

WEEK 1

LESSON GUIDE

measure up

BIG IDEA

God guides us
to safety.

BIBLE

The Escape to Egypt: Matthew 2:13-23;
Isaiah 63:7-9

LARGE GROUP TIME

Welcome to *Measure Up*, friends! Who here LOVES going to amusement parks? **Have you ever walked up to a rollercoaster, seen a sign that says, "Must be this tall to ride," and realized you're not able to ride it?** It's the worst! In this series, we are going to learn about another kid who, like you, experienced all kinds of challenges. **Do you know who that kid is?** Jesus!

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can lead kids in worship with any songs of your choice, but here are some suggestions that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)
 - "One Me" (Grow Kids VBS)
 - "Hey Me (Now and Forever)" (Elevation Church Kids)
 - "Won't Stop Now" (Worship Together Kids)
 - "Wanna Be Like Jesus" (Yancy)
 - "Wise Up" (Kidspring Children's Ministry)

ACTIVITY | Lost in the Park

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print an amusement park map like [this one](#), and cut it into at least five puzzle pieces that you will hide around your space corresponding to clues that will help the kids find them. Read clues aloud. Allow kids to roam the space, searching for the puzzle pieces. Your clues may vary depending on your space, but see below for some examples.
 - ✳ **PRETEEN HACK:** Do a little prep ahead of time to set up a photo scavenger hunt using an app or service like [GooseChase](#). Then, divide kids into as many teams as there are leaders with devices. Have teams work together to follow your clues and post photos and videos as proof that they found the locations indicated.

- Hi kids, imagine you have been at your favorite amusement park all day, enjoying your favorite rides. You are exhausted, but you can't find your way out of the park. You need a map!
- The map has been hidden around the room as puzzle pieces. You will have five minutes to find all of the pieces and put the map back together. Listen to these clues to help you find your way out of the park!
- *[Clue for puzzle piece hidden under a chair.]*
 - My legs are so very tired from walking around the amusement park all day. Where can I sit to rest my legs?
- *[Clue for puzzle piece hidden behind a clock.]*
 - Time flies when you are having fun! Why can't time slow down when I'm having a blast riding roller coasters?! What can I use in this room to find out what time it is?
- *[Clue for puzzle piece hidden in your usual snack corner, or set up a bin with snack items and tape a puzzle piece to a bag of popcorn.]*
 - Churros! Ice Cream! Popcorn! It's time for a snack! Where would I go to get some snacks?
- *[Clue for puzzle piece hidden inside a poncho hanging on a coat rack.]*
 - Oh no! I don't want my hair to get wet on the water ride. What should I use to keep me dry?
- *[Clue for puzzle piece hidden in an artificial plant.]*
 - I love all of the perfect trees, bushes, and flowers at the amusement park! Maybe we should make like a tree and leaf!

ACTIVITY | Fun for All Heights

- **How do you know if you fit the requirement for a ride at an amusement park?** You get measured. Usually, there's a marker that you need to stand next to but *[Ask if anyone wants to come up and have their height measured with a measuring tape.]*
- Well, these games don't have any height requirements. Want to play?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the group into two teams. Have players from each team come up front to compete in a Minute to Win It style challenge. Keep score to up the stakes! Here are some suggestions:
 - **Hula Hoop Go Round:** Have three kids from each team hold hands to form a circle. Hang a hula hoop on a kid's arm in each circle. Give them 30 seconds to travel the hula hoop all the way around the circle, or see how many times they can do this in 30 seconds. The fastest traveling hoop wins or the most times around wins.
 - **Defying Gravity:** Give a player from each team three balloons. Players have to keep their balloons in the air for one minute. Whoever lets a balloon touch the ground first loses. If each succeeds, give each team a point.
 - **Face the Cookie:** Place a cookie or an amusement park food item on the players' foreheads from each team. Using only their face muscles (no hands!), players must try to get the food item into their mouths [like this](#).
 - **Pick-a-Cup:** Fill 20 cups for each team with water. Before the game, place a sticker on the bottom of one of the cups for each team. Set out the filled cups with the sticker randomly in the mix. Players will race to find their cup with the sticker, picking whatever cup at random, drinking the water, and looking at the bottom. The first player to find their sticker wins.
 - **Tilt-a-Whirl:** Tape two, 2-liter bottles together at the openings. Fill one bottle with jelly beans, Cheerios or any small food item. Players transfer all items from one bottle to the empty bottle by shaking. [Here's a video on how to set up and play this game.](#)
 - **Snack Race:** Players from each team will race to push an empty popcorn container from one side of the room to another . . . with just their noses! Make it a relay race using multiple players from each team. Give the teams one minute to compete.

