



# WEEK 1

## HACKS FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

# BRAVE

BY EUGENIA LEE

### 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 | Career Charades

How empowering this message is to our students with special needs! There is nothing they cannot do and God doesn't limit them the way our world does. As the student looks at his/her career card and engages their thinking, talk to them and guide them through how they could act out the career. If students have a hard time coming up with an idea, guide them through different questions to help them think through. "What does a teacher do?", "What kind of clothes do firefighters wear?", "Have you met a librarian? What was s/he doing when you met one?" Act out together to encourage them to participate. Encourage the students that God has a special job for them too and God will help them do that job.

#### ACTIVITY | This or That

When I play "would you rather" game with students with special needs, the biggest hurdle is the spatial boundary. Where am I supposed to go? You mean inside this carpet or outside this line? Am I supposed to hug Mrs. Lee like that girl is doing? It can be confusing! Now I learned to mark a clear boundary by putting painter's tape across the middle of the classroom, or make 2 large squares in the room with the tape. Depending on our students' needs, I may make visuals too by printing out large pictures/clipart for each word; pool, beach, cookies, cake, YouTube, Netflix.

#### ACTIVITY | I Am

How about coming up with a list of positive feeling words and words of affirmation for students to refer to? If a student is a pre-reader, encourage the student to draw pictures of him/herself and



verbally tell the volunteer what s/he drew. Then, the volunteer can talk to the student about which word to write and write the word for the student. Make sure the students say the words and claim it using "I am ..." statement. Affirm by telling the student, "yes, you are!" Have the students affirm other students by saying "yes, you are!" If a student has difficulty affirming oneself, have peers help the student identifying their strength with positive words.



# WEEK 1

## ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

# BRAVE

### BIG IDEA

God knows who I am.

### THE BIBLE

**David is Anointed:** 1 Samuel 16;  
(1 Corinthians 8:3)

## LARGE GROUP TIME

**WHAT?** *What are we talking about today?*

### MUSIC | He Knows My Name

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Spend some time in worship with your kids! You can choose any song but you might want to check out ["He Knows My Name"](#) by Francesa Battistelli.

### ACTIVITY | Career Charades

- Welcome! I'm so glad you're here today! For the next few weeks, we'll learn about what it means to be brave. Today, we'll learn about a shepherd boy named David who was chosen for a very special job. Let's start with a game where you, too, will be chosen for a very special job. . . sort of.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print out the "Career Charades" printable. Distribute the career cards to each kid, asking them to keep their card hidden. Tell each kid to come up and act out the career listed on their card while the group tries to guess.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Guide the kids through how they could act out the career. If students have a hard time coming up with an idea, guide them through different questions to help them think through. "What does a teacher do?", "What kind of clothes do firefighters wear?", "Have you met a librarian? What was s/he doing when you met one?"
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have kids work together to create a skit or play based on their career cards. Have older kids direct or write or help younger kids with their skits.

### ACTIVITY | This or That

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Place a long line of tape on the floor, long enough to allow each kid to have a space along it. Tell the group to stand on one side of the tape. Instruct them to move to one side or stay where they are, based on the how they would answer your question [For example, “Would you rather eat eggs (indicate right side of the tape line) or cereal (indicate the left side of tape line) for breakfast?"]. Consider the suggestions below or add your own.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Mark a clear boundary by putting painter’s tape across the middle of the classroom, or make 2 large squares in the room with the tape. Depending on our students’ needs, I may make visuals too by printing out large pictures/clipart for each word; pool, beach, cookies, cake, YouTube, Netflix.
- Every day, we make a lot of choices. This game is all about choices.
  - Pool or beach?
  - Cookies or cake?
  - YouTube or Netflix?
  - Test or book report?
  - Hot dog or hamburger?
  - Ice cream or snowball?
  - Disney or Nickelodeon?
  - Sleeping in or staying up late?
  - Short car ride or long airplane ride?
  - Winter or summer?

