

Elementary Parent Guides

MAY

MEMORY VERSE

Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come. 1 Timothy 4:8, NIV

LIFE APP

Commitment—Making a plan and putting it into practice

BOTTOM LINE

Practice hearing from God.

SUPPLIES

Week 1

Paper, pencils/marker, paper, stapler/tape

Week 2

Plastic Easter eggs, sand, rock, or other items to put inside eggs, tape, “Instructions Sheet” Activity Page, stacking cups

Week 3

Fidget spinner (or another way to keep track of time), balloon, squares of tissue paper, and markers, paper and pencil and Bible/Bible app on phone

Week 4

“Charades Cards” Activity Page on website (just show to child), “I Am NOT Riddles” Activity

Week 5

balloon or beach ball, plain white paper, crayons, various coins, sandpaper, leaves, corrugated cardboard, or woven placemats

TRICKY TONGUE TWISTERS

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

- Ask kids if they know any tongue twisters. These are hard to say and can be hard to listen to.
- Share each one of these examples, one at a time, and invite the kids to try to say them.
 - Rubber baby buggy bumpers
 - Red leather yellow leather
 - She sells seashells by the seashore.
 - Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
 - Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear. Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair. Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't fuzzy, was he?

LAYING DOWN ON THE JOB

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

WHAT YOU NEED:

No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

When you say, "Go," kids/adults lay down on their backs, fold their hands across their chests, and try to get up without moving their arms.
The first person that stands up comes in first place and then so on until everyone is standing.

This will take practice! Keep playing to see if participants get better the more they practice.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"Wasn't that tough? It took some practice to stand up without using your hands!
[Transition] **Today in our Bible story, we'll hear about something else that requires practice! Let's watch!**"

- After they finish, instruct the kids to fold their strips in half and place them in the center of your small group area.
- Use the paper strips to play a game of charades.
- Select the kid with the closest birthday to go first.
- Direct the first kid to select a strip, read it silently, and act it out (without talking) for the rest of the group.

- The first kid to guess correctly will choose a new strip to act out for the group. Continue as time allows.

Head to hillcityrva.com/kidsonline/ where our digital video experiences are for our elementary schoolers. We have one for K-3rd graders and one for our preteens. Once you are there, put in the password – [hillcitykids](#). Place your cursor in the video screen upper left corner for a menu of which video to select.

FOUR CORNERS FAITH

Made to Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates concrete application through role-play and reenactment

WHAT YOU NEED:

Prepared paper, marker, and the whole family! If playing with one child see how long they can go without guessing their corner.

WHAT YOU DO:

Set the four pages in the four corners of your Small Group area, number side up. Play four corners.

- Select a kid to stand in the middle of the group, close their eyes, and count to ten as the rest of the group runs to a corner.
- Direct the kid in the center to call out a number between one and four, then open their eyes.
- All kids in that corner are out.

Before the kids in the called corner sit down, instruct the kid in the center to call on someone from that group to flip over the number in the corner and read the word on the back. Use the questions below to talk about that faith skill with all of the kids. Instruct the kid in the center to close their eyes and count again as the remaining kids run to one of the three remaining corners. Remind kids frequently not to bunch up too closely in one spot. Repeat the game for the three remaining numbers.

Questions:

- HEAR:
 - What is the number one way we hear from God? (through His Word, the Bible)
 - What are other ways you can hear from God? (through others you trust who follow God)
- PRAY
 - What is prayer? (talking to God)
 - When can you talk to God? What can you talk to God about? (You can talk to God at any time about anything.)
- TALK
 - Who do you talk to about God? (family, friends, your small group)
 - Why do you think it's important to talk to others about who God is and what He's done? (When you talk to others about your faith, it can help their faith grow, too!)
- LIVE

- What do you think “living for God” means? (making choices that honor Him; trusting Him to guide you; loving God and loving others)

WHAT YOU SAY:

“How can you live for God at school? At home? On your ball team or in your neighborhood?”

“Just as a runner follows a PLAN—they make sure to MOVE each day, FUEL their body with healthy food and lots of water, and make time to REST—we have a plan to follow, too. Even though we’re running a different kind of race: a race to follow God. When we follow this simple plan (hold up the signs as you review) to hear from God, pray, talk about Him with others, and live in a way that honors Him, our faith will grow and get stronger! That’s why we need to make a commitment to *[Bottom Line]* **keep practicing what matters most.**”

PRAYER TIME

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal processing and application.

WHAT YOU NEED:

construction paper and stapler

WHAT YOU DO:

Help the kids cut the construction paper in strips length wise (hot dog fold) place the crown around their heads for sizing, bringing the ends together. Let the kids hand you their crowns to staple.

