

WEEK 2 LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

I'm not alone — God is with me!

BIBLE

The Fiery Furnace:
Daniel 3; 2 Timothy 2:8-15

LARGE GROUP TIME

Welcome back to *Hear Me Roar*, where we get to share in the adventures happening around the Babylon Zoo! I'm the zookeeper here, and I can't wait to show you around. The capybaras just had babies last night, so I have been ooh-ing and aah-ing over those sweet things all morning! I'll show you pictures later but tell me, **what's your favorite baby animal?**

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can lead kids in worship with any songs of your choice, but here are some suggestions that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)
 - "Echo" (Elevation Worship)
 - "God Is Always With Us" (Lifetree Kids)
 - "I'm Trusting You" (Lifetree Kids)
 - "Not Afraid" (Rend Co. Kids)
 - "Journey of a Lifetime" (Kids on the Move)

ACTIVITY | Otter Tag

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ahead of time, find a picture of an otter raft, like [this](#) one. (For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)) To start the game, choose one kid to be "it." This kid will try to tag the rest. Once tagged, the kids will link arms and both kids will be "it" together. Only the kids on the ends of the chain can tag others. The game ends when there is only one otter left unattached to the raft. They are the winner!
 - ✳ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Have friends that have been tagged identify themselves by putting on a hat or a vest, or holding a bright piece of paper. Only the final two friends tagged will be able to tag others.
- Let's make our way to the otter exhibit. Did you know that otters link arms when they're eating, sleeping, or resting? A group of otters is called a raft! [Show picture.]
- In our next game, you'll all be otters creating your own raft!

ACTIVITY | Troop Trivia

- **Do you remember what my favorite animal is?** Yes! It's a lion! **Do you know what a group of lions is called?** Right, a pride! Today we're going to play a little something I call "Troop Trivia." I need three volunteers to battle it out to see who knows the most about groups of animals!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask for three volunteers. Give each kid a clipboard, pen, and ten small pieces of paper. While playing, show a picture of each animal grouping on a screen. (For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)) You can also get everyone involved by having kids play in small groups of four or five kids per team.
 - ✳ **PRETEEN HACK:** Give preteens a place to discover common ground by playing an animal-themed game of Never Have I Ever. For example, preteens could respond to prompts like, "Never have I ever seen a shiver of sharks in real life."
- I'm going to put a picture of a group of animals on the screen, along with four multiple choice options. Write down what you think the name of that group of animals is called, and then I will ask you to reveal your answers.
 - 1: [Rhinos](#): **A) Crash** B) Squish C) Family D) Drove
 - 2: [Bats](#): A) Nest B) Barrel **C) Cauldron** D) Pack
 - 3: [Alligators](#) A) School **B) Congregation** C) Pod **D) Cackle**
 - 4: [Giraffes](#) A) Band B) Parade C) Labor **D) Tower**
 - 5: [Camels](#) **A) Caravan** B) Business C) Cast D) Liter
 - 6: [Ferrets](#) A) School B) Drove **C) Business** D) Swarm
 - 7: [Frogs](#) A) Family B) Shiver **C) Army** D) Fever
 - 8: [Skunk](#) A) Stink **B) Stench** C) Odor D) Crew
 - 9: [Parrots](#) A) Prickle B) Mob C) Parliament **D) Pandemonium**
 - 10: [Jellyfish](#) A) Pack B) Leap C) Bloat **D) Smack**
- Thanks to all of our wonderful contestants. But today, there is only one esteemed animal expert! Let's give them a roar of applause!

QUESTION | Animal Kingdom Experts

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Invite kids to share their thoughts on the questions below. Depending on the size of the group, you can do this together or by having kids circle up with three or four kids sitting nearby.
- Something I love to think about is how every animal is unique, just like each of us.
- **If you could be any animal, what would you want to be and why?**
- Most animals travel around in groups, but some like to be alone. I get it — sometimes I just needed some peace and quiet too!
- **Would you rather be an animal that travels and works in a group or would you rather be on your own?**
- **What's your favorite activity to do when you're alone?**
- **What's your favorite thing to do with your friends?**
- We may like to be by ourselves sometimes, but it's really comforting to know that we're never really alone!

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Daniel 3 (The Fiery Furnace)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Dressed as a zookeeper, tell the Bible story from the zookeeper's perspective, reading from Daniel 3 when prompted. Prepare to show pictures of the following animals: [capybaras](#) and [sun bears](#). (For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)) You may choose to have a newspaper as a prop to hold your Bible behind and pretend you're reading the news as you read the Bible passage.

- It's another exciting day at the Babylon Zoo. *[Show pictures as you talk about the animals.]* The capybaras had their babies last night, and the sun bears set a climbing world record.
- And our animals aren't the only ones with big things happening this week!
- **Do you remember our guest from last week, Daniel, and his friends who were brought from Jerusalem to Babylon? Does anyone remember the names of Daniel's friends?**
- Well, the most incredible thing happened to Shadrach, Meschach, and Abednego . . . it was the front page news of the Babylonian Times and I've got to tell you about it!
- *[Read Daniel 3:1–6.]*
 - King Nebuchadnezzar didn't follow God, and wanted everyone in his kingdom to bow to him instead! This was a problem for Shadrach, Meschach, and Abednego because they were from Israel and had grown up knowing they were to worship only God. When they refused to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's statue, the king got really mad.
- *[Read Daniel 3:19–23.]*
 - You'd think this was the part of the story in which our three friends were gone for good. But God had another plan — one far greater than anything King Nebuchadnezzar could scheme up!
- *[Read Daniel 3:24–28.]*
 - Not only did God protect Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, a fourth person was walking around with them in the fire. It must have been an angel or something! When the three friends came out of the furnace, they weren't even singed or smelling like campfire like we sometimes do after roasting marshmallows. God saved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and showed them they weren't alone!
- I know you all came to the zoo to look at some more animals but I hope this is the thing you remember most from today's visit! What a story!