### QUESTION | The Best Thing About Being You

- **What is the best thing about being you?**
- Today, we are going to hear about David, who was chosen to do a very special job. David wasn’t chosen by people around him. He was chosen by God for this special job. Just like David, we are also chosen by God to do something special. What God chooses for you might be different than what God chooses for others, but you can have faith and believe your special job will be perfect just for you.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Older kids in particular might not be willing to say the best things about them. One way to hack this activity is to have a leader who knows the group well say great things they see in each kid. This could be done in smaller groups, or with only one or two students as an example, depending on your numbers and setup.

### THE BIG IDEA | God knows who I am.

- **INSTRUCTIONS :** Ask the kids to give you a drumroll by stomping their feet or patting their laps.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Show baby pictures of yourself and other leaders- the kids might not be able to guess who you are, but guess what – God knows! You could even coordinate with parents ahead of time if possible, and show pictures of some of the kids.
- This week’s Big Idea: **God knows who I am.**

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

### VIDEO | Brave, Episode 1

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

### SCRIPTURE | 1 Samuel 16

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the story in your Bible and encourage the kids to do the same. Read it!
- **What job did God give to Samuel?**
- **What was Samuel afraid of?** Sometimes, when God asks us to do something, we are afraid because of what might happen. That's a chance for us to trust God!
- **Who told Samuel that David was the one?**
- **How did David help Saul?**
- **How do you think David felt about being chosen for his special job?**
- The job God chose David for was not an easy one, and remember, David was pretty young. He didn't have a lot of experience doing what God chose him to do, but God knew David was the perfect choice. And **God knows who I am**. God has chosen special things for me and you to do, too.
- God knows who we are better than anyone else. Samuel and David's Dad would probably never have picked David because he was the youngest. But God knew who David was, and God knows who we are, and sees the greatness in us and all the potential we have!

### ACTIVITY | I Am

- Today, we read how God chose David for a very special, important job. You were created to do great things, too, because God knows who you are.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a sheet of blank paper and a pencil. Tell them to write their name in large letters in the middle of the paper. Help the kids brainstorm words that would complete an "I am..." statement, such as "I [John] am creative, bold, etc." Instruct them to write the words in various places around their name. Then, give them colored pencils or markers to decorate the page.
- ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Prepare a list of positive feeling words and words of affirmation for students to refer to. If a student is a pre-reader, encourage the student to draw pictures of him/herself and verbally tell the volunteer what s/he drew. Then, the volunteer can talk to the student about which word to write and write the word for the student.

### ACTIVITY | Name Game

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid an index card and a pencil. Instruct them to write their name on their card. Using a smartphone or tablet, Google each kid's first name to see what it means (you could also download a baby name app). Show the kid the meaning and tell them to write it on their card. Then, fold the cards and place them in a basket, mix them up, pull one out and read

*the meaning (do not read the name) on the card, having the kids guess who's name goes with the meaning. Continue with the remaining cards.*

### SCRIPTURE | 1 Corinthians 8:3

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the story in your Bible and encourage the kids to do the same. Read it!
- **What do you think it means to be known by God?**
- **How does it make you feel to know that you are known by God?**
- God knows us because God created us. God gave us our personalities, our gifts, our talents, and our physical appearance. God designed us to do the very special work that only we can do.

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

### ACTIVITY | Unknown Journey

- David's life took an unexpected turn when God chose him to be king. Sometimes, we don't know what to expect in life, but God has it all planned out.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Tell the kids to spread out around a large playing area. Tell them to turn and face any direction they'd like to. Randomly call out "left" or "right" and a number of steps they should take. Play as time allows. At the end of the game, ask:
- **How did it feel to not know where you were going?**
- **Have you ever been in a situation where you had to trust God to lead you?**

