



WEEK 3

ELEMENTARY LESSON OUTLINE



THE BIG IDEA

God's promises are for now
and for later.

THE BIBLE

God's Covenant with Abram: Genesis 12:1-3, 15:1-6
(Psalm 67)

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

LARGE GROUP TIME

- **MUSIC** | "Saturn"
- **ACTIVITY** | Island Relay
- **ACTIVITY** | Now and Later
- **OBJECT LESSON** | How Many Seashells?
- **SCRIPTURE** | Genesis 12: 1-3, 15:1-6
- **THE BIG IDEA** | God's promises are for now and for later.
- **VIDEO** | Promise, Episode 3
- **POLL** | Ask the Stars
- **ACTIVITY** | Star Blessings Craft
- **SCRIPTURE** | Psalm 67
- **REFLECTION** | From One to Many
- **RESPONSE** | Count Me In
- **MEMORY VERSE** | Volley Verse
- **PRAYER**

SMALL GROUP TIME

- **DISCUSSION**
 - What did God tell Abram to do?
 - What did God promise Abram?
 - How many offspring did God promise to Abram?
 - Read Genesis 15:6. Abram believed God, though he had plenty of reasons to doubt. Do you sometimes find it hard to believe God?
 - Can you think of a promise from God that is for now?
 - Can you think of a promise from God that is for later?
 - How can we know more about God's promises?
- **ACTIVITY** | Big Idea Star Craft
- **MEMORY VERSE** | Joshua 21:45 (NIV)



WEEK 3

HACKS FOR PRETEENS



BY MIKE SHELEY

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.

SCRIPTURE | Genesis 12: 1-3, 15:1-6

Recruit a preteen to be your teaching assistant! Explain to them the instructions in this section ahead of time. Then, as you read each section, they will draw the lines for the star. Encourage them to use a pencil to draw them out ahead of time if that helps them to not be so nervous.

BONUS: Draw a star with pencil lightly on a blank sheet of paper. Where each dot would be in a connect-the-dots, put the chapter and verse reference like "12:1". Write these with a dark marker. Then erase the pencil. Photocopy these and hand one out to each preteen so they can work along with the "Teaching Assistant."

THE BIG IDEA | God's promises are for now and for later.

If you did this in previous weeks, do this again either with the same preteens or give a new set a chance to create your Big Idea banner.

Give all these supplies to your preteens a week ahead of time and have them create your Big Idea banner. To help them out, share [this link](#) with them on ideas for doing chalk art lettering. Remind them that they don't have to be perfect. The goal is to create a visual that helps everyone see and remember the Big Idea for this week!

RESPONSE | Count Me In

Either the week before or right as preteens arrive, ask them to help you come up with a list of as many Bible characters as they can think of. Have them write one name per [star-shaped sticky note](#) and give them to you.

As a bonus, have them use a Bible app to quickly find where that person's story is in the Bible and write that reference on the note or write a one sentence summary of that person on the note.

Add these stars to the banner!

ACTIVITY | Big Idea Star Craft

Identify which preteens get this done the quickest or the ones it seems the easiest for. Then ask them to look around and help other children who may be having difficulty.

If you already know you have a preteen who loves crafts, give them these instructions the week before and introduce them as your Craft Leader to teach everyone how to do the craft, as well as have them bring a completed version to show everyone.



WEEK 3

HACKS FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



BY KIM DORPENYO

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.

MUSIC | "Saturn"

Use simple, repetitive actions for kids with special needs. If they cannot do the actions, have them jump up and down. Movement always helps memory and senses. Have noise-cancelling headphones available for kids sensitive to loud sounds. For kids using wheelchairs, have someone "dance" them during fast songs and hold up their hands during slow ones.

ACTIVITY | Island Relay

For kids sensitive to loud noises, make noise-cancelling headphones available. Provide the same supplies in a separate area and remove the race aspect so kids can take their time. You could also have them retrieve items without using the sack, or you can have them participate in the sack race without having to bring back an item.

ACTIVITY | Now and Later

Provide an enlarged photocopy of the wrapper for friends to write on as many have fine motor skill needs and the wrapper might be too small.

SCRIPTURE | Genesis 12: 1-3, 15:1-6

Many friends are visual learners. Provide a print-out of pictures for them to follow, or provide the coloring page in your printables folder for them to color while you tell the story. If they need to move, provide them with their own pictures in the back of the room so they can re-enact the story themselves.



This week, you could provide star stickers for friends to stick onto a printed picture of Abraham or on their coloring page.

THE BIG IDEA | God's promises are for now and for later.

Provide hand motions to help them remember the Big Idea.

- God (*point up*)
- promises (*pinky to pinky - like a pinky promise*)
- are for now (*point down*)
- and for later (*point forward*)

ACTIVITY | Star Blessings Craft

Provide a partner for friends to do this craft together. Lay out some worked examples that friends can play with or finish making. An alternative activity to provide if necessary is to have friends trace a star cookie cutter with white crayon onto dark paper.

