

## WEEK 2 ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE



### THE BIG IDEA

I can be wise by choosing my words carefully.

### THE BIBLE

**Wisdom and Speech:** Psalm 19;  
James 3:4-10

## LARGE GROUP TIME

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

### MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *You can lead kids in worship with any songs you like best, but here are a few songs that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)*
  - "True North" (Rend Co. Kids)
  - "Make Right Choices" (LifeKids)
  - "Wise Up" (Kidspring)
  - "My Lighthouse" (Rend Collective)

### ACTIVITY | Pirate Lingo

- Ahoy, mateys! This month is all about choosing your own adventure and making good and wise choices along the way!
- Today, we're talking all about the words we speak and choosing wisely. Let's try to decode this story full of pirate lingo!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give each kid a copy of this week's printable. Have them decode the pirate story. Select a few kids to read their decoded story to the whole group. After they have read theirs, read what the story actually meant.*

✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Read the story from the printable aloud with the kids and have them say it with you. Kids with language-related disabilities might feel unaccepted or inferior somehow, but having everyone make funny and different sounds with a silly pirate language could be encouraging to them.

- This is what your story should say now!
  - **Hello, friends!** I just returned from **robbing villages** and was keeping **my loot** stored on the **top part of the ship**, but. . . **oh, no!** There was a storm **starting**. The captain said to **tie down everything**, but some **inexperienced sailor** forgot to secure the treasure! Arg! When the storm hit, all **my treasure** went overboard into **the bottom of the ocean**. It took all **my friends** to hold me back from **throwing him into the sea!**
- Choosing our words wisely is so important. It helps us communicate clearly so others can understand us and also helps us to not say something we might regret later.

### ACTIVITY | Plank-Man

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the kids into two teams and play this modified version of “Hangman.” On a dry erase board or chalkboard, draw one line per letter for the phrase, “WEIGH ANCHOR AND HOIST THE MIZZEN.” Above that, draw a ship with a long plank sticking out, and a stick figure standing on the end of the plank closest to the ship. As teams take turns calling out a letter, for every incorrect letter, erase a little bit of the long plank (which will make up about six to eight tries). By the end, the stick figure will have no plank to stand on and fall into the ocean!
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** This is a great place to involve a preteen volunteer to set up this game for you by drawing the components needed on the board. They love being on the “inside” and knowing the answer in advance!
- Good job rescuing our stick figure from falling into the sea! [Or, “Sorry, your stick figure fell off the plank!”]
- **Does anyone know what “weigh anchor and hoist the mizzen” means?**
- It means to pull up the anchor of the ship and get it ready to sail . . . basically, it’s a fancy pirate way to say, “Get ready!”
- **Are you ready to talk more about choosing our own wise adventure today?**

### STORY | Trouble With Words

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Share a personal, age-appropriate story of a time when you got in trouble because of something you said. When you finish telling your story, ask the kids to share times when their words have gotten them into trouble, too. Alternatively, you can ask a few kids this question before service to allow them time to think about it.
- **Does anyone want to share their own story about when your words got you into trouble?**

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

**BIBLE STORY | Wisdom and Speech**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set up the two planks from last week to share today's Bible story from Psalm 19. Read the Bible passage or ask one or more volunteers to help you.
- **Let's read Psalm 19:1-6.**
  - We can imagine that pirates spend a lot of time looking at the sky while on the ocean. Today's Bible story tells us that even nature has something to say. Even without saying actual words, all of nature is shouting God's praises.
  - **What do you think the sun, moon, and stars might say about God if they could talk?**
- **Let's read Psalm 19:7-9.**
  - These verses tell us about God's instructions that are found in the Bible. The writer of this psalm, David, describes God's law as perfect, trustworthy, and even radiant!
  - **What are some things God's instructions help us to do?**
- **Now, let's read Psalm 19:10-13.**
  - David loves God's word so much, he says it's more precious than gold and sweeter than honey!
  - These verses remind us that God's words are more valuable than anything in the whole world, and David is asking God to protect him from sinning by reminding him of the words God has spoken.
- **Finally, let's read Psalm 19:14.**
  - This last verse serves as kind of a summary of this entire psalm. After talking about how good God is and how much he loves God's instruction, David now says that he wants everything he says, does, and even thinks to make God happy!
  - Our words mean a lot, and we want our words to show people how great God is.
- **How can the words we say make God happy?**
- **What helps us choose our speech wisely?**
- Okay, it's time to choose our wise adventure by walking one of these two planks:
  1. The Wise Plank: Learning more about what the Bible teaches us so we choose the right words.
  2. The Unwise Plank: Saying whatever we want to whomever we want without paying attention to what God says.
- **Which plank should we walk across based on what we talked about today?**