### ACTIVITY | Unseen Journey

- Life can sometimes go a different way than we planned, but God is always with us because God knows and loves us.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask for about five to six volunteers to come up. Put blindfolds on all but one of the kids. Have them form a train by putting their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them, and the kid without a blindfold will be at the end. Have that kid use only words to direct the entire train around the room (or give them jobs to do, like having the kid in the front pick up a cup in the middle of the room). Repeat activity with new volunteers or shift around the order of the kids in the train.
- ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Ask preteens some follow-up questions to this activity: How easy was it to trust the person giving instructions? / How easy is it to trust God? / How can we learn from how Samuel and David trusted God? / Does it make it easier to be brave and trust God when we know that God knows us really, really well?
- In this activity, you had to trust your friend to lead you because they were the only ones who could see. You can trust God to lead you, because God knows you better than anyone!

### PRAYER

- Let's pause for a moment and talk to God. Think back to the, "I am..." statements you wrote down earlier (You can also tell the kids to retrieve their papers, if you'd like). When we pray, call out a few of the words you wrote down when I tell you to.

- God, thank You for knowing us and having a plan for us to do what You want us to do. Help us remember You are always with us and that we are *[have kids call out 'I am...' statements here.]*

#### MEMORY VERSE | Verse in Action

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Encourage the group to work together to come up with motions to go along with the verse. Then, allow them to practice the verse a few times.

## SMALL GROUP TIME

#### DISCUSSION

- Who did God instruct to anoint the new king?
- Which one of Jesse's sons was chosen and anointed as king?
- Why was David chosen to be the new king?
- Read 1 Samuel 16:7. Why do you think our hearts matter more to God than our appearance?
- Have you ever been chosen for something you weren't expecting?
- How did you respond?
- How can you remember to be brave when doing something new and scary?

