

**Teachers Dig In****Dig In to the Bible**

- Read: Daniel 1
- In This Passage: Daniel and his friends are working in the king's palace while in exile. God gives them wisdom to handle a tough situation when the palace food they're served goes against God's plan for them. God is wise, and he helps us make wise choices.
- Bible Point: God is wise...
- Application: ...so we make wise choices.
- Summary Verse: "For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it?" (Isaiah 43:19).

**Dig Deeper**

- You'll Be Teaching: *God is wise.* As an adult, you might think kids don't face the kinds of tough decisions you do. But you'd be surprised at some of the tough stuff your kids have already faced! Help kids see that because God is wise, he can pour his wisdom into us and help us make wise choices.
- Think About: What difficult choice or situation are you facing right now? Ask God for his wisdom.

**Dig In to Prayer**

- Pray that God would fill kids with his wisdom.

**Quick Tip**

- It takes wisdom to teach kids about God! As you prepare this lesson, consider some of the challenges you've faced with kids in your class. Ask God to give you the wisdom to make the right choice when those challenges resurface.

## This Lesson at a Glance



### OPENING

Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.

#### Supplies

- Bible



### CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids eat vegetables and give wise advice.

#### Supplies

- Bible
- cupcakes or cookies (these are only to show kids, so you don't need enough for everyone)
- baby carrots or carrot sticks (1 per child)
- "Dear Wise Advisers" handout (1 copy) (download [here](#))
- paper
- pens

#### Easy Prep

- Cut apart the sections of the "Dear Wise Advisers" handout.



### LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids pray for each other to have wisdom.



### OBJECT LESSON

Kids strategically place stickers on a balloon.

#### Supplies

- uninflated balloons (1 per child)
- small stickers (6 per child)
- clothespins (optional)

#### Easy Prep

- Prepare a sample balloon ahead of time to show kids what they'll be doing. You'll inflate the balloon without tying it off and place the stickers about 1 inch apart before releasing the air. If the stickers don't line up on the first try, inflate the balloon again, adjusting your sticker placement.



### HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids try to pull others across the line.

#### Supplies

- masking tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

#### Easy Prep

- Tape a line on the floor, splitting the room roughly in half.



### LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids play a version of Deal or No Deal.

#### Supplies

- 3 gift bags
- marker
- mix of "average" candy, such as Tootsie Rolls, Smarties, or peppermints (1 per child)

#### Easy Prep

- Using large, easy-to-read numbers, label the gift bags 1, 2, and 3.
- Place the items in the gift bags as follows: Bag 1, the bag of candy bars; Bag 2, the "dud" item; and

- bag of “better” candy, such as candy bars (enough for ⅓ of the kids)
- roll of dimes
- “dud” item, such as a sock, a rag, or an empty bubble-gum wrapper
- basket or bowl

- Bag 3, the roll of dimes.
- Put a mix of the “average” candy in the basket or bowl.



## CRAFT

**Kids make a balance to weigh tough decisions.**

### Supplies

- wooden paint stir sticks (1 per child)
- rulers
- chenille wires (1 per child)
- duct tape
- string (about 4 feet per child)
- scissors
- hole punches
- 3-ounce paper cups (2 per child)
- markers
- slips of paper
- pens
- “Weighing My Decisions” handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

### Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.

*\*Marked supplies are also used in Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



### Welcome

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#### Supplies

- Bible

#### Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have kids wave at three people they're not sitting near.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having kids say "drippy haybath" (the letters of happy birthday mixed up).
- Collect the offering.

#### Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we're going to learn that God is wise, so we make wise choices. He gives us wisdom whenever we ask for it! In the Bible, some men needed wisdom in a situation involving vegetables. That seems like a strange reason to need wisdom, so get ready for some surprises!**

#### Share

- Tell kids *your* favorite and least favorite vegetable.
- Have kids form pairs. Ask kids to share about *their* favorite and least favorite vegetables.
- After partners have discussed, ask two or three kids to share with the whole group what they talked about with their partners.

