

# Dirty Jobs: Somebody's gotta do it

WEEK  
**FOUR**

SEPTEMBER 2018

GRADES  
**K-5**

STARTER

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

# 252 KIDS

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**PRELUDE**

**SOCIAL**

**STORY**

**WORSHIP**

**GROUPS**

**HOME**

## BIBLE STORY

### He Came in Like a Wrecking Ball

Nehemiah and Sanballat  
Nehemiah 2:19-20; 4; 6

## MEMORY VERSE

**"Work at everything you do with all your heart. Work as if you were working for the Lord."**  
Colossians 3:23a, NIV

## LIFE APP

**Initiative—Seeing what needs to be done and doing it**

## BOTTOM LINE

**Stay focused on what needs to be done.**

## BASIC TRUTH

**I need to make the wise choice.**

### PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

For Leaders Only  
Create the Environment  
Monthly Overview

**15**  
MIN

### SOCIAL: Providing time for fun interaction

Early Arriver  
Mirthful Message Mayhem

**25**  
MIN

### STORY: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

Welcome/Opener  
Worship  
Communication  
Prayer

**10**  
MIN

### WORSHIP: Inviting people to respond to God

"I Can Do All Things" from *At the Top of My Lungs*  
"My Strength" from *Alive*

**25**  
MIN

### GROUPS: Creating a safe place to connect

Raiders of the Red Cups  
Sweet Selection  
Balancing Act  
Prayer

### HOME: Prompting action beyond the experience

GodTime  
Parent Cue

## GETTING READY

**SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION**

CHOOSE ONE OR BOTH OF THESE ACTIVITIES.

**EARLY ARRIVER***Made to Play:* an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- An offering container

**MIRTHFUL MESSAGE MAYHEM***Made to Play:* an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- No supplies needed

**STORY: COMMUNICATING GOD'S TRUTH IN ENGAGING WAYS****OPENER/CLOSER****WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Leader
- Plush dog
- Two doggie bowls/dishes (can just be regular bowls, too)
- Two small containers to hold dog food (different from the doggie bowls)
- Small bag of dry dog food (you should still be able to feed a dog with it after the game is over)
- Two spoons
- Masking tape

**MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS (SFX):**

- Upbeat music to use as kids enter and exit the room
- Fun, upbeat music for the game (optional)

**LARGE GROUP VISUALS:**

- Theme Slide
- Initiative Slide
- Blank Bottom Line Slide

- Bottom Line Slide

**OPTIONAL VIDEOS (AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE THROUGH THE 252 MEDIA PACKAGE):**

- Theme Loop Video
- Countdown Video
- Theme Video
- Life App Video
- Theme TransBack Video

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Download and print this week's tech sheet for everyone helping with Large Group.
- Download the slides and have them ready to use. If you do not have CG capabilities, you have Orange's permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.
- Download music from a resource such as iTunes® and have it ready to play.
- A 252 Media Package is available for purchase to go along with each curriculum tier. These graphic motion loops are included in the package. For more information, visit [Store.ThinkOrange.com](http://Store.ThinkOrange.com).
- Set up the containers filled with equal amounts of dog food on one side of the room, and set the doggie bowls on the opposite side. Make them far enough apart to be challenging, but not so far as to make the game last too long.
- Use masking tape to make a starting line on the dog food side. Also mark two lanes to keep the teams separate from each other.

**BIBLE STORY****WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Leader
- Bible (marked at Nehemiah 2:20 and 6:3b)
- Adult or student volunteer to play Nehemiah
- Costume for the Nehemiah volunteer:
  - Tool belt (with a hammer and other tools)
  - Safety goggles
  - Hard hat

## GETTING READY, CONTINUED

- Clipboard
- Printed Bible Story Cue Cards (see “What You Do” below)

**LARGE GROUP VISUALS:**

- Blank Bottom Line Slide
- Bottom Line Slide
- Bible Story Cue Cards (#1-7)

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Download the slides and have them ready to use. If you do not have CG capabilities, you have Orange’s permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.
- Print out the Bible Story Cue Cards on either cardstock or paper and cut them apart.