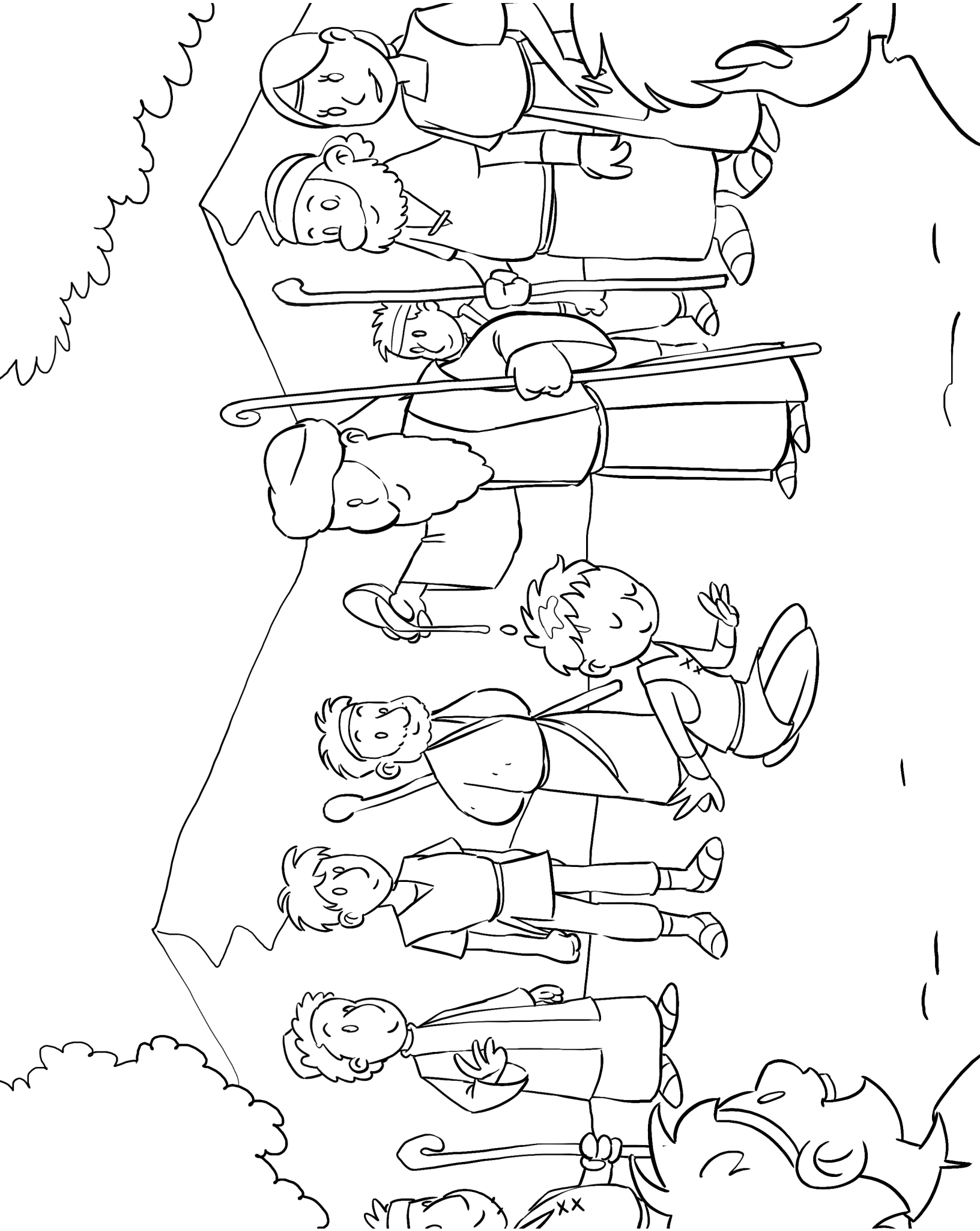
#### ACTIVITY | Brave Hearts

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a red or heart-shaped balloon and a black permanent marker. Tell them to inflate the balloon and tie it closed, assisting as needed. Instruct them to think of ways God can help them be brave when facing scary or unknown situations. Instruct them to write their responses on their balloon and take it home as a reminder that God loves them, knows them, and will help them be brave.

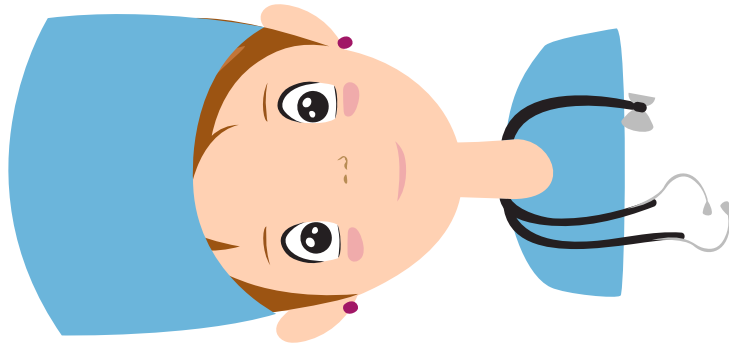
#### MEMORY VERSE | Isaiah 41:10 (NIV)

