



# WEEK 1

## ELEMENTARY LESSON OUTLINE



### **BIG IDEA**

I can spend time with God anywhere.

### **THE BIBLE**

**The Israelites Build the Tabernacle:** Exodus 35:4-35;  
(James 4:8a)

### THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

## LARGE GROUP TIME

- **MUSIC** | “God of Wonders”
- **ACTIVITY** | Wandering Game
- **ACTIVITY** | House of Cards
- **QUESTION** | Road Trip List
- **THE BIG IDEA** | I can spend time with God anywhere.
- **VIDEO** | Epic, Episode 1
- **SCRIPTURE** | Exodus 35:4-35
- **VIDEO** | The Tabernacle
- **ACTIVITY** | Where Do We Worship God?
- **SCRIPTURE** | James 4:8a
- **ACTIVITY** | Wilderness Art
- **REFLECTION** | Wherever I Am
- **PRAYER** | Prayer Cards
- **MEMORY VERSE** | Hidden in Sand

## SMALL GROUP TIME

- **DISCUSSION**
  - Where were the Israelites when they built the tabernacle?
  - What were some of the materials they used to build the tabernacle?
  - Why did they build the tabernacle?
  - Re-read James 4:8a. What can you do to come near to God?
  - Where do you go to spend time with God?
  - What are some things you can do to help you spend time with God?
  - What do you do when you are spending time with God?
- **ACTIVITY** | Super Web
- **MEMORY VERSE** | 1 Samuel 12:24 (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 | House of Cards**

Ask some discussion questions and encourage older kids to share their stories: Have you ever had to make something complicated? A project at school? Have you ever helped build something? Encourage older kids to share stories.

#### **SCRIPTURE | James 4:8a**





Ask a follow-up question: How can it help to set aside a special place to spend time with God?

#### **REFLECTION | Wherever I Am**

Have an older kid share a story about how they spend time with God. Maybe they pray and talk to God, or they like to listen to music that celebrates God.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

# HEATHER HENDERSON

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Heather is currently a self-employed writer, speaker, coach, and ministry partner. In addition to writing this awesome series, she writes for several other publications regularly. She is also on the teaching rotation at a couple of churches in the Washington, D.C. metro region. She is on the board of directors for a foster home in Mexico and also for a youth conference held in the Mid-Atlantic region each year. Heather is a former youth pastor and associate pastor at a large and culturally and racially diverse church in Maryland. She has coached and led tons of volunteers and paid ministry staff over the years, and she is passionate about helping churches tell

people the good news of Jesus. She is also a strong advocate of women in vocational ministry and leads electives and workshops for women and girls and their advocates any chance she gets! Heather is married to her technology genius husband, and they have three kids, aged 10, 5, and 3. They live in the Virginia suburbs of Washington, D.C. with their dog June and their fish Pepperoni.

If you'd like to chat with Heather about church leadership, about women in vocational ministry, or about how to make the perfect apple pie, reach out. She would love to connect with you!

**ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Elle Campbell, Brooklyn Lindsey, Amber Stephens, Linda Moon, Abby Burg.

**TEACHING VIDEOS:** Elle Campbell, Brooklyn Lindsey, Linda Moon, Jared Callahan.

**PRETEEN HACKS:** Heather Henderson.

**SPECIAL NEEDS HACKS:** Abby Burg.

**MEMORY VERSE SIGN LANGUAGE:** Sunny Brown.

**GRAPHIC DESIGN:** Josh Gosney, Jules Gray, Elle Campbell.

**LAYOUT DESIGN:** Jules Gray, Elle Campbell.

**ADDITIONAL SUPPORT:** Kenny Campbell, Tash McGill, Stephen Switzer, Ali Anne, Eddie Irvin, Ari Raines, Kellee Gentry, Tim Synan, Josh McLemore, Amber Gaddis.



# WEEK 1

## HACKS FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



**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 | Wandering Game**

For kids whose movement is impaired by a physical disability, consider giving the group toy race cars to create wandering paths on the table in front of them or have them create "wandering" patterns in the air with ribbons or scarves.

#### **ACTIVITY | House of Cards**

If you have kids with fine motor challenges in your group, be intentional about giving them a role to play in this activity (i.e. holding the playing cards for the team). Ask the group(s) to take time to develop a building strategy in advance and encourage those who may not have the skills to carefully position cards to contribute to the planning process.

#### **SCRIPTURE | Exodus 35:4-35**

If you have students with limited mobility due to physical disabilities, consider having the kids work together in pairs to select their items from around the room and bring them forward as appropriate.

