



WEEK 1

ELEMENTARY LESSON OUTLINE



BIG IDEA

I am wonderful because
God made me.

THE BIBLE

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made: Psalm 139;
(Psalm 104:24)

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

LARGE GROUP TIME

- **MUSIC** | Worship
- **ACTIVITY** | Musical Chairs and Share
- **IMAGE** | Masterpieces
- **VIDEO** | "Sing!"
- **THE BIG IDEA** | I am wonderful because God made me.
- **VIDEO** | Sing, Episode 1
- **SCRIPTURE** | Psalm 139
- **POLL** | Uniquely Made
- **OBJECT LESSON** | Fingerprints
- **SCRIPTURE** | Psalm 104:24
- **ACTIVITY** | Wonderfully-Made Self
- **ACTIVITY** | Special Sticky Notes
- **PRAYER**
- **MEMORY VERSE** | New Old Song

SMALL GROUP TIME

- **DISCUSSION**
 - What are psalms?
 - Name some of the things Psalm 139 says God knows about us.
 - How does Psalm 139:14 describe how we were made?
 - Read Psalm 104:24. What are some other things God has made in the world that are wonderful, too?
 - Sometimes, people don't like how they look or something else about themselves. How does this Psalm help them?
 - Why do you think people struggle with feeling good about themselves?
 - What is one thing about yourself that you're thankful to God for?
- **ACTIVITY** | Awesome Acrostic
- **MEMORY VERSE** | Psalm 95:1 (NIV)



WEEK 1

HACKS FOR PRETEENS



BY ASHLEY SIDER

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 | Musical Chairs and Share

Try this as activity in addition to or in place of the Musical Chairs activity. Write down a handful of "well-known" songs on pieces of paper in a basket and have willing participants choose a song and try to hum the tune. Those in the audience are to try and guess the tune and the first one to guess wins!

ACTIVITY | Wonderfully-Made Self

Collect a stack of magazines and have students cut out words, phrases or photos that represent themselves. Have students share their masterpiece with the group and explain why they chose different elements to add.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ASHLEY SIDER



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Ashley works at Messiah College as the Assistant Director of Alumni and Parent Relations and serves her church by teaching Elementary Sunday School. Before her current role, she worked in Youth Ministry for several years, first as a volunteer, then assistant, and then director. She's also done some guest teaching in other churches and loves it!

When she was in middle/high school, her faith was deeply impacted by a short-term missions trip, which led her to go to college to learn more about cross-cultural ministry and the importance of learning about global differences. One of her favorite things to do is to create trainings for other groups going on

missions trips to help prepare them for their journey. She is an energetic, hardworking, easily excitable gal who was made to help inspire others. (Read: INTJ, Enneagram 3, and StrengthFinders Future/Strategic/Learner through and through.) Though she spends most of her free time reading, writing, and taking photos, she loves an unscheduled weekend at home, spending time outside and hanging with her husband and daughter in Pennsylvania.

If you'd like to chat further about the enneagram, using social media for your ministry, or picking a paint color for your front door, reach out! She would love to connect with you!

ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Elle Campbell, Brooklyn Lindsey, Amber Stephens, Linda Moon, Kellee Gentry.

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

PRETEEN HACKS: Ashley Sider.

SPECIAL NEEDS HACKS: Sue Spiesz.

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 SUE SPIESZ

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 | Musical Chairs and Share

Contact the parent/guardians during the week prior to this lesson. Let them know about this activity, and the question being asked to the children. With enough notice, this will give the family an opportunity to talk communicate with their child about his/her favorite song, and have it written down for the child to bring to church. This will increase the chance of participation for that child.

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 139

Have the truths and main ideas of the Bible story written out, simply and clearly for all children to see:

- God Made Us
- God Loves Us
- God Knows Everything About Us
- God Is Always With Us

Give the Child with special needs a small mirror to look at themselves, and discover how wonderful God made him/her. By seeing his own image, this may help the child stay focused on their unique features.

ACTIVITY | Special Sticky Notes

Often times our friends with developmental delays also are challenged socially. Because this wonderful activity requires a higher level of social skills, the child will be successful, if they receives


support from a “buddy” or an adult. They will need assistance writing down the “awesomeness” of another student, and following directions to give the sticky note to student, and then do it again for the other students.

