



SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

I Have Questions / Words

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

Pay attention to the power of your words.

SCRIPTURE

And among all the parts of the body, the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself. People can tame all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and fish, but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison. Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right (James 3:6-10 NLT)!

James 3:2 NLT

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students understand recognize the power of their own words and choose their words carefully.

THINK ABOUT THIS

As leaders, it can be tempting to focus on what a student should or should not do, but at this phase of development, high schoolers are beginning to ask a very important question: "Why?" As you talk about words, be sure to help them uncover specific examples of times that words have negatively affected them. In doing so, you'll help them uncover specific examples of times that words have negatively affected them. In doing so, you'll help them recognize WHY words matter and it will set you up to discuss how we can all use our words more carefully.

Create meaningful conversations. Adjust the questions as needed, and don't feel like you need to answer all of them.

DURING GROUP

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What's a word or phrase you use that you're sure your small group leader doesn't know?
2. What are some words or phrases that people say or that you've heard that are toxic?
3. What types of things are you most likely to say?
 - a. Crude jokes?
 - b. Something insensitive?
 - c. Gossip?
 - d. Encouragement?
4. How have you felt when someone said something about you? How have you seen something you've said affect someone else?
5. **For upperclassmen:** What has someone said that was negative about you and how did it affect you?
6. Read James 3:6-10. Jesus compares words to a fire, why do you think that is? Do you think He is exaggerating? Do you think that's true?
7. It may feel like it's difficult to control our words. Why do you think we say the words that we know we shouldn't say?
8. What are some ways that we tend to justify the words we use? The jokes we tell? For example, "no offense" or "I was just telling the truth"
9. What would change if we were to ask ourselves "what can I say instead?"

TRY THIS

Leaders, this week, check in with your students and remind them of the list of words that build those relationships.
