



# WEEK 3

## ELEMENTARY LESSON OUTLINE



### BIG IDEA

We can worship Jesus.

### THE BIBLE

**The Wise Men and Shepherds:** Luke 2:8-20;  
Matthew 2:1-12; (Luke 4:5-8)

### THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

## LARGE GROUP TIME

- MUSIC** | Celebrate and Worship
- ACTIVITY** | Wonder Box
- ACTIVITY** | We Heart It
- QUESTION** | What is Worship?
- THE BIG IDEA** | We can worship Jesus.
- VIDEO** | Main Event, Episode 3
- SCRIPTURE** | Luke 2:8-20; Matthew 2:1-12
- ACTIVITY** | Gift to Jesus
- VIDEO** | "It's an Avocado. . . Thanks!"
- SCRIPTURE** | Luke 4:5-8
- REFLECTION** | The Gift that Keeps Giving
- ACTIVITY** | Let's Celebrate!
- PRAYER**
- MEMORY VERSE** | The Best Gift

## SMALL GROUP TIME

- DISCUSSION**
  - Why do you think the shepherds were afraid when the angel appeared to them?
  - What news did the angels bring the shepherds?
  - How did the wise men know about Jesus?
  - Read Luke 4:8. What can we do to worship Jesus in our everyday life?
  - How do you think it felt to see Jesus as a baby?
  - Why do you think God chose shepherds and wise men to be the first to worship Jesus?
  - What are some things that distract us from worshipping Jesus?
- ACTIVITY** | Gifts for Baby Jesus
- MEMORY VERSE** | Luke 1:46-47 (NIV)



# WEEK 3

## 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.

#### **THE BIG IDEA | We can worship Jesus.**

Instead of providing the action words, have students play a round of hangman or wheel of fortune to see if students can guess the word, or entire Big Idea, based on clues.

#### **VIDEO | "It's an Avocado. . . Thanks!"**

Have students make a list of all of the unique things they could do with an avocado. Then, talk about all of the unique ways that their gifts could be used by God!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

# ASHLEY SIDER



kinfolkcompany.com



facebook.com/ashley.sider91



instagram.com/ashley\_sider



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, Lauren Wierzb.

**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 3

## 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 | We Heart It

This activity should be differentiated for children with special needs, based on their ability. Have some hearts already cut out for those children who struggle with cutting skills. Have a few hearts already traced on the paper, and assist children in cutting on the lines. You may have a child who benefits from using adaptive scissors. There are a variety of adaptive scissors with designs specifically meant to help those who struggle with fine motor skills and/or hand mobility. They make it easy to maintain a proper hand grip while cutting accurately and comfortably.

#### SCRIPTURE | Luke 2:8-20; Matthew 2:1-12



Teach the Bible Story **visually**. This is usually the preferred way of taking in information for those with special needs. Provide actual figurines for children with special needs to manipulate – these will bring life to the Bible story. You can have sheep, the wise men, the shepherds, a star, Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus etc.

#### ACTIVITY | Gift to Jesus

Assist your kids with special needs in identifying the something special they like about themselves. Provide suggestions, and elaborate on how they can use that gift for Jesus.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

# SUE SPIESZ

 [facebook.com/SueBergstromSpiesz](https://facebook.com/SueBergstromSpiesz)  
 [instagram.com/SueSpiesz](https://instagram.com/SueSpiesz)



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!

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

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# WEEK 3

## ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE



### BIG IDEA

We can worship Jesus.

### THE BIBLE

**The Wise Men and Shepherds:** Luke 2:8-20;  
Matthew 2:1-12; (Luke 4:5-8)

## LARGE GROUP TIME

**WHAT?** *What are we talking about today?*

#### MUSIC | Celebrate and Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show or play some songs for worship time. Consider including “Wonder” by Hillsong UNITED ([video](#)).

#### ACTIVITY | Wonder Box

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Cut two arm holes on the sides of a cardboard box. Place slime in the box and blindfold two kids, one on either side. Ask them both to stick their arms in and feel the slime to guess what it is. Do this with other fun objects to introduce the idea of wonder!

#### ACTIVITY | We Heart It

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a piece of paper and tell them to cut it into a heart shape (you may need to help your younger students). Tell them to write or draw on the paper something or someone they love. Then, string up all the hearts together to hang up in the room.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Have some hearts already cut out for those children who struggle with cutting skills. Have a few hearts already traced on the paper, and assist children in cutting on the lines. You may have a child who benefits from using adaptive scissors.
- **Have you ever loved something or someone so much that you just couldn't keep that love to yourself? You just had to tell someone else?**
- Sometimes, we just can't keep in something that makes us so happy!

