

ALLEY SG - August 10-11, 2024

Due to summer scheduling, these activities can be done in small groups or in one large group led by one leader.

1. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Markers, “Self Portrait” Activity Page

What You Do:

- Set out markers.
- Give each kid a “Self-Portrait” Activity Page.
- Invite kids to fill in each section of the Activity Page with something they know about themselves. They can write words describing them or draw pictures of things that make them unique. If needed, prompt them with a few questions:
 - When do you feel the most excited?
 - What makes you sad?
 - What is one thing you wish everyone knew about you?
 - What makes you angry?
 - What is something you’re really good at?
 - What is really hard for you to do?
- Challenge kids to do more than simply write words but to draw or get creative and fill in all of the white space in each section by using a variety of letter sizes, font styles, colors, and designs.
- If time allows, you can invite the children to add hair, a hat, etc. to their Self-Portrait.
- When finished, let kids share their Self-Portraits with the group.
- Connect with the importance of knowing ourselves as well as knowing others. Every person has their own story, and every story is important.
- Expand the discussion by going a step further with the prompts used earlier:
 - When do you feel the most excited? How should you react when someone is excited about something you don’t find exciting?
 - What makes you sad? How can that sadness help you relate to others?
 - What is one thing you wish everyone knew about you? What’s something that’s good to keep in mind about every person you meet?
 - What makes you angry? How do you sometimes make people angry?
 - What is something you’re really good at? What’s a wise thing to remember when you meet others who are not as talented at the stuff you’re great at?
 - What is really hard for you to do? How might that help you be patient or sympathize with others?
- Invite kids to share some things they are learning about themselves.
 - Maybe they tried something new for the first time this year and discovered that they are really good (or really bad) at it. They can share both the good things they are finding out about themselves as well as the stuff they see that they don’t like and want to change.
- Encourage kids to keep being curious about themselves—why they think, feel, and do what they do. Remind them when they see ways they need to change, let them know they can always talk to God about whatever they are facing.

2. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: Bibles, markers, “Eye” Activity Page (one per kid)

What You Do:

- Turn the Bible to Matthew 7:1-5 and ask a few kids who want to read a few of the verses as a way to review today’s Bible story.
- Discuss the passage as a group:
 - What point do you think Jesus was trying to make when He used the examples of a speck of sawdust and a plank of wood in someone’s eye?
 - Make up some examples of situations when one person made a big deal of a speck-sized problem in **SOMEONE ELSE** while ignoring their **OWN** log-sized problems.
 - Why is it important to take an honest look at ourselves before pointing out a problem in someone else?
 - Jesus called those who quickly judge others “pretenders.” What do you think He meant by that?
- Touch on these points when reviewing the story:
 - Jesus wasn’t saying we should never help others grow by pointing out a bad choice they are making.
 - Jesus made it clear that we should ask God to help us look at ourselves **FIRST** to see where **WE** might need to change.
 - As God changes us from the inside out to be more like Jesus, we’re in a better place to help others change.
- Give each kid an “Eye” Activity Page and set out markers.
- Invite kids to pair up with a partner (It’s okay if there is a group of three.).
- Tell each pair to come up with exaggerated and contrasting images similar to the “log” and “speck” examples Jesus used.
 - If needed, give some suggestions such as a flea and elephant or dust and boulder.
- Tell one kid on each team to draw the small image they come up with within the “eye” on the Activity Page, and the other kid to draw the large image on theirs.
- Collect all of the drawings when kids are done drawing and bring everyone back together.
- Divide the whole group into two teams.
- Ask a volunteer from each team to hold up an end of the “ocean wave” (blue tablecloth/sheet).
- Invite a remaining kid from each team to stand side-by-side facing the “ocean wave” then position yourself on the opposite side of the “ocean wave” facing them.
- Explain that you will hold up one of the images. When you say, “DIVE!” the kids holding the “ocean wave” will quickly lower it to the floor revealing the image.
- Explain that you will hold up one of the images kids drew earlier. When you say, “DIVE!” the kids holding the edges of the “ocean wave” will quickly lower it to the floor, revealing the image you’re holding.
- The first kid to correctly identify the image wins a point for their team.
- Switch out the wave holders and those who are guessing, and then repeat.
- Continue until all the drawings have been correctly guessed.
- Point out that in the game, kids had to make a quick decision about what they saw. Sometimes those calls were correct, and other times they weren’t.
- Remind kids that sometimes taking a moment to stop and think about what we might need to change in ourselves will help us not to judge others too quickly.
- Close by encouraging kids to remember that God loves them, no matter what they struggle with. God’s love goes so deep and wants to help them become more like Jesus in the way they think of themselves as well as others.
- Save the “Eye” drawings to use later in “Make it Personal with Prayer.”

3. Discussion Questions

- Have you ever felt bothered by something another kid does? Do you think it might be because it reminds you of something about yourself?
- Have you ever been disrespectful or rude to someone else? What might have caused you to act that way?
- Have you ever been mean to another person? How did you feel afterward? Did it make you think about how you treat others?
- When do you get angry or feel anxious? What triggers those big emotions? How does that clue you in on something you might need God's help to change?
- Who can you talk to who will give you wise insight about some of the things you can work on to be more like Jesus?
- What are you learning about yourself?

4. Memory Verse Roll

What You Need: a ball (one per group)

What You Do:

- Guide kids to sit in a large circle.
- Invite a volunteer to recite the monthly memory verse, then say it a few times together. *"If any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. He will give it to you. God gives freely to everyone and doesn't find fault."* James 1:5
- Give one kid the ball.
- Lead kids to say the verse word by word (with help as needed) as they pass the ball to the person next to them. Play a few times, getting faster each time.
- Try it again, but instead of passing the ball, roll the ball to someone across the circle saying one word of the verse at a time.

Play as time allows, encouraging kids to say the verse

AT THE 5- MINUTE CALL:

PRAY

Ask, "Does anyone have any prayer requests or things they want to thank God for from this week?"

(Let the kids share their prayer requests and praises)

- Take some time to pray for these things as a group, then finish with the prayer below...

"Dear God, thank You that You love us so well. You are fair and truthful and kind. Thank You that You want us to love each other well too. Please show us where we have planks in our eyes so we can see more clearly. We want to love people fairly and well like You do. We love You, Jesus, and we ask these things in Your name. Amen."

- If there is still time, pass out the Parent Discussion Guides to the kids and begin to read through them together. Remind them they can do the activity at home and bring it back next week for a prize.

PARENT PICK UP POINT: As adults arrive to pick up, ask the kids to show them their self portrait.