



LOW-ENERGY GAME “I’m Listening”

[10 min]

Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)

Play a Version of Marco Polo

Say: **When God spoke to Samuel, Samuel said, “I’m listening.” Samuel found out that God speaks, so he continued to listen for God’s voice.**

Let’s play a great game that can help us understand a little bit of what it might have been like for Samuel when he was learning to listen for God’s voice.

- Invite a willing person to be the first “Samuel.”
- Samuel will keep his or her eyes tightly closed—*no peeking*.
- Everyone else will slowly move around the room.
- When Samuel wants to hear where people are, he or she will call out, “I’m listening!”
- Everyone else must respond by calling out, “Samuel!”
- Samuel will keep calling out for the response from the other players in an effort to track down and tag one of the other players—as in Marco Polo.
- Whoever Samuel tags will become the new Samuel.
- If you’d like, play upbeat music while kids play to increase the challenge. Adjust the volume as needed so it doesn’t make the game too difficult.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What was your strategy to listen well in this game?**

Say: **God spoke to Samuel in a voice that could be heard, like you can hear mine now. God can speak to us that way, but God also speaks to us in many other ways, such as through wise advice of other people who follow God or through reading the Bible—God’s Word. As we get to know God, we’ll get better and better at being able to listen to what he’s saying.**

Ask: • **What are some ways you’ll listen for God this week?** Share an example of your own, such as setting aside time in the morning to pray and listen to God.

Say: **God speaks to all of us, even if it’s not exactly the way he did to Samuel. If you tell God you’re listening, like Samuel did, God will speak to you in a special way, too.**



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO

Are You Listening?

[10 min]

Supplies

- “Are You Listening?” teaching video

Discuss and Watch “Are You Listening?”

Say: Today we’re learning that God speaks, so we listen for him.

Ask: • **What are some ways God speaks?**

Say: **Let’s listen to God as we see a lot of different ways he speaks. Think of this video as a prayer, and listen for God as you watch.**

Watch “Are You Listening?”

Ask: • **How did you hear God as you watched this video?**

• **How have you heard God as you experienced one of the things from this video in real life?**

Say: **God speaks through all kinds of normal, everyday things. He spoke to Samuel while he was sleeping! Samuel didn’t think it was God at first, but soon he learned to listen for God’s voice. God speaks, so listen!**



DEEPER BIBLE

Listen for God

[15 min]

Supplies

- soft stuffed animal or blanket (1 for every 15 kids)
- picture Bibles (1 for every 5 or 6 kids)

Listen for God

Say: **God speaks, so we listen for him. Let's explore some of the ways God speaks to us.**

Have kids sit with you in a circle.

Say: **Let's play a game of Telephone. I'll whisper a message to the friend sitting next to me, and then that friend will whisper the message to the person next to him or her. We'll see if we can send the message all the way around our circle.**

Whisper to the child sitting on your right, "God loves you." Lead kids to pass the message around the circle by whispering to the kids next to them. Continue until the message gets back to you.

Say: **You had to be really quiet and listen closely to your friend's voice. That reminds me of one way we can hear from God. We might not hear God's loud, booming voice like Samuel did. But when we're quiet and listening for God, we might have thoughts pop into our heads from God. God might tell you, "I love you" or "I'm proud of you."**

God can also use other people to speak to us. When someone shares kind words with you, like "God loves you," God is using that person to make sure you know how special you are!

Look for a Message From God

Say: **Let's try something else.**

Have kids lie down and close their eyes.

Say: **Let's use our imaginations. Keep your eyes closed and imagine eating your favorite ice cream in a big ice cream cone...with lots of sprinkles! Pause. Can you see a picture of that ice cream in your mind? Pause.**

Say: **Now I want you to imagine Jesus walking up to you and giving you a great big hug! Pause. Can you see it? Okay, you can open your eyes now.**

Have kids sit up.

Say: **Another way God speaks to us is through pictures or things we see! You can ask God for a picture when you close your eyes, like seeing Jesus give you a hug or a dream when you go to sleep. And when we look around us, we can see lots of things God uses to remind us of his love.**

Share something *you've* recently seen that reminded you of God's love for you. Avoid sharing abstract examples so kids can make an easy connection. For example, you might say you saw someone helping an elderly woman walk across the street or you saw someone give money or food to someone in need.

Ask: • **What's something you've seen that reminds you of God's love? Think of ways people care for others.** Help kids think of ways God uses people to care for others. Kids might share how a friend helped someone up when he or she fell down on the playground or a friend shared a snack with someone who didn't have one.

Say: **When we see people caring for others, it's a reminder from God that he loves us and he cares for us.**

Feel God in Our Hearts

Pass the stuffed animal or blanket around the circle so each child has a chance to hold it.

As the object is being passed, ask: • **How does the stuffed animal (or blanket) feel?**

Say: **It feels so soft and comforting. And God speaks to us by giving us feelings kind of like that in our hearts. God can fill our hearts with feelings. He can help us feel comforted or better when we have a worry. He can help us feel joy and happiness, too, when he shows us his love. And God can put feelings in our hearts to help other people, too. Like if we see someone get hurt on the playground and we feel sadness in our hearts, that can be God letting us know we can go help that friend.**

Learn From God's Words

Say: **Let's talk about one more way God speaks to us.**

Divide kids into groups of five or six, and hand out the picture Bibles.

