



WEEK 3

ELEMENTARY LESSON OUTLINE

LEVEL UP

BIG IDEA

Jesus helps me believe.

THE BIBLE

Doubting Thomas: John 20:19-20, 24-29;
(2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:1)

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

LARGE GROUP TIME

- **MUSIC** | Worship
- **ACTIVITY** | Peek-tionary
- **ACTIVITY** | Rabid Raceway
- **OBJECT LESSON** | Can You See It?
- **THE BIG IDEA** | Jesus helps me believe.
- **VIDEO** | Level Up, Episode 3
- **BIBLE STORY** | John 20:19-20, 24-29
- **QUESTION** | All About Doubt
- **IMAGE** | How Many Animals?
- **SCRIPTURE** | 2 Corinthians 5:7
- **ACTIVITY** | List It Out
- **PRAYER**
- **MUSIC** | "Hills and Valleys"
- **MEMORY VERSE** | Hebrews 12:2

SMALL GROUP TIME

- **DISCUSSION**
 - When Jesus appeared to the disciples after being in the tomb, who was missing?
 - How did this disciple react when the other disciples told him about Jesus?
 - Who helped him believe? How?
 - Read Hebrews 11:1. What do we need to believe the things we cannot see?
 - How do you think you would have reacted if you were Thomas?
 - Are there things about God or the Bible you don't really understand? What are they?
 - What can you do when you have questions or you're unsure of something?
- **ACTIVITY** | Faith Journal
- **MEMORY VERSE** | Hebrews 12:2



WEEK 3

HACKS FOR PRETEENS

LEVEL UP

BY MIKE SHELEY

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 | Peek-tionary

Play the same game described in the lesson plan but with this digital version to give it a new twist. You will need an iPad, Pictionary Air app, and the [Pictionary Air game](#). This will capture the objective of this activity because the person drawing doesn't have to—and can't easily—see what they are drawing in the air using Augmented Reality (AR) technology. The audience can see on the screen as the app captures and displays the lines they are drawing ([check it out!](#)).

ACTIVITY | Rabid Raceway

Ask preteens to design and set up the obstacle course or courses you need for this activity in your space. Also enlist their help cleaning up and resetting the room after the lesson. And during the race, allow them to serve as referees since they are the masters of the course!




BIBLE STORY | John 20:19-20, 24-29

Encourage preteens to pay attention and remember these lessons while also using their creative talents to help create visual aids for your teaching. Challenge a few preteens to create posters on poster board or simply slides on a presentation software that utilizes a little bit of text and emoji to summarize the lesson and provide visual answers to the questions presented in this part of the lesson. They should display the visuals after everyone has had a chance to answer. As a bonus, have them create visuals to go with this week's lesson and next week's. . . to be shown next week, of course. If you have the ability, share these on your church's social media channel.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MIKE SHELEY



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Mike Sheley is the Middle School Pastor overseeing ministries for preteen (5th-6th grade) and young adolescent (7th-8th grade) students at Mount Pleasant Christian Church in central Indiana. He has been in student ministry for over twenty years, with more than twelve of those years in his current position. In his current ministry, preteens participate alongside middle schoolers for weekly programming, but have their own lessons and special events. However, part of the health of the ministry is due to the close friendship and working relationship Mike has with the children's ministry team.

Mike is married and has three kids - one in college,

one in high school and one in middle school. Mike has had the joy and challenge of ministering to all of his kids as their youth pastor during their preteen and middle school years.

Mike's odd jobs over the years have included working at the his local Apple Store, Target, and at a couple fast-food restaurants. He has a weird fascination with presentations and fonts.

If you'd like to chat with Mike about spiritual disciplines with preteens, parent ministry or developing better presentations, reach out! He would love to connect with you!

ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Elle Campbell, Brooklyn Lindsey, Amber Stephens, Linda Moon, Lauren Wierzba.

