



October 20, 2019

Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels

The Judges: Gideon

BIG IDEA: God is great, so we should give Him all the glory.

BIBLE BASIS: Judges 6–7

KEY VERSE: “Lord, may glory be given to you, not to us. You are loving and faithful.” Psalm 115:1 (NirV)

 **SCHEDULE**
SMALL GROUP CONNECT 

7–15 minutes

 **LARGE GROUP LESSON**

30–40 minutes

REFLECT AND RESPOND STATIONS

7–15 minutes

 **SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES**
15–25 minutes

Scripture marked “NIV” is taken from the Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 Biblica. All rights reserved throughout the world. Used by permission of Biblica. Scripture marked “NirV” is taken from the Holy Bible, New International Reader’s Version™, Copyright ©1995, 1996, 1998 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved. All scripture references are taken from NirV unless otherwise stated.



3.2 Large Group Lesson | Elementary



User Agreement:

The GO! curriculum by Mooblio is intended for download and print by subscribing entities only. It may not be transferred electronically to or duplicated by other non-subscribing entities. If the GO! curriculum is cost prohibitive for your organization, please contact us about assistance. We are awesomely generous! All use must be in accordance with the Terms of Use agreement as described on the website www.go.mooblio.com.

LEADER DEVOTIONAL

I grew up going to the beach every summer with my family. One year, our beach was close to the path of a hurricane. While we didn't have to evacuate, the area was going to be pummeled by strong storms. My dad pulled me aside and asked if I wanted to go walk on the beach with him—right as the storm was rolling in. Though I was slightly nervous, I was also thrilled that he singled me out!

So, we headed out. As we walked down the boardwalk, we were the only people walking towards the beach. Everyone else was frantically trying to leave the area. I started to get second thoughts! But, I was with my dad. I trusted him completely and knew that if he was with me, I was safe.

We walked the beach as the storm came in over the ocean. It was beautiful and magnificent and terrifying all at once! My dad's enthusiasm was infectious and it wasn't long until I was enjoying the adventure even more than he was. I was so glad that I had the courage to go with him.

I'm sure you know where I'm going with this. God invites us to go on adventures with Him, and they are more terrifying and magnificent than walking on a beach when a storm is rolling in. Just like a child feels safe in the presence of a parent, as God's children we can feel safe in the presence of our Heavenly Father. As Deuteronomy 31:6 says,

“Be strong and brave. Don't be afraid of them. Don't be terrified because of them. The Lord your God will go with you. He will never leave you. He'll never desert you.”

God singles us out to go on adventures designed specifically for us. As you prepare to lead the children this week in the story of Gideon, dare to ask God what adventure He has in store for you. May we always have the courage to go on them!

Rebecca Crews
GO! Team Member





LARGE GROUP SKILL BUILDING

Helping Kids Reflect and Respond to God

At the end of every GO! large group lesson is an opportunity for kids to reflect and respond to God through prayer, journaling, scripture reading, or art. It's what we refer to as the Reflect and Respond Stations. This time is especially important because it allows kids to interact with God on a deep and personal level through various age-appropriate spiritual disciplines. You've probably already noticed what an incredible experience this can be for kids, but did you know that you can help to make the experience even more rich and meaningful? It's true! Here are a few ways you can help:

Establish a quiet atmosphere: Creating a quiet atmosphere helps kids focus on God instead of the other kids around them. Before dismissing the kids, remind them that this is a time for them to talk to God, not their friends. Right before dismissing kids to move about the stations, give your final instructions in a whisper. Consider telling kids they can begin moving on the count of three. By the time you get to one, mouth the number silently and motion for the kids to get up.

Help out at a station: Most kids will eventually know exactly what to do and how to do it, but some kids (especially young and new kids) might need a little bit of direction. Pick a station and be available to help kids who need it. At the prayer and journaling station, quietly help kids who need assistance with spelling. Help organize the materials at the art station. Be available at the reading station to help kids find the selected Bible passage or to quietly read to kids who need assistance.

Provide prayer support: Sometimes it might become evident that a kid could use some prayer (especially at the prayer station). Make yourself available to quietly pray with kids. When you're not praying with a specific kid, pray silently that God would move in the hearts and minds of all the kids during this time.

Follow up afterwards: From time to time, ask the kids after the Reflect and Respond Stations if they heard anything special from the Holy Spirit or if they said anything special to God. Processing the experience out loud sometimes helps kids make the most of their time with God. It also gives you a window into the hearts and minds of the kids.



