



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Cup Hop

[10 min]

Supplies

- 12-ounce plastic cups (3 per child)
- cotton balls (3 per child)
- a few large bowls or boxes
- table(s) with a chair for each child
- upbeat music (optional)

Make a Cup Hop Into Another

Say: **The Bible story we read today was about a surprising way God showed he's real. Some people in the Bible had been worshipping a statue—an idol—thinking it was a god, but *the one true God* caused the statue to bow to God's Ark. It was a clear message for the people that God is real!**

Sometimes we may wonder if God is real when we can't see him or we don't have other proof that he's real. But did you know there are other things in our world we can't see but that everyone believes are real? I'll show you what I mean.

- Give each child three cups and three cotton balls.
- Have kids start by each placing a cotton ball in one cup and then putting another cup inside the first cup, on top of the cotton ball.
- Kids will then hold the stacked cups in one hand, resting the cups on the table in front of them where they can lean forward and blow on the cups easily.
- Have kids place the third cup an inch or so behind the stacked cups.
- At your cue, kids will blow on the stacked cups from the front, trying to make the top cup "hop" out of the first cup and land in the next cup.



- Kids can experiment with how they blow on the cups, how many cotton balls they use to elevate the “hopping” cup, and how near or far they place the third cup away from the stacked cups.
- The goal is to find a strategy where they can land the hopping cup into the next cup consistently.
- Kids can also take turns using the large bowls or boxes to see if they can successfully land the hopping cup inside them.
- If you’d like, play upbeat music while kids play.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What made the cup hop into the next cup?**

• **How do you know for sure that air is real and that air is what moved the cup?**

Say: **Air itself is invisible, and it wouldn’t make a sound if it weren’t moving things around. We only know that air exists because we can see how it moves things. Air does so much that we couldn’t live without it, but we don’t actually see air every day. We simply know it’s there.**

Ask: • **What are some ways we can see God at work around us, even if we can’t see him?** Share an example of your own, such as seeing a person’s heart being changed as he or she gets to know God or witnessing miraculous healing and help.

Say: **Air gives us a little picture of what God is like because we can’t see air, but we’re always surrounded by it and we know it’s real. God is real, and he’s the one and only true God. If you ever need a reminder of that, take a deep breath; as you feel the air fill your lungs, remember that God is as real as the air you breathe.**



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO

What's More Important?

[10 min]

Supplies

- “What's More Important?” teaching video

Discuss and Watch “What's More Important?”

Ask: • **If someone who didn't know you walked into your room, what would that person think is most important to you?** Share your own example first.

Say: **In the Bible story, some people didn't know God was real. They thought a fake god, an idol, was more important! But God showed that he's the one true God by making the idol bow to the ark that represented God's presence. Let's watch a video where *you'll* decide what's more important. Get ready to move!**

Watch “What's More Important?”

Ask: • **How did you decide which was more important in each choice?**

• **Were there any that were really hard to choose between? Why?**

• **Think about that last choice: Based on what you pay the most attention to in your life, what would others say is most important to you? What are your thoughts on that question?**

Say: **None of the things in our video were bad. You might like soccer, your phone, kittens, and straight A's. Those can all be good things! But they can *also* become idols if we let them be more important than God. God is the only true God, so he deserves the most of our attention.**



DEEPER BIBLE What Do I Really Worship?

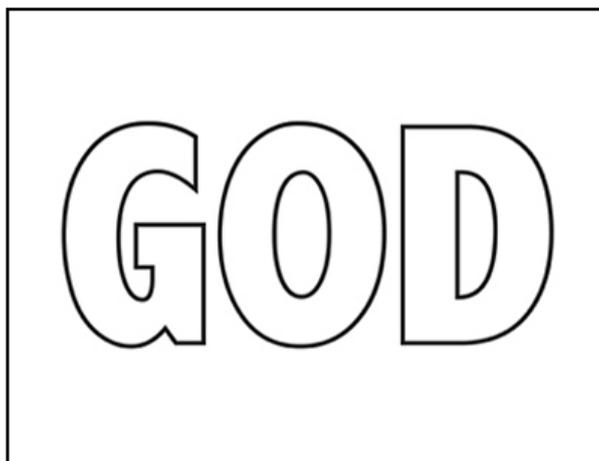
[15 min]

Supplies

- Bibles
- poster board or bulletin board paper
- thick marker
- 6 different colors of sticky notes (1 of each color per child)
- pens

Easy Prep

- Write "God" in big bubble letters on your poster board or bulletin board paper, and hang it on the wall. "God" should cover most of the paper so there's not much room or blank space surrounding it.



