



# WEEK 4

## ELEMENTARY LESSON OUTLINE



### **BIG IDEA**

We can ask God our questions.

### **THE BIBLE**

**Nehemiah Asks to Rebuild the Wall:** Nehemiah 2:1-20;  
(Matthew 14:22-32)

### THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

## LARGE GROUP TIME

- **ACTIVITY** | Yes or No
- **ACTIVITY** | Have You Ever?
- **QUESTION** | What's Your Question?
- **THE BIG IDEA** | We can ask God our questions.
- **VIDEO** | Wise, Episode 4
- **SCRIPTURE** | Nehemiah 2:1-20
- **VIDEO** | Nehemiah
- **OBJECT LESSON** | What is This?
- **SCRIPTURE** | Matthew 14:22-32
- **RESPONSE** | Do You Believe It?
- **ACTIVITY** | In the Form of a Question
- **PRAYER**
- **MEMORY VERSE** | Musical Blanket

## SMALL GROUP TIME

- **DISCUSSION**
  - Who encouraged Nehemiah to go visit Jerusalem?
  - Why was Nehemiah so upset by what he found in Jerusalem?
  - How did Nehemiah respond when people mocked him?
  - Re-read Nehemiah 2:7-8. Why was it wise of Nehemiah to ask these questions to the king?
  - Why do we sometimes hesitate to ask questions?
  - Why is it important to ask questions?
  - What are some questions you have for God?
- **ACTIVITY** | Delayed Questions
- **MEMORY VERSE** | James 1:5 (NIV)



# WEEK 4

## 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.

#### **OBJECT LESSON | What is This?**

Use several everyday items, and let preteens take turns and act out the made-up alternative uses for these items. For an added challenge, split them up into teams and have each team demonstrate the item being used in a different way, until one team runs out of ideas. Repeat with the next item.

#### **RESPONSE | Do You Believe It?**





Give some of the older kids access to a device with internet service and have them look up strange and unbelievable facts that can be used for this activity.

#### **MEMORY VERSE | Musical Blanket**

Set up like musical chairs, removing a chair each time the music is stopped but no one gets out. Each round, They need to somehow seat everyone in the game with progressively less chairs.

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, Dena Kitchens.

**TEACHING VIDEOS:** Stephanie Whitacre, Elle Campbell.

**PRETEEN HACKS:** Heather Henderson.

**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 4

## HACKS FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



**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 | Yes or No**




Kids with disabilities may take extra time to move across the room. Make sure to wait for such kids before giving out next instruction, all the while cheering them on. Have a peer buddy ready to walk/run together or offer an elbow to hold on to, especially for students with visual impairment.

#### **SCRIPTURE | Matthew 14:22-32**

Many kids with special needs require hands-on experience to understand a story. If reading the passage together doesn't meet the students' needs, engaging students visually may be effective for this passage. Prepare some cutouts or props for a boat, Jesus, Peter, other disciples, mountainside, lake, and a large board. As you read each verse, have students come up and place the props or pictures arranged in the way that represents the verse and talk about what students did briefly. Give all students turns in creating the scene to help them understand the passage better.

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, Dena Kitchens.

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# WEEK 4

## ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE



### BIG IDEA

We can ask God our questions.

### THE BIBLE

**Nehemiah Asks to Rebuild the Wall:** Nehemiah 2:1-20;  
(Matthew 14:22-32)

## LARGE GROUP TIME

*WHAT? What are we talking about today?*

#### ACTIVITY | Yes or No

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have all the kids stand on one side of the room, and you stand on the other side. Think of a person, place, or object in your head. Have kids take turns asking you one yes/no question to help identify the item— for example, “Is it in the room?” or “Is it blue?”. For each “yes,” the entire group gets to take a step forward, for each “no,” they stay where they are. Keep going until the group can guess what the item is, or until they reach you, at which point you can just reveal what it was. Repeat as desired (or have kids take turns taking your role).

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Kids with disabilities may take extra time to move across the room. Make sure to wait for such kids before giving out next instruction, all the while cheering them on. Have a peer buddy ready to walk/run together or offer an elbow to hold on to, especially for students with visual impairment.

#### ACTIVITY | Have You Ever?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have everyone stand up. Ask a series of questions, and anyone who has ever done what the question is asking, they sit down. Play until everyone is sitting (or only one or two kids are left standing). You could also do this activity with ten fingers, with kids putting down one finger for each activity they have done. Feel free to add your own questions to suit your group, but we have included some suggestions, as well. You can ask things like, “Have you ever. . . ”

- Gone to an amusement park?
- Gotten a stomachache?
- Broken a bone?
- Bought something with money you saved up?
- Ridden a bicycle or a scooter?
- Been to the zoo?
- Had a pet?
- Slept over someone else's house?
- Performed in front of a large audience?
- Played in a sports team?
- Watched two movies in a row?
- Taken public transportation anywhere?

#### QUESTION | What's Your Question?

- **What is one question you've been wanting to ask but you were too scared or embarrassed to ask?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a notecard and instruct them to write down their question on the notecard. Tell them to keep their questions anonymous by not writing their names on their cards. Provide a poster board/wall for the kids to tape their cards on. Encourage the kids to read each other's questions.

#### THE BIG IDEA | We can ask God our questions.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Guide all the kids to sit in the shape of a question mark, without telling them that's what they're making. This may require you telling each kid specifically where to sit, one-by-one. Afterward, ask: "What shape are we sitting in?"
- That's right, we made a big question mark! We ask questions when we don't know or are unsure of something and we need answers. Sometimes we are too shy or afraid to ask questions but guess what? God wants to hear them!
- Our Big Idea today is: **we can ask God our questions!**

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

#### VIDEO | Wise, Episode 4

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

#### SCRIPTURE | Nehemiah 2:1-20

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the Bible passage aloud and encourage the kids to read along with you. Each time you come across a question in the passage, pause and let the kids shout, "good question!" before continuing.
- Nehemiah wanted to follow God and rebuild the wall around Jerusalem. First, he had to get permission from King Artaxerxes.