3.2 Large Group Lesson | Elementary



UNIT DESCRIPTION

It's the distant future, the year 4,000 A.D., and the universe has run low on its most precious resource—fabulous hair. During the “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” series, small groups will be divided into two teams and will battle each other for the mythical wig of Walamazoo. In order to win these lovely locks, though, kids will have to exhibit team energy, show team spirit and participate in a trivia competition. All the while, kids will be embarking on a life-changing battle through the Book of Judges to discover the next part of God’s Big Bible Story.

SET-UP INSTRUCTIONS

- Divide your small groups into the two teams. Each team can have multiple small groups representing it. Kids will work within their small group to earn points for their team. If you have an uneven number of groups on the teams, you may want to award the team with fewer groups more points for some of the competitions in order to make it fair.
- Lay down a strip of tape through the middle of the room. During the lesson, have the “Space Ninjas” sit on one side and have the “Pirate Squirrels” sit on the other.
- Place the bin or bag containing all of the point balls in the teaching area.
- Place the two team bins in the teaching area. Print out the team signs ahead of time and attach one sign to each bin. These bins will be used at the end to collect all of the points that were tossed out to each team.
- Print out a set of A, B, C, and D signs for each small group. Give the set of signs to the small group leaders to have with them during the large group time.
- Choose a fun, crazy looking wig for the Wig of Walamazoo. Place the wig in the teaching area. The wig will serve as the winning team’s prize.
- Count out 300 M&Ms® or other small candies and place them in a jar or other clear container. Put the jar out of sight from kids in the teaching area.
- Hide a towel somewhere in the room. Try to hide it in a place where it’s somewhat visible and approximately equidistant between the two teams.
- Choose which of the Reflect and Respond Stations you would like to make available. Set out the appropriate materials for each of those stations.



3.2 Large Group Lesson | Elementary



★ LARGE GROUP LESSON

CG: show “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” title graphic
Sound: Play upbeat music as kids move to large group area

Tech Note: When all of the kids have moved to the Large Group area and have taken a seat, begin playing the “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” intro video.

VDO: Play “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” intro video

PREPARE FOR BATTLE!

Large Group Leader: Hello everyone! Are you ready to battle for the Wig of Walamazoo? (*Kids reply. Toss each team one point.*) Hmm...that was pretty good, but I know you can do better! (*Say with more enthusiasm.*) Are you ready to battle for the Wig of Walamazoo?! (*Kids reply with more energy.*) That’s way better! (*Toss several points to each team.*) Today’s battle is going to be soooo much fun, but it’s way more than that. Not only are we battling for the Wig of Walamazoo, we’re battling through the Book of Judges so we can know God more and fall even deeper in love with Him. Before we get started, though, I should probably tell you how this battle is going to work.

On this side of the room (*point to one side*) we have the Space Ninjas. Let me hear it from you! (*Space Ninjas cheer.*) And on this side we have the Pirate Squirrels. Let me hear you cheer! (*Pirate Squirrels cheer.*) The object of the competition is to be the team with the most points at the end of the hour. Each one of these (*hold up ball or other object representing points*) is worth one point. Your team will be collecting them throughout the lesson. There are three ways that you can earn points: Team Energy, Team Participation, and Team Competitions.

CG: Team Points graphic

At the end of the hour, we’ll count up the points. Whichever team has the most will win the coveted “Wig of Walamazoo!” (*Hold up the wig.*) Before we jump into our story, though, I have a challenge for you.

Reveal the jar with 300 pieces of candy. Tell both teams to guess how many pieces are in the jar. Employ the small group leaders in helping each team collectively decide on an answer. Record the two answers on a marker board or paper pad for everyone to see. Tell the kids you’ll reveal the answer later and the winning team will get points.

CG: “The Big Bible Story” graphic

THE BIG BIBLE STORY—GIDEON

Who remembers what Judge we talked about last week? (*Take answer. Give points.*) That’s right—Deborah. Many years after God helped Deborah defeat the Canaanites, the people of Israel once again forget all about God and start doing terrible things. So God handed the Israelites over to a new enemy—the Midianites. Every year, when the Israelites planted their crops, the evil Midianites would attack the farms and destroy every living thing. When I call out an animal, I want you to do your best impersonation. (*Toss points for each impersonation.*) The Midianites even killed the sheep (*toss points*), they killed the donkeys (*toss points*) and they killed the cattle (*toss points*). The Israelites became so poor and hungry

3.2 Large Group Lesson | Elementary



that they finally cried out to God for help. Do you think God heard them? (*Kids reply. Toss points.*) Of course He did!

So God sent a message to a man named Gideon. Let's see what the message said. **CG: Judges 6:14.** I'll give some points to the first team with someone who can find Judges 6:14 in their Bible.