## WORSHIP

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Leader(s)

**MUSIC AND SOUND EFFECTS (SFX):**

- “I Can Do All Things” from *At the Top of My Lungs*
- “My Strength” from *Alive*

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Download all songs (available on AmberSkyRecords.com) and have them ready to use.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**FEATURE PRESENTATION:** Creative video options designed to pair with the 252 Kids and 252 Preteen curriculum.

*Available for purchase through [Store.ThinkOrange.com](http://Store.ThinkOrange.com).*

Our Large Group scripts are interchangeable with these videos so you can plug and play the way you need to each week.

**Included in Feature Presentation:**

- 252 Story brings you the Bible story in a simple and direct way through a professional Storyteller accompanied by engaging visuals.
- *Intro and Outro* videos set up the Bible story and then connect it to the weekly Bottom Line. These videos are interchangeable with the live Opener and Closer, so you can use them to bookend either a live Storyteller or 252 Story.

**GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT**  
**CHOOSE AS MANY OF THESE ACTIVITIES AS YOU LIKE.**

*\* If you don’t have time to do all these activities, be sure to do activity #2.*

**1. RAIDERS OF THE RED CUPS****[TALK ABOUT GOD | BIBLE STORY REVIEW]**

**Made to Move:** an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- Several stacks of red plastic cups
- Masking tape
- Stopwatch or timer app on smartphone

**\* 2. SWEET SELECTION****[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]**

**Made to Play:** an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

**WHAT YOU NEED:**

- A large bowl of colored candy pieces
- Chopsticks; one pair for each kid
- Paper cups
- Rubber bands
- Small folded pieces of paper or napkins
- Large spoon

*Note: If you have mostly younger kids, place a small folded piece of paper between the chopsticks at the top and use the rubber bands to attach chopsticks together to make the game more manageable for their fine-motor development.*

## GETTING READY, CONTINUED

## 3. BALANCING ACT

## [HEAR FROM GOD | MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY]

*Made to Move:* an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

## WHAT YOU NEED:

- Bibles
- Print the “Balancing Act Verse Strips” Activity Page on colored paper; two sets—in two different colors—for each small group
- Masking tape
- Plastic cups (you could re-use the ones from the “Raiders of the Red Cups” activity)
- Tape the verse strips to individual cups. Make two sets of cups for each small group.
- *Note: If you have mostly older kids, they can take cups from Activity 1 and tape the verse strips to the cups before the activity begins.*

## PRAYER

## [PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

*Made to Connect:* an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

## WHAT YOU NEED:

- The bowl of candy and chopsticks from the “Sweet Selection” activity

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Make copies on cardstock or email this week’s GodTime and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Studio252.tv** and the **Parent Cue** app.

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

## BIBLE STORY

**He Came in Like a  
Wrecking Ball**

Nehemiah and Sanballat  
Nehemiah 2:19-20; 4; 6



## PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

## MEMORY VERSE

**"Work at everything you  
do with all your heart.  
Work as if you were  
working for the Lord."**

Colossians 3:23a, NIV

## LIFE APP

**Initiative—Seeing what needs  
to be done and doing it**

## BOTTOM LINE

**Stay focused on what  
needs to be done.**

## BASIC TRUTH

**I need to make the wise choice.**

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

*Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. At this phase, most kids will have a hard time recognizing when they're being distracted, so pray for God to make that recognition happen for them. Also pray that God would protect kids from distractions so they can do what needs to be done.*

### 1. EARLY ARRIVER IDEA

**WHAT YOU NEED:** An offering container

#### WHAT YOU DO:

- Greet kids as they arrive and show them where to put their offerings.
- Ask a few questions about focus:
  - What is something in your life that requires you to focus?
  - Is that easy or difficult?
  - What tends to distract you from focusing?
- Play the hand clapping game "Concentration."
- Kids circle up and clap to a rhythm while naming things in a category without repeating something already said.
- If kids repeat or can't think of an item, and they mess up the rhythm, they are out for that round. Play until only two players are left.
- Check out this link to see how it's done: <http://bit.ly/2GEIGKr>
- Choose from these categories or pick your own: food, candy, superheroes, colors, animals, places, clothes, etc.

