



WEEK 1

ELEMENTARY OVERVIEW



BIG IDEA

God gives extraordinary peace.

THE BIBLE

Gideon Asks for a Sign: Judges 6;
(Philippians 4:7)

STUFF FOR THIS WEEK

TEACHING – WEEK 1

- ▶ How to Prepare
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PARENTS & VOLUNTEERS

- ▶ [Week 1 Volunteer Email](#)
- ▶ [Weekly Volunteer Huddles](#)
- ▶ [Monthly Parent Email](#)
- ▶ [Parent Handouts](#)
- ▶ [Social Media Plan](#)
- ▶ [Memory Verse Sign Language](#)

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THIS WEEK



DESIGN

We made **lots of graphics** for you! Use them to create slides, social media posts, and more! You can find them in your [Graphics & Video folder](#).



SHOP

We made a list of everything you'll need to buy, borrow, or dig out of your storage closet in order to make this week happen. Get your editable shopping [right here](#).



PREP

We made a **list** of everything you'll need to print, cut, glue, build, or make in order to make this week happen. Get the list [right here](#).



CUSTOMIZE

You know your kids and ministry better than we do, so **you'll probably want make some tweaks** to this week's lesson. You can do that by editing the Word document in your series downloads, or the [Message Builder](#), or [the Grow App](#).



HACK

If you're using Grow for your toddlers, you may want to make some tweaks to make it more age appropriate. **Get the Preteen Hacks** for Week 1 [here](#) and the **Special Needs Hacks** for Week 1 [here](#).



COMMUNICATE

To make sure volunteers and parents are in the loop, don't forget about these . . .

- ▶ [Week 1 Volunteer Email](#)
- ▶ [Weekly Volunteer Huddles](#)
- ▶ [Monthly Parent Email](#)
- ▶ [Parent Handouts](#)
- ▶ [Social Media Plan](#)
- ▶ [Memory Verse Sign Language](#)



WEEK 1

ELEMENTARY LESSON OUTLINE

CROSSOVER
FROM EVERYDAY TO EXTRAORDINARY

BIG IDEA

God gives extraordinary peace.

THE BIBLE

Gideon Asks for a Sign: Judges 6;
(Philippians 4:7)

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

LARGE GROUP TIME

- MUSIC** | Peace Like a River
- QUESTION** | Come Again?
- ACTIVITY** | Dance Battle
- ACTIVITY** | Words Relay
- THE BIG IDEA** | God gives extraordinary peace.
- VIDEO** | Crossover, Episode 1
- SCRIPTURE** | Judges 6
- VIDEO** | The Story of Gideon
- OBJECT LESSON** | Full of Faith
- SCRIPTURE** | Philippians 4:7
- REFLECTION** | What Will I Do For God?
- PRAYER**
- ACTIVITY** | What Brings Us Peace?
- MEMORY VERSE** | Memory Fleece

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- Why was God not pleased with the Israelites at the time when Gideon lived?
- What did God tell Gideon?
- What did Gideon think about this? How did he react?
- Read Judges 6:39-40. Have you ever asked God for a sign?
- If you were Gideon, would you have reacted the same way, needing reassurance that you heard God correctly?
- Why do you think God chose Gideon to free the Israelites?
- How do you think it makes God feel when we don't trust God?

ACTIVITY | Fleece Blankets

MEMORY VERSE | Ephesians 3:20 (NIV)



WEEK 1

HACKS FOR PRETEENS



BY HEATHER HENDERSON

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 | Words Relay

In this activity, kids are doing a relay race with one word of this month's memory verse at a time. For the older kids, give the words to them out of order and let them figure out which way they go.

THE BIG IDEA | God gives extraordinary peace.

Add in a question about how ordinary things become extraordinary. For example, a vanilla ice cream cone is pretty ordinary. What would make it extraordinary? How about hot fudge and sprinkles? Give them more examples of ordinary things that could be made extraordinary (e.g., a hamburger or other food item, a birthday party, a piece of clothing, etc.)

ACTIVITY | What Brings Us Peace?

Discuss with the older kids about what having peace even means and how we can know when we have peace.



WEEK 1

HACKS FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

CROSSOVER
FROM EVERYDAY TO EXTRAORDINARY

BY ABBY BURG

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 | Words Relay

If you have kids whose movement is impaired by a physical disability, consider a more inclusive option like having the kids decode the memory verse using a cipher. For example, as you can see [here](#), you use a font like Wingdings, then provide a cipher card indicating the letter to which each symbol corresponds. Have the kids work as partners or small groups in decoding the memory verse.

