



# WEEK 1

## ELEMENTARY LESSON OUTLINE

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### THE BIG IDEA

We can know God through Jesus.

### THE BIBLE

**Jesus Comes to the World:** John 1:1-18;  
(Ephesians 1:3-14)

#### THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

## LARGE GROUP TIME

- MUSIC** | YouTube Praise
- ACTIVITY** | Twitter Bird Updates
- ACTIVITY** | I Spy Emoji
- QUESTION** | Who's Your Favorite Celebrity?
- SCRIPTURE** | John 1:1-18
- THE BIG IDEA** | We can know God through Jesus.
- VIDEO** | Subscribe Now, Episode 1
- ACTIVITY** | #HashTagIt
- ACTIVITY** | Twitter Profile
- SCRIPTURE** | Ephesians 1:3-14
- OBJECT LESSON** | Timeline Math
- RESPONSE** | Chat with Jesus
- MEMORY VERSE** | Whisper Challenge
- PRAYER**

## SMALL GROUP TIME

- DISCUSSION**
  - In John 1:2, who is the "He" John is talking about?
  - In John 1:14, who is the "Word" that became flesh?
  - Who was John the Baptist and what was his role?
  - Read John 1:10. Why did the "world" not recognize Jesus? (Hint: How did Jesus come to Earth?)
  - What does it mean to you that Jesus is both God and human?
  - What is the only way to know God?
  - What are some ways we can know Jesus better?
- ACTIVITY** | Google Search Jesus
- MEMORY VERSE** | John 14:6 (NIV)



# WEEK 1

## HACKS FOR PRETEENS

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BY STEPHEN BAY

### HOW TO HACK THIS SERIES FOR PRETEENS

In children's ministry, you've got a wide range of ages you need to engage every week, but preteens tend to get overlooked, so here are a few adjustments you can make to this week in order to keep your preteens more engaged.

#### ACTIVITY | Twitter Bird Updates

Engage the kids in a discussion before getting them started on their origami birds. What do they know about Twitter and what it's used for? Feel free to share some funny, appropriate tweets with them, too!

#### ACTIVITY | I Spy Emoji

After playing the games, engage in a bit of discussion with your preteens. Here's one way to guide this conversation:

- **Who found all the emojis before the video showed us where they were?**
- **What did you notice about where you found the emojis?** They would appear all over the place, among all the other emojis.
- **When people are looking for God, where might God be found?** God is everywhere around us! God is among us. Jesus is God, and Jesus lived among people here on earth. Kind of like the emojis we were looking for – they were hard to find, but once we knew what we were looking for, we could find the right emoji among the crowd!
- To find God, we have to know what we're looking for. Look for Jesus, and you'll find God.

**ACTIVITY | Twitter Profile**

Challenge the older kids to write a Twitter profile for Jesus within a 160-character limit.

- **If you only had 160 characters to describe Jesus to someone who doesn't know him yet, what would you say? What is most important about Jesus?**

Give the kids ample time to write their profiles and count characters. If you have time, ask them to read their profiles out loud at the end.



**WEEK 1**  
**HACKS FOR KIDS WITH**  
**SPECIAL NEEDS**

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**BY CHRISTIN RICKMAN**

*HOW TO HACK THIS SERIES FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS*

In children's ministry, you've got a wide range of ages you need to engage every week, but kids with special needs tend to get overlooked, so here are a few adjustments you can make to this week in order to keep your kids with special needs more engaged.

**ACTIVITY | Twitter Bird Updates**

Provide pre-made origami birds. Have them write or say the one thing they are looking forward to for the day and let them decorate the birds or fly them around the room if they'd like. Have volunteers or peer buddies assist with writing, spelling or providing words based on kids' descriptions.

**ACTIVITY | I Spy Emoji**

Turn this into an interactive activity and play I Spy within your environment! Provide auditory directions and items that kids have to look for. To sustain attention, keep the list short.

**QUESTION | Who's Your Favorite Celebrity?**

Add visual representation for kids to choose from by printing out photos of preparing a photo slideshow. Say, "Out of these options, who is your favorite celebrity?"



# WEEK 1

## ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

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### THE BIG IDEA

We can know God through Jesus.