Gives points to the first team to show you the verses. Have the kid who found it read the verse aloud or read it aloud yourself. It says, "The Lord turned to Gideon. He said to him, "You are strong. Go and save Israel from the power of Midian. I am sending you."

CG: "The Big Bible Story" graphic

Gideon couldn't believe what he was hearing. He wanted to make sure that it really was God talking to him, so he came up with a test. I'll give some points to the first team to find a hidden towel. (*Kids search for the pre-hidden towel. Give points to the team that finds it.*) Gideon put a piece of wool on the ground. (*Lay towel on the floor.*) He said to God, "In the morning, if the wool is wet with dew, but the ground is dry, then I'll know it was your voice that I heard." (*Get on hands and knees. Feel the floor.*) The next morning, Gideon checked the ground—it was dry. Then he checked the wool (*pick up towel and pretend to wring it out*)—it was filled with water! But still, Gideon wanted to really make sure that he was hearing from God, so he came up with another test. (*Lay towel back down.*) Gideon said to God, "In the morning, if the wool is dry, but the ground is wet with dew, then I'll really know it was your voice that I heard." And guess what (*pick up and feel towel*)—the next morning the wool was dry, (*feel ground*) but the ground was covered with dew. There was no denying it, the voice *had* to be from God!

So Gideon wasted no time! He put together an army of 32,000 men to fight against the Midianites. But God said, "No way, uh-uh, not gonna do it! You've got too many men!" You see—God didn't want the Israelites to brag that they had defeated Midian because of their own strength. So God told Gideon to send home anyone who was too scared to fight. 22,000 men went home. **CG: Math Equation.** If they started with 32,000 men and 22,000 men went home, how many men are left? (*Give points to first team with correct answer.*) That's right—only 10,000 men were left. But God said, "No way, uh-uh, not gonna do it!" You *still* have too many men!" So God had Gideon take his men to a creek for a drink of water. Most of the men got on their knees and drank straight from the stream. Space Ninjas, get on your knees and pretend to drink from the stream. (*Toss points.*) But some of the men scooped the water up with their hands and lapped it up like a dog. Pirate Squirrels, let me see you scoop the water up with your hands and drink it like a dog. (*Toss points.*) God told Gideon to keep the men who lapped like a dog, but send home all the men who kneeled down to drink. There were only 300 men left.

(*Move back to teaching area.*) That night, Gideon and his 300 warriors snuck up to the edge of the camp where the *huge* Midianite army was sleeping. When Gideon signaled, all the men blew trumpets, smashed jars, waved torches, and shouted as loud as they could, "A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!" **CG: "A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!"** Space Ninjas—shout that with me. (*Space Ninjas shout, toss points.*) The sound of the trumpets, jars, and shouting startled the Midianites from their sleep. When they came out of their tents, they saw the torches all around them and freaked out. And as the Midianites started running in every which direction, God confused them and caused them to attack each other with their swords. Pirate Squirrels—show me what it looks like to freak out and die. (*Pirate Squirrels freak out and pretend to die, toss points.*) Every Midianite that wasn't struck down by a sword, ran like scaredy-cats! And from that day forward, Midian wasn't able to attack the Israelites any more.

CG: "Big Bible Story Questions" graphic



3.2 Large Group Lesson | Elementary



BIG BIBLE STORY QUESTIONS

At the end of the Bible story have the kids turn briefly to their small groups and discuss the following questions: **For Younger Kids:** **What was your favorite part of this story? Why do you think God had Gideon send so many of his warriors home?** **For Older Kids:** **What do you think this story teaches us about God? How do you think the Israelites were able to defeat the huge Midianite army with only 300 men?** After a few minutes, draw their attention back to the teaching area.

CG: show “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” title graphic

REVIEW BATTLE

Now that you’ve heard the story, I think it’s time to see how well you were listening. Are you all ready for the big review battle? Here’s how the battle works. I’m going to ask you all a series of multiple choice questions. If you think you know the answer, turn to your small group leader and tell them what it is. Your leader will then hold up the sign with the most popular answer from your group. Here we go...

Give the groups about 10 seconds to choose their answer and hold up the right sign before the answer is revealed. **For younger kids, you may elect to give them more time.** Once the answer is revealed, toss out one point to all of the groups with the right answer. (*Correct answer is in italics below.*)

Music: (Optional) Play upbeat music during game

CG: Who were the people that were destroying Israel’s crops and livestock?

- A. Moabites
- B. Gideonites
- C. Amorites
- D. *Midianites*

CG: What sign did Gideon ask to see the *first* time he tested God?

- A. The ground is wet and the wool is dry.
- B. *The wool is wet and the ground is dry.*
- C. The ground is wet and the wool is gone.
- D. The ground is gone and there’s a woolly mammoth.

