

K-3rd

Large Group

November — Week 4

# Large 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 (10 minutes)

#### Social: Providing time for fun interaction

1. Opening Activity

### Large Group (30 minutes)

#### Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

#### Worship: Inviting people to respond to God

### Small Group (15 minutes)

#### Groups: Creating a safe place to connect 1. Bible Story

### Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

→ Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)

→ [Devotionals for Kids](#)

→ Parent Cue App and [ParentCue.org](#)

THIS MONTH



### Today's Bible Story

## Esther

Esther

### Bottom Line

**God can help you stand up for others.**

### 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

Loud sounds, bright lights, and large groups can be overwhelming or overstimulating for some children. To create a more inclusive large group experience, consider offering adaptive tools like noise-canceling headphones, sunglasses, sensory-friendly items, or access to modified spaces.

5 MINUTES

# Opener

10 MINUTES

# Worship

20 MINUTES

# Story

## ① Opener

AUDIO → Play high-energy music as kids enter.  
SLIDE → Theme  
Optional Video → Theme Loop

→ Host enters.

Optional Video → Countdown  
Optional Video → Theme Intro  
Optional Video → Theme Loop

HOST: Hey, everyone! I'm so glad that you're here with us today. All month, we're exploring what it means to build on a firm foundation with Bedrock: Building confidence in God, block by block. You've got to be on solid ground if you want to be able to stand tall and strong, as we'll see in today's story. And speaking of standing, are you all ready to play a game? (PAUSE FOR RESPONSES.)

"Okay, I'm going to need everyone for this game! I'm going to say something, and if you agree with it, I want you to stand up. So if I say: 'I like pizza!'—then everyone who likes pizza will stand up.

"If you don't agree with something, that's okay! Just stay sitting down. Then I'll move on to the next statement. If you're standing up and you don't agree with the next thing I say, just sit down. Everybody ready to take a stand? Okay, here goes!

→ Share some of the following statements—or create your own that are more unique to your environment. Make sure to include statements that will allow everyone to stand at least sometimes. (YOU COULD ALSO OFFER AN OPTION OF SIMPLY RAISING A HAND INSTEAD OF STANDING.)

1. I like ketchup on French fries.
2. I like ketchup on green beans.
3. I like to wake up early in the morning.
4. My favorite color is yellow.
5. My favorite color is blue.
6. My favorite color is red.
7. I can do a cartwheel.
8. My favorite holiday is Christmas.
9. My birthday is in the summer.
10. I've eaten a s'more this fall.
11. I have a pet at home.
12. I would have a pet (OR ANOTHER PET) if my mom let me.
13. I can say something in a different language.
14. I have a brother or sister.
15. I like telling jokes.
16. I've written someone a letter and sent it in the actual mail.
17. I like salt and vinegar potato chips.
18. I like dark chocolate more than milk chocolate.

5 MINUTES

# Opener

10 MINUTES

# Worship

20 MINUTES

# Story

19. I've played on a sports team.  
20. I probably have more stuffed animals than anyone.

→ Make sure everyone has had a chance to stand **(OR RAISE THEIR HAND)** a few times.

"Wow! Way to take a stand. I feel like I know so much more about you all!

"This week, our true story from the Bible is also about someone who took a stand for something much bigger. Our story is about a woman named Esther. She learned that God had put her exactly where she was to take a stand for her people—and she did!

"But before we talk about our Bible Story today, let's praise and worship the God who put us where we are for this exact right time and then goes with us through everything we face!"

## ② Worship

→ Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

WORSHIP LEADER: "That game was so fun! I love seeing how you all jump in and give it your best. You know, our story today is about someone who had to be brave and trust God — Queen Esther. She learned that God made her for a special purpose and gave her the courage to do the right thing.

We can live that way too — when we follow God, we find real life! This first song reminds us that this is living now — the kind of life that's full, exciting, and full of purpose when we walk with Jesus. Let's stand up and sing it out together!

Video → This Is Living - Hillsong Y & F

That was awesome! You guys sounded so good and full of joy. I love that we get to sing together about what it means to really live the way God designed us to.