### THE BIBLE

**Jesus Comes to the World:** John 1:1-18;  
(Ephesians 1:3-14)

## LARGE GROUP TIME

*WHAT? What are we talking about today?*

#### MUSIC | YouTube Praise

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play worship songs that the kids can sing along to. Here are some we like:
  - ["Jesus"](#) by Chris Tomlin
  - ["J.E.S.U.S."](#) by Cool Worship Kids

#### ACTIVITY | Twitter Bird Updates

- Welcome, everyone! We are going to do a fun activity and make a Twitter origami bird!
- How do birds communicate with each other? They tweet. Have you heard of the word, "tweet," used in another way? That's right! Online! People use the social media platform, Twitter, to communicate to each other in short messages.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before the kids arrive, prepare copies of the origami instructions printable provided (also check out [this video](#)). Tell the kids to write one thing they are looking forward to today on the back part of the blue origami paper. Then, instruct the kids to follow the instructions to fold the paper into origami birds.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Engage the kids in a bit of discussion before getting them started on their origami birds. What do they know about Twitter and what it's used for? Feel free to share some funny, appropriate tweets with them, too!

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide pre-made origami birds. Have them write or say the one thing they are looking forward to for the day and let them decorate the birds or fly them around the room if they'd like.

- It's time to "tweet" a friend! Exchange birds with someone else and read your friend's "Twitter update!"

### ACTIVITY | I Spy Emoji

- Did you know that every day there are more than 18 million people who are searching online for God?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this [video](#) and tell the kids to raise their hand and say, "I spy!" when they find it.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Ask some follow-up questions after playing this game. Check your Preteen Hacks document for this week for more detail.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Turn this into an interactive activity and play I Spy within your environment! Provide auditory directions and items that kids have to look for. To sustain attention, keep the list short.
- Just like we've been searching the video, people in the world are searching everywhere for God! Let's find out how we can know God!

### QUESTION | Who's Your Favorite Celebrity?

- **Who is your favorite celebrity? Who would you like to meet?**
- **What would you do if your favorite celebrity was coming to town?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show the kids this [video](#) of kids getting excited to meet their favorite famous person. You can choose to watch the entire video or show only a portion of it (i.e., 3:05 - 4:42). Optional: Bring in some mementos from your favorite sports team or icons!
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Add visual representation for kids to choose from by printing out photos of preparing a photo slideshow. Say, "Out of these options, who is your favorite celebrity?"
- In today's Bible story, John the Baptist gets really excited and tells the world about who is coming to the world!

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

### SCRIPTURE | John 1:1-18

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Summarize the Bible Story in John 1:1-18.
- For years and years, the people of Israel were waiting for someone to come save them. They knew that one day God, who can create life with words, would come to Earth and save them from their troubles. They did not want to miss it!
  - **Have you ever had to wait for a really long time for something you wanted?**
- Sometimes, it's not easy to recognize God. Even with all of the clues God gave Israel, the people didn't recognize Jesus when Jesus came.

- **Have you ever looked for something all over and couldn't find it, only for it to be right in front of you the whole time?**
- John the Baptist was a very popular man at that time. Many thought John the Baptist was the Savior they were waiting for because he was baptizing people from all over the place! But John the Baptist made it clear that he was not God. With so much excitement, he shared that God was coming soon! And all he was doing was preparing the way as a messenger!
  - **Now, imagine what you would do if your favorite icon (like a celebrity or an influencer) came to meet you personally.**
- When John the Baptist met Jesus, "the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth," he told all the Israelites that Jesus was the one true God!

### THE BIG IDEA | We can know God through Jesus.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Select a kid to come and push a giant button that says, "Subscribe now" on the stage or wall. Once they do, play the "[subscribe now](#)" video with the audio on, and show the slide containing today's Big Idea.
- Thanks for subscribing to this week's Big Idea!
- **We can know God through Jesus.**

### VIDEO | Subscribe Now, Episode 1

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's [teaching video](#).