- **Wrap It Up:** Have three or four players from each team compete to wrap one player up with colorful streamers. The team with the best wrapped player at the end of one minute wins!
- It's nice when games and rides are available for everyone. **So why do they have height restrictions for some rides?** Yep — to keep you safe!
- That's what we're talking about today. There are many things and people that keep us safe, but today we'll learn about someone who does it best!

QUESTION | What does it mean to stay safe?

- Staying safe means staying away from danger so we don't get hurt.
- **Can you remember a time when someone helped you stay safe?**
 - Did a parent hold your hand while you crossed the street?
 - Did a family member buy you a helmet to wear while you ride your bike?
 - Did a grown-up remind you to put on your seatbelt in the car?
- In today's Bible story, you'll hear how God kept Jesus and his family safe. God kept them safe in a very unusual way.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Matthew 2:13–23 (The Escape to Egypt)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play a video like [this one](#) without the sound as your backdrop as you begin to tell the Bible story from Matthew 2:13–23. Dress up as a ride operator (polo shirt with khaki pants or shorts and name badge). You will need kid volunteers to play Herod, the Magi, the angel, Joseph, Mary, and Jesus. Have them act out the things you say in the story. Make sure you point to each character when you mention them as their cue to act it out. Make signs volunteers can wear so that the audience can keep track of who is playing what character.
- Hey friends! You're just in time for today's live show experience at the Measure Up theme park. Today's show is called "The Escape to Egypt." **Everyone say, "Ooh!"**
- Excellent! You are a great audience — we're going to have so much fun. Speaking of which, we love audience participation over here, so wave your hands if you'd like to be a part of the show! *[Select volunteers.]*
- Let's begin!
- When Jesus was born, Herod was the ruler of the area — the big boss. Herod loved being the king. He sat on his throne and took long naps. Probably.
 - But one day, he got some disturbing news. Some wise men, or Magi, dropped by and told Herod they were searching for a baby who would be king of the Jews!
 - **Can you guess what baby that was?** Right, Jesus!
 - Herod was not happy about this news. But he had a plan. Herod told the wise men to find the baby, then to tell him. Herod said he wanted to worship the new king too. But, secretly, he wanted to get rid of the baby.
 - **Everyone say, "Dun dun DUN!"**
 - However, the Magi didn't go back to Herod to tell him about Jesus because God warned them in a dream. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph were safe for now, but it wouldn't stay that way.
- While Herod was up to his sneaky plan, God was looking out for Jesus and sent an angel to appear to Joseph in a dream.
 - While Joseph snored, the angel said, "Take your wife and baby and get out of here. Escape to Egypt and stay there until I tell you the coast is clear. Herod is looking for you."

- Joseph woke up from his dream, woke up Mary and the baby, and ran away to Egypt.
- **Can you all breathe a sigh of relief with me? Phew!**
- Herod was so mad that he started to look everywhere for this baby king. I mean, everywhere! Every boy two years old and under was a threat. But he never found the baby he was looking for. They were safely in Egypt.
- Years later, after Herod died, the angel gave them the all-clear, and Joseph and his family went back to Israel to a town called Nazareth.
- **Wasn't that such a narrow escape?**
- **Has someone ever warned you about something? Something dangerous you didn't even know about?**
- God sent an angel to keep Jesus and his family safe when they didn't even know they were in danger!
- In the same way, God watches over us and can guide us to safety and protection when we're scared, in danger, or confused.
- **Please help me give a round of applause to our volunteers!**