#### Summarize

Open a Bible to Daniel 1, and say: **Choosing your favorite and least favorite vegetables doesn't take much wisdom. But we'll see how some men in the Bible needed wisdom so they could eat God's way. We'll see what the Bible says about God's wisdom and how he passes that on to us to help us make wise choices. We know everything in the Bible is true and is from God, so let's take a moment to talk to God as we get started.**

Pray, praising God for his wisdom.

**Supplies**

- Bible
- cupcakes or cookies (these are only to show kids, so you don't need enough for everyone)
- baby carrots or carrot sticks (1 per child)
- "Dear Wise Advisers" handout (1 copy) (download [here](#))
- paper
- pens

**Easy Prep**

- Cut apart the sections of the "Dear Wise Advisers" handout.

**Eat a Healthy Snack**

Show kids the cupcakes or cookies and the carrots. You may want to pass around the cupcakes or cookies, letting kids smell them and get a closer look.

Ask: • **Which of these snacks would you rather eat?**

Say: **In our Bible story today, Daniel and some friends had to choose what they were going to eat. Daniel's country had been overtaken by another country, and Daniel and his friends were taken to work for the king of the other country. They lived in the palace for a few years to train before going to work for the king.**

**The king served food that probably looked and tasted really yummy, like our desserts. But Daniel and his friends wanted to eat only vegetables.**

Distribute carrots. As kids eat, read Daniel 1:8.

Say: **You might think this is a lesson about choosing healthy foods or eating all your vegetables.**

**But that's not why Daniel wanted vegetables.**

**God had certain laws about food. There were some kinds of meat that God told his people, the Israelites, not to eat. He called that kind of meat "unclean." There were also laws about not eating meat that had been killed as a sacrifice to fake gods.**

**We don't know whether the food the king served was unclean meat or meat that had been sacrificed to fake gods—or both—but we know it was against God's plan for Daniel and his friends to eat the king's food.**

**God is wise, and he gave Daniel wisdom. It wasn't as simple as choosing to eat only vegetables and not the food the king offered. Listen to this.**

Read Daniel 1:9-10.

Say: **This was a matter of life or death! If Daniel handled this wrong, the king could get mad and people could die. But Daniel didn't want to disobey God, either.**

Ask: • **What do you think Daniel could do?**

**Give Advice**

Say: **Before we find out the wise solution God gave Daniel, let's think about situations kids today might face when a leader tells them to do something that's wrong.**

Form four groups. Say: **Sometimes when people have a problem, they write or email someone to get advice. Maybe you've seen those letters in the newspaper, in a magazine, or online. Today you are going to be advice columnists. You'll get a letter about a kid who's facing a tough situation, and you'll write advice about how to solve the problem wisely.**

Give each group a section of the "Dear Wise Advisers" handout, along with a blank piece of paper and a pen. Allow time for groups to brainstorm solutions to the problems and write their answers as advice columns.

After kids write their advice columns, have them read their situations and responses. Other groups can chime in with additional wise solutions.

Say: **Great wise thinking! Daniel's situation was a tough one; the king was telling him to do**

something that was wrong. But if he just stopped doing it, the king's adviser could be killed. Maybe even Daniel and his friends could be killed! But God is wise, and he helped Daniel and his friends make a wise choice in solving Daniel's problem. Here's what they did.

Read Daniel 1:11-16.

Ask: • **Why was this solution a wise one?**

• **Now that you know what Daniel did, is there anything you'd change about your advice column?**

Say: Daniel and his friends trusted that God would keep them healthy when they stopped eating the food the king served, and they knew they wouldn't look sick or weak after 10 days. But putting a time limit on how long they'd eat only vegetables helped the guard in charge of Daniel and his friends feel better. He knew that if they didn't look healthy, Daniel and his friends would agree to eat the king's food.

### Train

Say: Making wise choices isn't something we can always do well on our own; wisdom comes from God. God is wise, so we make wise choices. Listen to what the Bible says about the wisdom of Daniel and his friends.

Read Daniel 1:17-20.