Introduce

Say: **In the Bible, the Philistines worshipped an idol named Dagon. Dagon was just a statue they'd made.**

Most people we know don't worship statues. But that doesn't mean we don't have idols! An idol is anything we worship or put before God. And while it's okay to like things besides God, we need to make sure we put God first.

So how can we tell what we really worship? Let's dig in to that!

Dig Deeper

Gather with kids near the sign you made.

Say: **In order to look at things that *could* be idols in your life, we'll consider some signs that you're worshipping something other than God. Just because something fits into one of these categories doesn't necessarily mean it's an idol, but we'll think through several signs of worship to determine if it is.**

One sign of worship is when you talk about something a lot.

Distribute pens. Give each child a sticky note in the same color, and have kids each write something they talk about a lot besides God. Have them place the sticky notes on the poster board, beginning to cover the word "God."

Continue with the following categories, using a different color of sticky note for each category. It's okay if kids have the same answer in multiple categories.

- what guides the choices you make
- what you think about (this could include worries and fears)
- what makes you feel happy
- physical displays (such as posters or clothing)
- what you spend time doing

Say: **Wow! God is all crowded out by other things right now.** Read off some of the things you see on sticky notes, especially things you see repeated a lot, such as video games, sports, or celebrity names.

Say: **These things aren't necessarily bad. But when they crowd God out of our lives like these sticky notes do, they're idols. Let's see what it looks like to put God at the center.**

Read the following verses for each category. After you read each one, have kids move all the sticky notes of that category's color to the perimeter of the poster board, and then lead kids in this prayer. Pray: **God, please don't let these be idols in our lives.** Ultimately, you'll clear the space over the word "God."

- What you talk about: 1 Peter 3:15
- What guides the choices you make: Romans 12:2
- What you think about: Psalm 48:9
- What makes you happy: Psalm 100:2
- Physical displays: Romans 1:23
- What you spend time doing: Psalm 1:1-2

Ask: • **How can you tell if one of the things you wrote might be an idol?**

• **Think about some of the things you wrote. How could you include God in those things?** Give kids an example of your own, such as praying with your family or sharing Bible verses with your closest friends.

Say: **This question is just for you to think about—you don't have to answer aloud. But you can pray and ask God to help show you an answer.**

Ask: • **Is there anything you wrote that you honestly think is an idol in your life—something that's really and truly more important than God? Consider the things you wrote more than once, especially.** Allow time for kids to think and pray.

Say: **God is real, so we believe he's the one true God. Anything else we enjoy needs to come after God in our priorities. Let's read these verses as a prayer to celebrate that God is the one true God.**

Read 1 Corinthians 8:5-6. When you get to verse 6, pause after each line and have kids repeat it.

**LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP****Bow and Pray****[5 min]**

Bow and Pray

Say: **In the Bible story, God caused the idol to fall, almost as if it were bowing to him. Bowing is a sign of respect. It's a physical way to show that we believe God is real.**

- Have kids spread out and get in a bowing position. This may be on their knees and bowing, standing and bowing, or any other way they feel comfortable.
- Have kids talk to God about what they learned today as they're bowing.
- Kids can ask God to remove any idols in their lives—anyone or anything that becomes more important to them than God.

Wrap Up

Pray: **God, you're real, and we believe you are the one true God. Thank you that we don't worship a fake god or a statue...we worship you, and you're real! In Jesus' name, amen.**

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



ACTIVITY PAGES WITH A POINT

Real and Fake

[10 min]

Supplies

- “An Idol Bows to God's Ark” Activity Page
- pencils
- crayons

Older Kids: Do an Activity Page

Say: **God is real, so we believe he’s the one true God. Dagon was just a statue—a fake! Let’s see how well you can tell real from fake.**

Distribute the activity pages and pencils. Allow time for kids to answer all the questions. Then review the answers below.

Ask: • **Which fake things tricked you?** Point out that crayons do *not* really make a good snack!

• **What are some things that people give the kind of focus and attention only God deserves?**

Say: **Today we don’t worship statues like the Philistines did. But we might worship video games, our phones, or internet stars by giving them too much time and attention. God is real, so let’s give him the most attention! Everything else falls before him.**

ANSWER KEY: These are real: 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15

Younger Kids: Color a Coloring Page

Distribute the coloring pages and crayons. Say: **God is real. Not Dagon! Dagon was just a fake statue! Let’s color that broken statue.**

Allow time for kids to color the picture.