

Group

Teacher Guide

GRADES 5 & 6

Spring



Teach as
Jesus Taught!®



Grades 5&6

Teacher Guide • Spring
group.com/sunday-school

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

Learner-to-learner interaction enhances learning and builds Christian friendships.

Experiential

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

Applicable

The aim of Christian education is to equip learners to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

Learner-based

Learners understand and retain more when the learning process takes into consideration how they learn best.

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, Spring

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* Due to the way Easter falls, we recommend moving the lessons as needed to line up Lesson 8 with Easter Sunday.

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.

What's the “one thing”? Many might say it's Jesus. 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.

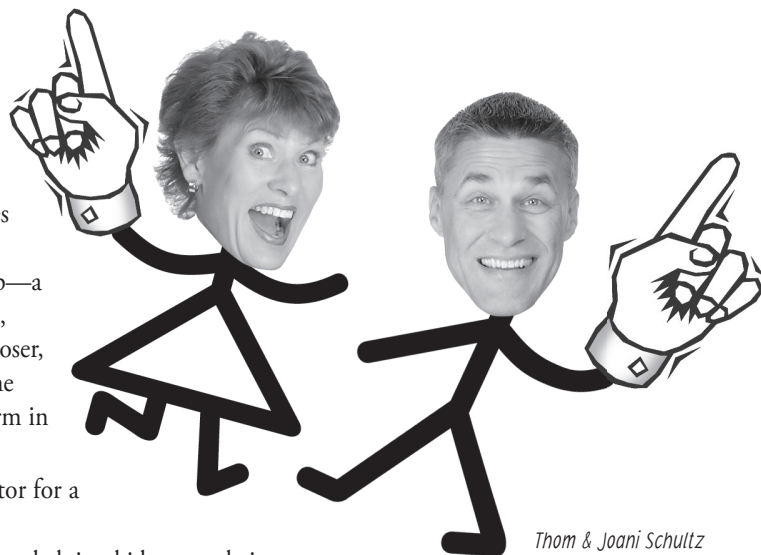
We believe that the church, like Martha, is often distracted by many things. It tends to deprioritize the one thing. Many other well-intentioned things get in the way. Churches and Christians can get sidetracked with an emphasis on rules, political positions, appearances, social action, secondary goals, 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.



Struggles Kids Face

Wouldn't it be great if you could arrange for your kids to grow up in Disneyland? They'd be surrounded by lots of friendly people, exciting entertainment, and every kind of fast food you can imagine. They'd be safe and protected from all of life's struggles. But that's not the way God planned it. Each of your students will face difficult problems, worries, and fearful situations.

Fifth- and sixth-graders today deal with tougher, more serious issues than kids did 20 years ago. Kids often worry about poverty, that a parent might die, and about violence.

You may not be able to shelter your kids in Disneyland, but you can do something far better. You can teach them that in times of need, Jesus is an ever-present help. Use these four lessons to show your group members how to rely on God in the midst of life's struggles.

Four Lessons on Struggles Kids Face

Lesson	Bible Point	Page	Bible Basis
1	God can help us face people who intimidate us.	11	Psalms 124
2	God cares when we're feeling down.	21	Psalms 34:17-19
3	God can heal hurting family members.	31	Psalms 23
4	What we say reflects who we are.	43	Ephesians 4:29

The Signal



During the lessons on struggles kids face, your signal to get kids back together during activities will be to spin the *twirling groaner* found in the Learning Lab. In response to the *twirling groaner*, have kids stop what they're doing and focus on you for their next instructions.

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.

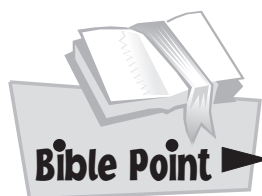
The Time Stuffer

In a box, put items your kids can use to make the pieces of armor listed in Ephesians 6:13-18—the items will include such things as aluminum foil, rope, cardboard, scissors, markers, construction paper, and so on. Use a marker to write the Scripture passage on the box so kids can refer to it easily. During their free moments, direct kids to think of struggles they face or have faced. Then have kids draw or create the pieces of armor listed in the Scripture passage that they feel could best help them as they deal with those struggles. For example, if gossip is the problem, kids could create “belts of truth.”