REFLECTION | What Will I Do For God?

For kids with fine motor challenges, consider providing ink stamps, chunky crayons, or markers that are easier to grip as writing/drawing utensils.

ACTIVITY | What Brings Us Peace?

Kids with intellectual disabilities will benefit from a little extra support in this activity. For the first few examples that are called out, say something like this: "Henry shared that his night light brings him peace when it's dark. A night light is made by people, so let's put that in the 'people' category." Then, as the group gets used to the process, you can move on to asking something like this: "Ava shared that reciting Psalm 23 out loud brings her peace. Psalm 23 is part of God's Word, so which side of the board should we put that?"



ACTIVITY | Fleece Blankets

If you have kids with fine motor challenges, consider a more inclusive option, like having the kids make a card for someone they know who needs peace. Provide felt shapes to glue to the cards or [felt stickers](#) to both decorate and remind the kids of the fleece from the story of Gideon. Depending on time and ability, you could have the kids write a Bible verse - like Philippians 4:7, referenced earlier in the lesson - on the card as well.



WEEK 1

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

God gives extraordinary peace.

THE BIBLE

Gideon Asks for a Sign: Judges 6;
(Philippians 4:7)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

MUSIC | Peace Like a River

- If you know this song, feel free to sing along! If you don't, no worries — let's dance together as the music plays!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play [this video](#) ("Peace Like a River" by Listener Kids).

QUESTION | Come Again?

- **Have you ever been told to do something, but you were not sure what you heard?** Maybe you were confused about the directions, or maybe you really couldn't hear at all, but you knew it was important?

ACTIVITY | Dance Battle

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before the kids arrive, type the name of different dance moves and print them. Cut the paper into strips and place them into a bag. Play fun music while the kids try to do the dance moves. Some dance moves suggestions include walking after rollerblading, hula hooping karate kid, fried chicken sizzle, flossing, etc. Tell the kids to share the name of the dance move they picked after they do the moves for ten seconds. Click [this link](#) for inspiration!
- That dance battle was kind of hard, wasn't it? If you didn't know the name of the dance move, you wouldn't have known what you were doing!
- This month, we are starting a new series called, "Crossover," where everyday people were able to

do extraordinary things, because they heard God speak and listened to what God said.

ACTIVITY | Words Relay

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Split the group into two teams. Have each team select one speller, and give the speller a stack of paper and something to write with. The rest of the team lines up, and when you're ready, whisper to the first person on each team one word from today's memory verse. As soon as you say go, they will run to their speller and whisper the word to them, and the speller will write it out. While they are running, give the next kid their word, and so on. Then the runner returns and tags the next person. Keep going until all the words of the verse has been written out. The first team to finish getting the entire verse written out wins!*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *If the kids are older, give the words to them out of order and let them figure out which way they go.*
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *If you have kids whose movement is impaired by a physical disability, consider a more inclusive option like having the kids decode the memory verse using a cipher. For example, as you can see [here](#), you use a font like Wingdings, then provide a cipher card indicating the letter to which each symbol corresponds. Have the kids work as partners or small groups in decoding the memory verse.*
- **What do all the words put together say?** That's right, and that is this month's memory verse! We are going to see how true this verse is through the stories we will learn in this series!

THE BIG IDEA | God gives extraordinary peace.

- This month, we're going to find our Big Ideas each week in this ordinary, boring box. It just looks like any ol' box, right? Maybe like the kind of box Amazon packages come in, or the ones you use when you move houses. But it's not! It is an extraordinary box because it has some extraordinary ideas inside.
- **Can one of you come and pull the red paper out of this box and read it to us** (or hand it to a leader if they are a pre-reader)?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Either the kid or the leader reads the Big Idea: God gives extraordinary peace! After you have read the message written on a piece of construction paper or a longer banner of bulletin board paper, glue or tape it to the outside of the box.*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Add in a question about how ordinary things become extraordinary. For example, a vanilla ice cream cone is pretty ordinary. What would make it extraordinary? How about hot fudge and sprinkles? Give them more examples of ordinary things that could be made extraordinary (e.g., a hamburger or other food item, a birthday party, a piece of clothing, etc.)*