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

PRETEEN HACKS: Mike Sheley.

SPECIAL NEEDS HACKS: Eugenia Lee.

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 3

HACKS FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

LEVEL UP

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 | Peek-tionary

Get students involved in guessing what the picture is. Have communication devices ready, if applicable, to say their guesses. Model your student to say what you think it might be, using their device. Say something silly while guessing so students don’t feel pressured to say the right answer. When you see your student expressing using the device, yell their answer out (e.g., “Joshua says it is a dog!”).

ACTIVITY | Faith Journal

Give them examples of how they can “write” in the journal, especially if your student cannot read or write. They can insert 1) pictures from magazines or newspapers, 2) church bulletin and/or announcement that was meaningful to them, 3) dry flowers or leaves to remind them of the beauty of God, 4) printouts or crafts made at church, and 5) pictures of their loved ones. Review the journal once in a while together and talk about how you see them growing in their trust and faith in God.

MUSIC | “Hills and Valleys”

Listening to music with words while comprehending the meaning of the words and sentences can be a complex task for some students with special needs. Before playing the song, give students explicit instructions on what they are about to do. Read the lyrics first before playing the music so they can understand the meaning of words. As they listen to the song, have students point at each word in the lyrics with a finger or a pen/marker. Afterward, give them a couple minutes to soak it in and remember the words that stood out to them. If they’re pre-readers, students can simply answer orally and talk about their answers with a peer buddy or a leader.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

EUGENIA LEE



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Eugenia Lee currently serves as a volunteer leader at Newsong Church in Santa Ana, CA. Having children of her own with special needs, she started leading a support group of parents with special needs children and collaborating with children's ministry. In time, she learned that she loved working with children with special needs and realized it was her calling. She has worked on accommodating and modifying curriculum for students with different needs as well as training 1:1 buddies for many years. Helping children with special needs gave her so much joy that she decided to pursue a teaching career in special education. In a few short weeks, she will be ready to have her own classroom at a public school!

She is also working on a volunteer training manual specifically geared toward layperson volunteers working with children with disabilities in any setting.

Eugenia and her husband live in Orange county, CA with their four amazing children. Home is her favorite place on earth: spending time with her family, cooking up some BBQ, and sharing good conversation with close friends.

If you have any questions about curriculum accommodations and modifications, engaging with parents of special needs children, training volunteers, and so on, feel free to get in contact with her via email, Instagram, or Facebook!

ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Elle Campbell, Brooklyn Lindsey, Amber Stephens, Linda Moon, Lauren Wierzba.

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

PRETEEN HACKS: Mike Sheley.

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WEEK 3

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

LEVEL UP

BIG IDEA

Jesus helps me believe.

THE BIBLE

Doubting Thomas: John 20:19-20, 24-29;
(2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:1)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the kids to sing along to [“Who You Say I Am”](#) by Hillsong Kids.

ACTIVITY | Peek-tionary

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Split the kids into two teams. One person from each team wears a blindfold so they can't see what they are drawing. Quietly tell the blindfolded players what to draw a picture of on a poster board. The first team to guess the word correctly wins the round. A new person from each team will draw in the next round and repeat the process. Best two out of three wins (Suggested words: basketball, smart phone, sword, llama, coins, star, bird, and other words loosely related to gaming).
- **In what ways did the blindfold make this activity difficult?**
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Get students involved in guessing what the picture is. Have communication devices ready, if applicable, to say their guesses. Model your student to say what you think it might be, using their device. Say something silly while guessing so students don't feel pressured to say the right answer. When you see your student expressing using the device, yell their answer out (e.g., “Joshua says it is a dog!”).
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** For a digital twist, you will need an iPad, Pictionary Air app, and the [Pictionary Air game](#). This will capture the objective of this activity because the person drawing doesn't have to—and can't easily—see what they are drawing in the air using AR

technology. The audience can see on the screen as the app captures and displays the lines they are drawing ([check it out!](#)).

