**

Ask: • **Can you think of some people Jesus stepped out of his comfort zone to talk to, even though it made him unpopular? Why was Jesus willing to talk with them?** (The Samaritan woman at the well; the tax collectors; Jesus wanted to share God's love with all of them.)

• **How would you be willing to step out of your comfort zone this week so you could share your faith in Jesus Christ?** (I could share my faith story with my cousin; I could ask a guy in my class about his faith relationship.)

Give groups five minutes to discuss and prepare responses. Next, have Reporters share their group's responses with the class.

Say: **Getting outside our comfort zones is a little scary, but necessary. The people you read about had to leave their comfort zones, and even Jesus did, too. Sometimes we have to leave our comfort zones to build better friendships with others and with Jesus. But we can trust that ▶ God helps us develop good friendships.**

Closing

Friendship Builders

SUPPLIES: index cards, pencils, CD player



Have kids form groups of four. Give index cards and pencils to each group. Have groups brainstorm friendship-building statements. An example of a friendship-building statement might be, "I plan on comforting my friends by telling them one time each week that I care about them." Allow each group to choose a Scribe to write down the group's ideas and a Reporter to present the group's ideas.

After two minutes, ask for the total number of statements from each group. Have the Reporter from the group with the shortest list read that group's statements. The Reporters from the other groups should stand up each time they have the same (or a very similar) statement. Then have the Reporters from the other groups read the remaining statements on their lists. Have kids applaud one another's creativity.

In closing, sing "Live in Harmony" (Romans 12:16) (track 2) using the CD. You'll find the words at the back of this book. Then lead in prayer, asking God to help kids express real love as they reach out in friendship this week and to remember that a relationship with Jesus Christ makes real love possible.



teacher tips

A great after-class project for this activity would be to type out kids' responses, photocopy them, and hand them out next week.

Show kids the friendship tree that has been growing during their lesson time, and remind them that friendships require special attention, just like trees do, to help them grow. End your class with a prayer, asking God to help your students remember that ► God helps us develop good friendships. Return the *CD* to the Learning Lab.



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Takin' It Home" handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your kids. Encourage kids and parents to use the handout to spark meaningful discussion on this week's topic.

Making New Friends

Photocopy and cut apart these slips. You'll need one slip for each student.

Introduce yourself.

Introduce yourself.

Introduce yourself.

Introduce yourself.

Shake hands.

Shake hands.

Shake hands.

Shake hands.

Ignore people.

Ignore people.

Ignore people.

Ignore people.

Path to Forgiveness

QUESTION 1: Did Joseph dream in many colors?

A. Yes

B. No

QUESTION 2: What other reasons did Joseph's brothers have to hate him?

A. He got to sleep longer than the rest of them.

B. He was smarter than they were.

C. Their mother gave him better gifts.

QUESTION 3: Why didn't Joseph's brothers recognize him?

A. Joseph was dressed funny.

B. Their eyesight was bad.

C. Joseph was wearing a mask.

QUESTION 4: Did Joseph lose weight during the famine?

A. Yes

B. No

QUESTION 5: Which of the following statements is true?

A. God wanted Joseph to forgive his brothers when they hurt him.

B. God wants us to forgive others when they hurt us.

Friendship Breakers

Skit One:

(Telephone rings.)

Jeremy: Hi, Matt!

Matt: Jeremy! What's up?

Jeremy: A lot! Our soccer team made it to the semifinals.

Matt: Hey, that's excellent!

Jeremy: You know what that means, don't you? We'll be going to state this weekend.

Matt: *This* weekend? But we can't! We have to finish our science project!

What should Matt and Jeremy do so they can get everything done and still remain good friends?

Scripture: Philippians 2:1-4

Skit Two:

(Telephone rings.)

Chelsea: Hello?

Amber: Hi, Chelsea. It's Amber.

Chelsea: Oh—hi, Amber. How did the tryouts turn out?

Amber: Sorry, I've got bad news.

Chelsea: I didn't get the part?

Amber: No—but everybody thought you should have.

Chelsea: Who got it?

Amber: Janna. And she was bragging about it all over school and saying that she couldn't believe you even tried out because you have such a weak voice.

Chelsea: You're kidding!

Amber: No, sorry. I wish it weren't true.

Chelsea: Wow. How am I gonna face people at school?

Amber: I think we should all refuse to speak to Janna. I can't believe she talked about you that way.

How should Chelsea handle this so that she can stay good friends with both Amber and Janna?

Scripture: Romans 12:14-18

Skit Three:

(Telephone rings.)

Ryan: Hello!

Tim: *(In an angry voice)* Hey, you moron.

Ryan: Who is this? Is that you, Tim?

Tim: Why'd you tell the history teacher I had a copy of her test?

Ryan: Hey, she asked me straight out if you had the test. Somebody must've told her!

