



# Activities and Game Ideas

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## Less is More

- Blindfold your volunteer.
- Using a different colored dry erase marker, he/she is to attempt to follow your line as close as possible.
- The rest of the group should shout out instructions to help the guide the volunteer (such as, 'draw a straight line' or 'curve up,' etc.)
- When your volunteer has reached the end of your line, remove the blindfold and allow him/her to see how he/she did. (*Probability is that the lines will be very different.*)
- Blindfold your volunteer a second time.
- Using a third color dry erase marker, repeat the process a second time. This time, however, you should whisper instructions into the ear of your volunteer while the class shouts out their instructions to the volunteer.
- The lines should be a little more similar this time because you whispered instructions into your volunteer's ear. Take a moment and talk about the exercise.

**Ask:** Why was it easier the second time you tried to copy my line? (*you, the line drawer, whispered instructions into the volunteer's ear*)

**Teach:** God has a plan for each of our lives. There are things He wants us to do while we are alive on this earth. Sometimes we may be tempted to follow the instructions of others just like our volunteer followed the instructions of the group. The group was trying to help him/her copy the line exactly, but with so many voices, it was hard to know which one to follow. It was easier to copy the line when the one who drew the line whispered instructions into his/her ear. God will show you how to live out the life He wants you to live; you just need to listen for Him and obey His instructions.

Simon, May I?

This game is a variation of both Simon Says and Mother, May I? Have all the children line up on one side of the play area. 'Simon' should stand on the opposite side of the room. Be sure the space between the two is clear.

'Simon' should call out commands such as 'Simon says hop two times.' The children are to hop two times in the direction of Simon. Simon will continue to call out commands (some suggestions are listed below) making sure to leave off 'Simon says' on some. If a child moves at a command where 'Simon says' was left off, he/she must return to the start line and begin again. The first player to reach Simon wins (perhaps gets to be Simon in the next round?).

Here are some suggestions for moving the children forward. Feel free to change the numbers or add others as needed.

- Take \_\_\_\_ steps forward (baby steps or giant steps).
- Hop \_\_\_\_ times (on your right leg; on your left leg; with both feet).
- Take \_\_\_\_ backwards steps.
- Crawl \_\_\_\_ steps.
- Take \_\_\_\_ penguin steps (or other animal such as elephant, crocodile, chick, etc)

**Connect to lesson:** In order to be successful at this game, not only did you have to listen carefully, but you had to follow instructions exactly as they were given. In order to be successful in life we need to do the same, listen carefully to God and follow His instructions. *(Connect to lesson being taught.)*

### Human Tic-Tac-Toe

**Supplies:** 9 chairs set in 3 rows of 3 *(chairs make playing the game easier but not absolutely necessary)*

*Group the children into groups of 8.*

With the chairs in a tic-tac-toe patterns, have four boys and four girls (or 2 teams of 4) stand 5 feet away from the chairs. Boys (or 1 team) are the X's; girls (or the other team) are the O's. Explain that when you say, "Go!" they should race to sit in a chair (one chair should be left empty every time). The team with three seats in a row wins. Play best four out of five games. Notice as you begin, children almost always race to their seats. But as they play more, they should begin to realize strategy, not racing, guarantees the win. (If the teams continue to tie, have a leader suggest they strategize before rushing to their seats.) Mix your teams up and play again as time permits allowing the teams a few moments between matches to strategize.

Explain that many times we try to do things our own way – just like when we first started playing Human Tic-Tac-Toe. We soon discovered it took stopping, thinking and asking for help to win – not just racing. God wants us to ask Him for help. He loves to hear from us. *(Connect to lesson being taught.)*

### Good Day, Bad Day

**Supplies:** happiness sign, despair sign

*Post the happiness sign on one side of the play area. Post the despair sign on the opposite side. Have the children line up shoulder to shoulder in the center of the room with the despair sign to their back and the happiness sign to the front.*

**Explain the game:** Today's game will help you see how easy it can be to get discouraged. Each one of you will share something that happens on a normal school day. If you think that is a good thing, take one step forward. If you think it is a bad thing, take one step back. For example, one of you may say 'I brought my lunch to school on Monday.' For some of you that is a good thing. For others, it is not a good thing. Let's play. *(Allow time for everyone to share something from their day or, the leader can share typical events in a child's week. After everyone has shared, share some of negative experiences of several of the men and women in the Bible (such as Job, Joseph, Moses, etc.) without letting the children know who experienced those events. The children should be taking steps back as you share hardships.)*

**Explain/Connect to the lesson:** We all have good days and we all have bad days. The last few things mentioned were things that happened in the lives of men and women in the Bible. Some men like Job and Joseph had bad days after bad days. It would have been very easy for them to give up on God but they did not. *(Connect to lesson being taught.)*