BIG IDEA | God guides us to safety.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write the Big Idea on a winning ticket. Hide the winning ticket inside a carnival punch-out game. Use one [like this](#) or make your own with cups and tissue paper [like this](#). Kids take turns punching holes until the winning ticket is found! After the Big Idea is revealed and read aloud, give each kid a lanyard and a pin. Each week, they will collect pins. Be sure to get a wide assortment of pins to encourage pin trading (like they do at [Disney](#)). If you have access to a [pin maker](#), you can create pins that say each week's Big Idea (using the graphics provided in the Programming folder).
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Instead of giving out pins, consider giving out items that are more closely related to the Big Idea. This week, you could hand out [compasses with cords](#), reminding kids that God is guiding them to safety.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** You could also create a sensory box with beans, pasta, or kinetic sand. Hide the winning ticket in there. You could also gift wrap boxes and hide the ticket in one of them (ripping and tearing paper is great sensory input!).
- And the winning ticket for today's Big Idea says . . . **God guides us to safety.**
- Whenever you look at the pin on your lanyard, remember God is with you and can lead you to safety! He watches you even more closely than amusement park workers watch their visitors!

VIDEO | Measure Up, Episode 1

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](#).

ACTIVITY | Escape Ride

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Mark the floor using painter's tape laid out in a curvy path (like a 2-D roller coaster). Have groups of ten put their hands on the shoulders of the kid in front of them. Put blindfolds on all of them except the first person. The person in front has to safely guide their team from one end of the roller coaster (Israel) to the end (Egypt). Show a map of the route Jesus and his family traveled, like [this one](#), from Israel to Egypt and back.
- God led Jesus and his parents safely into Egypt. **On this ride, will you be led to safety?**
- God protected them and guided them to safety. **God guides us to safety** as well!

OBJECT LESSON | Safety First

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Open up this activity with a [video clip](#) from a theme park where the ride operator gives safety guidelines. Then show images and videos demonstrating examples of safety (see examples below).
- **What's the purpose of announcements like this? What are the different safety measures this announcement mentions?**

- **What are some other things at amusement parks that are designed to keep people safe?**
 - [Parent holding child's hand](#)
 - [Child accompanied by grown-up on ride](#)
 - [Rollercoaster harness](#)
 - [Carousel fence](#)
 - ["Must be this tall to ride" sign](#)
- **What does safety mean?**
- **What things or people keep us safe?**
 - **What are some things at school that keep us safe? Church? Home?**
- God protected Jesus and his family by leading them to safety, and God keeps you safe too!

SCRIPTURE | Isaiah 63:7–9

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Isaiah 63:7–9 with the group. Prepare leaders for conversations that might arise when discussing situations that made kids feel unsafe. Be aware of mandatory reporting laws and also be available to answer questions your small group leaders may have.*
- In the passage we just read, Isaiah mentions that God has done many good things for the people of Israel. One of those good things was rescuing them from Egypt a long time ago, where they were being treated unfairly. God used people like Moses and Joshua to lead the people out of Egypt, through the wilderness, and into the Promised Land.
- God didn't have to do this but as Isaiah says in verse 9, "In his love and mercy he redeemed them." Because God is loving and kind, God wanted them to be safe.
- This is true for us, too. God is kind and loving toward all of us.
- Think about a time when you might have felt unsafe or out of your safety net. **What about the situation made you feel unsafe?**
 - **Did you feel alone?**
 - **Were you worried about what would happen?**
 - **Did you need to ask for help?**
- Even when we feel scared or alone, God is with us. Out of God's love and mercy, Jesus, our Savior, came so we may be safe in God's presence forever.
- Whatever scary, hurtful, or confusing situation we may experience, God, who is always with us, ultimately is our safe place.
 - We are never alone with God.
 - We are held in God's hands.
 - God will help us and put people in our lives who will help us.
- **God guides us to safety.** Thank God for always being with you!