CG: How many men did Gideon start off with in his army?

- A. 29,000
- B. *32,000*
- C. 47,000
- D. 112,000



3.2 Large Group Lesson | Elementary



CG: God finally reduced Gideon’s army to 300 warriors by choosing the men who did what?

- A. Drank water on their knees.
- B. Drank water like a fish.
- C. *Drank water like a dog from their hands.*
- D. Drank water through a curly straw.

CG: Which of the following did the Israelites NOT do to defeat the huge Midianite army?

- A. *They waved banners.*
- B. They blew trumpets.
- C. They smashed jars.
- D. They yelled loudly.

CG: “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” title graphic

At the end of the review battle have the kids place all of their points inside their team’s bucket or bag. Set it aside for later. At some point after the small group time, count up the points for each team and announce a winner. Choose a small group leader or kid from the winning team and place the “Wig of Walamazoo” on his or her head.

GIVING GOD THE GLORY

(Hold up jar of candy.) Remember this? I’ll bet you’re just dying to know how many pieces of candy are in this jar?!

Review the team guesses from earlier. Reveal the number to the kids: 300. Give the team with the closest guess a few additional points toward their total.

Does the number 300 sound familiar? Where did we hear that number from? *(Take answers.)* That’s right—300 is the number of men that God used to defeat the Midianites. That might sound like a lot of men, but it’s not! In fact, the Midianite army had 135,000 men fighting on their side. That’s 450 times bigger than the Israelite army! *(Hold up jar of candy.)* This one jar of candy is like the Israelite army. Now imagine what 450 of these jars would look like. That’s how big the Midianite army was!

So why do you think God wanted Gideon to have such a small army? *(Take answers.)* You got it! God didn’t want the Israelites to be able to brag that they had defeated Midian with their own strength. God wanted the Israelites to realize that He alone had won the battle and that He alone should get the glory. “Glory”— have you heard that word before? *(Kids respond.)* Take a look at what it means:

CG: **Glory, (noun) to honor and praise someone for being great**

(Read definition aloud with kids.) When we give God glory (or glorify God), it means that we honor and praise Him for being so great. It means that we recognize that every good thing we have comes from God, not from us. In fact, that’s what our Bible verse for today tells us. *(Encourage kids to open their Bibles to Psalm 115:1. Be prepared to give younger kids more time and assistance in finding the verse. When ready, choose a kid to read it aloud or read it aloud yourself while the kids follow along.)*

3.2 Large Group Lesson | Elementary



CG: “Lord, may glory be given to you, not to us. You are loving and faithful.” Psalm 115:1

God is great, so we should give Him *all* the glory! Close your eyes for a minute. (*Kids close eyes.*) Picture something that you’re *really* good at or something *awesome* you did. Are you really good at a sport? Did you get a really good grade on a test at school? Have you been told that you’re really good at something? Picture it in your head. (*Pause.*) Okay—now open your eyes. Raise your hand if you were able to think of something. (*Kids raise hands. Take a seat or kneel near kids.*) Look around—we all have things that we’re good at or something awesome we did. But did you know that all of those good things are from God? They are! Even though we have to work hard to develop our abilities and talents, all of our gifts, talents and abilities are from God above and He alone deserves the glory. In fact, let’s pray right now and give God glory.

When finished close the Large Group time by praying for the kids in whatever way the Holy Spirit prompts you. Following the prayer, explain to the kids which of the Reflect and Respond Stations will be available. Remind them to move about the stations very quietly. Tell them they are free to respond to God in whatever way the Holy Spirit leads them, but if they need suggestions, some of the stations will give them ideas for how to pray, write, or draw. Give each child one “GO! Home” sheet and instruct them to take it with them to the stations. Place small group leaders at the different stations to quietly help the kids. The stations listed below are just the ones that have prompts that are specific to today’s lesson. For more instructions on how the Reflect and Respond Stations work as well as a full list of possible stations, see the “GO! Guide.”

CG: “Space Ninjas vs. Pirate Squirrels” title graphic
Music: (Optional) Play quiet instrumental music

REFLECT AND RESPOND STATIONS

Prayer Station prompt: Write a prayer that gives glory or praise to God for something you’re good at or something good that has happened to you.

Journal Station prompt: Write out a list of all the things you’re good at or good things that have happened to you. Next to each thing, write the words, “Thank you, God.”

Bible Station prompt: Read it for yourself: Judges 7:1-22. Write to God your favorite part of the story. Tell Him why you liked it.

Art Station prompt: Draw a picture of yourself doing something you’re really good at. Beneath the picture, write the words, “Lord, may glory be given to you, not me.”

