

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.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids try to keep a toy figure from dropping to the bottom of a cup.

Supplies

- 12-ounce plastic foam cups (1 for every 3 kids)
- coffee stir sticks (about 10 for every 3 kids)
- toy people, such as Lego Minifigures (1 for every 3 kids)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Poke 10 or more coffee stir sticks through each plastic foam cup, starting about halfway up the cup. Arrange the stir sticks so they form a "web" inside the cup that'll support a toy person.
- Place a toy person on top of the stir-stick web in each cup.



CRAFT

Kids paint with celery "paintbrushes."

Supplies

- white paper (at least 1 sheet per child)
- washable paint in a variety of colors
- disposable plates (at least 1 for each paint color)
- head of celery

Easy Prep

- Cut off the end of the head of celery, which can be used as a large flower-shaped stamper. Then cut the individual stalks of celery into 3-inch lengths.
- Pour each color of paint onto a separate disposable plate.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids make choices.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids train their minds, bodies, and spirits and then pray.



OBJECT LESSON

Marshmallow Sink

Supplies

- mini marshmallows (handful for each child)
- clear plastic cups (1 per child)
- water
- flour
- wet wipes

**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.



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'll learn what it means that God is wise. *Wise* means knowing what good choices are and making them, and it means knowing which choices aren't going to be helpful. God knows the best choices to make, and he knows what's going to be best and most helpful for us. Today we'll hear about some young men who chose to eat some food that would make their bodies healthy and strong. They were wise. Eating vegetables is one thing we can do to help our bodies be healthy and strong.**

Share

- Share what *your* favorite vegetable is, and then share which vegetable you like the least.
- In small groups, have kids share about *their* favorite vegetables, and then have them share which vegetables they like the least.
- After small groups have discussed, have a few kids share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **We all like different kinds of vegetables. Today we'll hear how some young men ate plenty of vegetables while some others didn't. The young men who ate the vegetables were much stronger and healthier than those who didn't! Those men learned to make wise, or good, choices from God because God was their friend. God is wise, and they knew if they did what God says, it would be the best for them. We can make wise or good choices when we're friends with our wise God, too.**

Pray, thanking God that he's wise.



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 adult or teen-helper led 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.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Don't Let It Drop

Supplies

- 12-ounce plastic foam cups (1 for every 3 kids)
- coffee stir sticks (about 10 for every 3 kids)
- toy people, such as Lego Minifigures (1 for every 3 kids)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Poke 10 or more coffee stir sticks through each plastic foam cup, starting about halfway up the cup. Arrange the stir sticks so they form a “web” inside the cup that’ll support a toy person.
- Place a toy person on top of the stir-stick web in each cup.



Tip

- 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](#).

Pull Sticks Out of the Cup

Say: **Today in our Bible story, God helped Daniel make wise choices about food. We can talk to God, too, about *any* choice we have to make, and God can help us make the best choice. God is wise. I have a fun game to play where you'll try to make the best choices!**

- Help kids form groups of three, and have trios sit in close circles facing each other.
- Give each trio a cup you prepared earlier.
- Trios will take turns pulling one stir stick at a time from the cup without causing the toy person to fall to the bottom of the cup.
- Have any teen or adult helpers sit near or with the groups of kids to help with the game and reset the game for new rounds.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play as many rounds as time allows.

Talk About It

Ask: • **Was it hard or easy to choose which straw to pull out?**

Say: **Sometimes our choices aren't easy and we need some help making the best choice.**

Tell about people in *your* life you ask for help when you have a tough choice to make, such as a parent or a wise friend.

Ask: • **Who are people who help *you* make good choices?** Kids may talk about their parents, grandparents, older siblings, or friends.

Say: **Making the best choice is easier when we have help! We have great people in our lives we can talk to about our choices, and we can always talk to God, too. God is wise, so God will help us make wise choices—the *best* choices.**



Supplies

- white paper (at least 1 sheet per child)
- washable paint in a variety of colors
- disposable plates (at least 1 for each paint color)
- head of celery

Easy Prep

- Cut off the end of the head of celery, which can be used as a large flower-shaped stamper. Then cut the individual stalks of celery into 3-inch lengths.
- Pour each color of paint onto a separate disposable plate.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Paint With Celery

Say: **God is wise, so we make wise choices.** In our Bible story, Daniel and his friends knew that the wise choice was to eat vegetables and water instead of the king's food. That's because God said the king's food wouldn't be good for their bodies. And because they followed what God said, Daniel and his friends became healthier and smarter than the other young men.