RESPONSE | Count Me In

Use [star-shaped sticky notes](#) and allow friends to stick them to the banner. You can also ask a buddy to write on their behalf if needed.

MEMORY VERSE | Volley Verse

Provide a separate playing space. Instead of trying to say the whole verse fast, have friends say one word of the verse then throw or roll the ball to the next person and add on to the verse with each toss.

ACTIVITY | Big Idea Star Craft

Scaffold this activity by either having the Big Idea written beforehand on the craft sticks and having a buddy glue it together for them, or give them a completed version that they can take home. Review the Big Idea motions from earlier.



WEEK 3

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE



THE BIG IDEA

God's promises are for now and for later.

THE BIBLE

God's Covenant with Abram: Genesis 12:1-3, 15:1-6
(Psalm 67)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

MUSIC | "Saturn"

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play the song, "[Saturn](#)," by Sleeping at Last (start at 2:25). Give the kids and leaders small flashlights, or invite leaders to use the flashlights on their mobile devices. Allow the kids to have fun waving around the lights and moving freely around the room while the song plays.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Use simple, repetitive action or have them jump up and down instead. Have noise-cancelling headphones available for kids sensitive to loud sounds. For kids using wheelchairs, have someone "dance" with them!

ACTIVITY | Island Relay

- Welcome back to our island paradise! This month, we've been talking all about God's promises. Today, we are going to pretend we got stranded here and we need to go collect supplies to survive!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the group into teams and provide each team with a pillowcase or potato sack. At the opposite end of the room, place a bunch of items, both essential and non-essential things, that can be easily held with one hand. Tell the kids to take turns in the sack race, but each time they go, they need to bring back a "survival" item to the group, then pass the sack to the next kid. Continue until everyone has had a chance to race, and the first team to collect the most amount of survival items the fastest wins!

- ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide noise cancelling headphones. Provide the same supplies in a separate area and remove the race aspect so kids can take their time.

ACTIVITY | Now and Later

- These days, it's usually really easy to get access to things we want pretty quickly. But just because we can, doesn't mean we always need it right now! Can you think of some examples with me?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid two [Now and Later candies](#) and a permanent marker. Tell them to unwrap and chew on the first one, then write one thing they want right now on the wrapper. On the second wrapper, tell them to write something they wouldn't want now, but they would later.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide an enlarged photocopy of the wrapper for friends to write on as many have fine motor skill needs and the wrapper might be too small.
- Those are great examples. **Can you think of something you would want now AND later?**

OBJECT LESSON | How Many Seashells?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before the kids arrive, fill a large jar with as many seashells as possible, making sure you know how many are in the jar. Ask the kids to guess how many seashells are in the jar. When everyone has made a guess, reveal the answer.
- It was hard to tell how many shells there were, wasn't it? Imagine how hard it would be if we were to count the grains of sand on the beach, or all the stars in the sky.
- Did you know God told a man named Abram to do just that? Let's find out why!

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

SCRIPTURE | Genesis 12: 1-3, 15:1-6

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** On a large poster board or dry erase board, draw the lines to make a large, [five-point star](#) as you read the scripture. You can do this on the back of your Big Idea board with chalk or metallic marker, and then flip it over to reveal the Big Idea after the Bible story.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Recruit a preteen to be your teaching assistant and have them draw the lines for the star. You can also create a worksheet with the Scripture references along the path of a star that all the preteens can follow along with!
- [Read Genesis 12:1, then draw the first line.]
 - What was the first thing God asked Abram to do?
 - **Have you ever left your home to go to a new place?** Imagine having to leave your whole family and all your friends. **What would that be like?**
- [Read Genesis 12:2-3 then draw second line.]
 - Wow! If God had said that to you, **what would you think it meant?**
- [Read Genesis 15:1 then draw third line.]
 - **Why might Abram have been afraid?**
- [Read Genesis 15:2-4 then draw fourth line.]
 - God promised Abram that he would be father to a great nation. But Abram was old and

childless. He could not imagine how that could be so. He learned that God’s promises might take time, but they would come true.

- *[Read Genesis 15:5-6 then draw fifth line.]*
 - **Why would God tell Abram to count the stars?**
- Just as the stars are too many to count, so are the people who came from the line of Abram. From that one person came many, many people who would follow the one God. God promised to bless Abram with many things that came right away, but Abram discovered God’s promise of him becoming father of a great nation would be for much later.