- **What big questions did Nehemiah have before he re-built Jerusalem's walls?**
- Surely, it was not an easy task! But Nehemiah knew he had already done the hard part – he already came to God. This shows us we can go to God with our questions.
- **What did the people think of Nehemiah when he decided to re-build the temple?**

**VIDEO | Nehemiah**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this video](#), "God's Story: Nehemiah" by Crossroads Kids' Club.

**OBJECT LESSON | What is This?**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Select a common everyday household item such as an umbrella, cheese grater, tennis racket, and the like. Hold up the item and tell kids to pretend they don't know what the item's actual purpose is, and suggest different uses for it. For example, the umbrella could be used as a cane, or storage for stuffed animals. A tennis racket could be a stringed instrument. Suggestions can get pretty silly, which is part of the fun!
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Use several everyday items, and let preteens take turns and act out the made-up alternative uses for these items. For an added challenge, split them up into teams and have each team demonstrate the item being used in a different way, until one team runs out of ideas. Repeat with the next item.
- It's important we ask God our questions because sometimes we need to ask God to show us a new perspective when we don't understand what we are seeing or experiencing.

**SCRIPTURE | Matthew 14:22-32**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the passage aloud and encourage the kids to read along with you.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Prepare some cutouts or props for a boat, Jesus, Peter, other disciples, mountainside, lake, and a large board. As you read each verse, have students come up and place the props or pictures arranged in the way that represents the verse and talk about what students did briefly.
- **Why were the disciples afraid when they saw Jesus?**
- Sometimes, when Jesus asks us to do something unfamiliar, we can become afraid.
- **How do you think Peter felt when he began sinking into the water?**
- This story often identifies the doubt and questioning Peter feels when he starts walking on the water. But Jesus doesn't get angry at Peter when he starts to doubt. Jesus reaches down and picks Peter back up.
- Jesus shows us that we can go to God for anything, including when we have a question about something.

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

**RESPONSE | Do You Believe It?**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Stand in the middle of the room and ask kids to stand behind you if they think a statement is true, and in front of you if they think it is false.



✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Give some of the older kids access to a device with internet service and have them look up strange and unbelievable facts that can be used for this activity.

- **Have you ever heard something you didn't quite believe, something that you questioned?** I'm going to read you a list of questions, and I want you to tell me if you think they are true or false.
  - Penguins can smell toothpaste from miles away. (False)
  - In Tokyo, Japan, a bicycle is faster than a car for trips of less than 50 minutes. (True)
  - 50 years ago, M&Ms were candy-coated peas during a chocolate shortage. (False)
  - When glass breaks, the cracks move faster than 3,000 miles per hour. (True)
  - A violin contains about 70 pieces of wood. (True)
  - In Japan, they have square watermelons there because they stack better. (True)

### ACTIVITY | In the Form of a Question

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask kids some of the questions to review the Wise series, and throw in some random trivia questions, too. But like the famous quiz show, Jeopardy!, kids must answer in the form of a question. For example: you would say, "The king who asked God for wisdom." And kids would respond with, "Who is Solomon?" (For added fun, create a quiz board using Powerpoint templates [or an online game generator](#) like [this one](#).) Here are some questions you could ask:
  - The king who asked God for wisdom. (Who is Solomon?)
  - What Solomon had brought into the temple he was building. (What is the Ark of the Covenant?)
  - What two women were arguing about in front of Solomon. (What is a baby?)
  - Two things we learned this month that we can ask God for. (What are the right words and our questions?)
  - The cup-bearer to Artaxerxes, (Who is Nehemiah?)
  - The city Nehemiah wanted to rebuild the walls of. (What is Jerusalem?)
  - The book, chapter, and verse of this month's memory verse that says: "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God. . . and it will be given to you." (What is James 1:5?)

### PRAYER

- Dear God, Thank You for listening to and answering our questions. Remind us to always come to You with our questions. We know that the more we ask You, the more we will get to know about You!

### MEMORY VERSE | Musical Blanket

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Place a large blanket for kids to walk around, while playing some music. When the music stops, all the kids have to sit on the blanket, then recite the memory verse. Then, fold the blanket in half and repeat the game. When the music stops, they recite the verse again. Keep going until the blanket becomes really small, and kids still have to try to find a way to remain in contact with it.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Set up like musical chairs, removing a chair each time the music is stopped but no one gets out. Each round, They need to somehow seat everyone in the game with progressively less chairs.

## SMALL GROUP TIME

### DISCUSSION

- Who encouraged Nehemiah to go visit Jerusalem?
- Why was Nehemiah so upset by what he found in Jerusalem?
- How did Nehemiah respond when people mocked him?
- Re-read Nehemiah 2:7-8. Why was it wise of Nehemiah to ask these questions to the king?
- Why do we sometimes hesitate to ask questions?
- Why is it important to ask questions?
- What are some questions you have for God?

### ACTIVITY | Delayed Questions

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Print and distribute this week's printable and something to write with. Give everyone some time to complete the questionnaire. Once completed, have kids pair up, with one person as the question giver, and the other one answering the questions. However, the kid providing the answers, gives the answer to the next question, not the current question. So if they were asked question #2, they would give their answer to question #3. For example, "Q: What city do you live in?" "A: Dark blue." Have kids go through all the questions this way (using answer #1 for question #10), then swap roles.*
- God knows our questions before we ask them, but God often won't answer us until we ask. So let's not hesitate to ask God our questions!

### MEMORY VERSE | James 1:5 (NIV)

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