### Bible Scavenger Hunt

**Supplies:** Scavenger hunt questions (Appendix)

*There are two sets of questions based on grade level. If the majority of children are younger, use level 1 questions. If the majority of the children are older, use level 2 or just mix them up and use both sets.*

**Explain the activity:** Today's activity is a Bible Scavenger hunt. I am going to ask you a series of questions. *(Children may use Bibles if needed and available.)* Each of you has an opportunity to earn some points depending on how many correct answers you have so think and try hard. You will earn the following points (based on a group of 16 children):

- 1-4 correct answers (or 25% of the group offers a correct answer) = 1 point
- 4-8 correct answers (or 50% of the group offers a correct answer) = 2 points
- 9-12 correct answers (or 75% of the group offers a correct answer) = 3 points
- 13-16 correct answers (or 100% of the group offers a correct answer) = 4 points

*Divide the children into manageable groups. Have the leaders keep track of the number of correct answers each group provides and the points earned. For example, group A is a group of 8 children. The first question is asked – name a book that begins with a 1, 2 or 3. If 6 of the children can correctly name a book that begins with a 1, 2 or 3, the team earns 3 points (75% of the team answered correctly). Encourage the children to work together. Award points according to the scale listed above and applaud the winning team.*

**Explain/Connect to the lesson:** It is important for us to know the Bible because it is through what's written in the Bible that we know God. There are men and women who devoted much of their time studying God's word and because they knew God's word well, were able to teach others about God. *(Connect to lesson being taught.)*

## Charades

**Supplies:** phrase slips (*prepared in advance*)

*Phrases can be anything. Some suggestions:*

- *Animals*
- *Men from the bible*
- *Bible stories*
- *Sports activities*
- *Movie or television titles*

Divide the children into two groups. Flip a coin to see which group goes first.

**Explain:** The first group will send a player to select a phrase slip. That player must act out the phrase until someone in his/her group guesses the correct answer or time runs out. If the team guesses the correct answer, the team receives one point. The opposing team then sends one of their players to select a phrase from the jar to act out. Continue playing until all the phrases have been acted out or until you are out of time.

**Connect to today's lesson:** It can be hard to communicate with others when you cannot speak. We had to get creative in order for our team to 'hear' and understand us. God loves us and wants us to know Him. God uses the Bible to tell us about Himself but He, too, is creative in how He communicates with us. God uses His creation to tell us some things about Himself. For example, what do mountains tell us about God? What about ants? (*Connect with lesson being taught.*)

## Stories 'n' Statues

**Supplies:** Bible

**Explain:** Divide your group into teams of four. Each group will select one story from the Bible to perform as statues. Allow the teams 5-7 minutes to select a story and discuss how they will perform it at statues.

When ready, call on the first team. The team will then pose themselves in one or more scenes from the story. The other teams have one minute to guess the story.

For example, if one team selects 'David and Goliath' as their story, one child could pose as David flinging a stone, another as Goliath and the remaining two as scared Israeli soldiers. The children would remain frozen as statues while the rest of the teams attempt to guess which story is being performed. Continue playing until all the teams have performed.

**Connect:** God asks us to tell others about Jesus. We can share Jesus with our words, but we also share Jesus with our actions. Many people will only know us for a short while and will only see a part of our lives – they will only see certain scenes of our lives.

**Ask:** How can we show them Jesus with our actions? (*allow for discussion*)

## Games just for Fun

*(A skilled leader should be able to connect some of these to the lesson being taught.)*

### Ape, Man, Lady

This game is played similar to Rock-Paper-Scissors. Have the children pair off. At the leader's signal, each person is to strike a pose like an ape, a man or a lady (be sure to demonstrate what each looks like ahead of time). The ape beats the lady (because King Kong took the lady), man beats ape and the lady gets the man. Eliminate losers and pair the winners until you get a champion.

### Irish Pass the Parcel

Supplies needed: a few inflated balloons, music

The game is played much like Hot Potato. Have the children stand in a circle facing out. Pass out a few balloons (depending on the size of the group ~ perhaps 1 for every 10 children playing). When the music starts, the children should pass the balloon from one to another. When the music stops, the children holding the balloons should pass the balloon to the next person and turn around (facing the inside of the circle). These children will no longer handle the balloons. Start the music and repeat. As more and more children turn to face inwards, it will become increasingly difficult to get the balloons from one person to the next. Be sure to decrease the number of balloons in play as the number of children in play decreases. Play until you are down to a few (or one) winners.

### Back to Back

Start the game with two people sitting back to back. The team must stand straight up without using their hands. Every time the team is successful, add an additional player. The goal is to see how many children can participate successfully. This is a great game showing children what teamwork can do.

### Charade Wars

This game is played with multiple teams (of the same number of players) playing charades at the same time with the same clues. The teams will race to see who can finish first.