### QUESTION | What is Worship?

- **What do you think worship means?**
- Usually we think of worship as singing songs to God and coming to church. But did you know that we can worship God in other ways, too?
- Worship is to love God so deeply that our actions show how much we love God. We worship anytime we choose to live our lives for God. By loving God and loving other people, we are doing our part to tell others about Jesus! Being kind and loving is an act of worship to God.
- **What are some other ways we can worship God in our daily lives outside of church?**

### THE BIG IDEA | We can worship Jesus.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write action words on a piece of paper, such as, "EAT," "SMELL," "SPIN," "TICKLE," and finally, "WORSHIP." Tell the kids to choose which word fills in the blank (We can \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus) best for our Big Idea.
- ✳ **PRETEEN HACK:** Instead of providing these words, have students play a round of hangman or wheel of fortune to see if students can guess the word, or entire Big Idea, based on clues.
- Today's Big Idea: **We can worship Jesus!**

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

### VIDEO | Main Event, Episode 3

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

### SCRIPTURE | Luke 2:8-20; Matthew 2:1-12

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the Bible passages and read it to or with your kids.
- ✳ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide actual figurines for children with special needs to manipulate – these will bring life to the Bible story. You can have sheep, the wise men, the shepherds, a star, Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus etc.
- The great thing about worshipping Jesus is the wonder! We have an opportunity to look to God and learn so much just by expressing our thankfulness for this life and everything God has given us. Before Jesus was born, there were people who were asked to be the very first to worship God!
- **Can you imagine what that must have been like?**
- Well, the shepherds, who were approached by an angel giving them this news, were afraid. Jesus was talked about for hundreds of years before being born, and the shepherds could hardly believe they were being asked to be a part of this story. But they weren't the only ones who came to worship Jesus!
- Magi, better known as wise men, saw an unusual star and followed it. They knew that it meant that a king was born, so they were wondering what this child would be like, and also decided to bring gifts for the baby.
- The shepherds and wise men adored Jesus and were full of wonder. Jesus' birth was so special because Jesus was the son of God! Finally, Jesus was born and the celebration could begin!



### ACTIVITY | Gift to Jesus

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Tell the kids to write down or draw something special they like about themselves, whether silly or serious. Then, put this piece of paper in a small box and wrap it like a gift.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Assist your kids with special needs in identifying the something special they like about themselves. Provide suggestions, and elaborate on how they can use that gift for Jesus.
- Let's promise to give this gift to Jesus every day this week. **In what ways can we use our special gifts to worship Jesus?**

### VIDEO | "It's an Avocado. . . Thanks!"

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show the kids [this funny video](#) of a little boy unwrapping an avocado as a gift!
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have students make a list of all of the unique things they could do with an avocado. Then, talk about all of the unique ways that their gifts could be used by God!
- Isn't it so nice to see how joyful this little kid was unwrapping that avocado? Maybe you might be thinking, "Oh, man! I would never want an avocado for Christmas!" And I agree, it's an unusual gift.
- But what if you lived in a place where avocados are super rare and expensive? What if your favorite food was avocado?
- Sometimes, when we say that Jesus is the greatest gift we could ever receive, we treat the news like someone just gave us an avocado. Now, Jesus is a MUCH better than an avocado. When we think about Jesus, we have to be filled be joy and thanks!

### SCRIPTURE | Luke 4:5-8

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the Bible passage.
- There are many things that compete for our attention. Sometimes we spend all our time doing other things that we forget about Jesus.
- No matter how shiny and cool other things may appear, our worship should only go to Jesus! That means letting our love for Jesus guide us in the ways we behave, talk, and spend our time.
- I mean, Jesus came to earth for us. That's super worthy of our worship, don't you think?

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

### REFLECTION | The Gift that Keeps Giving

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass out to the kids a piece of paper and something to write with.
- Jesus is the gift that keeps on giving! Let's take some time now to think about all the good things and people God has given you. Let's write down or draw the things you are thankful for.

### ACTIVITY | Let's Celebrate!

- The angels appeared to the shepherds at night time. The wise men followed a star to Bethlehem. I wonder what that was like?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before group time, [stick glow-in-the-dark stars](#) all around your space, including



the ceiling. When it's time for this activity, turn off all the lights, and have kids lie down and look up at all the stars. You can choose to give out glow party favors and have a dance party with the kids to some upbeat worship songs afterward!

### PRAYER

- Dear God, we want to worship You! Help us to focus on you no matter what distractions come our way and to never stop being in wonder about just how good You are!

### MEMORY VERSE | The Best Gift

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write the memory verse and put it in large frame. Then wrap it, complete with ribbons or bows and encourage the kids to unwrap it together. You could make it a challenge by wrapping the large frame in multiple layers of wrapping paper and each kid has to unwrap one layer at a time. Once unwrapped, have all the kids recite the verse together.

## SMALL GROUP TIME

### DISCUSSION

- Why do you think the shepherds were afraid when the angel appeared to them?
- What news did the angels bring the shepherds?
- How did the wise men know about Jesus?
- Read Luke 4:8. What can we do to worship Jesus in our everyday life?
- How do you think it felt to see Jesus as a baby?
- Why do you think God chose shepherds and wise men to be the first to worship Jesus?
- What are some things that distract us from worshipping Jesus?

### ACTIVITY | Gifts for Baby Jesus

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Distribute this week's printable and something to write/draw with. Have them write or draw in response to the prompt below.
- Pretend you were one of the wise men who came to find Jesus. **What gifts would you have brought baby Jesus?**

### MEMORY VERSE | Luke 1:46-47 (NIV)

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