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

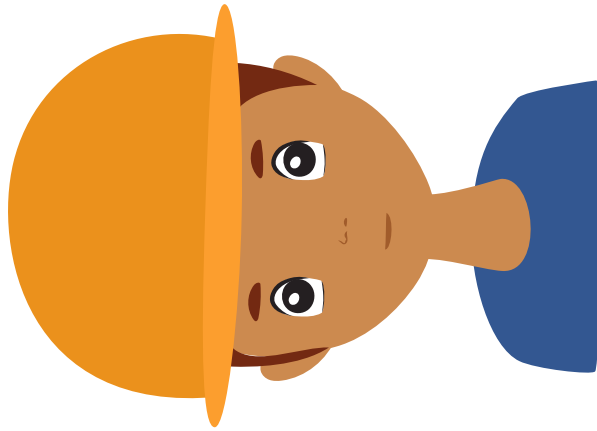




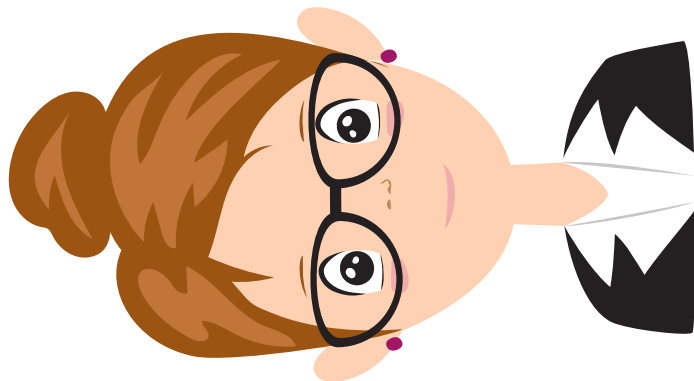




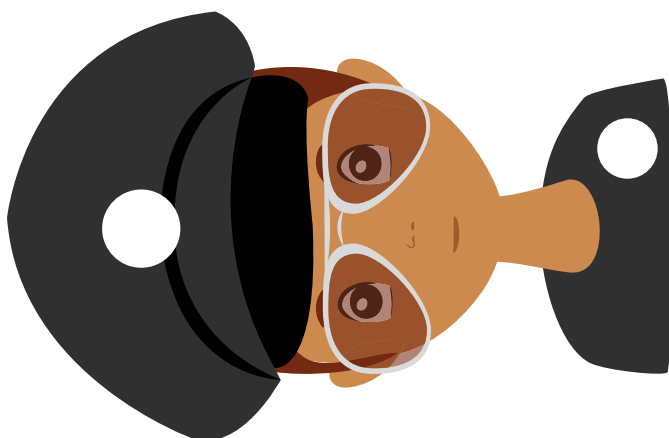
**NURSE**



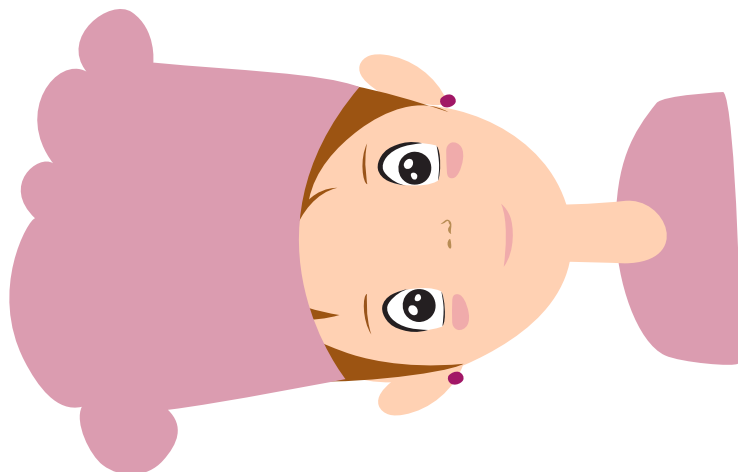
**BUILDER**



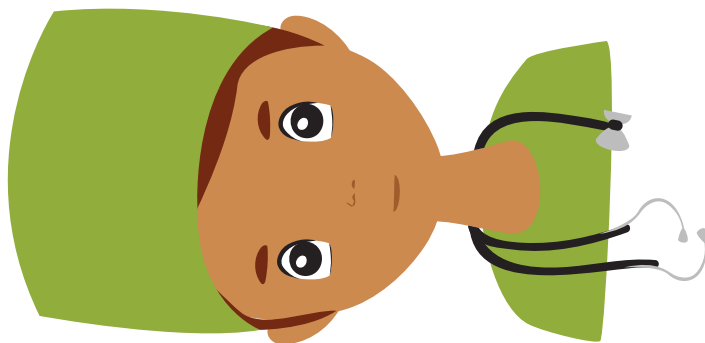
**LAWYER**



**POLICE OFFICER**



**COOK/BAKER**



**DOCTOR**