You know, just like Esther, we can trust God to help us be brave and to do what's right, even when it's scary. God's always close, and when we talk to Him, He listens. This next song reminds us that we can ask, seek, and knock, and God promises to be there.

Let's take a deep breath, think about how amazing God is, and sing this next one together.

Video → Ask, Seek, Knock - Hillsong Kids

God, thank You for always being with us. Thank You for giving us courage to do what's right, just like You did for Esther. Help us to keep talking to You and trusting You every day. We love You. Amen.

That's what our Memory Verse this month promises. It's Isaiah 41:30. Let me read it out loud, and then you can repeat after me!

SLIDE -> Memory Verse

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: "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

"Let's say it together!

WORSHIP LEADER: "Those who trust in the LORD"

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: "Those who trust in the LORD"

WORSHIP LEADER: "will receive new strength."

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: "will receive new strength."

WORSHIP LEADER: "They will fly as high as eagles."

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: "They will fly as high as eagles."

WORSHIP LEADER: "They will run and not get tired."

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: "They will run and not get tired."

WORSHIP LEADER: "They will walk and not grow weak."

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: "They will walk and not grow weak."

WORSHIP LEADER: "Isaiah 40:31!"

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: "Isaiah 40:31!"

"So great! God will give us the strength to do everything that we are faced with. That's part of what our true story from the Bible is about this week. Let's go ahead and sit down and hear it!"

### ③ Bible Story

SLIDE -> Theme Background

→ Storyteller enters as Worship Leaders exit

#### INTRODUCTION

→ Place the chair on one side of the stage (FOR THE KING'S THRONE) and the table (FOR ESTHER'S TWO BANQUETS) on the other. Make sure the small table is also set on stage so the Storyteller can set their Bible on it and read from it. Put the box of props in a place that is easily accessible to the Storyteller as well.

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

STORYTELLER: “Hey, friends! Today, we have a story that covers the ENTIRE book of Esther! (HOLD UP BIBLE.)

“But before we dive into Esther’s story, where we’ll learn that God has put us all at the exact right places and the exact right time, let me tell you about something amazing we are doing this year!

“We’re going to go cover to cover through the Bible and learn the key stories!

“You see, part of the reason God gave us the Bible is so we can get to know Him. He wants us to be His friends! So we’re going to go through the entire Bible this year so we can get to know God!”

### GOD’S BIG STORY OPENER (OPTIONAL)

STORYTELLER: ““We’re going to go through God’s Big Story in the Bible to get to know Him! (GESTURE TO SLIDE.)

SLIDE -> God’s Big Story

“Each week, we’ll look at a story from God’s Big Story and add a picture of that story to our timeline, so we can see where we’ve been in the Bible as we journey along. (GESTURE TO TIMELINE.)

“Let me bring you up to speed on where we’ve been in God’s Big Story so far!

“So you might remember that in the very beginning, God made everything! He made the world, the animals, people ... everything! God made the first people for the same reason He made all people—to be His close, close friends. But sadly, the first people God made chose to turn away from Him and sin. God wanted people to be close to Him, but they couldn’t anymore! It was so sad.

“And awful things happened to the world too. Pain, sickness, and death entered into it.

“But God didn’t want to leave things that way! So He put His rescue plan in motion right from the start!

“God was going to rescue everything through a family! God chose a man named Abraham and promised that his family would bless the whole world. Many years later, Abraham’s great-grandson Joseph ended up in Egypt. After some hard times, God helped Joseph become a super-important leader there! Joseph saved his whole family by bringing them to Egypt. But hundreds of years passed. God grew and grew His people. A new Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, came along. He didn’t know about Joseph. He saw how many of God’s people there were, he got scared, and he started being mean to them.

“God’s people cried out to God for help. He answered! God brought His people out of Egypt into a beautiful home He had for them—the Promised Land!

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

“After some time living in the Promised Land, God’s people wanted a king like the other nations around them. God gave them a king, and then many more kings (**AND ONE QUEEN**) followed. Sadly, the nation of God’s people split in two—into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah.