For older kids, lead the following discussion:

- What does a gold medal runner have to do to prepare for a big race?
- Have you ever trained for a sport or prepared for a recital? What did you do to prepare?
- When we see someone receive a prize in a big race or competition, it can be easy to forget that they trained REALLY hard to win! What are some ways we train or practice our faith? (love God, love others; hear from God; pray to God; talk about God; live for God)
- Practicing these four things—Hear, Pray, Talk, Live—will help us love God and love others. That’s running in a way that will earn a prize. What kind of prize do we earn according to 1 Corinthians 9:25? Is it a crown like the one you made? (No, the prize lasts forever. When we put our faith in Jesus and practice loving God and others, we will win the prize of life forever with Jesus and hope for our lives here on earth!)

Encourage kids to wear their crowns as you lead the group in prayer.

WHAT YOU SAY:

“Heavenly Father, You are awesome! Thanks for reminding us how important it is to **[Bottom Line] keep practicing what matters most.** Help us make a commitment to follow You so we can love You and love others. Thank You for Jesus. In His name we pray, amen.”

TRICKY TONGUE TWISTERS

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

no supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

- Ask kids if they know any tongue twisters. These are hard to say and can be hard to listen to.
- Share each one of these examples, one at a time, and invite the kids to try to say them.
 - Rubber baby buggy bumpers
 - Red leather yellow leather
 - She sells seashells by the seashore.
 - Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
 - Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear. Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair. Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't fuzzy, was he?

AN EGGCELLENT MYSTERY

Made to Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery

WHAT YOU NEED:

Plastic Easter eggs, loose sand, rock, or other items to put inside eggs, tape

WHAT YOU DO:

- Before group time, put the small objects into the eggs and seal them well with tape.
- Be sure to have one egg with loose sand and one egg with a rock. The other eggs can be filled with anything you have on hand.
- Invite kids to select an egg, shake it, and guess what's inside.
- Younger kids can pass the egg in a circle and each shake it.
- For older kids, make figuring out the contents a blind-guessing game.
 - Instruct the kids to be quiet and shake the egg one time.
- Open all the eggs and reveal the items. Tell the kids that the most important ones are the sand and the rock.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"You had to have a sharp sense of hearing to guess what was inside these eggs!

[Transition] **Let's go to Large Group to see if listening carefully makes us like sand or like rock!"**

Head to hillcityrva.com/kidsonline/ where our digital video experiences are for our elementary schoolers. We have one for K-3rd graders and one for our preteens. Once you are there, put in the password – [hillcitykids](#). Place your cursor in the video screen upper left corner for a menu of which video to select.

BUILT TO ORDER

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

“Instructions Sheet” Activity Page, stacking cups

WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Give each team the stacking cups.
- Set the teams in circles around their materials.
- Instruct the teams that they can build as long as they listen carefully to your instructions.
- Read from the “Instruction Sheet” Activity Page so the groups know who can build what and when.
- Warn kids to listen carefully, because if anyone builds something that is not in the instructions, the entire group has to start over.
- The first team to complete their building, wins!

WHAT YOU SAY:

“You had to listen carefully during this game. Why was listening so important in this game? (*had to wait for instructions; didn’t always understand; couldn’t just do whatever we wanted*)

“Listening is important! What do we usually use to listen? (*Our ears*) But when we talk about ‘hearing from God,’ we don’t always use our ears. We don’t usually hear God’s voice like you can hear mine right now.

“So how do we hear from God? (*from the Bible, from other followers of Jesus, by paying attention at church*) When we read the Bible, we ‘hear’ what Jesus said. When someone else reads the Bible to us or tells us stories and messages from the Bible, like in Large Group, we hear from God.

“In our Bible Story today, we heard that just listening about God isn’t the end of the ‘hearing’ part—we have to do what we hear! Just like in our game, you had to hear what I said then do it. So, what should you do to [*Bottom Line*] **practice hearing from God?**” (*Hear what God says in the Bible then do what God says to do.*)

Optional Discussion Questions for Older Kids

If you lead 4th, 5th, or 6th graders, consider asking these discussion questions:

- How do you hear from God best: reading the Bible on your own or having someone talk to you about the Bible?
- What is one thing you know about how God wants you to live that you read in the Bible or heard someone talk about?
- When have you heard from God (through Scripture or through a message at church) then did something with what you heard? Or when have you put God’s words into practice by doing what you know He wants us to do?

PRAYER TIME

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal processing and application

WHAT YOU NEED:

No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

- Gather together and pray, using the responsive prayer below.
- Say the part of the prayer that is bolded.
- Direct the kids to respond with the sentence in italics.
- If you have older kids, assign them a line in bold to read as the rest of the group responds.