Say: Daniel and his friends had wisdom because they spent time with God. They knew eating the king's food was against God's wishes because they knew God's plan for wise living.

God gives us wisdom when we spend time with him, pray, and read the Bible. The Bible can tell us what to do when we're not sure what the wise choice is. And the better we know the Bible, the more we'll know the wise way to handle a tough situation.

It's kind of like training our bodies. If you want strong arms, you train them by doing push-ups. Have each child do five push-ups.

Say: **If you want strong abs, you train them by doing sit-ups.** Have each child do five sit-ups.

Say: **If you want strong legs, you train them by doing squats.** Have each child do five squats.

Say: **The more you do those kinds of exercises, the stronger your muscles will get. Then your muscles will be trained to do hard things, so when you really need them to work hard, they're ready.**

If we want to be spiritually strong, we can train by spending time with God and reading the Bible. Then when we need to use our wisdom muscles to handle a tough situation, we'll be ready since we've been letting God fill us with his wisdom! God is wise, so we make wise choices.



## LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

[5 min]

### If You Need Wisdom

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#### Pray for Each Other

Say: **We all need wisdom from God to make wise choices, and there's good news about that!**

#### Listen to God's promise.

- Read James 1:5.
- Have kids form pairs and each share one choice or tough situation they need God's wisdom for this week.
- Have partners pray for each other to receive God's wisdom.

#### Wrap Up

Pray: **God, thank you that you are wise! And because we're made in your image and can be your friend, you're always ready to give us wisdom to make wise choices. Give us wisdom this week. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Thank kids for coming, and encourage them to come back next week.



### Supplies

- uninflated balloons (1 per child)
- small stickers (6 per child)
- clothespins (optional)

### Easy Prep

- Prepare a sample balloon ahead of time to show kids what they'll be doing. You'll inflate the balloon without tying it off and place the stickers about 1 inch apart before releasing the air. If the stickers don't line up on the first try, inflate the balloon again, adjusting your sticker placement.



### Put Stickers on Inflated Balloons

Say: **I have a challenge for you. You'll need some wisdom so you can strategize and think this through.** Show kids the deflated balloon with a line of stickers that barely touch each other. **You each need to blow up a balloon and then place stickers on the inflated balloon so that when you let the air out, all the stickers will be in a straight line and will barely touch each other. Think you can do it?**

- Give each child a balloon.
- Have kids inflate balloons but not tie them off. They should hold them closed or twist and secure them temporarily with clothespins.
- Have kids strategically place the stickers on their balloons, making sure to firmly press the stickers so they don't come off when kids let go of the balloons.

### **Deflate the Balloons**

- When their stickers are placed, have kids let go of the balloons to release the air inside.
- Have kids pick up their deflated balloons and look at the stickers.
- If the stickers aren't in a neat row, have kids blow up their balloons and try again. Have extra stickers ready to replace those that may have lost their stickiness.
- Repeat until stickers are lined up like they are on the sample balloon. If time allows, challenge kids to make a close circle or other shapes with their stickers.

### **Talk About It**

Ask: • **What wise choices did you have to make in this experiment?**

• **What did you learn after releasing your balloons the first time? How did your strategy change?**

Say: **When we're wise, we think about consequences. You had to think ahead to what the stickers would be like without the air inside the balloon. Then, if it didn't turn out the way you planned, you learned from your mistakes and tried again.**

Ask: • **Tell about a time in your life you gained wisdom and learned from past experiences.** Share an example from your own life to begin.

Say: **God is wise. God is our friend, so we can ask him for wisdom when we need to make choices. God knows we'll make mistakes sometimes, but he loves us and will help us gain wisdom from every experience in life.**



### Supplies

- masking tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

### Easy Prep

- Tape a line on the floor, splitting the room roughly in half.

### Tips

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).
- Watch for kids who are being overly aggressive in this game, and make sure they tug more gently so no one gets hurt.

