

WEEK 5

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

UP IN THE AIR

THE BIG IDEA

I can be used by God.

THE BIBLE

Elisha and Naaman: II Kings 5:1-14;
Colossians 3:1-4

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 | Shoot for the Stars!

- Give the highest of high fives to your friends around you, because we are in week five of *Up in the Air!*
- So far we have been learning so much about what God does for us. Today, we'll talk about what we can do for God.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have four volunteers come up at a time to shoot their stars until they are completely soaked. The first one done wins! Repeat as many times as you want with new sets of volunteers.*
- Stars remind us of dreaming. When people say "shoot for the stars" they are encouraging you to try to do all of the wonderful and difficult things you hope for.

- Many of the dreams people dream up are more reachable than you think – they just require hard work.
- **What is a dream that you have?**
- No matter what stands in your way, you can shoot for the stars! With God, anything can be made possible!

ACTIVITY | Starry Night

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Using only fork scraping and cotton swabs, the kids will create their own versions of “Starry Night” by Vincent van Gogh out of acrylic paint on [canvas boards](#). Show them [a picture](#) of what the final product might look like (or the [original art](#)) but let them make the painting their own.
- One of the most famous oil paintings by the artist Vincent van Gogh is one called “Starry Night.”
- Let’s make our own versions of this famous painting. A starry sky points us to God and helps us know more about God, too.

QUESTION | Can you name any of the constellations?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Project images of constellations like [Orion](#), [Cassiopeia](#), [Big and Little Dipper](#), etc.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** On a chalkboard or black bulletin board paper, draw a bunch of dots throughout. Give preteens a [printout](#) of constellations and have them try to recreate them by connecting the existing dots.
- Groups of stars in the night sky that make up different patterns are called constellations. These can be named and identified by the shapes that they make up when connected by an imaginary line. There are many different constellations that have been noticed through the years.
- **Can you name any of the constellations?**
- Yeah! In the night sky are constellations like Orion, Ursa Major, Draco, and Cassiopeia.
- People once used stars to navigate where they were. They could tell by the orientation of the constellations where they were relative to home.
- Believe it or not, we can be as useful as stars!

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

BIBLE STORY | Elisha and Naaman

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Bookmark [II Kings 5:1–14](#) in your Bible and read the passage in small chunks as you tell the Bible story. For your story setup, consider turning off the lights and use a [projection night light](#) or set up twinkle lights to mimic a starry night sky.
- Hey friends! I’m glad you’re here today to hear about our final story in this series about Elisha.
- *[Read II Kings 5:1–3.]*
 - Even though Naaman was a brave and mighty soldier, he was no match for leprosy.
 - Now leprosy is a disease that’s mentioned a lot in the Bible. It was a skin disease that would soon spread throughout a person and cause them incredible pain. Moreover, it was a contagious disease so once people knew you had leprosy, you had to be isolated away from all your family and friends.

- The young girl from Israel that was forced to work in Naaman's home told them about someone who could help his condition.
- **Can you guess who she was talking about?** Yup, our friend, Elisha!
- *[Read II Kings 5:4-10.]*
 - So the king of Aram, Naaman's kingdom, sent a letter to the king of Israel, letting him know why Naaman was coming into town.
 - The king was so worried. He thought this other king was trying to wage war. Who could cure leprosy?
 - Elisha heard that the king was upset and said he would take care of it. He sent a message to Naaman for him to wash himself seven times in the Jordan River, and he would be healed.
 - But Naaman was not pleased.
- *[Read II Kings 5:11-14.]*
 - Naaman was mad at Elisha because he thought that the washing would be a waste of time. Remember, he was really sick. It didn't seem like something as simple as taking a bath in the river could heal him.
 - Besides, Naaman was an important military guy. He expected Elisha to at least come see him in person!
 - But Naaman's servants reminded him that Elisha was sent by God and that washing wasn't too hard to do.
 - Begrudgingly, Naaman went to the Jordan River and washed seven times.
 - After the seventh time, God healed him and his skin was completely healed!
- In the end, Elisha didn't need to meet with Naaman and do some spectacular signs and wonders. Because Naaman had zero confidence that washing in the river would work, when he was healed, he knew that it could only have come from the God that Elisha served.
- Think of the different people who God used to cure Naaman: the servant girl from Israel, the kings of Aram and of Israel, Naaman's servants, Elisha . . . every single one of them played a part in God's plan!