**TO ADAPT FOR YOUNGER KIDS:** Clap to a simpler, slower rhythm and make sure everyone has time to think of what they will say.

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

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GROUPS

HOME

15 MINUTES

## BIBLE STORY

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## PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

## MEMORY VERSE

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## BASIC TRUTH

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## 2. MIRTHFUL MESSAGE MAYHEM

**WHAT YOU NEED:** No supplies needed

### WHAT YOU DO:

- Gather the kids in a circle and choose one to stand in the middle.
- The kids in the circle will pass a secret message around the circle by whispering it to the person next to them.
- The kid in the middle will try to distract the other kids and make them laugh by talking, singing, dancing, etc. They may not touch anyone or be mean-spirited.
- If the kid in the middle gets another child in the circle to laugh or look at them before they can pass on the phrase, they change places.
- Once the message gets around the circle, reveal what it was originally meant to be.
- Then start a new message going the other way, and choose someone to start in the middle of the circle.
- Some phrase ideas:
  - I'm glad you're here at Small Group!
  - I like coffee ice cream.
  - Snape wears snazzy sneakers and sweet sandals.
  - A yawning llama is about to start drama.
  - Swedish Fish® are neither Swedish nor fish.
  - Red leather, yellow leather.

### WHAT YOU SAY:

"Passing the message along takes tons of concentration, and having someone dancing around like they have ants in their pants makes it harder to focus! I'm surprised any of you made it through! **[Transition] Let's go hear about what it takes to buckle down and get the job done even when there are some major distractions going on.**"

*Lead your group to the Large Group area.*

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25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

## BIBLE STORY

**He Came in Like a  
Wrecking Ball**

Nehemiah and Sanballat  
Nehemiah 2:19-20; 4; 6

Engage kids' hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

**SFX:** *Play high-energy music as kids enter.*

**CG:** *Theme Slide*

**Optional CG (Media Package):** *Theme Loop Video*

## MEMORY VERSE

**"Work at everything you  
do with all your heart.**

**Work as if you were  
working for the Lord."**  
Colossians 3:23a, NIV

*Leader enters, carrying the plush dog.*

**Optional CG (Media Package):** *Countdown Video*

**Optional CG (Media Package):** *Theme Video*

## OPENER

**LEADER:** "Hey, everyone! I'm so glad you're here. We're talking about initiative this month.

## LIFE APP

**Initiative—Seeing what needs  
to be done and doing it**

**CG:** *Initiative Slide*

**Optional CG (Media Package):** *Life App Video*

**"Initiative is seeing what needs to be done and doing it—even if it's hard, even if it's messy, even if it takes time. When you see a dirty job that needs to be done, don't wait. Take initiative and make it happen!**

## BOTTOM LINE

**Stay focused on what  
needs to be done.**

**Optional CG (Media Package):** *Theme TransBack Video*

"Today's game is mix of all those things. I need all of you to help me feed my dog Rover here. It's a real team effort. *(Walk over to the dish side.)* Over here, we have two doggie dishes just waiting to be filled. *(Walk over to the food side.)* And over here, we have the food. *(Pick up a cup and sniff it.)* Mmmmm. *(To the dog)* You're so lucky! Kidding, I'm kidding.

## BASIC TRUTH

**I need to make the wise choice.**

"Your job is to get the food from this side over to the bowl *(point)*. You must do it one piece at a time, using a spoon. And, of course, it's a competition. So let's form our teams!

*Make sure the teams are evenly divided among ages/abilities. It doesn't matter if the teams aren't exactly the same size, because some kids will go more than once anyway. Line the kids up behind the line on the food side, and give a spoon to the first person in line.*

"You can only take one piece at a time. If it falls off your spoon, you have to stop and pick it back up and put it on the spoon before you start moving again. When you make it to the dish, drop it in, and then run back to your teammates



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		25 MINUTES	10 MINUTES		

and deliver the spoon. Then get back in line, because you may need to take another turn. The first team to get all of the food from the cup over to the doggie dish wins!

"Rover is hungry, so let's get this party started. On your marks, get set, go!"