Remembering the Bible



Every lesson in each four- or five-week module focuses on a key Bible verse that ties in to the lesson's Bible Point. In addition, each lesson points to a related activity in the *Hands-On Bible* to enhance 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 a *Hands-On Bible* experience into each lesson is another great way for them to remember what they've learned long after class has ended.



Bible Point ▶

God can help us face people who intimidate us.

Bible Verse

“Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth” (Psalm 124:8).

Growing Closer to Jesus

Students will ■ discuss what they’d do in intimidating situations,
■ examine a biblical response to enemies, and
■ brainstorm tactics for dealing with bullies.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Beating the Bully Factor

Psalm 124



In this psalm, David declares praise to the Lord for victories won in battle, acknowledging that without God fighting for them, Israel would have been badly beaten. The way this psalm is set up, it’s likely that a Levite was to read the first five verses and then the people were to respond with the last three verses.

The imagery David uses in this psalm reflects how God saved his people. The point David seems to be making is that the victories were completely due to God being on Israel’s side.

David’s conclusion to this psalm is a fitting one that applies to us today. Even if we’re not facing raging torrents or wild beasts that could swallow us alive or tear us apart with their teeth, we do face struggles and trials of our own. And, indeed, “Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth” (Psalm 124:8).

Prayer

- Read Psalm 94:17-19.
- How is the feel of this psalm different from that of Psalm 124?
- How can you relate to the psalmist in Psalm 94?
- How can we be sure God will be with us when people intimidate us?
- Pray: God, thank you for promising to stand with me against those who would hurt me. Help me as I seek to teach my students that they can depend on you when...

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	Bullies in the Way— Experience what it’s like to be bullied.	Bible, masking tape	
Bible Exploration & Application	Bully Busters— Consider how to respond to bullies, and learn from Psalm 124 that God is with them.	Bibles, CD player, newsprint, tape, marker	
	Bully Blues— Explore where bullies come from and how they affect us before comparing the experience with the promise found in Romans 8:35-39.	Bibles, block of wood, hammer	
	Can’t Pound Me Down— Respond joyfully to trials.	Bibles, hammer and piece of wood from previous activity	
Closing 	Sticks and Stones May Break My Bones...— Define “bullies,” and discover God’s ways of dealing with them.	Bibles	

Welcome

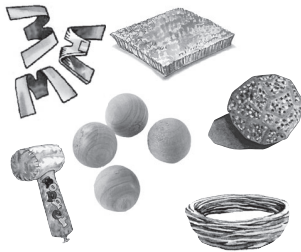


As kids arrive, teach them the signal for the quarter. Tell kids that whenever you spin the *twirling groaner*, they're to stop what they're doing and look at you without talking. Explain that when you have everyone's attention, you'll continue the lesson.

Attention Grabber

■ Bullies in the Way

SUPPLIES: Bible, masking tape



Create a starting line by placing a piece of masking tape on the floor. Form five groups, and have each group stand single file behind the line. Say: **We're going to start with a game to get us thinking about our topic.**

Give the first person in each line a *flipper*. Put a chair about 10 feet in front of each team. Say: **The object of this game is for each group member to flip the flipper on the floor, going around the chair and back to the next person in line. Encourage others by cheering them on. Ready? Go!**

As groups play, place items from the Learning Lab in their path. For example, roll the *rubber rock* in front of moving *flippers*, place the *fuzzy fleece* and the *inflatable big bopper* on the floor in a player's direct path, toss the *craft wreath* around a player's *flipper*, and try to knock *flippers* over by tossing *cedar balls* at them. Be sure to create an obstacle for each team's path.