### Try to Pull One Another Across the Line

Say: **Today in the Bible we read about Daniel and how God helped him make a wise choice about food. When we have choices to make, we can feel pulled in different directions as we decide what to do. Let's play a game where you'll try to pull each other across a line like you're pulling someone toward a decision.**

- Form roughly even teams, and have teams stand on opposite sides of the line taped on the floor.
- Everyone will stand close enough to the line so that a person on the other side can reach across and grab a hand or arm.
- Kids will try to pull more people over to the side they're on, even if that means trying to pull original teammates over after they've been pulled across the line.
- If everyone gets pulled to one side, mix up the teams and play a new round.
- Play as many rounds as time allows.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play.

### Talk About It

Ask: • **Why was it hard to resist getting pulled over the line?**

Say: **It can be hard in real life to not get pulled toward or talked into making a choice that we know isn't wise. Sometimes we let others pull us to bad choices. But sometimes people can pull us to good, wise choices, too.**

Ask: • **How do you know if someone is pulling you toward a good or bad choice?** Share an example of your own, such as knowing that making a certain choice means breaking a rule or doing something that could cause harm—a bad choice—or knowing that a different choice would help someone else or show kindness—a good choice.

Say: **We'll get pulled in a lot of directions when we're trying to make wise choices. Even as we try our best, we'll all make mistakes in our choices sometimes. When we're not sure what to do or whose advice to listen to, we can always talk to God. God is wise, so he'll help us make the best choice.**



## LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

### Weighing the “What If?”

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#### Supplies

- 3 gift bags
- marker
- mix of “average” candy, such as Tootsie Rolls, Smarties, or peppermints (1 per child)
- bag of “better” candy, such as candy bars (enough for 1/3 of the kids)
- roll of dimes
- “dud” item, such as a sock, a rag, or an empty bubble-gum wrapper
- basket or bowl

#### Easy Prep

- Using large, easy-to-read numbers, label the gift bags 1, 2, and 3.
- Place the items in the gift bags as follows: Bag 1, the bag of candy bars; Bag 2, the “dud” item; and Bag 3, the roll of dimes.
- Put a mix of the “average” candy in the basket or bowl.

#### Play a Game Similar to Deal or No Deal

Say: **In today’s Bible story we saw how God helped Daniel make wise choices about food. We have a lot of decisions to make each day; sometimes it’s easy to make wise choices, and sometimes the wise choice isn’t so clear.**

**Let’s play a game that’s all about wise choices.**

- Form three roughly equal teams.
- Give everyone a piece of “average” candy.
- Teams will then work together to decide whether they’re willing to give up the candy they have so they can get something in one of the mystery gift bags.
- Explain that teams won’t get to look in the bags first to see what’s in them; they’ll have to decide if they want to risk giving up their candy for something that might or might not be better than the candy they’re holding.
- Allow a few minutes for teams to discuss their decision.
- Ask teams to raise their hands if they’ve decided to give up their candy for what’s in a mystery bag.
- Hand out the bags randomly to any teams with raised hands, and collect their candy.
- Allow the teams who chose to take the bags open them.
- If any teams decided not to trade their candy, reveal the items in the unclaimed mystery bags.

#### Talk About It

Ask: • **What did you talk about in your teams as you made your choice?**

• **Why do you think your team did or didn’t make a wise choice?**

Say: **The decisions in our game were fun and not too serious, but many times in life we have some very important decisions to make.**

Ask: • **What’s a big decision you’ve had to make?** Share an example of your own, such as deciding to move to a different town or state: You’d be moving away from friends, but you could make some amazing new friends in the new town.

Say: **When we have important decisions to make, it’s nice to have someone to talk to about it to get some advice. We might talk to parents, teachers, friends, and family members. We can also talk to God. God is wise, so he’s the best one to go to when we need wisdom.**