**SFX: Fun, upbeat music (optional)**

*Watch the kids to make sure they stay in their lanes so there are no collisions. Also, make sure everyone is stopping to put the food back on the spoon before they move. Once the first team finishes, encourage the other team to finish what they've started.*

"Great job, everyone! Rover is really thankful that you all worked so hard to fill up his bowls. Yes, he does, in fact, eat both bowls. He's a growing pup! Let's let him get started on the first bowl while we get our worship on!" *(Put the dog down by the bowl.)*

## WORSHIP

**LEADER:** "Psalm 23:4 says: *Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid. You are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff comfort me,* (NIV). God has promised that He is ALWAYS with us, so we don't have to be afraid. No matter what you face every single day of your life, God is for you! Isn't that amazing? The God of the universe is FOR you! Let's tell Him how awesome we think that is as we sing.

**SFX: "I Can Do All Things" / track 7 from At the Top of My Lungs**

"It's true—God is our strength. This next song reminds us of that. We can't do everything that needs to be done in our own strength, but God has promised He will carry us through. Let's keep worshipping Him and telling Him that we trust Him!"

**SFX: "My Strength" / track 5 from Alive**

"I love that we know **[Basic Truth] we can trust God no matter what.** It makes me want to learn more about His story, so let's do that now. You all can have a seat."

**CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide**

## STORY

### SETTING UP THE STORY

**LEADER:** "If you haven't been here this month, I want to catch you up really fast. We've been talking about a guy named Nehemiah who lived a long time ago. You can find his story in a book of the Bible called . . . yep, Nehemiah. *(Hold up Bible.)*

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HOME

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

"Nehemiah was the drink taster for the king. This was far away from his homeland, Jerusalem. But then he heard how things were going as some of God's people tried to rebuild the city, which had been destroyed a century earlier. So Nehemiah requested some serious time off from his job. But this was no vacation. The job ahead of Nehemiah in leading the people to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem was a big one—a REALLY big one.

"Looks like Nehemiah is here right now. Let's give him a big hand!"

*Adult or student volunteer enters, wearing a tool belt, safety goggles, hard hat, etc., and carrying a clipboard.*

### ENEMIES NOTICE

**LEADER:** "Nehemiah was leading a team of excited people. They were ready to make their city strong again and get the walls rebuilt so that enemies couldn't attack.

"The people may have been excited, but you can imagine how NOT excited their enemies were to see the walls being rebuilt. A few men, including two guys named Sanballat and Tobiah, were watching the construction very closely. They were afraid of Jerusalem's strength, and with good reason. Check out what Nehemiah had to say to these two guys when they laughed about his plans."

*Hand "Nehemiah" the Bible and have him read Nehemiah 2:20.*

**NEHEMIAH:** "The God of heaven will give us success. We serve him. So we'll start rebuilding the walls. But you don't have any share in Jerusalem. You don't have any claim to it. You don't have any right to worship here" (NIRV).

*Take the Bible back from Nehemiah.*

**LEADER:** "Wow. When God is on your side, your enemies SHOULD be scared, right?"

"Nehemiah encouraged the Israelites to ignore the taunts of their enemies. He focused on dividing up the work between families.

*Nehemiah walks around the crowd with the clipboard.*

"Everyone, including the priests and goldsmiths, officials and merchants, set aside their own work to put all their energy into repairing the walls and gates."

*Nehemiah sets down the clipboard, picks up a hammer and any other tools from his tool belt, and pretends to be working on a construction site.*

### ENEMIES MOCK; ISRAELITES WORK

**LEADER:** "As the Israelites worked hard, Sanballat and Tobiah started saying bad things to their friends about what Nehemiah was doing. They said things like this. *(Hold up the cue cards.)* Who can help me read a line? *(Pause.)* Great! Be sure to read your line nice and loud!"

**PRELUDE**

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**STORY**

**WORSHIP**

**GROUPS**

**HOME**

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

*Hand out the first three cards to three different kids. Point to each kid to cue them to say their line. Nehemiah should keep working but also be paying attention to the taunts.*

**KID:** (Reading card one) "What are those Jews trying to do?  
"Do they really think they can make their city like new?"