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

REFLECTION | Oh, The Places You'll Go!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Generate a list of places kids go, keeping in mind God is with them in all of these places. Generate an amusement park-themed word cloud with this [online generator](#) by uploading a [rollercoaster icon](#) or by using the icons provided. Create this live by projecting the word cloud in real time, entering their suggestions as they list the places they go. If possible, print a copy of the word cloud for kids to take with them as a reminder of God being with them always.*

✳ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide magazines and images printed from online of various places kids would be familiar with. Have them cut or tear out the images and attach them to a poster board to create a group collage. After all the images have been pasted, reinforce the Big Idea by saying, "God guides us to safety at [e.g., the park, school, the mall, the forest, etc.]".

- We are going to create a word cloud together to remind us that God is with us everywhere we go. Wherever we may be, **God guides us to safety.**
- **Where are the places you might go . . .**
 - **Daily?**
 - **Weekly?**
 - **Once a month?**
 - **Once a year?**
 - **Once in a lifetime? Somewhere you dream of going?**
- Wherever we go, God is with us. We can trust God to lead us to safety. God's presence is always a safe place to be.
- **How does it feel to know that God guides us to safety?**

RESPONSE | I Am Never Alone

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print a popcorn printable for each kid, and ask them to write on it a time that someone did something to keep them safe. After the kids are done writing, have them glue their popcorn to a big poster of a popcorn container so that the popcorn is coming out of the top. It's okay if they overlap or stick out off of the page. Invite a couple of kids to share what they wrote. Have the kids think about how they felt when that moment happened.
- On your popcorn piece, write about a time that someone did something to keep you safe, for example:
 - When your parents keep an eye on you when you're swimming
 - When your uncle fixes your bike and gives you a helmet to wear
 - When your grandma reminds you to put on your seatbelt
 - When your coach reminds you to drink water
- **How did you feel when that moment happened?**
 - **Did you feel loved, warm, or safe? Did you feel comforted?**
 - **How does it feel to be important to someone else?**
- Just like you felt cared for when someone did something to keep you safe, you can experience the love and kindness of God because God is always caring for you. God does good things for us for our good . . . like sending us Jesus!
- Even if we haven't always felt safe, we are safe because God is always with us.
- **God guides us to safety.**

MEMORY VERSE | Matthew 6:33 (NIV)

- **"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Place two chairs next to each other, then two directly behind those chairs, continuing so there is a "rollercoaster" created. You can also have kids sit or kneel on the floor in the same roller coaster pattern. You will be in the front saying the verse and the kids will echo. **(Don't forget to also check out the memory verse signs — a combination of SEE and ASL — available in your Programming folder or at growcurriculum.org/Matthew6-33.)**

PRAYER

- Dear God, you are my guide and my protector. You led Jesus and his parents to safety in Egypt, keeping them from harm until the time was right. Thank you for watching over me, guiding me to safety, and putting people in my life who do that for me, too. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- How did Joseph know where his family was supposed to go?
- Why did Jesus need to escape with his family?
- When did Jesus and his family know it was safe to return to Israel?
- Read Isaiah 63:7. What words does the author use to describe God?
- Can you think of a time when you felt safe?
- When might be a time that you would need to remember that God is with you?
- Who are the people in your life who keep you safe?

ACTIVITY | Guided to Safety

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** As a small group, kids will create a large maze using Play-Doh, or anything else you have on hand, on a flat surface. Kids will guide Jesus' family (a ping pong ball) from one end (Israel) to the other (Egypt) by blowing through a straw. [Here](#) is an idea of what it might look like.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have preteens create personal-size versions by using a tray and a marble ([like this](#)).
- Now that you all have had a little experience in being a guide, what do you think . . . **is it an easy job?** Not always. Sometimes the thing you're guiding seems to have a mind of its own, right?
- It's kind of like us. Lots of times, we do things our own way without asking God about it, and sometimes that leads us into trouble or danger. But God is always with us and redirects us so that we can go the right way again. And not only does God guide us away from our bad choices, but **God guides us to safety**, also.