#### **ACTIVITY | Wilderness Art**

For kids with fine motor challenges, provide markers or chunky crayons that are easier to grip as drawing utensils. For kids with learning disabilities such as dyslexia and dysgraphia, write out the phrase "I can spend time with God" on a poster, whiteboard, or a similar large format so they can see how the words are spelled. Encourage them to copy the phrase as best as they can.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

# ABBY BURG

 [instagram.com/abbyjburg](https://www.instagram.com/abbyjburg)



Abby Burg has been living the adventurous life of the unexpected over the past decade. After seven years in both children’s ministry and executive ministries in upstate New York and her home state of Delaware, she has taken on a new endeavor in serving missionaries around the world through ReachGlobal, the international mission of the Evangelical Free Church of America. As a missionary kid herself, interacting with ReachGlobal staff has been a joyful extension of her ministry. Blending her training in Inclusive Childhood Education at Houghton College (class of 2012) with her heart for Jesus, she is passionate about making the Bible real to kids and believes that disciple-making should be active, full of fun, and sometimes a little messy. . . all while pointing to Jesus. Whether serving as a kids camp speaker, “pinch-hitting” on the children’s

church rotation, or training fellow kidmin leaders, Abby enjoys every opportunity she gets to advance the kingdom in the hearts of kids and those that lead them.

Abby lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota with her high-school sweetheart and husband of nine years, Andrew. They love Saturday morning breakfast dates, ice skating, road trips, and writing post cards to their niece and nephew. Their lovable golden retriever, Charlie, is the most popular dog on the block with his trademark goofy grin and eagerness for belly rubs.

If you’d like to chat with Abby about creative worship experiences for kids, anything written by Henri Nouwen, or living life as an enneagram one, reach out! She would love to connect with you!

**ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Elle Campbell, Brooklyn Lindsey, Amber Stephens, Linda Moon, Abby Burg.

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# WEEK 1

## ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE



### BIG IDEA

I can spend time with God anywhere.

### THE BIBLE

**The Israelites Build the Tabernacle:** Exodus 35:4-35; (James 4:8a)

## LARGE GROUP TIME

*WHAT? What are we talking about today?*

#### MUSIC | “God of Wonders”

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play [this video](#) and encourage kids to sing and dance along with you.

#### ACTIVITY | Wandering Game

- Are you ready for an adventure? This month, we will follow the epic stories of the Old Testament in the Bible – stories of God’s people in the wilderness. . . where they wandered for forty years! Let’s play a wilderness wandering game together.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the kids to line up behind a leader and follow them in a wandering path around the room. The leader should occasionally complain about the long trip and encourage the kids to complain as well. Lead them back to the starting point before moving on to the next activity.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** For kids whose movement is impaired by a physical disability, consider giving the group toy race cars to create wandering paths on the table in front of them or have them create “wandering” patterns in the air with ribbons or scarves.

#### ACTIVITY | House of Cards

- We wandered around like the Israelites did in the desert. Just imagine: for forty years, they walked around with all of their things, without a house to go home to, looking for the land God had promised them. Let’s use these cards to try to build a house.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If your group is large, ask the kids to work in smaller groups. Provide a deck of playing cards (try using something with a comic book theme, like [these](#)) and challenge the group to build a house together. If needed, demonstrate strategies for building. Provide tape or paper clips only if necessary.*

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *If you have kids with fine motor challenges in your group, be intentional about giving them a role to play in this activity (i.e. holding the playing cards for the team). Ask the group(s) to take time to develop a building strategy in advance and encourage those who may not have the skills to carefully position cards to contribute to the planning process.*

✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Ask some discussion questions and encourage older kids to share their stories: Have you ever had to make something complicated? A project at school? Have you ever helped build something? Encourage older kids to share stories.*

### QUESTION | Road Trip List

- If you knew you had to wander for a very long time, let's say 40 years! **What would you bring with you?**
- The people of God missed a lot of things while they were wandering in the desert. One of the things they missed the most was the feeling that God was with them.

### THE BIG IDEA | I can spend time with God anywhere.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Write the Big Idea on a poster board. Set the poster on an easel and cover it with a brightly colored cloth or scarf, preferably in purple, blue, or deep red. Tell the kids to do a drumroll by patting their legs with their hands, then remove the cloth with a flourish.*
- Today's Big Idea is: **I can spend time with God anywhere!**

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

### VIDEO | Epic, Episode 1

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

### SCRIPTURE | Exodus 35:4-35

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give kids access to the assorted materials (see the included shopping list) around the room. Allow kids to pick one item to use as they interact with the story. Tell them to bring their item to the front when their item is mentioned. At the underlined words, pause for the kids to bring up their items, reminding them if necessary. (You can read Exodus 26-27 for a more detailed background for today's story.)*

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *If you have students with limited mobility due to physical disabilities, consider having the kids work together in pairs to select their items from around the room and bring them forward as appropriate.*

- When the Israelites were wandering in the desert, they sometimes forgot God was there with

them, so God gave a man named Moses instructions.