**KID:** (Reading card two) "How long do they think this rebuilding will take?  
"Do they really think their new wall won't break?"

**KID:** (Reading card three) "Come on! Burned stones can't protect a town.  
"A little fox could bring the new wall down!"

**LEADER:** "While their enemies taunted, Nehemiah prayed to God about the situation.

*Nehemiah pauses working and appears to be praying. Then he resumes working.*

"The Israelites continued to work hard. Soon the wall was almost half as high as they wanted it to be!

"But Sanballat and Tobiah and many of their other enemies heard about their progress. They were mad AND scared. They made evil plans and spread them around. Plans like these." (Hold up the cue cards.)

*Hand out cards four through six to three other kids. Point to each kid to cue them to say their line.*

**KID:** (Reading card four) "They're halfway done? No more gaps?  
"What will we do if it won't collapse?"

**KID:** (Reading card five) "If they finish the wall, they'll be too strong.  
"We must take them down, even if it's wrong."

**KID:** (Reading card six) "Let's gather everyone and plan an attack.  
"But before we move on, I need a snack."

**LEADER:** "While their enemies plotted, the Israelites prayed. They also put guards on duty day and night to watch the gates and make sure their enemies weren't approaching. But the people were starting to get discouraged. Pieces of the old wall stood in their way and slowed their progress, and they were hearing of all the rumors of attacks to come. So Nehemiah tried to encourage them. He said: *Don't be afraid of your enemies. Remember the Lord. He is great and powerful (Nehemiah 4:14, NIV).*

"But how were they supposed to keep working AND keep guard at the same time?

*Nehemiah picks up the clipboard again and pretends to count people.*

"Nehemiah appointed half of the people to stand guard while the other half worked. And even the half who were working were holding a weapon in their other hand!

## PRELUDE

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## HOME

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

*Nehemiah sets down the clipboard and resumes his (pretend) work.*

"Nehemiah and the Israelites continued their work, beginning at the first sign of sunrise and working through the entire day . . . until at last the stars appeared. Within weeks, all the gaps in the wall had been repaired!"

### ONE LAST TRICK

**LEADER:** "Now Sanballat, Tobiah, and the others were getting desperate. They made a new plan. Sanballat and another guy sent a messenger to Nehemiah. Who wants to be the messenger?"

*Choose a volunteer and give her cue card seven. Tell her to take it to Nehemiah and then go back to her seat.*

**NEHEMIAH:** (Reading card seven) "Hey, buddy. We see that you're doing a great job. 'Take a break to meet with us—we can share a kebab!'"

**LEADER:** "But Nehemiah could see through their tricks. He knew they planned to lure him away only to hurt him. So Nehemiah sent THIS message back to Sanballat and his buddies.

*Hand "Nehemiah" the Bible and have him read Nehemiah 6:3b.*

**NEHEMIAH:** "I'm working on a huge project. So I can't get away. Why should the work stop while I leave it? Why should I go down and talk with you?" (NirV)

"But Nehemiah's enemies didn't back down. They continued to send messages—five more times, in fact—filled with threats and lies. They even hired a trickster to try to frighten Nehemiah into running away and looking weak . . . but he didn't fall for it.

"Time and time again, they tried to distract and discourage Nehemiah. But time and time again, Nehemiah didn't fall for their tricks. He and the Israelites worked day and night until the wall and gates were completely finished. And here's the really amazing part: they finished the work in just 52 days! (To Nehemiah) Go, Nehemiah! (To audience) Give him a hand!"

*Nehemiah does an over-the-top happy dance and exits.*

### WRAPPING UP THE STORY

**LEADER:** "Nehemiah had seen the work that needed to be done, and he refused to allow threats to distract him. Finally, after more than 100 years, Jerusalem and the Israelites were once again protected from their enemies.

"Nehemiah could stand strong and **[Basic Truth] make the wise choice** because he trusted God. He knew that God had a plan, and he knew that God would help him carry it through. He had to rely on God to help him when others were trying to distract and discourage him.

"God wants to do the same thing for you, too! He can help YOU stand strong when others are trying to distract and discourage you from the doing the right thing—from **[Basic Truth] make the wise choice**. Just ask Him for help.