After each group member has had a turn, applaud the groups, and collect the Learning Lab items for later use. Gather everyone together, and ask:

- **How did the Learning Lab items make this game more difficult?** (You had to go around them; you didn't always know when one was going to hit your flipper or get in your way.)
- **How was your experience with the Learning Lab items in this game like people's experiences with bullies?** (They try to avoid bullies just as I tried to avoid the Learning Lab items; I didn't like having to deal with the Learning Lab items, and people don't like having to deal with bullies.)

Say: **Everyone has to deal with bullies of one kind or another. Some bullies intimidate us—or make us scared—with violence or the threat of violence. Some bullies use words. Some stand in our way. Some pick on us using pranks. But the Bible tells a wonderful promise you can remember every time a bully is breathing down your neck.**

Open a Bible to **Psalm 124:8**, and ask a volunteer to read aloud today's Bible verse:
► **"Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."**

Say: **Let's learn more about how ► God can help us face people who intimidate us.**

teacher tips

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.

teacher tips

Encourage kids' participation in the discussion by following up kids' answers with questions such as "What did you mean by that?" and "Can you tell me more?"

◀ BIBLE VERSE ▶ BIBLE POINT



Bible Exploration & Application

■ Bully Busters

SUPPLIES: Bibles, CD player, newsprint, tape, marker



tracks 2, 3, & 4

Form pairs, and have partners sit together on the floor. Say: **I'm going to play three segments from the CD that illustrate ways people intimidate us. After each segment, I'll stop the CD so you and your partner can discuss how you would respond. Be ready to share your responses with the rest of the class.**

Play "Bully Busters" (tracks 2, 3, and 4) from the CD. Each time the narrator asks, "What would you do?" stop the CD and give partners a minute to discuss how they'd respond. Then have one person from each pair report the pair's thoughts to the rest of the class. After the third segment, return the CD to the Learning Lab for use in later lessons.

Say: **Bullies can make us feel vulnerable and afraid. The good news is that God is with us. Let's look at an example of this in the Bible.**

Ask for one member of each pair to read **Psalm 124**, and have the other member summarize it in one sentence. Then have pairs discuss the following questions. Write the questions on newsprint and hang them on the wall so kids can refer to them during discussions.

Ask: • **In what ways do people intimidate you?** (They bump into me in the hall at school; they tease me; they tell me they'll hurt me if I don't do what they want.)

• **How do you respond?** (I just wait for them to go away; I try to ignore them; I tell a teacher.)

• **In what ways can God help you deal this week with people who intimidate you, just as God helped the writer of Psalm 124?** (I can pray for strength; he can provide good friends to stick close to me.)

Have partners take turns sharing their responses to the questions.

Then say: **Sometimes when others intimidate us, it feels like we're all alone. But Psalm 124 reminds us that God can help us face people who intimidate us.**

Right now, think of a time you felt afraid, threatened, or intimidated. Pause. Now let's all repeat today's Bible verse together to remind ourselves that God is with us during those times.

Open a Bible to **Psalm 124:8**, and lead kids in saying today's Bible verse: ► **"Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."**

Say: **Think of a way God helped you when you felt afraid, threatened, or intimidated. Pause. Now silently tell God thanks for helping both you and the writer of Psalm 124.**

Give kids about 30 seconds to pray silently before you move on to the next activity.



BIBLE POINT ►

BIBLE VERSE ►

■ Bully Blues

SUPPLIES: Bibles, block of wood, hammer



Place the *checkered mat* on the floor in the middle of your room. Gather your kids around it. Say: **In a moment we'll use this mat, but first find a partner, and share about one time you were bullied or treated unfairly. Maybe you were bullied by a bigger kid when you were young, or maybe an insensitive teacher at school made your life difficult. Tell about any time someone with more power used that power to humiliate or hurt you. Take one minute to tell your partner about one of those times.** Share an example from your own life of a time you were bullied.