WHAT YOU SAY:

“Dear God, we want to hear what You have to say to us! *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“When we have a chance to read the Bible, *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“When we listen to someone talk about Your Word, *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“When we think about all You have done and all You have made, *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“When we need wisdom and direction, *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“When we are afraid and alone, *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“When we want to help other people, *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“When our lives are noisy, *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“When our lives are calm, *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“When we are tempted to do something wrong, *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“When we are sorry and ready to try again, *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“We know that You speak through Your Word, Your people, and Your creation, so every day, *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“Thank You for speaking to us because You love us. We will show we love You by the ways *(We will practice hearing from God.)*

“Amen!”

1. *(in a normal voice)* Whoever is wearing the most amount of green in their clothes, place four cups on the ground using your left hand.
2. *(in a whisper)* Someone whose first or last name ends in a vowel, place two cups on top of the base of four.
3. *(in a strange accent)* Someone whose first name starts with an R, S, T, L, N or E, place the third cup in the second layer.
4. *(in Pig latin)* Whoever has the next birthday, put one cup on the layer of three.
(Who-hay ever-hay as-hay uh-they ext-nay irthday-bay, ut-pay one-hay up-cay on-hay uh-they ayer-lay of-hay ee-thray.)
5. *(snap your fingers for attention)* You *(point to a kid on each team)* put the next thing on the other things.
6. *(in a normal voice)* Whomsoever has not heretofore yet participated, put ye the final liquid receptacle turned building material in the prominent place at the apex of the ancient architectural marvel of the pyramid.

What to Do:

Print one for each small group.

"Instructions Sheet" Activity Page

May 2021, Week 2, K-5 Starter
©2021 The reThink Group, Inc. All rights reserved.

GET MOVIN'

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

fidget spinner or another way to keep track of time (hour glass minute timer from a game, or a timer)

WHAT YOU DO:

- Choose someone and give them the fidget spinner.
- Instruct the kid with the fidget spinner to call out a movement to practice (jumping jacks, jogging in place, etc.) and spin the fidget spinner.
- Direct the rest of the kids to practice the movement until the spinning stops.
- Continue for several rounds, passing the fidget spinner around the circle so each kid has a chance to select the movement.

WHAT YOU SAY:

“You guys are expert movers! When you want to know the answer to something, you ask an expert! *[Transition]* **Who do you think would be the expert in praying or talking to God? Let’s go find out!”**

Head to hillcityva.com/kidsonline/ where our digital video experiences are for our elementary schoolers. We have one for K-3rd graders and one for our preteens. Once you are there, put in the password – [hillcitykids](#). Place your curser in the video screen upper left corner for a menu of which video to select.

SEND UP A PRAYER

Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal processing and application

WHAT YOU NEED:

Balloons, squares of tissue paper, and markers

WHAT YOU DO:

- Give each kid two or three squares of tissue paper and a marker.
- Invite them to write or draw anything they want to pray about.
- Ask kids to hold the tissue paper and silently pray a couple of quick prayers.
- Inflate the balloon and tie it.
- Rub the balloon on a shirt or the carpet. Then, they try to pick up their prayers (the tissue paper) off the ground with the static balloon.
- Explain that God hears our prayers every time we lift them up to Him and talk to Him—just like this balloon picked up our pieces of tissue paper.

WHAT YOU SAY:

“I sure am thankful that Jesus taught us how to *[Bottom Line]* **practice praying to God**. I’m also thankful that God loves us so much that He hears our prayers every time we talk to Him.”

PRAYER TIME

paper and pencil and Bible/Bible app on phone

WHAT YOU NEED:

paper and pencil and Bible/Bible app on phone

WHAT YOU SAY:

“Jesus gave us a pattern to follow when we pray. We can use this pattern to talk to God anytime, anywhere, no matter how we feel. So this week, I want to challenge you to use this pattern as you *[Bottom Line]* **practice praying to God**. Let’s pray.”