ACTIVITY | Rabid Raceway

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Create a simple (or multiple smaller) obstacle course(s) in your environment. You can use chairs (to walk around), tables (to crawl under), hula hoops (to hop through), or whatever you have. Make it fun! Pair up the kids. One will be the “leader” and the other will be the “follower.” Put blindfolds on the followers. The leader has to lead their follower through the obstacle course by telling them what to do using only words. Once they are through the course, ask the kids to switch roles. This way, everyone gets a turn at leading and following.
- **When you were the follower, why did you have to listen carefully to the leader?**
- **When you were the leader, was it easy or difficult to guide them using only your words?**
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Ask preteens to design and set up the obstacle course(s)! Also enlist their help cleaning up and resetting the room after the lesson. And during the race, allow them to serve as referees since they are the masters of the course!

OBJECT LESSON | Can You See It?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Prepare two balloons: one inflated and one deflated.
- **Which one of these balloons have air in them? How do you know?** That’s right — we know because the balloon with air in it is bigger and can float around the room (*Bounce the balloon around among the kids and have the kids join in*).
- So, just like we can’t see the air in the balloon, we can’t technically see Jesus walking around. But just like we knew the balloon had air in it because it was inflated, we know Jesus is here with us by the things we see all around us.

THE BIG IDEA | Jesus helps me believe.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the kids into four groups. Give each group one word from the Big Idea to say when you point to them. Have them shout it out as loud as they can! Point to each group one at a time (You could also point really fast and see how quickly they can say the Big Idea together!).

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

VIDEO | Level Up, Episode 3

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

BIBLE STORY | John 20:19-20, 24-29

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Conduct a quick review of what we’ve been going over in this series. This serves as a great overview for anyone who missed previous weeks.
- **Who can tell me who Jesus is?** Jesus is God’s son, and Jesus lived here on Earth teaching people about God, healing people, and even performing miracles. Lots of people loved Jesus.

- But there were people who didn't like Jesus at all and they had Him arrested. **Can anyone tell me what happened when they arrested Jesus?** Yes, they nailed Jesus to a cross and Jesus died on the cross. It was an incredibly sad moment. All of Jesus' friends couldn't believe Jesus was gone.
- But Jesus wasn't really gone, right? **What happened when they went to see Jesus' body in the tomb?** That's right! They discovered Jesus beat death! Jesus was alive! Jesus' disciples couldn't believe it – especially one guy in particular. Let's open our Bibles and read what happened.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read John 20:24-29.*
- Thomas only believed when he saw the marks where Jesus had been nailed to the cross, and when he touched them. It would have been easy for Jesus to get disappointed when one of His disciples doubted him. But Jesus didn't get upset. Instead, Jesus helped Thomas believe!
- **Have you ever had any trouble fully understanding the things you learn about God?** We all do. When we don't understand something, we can pray and ask for help to understand. Jesus loves us and wants us to know more about God. **That's why Jesus helps you and me to believe.**

✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Challenge a few preteens to create posters on poster board or simply slides on a presentation software that utilizes a little bit of text and emoji to summarize the lesson and provide visual answers to the questions presented in this part of the lesson. They should display the visuals after everyone has had a chance to answer. As a bonus, have them create visuals to go with this week's lesson and next week's. . . to be shown next week, of course. If you have the ability, share these on your church's social media channel.*

QUESTION | All About Doubt

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Allow for open discussion on these questions.*
- **What is doubt?** *(To be uncertain, unsure, skeptical, afraid.)*
- **Is it okay to doubt?** *(Reassure the kids it is okay to doubt at times, we all doubt sometimes and have questions.)*
- **Does Jesus still love us even when we doubt?** *(Jesus loves us even when we doubt or don't understand something.)*
- Doubt is a natural reaction to things that are hard to believe. When we have doubt, we can pray, we can talk to our parents, relatives, church leaders, and other people we trust.

