



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Shepherd Search

[10 min]

Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Follow a Partner's Voice

Say: **We're learning that Jesus is our good shepherd. He knows us, watches over us, and cares about us like a shepherd cares for each of his sheep. Let's play a game of shepherds and sheep to see what all this means.**

- Form pairs. Partner with someone yourself if you have an uneven number of kids.
- Give partners time to introduce themselves if they don't already know each other and find something they have in common, such as a favorite color, what school they go to, or a favorite sports team. Once pairs find something simple they have in common, that word or short phrase will be their special call.
- For the first round, one partner will be the Shepherd and the other will be the Sheep.
- Have all the Shepherds stand along one of the walls, facing their partners.
- Have all the Sheep stand along the opposite wall, facing the wall so their backs are turned to their partners.
- Have the Shepherds shuffle so they're no longer standing across from their partners.
- At your cue, the Shepherds can start calling out the word or phrase they and their partners decided on, and the Sheep will walk backward, trying to get to their Shepherds only by listening for their voices and special calls.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play. It will help make the game more challenging as partners try to listen for each other.
- Play a second round, allowing pairs to come up with a new special call and swap roles.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What was hard or easy about listening for your Shepherd's voice?**

• **What would be different if you had to pick out the voice of someone you know really well, like a parent or your best friend?**

• **Who are people you could easily pick out of a crowd?** Share an example of your own, such as your mom because of her gentle voice or a friend because he or she is always joking and laughing with you.

• **How can we get to know Jesus' voice like that?**

Say: **Jesus know us better than anyone, and as we spend time with Jesus, we'll get to know him more and more so we can recognize his voice in our lives. It's good to know the voice of our good shepherd!**



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO Feeling Sheepish

[10 min]

Supplies

- “Feeling Sheepish” teaching video

Discuss and Watch “Feeling Sheepish”

Say: Today we’re learning that Jesus is like a shepherd! Jesus knows us, even better than a shepherd knows his sheep.

Ask: • **What are some interesting things you know about sheep?**

Say: **We know a little about sheep, but we could learn a lot more!**

Let’s find out more about sheep by seeing some real shepherds!

Watch “Feeling Sheepish.”

Ask: • **What did the shepherds say or do that reminds you of how Jesus interacts with us?**

- **What was different about the shepherds and Jesus?**

Say: Jesus knows us, so we get to know him. The shepherds in our video knew how to take care of their sheep and how to get them to go where they need to go. They made sure a lot of grass grew so the sheep would have food. They knew the names of certain special sheep, but most sheep didn’t even have names. That’s a little different from shepherds in Bible times. Jesus knows our names and so much more! He knows everything about us, and he invites us to get to know him.



DEEPER BIBLE

Who Is the Thief, and What Could He Steal From Me?

[15 min]

Supplies

- Bibles
- ball

Tip

- This topic may inspire kids to ask many more questions. It's okay not to answer all the questions that arise. Stick to the lesson and redirect kids to avoid focusing on spiritual warfare stories.

Play a Sneaky Game

Say: **In today's Bible story, Jesus tells us that he's a good shepherd who knows us. But he also warns us about a thief.**

Read John 10:10.

Say: **Let's play a game to see how good you are at catching a thief.**

Have kids line up along the wall. Choose one child to stand several feet away from the wall with his or her back to the group. That child will be the Catcher.

Place a ball about 1 foot behind the Catcher.

Say: **The Catcher's job is to keep everyone else from stealing the ball. The Catcher will have to listen carefully for thieves. If the Catcher turns around and everyone is still touching the wall, his or her turn is over. However, if the Catcher turns around and someone is sneaking toward the ball, that person is out. Everyone else, your goal is to steal the ball and get back to the wall without the Catcher catching you.**

Play several rounds, allowing time for different kids to be the Catcher.

Ask: **When you were the Catcher, what was your strategy to catch the thieves?**

Say: **Jesus warned us that there is a thief out to kill, steal, and destroy. So who is that thief, and what do we have that he wants to steal? Let's dig in to that.**

Dig Deeper

Have kids form two groups. Assign each group one of the following passages. Explain that each of these passages addresses a different earthly king, but people who study the Bible believe that the verses are actually talking about Satan and that the evil kings mentioned got their spiritual power from Satan. Also be ready to help define difficult words in these passages. Even the NLT, a very kid-friendly version, mentions some difficult words!