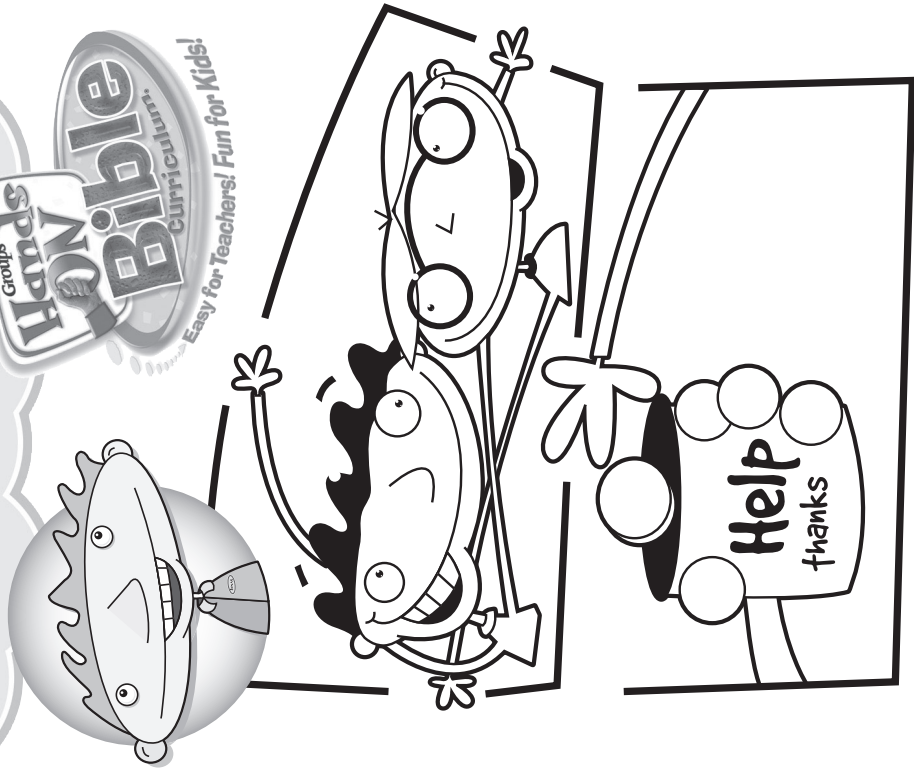
Tim: That's not what I heard! Look, here's the deal. You and I are meeting tomorrow after school, and we're going to work this out. In person. Got it?

How should Ryan handle Tim so their friendship is not jeopardized and no one gets hurt?

Scripture: Romans 12:9-13

Making Friends, Week 1

Takin' It Home



The more love you give,
the more love you will
receive.

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Something to Think About

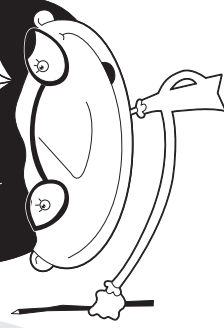


Hetty Green lived in poverty. She ate cold oatmeal because she wouldn't pay for the gas to heat it. Her son had to have his leg amputated because Hetty insisted on finding free medical service for him rather than paying for it. Yet, in 1916, the miser Hetty Green died and left behind an estate worth \$95 million.

Christians often live like Hetty Green. We are surrounded by love. It can be found in our churches, our families, our schools, our jobs, our friends, and our hearts. But we keep our love to ourselves. "What about me?" we ask. "Who will meet my needs? If I always reach out to others, what will be left for me?"

There is no secret to having friends. There is no secret to receiving love. If you want a friend, be a friend. If you want love, love others. Others may reject you, embarrass you, and ignore you. But not everyone will. If you want to be rich in friends and love, be generous with your time, energy, and interest for others. The more love you give, the more love you will receive.

"Live in harmony with each other.
Don't be too proud to enjoy the
company of ordinary people. And
don't think you know it all!"
(Romans 12:16)



Discussion Starters



- Why do you think Hetty let her son lose his leg when she had more than enough money to save it?
- What things in your life are you selfish with?
- What things in your life are you generous with?
- What things prevent you from making friends with others? feeling loved by others?

Family Building

***FOR KIDS ONLY:** Think of the one student at your school who has no friends. Become that person's friend. Don't do this out of pity or self-righteousness—do it out of love for Jesus and love for the person.

***FOR PARENTS ONLY:** Think of the one person at your work or church who has no friends. Become that person's friend. Don't do this out of pity or self-righteousness—do it out of love for Jesus and love for the person.

***FOR THE FAMILY:** Invite a socially withdrawn family in your neighborhood over for dinner. As a family, show love to your guests by asking them questions about their lives, inviting them to play with your games and toys, and giving them whatever compliments you can.



Teacher Guide

GRADES 5 & 6

Fall

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This quarter your 5th- and 6th-graders will learn these important Bible lessons:

FRIENDSHIPS

Romans 12:9-18

Ephesians 4:25-32

Romans 15:7-12

Proverbs 17:17

God helps us develop good friendships.

God helps us be open and honest with friends.

Our faith can affect our friendships.

God-pleasing friendships take work.

SELF-ESTEEM

1 John 3:1-2

Philippians 3:12-14

Joshua 1:6-9

Genesis 1:26-27

God loves us and values who we are.

With God's help, we can set and reach realistic goals.

We can be confident because God is with us.

We are created in God's image.

GOD'S LOVE

1 John 4:7-12

1 John 1:5-10

Romans 5:6-9

Psalms 121

Colossians 3:1-4, 17

In response to God's love, we can show love to others.

God forgives us.

If we believe in Jesus, we'll receive eternal life.

God is always available to help us.

We can please God in our lives.

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