ACTIVITY | Awesome Acrostic

This sweet activity will require some individualized attention for our kids with special needs. Academically, many of our students may not be able to recognize their name, spell their name, or write their name. Provide a model/finished example of what is to be expected. Have their name already written out in Acrostic form. According to ability, verbally and physically assist the child in brainstorming words that describe them. Offer applicable suggestions.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SUE SPIESZ

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My name is Susan, and I LOVE writing Special Needs Hacks for Grow Curriculum, and Student Ministries!!!!

For my profession, I teach Special Education to struggling preschoolers, and also teach school-aged students who are hospitalized, or home-bound.

One of my favorite jobs is teaching at the local college in the Exceptional Education Department!! So much fun!! I was so honored to be part of the launching of the special needs ministry at our church over 15 years ago, and now we help other churches in the area begin their own special needs ministries.

It's been an awesome experience! I have 4 amazing children who are crazy fun and outgoing! They range from 11 years old to 27!!

In my spare time I enjoy cycling and riding my jet ski on the great Niagara River! I've been caught zip lining in my backyard, and unicycling down my street. Life is fun around here!

Please feel free to reach out to me to chat about special needs curriculum and ministry. I'd love to hear from you!

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WEEK 1

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

I am wonderful because
God made me.

THE BIBLE

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made: Psalm 139;
(Psalm 104:24)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Sing a few worship songs with your kids! Choose any song(s) you and your kids like, but you might want to include this one: ["He Knows My Name"](#).*

ACTIVITY | Musical Chairs and Share

- Today, we are starting a brand new series called, "Sing!" We will learn some things about God. God is so wonderful and so amazing that people like to sing songs all about God. Sometimes, we call these songs, "praise." Praise is just a fancy name for a song that shows how thankful we are for God.
- But first, let's get to know each other better through a game called, Musical Chairs & Share.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Set up a circle of chairs, with one less than the number of kids in your group. Play some upbeat music as the kids circle around the chairs. Once you stop the music, each kid must quickly sit on a chair. Whoever is left standing at the end of the round gets to share their favorite song and why they think it's great. Repeat until everyone has shared. If you have a large group, consider splitting everyone into smaller groups. If you have extra time, you can plan another round, asking a different question as a way to get to know everyone better.*
 - ✳ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Contact the parent/guardians during the week prior to this lesson and give the family an opportunity to talk communicate with their child about his/her favorite song, and have it written down for the child to bring to church.*

✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Write down a handful of “well-known” songs on pieces of paper in a basket and have willing participants choose a song and try to hum the tune. Those in the audience are to try and guess the tune and the first one to guess wins!

- God’s people in the Bible sang songs they loved, too. Some of those songs are saved for us in a book of the Bible called Psalms. The psalms are songs that tell about how great God is and how much God loves us. Unfortunately, we don’t know what the songs sounded like, but we do know the words! Today, we are going to learn something important that God’s people in the Bible wrote a whole song about.

IMAGE | Masterpieces

- Does anyone know what the word, “masterpiece,” means? A masterpiece is something incredible that someone creates. It can be something people cook, draw, paint, build, write, or create in any other way.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show the kids photos of some of your favorite masterpieces such as [this painting](#) (they can also be favorite foods, books, songs, etc.). If you have a large group, consider projecting photos on a screen. If you have a smaller group, consider passing photos around (or bringing in objects if you own them, such as your favorite book). Be sure to keep the sharing kid-friendly!

VIDEO | “Sing!”

- The most obvious ways we can see how unique everyone is when people put them on display, like on a talent show!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this clip](#) from the movie, “Sing!”
- **How did each of the contestants show off their uniqueness?**

THE BIG IDEA | I am wonderful because God made me.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Hang up a large piece of poster or craft paper and tell the kids to take turns adding features and body parts to create a person. You may want to give each kid a specific task such as, “Will you add the ears?” and “Will you draw some feet/shoes?”
- Do you know what’s even more wonderful than this masterpiece you guys just made? Each of you! This week’s Big Idea is, **I am wonderful because God made me.**

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

VIDEO | Sing, Episode 1

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

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 139

- **INSTRUCTIONS :** Look up Psalm 139 in your Bible and encourage the kids to do the same. Read it!