### ACTIVITY | #HashTagIt

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print out John 1:1-18 (photocopy from your Bible or use an [online Bible](#)) and give one out to each kid, along with highlighters and pencils. Have kids read through the passage and underline the clues from the Bible verse that reveal Jesus was God.
- A hashtag is when you put a pound symbol (#) before a keyword or key phrase. It's used on social media to help people see what everyone's talking about.
- Just like John the Baptist showed his excitement for Jesus' arrival, we can show ours by creating a hashtag of words and/or phrases to share our excitement about Jesus coming to Earth!
- Let me give you some of the clues I found and the hashtags I thought would go with it:
  - Verse 1: "In the beginning was the Word" #GodIsTheWord #TheWord
  - Verse 14: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" #JesusIsGod #JesusIsHuman
- **What are some hashtags you'd like to add?**

### ACTIVITY | Twitter Profile

- Let's create a Twitter profile for Jesus with Jesus' trendiest tweets and the hashtags we made up from the previous activity.
- **INSTRUCTION:** Print out the Twitter profile printable, one for each kid, and have them fill it out.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Challenge the older kids to write a Twitter profile for Jesus within the 160-character limit. Say, "If you only had 160 characters to describe Jesus to someone who doesn't know him yet, what would you say? What is most important about Jesus?" Give the kids ample time to write their profiles and count characters.

- Write all the facts you know about God!
- If Jesus had a Twitter account, Jesus would definitely have the most followers!

### SCRIPTURE | Ephesians 1:3-14

- This Bible passage tells us that sending Jesus to Earth was God’s plan all along.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Look up the verses in the Bible and encourage the kids to do the same. Read it together.*
- **What was something new you learned about Jesus?**
- **Who is Jesus to you?**
- **If you could ask God any question, what would you ask?**

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

### OBJECT LESSON | Timeline Math

- Sometimes on social media, the history of everyone’s posts and comments is called a “timeline.” But the more common understanding of a timeline is when someone’s life begins and ends. Let’s see where we all fit on a timeline!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Pass out a small piece of paper and a paperclip to each kid and ask them to write their birthdays on the paper and paperclip it. Place the birthdays in order on a string hanging horizontally. Show where on the horizontal string Jesus was born (around 4-6 B.C.) and when Jesus died (A.D. 30-33). Show the kids how it happened before all of us were born.*
- The horizontal line is a human timeline. There is a beginning and an end.
- Even though Jesus was born on a specific timeline here on Earth, Jesus’ actual timeline starts long before his birth because he was always in heaven with God!
- *[Twist the piece of string into an infinity symbol.]*
- Even though Jesus was human and came to Earth at a specific time in human history [*point to when Jesus was born on the string*], Jesus existed before the creation of the world!

### RESPONSE | Chat with Jesus

- Do you want to know Jesus for yourself? The best way to find out more about Jesus is to talk with Jesus!
- Let’s take some time to pray and talk with God.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give each kid a copy of the Chat Prayer printable. Encourage the kids to write their prayers.*

### MEMORY VERSE | Whisper Challenge

- We are going to try to guess the words of the memory verse by playing Whisper Challenge!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Write each of the words to this week’s memory verse on separate index cards. Shuffle the cards. Give one kid a pair of headphones with music playing so they cannot hear. Have another kid pick one of the cards and say it to the kid with the headphones on. Give a small treat to both kids if the word is guessed correctly. Keep playing until all the memory verse words are played. Put the cards in order on a board in front of the room and practice saying it together!*

**PRAYER**

- Dear God, we praise You because You have always been with us, from the beginning of creation to now. And how awesome is it that You want to be close to us! Thank You for giving us a way to get to know You through Jesus. Amen.

**SMALL GROUP TIME****DISCUSSION**

- **In John 1:2, who is the “He” John is talking about?**
- **In John 1:14, who is the “Word” that became flesh?**
- **Who was John the Baptist and what was his role?**
- **Read John 1:10. Why did the “world” not recognize Jesus? (Hint: How did Jesus come to Earth?)**
- **What does it mean to you that Jesus is both God and human?**
- **What is the only way to know God?**
- **What are some ways we can know Jesus better?**

**ACTIVITY | Google Search Jesus**

- Did you know that many of the top universities in the world started out as a place where people came to study about God?
- Just like the study of animals is called, “biology,” or the study of stars is called, “astrology,” there are people who study the history and facts of Jesus, and that field is called, Christology!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Before the kids arrive, print the list of Jesus’ names or Wikipedia facts about Jesus. Ask the kids to read and highlight facts about Jesus.*
- **Why is it important for us to know the facts about Jesus?**

**MEMORY VERSE | John 14:6 (NIV)**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Practice this month’s memory verse with the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) we’ve provided.*