Say: **Another way God speaks to us is through his words in the Bible. The Bible is full of God's words that tell us how much he loves us. God's words in the Bible also tell us the best way to live.**

Let kids flip through the Bibles to look at the pictures. Have adult or teen helpers lead kids to look for pictures that show love. They might show people loving each other, or they might show Jesus loving people by talking to them and healing them.

Say: **When we know what God tells us in the Bible, those good things will stay in our minds and hearts and help us when we're feeling sad or lonely or scared.**

God spoke to Samuel through a loud voice that woke up Samuel. But God speaks to us in so many other ways, too. God speaks through pictures in our minds and things we see, God speaks through feelings in our hearts, and God speaks to us through his words in the Bible. There are so many ways God speaks, so we listen for him!

(Four categories adapted from Truth to Table ministry.)



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

God Speaks, We Listen

[5 min]

Supplies

- Bible

Listen and Respond

Say: **Today we heard how God talked to his friend Samuel, and we found out that God speaks to us, too. Let's listen to some things God says to us. God talks to our hearts when he speaks to us, so let's put our hands on our hearts as we listen to God.** Lead children to place their hands over their hearts.

Show the Bible. Say: **The Bible is God's words to us. It says in John 3:16, "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."**

We listened to something God speaks to us: God says he loves us. Now let's talk to him. We can tell him we love him, too. Lead kids to hold out their arms to welcome a hug from God and say to God, "I love you, too, God."

Show the Bible. Say: **The Bible says in Psalm 139:13, "You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb."**

We listened to something God speaks to us: God says he made each of us perfectly. Now let's talk to him. We can thank him for making us. Lead kids to thank God for several of their body parts and touch those body parts as they thank God. For example, you might lead kids to thank God for making their legs as they place their hands on their legs and thank God for making their minds that they think with as kids touch their heads.

Show the Bible. Say: **God's Son, Jesus, said in John 14:15, "If you love me, keep my commandments."**

We listened to something God's Son says to us: Jesus says to obey and follow him. Now let's talk to him. We can ask Jesus to help us follow him. Lead kids to hold their arms up in the air to ask for Jesus' help and say, "Jesus, help me follow you."

Listen Quietly

Say: **There are so many ways God speaks to us. He speaks to our hearts. We listen to what he said in the Bible. We can hear him speak to us when we sing songs to him. We can hear him whisper to us when we pray silently to him. Let's practice being quiet and listening for God to talk to us now.** Lead children in a moment of silence for about 20 seconds. Then close in prayer.

Tell the children that you're glad they came to church to join your class today. Ask them if they'll come back to your class next week.



ACTIVITY PAGES WITH A POINT

Listen Carefully

[10 min]

Supplies

- “God Speaks to Samuel” Coloring Page
- pencils
- crayons

Older Kids: Do an Activity Page

Say: **God speaks, and Samuel had to listen carefully! Let’s see if you can look carefully for some of the words God speaks to us in the Bible.**

Distribute the activity pages and pencils. Allow time for kids to find all the words.

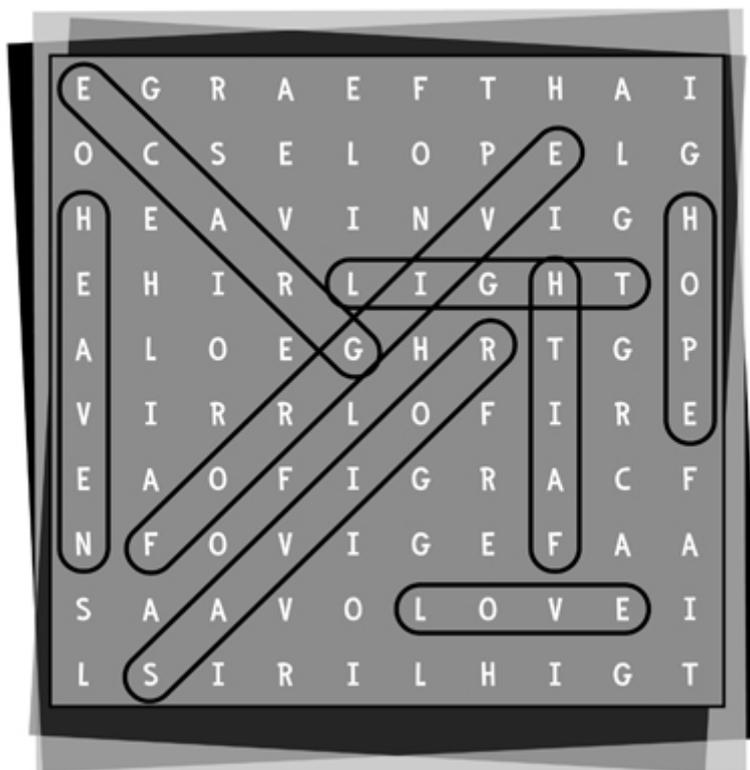
Ask: • **Which words were hardest to find? Why?**

• **How is searching carefully for those hard words like listening carefully for**

God?

Say: **Sometimes when we do a word search, we have to look carefully or we’ll miss some words. And when it comes to hearing God, it helps to quiet ourselves and listen carefully. God speaks, but we can miss him in the noise of our own busyness and distractions!**

ANSWER KEY:



Younger Kids: Color a Coloring Page

Distribute the coloring pages and crayons. Say: **God speaks to us, just as he spoke to Samuel! Let’s color Samuel as we listen for God.**