

WEEK 3

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

UP IN THE AIR

THE BIG IDEA

I can count on God's promises.

THE BIBLE

Elisha and the Shunammite's son:
II Kings 4:8-37; Genesis 18:1-10a

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!](#)*
 - "Trust In You" (Lauren Daigle)
 - "Promises" (Maverick City Music)
 - "For All My Days" (Gateway Kids Worship)
 - "All of Me" (Gateway Kids Worship)
 - "We Shine" (Vineyard Kids)

ACTIVITY | Rainbow Jars

- Hi everyone! We are in week 3 of *Up in the Air*, learning about all the big things God was able to do through Elisha and can do through us, too!
- **Speaking of things up in the air, have you ever looked up into the sky just after a storm and noticed a beautiful rainbow?** The rainbow reminds us that the rain is gone and the sun is shining through.
- Today, let's try to capture our own rainbow in a jar!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Set up stations with leaders to help kids make their own [rainbow jars](#). Set out all the materials (see your Shop & Prep List) with eye droppers or pipettes so that they are easy*

for kids to use. Alternatively, you can have kids pair up for this activity or make one very large one as a demonstration.

✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have preteens try out this [rainbow and water activity](#) instead.

- Pour in the following items in order, making sure it doesn't touch the sides of the jar:
 - honey
 - purple corn syrup
 - green dish soap
 - yellow olive oil
 - red rubbing alcohol
- Be careful not to shake the jar and mix the layers.
- **Isn't your rainbow in a jar breathtaking?**

ACTIVITY | Rainbow Prism Artistry

- Did you know that all of the colors of the rainbow are hidden inside regular white sunlight that you see every day?
- The colors are just combined. When the white light gets reflected off of something transparent, like glass, the colors spread out. That's how you get to see the colors of the rainbow.
- But we don't need to wait for water and sunshine to create a rainbow . . . we can actually make one right here, right now!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Kids will see how light through a prism comes out as a rainbow. Have kids partner up. Have one kid hang their sheet of paper on the wall. Then, have their partner shine the flashlight on the bottom side of a CD and point it towards the paper. Have the first kid try to capture the rainbow design on their paper using colored pencils. Then have them switch roles.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** To be considerate of kids with light sensitivity, make sure kids are pointing the CD only at the paper. An alternative might be for kids to work on a long piece of paper and have a leader or two be the ones to hold the CD and flashlight for everyone at different spots along the paper.
- Isn't it interesting to know that a rainbow actually might be hiding in regular light?
- Today's story is going to show us that sometimes God's promises to us aren't easily visible, but that doesn't mean they're not there.

POLL | What's Your Favorite Color?

- **What is your favorite color?**
- Go and put your star sticker on your favorite color, and we will see what color is the most favored!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a star sticker and invite them to place their one sticker on the colored sheet that is their favorite. Count up the stars to see which color is the most popular!
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACKS:** Share swatches of unique colors and have kids guess the crayola name for the colors. Check out [this list](#) of our favorites. You can also have kids create their own names for selected colors!
- So far we've been talking a lot about rainbows, and we'll mention them a few more times today. There's a story in the Bible that talks about a rainbow.

- **Does anyone remember what that story was? What did the rainbow mean?**

- That's right, the rainbow represented a promise God made to Noah and his family after a terrible flood. God promised to never send a flood like that ever again, and you know what? God hasn't.
- Let's learn some more about God's promises!

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

BIBLE | Elisha and the Shunammite's Son

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Bookmark II Kings 4:8–37 in your Bible and read the passage in small chunks as you tell the Bible story. For today's story setup, consider getting wheeled in on a cart or a scooter holding an umbrella over your head (like [Mary Poppins](#)). If you are uncomfortable with an umbrella, [a kite](#) will work perfectly, too.*
- Well hello, friends! I'm so glad you're here today to hear another story about Elisha. This one is about how a family from Shunem invited Elisha to stay with them, and then all sorts of amazing things started to happen. Let's take a look, shall we?
- *[Read II Kings 4:8–16.]*
 - We can guess that this woman and her husband were pretty wealthy by the way they made a room for him any time he came to town. They seemed to have everything they needed, except for a child.
 - Having a child, especially a son, was a big deal in those days because they were the ones who would continue the family line.
 - Elisha promised the Shunammite woman that she would have a son. She didn't accept this promise right away, though. She didn't want to get her hopes up.
- *[Read II Kings 4:17.]*
 - Just as Elisha had said, God kept the promise to her! Isn't it amazing that God cared for her so much?
- *[Read II Kings 4:18–21.]*
 - Wait a minute. Her son came as a promise from God and now . . . it looked like she had lost him for good.
 - **How would you be feeling if you were the mother?**
- *[Read II Kings 4:22–28.]*
 - The woman knew that Elisha would know what to do. She knew that if only Elisha would go to her son, God might do something impossible again.
- *[Read II Kings 4:29–37.]*
 - At first, Elisha's servant Gehazi tried doing what Elisha told him to do – he put Elisha's staff on the boy's face. But nothing happened.
 - But after praying to God and performing what looked like some kind of ancient CPR, Elisha was used by God to bring the boy back to life.
- Through Elisha, the Shunammite woman and her family were able to see that God keeps promises, even the ones that seem like they're too big, too far away, or too late.

BIG IDEA | I can count on God's promises.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write each word from today's Big Idea on a sheet of construction paper in rainbow order: red = "I," orange = "can," yellow = "count," green = "on," blue = "God's," purple = "promises." Tape the papers up, then flip over and shout each word in rainbow order for the big reveal.
- If there is anyone who makes good promises, it is God! God always does what God promises.
- Let's say today's Big Idea together: **I can count on God's promises!**

VIDEO | Up in the Air, Episode 3

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](#).