After students have shared, have them gather around the *checkered mat*. Say: **This is an Answer Mat. See all the answers on it? Of course not—you've got to put them there! I'm going to ask you a question. When you think of an answer, jump on the mat to give your answer. Then jump off. Only one person can be on the mat at a time. Let's come up with lots of interesting ideas—you'll have 60 seconds to come up with as many ideas as you can.**

Ask: • **Why do people intimidate others?** (Because their families don't treat them well; because they want to feel powerful.)

• **When someone threatens to hurt you, what can you do?** (Tell my parents or a teacher; tell them to stop and leave me alone.)

• **What did Jesus do when he faced bullies?** (He turned the other cheek; when they were wrong about things, he told them so.)

Once kids have responded to the last question, say: **Great ideas! Any last suggestions?**

Return the *checkered mat* to the Learning Lab for later use. Ask your kids to form groups of four and discuss the following questions:

• **Which ideas seemed like really good ones? Why do you think so?** (Telling the person to stop because they won't expect it; telling a teacher because an adult can help keep you safe.)

• **Do you think a bully would leave you alone if you used these ideas? Why?** (If you tell a teacher, the person may bully you worse for being a tattletale; yes, because when they know they can't push you around, they'll leave you alone.)

Have kids gather back together as a large group. Set a block of wood in front of you, and get the hammer. Say: **Sometimes people do things that can hurt us and negatively affect our lives. Just as a hammer pounds down a nail, they try to pound us down. For example** (strike the piece of wood hard with the hammer), **a person might make fun of your appearance. That hurts.**

Ask: • **What are other things people do that can really hurt?** (Beat you up; gossip about you; steal stuff from you; laugh at you; call you names.)

Each time a student says an answer, pound the hammer onto the wood.

When kids have exhausted their ideas, pass around the piece of wood so they can see the indentations left by the hammer. Say: **The cruel things people do can make dents of hurt on our hearts.**

Instruct kids to return to their foursomes to discuss the following question:

• **Is there any way to make sure no one will ever hurt you? Why or why not?** (No, because you can't control other people; no, because people sin.)

teacher tips

When your students begin quickly jumping onto the *checkered mat*, they may experience midair collisions. Help kids avoid them by positioning yourself near the mat.

teacher tips

Bullying is a serious problem that should not be taken lightly as a "rite of passage." Bullying affects kids' sense of self-esteem and safety, and some kids have switched schools, simply stopped going to school, or done even worse just to escape. Learn to recognize the signs that a student is being bullied and find out what to do about it online at stopbullying.gov.



BIBLE POINT ►

Say: **Let's see what the Bible says about people hurting us.** Ask for a volunteer in each group to read aloud **Romans 8:35-39**. Ask groups to discuss this question:

• **What does it mean that nothing—and nobody—can separate us from Jesus?** (Jesus is always with us; we're never alone.)

After two minutes, ask foursomes to share their insights with the larger group.

Say: **A person can take away our lunch money, but he or she can't take away our promise of heaven—no one can take away the most precious thing we have.** ► **God can help us face people who intimidate us** when we trust in him for protection.

■ Can't Pound Me Down

SUPPLIES: Bibles, hammer and piece of wood from previous activity



Have everyone sit in a large circle. Invite a volunteer to read aloud **Romans 5:3**, and then pick up the piece of wood and the hammer you used in the previous activity.

Say: **When people try to hurt us** (use the hammer to hit the wood a few times), **we can remember that God loves us, which is a reason to rejoice! Even though we may be hurting, we also can smile and even laugh because we feel God's amazing love and know that God will never abandon us. This means that instead of getting pounded by others' words and actions** (use the hammer to hit the wood a few times), **God's love can make that pounding like this** (use the *inflatable big bopper* to hit the wood a few times). **God doesn't promise that we will never get hurt, but because of his love we can remain strong and undented by that hurt.**

Let's listen again to **Romans 8:38-39**. As we hear the words, let's think of all the reasons we have to rejoice about God's love.