Prior to the game have a list of action clues ready. It works best to have each clue include one verb and one noun (suggestions provided) that must be guessed correctly. Hand each team their set of clues in random order (not the same order so they are not tempted to watch the other teams). Do not tell the teams they all have the same clues. If possible, have a leader with each group to make sure the clues are guessed correctly. Here are a few suggestions:

- Wash the car
- Picking apples
- A Balance beam routine
- \* Playing baseball
- \* Washing dishes
- \* Cooking a meal

### Never Have I Ever

The game is played with the group sitting or standing in a circle. The first player says a simple statement starting with the phrase, "Never have I ever...". (For example, the player may say never have I ever flown in an airplane.) The children who have done what the player said he/she had not should stand and find move to another place in the circle. The person who spoke should take advantage of that time to find a place in the circle. The person who left standing is the next one to speak.

This is a good game to tie into the truth that we all sin. The final statement could be something like, "Never have I ever NOT sinned." Everyone would stand and move because we have all sinned. The leader could use this opportunity to discuss how Jesus is the only One who never sinned and is therefore the only One who can offer salvation.

### American Football Football

Supplies needed: An American Football

The game is played like a traditional soccer (European football) game with two differences:

1. There is no goalie
2. The ball of choice is an American football

Divide the group into two teams (if you have a very large group, play separate games). Mark out the goal lines on opposite sides of the playing area. Hand the teams an American football and play soccer according to traditional soccer rules (cannot touch the ball with their hands). It is great fun to watch children try to score points by kicking a ball that will bounce every which way.

### The Big Squeeze

This is a great and easy game for larger groups. Divide the children into manageable sized groups. Explain you will call out a shape and the team must squeeze themselves into the shape you call out. For example, you could call out 'football' and the children must position themselves into the shape of a football as would be seen from above. Keep score and the first team to 10 wins. You could play music in the background to help set the mood. Some potential shapes:

- Football
- Shark
- A pair of sunglasses
- Any letter of the alphabet
- \* dog
- \* a baseball bat
- \* a pair of pants
- \* any number

### Ants on a log

Divide your group into equal numbered teams (no more than 10 to a team). Identify a line for each team to stand on. Number the players on each team from one to ten (or less depending on the

number of players on your teams). Line the children up in numerical order according to the number you assigned them.

The object of the game is to get the whole group to switch position on the line without falling off the line. If the first player is on the left end of the line, he or he should end up on the right end of the line. The order of the players should remain the same only in reverse order. (The leader may provide suggestions as to how to accomplish this if the team is struggling to complete the task.)



## Appendix

### Scavenger Hunt Questions

#### (Level 1)

1. Name one book of the Bible that begins with the letter A.
2. Name the first book of the Old Testament.
3. Name a book of the Bible that has four or fewer letters in its name.
4. Name a book of the Bible that has six or more letters in its name.
5. Name the sixth book of the Old Testament.
6. Name the tenth book of the New Testament.
7. Name a book of the Bible that begins with the letter N.
8. Name a book of the Bible that is named for a woman.
9. Name a book of the Bible that has double letters in its name.
10. Name a book of the Bible that begins with the letter Z.
11. Name a book of the Bible that ends with the letter h.
12. Name a book of the Bible that has two or more s's in its name.
13. Name a book of the Bible that has a 1, 2, or 3 in its name.
14. Name the first book of the New Testament.
15. Name the last book of the Old Testament.
16. Name of book of the Bible that rhymes with *dark*.

#### (Level 2)

1. Name one book of the NT that is named for a disciple of Jesus.
2. Name the book of the Bible that tells about a man who was swallowed by a big fish.
3. Name the book of the Bible whose name means 'beginning'. (Genesis)
4. Name the book of the Bible that tells the story of a man who was thrown into a pit of lions.
5. Name a book of the Bible that is a letter from Paul to the church at Corinth, Greece.
6. Name the book of the Bible that is a collection of songs.
7. Name the book of the Bible that tells about the Hebrew people's escape from slavery in Egypt.
8. Name a book of the Bible that is one of the four Gospels.
9. Name the book of the Bible that would come first if all the books were arranged alphabetically.
10. Name the book of the Bible that would come last if all the books were arranged alphabetically.
11. How many books of the Bible have a 1, 2, or 3 in front of the name?
12. Name the book of the Bible that is a letter from Paul to the church in Rome, Italy.
13. Name the book of the Bible that tells how Moses' successor led the Hebrew people into the Promised Land.
14. Name a book of the Bible where you would find some of the first kings of Israel.
15. Name a book for the Bible where you would expect to find stories about Jesus, what He taught, what He did and who He knew.

16. Name a book of the Bible where you would expect to find stories about the first apostles and what they did after Jesus went to be with God.