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Simplify the main ideas of the passage and write it somewhere for kids to see: God Made Us, God Loves Us, God Knows Everything About Us, God Is Always With Us. Then kids a small mirror to look at themselves, and discover how wonderful God made him/her!*

- Psalm 139 teaches us God made each one of us and we are special because God made us. God knows everything about us – the things we are proud of and the things we are not so proud of – and loves us just the same!
- **Is there anything or any person you know everything about?** You may know A LOT of about someone or something, but you can never know EVERYTHING. Then, how is it possible for God to know everything about us? God knows everything about us because God made us and is always with us.
- God created and loves every part of us. Every single part of us! You are wonderful because God made you!

POLL | Uniquely Made

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Say aloud several different characteristics or traits people have. If you say something that describes the kids, tell them to stand. If it does not describe them, tell them to remain seated or sit back down if standing. Call out the following: brown eyes, freckles, left-handed, curly hair, dimples, can whistle, can snap, missing teeth, etc.*
- **Is there anyone who was standing the entire time?** No, right?
- God has made every one of us to be unique or different from everyone else. Today's psalm reminds us we can praise God because God has made us special.

OBJECT LESSON | Fingerprints

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell each kid to put their thumb on an ink pad and then press their thumb down onto a piece of paper. Using magnifying glasses, lead the kids to compare the thumbprints and discover how each one is unique.*
- Did you know that no one in the whole, entire world has the same fingerprint as you? God gave every single person their own set of fingerprints that are different from every single other person.
- Our fingerprints are great reminders about how God loves each of us and created us exactly like God wants us to be.

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 104:24

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Look up the verse and read it!*
- God made more things than we can even count. God was able to do this because God is very wise. That means that God is very smart and used all those smarts to make us awesome.
- Every time we look into the mirror, we can remember that God designed us and thinks we are a masterpiece. We were especially created by God. Whenever we look at each other, we can remember the same thing.

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

ACTIVITY | Wonderfully-Made Self

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a large piece of craft paper. The paper should be large enough for a kid to lay down on. Under careful supervision, tell the kids to take turns tracing each other's bodies on the pieces of paper. After they have their outline, they can decorate the outline to look like them. They should draw the same hair color, eye color, etc. They will then fill up the inside of the body by writing things they are good at, things they love, and other words that show what is unique about them. Allow the kids to share their pictures with each other.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Collect a stack of magazines and have students cut out words, phrases or photos that represent themselves. Have students share their masterpiece with the group and explain why they chose different elements to add.

ACTIVITY | Special Sticky Notes

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a small stack of sticky notes and something to write with. Tell everyone to go around and write one thing that's awesome about another person in the room on the sticky note and hand it to them. The recipient can then stick the note to their shirt or somewhere on their body and move on to the next person. Make sure you monitor closely to ensure that only positive words are shared. Consider turning on music during this activity.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Have a peer or another leader help the kids write down the "awesomeness" of another student and give them the sticky note, then do it again for the other students.
- Each of us are unique. It can be great to share with others what we think is special about them.

PRAYER

- Dear God, We praise You because we are fearfully and wonderfully made. Thank you for loving us exactly as we are. Help us to love each unique person the way you love them and help us to love ourselves, too!

MEMORY VERSE | New Old Song

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Since this series is called, "Sing!" try different ways to sing the memory verse. This week, sing the memory verse in a familiar tune or melody (such as Do Re Mi Fa So La Ti Do, Mary Had a Little Lamb, etc.)

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- What are psalms?
- Name some of the things Psalm 139 says God knows about us.
- How does Psalm 139:14 describe how we were made?

- Read Psalm 104:24. What are some other things God has made in the world that are wonderful, too?
- Sometimes, people don't like how they look or something else about themselves. How does this Psalm help them?
- Why do you think people struggle with feeling good about themselves?
- What is one thing about yourself that you're thankful to God for?

ACTIVITY | Awesome Acrostic

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a sheet of paper and something colorful to write with. Encourage them to write out the letters of their name vertically down their paper. For each letter of their name, tell them to write a word that describes themselves. For variety, you can provide different types of paper, stickers, or other decorative items.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide a model/finished example of what is to be expected. Have their name already written out in Acrostic form and assist in brainstorming words that describe them.

MEMORY VERSE | Psalm 95:1 (NIV)

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