Invite a student to read **Romans 8:38-39** aloud, and then say: **Let's praise God for his love right now! I'm going to pass around the hammers and wood. When you get them, hammer the piece of wood a few times to represent times circumstances are trying to pound you down. Then use the inflatable hammer to hit the wood to show how God's love can transform the hurt. As you hammer the second time, shout out a statement of praise, focusing on something about God that makes you rejoice. For example, you might say, ►“God, I rejoice because you can help me face people who intimidate me!” or “God, I rejoice because you are my best friend!”**

When everybody understands this praise activity, go first by striking the piece of wood first with the hammer and then with the *inflatable big bopper*, calling out a statement of praise using the words “God, I rejoice because...” Then pass the two hammers and wood to the student next to you.



BIBLE POINT ►

Closing

■ Sticks and Stones May Break My Bones...



SUPPLIES: Bibles

Say: **There's an old saying: “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” It's not true. It hurts when bullies attack our bodies and our**



feelings. And the world is full of bullies—people who have more power than we have and use it to hurt us or push us around. Maybe there's someone like that in your life right now. Maybe you're acting like a bully in someone else's life. Let's check out what the Bible says about bullies and how **► God can help us face people who intimidate us.**

Ask kids to form pairs and read **Luke 6:27-36** and **1 Thessalonians 5:15-16**. Tell kids to look for advice in these passages on how to deal with a bully.



HANDS-ON BIBLE

Say: **This advice may seem almost impossible to follow, but remember—anything is possible with God's help.**

Direct students to the "Anything Is Possible" activity near **Luke 6:27-36** in the *Hands-On Bible*. Distribute a piece of paper to each person, and have students follow the instructions in the *Hands-On Bible* to see the "hole" in their hands.

Say: **If God asks us to do something, we can be sure that God can give us the strength and wisdom to follow through.**



Ask pairs to discuss these questions:

- **Why do you think the Bible encourages us to be nice to people who are mean to us?** (Because if we love them, they might be nice instead; because if we love them, we'll show them God's love.)
- **What makes it hard for you to follow the advice in these Scriptures?** (I'm afraid a bully will hurt me; I feel like being mean back.)
- **What can we do to follow the advice in these Scriptures without putting ourselves in danger?** (Avoid being alone with bullies; don't fight with a bully even if you have to run and tell an adult.)

After four minutes, ask the kids to form a circle. Ask volunteers to share some of their answers with the group.



Say: **It may seem unfair for Jesus to expect you to love your enemies. But Jesus knows just how difficult this is. He suffered from bullies who teased him and intimidated him, and he suffered much worse than that, too. He was beaten and tortured and killed. In the midst of all of this, do you remember what Jesus said? He said in Luke 23:34, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."**

If someone is hurting you, forgiveness doesn't mean you shouldn't do anything about it. You should tell the person to stop, you should get away, and you should tell an adult. Forgiving as Jesus did means not striking out and not trying to make the person as miserable as he or she makes you.

Take out a *cedar ball*, and break a small piece off the *craft wreath*. I'll pass this stick and this "stone" around our circle. When they come to you, please think of a way someone has bullied or done something to offend you in the

Bible Insight

When Jesus quoted Old Testament Scripture, he referred to both Scripture and Hebrew commentary. Jesus was willing to teach the people by accepting their traditions, but he challenged them with the charge to "love your enemies." Jesus often challenged his hearers to follow a higher standard of conduct, not merely to follow the law. In this case, "loving neighbors" met the requirement of the law, while "loving enemies" raised the standard.



Not all your kids may choose to forgive. Don't force such a decision. Instead, make a mental note of who chose not to forgive, and gently follow up later outside of class.

past week. When the stick and stone reach you, decide if you're willing to forgive the person for what he or she has done—and think about one thing you can do this week to deal with bullies or those who hurt you.

If you're willing to forgive, say "I forgive you," and then pass the stick and stone to the next person in the circle. You don't have to tell anyone who the person is—and if you decide you can't forgive, quietly pass the stick and stone along to the next person in the circle. I'll begin.