WHAT YOU DO:

- Pray using the pattern discussed on the word and the comments the kids said in the activity.
 - “Tell God He’s awesome.” (Based on Luke 11:2)
 - “Ask for what you need.” (Based on Luke 11:3)
 - “Seek forgiveness.” (Based on Luke 11:4a)
 - “Ask for help to do the right thing.” (Based on Luke 11:4b)
 -
 - Walk kids through praying using this pattern by asking the following questions and writing their answers on the white board:
 - 1. How would you tell God He’s awesome? What would you say to let Him know how great He is?
 - 2: What are the things you need? How could you say that in a simple prayer to God?
 - 3: What words do you say when you ask someone to forgive you? How would you ask God for forgiveness?
 - 4: When do you have trouble doing the right thing? When are you most tempted to make an unwise choice? How could you ask God for help with that?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share and collaborate with others while growing their understanding

WHAT YOU NEED:

No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

- Ask them to talk about their favorite TV show, video game, food, or sport.
- Then ask them to talk about something they're less likely to know about: the South Pole, tortoises, tax codes. If they can't think of anything to say, reassure them that it's fine not to know something about everything.
- Ask: Why is it easy to talk about some things and difficult to talk about others?

CHARADES

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

"Charades Cards" Activity Page on website (just show to child)

WHAT YOU DO:

- Use the "Charades Cards" to play charades with the group.
- Instruct one kid to choose a card and act-out what is on that card.
- Show word to child.
- Direct actor not to say any words or make any sounds.
- The first kid to guess the word on the actor's card becomes the next actor.
- Play as long as time allows.

WHAT YOU SAY:

"This game is pretty fun, but it would have been a lot easier if we could have talked about the word on our cards. None of the topics on the cards were things we didn't know about. We could have all talked for a long time about tacos! *[Transition]* **Let's go hear about the most important thing to talk about with anyone, anytime, anywhere!"**

Head to hillcityrva.com/kidsonline/ where our digital video experiences are for our elementary schoolers. We have one for K-3rd graders and one for our preteens. Once you are there, put in the password – [hillcitykids](#). Place your cursor in the video screen upper left corner for a menu of which video to select.

I AM NOT

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and/or working as a group

WHAT YOU NEED:

“I Am NOT Riddles” Activity Page

WHAT YOU DO:

- If you have mostly younger kids, choose three riddles to read out loud, one at a time, and let kids guess the answer as a group.
- For older kids, give each kid a card with a riddle and let them quiz the group. Allow the group to consult together before guessing.
- If you have several kids of the same age group, split into teams.
- Instruct one team to give riddles to the other.
- Give a point for each correct answer a team is able to guess, and keep track of each team’s points.

WHAT YOU SAY:

“This game gave you a pretty good idea of the answer, even if you didn’t have all the information you wanted.

“Sometimes, we are shy or embarrassed to *[Bottom Line]* **practice talking about God**, because we think that it means we have to have all the answers. Have you ever felt like that?

“But that’s the opposite of true! In fact, part of talking about God is asking questions and thinking about the answers. Who could you ask questions about God? (*parents, Small Group Leaders, church friends, other people who follow Jesus*) Yes! Discovering who God is takes our whole lives! God is so big that we could talk about Him forever and never run out of stuff to think about or wonder.

“What is one question you have about God? (*Invite kids to talk together.*) Let’s play from our game—what is one thing that God is NOT? (*God does not lie or cheat or forget. He does not sleep or get bored. He doesn’t break promises.*) What is one thing you know God IS?” (*loving, kind, wise, faithful, healing, etc.*)

[Make It Personal] (*Share about some good conversations you’ve had about God with friends or spiritual mentors. What were the questions you explored? What were the thoughts you talked about? You can even remind kids about times that you have all discovered something about God together as you talked these activities each week.*)

PRAYER TIME

paper and pencil and Bible/Bible app on phone

WHAT YOU NEED:

No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO:

- Gather kids in a circle and invite them to [Bottom Line] practice talking about God.
- Pray in a circle, letting kids finish this sentence: Dear God, I know that You are _____ and I want to tell everyone!
- After the last kid has prayed, close in prayer.

WHAT YOU SAY:

“Dear God, You are the most important subject we could ever talk about! Please help us be brave when we have a chance to [*Bottom Line*] **practice talking about God**, so that everyone can know how much You love us. We pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Unicorn

Taco

Rollercoaster

Raincoat

School bus

Christmas tree

Caterpillar

Ice skates

Milkshake

Sleeping bag

Board game

Spelling test

What to Do:
Print and cut apart. Provide one set for each small group.

"Charades Cards" Activity Page
May 2021, Week 4, K-5 Starter
©2021 The reThink Group, Inc. All rights reserved.