“During this time, there were prophets in both kingdoms who spoke and taught on God’s behalf. Many of the prophets delivered the same message from God: ‘Come back to Me!’

“But many of the kings didn’t listen. They turned their hearts away from God, and as a result, the northern kingdom of Israel was totally destroyed and never heard from again. The southern kingdom of Judah was taken captive by other nations. God’s people were taken from the Promised Land! It was sad, but God was preserving a remnant mostly from the nation of Judah.

“After some time in captivity, God worked through a foreign king to allow His people to come home to the land of Judah, which is part of the Promised Land. Many of God’s people came back home! But some stayed in foreign lands—like Esther and her family. But even there, God was still in charge, protecting His people and His promise to rescue us!

“And that’s where we are in God’s Big Story.”

### SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “This week as we journey through the Bible, we’re in the book of Esther. Esther’s family had chosen not to go home to Judah and stayed in Susa, which was the capital of the Persian Empire.

“One of the Persian rulers was a proud king named Xerxes.

“Oh! This is where I’m gonna need some help. I have a very special costume box right here ...

→ Gesture to the prop box.

“And I’m gonna need one volunteer right now to help me tell the story. If you want to do a little acting, raise your hand!

→ Choose one boy to come up on stage.

“Okay, great! You’re going to be King Xerxes. So you need a crown ... and a royal robe ... because you’re the king ...

→ Pull a crown and royal robe out of the costume box and put them on the boy.

“You look very royal. Everyone else say: ‘Hello, Your Majesty!’

→ Pause as the kids respond.

“Now, you should know that King Xerxes liked to par-TAY. Let’s see your dance moves, King Xerxes.

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

AUDIO -&gt; Upbeat party music

→ Encourage the volunteer to do a few moves.

“To show how rich he was, King Xerxes threw a party that lasted 180 days. That’s nearly half of an entire year! And then he threw a SECOND party right after the first that lasted for seven more days. On the seventh day, King Xerxes decided he wanted to show off his queen, Vashti, to all his guests. But Vashti was like, ‘Lemme think ... NO.’ That did not go down well with King Xerxes, who said she could not be queen anymore. Yikes!

→ Point out the chair to the kid who is playing King Xerxes.

“Okay, King Xerxes, you can sit over here now on your pretend throne.

### ESTHER CHOSEN AS QUEEN

STORYTELLER: “Through his own pride and arrogance, King Xerxes was now without a queen. So what did he do? He decided to hold a contest for the queen. That’s also a terrible idea ... but Xerxes was king, and he could do what he wanted. Young women from all over the kingdom were gathered in the capital and given special care for one year before meeting the king.

“Now, I need another volunteer!

→ Choose a girl to come up and be Esther. Give her a simple shawl to wear.

“Everyone, meet Esther! Esther was one of the young women selected for the competition. She was a Jewish girl, one of God’s people, living in exile under the care of her relative, Mordecai. Esther’s parents had died, and even though Mordecai was her older cousin, he adopted her like she was his own daughter.

“Esther was taken to the palace, and while she was there, she didn’t tell anyone she was Jewish, a member of God’s people.

“But when she was taken to the king, he was so pleased with Esther that he picked her from among all the other women and made her queen!

**(TO VOLUNTEER)** “So now, you need a new outfit.

→ Take the other royal robe and crown out of the prop box and exchange them with the shawl. Instruct “Queen Esther” to put on the robe and crown, and move to the side of the stage with the table.

“Everyone, meet QUEEN Esther! Let’s all say: ‘Hail the Queen!’

→ Join the kids as they say: “Hail the Queen!”

### HAMAN’S PLOT

STORYTELLER: “Now, remember Esther’s cousin, Mordecai? He was an official, and he stayed near the palace gates.

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

“At this same time, Haman—one of King Xerxes’s officials—had received a promotion. Let’s get our Haman up here now!

- Select a boy to play Haman. Give him a ball cap (BACKWARD) and the fake, thick gold chain to wear.

“Great. We’ve got Haman now! Everyone say: ‘Hey, Haman!’

