

IDENTITY & SELF ACCEPTANCE | WEEK 12

LEADERS GOAL

To remind students of who God says they are, not the lies they hear

SCRIPTURES

Psalm 139:1-5
Luke 15:3-7

ACTIVITIES

I admire you
Truth or Lie Showdown

PRAY

SUPPLIES

- Ball of yarn, one per Small Group, for I Admire You Activity
- Bible marked and open to Psalm 139:1-5
- Create welcoming space by engaging with students as they enter the space

BOTTOM LINE

Remembering who God says we are is all that matters

AS STUDENTS ARRIVE

Play the Game, Two Truths and a Lie as students walk in. As each student arrives, say “We are playing two truths and a lie, and __student’s name__ just told us (repeat the two truths and a lie) Can we guess which one is the lie?”

How to play the game: Students take turns sharing two truths and a lie about themselves. The rest of the Small Group must guess which one is the lie.

STORY CONNECTION

So much is happening in The Lion King. Mufasa is killed in the stampede. The villain Scar blames Young Simba for the king's death, and Simba believes Scar's lie that "If it weren't for you, he'd still be alive. Oh, what will your mother think?"

Scar tells him to run away and never return. (Script, p65)

When Nala finds Simba she is so excited. "What else matters? You're alive! And that means...you're the king!" (Script, p95)

But Simba feels he can't go back. "I can't go back. What would it prove, anyway? It won't change anything." (Script, p103)

What does Simba need to be reminded of? (who he is, his identity)

When Simba looks in the pool, he sees Mufasa's reflection. What does Mufasa tell him? (Script, p 110)

What should Simba have remembered about who he was? "You are my son and the one true king.) (Script, p110)

Simba isn't the only one who forgot who he was. It can be easy for us to forget who we are and who we belong to.

OUR STORIES

- What is something you are good at?
- Where do you find confidence?
- What do you believe about yourself?
- What do you think God believes and says about you?
- What lies do we believe that contradicts what God says about us?

TRUTH & TREASURE

Just like Mufasa said to Simba, "Remember who you are," (Script, p110), let's remember who God says we are.

Read Luke 15: 3-7

Summary: Jesus tells a story about a shepherd who had 100 sheep. One day, one sheep wandered away. Instead of staying with the 99 safe ones, the shepherd left them to search for the one lost sheep. When he found it, he joyfully put it on his shoulders and carried it home. Then he called his friends and neighbors and said, "Rejoice with me! I have found my lost sheep!"

Jesus reminds us...

- we are deeply loved by him – He notices when we wander.
- We are never forgotten – Jesus will always come looking for us
- We are valuable – each one of us matters to Him.
- We are safe and cared for – Jesus carries us back home when we get lost.



Remember...even when we make mistakes or feel far from God, Jesus still calls us His own. We belong to Him – We are His sheep, His friends, His children. That’s who we are in Jesus.

Invite students to open in their binders to their Journal page from Week 5 that reads:

- You are amazing and wonderful.

“You created my inmost being. You knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made, I know that full well.” Psalm 139:13-14 NIV

- You are greatly loved.

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” 1 John 3:1 NIV

- You are worthy to be loved.

“I have loved you with an everlasting love. I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.” Jeremiah 31:3 NIV

- You have purpose.

“I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you.”

Jeremiah 29:11-14 NIV

DISCOVERY

GAME | I Admire You

Supplies: Ball of yarn, one per Small Group.

Small Group Leader starts with a ball of yarn. They toss the ball to a student and share something they admire about that student. The student, who caught the yarn, holds on to a section of the string, tosses it to another student, and shares something they admire about them.

Students take turns sharing what they admire about each other while holding onto a section of the string. The idea is to create a web of string as everyone shares.

GAME | Truth Or Lie Showdown

Decide on one side of the room as “Truth” and the other “Lie.”

Read each statement out loud. Students move to the side they believe is correct.

After everyone chooses, reveal the correct answer and briefly discuss why.

1. Bananas grow on trees. → Lie! (They grow on large plants called banana herbs.)
2. Humans share 50% of their DNA with bananas. → Truth!
3. It's illegal to own just one guinea pig in Switzerland. → Truth! (They get lonely!)
4. Sharks can live in lakes. → Lie! (Only bull sharks can survive in some fresh water.)
5. Sloths can hold their breath longer than dolphins can. → Truth! (Up to 40 minutes!)
6. You can see the Great Wall of China from space. → Lie! (It's a myth — it's too narrow to see unaided.)
7. Lightning never strikes the same place twice. → Lie! (It often strikes tall buildings multiple times.)
8. Octopuses have three hearts. → Truth!
9. Honey never goes bad. → Truth! (It can last thousands of years!)
10. Goldfish have a 3-second memory. → Lie! (They can remember things for months.)
11. A group of flamingos is called a “flamboyance.” → Truth!
12. Bats are blind. → Lie! (They can see, but they also use echolocation to navigate.)
13. An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain. → Truth!
14. Humans can't taste food without saliva. → Truth! (We need saliva to dissolve flavor chemicals.)
15. Penguins can fly short distances. → Lie! (They're excellent swimmers, but they can't fly.)
16. The shortest war in history lasted only 38 minutes. → Truth! (Britain vs. Zanzibar, 1896.)
17. A sneeze can travel up to 100 miles per hour. → Truth!
18. Carrots help you see in the dark. → Lie! (They're healthy but won't give you night vision.)
19. There are more stars in the sky than grains of sand on Earth. → Truth! (By a lot!)
20. You swallow eight spiders a year while sleeping. → Lie! (That's an old myth — thankfully, not true!)

PRAYER

Thank you, God, that you have chosen us. We feel special knowing we are valuable and we have purpose. When we go to bed tonight, get up in the morning for school, argue with our friends, or write a math test, we remember that you love us, you see us, and we are important to you. Thank you for caring for us. Amen.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Each day this week, speak one truth over yourself about who God says you are. Use this Journal page to remind you of who God says you are.