- God told Moses to have the Israelites gather fine materials to make a home for God so that God could travel with them. Of course God was with them wherever they were anyway! But this home for God would help the Israelites remember this.
- This home was called a Tent of Meeting or Tabernacle. This is how God told them to build it:
  - Make curtains of fine, twisted linen or yarns of **blue, purple, and deep red**.
  - Use **gold clasps** to hold the curtains together. Weave pictures of winged angels in the curtains. Join them together to make walls.
  - Then, make a tent around the curtains with **goat hair**.
  - Make frames from **acacia wood** and **silver bases**. Assemble the tabernacle exactly as I have told you at every place you stop to rest.
- God's people built the tabernacle exactly as they were told and put it up each time they stopped
- during their journey in the wilderness, to remind them God was with them while they traveled.

#### VIDEO | The Tabernacle

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this video](#) of a 3D model of the tabernacle.
- Here is how the tabernacle might have looked!

#### ACTIVITY | Where Do We Worship God?

- The Israelites built the tabernacle as a home for God while they were traveling. It was a place for them to worship God.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Prepare a parachute or a large sheet. Space the kids evenly around the parachute/sheet and have them hold on to the edge. When you give them a signal, have all the kids lift it up together and run under it, towards the center. Once they are at the center, ask the following questions:
  - **Where are some places where we worship God?**
  - **Do we need a specific place to worship?**
  - **Why do we come to church to worship?**

#### SCRIPTURE | James 4:8a

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the verse and read it!
- The Israelites believed they needed to carry a home for God with them to spend time with God.
- **What does this verse tell us about where we worship God?**
- **Do you need to always be in a special place to spend time with God?**
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Ask a follow-up question: How can it help to set aside a special place to spend time with God?

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

#### ACTIVITY | Wilderness Art

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a sheet of sandpaper and a few crayons. Ask them to write, "I can



spend time with God anywhere.” across the top of the page. Tell them to pick one dark color to draw a wandering path around the page, as though they were wandering in the desert. Ask them to color the spaces around the wandering path with bright colors to show how God was with the Israelites all along.

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** For kids with fine motor challenges, provide markers or chunky crayons that are easier to grip as drawing utensils. For kids with learning disabilities such as dyslexia and dysgraphia, write out the phrase “I can spend time with God” on a poster, whiteboard, or a similar large format so they can see how the words are spelled. Encourage them to copy the phrase as best as they can.

### REFLECTION | Wherever I Am

- We know we can spend time with God wherever we are. We can carry something around with us like the Israelites did or we can use whatever we have with us to help us remember God.
- Hmm...what do we have here that we can use to spend time with God? Ah! Here are the cards we used to build the “house” earlier. We can use these as a reminder that God is always with us and we can talk to God anytime we want.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Help each child choose four cards (one of each suit) from the deck of cards used earlier.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have an older kid share a story about how they spend time with God. Maybe they pray and talk to God, or they like to listen to music that celebrates God.

### PRAYER | Prayer Cards

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the kids to draw each card from their stack and pray according to the instructions below. Encourage them to use the cards to guide them in prayer whenever they want to spend time with God.
  - **Hearts:** Pray for someone you love.
  - **Diamonds:** Tell God how thankful you are for something special in your life.
  - **Spades:** Ask God for strength to do something you need to do.
  - **Clubs:** Tell God how sorry you are for something you’ve done that you shouldn’t have.

### MEMORY VERSE | Hidden in Sand

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ahead of time, lay [plastic tablecloths](#) on the floor and prepare shallow dishes (inexpensive [foil pans](#) work great for this!) filled with [sand](#). Write the memory verse on index cards (or use thematic cards like [these!](#)) with one word on each card. Let each kid find a card, then work together to put the words in order to make the memory verse complete.

## SMALL GROUP TIME

### DISCUSSION

- **Where were the Israelites when they built the tabernacle?**
- **What were some of the materials they used to build the tabernacle?**

- Why did they build the tabernacle?
- Re-read James 4:8a. What can you do to come near to God?
- Where do you go to spend time with God?
- What are some things you can do to help you spend time with God?
- What do you do when you are spending time with God?

#### ACTIVITY | Super Web

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a paper plate, and have them cut tiny slits all around the edge of the plate with a scissor ([here's](#) how it might look when they're done!). With a long piece of yarn, have kids wrap the yarn around the plate to make their own spider web (for continuity with the lesson, use blue, purple, and red yarn.)
- **Spider-Man builds webs constantly to trap his enemies and also to go from place to place very quickly. . . it's very important for him to build webs to do his job! We don't have to make anything like that, but we always need to make time for God!**
- **How will you spend time with God in the coming week?**

#### MEMORY VERSE | 1 Samuel 12:24 (NIV)

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