“To honor Haman, the king commanded that all of the royal officials bow to Haman. But Esther’s cousin Mordecai refused to bow. Haman was so angry that when he discovered Mordecai was Jewish, he decided to punish all the Jewish people! So Haman went to the king. This is what Haman told the king:

- Open the Bible to Esther 3:8-9 (NIRV) and read.

Then Haman said to King Xerxes, “Certain people are scattered among the nations. They live in all the territories in your kingdom. They keep themselves separate from everyone else. Their practices are different from the practices of all other people. They don’t obey your laws. It really isn’t good for you to put up with them. If it pleases you, give the order to destroy them.”

“Wow. Haman was not a great guy, either, was he? But King Xerxes did exactly what Haman asked. A decree was sent out that on a certain date, all the Jewish people were to be destroyed! Mordecai and other Jewish people throughout the kingdom wept and put on sackcloth—rough clothing people wore when they were sad.

“Mordecai heard what happened and put on rough clothes of mourning too. A messenger went back and forth between Esther and Mordecai. Through the messenger, Esther found out what was going on, and Mordecai told her that she should go ask the king for help! Well, Esther sent the messenger back with her response right away. See, she couldn’t go before the king unless he asked for her! If anyone walked into the throne room without being asked, the king could have them killed!

“Unless ...

- Pull the golden scepter out of the prop box.

“Unless the king decided to hold out his golden scepter toward them!

- Hand the scepter to the kid volunteer playing King Xerxes.

“Okay, King Xerxes ... here is your golden scepter! Hold it up high!

“Now, Mordecai received Esther’s message. Then he sent back this response.

- Open the Bible to Esther 4:13-14 (NIRV) and read.

“You live in the king’s palace. But don’t think that just because you are there, you will be the only Jew who will escape. What if you don’t say

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

anything at this time? Then help for the Jews will come from another place. But you and your family will die. Who knows? It's possible that you became queen for a time just like this."

"Wow. Those are some strong words. Mordecai was reminding Esther of an important truth. God had put her where she was to help! So she sent a strong message back to Mordecai:

→ Open the Bible to Esther 4:16 (NIRV) and read.

"Go. Gather together all the Jews who are in Susa. And fast for my benefit. Don't eat or drink anything for three days. Don't do it night or day. I and my attendants will fast just as you do. Then I'll go to the king. I'll do it even though it's against the law. And if I have to die, I'll die."

### ESTHER'S COURAGE

STORYTELLER: "Esther was taking a huge risk! But she also knew that God had placed her in this special position for this exact time. For three days, Esther and the other Jewish people went without food to prepare. Then ... Esther went to the king.

→ Direct the volunteer actors.

"Okay, Esther, head over to the king.

"Knowing it could be the last thing she ever did ... Esther stepped into the inner courtyard of the palace in front of the king's hall. The king saw Queen Esther.

"This was it! The king could choose to send Esther away and have her killed. Or he could lower his scepter and allow her to live! What do you think will happen?

→ Pause and get some responses from the audience.

"Okay, King Xerxes ... lower that scepter! Whew! Esther was safe.

→ Open the Bible to Esther 5:3-4 (NIRV) and read.

The king asked, "What is it, Queen Esther? What do you want? I'll give it to you. I'll even give you up to half of my kingdom."

Esther replied, "King Xerxes, if it pleases you, come to a feast today. I've prepared it for you. Please have Haman come with you."

"Wait, what? After all that, Esther just gave the king a dinner invitation? See, Esther knew that she needed to work up to the big ask. Hand the volunteer playing Esther three plates and some play food from the prop box.

"Okay, Esther, head back over to the table and set up your banquet. You can bet Haman was pretty excited to get a dinner invite along with the king. So that evening, the two of them went to Esther's banquet.

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

→ Direct the kids playing King Xerxes and Haman over to Esther's table.

"Let's see you scarf up some of that yummy food! King Xerxes was so pleased that he offered to give Queen Esther anything up to half of his kingdom. Wowzers! But instead of asking to save her people yet, Esther invited the king and Haman to ANOTHER banquet the next night. And then, finally, at that second banquet, she made her request.