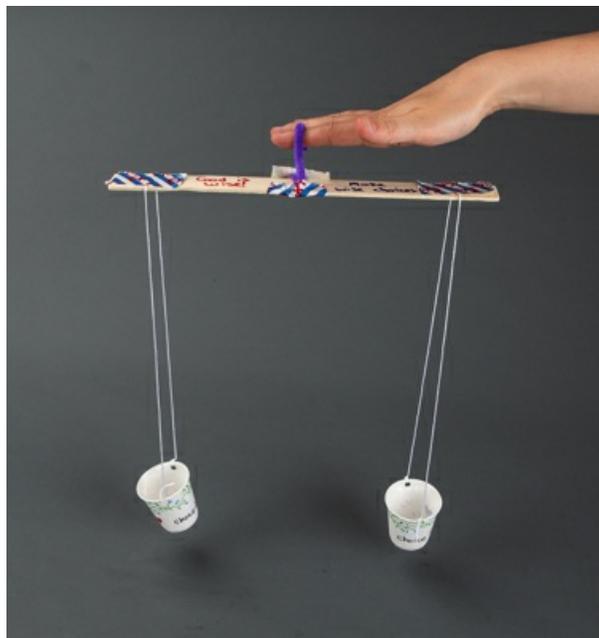


## Supplies

- wooden paint stir sticks (1 per child)
- rulers
- chenille wires (1 per child)
- duct tape
- string (about 4 feet per child)
- scissors
- hole punches
- 3-ounce paper cups (2 per child)
- markers
- slips of paper
- pens
- "Weighing My Decisions" handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

## Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



## Make Balances

Show kids the sample craft you made. Give each child a paint stir stick, and set out the other supplies to share. Have kids follow these directions to make their own balances.

- Use a ruler to measure the exact center of your paint stir stick, and mark the spot.
- Wrap a chenille wire around the center of the paint stir stick, and then shape it into a hook that can fit on your finger.
- Hang the paint stir stick on your finger, making sure it hangs level. Adjust it if needed, and then tape the chenille wire in place.
- Punch two holes opposite each other at the top of each 3-ounce cup.
- Cut two pieces of string the same length (each about 2 feet long), and tie one piece of string in a loop through the holes in the first cup.
- Tie the second piece of string in a loop through the holes in the second cup.
- Hang the cups on opposite ends of your paint stir stick. Hang the paint stir stick on your finger to make sure it's balanced, and then have a friend help you tape the strings in place. (If it's not balanced, try moving one of the strings a little closer to the center.)

- Decorate the paint stir stick and cups with markers. Write “Choice 1” on one cup and “Choice 2” on the other.
- Once again, double-check the paint stir-stick balance, and add tape to one side if needed to weigh it down slightly.

### **Weigh a Decision**

Say: **Think of a tough decision you’re facing right now. Pause. You’re going to use your balance to weigh that decision!**

Give each child a “Weighing My Decisions” handout, and have kids follow the directions. The directions are also listed below so you can guide kids.

Have kids consider these factors as they weigh their choices, placing crumpled slips of paper into one cup or the other each time.

- They can ask someone’s opinion of what to do. If kids think they receive wise advice, they’ll write it on a slip of paper, crumple it into a tight ball, and place it in the cup that represents the recommended choice. They can decide which cup represents Choice 1 and which is Choice 2.
- Do kids know any Bible verses that relate to their decision? (Kids can ask you if they need help.)
- Kids can pray about it—what is God putting on their hearts?
- Have kids consider whether there are pros for Choice 1 or for Choice 2.
- Ask kids if either of the choices would hurt someone. If so, kids can put a paper in the cup representing the choice that wouldn’t hurt anyone.
- Ask kids to consider what they’ve learned from past choices that can help them make this one.

After they’ve placed a lot of paper slips in their cups, have kids pick up their balances and see which cup is heavier.

### **Talk About It**

Ask: • **Explain whether you think this balance will always give you the wisest answer.**

• **What other factors do you consider when you’re weighing a tough decision?**

Say: **Your balance can be a helpful tool as you consider the pros and cons of different decisions, but it may not always be 100 percent accurate. For example, you might think of a lot of pros to weigh down Choice 1, but they might be selfish pros, and the Bible tells you Choice 1 is wrong. In reality, wisdom from God in the Bible should weigh the most of all! God is wise, and he passes on his wisdom to us so we can make wise choices.**

Have kids take their balances and handouts home and use them with their friends and families to weigh decisions.