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

VIDEO | Crossover, Episode 1

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

SCRIPTURE | Judges 6

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Summarize the Bible story from Judges 6. Here is one way you can do this:
- Today's Bible story comes from the book of Judges, chapter 6. This story is about a man named Gideon. Gideon was an Israelite, which means he was a part of God's special family. At this time, the Israelites were really struggling with worshipping idols rather than just God. Does anyone know what an idol is? Yeah, it's something you worship instead of God.
- The golden calf is the most famous one, which Moses had to teach the Israelites to stop worshipping, but there are others throughout history, as well. Worshipping idols does not make God happy, and God was very angry with the Israelites. As a consequence of their actions, the Israelites spent a long time being ruled by a group of people called the Midianites.
- God appeared to Gideon and said Gideon was going to be used to free the Israelites from the Midianites. Gideon wasn't so sure, though. So, Gideon asked God to prove it.
- First, Gideon set out a fleece skin and asked God to make the fleece skin wet with dew, but keep all the ground under it and around it dry. Gideon figured that if God did that, then Gideon would take it as a sign that God was going to do as promised and help Gideon free the Israelites. Guess what happened? If your guess was that the fleece got wet, but the ground stayed dry, you are exactly right!
- But Gideon still wasn't sure, so the next night he asked God to do the opposite. This time, Gideon wanted the fleece to be dry and the ground to be wet. Guess what? God did exactly what Gideon asked! Knowing God was really and truly on his side, Gideon decided to call together an army of Israelites to fight beside him.

VIDEO | The Story of Gideon

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this video](#) from Pursue God Kids about the outrageous bravery of Gideon.

OBJECT LESSON | Full of Faith

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Place two plastic water bottles, with the labels removed, in front of the kids. Show them that one is full and the other is empty. The water inside the full bottle represents faith. The full bottle is full of faith while the other bottle is empty and has no faith. You'll demonstrate what happens when you hit the empty (faithless) water bottle with a solid downward smack from the top: it will become smashed and destroyed. Then, you'll demonstrate what happens when you hit the full (faith filled) water bottle: it might have a little damage, but it still stands and can be used.
- We've got two bottles here, one full and one empty. Today, water is representing faith, so this bottle here is full of faith and this one has no faith at all. We're going to see how these bottles hold up to tough stuff. Okay, first I'm going to have a go at this bottle that has no faith at all. Ready... set... kerplow! Oh, no! The bottle is totally smushed and busted! Okay, now I'm going to try the same thing with the bottle that's full of faith. Ready... set... kerplow! Hey! Look at this! It got a little dent, but I think it's still fine!
- God wanted Gideon to lead, and even though Gideon needed a little reassurance from God, he had faith. It is okay to sometimes need a little extra peace from God when it comes to doing something brave. But it is important to remember that we should have faith and God will give us the extraordinary peace and strength to tackle whatever comes our way.

SCRIPTURE | Philippians 4:7

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the Bible verse. Depending on your preferred translation, you might need to prompt the kids with a, “Who knows what surpasses/transcends means?”
- No matter what you’re going through, whether it makes sense to you or not, God can give you peace. Peace is when you feel calm and confident. Gideon was asked to do something, and he thought maybe God picked the wrong person. But God cared so much about Gideon, God proved to Gideon that he had heard God correctly.
- Gideon felt that he was ordinary, but God made sure to let Gideon know that with God’s peace and strength, Gideon was extraordinary! And just like with Gideon, God can give you peace, too, no matter what!

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

REFLECTION | What Will I Do For God?

- God had a specific plan and job for Gideon to do. And guess what? God has a specific plan and job for you, too!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass out blank paper die cuts in the shape of people, as well as something to write and color with. Kids can either write what they feel their calling is or draw what they think their calling might be.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** For kids with fine motor challenges, consider providing ink stamps, chunky crayons, or markers that are easier to grip as writing/drawing utensils.
- Take a person and either write down or color a picture of what it is you think you might want to do for God one day. Maybe you want to be a teacher, a doctor, a musician, a missionary, a firefighter, a parent, an astronaut, a ballet dancer, a veterinarian... Maybe you want to be a lot of different things! Maybe you don’t know what it is God wants you to do. That’s totally okay! You’re not alone in that feeling! We can always pray to God for a little guidance to help you discover what God wants you to do.

PRAYER

- Dear God, help us to be brave, just like You did for Gideon, and to stand up for what we believe is right. Grant us peace as we learn to be still and to keep trying to listen for Your voice.