→ Open the Bible to Esther 7:3-4a, 5-6 (NIRV) and read.

Then Queen Esther answered, "Your Majesty, I hope you will be pleased to let me live. That's what I want. Please spare my people. That's my appeal to you. My people and I have been sold to be destroyed. ..."

King Xerxes asked Queen Esther, "Who is the man who has dared to do such a thing? And where is he?"

Esther said, "The man hates us! He's our enemy! He's this evil Haman!" "Whoa. Haman just got called out big time. Kids, can you gasp? Pause as the kids gasp. Gasp yourself.

→ (TO VOLUNTEER PLAYING HAMAN) "You can leave the banquet and go stand over there.

"Long story short, King Xerxes sent a new decree allowing the Jewish people, God's people, to defend themselves. And Haman ... well, the king ordered that he be put to death.

"Okay, thank you, volunteers, for helping us tell our story today! Let's get our fantastic volunteers a big round of applause as they return to their seats!"

→ Lead applause for the volunteers, take their costumes and props, and send them back to their seats.

### WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "Esther wasn't anyone important, until God made a way for her to become queen. Because of that, Esther was able to stand up for her people when the time came. Mordecai helped her realize that God had put her exactly where she was to help her people! And so she did.

"In Esther's story, we see that ...

SLIDE → Bottom Line

[BOTTOM LINE] "God can help you stand up for others. Say that with me."

Host enters and joins in.

STORYTELLER and HOST and KIDS: [BOTTOM LINE] "God can help you stand up for others."

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

### GOD'S BIG STORY CLOSER (OPTIONAL)

HOST: "Let's take a look at the progress we made in God's Big Story this week!"

SLIDE -> God's Big Story

"This week, we're up here in on the path past the picture of Daniel. Esther lived after Daniel! We're on the path of God's Big Story! (GESTURE TO IMAGE OF GOD'S BIG STORY.)

"This week we talked about Esther! Esther's family stayed in a foreign land when God's people were allowed to go home to Judah. But God used Esther, right where she was, for His good plan. Because when Esther stood up for her people, she stood up for all of God's people in the Persian Kingdom! And the Persian Kingdom was so big, it included God's people who were back home in Judah too. God used Esther's bravery to preserve His people! And many, many years later, from that remnant of people whom God protected, God would send Jesus! And Jesus would rescue us all!

"Let's put the next image on our timeline!"

SLIDE -> Week 4 Timeline Image

If you're making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today's timeline image on the clothesline.

"This week we talked about Esther!"

### WHAT'S OUR PART IN THE STORY?

HOST: "So what does Esther's story mean for us? Well, Esther saw that God had placed her exactly where she was to help her people!

"And while you may not be in a palace, you are exactly where God wants you—on your team, in your family, in your class, at your church—to show your world His ways. God might want you to stand up for others, like Esther did!

"Perhaps kids at school are saying mean things about one of your classmates. Or your coach calls out a teammate for cheating, when you saw they didn't do it. It might even be that you see no one understands the math assignment, so you choose to be the one to speak up and ask the teacher to explain it again for everyone.

Where you live, who you go to school with, the people you see regularly—none of it is by accident. You have been perfectly placed to stand up for someone who needs it today, tomorrow, or anytime.

"And you don't have to stand up for others on your own! God wants to help you! When you choose to follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

live inside you. God's very Spirit will help you to live like Jesus and help you remember that God is always right there with you.

"Let's ask God to help us show the people in our worlds His goodness and love right now!"

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### ③ Prayer

STORYTELLER or HOST: "Dear God, thank You so much for the story of Esther and how she stood up for others. Please help us see when people in our lives need us to stand up for them, and help us know what to do. We need Your help and Your strength to show the world Your goodness and love. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Transition → Dismiss kids to their small groups.

AUDIO -> Play high-energy music as the kids exit.

SLIDE -> Theme

Optional Video (MEDIA PACKAGE) → Theme Loop