## CG: Bottom Line Slide

"Then you can **stay focused on what needs to be done**. You can put all your attention on what God wants you to do instead of getting distracted along the way. Let's go ahead and ask God to help us with that right now."

## CG: Blank Bottom Line Slide

### PRAY

**LEADER:** "Dear God, thank You for giving us a great example of initiative in Nehemiah. Looking at his life, we can see how important it is to stay focused on what needs to be done. We know that he trusted in You to do that, and we want to do that too. Please help us this week to rely on You for our focus, our strength, our initiative. Help us to stay focused on the things that need to be done around us. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."

### CLOSER

**LEADER:** "When you're trying to do something that needs to be done, it's easy to get distracted. Take your homework, for example. When you're doing homework, you can be distracted by the TV, phones, noises in your house, and even thoughts in your own head. All of those can keep you from finishing your homework."

"So what do you do when you've got a task to be done and others are trying to distract you? How do you fight through it and get the job done? You can remember what Nehemiah did. No matter how many times Sanballat and his buddies tried to distract him from building the wall, Nehemiah refused to come down. He stayed focused and kept his eyes on the job God wanted him to do. You can do that too."

## CG: Bottom Line Slide

"When you start to get distracted, **stay focused on what needs to be done**. Say that with me."

**LEADER AND KIDS:** "**Stay focused on what needs to be done.**"

**LEADER:** "How do you do that? You can pray and ask God to help keep you strong, focused, and on task. You can ask a friend or a parent to help you. And you can remind yourself that if you stay focused, you'll get it done MUCH faster. Then you can relax and have fun when the job is all done!"

"Don't let yourself get distracted. Think about how good it's going to feel when the job is done, and just do it! We've got some more awesome stuff planned for Small Group, so let's head on over!"

*Dismiss kids to their small groups.*

**SFX:** Play high-energy music as the kids exit.

**CG:** Theme Slide

**Optional CG (Media Package):** Theme Loop Video

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

## TALK ABOUT GOD BIBLE STORY REVIEW



## MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

### BIBLE STORY

**He Came in Like a  
Wrecking Ball**

Nehemiah and Sanballat  
Nehemiah 2:19-20; 4; 6

### MEMORY VERSE

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### LIFE APP

**Initiative—Seeing what needs  
to be done and doing it**

### BOTTOM LINE

**Stay focused on what  
needs to be done.**

### BASIC TRUTH

**I need to make the wise choice.**

### 1. RAIDERS OF THE RED CUPS

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Several stacks of plastic cups; masking tape; stopwatch or timer app on smartphone

#### WHAT YOU DO:

- Divide the group into four teams.
- Use masking tape to give them each a territory by dividing your space into quarters.
- Give each team a few stacks of cups.
- Outline the rules of the game:
  - The goal of the game is to build the tallest pyramid tower possible.
  - Only two cups may be held in any kid's hands at any given time. The rest will be either part of a pyramid tower or in a "supply" pile. (In other words, only two cups can be touched by any team member at one time. Two kids can be building the pyramid at the same time, but they can each only pick up one cup.)
  - Teams may not only use their own cups, but may also raid other teams to grab their cups from the "supply" pile.
  - There cannot be any physical contact between teams or kids who are raiding for cups.
- If you have mostly younger kids, give them time to sort out who will be the builders and raiders on their team, or assign these roles at the beginning.
- For older kids, let them discover the necessity of these jobs and work it out among themselves.
- Set your timer for five minutes, and begin the game.
- After five minutes, the team with the largest pyramid wins.
- You may play as many rounds of this as time allows. Switch up the team members and roles as needed.

#### WHAT YOU SAY:

"How did it feel to be a builder and try to defend your supplies and build at the same time? How did it feel to be a raider and have to trust that your builders would use what you gave them? *(Allow for discussion.)* No matter which job you had, it was hard to focus and not get distracted. Nehemiah had a similar problem. What things could have been a distraction for him? *(Allow for discussion: the enemies' taunts, discouragement, grumbling workers, getting*

## TALK ABOUT GOD BIBLE STORY REVIEW



## MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

tired from building, etc.) When he was tempted to lose his focus, Nehemiah did what he always did: he prayed and asked God for help. God listened, and He gave Nehemiah wisdom and strength to do what needed to be done.