ACTIVITY | What Brings Us Peace?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Take a large piece of poster board and divide it in half down the center (use a marker or Washi tape). Give each kid one sticky note and have them write things that give them peace (and comfort), then put it up on the “people” side of the board. Then after discussing with the kids, have them write one way God gives them peace, and put that on the “God” side of the board.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Discuss with the older kids about what having peace even means and how we can know when we have peace.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Kids with intellectual disabilities will benefit from a little extra

support in this activity. For the first few examples that are called out, say something like this: "Henry shared that his night light brings him peace when it's dark. A night light is made by people, so let's put that in the 'people' category." Then, as the group gets used to the process, you can move on to asking something like this: "Ava shared that reciting Psalm 23 out loud brings her peace. Psalm 23 is part of God's Word, so which side of the board should we put that?"

- Okay, let's see what some of you wrote here. Yes, these are all very good sources of peace!
- But we can also get peace, even greater peace, from God. It might also from a special Bible verse you love, or maybe a song about Jesus that always gives you a peaceful feeling, or maybe a special prayer you like to pray. **What is one way God gives you peace?**
- Peace is such a tricky thing. It can be hard to feel. Sometimes, peace comes from something like a special blanket you always sleep with. Sometimes, it might be knowing someone is right down the hall from your room and that you're not alone. God loves that those things help us feel calm and peaceful.
- But don't forget that God is bigger than your problems and that God's got your back. Let's remember to ask God for extraordinary peace!

MEMORY VERSE | Memory Fleece

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a [sheet of white felt](#) and a permanent marker. Display today's memory verse on a board or screen and have kids copy it on to their felt sheets. Once they are finished, let them spray their felt with a spray water bottle, just like how the fleece was wet in today's story!

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **Why was God not pleased with the Israelites at the time when Gideon lived?**
- **What did God tell Gideon?**
- **What did Gideon think about this? How did he react?**
- **Read Judges 6:39-40. Have you ever asked God for a sign?**
- **If you were Gideon, would you have reacted the same way, needing reassurance that you heard God correctly?**
- **Why do you think God chose Gideon to free the Israelites?**
- **How do you think it makes God feel when we don't trust God?**

ACTIVITY | Fleece Blankets

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the kids into small groups. The groups will make a small tied fleece blanket to be donated to a local organization (If your church does not have an outreach mission that needs blankets, a local retirement home, emergency intake shelter for families experiencing homelessness, or a foster kids' outreach program would be great places to donate to). In the interest of time, pre-cut the blanket squares and tie tabs so the groups can quickly tie the blankets



together. Watch [this how-to video](#) so you know how to help the kids.

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *If you have kids with fine motor challenges, consider a more inclusive option, like having the kids make a card for someone they know who needs peace. Provide felt shapes to glue to the cards or [felt stickers](#) to both decorate and remind the kids of the fleece from the story of Gideon. Depending on time and ability, you could have the kids write a Bible verse - like Philippians 4:7, referenced earlier in the lesson - on the card as well.*

- Gideon wanted to be sure he heard God correctly. When the fleece was wet, it was a sign to Gideon that God was with him and it gave him peace. We are going to make fleece tie blankets and donate them to people in need (*be specific if you have the information about where the blankets will go*). Hopefully, these blankets we create will bring peace to someone who needs it.

MEMORY VERSE | Ephesians 3:20 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Introduce kids to this month's memory verse, teaching them the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) we've provided.*

WEEK 1

SMALL GROUP GUIDE



BIG IDEA

God gives extraordinary peace.

THE BIBLE

Gideon Asks for a Sign: Judges 6;
(Philippians 4:7)

QUESTIONS

- Why was God not pleased with the Israelites at the time when Gideon lived?
- What did God tell Gideon?
- What did Gideon think about this? How did he react?
- Read Judges 6:39-40. Have you ever asked God for a sign?
- If you were Gideon, would you have reacted the same way, needing reassurance that you heard God correctly?
- Why do you think God chose Gideon to free the Israelites?
- How do you think it makes God feel when we don't trust God?

ACTIVITY

Prepare fleece squares that kids can cut and tie together. You can find tutorials on "How to Make a Tie Blanket from Fleece." to help you! If you are pressed for time, pre-cut the ties and have kids just tie squares together.

To remind us of the fleece Gideon used in today's story, we are going to make fleece tie blankets and donate them to people in need (*be specific if you have the information about where the blankets will go*). Hopefully, these blankets we create will bring peace to someone who needs it.

MEMORY VERSE OF THE MONTH: Ephesians 3:20 (NIV)

*Looking for memory verse sign language you can share with your families and volunteers?
Go to growcurriculum.org/Ephesians3-20 and share away!*