BIG IDEA | I can be used by God.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write each of the words of the Big Idea on a yellow star and hang them in the shape of the [Big Dipper](#) (add an exclamation mark for the last star) on black poster paper. Draw lines between each star using chalk as you reveal the words of the Big Idea.
- God has given us all special gifts, talents, and dreams. God can take these special things about us and use them to help others to know God more.
- Today, the Big Dipper is going to help reveal the Big Idea!
- This week's Big Idea is: **I can be used by God!**

VIDEO | Up in the Air, Episode 5

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

STORY | “Katie and the Starry Night”

- We all tried our hand at following one of Van Gogh’s famous masterpieces. Let’s read this book together and explore some of his other work!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Obtain a copy of “[Katie and the Starry Night](#)” from a local library or bookstore, or show a read-aloud [like this](#).
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have preteens share one or two people whose gifts and talents they admire. They can be someone they know or even influencers online. How does this person’s gift make them unique? How can you imagine that gift being used for God?
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Sitting still for extended periods of time is difficult for all kids, but especially for kids with attention issues. To make this time a little more active, have kids stand up and jump in place each time Katie jumps through a painting in the story.
- Wasn’t that a cool story? We can see how an author used their gift of storytelling and an illustrator used their gift of drawing to create this book.
- Writing and drawing are just two of the many gifts we have that can be used for God.
- **Can you think of some others?**
- God can use any of these talents to help others and to help others know God more. No matter what your gifts and talents are, they make you special!
- This is why we can boldly say, **I can be used by God!**

ACTIVITY | Dream Board

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, have kids make a group dream board using magazine clippings and their own drawings.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Give each kid a page of a magazine (ads work great) and have kids doodle on it using a permanent marker, creating a brand new ad. Connect to how things can be used for different purposes.
- **What are you good at? What are things that you like to do? What are things you would like to keep working on?**
- Let’s fill this board with all those special things about ourselves! Then we can ask God how the things on our boards can be used by God.
- When we look at this board and all the wonderful gifts we have together, each of you can remember that **I can be used by God!**

BIBLE | Colossians 3:1–4

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Colossians 3:1–4 or recruit a few readers to help you.
- This passage is where our memory verse for this month, Colossians 3:2, comes from!
- **Let’s say the verse together! “Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”**
- These first four verses in Colossians 3 tell us what our memory verse means. Setting our minds on “things above” means to think about Jesus and what he taught us to do.
- **What are some things Jesus taught us to do that might be different from “earthly” ways?**
- When you say **I can be used by God**, you are saying you will do things God’s way. That way, when people see us, they will see God at work in us.

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

REFLECTION | Used by God

- You are each created with so many wonderful gifts and talents that can be used by God!
- But let's back up for a second. Because there are many people out in the world who have remarkable skills, but that doesn't mean they're being used by God.
- **So, what does it even mean to be used by God?**
- Being used by God means that everything we do somehow points to God. We often do this by helping others with the gifts we have.
- When you use your gifts and talents to help others and to help others know more about God, that is God using you!

RESPONSE | I Shine

- You are not too young or too small to be used by God. Your talents, abilities, and interests are just the right stuff you need to make a big impact on the world around you!
- Think of two things that you know God can use you to do. Write each of them on a star.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have the kids write the different ways that they "shine" (or want to shine) on each star on the printable. Have them cut out and glue their stars back-to-back, then hole-punch the top and string a ribbon through it to create a necklace or medal.*
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Have preteens create this [origami star medal](#).*
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Write "_____ can be used by God" on one of the two stars. Cut out and create the medals for the kids in advance. Have kids fill in their name on the blank line and draw a picture on the back.*
- When we remember the different ways God can use us, we know that **I can be used by God!**

MEMORY VERSE | Speed Stars

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have kids pair up and alternate saying the words of the memory verse. See which pair can say it the fastest!*
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Have kids repeat chunks of the memory verse after you. Start with a whisper and get increasingly loud. The last time, shout it to the stars together as loud as you can!*

PRAYER

- God, thank you for giving us good gifts that we can use for you. Sometimes we might feel like we're not special enough, but we know none of us are left out of being used by you. Help us to spend more time with you to find our purpose and learn how we can help others with the thing you gave us. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- What problem did Naaman have?
- How did Naaman get healed?
- Who are the different people in today's story that was used by God to help Naaman?
- Read Colossians 3:2. What does it mean to "set your mind on things above"?
- Name someone in your life that God used to help you in some way.
- Why can it be difficult to be used by God?
- What can you do to be used by God in everyday life?

ACTIVITY | A Letter to Myself

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have the kids write themselves a letter to remind them how they can be used by God.
- I know that God made you with special gifts and talents. Even the things that you dream and hope for are all special things about you. God will use you to help others and to help others know God more.
- Write yourself a letter, or draw a picture, to remind yourself that you are special and you can be used by God.
- Whenever you feel sad, small, or a little unsure of yourself, this letter (or drawing) can be a reminder to yourself: **I can be used by God!**

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."**