- Isaiah 14:12-15 (the words "shining star" in this passage are the name Lucifer, another name for Satan)
- Ezekiel 28:13-16

(Note: We used [Christianity Today](https://www.christianitytoday.com) and [billygraham.org](https://www.billygraham.org) as sources for the background on these passages.)

After kids read their verses, ask them to share what the verses tell us about where Satan came from and who he is.

Say: **The Bible doesn't have a fully written story of exactly where Satan came from. But by looking at clues throughout the Bible, we can find out more about who he is. From these verses, we can tell that Satan was once a mighty angel but was kicked out of heaven because of his pride. The**

Bible also tells us how Satan works in the world.

Read 1 Peter 5:8.

Say: **The Bible tells us that Satan is someone we should be aware of and watch out for. But what does Satan want to steal from us? Let's see.**

Have kids form four groups, and assign each group one of the following passages. Each group will come up with a pose that shows what Jesus gives us that Satan may want to steal from us.

- John 14:27 (peace)
- John 15:11 (joy)
- Hebrews 6:19 (hope)
- Hebrews 10:35 (confidence/trust)

After groups read, have them show their poses to everyone and share what Satan wants to steal.

Have each group answer this question, sharing its answer with the whole group.

Ask: • **What is the opposite of the words you just shared?**

Say: **Satan tries to steal good things from us and give us those opposites instead. He wants to give us worry instead of peace and sadness instead of joy.**

Ask: • **How does it feel to hear all these things about Satan?**

Say: **It can be scary to think about Satan having power and wanting to steal our peace, joy, hope, and confidence. But here's something important to remember: Satan is not another god. His power is nowhere close to God's! In fact, Jesus gave his own disciples, who were regular people, more power than Satan has.**

Read Luke 10:18-20.

Ask: • **What does it tell you when you hear that Jesus gave his followers more power than Satan?**

Say: **God gave us power over Satan, too.**

Read Ephesians 6:13-17.

Ask: • **How would you feel wearing this amazing armor of God's?**

Say: **When we arm ourselves with God's truth, righteousness, peace, and, most important, salvation through Jesus, we have the power to fight Satan. When Satan tries to steal from us, we can tell him *no* because we have Jesus' power on our side! Jesus knows us, and when we get to know him, we have his power!**

I'm going to close this time with a verse that gives us victory over Satan. As I read it, pose like you're going into battle.

Read Romans 16:20. Have kids pose for a few seconds and then stomp their feet victoriously.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Thanks for Knowing Me

[5 min]

Thank Jesus

Say: **Today we learned that Jesus knows us. Jesus knows everything about you...and he loves you so much. There might be some things about you that not a lot of people know, but Jesus knows.**

- Have kids think of things not many people know about them.
- Kids will pray, thanking Jesus for knowing those things about them.
- Kids can also ask Jesus to help them get to know him better.

Wrap Up

Pray: **Jesus, thank you that you know and love us! Help us hear your voice and get to know you better. In your name, amen.**



ACTIVITY PAGES WITH A POINT

Know Those Sheep

[10 min]

Supplies

- “Jesus Is the Good Shepherd” Activity Page (1 per reader)
- crayons

Older Kids: Do an Activity Page

Say: **Today we saw how Jesus knows us. He’s like a shepherd who knows his sheep really well! Let’s see how well you can get to know some sheep.**

Distribute the activity pages. Tell kids they’ll have about two minutes to study the picture, then they’ll flip it over and answer questions. Estimate about two minutes, and then have kids flip over their papers.

Ask: • **How many sheep are sleeping?** (Answer: 2)

• **How many sheep have hats?** (Answer: 5 hats, 6 if you count the wig)

• **Where is the sheep who is eating grass?** (Answer: top left corner)

• **Where is the sheep who is tap dancing in a hat?** (Answer: near the middle)

• **How many sheep have black wool?** (Answer: 7)

• **How many sheep are wearing shirts?** (Answer: 5)

• **Were there any sheep with shoes?** (Answer: yes, the clown)

• **Is there anything else you can tell me about the sheep in this picture?** (Answers will vary.)

• **What would help you know these sheep better?**

• **What would help you get to know Jesus better?**

Say: **Jesus knows us. You didn’t have very long to get to know the sheep in this picture. But Jesus has known you since before you were even born! Jesus knows us, and we can get to know him.**

Younger Kids: Color a Coloring Page

Distribute the coloring pages and crayons. Say: **Jesus knows us. He’s like a good shepherd who knows and loves his sheep. Let’s color a shepherd!**

Allow time for kids to color.