THE BIG IDEA | God’s promises are for now and for later.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write the Big Idea in large letters on a black-colored poster board, using chalk markers in rainbow or neon colors. Position large tropical leaves in front to cover up the words. You can place pots in front of the poster and put the leaves in the pots, or tape the leaves to the poster. At the appropriate time, remove the leaves one by one to reveal the Big Idea.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Like the previous weeks, try delegating this to one or more of your preteens!
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide hand motions to help them remember the Big Idea. Example: God (point up) promises (pinky to pinky - like a pinky promise) are for now (point down) and for later (point forward).
- God never changes! There are many promises in the Bible that God made to people back then that are promises God makes to us today. **God’s promises are for now and for later!**

VIDEO | Promise, Episode 3

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

POLL | Ask the Stars

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass out 5 star stickers to each kid. Make five posters. Write the question at the top and draw a line down the middle to create two columns with the answer choices. Put them up around the room. Have kids walk around and put a star in the column they agree with. Below are some questions you could ask (the last one calls for open-ended responses that kids can write in).
- **Do you think it’s scary to go some place where you know no one at all?**
- **If someone offered you a million dollars, would you leave your friends and family and travel to a new place?**
- **If you were Abram, would you have been afraid of what God told you to do?**
- **Do you think it would be cool to have lots and lots of kids, grandkids, great-grandkids, great-great-grandkids, and so on?**
- **Has anyone ever made a promise to you that they kept?**
- **If you could have an endless amount of something (as many as the stars!), what would it be?**

ACTIVITY | Star Blessings Craft

- Let’s make a reminder to help you remember that God’s blessings are for now and for later.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show kids how to paint the outside of their cup black and then poke holes all over the cup to make stars. Have them put the cup over a battery-operated tea light to show off the stars.

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide a partner for friends to do this craft together. Lay out some worked examples that friends can play with or finish making. An alternative activity to provide if necessary is to have friends trace a star cookie cutter with white crayon onto dark paper.

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 67

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Teach kids the text of verses 3 and 5 (they are identical). When they can say it without help, read Psalm 67, pausing after verses 2 and 4 to allow kids to stand and recite their part.
- **What is a blessing?** Blessings are gifts from God. God promised Abram incredible blessings. Did you know that God wants to bless us, too?
- Let's pray this prayer of blessing from Psalm 67 as a "call and response." When I give you the signal, stand up really quickly and say your part!

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

REFLECTION | From One to Many

- God's promise to Abram is the beginning of a blessing for all people. It started with a call for one person to move from his home to a new place and start a family, and continued as a promise and blessing for all.
- **God's promises are for now and for later!**
- **What can you do to share God's promise to all people?**

RESPONSE | Count Me In

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Put up a large piece of black or dark blue banner or bulletin paper. Leave out various colors of metallic and chalk markers near the paper.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Sometime before group time, ask preteens to help you come up with a list of as many Bible characters as they can think of. Have them write one name per [star-shaped sticky note](#) and add them to the banner.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Use [star-shaped sticky notes](#) and allow friends to stick them to the banner. You can also ask a buddy to write on their behalf if needed.
- God told Abram that one day his family will be as many as the stars! In a way, we are a part of the blessing God promised to Abram. That promise was made long ago, but the promise still holds true today – many, many years later!
- Let's remember that God's promises are both for now and for later by drawing a star and writing next to it the name of a Bible character you remember (other than Abram, of course!), and another star with YOUR name next to it!

MEMORY VERSE | Volley Verse

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the group into two teams and have them face each other (like volleyball). One kid from the first team tosses the ball very high towards the other team. Everyone on the receiving team has to try to recite the memory verse really fast before catching the ball. Let kids take turns throwing, and separate into subgroups with more beach balls if you have a large group.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide a separate playing space. Instead of trying to say the whole verse fast, have friends say one word of the verse then throw or roll the ball to the next person and add on to the verse with each toss.

PRAYER

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Psalm 67 as a prayer, with the kids' help! Every time you come across the word "us", point to the kids and have them shout, "US!" Every time you come to the word "You," point upwards and have kids shout, "YOU!"

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- What did God tell Abram to do?
- What did God promise Abram?
- How many offspring did God promise to Abram?
- Read Genesis 15:6. Abram believed God, though he had plenty of reasons to doubt. Do you sometimes find it hard to believe God?
- Can you think of a promise from God that is for now?
- Can you think of a promise from God that is for later?
- How can we know more about God's promises?

ACTIVITY | Big Idea Star Craft

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid 10 [mini craft sticks](#). Have them write one word of today's Big Idea on each stick. Then hot glue them together in the shape of a star, with the Big Idea words in order. It will help to make five V-shaped points and then gluing all the V's together. Let kids decorate with paint and [confetti](#), if you'd like. Tie some string around the top so kids can hang it up! Here are more [detailed instructions](#).
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Give preteens opportunities to serve by helping other children who may be having difficulty, or designate a Craft Leader beforehand from among the group who can lead the activity.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Scaffold this activity by either having the Big Idea written beforehand on the craft sticks and having a buddy glue it together for them, or give them a completed version that they can take home. Review the Big Idea motions from earlier.
- God and God's promises are forever! Hang this star somewhere at home to remind you that **God's promises are for now and for later.**

MEMORY VERSE | Joshua 21:45 (NIV)

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