**BIG IDEA | I can be wise by choosing my words carefully.**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Use the pirate ship mast from last week and add today's Big Idea to the sail. Ask the same volunteer to play the part of Captain Solly to reveal the Big Idea.
- Ahoy, me hearties! Cap'n Solly here with ye again this week! Yesterday, me heard yellin' outside me quarters – me mateys arguin' and callin' each other "scallywags" and other insults! Methinks today's Bible story is one I need to tell me crew about. Avast ye, let's see our new Big deal!

- **Which deckhand will come to help me set sail today?** *[Choose a volunteer to come help reveal the Big Idea on the sail.]*
- Our Big Idea today is: **I can be wise by choosing my words carefully.**

### VIDEO | Choose Your Own Adventure, Episode 2

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week's episode of Grow TV.*

### IMAGE | Small But Significant

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Prepare to show the following pictures of a [bit for a horse](#), a [horse wearing a bit](#), a [rudder on a ship](#), a [ship](#), a [match](#), and a [forest fire](#).*
- **Does anyone know what this is?** *[Show the image of the bit.]*
  - This is called a "bit." Bits are placed in horses' mouths and they help the rider communicate what direction they want the horse to go.
- **What is this called?** *[Show the image of the rudder.]*
  - It's a rudder! A rudder is the part of the ship that helps the ship turn in the water.
- Okay, one more. **You know what this is, right?** *[Show the image of the match.]*
  - That's right, it's a match! When you strike it against the right surface, it lights up a flame.
- **Now, what do a bit, a rudder, and a match all have in common?** They are all very small things that can make a huge difference!
  - *[Show the image of the horse wearing a bit.]* This little piece of bit can tell a huge horse which way to go.
  - *[Show the image of the ship.]* The rudder steers a huge ship.
  - *[Show the image of the forest fire.]* A match can start a huge forest fire like this one.
- The words we use might seem small and meaningless, but they can make a huge impact on those around us. The words we speak set the path for our adventures the same way the bit in the horse's mouth steers the direction the horse goes or how a rudder steers the boat.
  - Choosing the right words could be like lighting a match to light birthday candles, start a grill, or a campfire.
  - Choosing the wrong words, though? It's like a match starting a forest fire — it can have terrible consequences. We can really, really hurt someone with just a few unkind words.
- That's why it's so important to remember our Big Idea: **I can be wise by choosing my words carefully.**

### ACTIVITY | Pirate Paste Race

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Choose four kids to pair up and come to the front. Give each pair a plate, a spoon, and a tube of toothpaste. When you say, "Go!" the teams will race to see who can get all the toothpaste out of the tube the fastest. Once you declare a winner, give them the second task: Which team will be able to put the toothpaste back inside the fastest? Obviously, this will be impossible and after a minute of trying, thank them for playing and have them return to their seats.*
- Our words are much like squeezing the toothpaste out of the tube.
- When we speak too quickly and unwisely, it doesn't take long to make a mess with our words.
- Once those words are said, we can't take them back, just like we can't get the toothpaste back in the tube. Words have a lot of power to help or to hurt.

**BIBLE | James 3:4-10**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the kids to repeat a few tongue twisters with you. You can write the tongue twisters you choose on a dry erase board or chalkboard. Afterward, read the Bible passage or have a few kids volunteer to read.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Instead of getting kids to try tongue twisters, let kids experiment with silly-sounding gibberish (or pick a few they can repeat after you, like “glibbety gloob”). You can discuss with them about how none of these words or sounds mean anything but the things we say do!
- Everyone, stick out your tongue! In addition to helping us taste things, tongues play a very important role in talking.
- Let’s try out a few tongue twisters together to show you what I mean.
  - Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
  - How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?
  - Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear. Fuzzy Wuzzy had no hair. Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn’t very fuzzy, was he?
  - She sells seashells by the seashore.
  - Which wristwatches are Swiss wristwatches?
  - Fred fed Ted bread, and Ted fed Fred bread.
- See? It’s super easy for our tongues to get in the way when we try to say these really fast.
- James knew this, too. Let’s check out James 3:4-10 to see what James had to say.
  - Our tongues and our words can get in the way of helping people or keep us from loving someone well. Our tongues can keep us from being the kind of person we all want to be.
  - Even though our tongue is small, it can make a big difference when we use it wisely.
- Jesus once taught people the same sort of thing. Jesus said in Matthew 15:18 that the words that are spoken out of someone’s mouth show what’s in their heart. That’s why it’s so important to choose our words carefully!