I am NOT alive. I do NOT have lungs. I do NOT eat food—but I AM something that grows bigger. (Answer: fire)

I am NOT spicy. I am NOT yellow. I am NOT red—but I AM usually on a hot dog. (Answer: fur)

I am NOT a door. I am NOT a diary. I am NOT a vehicle. I AM something that needs keys. (Answer: a piano)

I am NOT a person. I am NOT an animal. I am NOT a memory. I AM something with a tongue and a sole. (Answer: a sneaker)

I am NOT on your back. I am NOT a wolf. I am NOT bubble gum—but I AM in a pack. (Answer: cards)

I am NOT here today. I will NOT be here tomorrow. You will NOT see me ever again—but I am always right behind you. (Answer: yesterday)

I am NOT ever thrown. I am NOT ever held. I am NOT ever fully kicked—but I AM often caught. (Answer: a cold)

I am NOT ever hurt. I am NOT ever broken. I am NOT ever in love—but I AM always falling somewhere. (Answer: rain)

I am NOT a car. I am NOT a person. I do NOT have wheels—but I AM winding through every town and city in the world. (Answer: roads)

I am NOT air. I am NOT water. I am NOT foam—but I AM able to fill a room completely from top to bottom. (Answer: light)

I am NOT an animal. I am NOT a camera. I am NOT a person—but I AM something with three eyes. (Answer: traffic light)

I am NOT a person. I am NOT an animal. I am NOT invisible—but I AM always going up and down. (Answer: elevator or stairs)

What to Do:

Print and cut apart. Provide one set for each small group.

PRACTICE

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

WHAT YOU NEED:

balloon or beach ball

WHAT YOU DO:

- Play by bopping the balloon or ball around the circle.
- Instruct the kids that for every hit, the person bopping the balloon has to name something they practiced this month. (spiritual practices we've discussed in Small Group, homework skills, sports/dance/art techniques, etc.)
- Count how many times in a row the group can hit the balloon without the it touching the floor or without repeating things they've practiced.

Head to hillcityrva.com/kidsonline/ where our digital video experiences are for our elementary schoolers. We have one for K-3rd graders and one for our preteens. Once you are there, put in the password – [hillcitykids](http://hillcitykids.com). Place your cursor in the video screen upper left corner for a menu of which video to select.

UNDER THE SURFACE

Made to Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery

WHAT YOU NEED:

Plain white paper, crayons, various coins, sandpaper, leaves, corrugated cardboard, or woven placemats

WHAT YOU DO:

- Hand a piece of paper to each kid.
- Set out the crayons and the materials to make rubbings.
- Demonstrate how to place a coin under the paper and rub over the page gently with a crayon to make an impression.
- Challenge kids to use a variety of materials, as well as drawings they make with the crayons, to create a picture of their favorite part of the Bible Story today.

WHAT YOU SAY:

“In our Bible Story, we heard about a woman who shared the coins she had, even though it wasn't very much. Jesus was so impressed with her gift that He pointed it out to His disciples.

“Just like us, Jesus' friends were learning how to [Bottom Line] practice living for God. They probably thought that the people who gave away tons of money were doing something greater for God than the woman who only gave a little money. But Jesus said that your heart behind giving is more important than the amount you give.

“We don’t have to do big things to impress God. Little things done with big hearts are what He appreciates. That means that we can live for God in all kinds of normal, everyday ways: by sharing what we have, by showing kindness to people around us, and by helping those in trouble.

“Think about this past week. Were you helpful to your family? Were you kind to someone at school or in your neighborhood? Did you share with a little brother or sister?

“Those are all ways that you already [Bottom Line] practice living for God. What are some other things you did this week that showed love for God or other people?” (As the kids share, encourage them that all these things are ways to live for God and that He notices.)

Optional Discussion Questions for Older Kids

If you lead 4th, 5th, or 6th graders, consider asking these discussion questions:

- What is the difference between KNOWING God and LIVING for God?
- This next season, you’ll have new opportunities to show love to others at activities, camp, during vacation from school, extra time with your siblings—what will you do with it? What could you do this upcoming week to [Bottom Line] practice living for God?

PRAYER TIME

paper and pencil and Bible/Bible app on phone

WHAT YOU SAY:

“Many people say that to [Bottom Line] practice living for God, we can walk in Jesus’ footsteps. Jesus loved people and loved God, and we can see that in these verses.

“Jesus lived as a normal person. He walked around and traveled. He met people while He did errands. He spent time with friends and family. Jesus lived a life a lot like ours, and yet everything He did, He showed love to those around Him.

“So, how do we take our normal life—going to school, being with our family, hanging out with friends, going about our business—and still [Bottom Line] practice living for God?” (Invite kids to come up with ideas: writing letters to far away family, helping out with their siblings’ chores, being patient with our friends, sharing what we have, etc.)

[Make It Personal] (Share the everyday ways that you live for God. Emphasize not just what you do, but the attitude you have towards others.)

What You Say:

“Dear God, we are happy to live for You! You have given us so much! Please show us ways we can use what You’ve given us to show Your love to others. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”