

Small Group Leader Guide

Today's Suggested Schedule

Prelude: Setting the tone for the experience

See the Getting Ready pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the Prelude folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing time for fun interaction

1. Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God

Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

- Opener
- Worship
- Bible Story (sections about God's Big Story are listed as optional)
- Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Bible Story Review: ROARing Review
2. Application Activity: God is Always with Me
3. Memory Verse Activity: Picture This! Memory Verse
4. Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)
- Devotionals for Kids
- [Parent Cue App](#) and [ParentCue.org](#)

✦ Need activities for a K-5th group? Check out the 2nd-3rd grade guide.

THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Daniel and the Lions' Den

Daniel 6

Bottom Line

God is always with you.

Memory Verse

Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak.

Isaiah 40:31 (NirV)



Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a special need, learning difference, or disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro tips.

SOCIAL

Opening Activity



What You Need

- Offering container
- "Lions" Activity Pages
- Floor tape
- Device for playing upbeat music

Inclusive Supplies

- Small stuffed animal



Inclusive Pro Tips

Create a seated version of the activity with less movement by instructing the kids to form a circle and placing the "Lion" pictures in a circle around the group. Give a child in the circle the stuffed animal, and instruct the kids to pass the stuffed animal around the circle quietly and sneakily so as not to wake the "lions."

① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God that He is with you at all times. Think about an age-appropriate time when you faced something more confidently because you know God was with you in it. Ask God to help the kids see that He is always with them, and to teach them how to live confidently because God goes through every single moment of life with them.

1. Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high-five, smile, or wave as they arrive!
2. Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
3. Before you begin, place the "Lions" Activity Pages in a pathway.
4. Use floor tape to mark a start and finish line.
5. Say: "We're going to take turns tiptoeing through the lion's den. Let's pretend not to wake the lions!"
6. Play music and let the kids tiptoe, hop, crawl, or sneak from one end of the path to the other.
7. If a kid accidentally touches or wakes a lion, no worries! Everyone cheers them on.
8. Let everyone have a turn, then gather them to sit in a circle.

② What You Say

"Way to go, friends! You were very careful not to wake the lions!"

"Can you imagine if you were really in a den filled with lions? It would be so scary, wouldn't it? Well, that actually happened to someone long ago. His name was Daniel!"

"In today's true story from the Bible, we'll discover that even though things looked scary, Daniel did what he always did—he put all his trust in God. And do you know what? God was right there with him the whole time. Let's go find out what happened!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/4

ROARing Review

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed



Inclusive Pro Tips

If the roaring noise is uncomfortable for your group, invite the kids to say the Bottom Line together with hand motions instead.

→ 'God' (point up)

→ 'is always with me.' (place hands over your heart)

① What You Do

1. Invite the kids to spread out.
2. Say, "Stretch out your arms to make sure you have enough room! Now, tuck your arms down like a lion ready to pounce."
3. Explain how to play:
 - You'll share a part of the Bible Story. (Bible Story Points are listed below.)
 - After each line, point to the kids and prompt them to say: 'God is always with me!' in their best lion voice!
 - *NOTE: If this activity gets too noisy, prompt the kids to be quiet lions, sleepy lions, or sneaky lions to keep things fun and help with volume control.*
4. Continue until all of the story points have been read.

Make It Personal → Tell the kids about an age-appropriate time when you felt alone—maybe you moved to a new town or started a new job. How did you remind yourself that God was with you? Share how knowing God was with you brought you peace, and share your habits for talking with God!

Bible Story Points:

- "Daniel was in a foreign land. He was very smart and was chosen to help the king. But even far from home ..." [POINT TO KIDS] "God is always with me!"
- "But the leaders were very jealous of Daniel. So they convinced King Darius to make a law that people could only pray to the king for 30 whole days. If they prayed to anyone else, then they would be thrown into the lions' den. But Daniel knew ..." [POINT TO KIDS] "God is always with me!"
- "Daniel prayed every day, even when he knew it might get him in trouble. He did that because ..." [POINT TO KIDS] "God is always with me!"
- "Those mean leaders tattled to the king! The king didn't want Daniel to be hurt, but he couldn't change the law. Still, Daniel had confidence, because ..." [POINT TO KIDS] "God is always with me!"
- "Daniel was thrown into a den filled with hungry lions. The king said, 'You always serve [YOUR GOD] faithfully. So may he save you!' (Daniel 6:16 NIV). [POINT TO KIDS] "God is always with me!"
- "God sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths, and Daniel wasn't hurt. Because ..." [POINT TO KIDS] "God is always with me!"
- "The king told the whole kingdom to honor Daniel's God, because He had saved him. Just like God was with Daniel, you can trust that ..." [POINT TO KIDS] "God is always with me!"