"There are times we get distracted too. What distracts you from doing what needs to be done that happens 'on the outside' like, for instance, YouTube® channels devoted only to surfing squirrels? (Allow for responses both silly and serious.) Are you ever distracted on the inside—by discouragement or fear—from doing what needs to be done? (Allow for discussion.)

**[Make It Personal]** (Describe a time when you got distracted by circumstances around you. It could be that you were simply distracted by cat videos on the Internet or that you had too much going on and your task list was overwhelming.)

"A lot of things can distract you and get in your way, but remember, **stay focused on what needs to be done**. Ask God to help you, just like Nehemiah did. He will give you the focus you need to overcome distractions and finish strong!"

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**LIVE  
FOR GOD**  
APPLICATION  
ACTIVITY



## PLAY

an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

### BIBLE STORY

**He Came in Like a  
Wrecking Ball**

Nehemiah and Sanballat  
Nehemiah 2:19-20; 4; 6

### MEMORY VERSE

**"Work at everything you  
do with all your heart.  
Work as if you were  
working for the Lord."**  
Colossians 3:23a, NIV

### LIFE APP

**Initiative—Seeing what needs  
to be done and doing it**

### BOTTOM LINE

**Stay focused on what  
needs to be done.**

### BASIC TRUTH

**I need to make the wise choice.**

### \* 2. SWEET SELECTION

**WHAT YOU NEED:** A large bowl of colored candy pieces, chopsticks, paper cups, rubber bands, large spoon

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Gather the whole group in a circle around the bowl of candy. Make sure everyone can reach inside.
- Hand out the chopsticks (modified with rubber bands if necessary for younger kids) and the paper cups.
- Assign one color of candy to one half of the circle to collect and put in their cups, and assign the other half a different color.
- There will be some jostling around the bowl and someone is bound to lose a chopstick at some point.
- Remember, this game is to highlight the need and ability to focus amid distractions. Remind kids of that as often as necessary.
- If the candy gets picked over quickly, call a pause and stir it with the spoon to bring more of the desired colors to the top.
- When you think all the designated colors have been cleared out, circle up to talk.
- If your church environment allows it, let kids eat their candy as you talk.

**TO ADAPT FOR OLDER KIDS:**

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- After gathering around the candy bowl in a circle and handing out the chopsticks and cups, assign each kid a different color.
- Some may have the same one depending on the candy, but try to vary them so that no one sitting next to each other has the same color.
- While kids are collecting their color candy with the chopsticks, periodically stir the bowl with the spoon while they're still looking.
- Allow five minutes for this activity.
- The goal is not to have "the most" of your color as a team, but to have gathered as many as you personally can in the allotted time.
- If your church environment allows it, let kids eat their candy as you talk.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

"How did you feel when you had to hunt for your color of candy? (Allow for discussion.) Would it have been easier to do it by yourself, while using your hands, and having plenty of time to do it? Probably! We all like the idea of

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**PLAY**

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working at something with absolutely no distractions or interruptions, but most of us don't have distraction-free lives. Learning to keep your cool and **stay focused on what needs to be done** is a big part of growing up, both as a regular human being and as a follower of Jesus.

"What kinds of things helped you stay focused on just your job during this game? *(Allow for discussion.)* Can any of them help you focus on a job you have to do at home or school? *(Discuss strategies like blocking out noise by concentrating on your breathing, being aware of your body movements, being polite to those around you to avoid costly conflict, counting how many you have completed instead of looking at how many to go, keeping your eyes on your own progress and not others', etc.)* These are all great strategies to help you **stay focused on what needs to be done.**"

## HEAR FROM GOD

MEMORY VERSE  
ACTIVITY



## MOVE

an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

## BIBLE STORY

**He Came in Like a Wrecking Ball**  
Nehemiah and Sanballat  
Nehemiah 2:19-20; 4; 6

## MEMORY VERSE

**"Work at everything you do with all your heart. Work as if you were working for the Lord."**  
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## LIFE APP