After the stick and *cedar ball* have gone around your circle, say: **Jesus showed us how to forgive others—even bullies. Jesus has forgiven our sins, including those times we bullied others. If you want to accept Jesus' forgiveness for those times you've been a bully to or hurt another person, say, "Jesus, thank you for forgiving me" when this wreath reaches you. We'll let the wreath stand for the crown of thorns Jesus wore on the cross, even though there are no thorns on our wreath. I'll start passing it around the circle.**

When the wreath has returned to you, sum up by praying aloud for your kids and asking God to help them face people who intimidate them. Return the Learning Lab items to the Learning Lab box for use in later lessons.



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.

Beating the Bully Factor, Week 1



Something to Think About

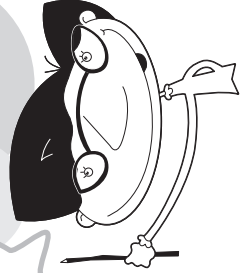
The beginning of Tara's eighth-grade year was everything she'd hoped it would be. Things were definitely great—that is, until Dora moved to town. Dora was tough, and she had a chip on her shoulder. Dora would purposely stand right in front of Tara's locker when Tara needed to get her books. Dora also started spreading nasty rumors about Tara.

Tara was miserable—and angry. "She's ruining my year!" she thought. Tara dreaded going to her locker at all, and it seemed her friends were starting to believe Dora's rumors. One evening at the dinner table, Tara burst into tears and told her parents about the situation. They comforted her and told her what they thought she should do—be kind to Dora, for doing this would be like heaping burning coals on her head. Tara thought, "There's no way! I can't be kind to her! Besides, she'd probably clobber me!" Nonetheless, she decided to try it.

The next day, rather than avoiding Dora, Tara walked up to her and said, "Hey, Dora! Did you do your history assignment?" Dora glared at Tara for a moment, and then hung her head and said, "No.... I guess I didn't understand it." "Well, I can help you if you'd like," Dora said.

Dora offered. Dora gave Tara a long look and then said, "That would be great."

"Our help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (Psalm 124:8).



Discussion Starters

- Was Dora's reaction to Tara's offer of help what you expected? Why or why not?
- Why do you think facing someone's anger and "bullying" with kindness could result in forgiveness and even friendship?
- Think of someone you don't get along with at school or work. What could you do to show that person kindness this week?

Family Building

*** FOR KIDS ONLY:** The next time you're tempted to argue with your siblings, take a deep breath, and tell them how much you love them instead.

*** FOR PARENTS ONLY:** "Kidnap" your children, and take them out for a special treat.

*** FOR THE FAMILY:** Have a Good Deeds Week. Who can do the most for other family members? Decide on rules, and have a fun prize ready!





Teacher Guide

GRADES 5 & 6

Spring

Teach as Jesus Taught!®

JESUS USED EVERYDAY OBJECTS—a mustard seed, a fig tree, a lost coin—to teach his disciples the truths that would change the world. With Hands-On Bible Curriculum, you can teach as Jesus taught, using fun surprises that children can touch, see, and smell to relate eternal truths they won't forget.

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

STRUGGLES KIDS FACE

Psalm 124

Psalm 34:17-19

Psalm 23

Ephesians 4:29

God can help us face people who intimidate us.

God cares when we're feeling down.

God can heal hurting family members.

What we say reflects who we are.

NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

2 Corinthians 5:17

Hebrews 4:12

Acts 1:8

* Romans 8:10-13

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Only God makes us new.

God's Word is our guidebook for new life.

Telling others about God is a privilege.

God has power over life and death.

Jesus' return gives us hope.

SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Romans 13:8-10

Luke 22:54-62

Philippians 1:20

Philippians 1:3-6

We make friends by caring about others.

God can make our failures steppingstones to success.

True success is becoming like Jesus.

God's people can be positive and joyful.

* Due to the way Easter falls, we recommend moving the lessons as needed to line up Lesson 8 with Easter Sunday.

Also available:

AWARD-WINNING HANDS-ON BIBLE®

God's Word comes alive with hundreds of fun, interactive activities. It also coordinates with Hands-On Bible Curriculum!



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