Show kids the sample craft. **Let's make paintings and use vegetables as our paintbrushes to help us remember our Bible story!**

- Give each child a sheet of paper.
- Show children how they can dip the end of a piece of celery in the paint and dab it onto their papers to make "C" shapes. Point out that the shapes look like little smiles—and God's wise choices are always the best ones! Kids can also cover the length of a piece of celery in paint to make lines on their papers.
- Encourage kids to use at least as many colors of paint as years they are old, so a 4-year-old would use at least four colors of paint for his or her craft.
- Have kids make a few paintings if they finish the first one quickly.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Choosing This or That

Make a Choice and Move to a Side of the Room

Say: **Today's Bible story is about some important choices Daniel had to make. Daniel talked to God about his choices, and God helped him make the best choices. God is wise, and he helped Daniel be wise, too. We all have choices to make every day, so let's play a fun game full of choices!**

- Gather everyone to stand in the middle of the room.
- Call out the following choices, and point to either side of the room for each choice. Kids will move to the designated side of the room for their choice in the motion you call out and then come back to the center.
 - **Would you rather brush your teeth** (point to one side of room) **or take a bath?** (Point to the other side of the room.) **Hop on one leg to the side you choose.**
 - **Would you rather wear shoes outside** (point to one side of room) **or be barefoot?** (Point to the other side of the room.) **Run to the side you choose.**
 - **Would you rather have ice cream** (point to one side of the room) **or pizza for dinner?** (Point to the other side of the room.) **Skip to the side you choose.**
 - **Would you rather watch your favorite movie** (point to one side of the room) **or look at a favorite book?** (Point to the other side of the room.) **Leap like a frog to the side you choose.**
 - **Would you rather play with a dolls** (point to one side of the room) **or play with Legos?** (Point to the other side of the room.) **Bunny-hop to the side you choose.**
 - **Would you rather get a new puppy** (point to one side of the room) **or a new kitten?** (Point to the other side of the room.) **Hop on one leg to the side you choose.**
 - **Would you rather ride on a horse** (point to one side of the room) **or ride on an elephant?** (Point to the other side of the room.) **Run to the side you choose.**
 - **Would you rather learn how to swim** (point to one side of the room) **or learn how to tie your shoes?** (Point to the other side of the room.) **Skip to the side you choose.**

Talk About It

Ask: • **Why was it fun to make your choices in the game?**

Say: **It can be fun to make choices! Today I chose to come to church, and I get to see all of you!**

Ask: • **What's a choice you made today? Maybe you chose what you wanted to eat for breakfast or what you wanted to wear.** Kids may also share other choices, such as what shoes to wear or a toy they chose to play with at church today.

Say: **Some of our choices are fun, and some are very important. No matter what choice we have to make, we can talk to God about it. God is wise, and God can help us make a wise choice—that's the best choice.**



Train and Pray

Train With Exercise

Say: **Today we learned that God is wise, and we can learn to make wise or good choices from God, too. We heard how some young men in the Bible trained their bodies after they learned what God said was good for their bodies. We can train our bodies, too. God wants us to be healthy! Let's do an exercise to train our bodies.**

Lead kids in doing a jumping jack, and then lead them in a short prayer, asking God to help them make good choices with their bodies.

Say: **Making good choices with our bodies doesn't just mean exercising. It also means eating healthy foods and doing other things to take care of our bodies, like getting plenty of sleep.**

Train Our Minds

Say: **We can also train our minds so we can use them to think good thoughts and learn lots of good things. Let's practice spelling "God."**

Lead kids in spelling the word *God*. Then lead kids in a short prayer: **G-O-D—God—you love us, and you want us to know you more so we can be even better friends. Help us train our minds by learning more and more every day. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Train Spiritually

Say: **We can train our hearts to love God more, too. When we learn more about God and spend time with him, God helps us make good choices that show love to others. One way we train our hearts is by talking to God.**

Lead kids to fold their hands in prayer, and lead them in a short prayer, asking God to help them find time to spend with him.

Say: **God loves it when we look for ways to spend time with him! And the more time we spend with him, the better we get to know God. God can be our best friend when we spend lots of time with him! God is so wise that when we're around him, we learn to make the best choices, too.**

Let kids know that you hope to see them back in church next week, and thank them for coming today.



OBJECT LESSON

[10 min]

Kids sink marshmallows.

Supplies

- mini marshmallows (handful for each child)
- clear plastic cups (1 per child)
- water
- flour
- wet wipes

Float a Marshmallow

Give each child a handful of mini marshmallows.

Say: **Marshmallows are yummy to eat *and* fun to float! Let's put marshmallows in cups of water and watch them float.**

- Have adult or teen helpers give each child a cup of water.
- Have kids each place a couple of marshmallows into their cups and watch them float.

Ask: • **What other things float in water?** Direct the conversation toward a swimming pool, and suggest something you've seen float to begin the conversation. You could mention a life preserver, a life jacket, or a pool noodle.

Smash a Marshmallow

Say: **A marshmallow floats because it has air bubbles inside. But let's see what happens when we smash the marshmallows. Will they still float?**

- Have kids put some flour on their fingertips and then use their fingers to smash several marshmallows together and roll them into a tiny ball. (The flour will keep marshmallows from sticking to their fingers.)
- Have kids drop the smashed marshmallows into their cups; they will sink!
- Give kids a choice to float or smash their remaining marshmallows.
- Pour out the water, and throw away the cups and marshmallows. Use wet wipes to clean sticky hands.

Talk About It

Say: **When we smashed the marshmallows, they didn't float anymore. They sank! That's kind of like what happens when we make a wrong choice—wrong choices hurt us the way wrong choices hurt the marshmallows.**

Tell about a time *you* made a wrong choice and it ended badly. Maybe watching too much TV made you late for an appointment, or you ate a lot of candy and got a tummy ache. Say: **When we're wise, we make good choices, like choosing to wear a lifejacket when we go to the pool. We want to make wise choices because wrong choices hurt us. God is wise, and he helps us make wise choices that help us and don't hurt us.**