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

**REFLECTION | What’d You Say?!**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have the kids think about a time their words got in the way and hurt someone else, or about a time when they were hurt by someone else’s words.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Rather than having preteens process aloud, try using visual reflection instead. Have preteens use a 5”x7” index card to draw a [single frame comic](#) that shows what happened when their words hurt someone else. After a few minutes, you can have them show and describe their comic. Then, post them up in your room as a reminder for the rest of the series and allow the “artists” to take them home at the end of the month.
- **How did those words hurt you or others?**

- What can we do with our words that will help us have a better relationship with God?
  - How about the people we love the most?
  - How about the people we don't like so much?

### RESPONSE | Pirate Papers

- Every pirate is different. Some pirates follow a pirate code that helps keep them from lying, stealing, or fighting on board. When they signed the pirate code papers, they were making a promise to live like good pirates!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a notecard, a pencil, crayons, and markers. Share a few scenarios when kids might be tempted to speak unwisely (e.g., someone cut them in line, a sibling broke one of their belongings, they heard a rumor about someone, etc.). This is also a good opportunity to speak to any tension among the kids you might have picked up on. After each scenario, tell the kids to write down words or phrases they could say in that situation that would be wise. Have the kids share their responses.
- Look at all those wise words on your paper! You can decorate your paper and write your name in big, fancy letters down at the bottom. You now have your own signed copy of the pirate code. Our code is . . . **I can be wise by choosing my words carefully.**

### MEMORY VERSE | Hook the Verse

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the group into two teams. Make a pirate hook ring toss ([like this](#)) and write parts of this month's memory verse from Ephesians 5:15 over each hook. Each team will race to toss a ring on each hook until they complete the verse. Once both teams are done, have everyone say the verse together!
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** To increase activity, consider having kids wear the pirate hooks and try to catch the rings their friends toss to them.

### PRAYER

- Dear God, give us the wisdom to choose our words carefully. Help us to be full of love and respect for those around us by watching what we say and how we say it. We want to use even the smallest of words to make a big difference for you. Amen.

## SMALL GROUP TIME

### DISCUSSION

- What does Psalm 19 say that the heavens, skies, and all of nature do even though they have no voice?
- The writer of Psalm 19 said that God's law is more precious than \_\_\_\_\_ and sweeter than \_\_\_\_\_.
- What did the writer of Psalm 19 want to be pleasing to God?
- Read James 3:9. What are the two things we can use our tongues for?

- Why is it important to speak wisely to others?
- In what situation this week will you need to make sure that you speak wisely?
- How do you think speaking wisely will help your relationships with other people?

#### ACTIVITY | Wise Wordsearch

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a Wise Wordsearch printable. Ask the kids to think of five wise words or phrases they can use toward others. They can write them on the blank lines, then place the words or phrases forward, backward, horizontally, vertically, or diagonally on their grid. If it's a phrase, make sure they leave no space between the words in the grid (e.g., If the phrase is, "I'm sorry," it should read "IMSORRY" on the grid). Once they are finished, they can fill in the rest of the grid with random letters, then swap papers with a friend and try to solve each other's wordsearch.
- Sometimes, it can be hard to find the right words to say. That's why we should take our time before we say something that might be unwise. Use this wordsearch to remind yourself, **I can be wise by choosing my words carefully.**

#### MEMORY VERSE | Ephesians 5:15 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Practice this month's memory verse with the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) available in your Programming folder or at [growcurriculum.org/Ephesians5-15](http://growcurriculum.org/Ephesians5-15).
- Let's practice this month's memory verse together!
- **"Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise."**