



HEROES OF THE FAITH

INTERMEDIATE
Small Group

LESSON 2: INTERMEDIATE SMALL GROUP

My Friends and Neighborhood

MAIN IDEA:

Jesus is a friend to sinners, and he can be our closest friend. He can protect us from all the dangers that surround us in our neighborhoods and world.

BIBLE PASSAGES:

- John 11:1–15
- Matthew 20:29–34
- Matthew 14:15–21
- Luke 19:1–10

MEMORY VERSE:

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us.”

Hebrews 12:1, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for. (15 minutes)



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus. (20-25 minutes)



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel. (5-10 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS:

- How can you be praying for the students this week?
- Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any adaptations that you can make to the lesson this week to better serve the kids in your small group or make your small group more effective?
- How can you connect with the students outside of the club over the next few weeks?
- Is there a sporting event or performance you can go to? Can you plan a casual park or fast-food meet-up with them and their families (as a group or individually)?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Bible
- Name tags
- Snacks, 1 per child
- Large piece of paper or whiteboard
- Crayons or markers
- Index cards or small pieces of paper
- Printout 2, 1 per group
- Printouts 3-4, 1 per child
- (Optional) Bag with about 50 cinnamon red hots, 1 per group
- (Optional) Bag with about 50 mini marshmallows, 1 per group
- (Optional) Bag with about 50 M&Ms, 1 per group
- (Optional) Bag with about 50 gummy bears, 1 per group
- Pens or pencils, 1 per child
- Memory Verse Cards, 1 per child

Connect



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for.
(15 minutes)

Small Group Session 1

ICE BREAKER:

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following icebreaker activities to do together while children eat their snack:

- Option 1: Ask the children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).
- Option 2: Ask the children to take turns sharing how they're feeling today using the "How Are You Feeling?" chart (from the CKC Games Bag).

PRAY TOGETHER:

Collect prayer requests from the students. The leader or a student can pray for the entire group or a leader can pair up students and invite them to pray for one another.

ACTIVITY: FRIENDSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

Say: **We will be talking about our friends and what makes someone a good friend.**

It's important to have good friends. Friends can help us feel happy, encourage us, and support us.

Using Printout 2, ask the kids to think about qualities that make a good friend. As they share, write these qualities inside the circle. (Examples might include: kind, funny, helpful, honest, etc.)

Follow up by asking your students these questions to help them share more about their friends:

- "What is your favorite thing to do with your friends?"
- "How do you make new friends?"
- "What do you like most about your best friend?"

Give each child a strip of colored paper.

Ask them to write one quality they think is important in a friend on their strip of paper. For younger students, you may need to write the friendship characteristic on the paper for them.

Once everyone is finished, loop the strips together with tape or a glue stick to create a "friendship chain".

Encourage students to take the chain home and place it where they can be reminded of the qualities they value in friendships.

Say: **Think about how you can be good friends to others and how you can appreciate the friends you have.**

HELPFUL HINT

There are several parts to this activity. Depending on timing you may need to choose which part of this activity you would like to do with your student. You may also choose to do part of this activity in Small Group Session 1 and the rest in Small Group Session 2.

As we get ready for Large Group, we can see some great characteristics of friendship. Even if you don't have a best friend or a lot of friends, we can learn who God is and see that we can know him and trust him.

God wants to have a relationship with us, and he is always looking for ways to help and support us.

Dismiss to Large Group.

Heart



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus.
(20-25 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

MY NEIGHBORHOOD MAP

Distribute pens and neighborhood maps (Printout 3) to the students.

Say: **We have been talking about friends today and what it means to be a good friend. Something closely related to the topic of friends is the idea of neighbors and a neighborhood. We are going to spend some time looking at your neighborhood.**

Have the students look at the map and locate where their own home is. Ask them to draw a house to represent where they live on the map.

HELPFUL HINT

If you don't have access to these varieties of candy consider using other choices of candy or have student use different color markers, crayons, or colored pencils.

Next, ask them to place a red hot anywhere on the map where they feel unsafe in their neighborhood. Ask any students who put red hots on the map to explain why they put the red hot where they did.

Tell the students to place a mini marshmallow in any places on the map where they feel safe. These places might be parks, churches, schools, friends' houses, etc. Ask each student to explain why they put the marshmallows where they did.

Ask the students to put gummy bears in places on the map where they think there are people who might need some sort of help. Again, ask them why they placed them where they did.

Finally, ask the students to put M&Ms on the map anywhere where they like to hang out—their favorite places in the neighborhood. Ask them to explain why they put these M&Ms where they did.

Point out to the students, **Jesus was a good friend and neighbor. He helped people in need.** Return the discussion to the places in the community where there were people in need of some sort of help.

It's important to know you have good friends, but it is also important to be a good friend to others.

Ask:

- **Can you think of ways that you could help meet those needs?**
- **How can you be a friend to those people?**

Pick one or two passages to reread from Large Group.

John 11:1–15

Matthew 20:29–34

Matthew 14:15–21

Luke 19:1–10

Ask:

- **How does Jesus show his love and care for others?**
- **What was Jesus willing to do to help them?**
- **What can we learn about Jesus from this passage?**
- **Do you believe Jesus wants to help you when you are in need?**

Say: Jesus loves each and every one of you very much! Even if you don't know Jesus or believe in him for salvation, he still loves you and cares about you.

The Bible says that God loves us even before we love him (1 John 4:10).

Jesus wants to be our friend, for us to know him and spend time with him. He is always looking for ways to connect with us. Even if we feel alone, scared, or worried, Jesus is always there when we need him.

ACTIVITY: MY FRIEND'S PORTRAIT

Pass out one "My Friends Portrait" (Printout 4) to each student. Allow them to write or draw. Have each child think of a friend they want to describe.

Ask them to draw a portrait of their friend. Encourage them to include details like hair color, eye color, and favorite clothes.

Once the portraits are complete, ask the kids to write 3-5 sentences about their friend on a separate piece of paper or on the back of the portrait.

If time allows, ask the students questions about their friends.

- What is your friend's name?
- What do you like most about your friend?
- What is something fun you do together?
- What is your friend good at?
- Why is your friend special to you?

Hands



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel.
(5-10 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

WRAP IT UP:

Recap with the students.

Tell the students: **I am glad you are here, and I want you to know that you are important, both to me and to God.**

As you go from this place, remember that Jesus is with you wherever you go. If you turn to him as your Savior, he will also be your very best friend. Just as Jesus served others around him, we should go and love and serve others in our neighborhood as well.

Consider reading Matthew 28:20b, NLT

And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

This is a promise for all those who believe in Jesus for salvation and who are his friends.

Pray with the students and dismiss them.

RESPONSE & REFLECTION:

Print out the memory verse. Try out some Bible Memory Verses Games.

Practice the memory verse for this unit (Hebrews 12:1).

Pray with the students and dismiss them.



Bible Memory Verse
Games