**Initiative—Seeing what needs to be done and doing it**

## BOTTOM LINE

**Stay focused on what needs to be done.**

## BASIC TRUTH

**I need to make the wise choice.**

## 3. BALANCING ACT

**WHAT YOU NEED:** Bibles, prepared plastic cups, masking tape

### WHAT YOU DO:

- Use the masking tape to make two X's on one side of your area.
- Gather the group on the opposite side.
- Divide them into teams and give each team a set of prepared cups.
- Teams must balance the cups on their heads, put their hands on each other's shoulders to make a line, and walk together from one side of the room, around the X, and back.
- Once they make it back successfully, they build the cups into a pyramid (in verse order) to win the game.
- If anyone's cup falls off, the whole team has to walk back and start over.
- Play as many rounds as time and interest allow.
- *Tip: The cups are easier to balance if they're upside down on the kids' heads.*

### WHAT YOU SAY:

"This game was hard work! You could have let your frustrations run away with you and gotten distracted from the point of the game. But if you all moved slowly, together, this game was possible. When you were tempted to get upset with a teammate, you remembered to **stay focused on what needs to be done.**"

"It may seem like other people are a distraction in your life—like when your mom is requiring that you put the tablet down and come to dinner—but they are not the distraction at all. What needs to be done most—the biggest job you'll ever have—is to love other people because God loves you. So when you think that call to dinner is a distraction from your video games, think twice! The games can be a distraction from your relationship. What else could be like that? (*Allow for discussion.*) Loving others is the most important thing to do, so be thoughtful of those around you and **stay focused on what needs to be done.**"

*Optional Discussion Questions for Older Kids*

If you lead 4th, 5th, or 6th graders, consider asking these discussion questions:

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## HEAR FROM GOD

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an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and  
taps into the energy in the body

- For most of us, there are a lot of things every day that need to be done. What are some things on your to-do list this week? *(Allow for discussion.)*
- What happens if you're trying to get something done, like homework or practicing an instrument, but then something else comes along that's really important? How do you figure out which thing to focus on first?
- Nehemiah had a lot to do too, but he decided on the most important things: he worked at the job God gave him, and he made time to pray about everything else. How does that help us?
- How can you **stay focused on what needs to be done** and still put God first? How did Nehemiah do it?

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

**PRAY  
TO GOD**  
PRAYER  
ACTIVITY



**CONNECT**

an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

**BIBLE STORY**

**He Came in Like a  
Wrecking Ball**

Nehemiah and Sanballat  
Nehemiah 2:19-20; 4; 6

**MEMORY VERSE**

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**BOTTOM LINE**

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needs to be done.**

**BASIC TRUTH**

**I need to make the wise choice.**

**PRAY AND DISMISS**

**WHAT YOU NEED:** The bowl of candy and chopsticks from the "Sweet Selection" activity

**WHAT YOU DO:**

- Circle the group around the bowl and hand out chopsticks, as before.
- Prompt kids to gather one of each: red, yellow, and green candies. (Adapt for the candy you used if you don't have these exact colors.)
- Then, go around the circle and invite kids to share:
  - For the red candy: one thing that they know distracts them on the outside from doing what needs to be done, like a hobby or activity they need to cut back on.
  - For the yellow candy: one thing that distracts them on the inside, like discouragement or negative self-talk, that they want to ask a grownup for help to think differently.
  - For the green candy: one thing that they know needs to be done this week, once they've removed all those distractions, like being kind to their families or finishing a big project on time at school.
- Once they've shared, they can eat the candy. Then close in prayer.

**TO ADAPT FOR YOUNGER KIDS:** Be ready to prompt kids with things you've discussed for the red and yellow candies.

**WHAT YOU SAY:**

"Dear God, thank You for hearing us when we talk and when we pray. We know that You've heard what we've shared about our distractions. Please help us to **stay focused on what needs to be done** and to love other people the way You love us. Amen."

As adults arrive to pick up, if you have extra chopsticks and candy, you can let adults or siblings try to pick up a piece as they gather their kids from your small group. Give each kid a high five on the way out, and remind them to **stay focused on what needs to be done** this week.