ACTIVITY | Promise Tag

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids partner up linking up their pinky fingers and spread out around the room. Choose one pair to start the game, one player being "it" and the other running away. Before they can get tagged, the one being chased has to link pinky fingers with anyone in a pair. Once the new connection is made, the other half of that pair has to break off and run away. When a tagging occurs, the roles are reversed, but don't allow immediate tag-backs! Check out the original version of this game [here](#).
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** For kids who need to play in a stationary position, pass out the flashlights from the prism activity earlier and have kids play flashlight tag! Dim the lights and have kids try to catch their friend's beam with theirs. They can also lie on their backs and chase the lights on the ceiling.
- People make and break promises all the time, just like this game kind of showed us! But God? Never! When God makes a promise, we can know that it's a guarantee.
- **I can count on God's promises.**

ACTIVITY | Rainbow Relay Race

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Create three or four teams. Give each team as many colored papers as there are team members. Mark a starting and finish line. The objective of the game is for the entire team to get to the finish line but they can only walk on one of the colored pieces of paper. The first player has the stack of paper and puts down each paper in rainbow order, starting with the red paper. They step on the red paper, then place an orange paper in front of them. They move to the orange paper, and put a yellow paper down, while the next player steps on the red paper behind them. The last player in line must always pick up the last paper they step on and pass it up so the team doesn't run out of paper to step on. [Here's](#) an idea of how it might be played.
- We had to count on each other's help to get to the finish line in this game. We never ran out of paper because the player in the back always passed up a new one so we can keep going forward.
- God always follows through! This rainbow-patterned path is a great reminder that **I can count on God's promises!**

BIBLE | Genesis 18:1–10a

- A baby being born against all odds is something that happens quite a few times in the Bible.
- **Does anyone remember the story of Abraham and Sarah?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Genesis 18:1–10a or recruit a few readers to help you.
- God promised Sarah that she would have a child, even though it seemed like she was too old and she had given up hoping for that one special thing.
- **Can you think of anyone else in the Bible who had a baby even though it was highly unlikely?**
- If you guessed Mary, then we're on the same wavelength! Mary having a baby was not only unlikely, it was impossible. But God promised she would have a son and that son is none other than Jesus!
- If God says something is going to happen, it will. That's how I know that **I can count on God's promises**, even the ones that seem impossible!

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

REFLECTION | Promise Exchange

- **Have you ever been promised something by someone and they didn't keep their promise? What happened? How did you feel?**
- I'm sure it felt awful. A broken promise makes us feel so disappointed because we had been counting on that promise to be kept.
- But as human beings, it's really hard to keep all the promises we make!
- **Have you ever broken a promise?**
- I sure have! We don't do it on purpose but sometimes we make promises in the moment because we think we can keep it, but later we have to go back on our word. And like we just talked about, that's not a great feeling.
- But God doesn't do that. That's also why God doesn't promise us that everything will be fine all the time. God knows that we will face challenges. We will get heartbroken. We will not get something we want.
- But God promises to be with us and help us through all of those things. We can turn to God's words in the Bible and know for sure that you and **I can count on God's promises!** Always!

ACTIVITY | Bookmark a Promise

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids make a rainbow cloud corner bookmark using plain paper, colored paper, glue, scissors, and a marker ([view tutorial here](#)). You can also make colorful strips that are the perfect length out of [rainbow sticky notes](#).
- ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Have the origami part of this craft pre-made.
- The Bible is the first place we can go to find more of God's promises to us.
- Whenever you read the Bible and you come across a promise from God, you can bookmark it using your new rainbow bookmark.
- That way, the next time you're not feeling sure about something, you can re-read the page you saved and say, **I can count on God's promises!**

MEMORY VERSE | Tasty Rainbow

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass out a fun-size pack of Skittles, colorful cereal, or gummy bears to each kid. Invite them to eat their snack one piece at a time in rainbow color order as you all recite one word from the memory verse at a time.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Check in with parents and caregivers in advance to see if candies and similar treats are okay to give kids. If not, try doing this activity without food items, such as stringing rainbow-colored beads onto a pipecleaner.

PRAYER

- God, thank you that you love me and that you have good plans for me. You make promises that you keep. Remind me that I can count on your promises and that you will always do what you say you will. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- What promise from God did Elisha tell the Shunammite woman and her husband?
- What happened to this promise they received?
- How did God use Elisha again to help the woman and her family?
- Read Genesis 18:10. What promise did God have for Abraham and Sarah?
- What is a promise?
- Have you ever made a promise before? Did you keep it?
- What is a promise that God has made to you?

ACTIVITY | Rainbow Writing

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Prepare a list (or look up lists [like this](#)) of Bible verses that contain a promise from God. Have kids pick their favorite one and write it along the lines of the rainbow printable then decorate it. Have them get creative with how they write the verse, like using different colored ink for each line.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Challenge kids to search the Bible (or a Bible app) and find their own promise then write it out using [scratch art](#).
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Print out a few verse options that kids can cut out and glue on instead of writing out. Another option is to type out each verse you want in [curvy text](#), and have kids design it into a rainbow.
- The Bible is filled with promises from God to us that God always keeps.
- **Which one of these do you find most comforting?**
- Let's rainbow-write one of these promises using different colors on our paper! Then you can take this home and put it somewhere you can see it every day to remind yourself **I can count on God's promises . . .** because it's God who made them!

MEMORY VERSE | Colossians 3:2 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Practice this month's memory verse with the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) we've provided in your Programming folder or at growcurriculum.org/Colossians3-2.
- Let's practice this month's memory verse together!
- **"Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things."**