Continued on the next page. →

GROUPS 1/4

ROARing Review

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed



② What You Say

"Let's give one last lion roar to celebrate what God did for Daniel! (INVITE RESPONSES.)

"Now, let's think about this: Daniel was no superhero. He was just a person, like you and me! But Daniel knew God. He made a habit of talking to God every day, so when tough things happened, he already knew who to trust: a good, strong, powerful God!

"There are going to be times we don't feel like God is with us. Maybe you feel nervous or unsure about a new school, or a kid is being mean to you at recess. But here's the truth: when you choose to follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to live in you. So God is with you—ALWAYS! No matter what happens, God goes with you. Always remember, God is always with you!"

Inclusive Pro Tips



If the roaring noise is uncomfortable for your group, invite the kids to say the Bottom Line together with hand motions instead.

→ 'God' (point up)

→ 'is always with me.' (place hands over your heart)

GROUPS 3/4

Picture This! Memory Verse

Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- Bible marked at Isaiah 40:31
- Print "Isaiah 40:31 Pictures" Activity Pages

Inclusive Pro Tips



Instead of racing to finish, help the teams talk and discuss the order of the cards as they say the verse together.



① What You Do

1. Select a kid to open the Bible to Isaiah 40:31.
2. Read the verse aloud, then lead the group to repeat it together.
3. Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
4. Divide the kids into two teams.
5. Direct each team to sit in a circle.
6. Give each team a mixed-up set of the "Isaiah 40:31 Pictures" Activity Pages.

Play Together:

1. Say: "Your team will work together to figure out the correct order of the pictures based on Isaiah 40:31. Once you're finished, raise your hands!"
2. If the kids need assistance, point out the numbers on the cards.
3. Check their picture order.
4. Repeat the verse together as a group, encouraging a kid from each team to point to the picture that illustrates that part of the verse as you go along.
5. Play another round if time allows.
6. Gather everyone to discuss.

② What You Say

"I love this verse from the book of Isaiah! Have you ever seen a video of an eagle flying? Eagles can flap their wings, but most of the time, they soar! They spread their wings wide and let the wind carry them higher and higher without even flapping. That's how God made them, to soar on the wind.

"God designed eagles to soar, and He designed YOU to trust Him so you can soar through life too.

"Trusting God means, when you're tired, remembering, 'Oh, God can do that!' It means when you need help, remembering, 'God will help me get through that!' Trusting God means giving God the weight so you can soar like an eagle! Trusting God is letting yourself be carried by God's strength, like an eagle rides the wind!

"And that trust in God gives you strength! It's not just physical strength like lifting something heavy. It's strength in your heart and mind—like the courage to do what's right, the willingness to forgive, or the confidence to speak up.

"So when you feel nervous at school, or when your feelings are hurt, or when it's hard to do what's right, remember this promise: God is always with you. Trust Him and let His strength carry you through whatever you are facing!"

GROUPS 4/4

Pray and Dismiss



Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed

① What You Do

1. Gather the kids together in a circle.
2. Say, "Talking to God is one of the most powerful things you can do. You are talking to the King of the universe who is your friend. Prayer doesn't need to be fancy or perfect. It's just you being open and honest with God, because He already knows you and loves you!"
3. Say, "You don't have to be a grown-up or know everything to talk to God. You can pray out loud or quietly. However, you pray, trust that God is listening—and God is always with you!"
4. Invite a kid to pray aloud for the group with confidence, as they remember God is always with them!
5. Close in prayer.

② Prayer

"God, You are an awesome, loving, powerful God. There is no one greater than You! Teach us how to live knowing that You are always with us. Help us remember how You've helped us in the past, and how You shut the mouths of lions for Your friend Daniel. Help us to keep trusting You, and put all our confidence in You. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Transition → As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to show off their shadow puppet skills and share that every time they see their shadow, they can remember: God is always with you.

Inclusive Pro Tips



Allow the kids to pray silently if that works best for your group.