IMAGE | How Many Animals?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Print or project [this image](#). Find as many animals as an entire group or split into smaller groups and see who can find the most animals in one minute (Scroll down on the above link to find the answers).*
- Even when something is right in front of us we don't always see it!

SCRIPTURE | 2 Corinthians 5:7

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *If possible, have everyone open up their Bibles to 2 Corinthians 5:7. Have one of the kids read the verse out loud to the group.*

- **Who can tell me in your own words what you think this verse means?**
- Being able to see is very important. But the thing is, we don't need to see to believe in Jesus! We don't physically see Jesus today. But we believe in Jesus because we have faith. Faith is believing in something even though we can't physically see it.

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

ACTIVITY | List It Out

- Sometimes, it can be hard to think of all the people we can talk to when we have doubt or even just questions. Let's think of some people together!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Use a large poster board or dry erase board for the kids and/or leaders to write the lists on. Ask, "Who can tell me the name of someone they can go to when they have doubt?" (Encourage the kids to be specific – my brother Jimmy, my Tia (Aunt) Rosa, Pastor Kris, etc.)
- There are a lot of people we can all go to when we need encouragement, have questions, or experience doubt. Jesus helps us to believe by surrounding each of us with other people we can turn to.

PRAYER

- Jesus, thank You for reminding us that even when we doubt or have questions, that doesn't change how much You love each of us. Thank You for surrounding us with others who pray for us and encourage us. Help us to grow our faith and believe in You.

MUSIC | "Hills and Valleys"

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play and sing along together to [this song](#) by Tauren Wells. You can also print out the [lyrics](#) and have students circle or highlight the parts that stand out to them and/or are especially meaningful.
- Jesus is the greatest coach we'll ever have in life. The activities we did today helped us to rely on faith to complete tasks set before us. This is what life with Jesus is like. Even though we cannot always see what God is up to, Jesus coaches us through the hills and valleys of life and helps us believe.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Before playing the song, give students explicit instructions on what they are about to do. Read the lyrics first before playing the music so they can understand the meaning of words. As they listen to the song, have students point at each word in the lyrics with a finger or a pen/marker. Afterward, give them a couple minutes to soak it in and remember the words that stood out to them. If they're pre-readers, students can simply answer orally and talk about their answers with a peer buddy or a leader.

MEMORY VERSE | Hebrews 12:2

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Say the memory verse for the kids, but intentionally get some of the words wrong. Tell the kids to make a buzzer noise when they hear the wrong word. If they don't catch it, you get to say, "Gotcha!"

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- When Jesus appeared to the disciples after being in the tomb, who was missing?
- How did this disciple react when the other disciples told him about Jesus?
- Who helped him believe? How?
- Read Hebrews 11:1. What do we need to believe the things we cannot see?
- How do you think you would have reacted if you were Thomas?
- Are there things about God or the Bible you don't really understand? What are they?
- What can you do when you have questions or you're unsure of something?

ACTIVITY | Faith Journal

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Hand out faith journals. The kids can write "Jesus Helps Me Believe" on the cover and can decorate the cover however they like.
- There is one person you can always talk to at any time: Jesus! Use this faith journal to write or draw whenever you might have a question or need guidance. Pray about the things in your journal and watch how God will send help your way! You'll find out just how much Jesus helps us believe!
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Give them examples of how they can «write» in the journal, especially if your student cannot read or write. They can insert 1) pictures from magazines or newspapers, 2) church bulletin and/or announcement that was meaningful to them, 3) dry flowers or leaves to remind them of the beauty of God, 4) printouts or crafts made at church, and 5) pictures of their loved ones. Review the journal once in a while together and talk about how you see them growing in their trust and faith in God.

MEMORY VERSE | Jeremiah 33:3

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the kids to crouch down low and then say the verse as they stand up and reach their arms to the sky as if they are a plant growing up.