BIG IDEA | I'm not alone — God is with me!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set up your space with the coconut tree, flamingo, and lion decorations like last week. Insert papers with the Big Ideas into the coconuts and attach them to the tree. Play the song, "[The Lion Sleeps Tonight](#)," as you gather the kids. After the Big Idea reveal, play a [sound bite of a lion's roar](#). For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
- It sounds like our biggest lion, Ari, is sleeping right now. We will try to wake him up in a bit, but for now, let's stay here and let him nap. While he's sleeping, we're going to talk about our Big Idea . . . but I wonder where we can find it. *[Look around for a few seconds and then grab a coconut off the tree.]* Let's crack this open and see what we find.
- *[Remove paper containing the Big Idea and read it out loud.]*
- **I'm not alone — God is with me!** I think it's time for Ari, the lion, to wake up! Let's shout — or should I say, roar — the Big Idea! Stand up and roar that **I'm not alone — God is with me!** *[Play a [sound bite of a lion's roar!](#)]*

VIDEO | Hear Me Roar, Episode 2

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](#).

VIDEO | Lions Stick Together

- Lions are some of the most social creatures in the animal kingdom. Let's watch this video to learn more about how they choose to live life together in their pride.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Watch the video "[Wild Inside the National Zoo: Lion Pride](#)". For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
- The lions are reminded they aren't alone because they have each other. They're also bonded with the zookeepers, who help them learn, grow, and conquer challenges along the way.

- In a similar way, God made us to be social creatures. We need each other.
 - When we're going through hard times, we need each other for support.
 - When we see people doing what we know is not right, we can help each other make the choice that would honor God.
 - When things are going really well, we need friends to celebrate with us.
 - God wired us to go through life together.
- We all want to know we aren't alone. We have amazing friends and family, but we also have God! God lives inside our hearts, so we literally are never alone! God sticks to us closer than a lion pride sticks together. God never leaves us!
- God has given us many people, like our friends and family, who love us and will help take care of us. Not only that, but God loves you and will take care of you too.
- **Who are some people in your life that show you God's love and care and show you that you're not alone?**

ACTIVITY | Ant Race

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show a [picture of the ants](#) that build bridges. Then, have one kid come to the front, get on all fours, and try to balance a beach ball on their back. Then divide the kids into pairs, have them stand back-to-back and link arms. Place a beach ball between their backs and have them race around the room with the ball between their backs.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have preteens compete in a three-legged relay race where they have to dribble the beach ball with their joined feet around the race course.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Have kids line up in teams and have them pass the beach ball from one end of the line to the other. The last person then goes to the front of the line and passes it down the line. Keep going until the original first player returns to position, then have the team sit down to show that they have finished. Don't worry about making it a race or timing them but give them ample time to complete the activity.
- Now this next exhibit is not really an exhibit. It's an animal that we see all the time almost everywhere. **Can you guess what animal it might be?** It's ants!
- Normally, I don't like bugs of any kind, but this picture started to convince me ants might be awesome!
- *[Show image.]*
- Ants are able to accomplish amazing things because they are together. Sometimes, we may feel like we can't tackle a big task in front of us, but God can create a bridge! Oftentimes, God helps us conquer the impossible by giving us other people. One way we're reminded that God is with us is by noticing our friends and family members.
- We're going to race around the room carrying these beach balls on our backs. *[Have one kid come to the front, get on all fours, and try to balance the ball on their back.]* That seems pretty impossible, right? But now let's try it with two people working together!
- *[Divide the students into pairs.]* Each of you are going to race around the room with your partner, carrying the beach ball. Here's the catch: You can't use your hands or legs! You have to carry the ball between your backs! *[Have leaders place the ball between their backs to get them started, and start the race.]*
- Great job, everyone! What was impossible alone was possible when you worked together!

SCRIPTURE | 2 Timothy 2:8–15

- The apostle, Paul, wrote the book of 2 Timothy while he was in a jail cell in Rome. He had been arrested for sharing the good news of Jesus. He knew his life was coming to an end, so he wrote a letter to his young friend, Timothy, encouraging him to keep being devoted to Jesus, even when things got hard.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read 2 Timothy 2:8–15.
- Did you notice what Paul did in the middle of his gut-wrenching moments in jail? He remembered Jesus, and how even death couldn't hold Jesus down!
- Although Jesus had returned to heaven, Paul wrote about the faithfulness of Jesus, who will always be faithful to us, no matter what. Isn't that incredible? Jesus will never leave our side. He has sent his Spirit to be our constant friend and guide! His love and constant presence with us isn't based on anything we do. It's just who he is!
- Paul was in chains, which means he was caged up and probably treated far worse than the animals at our zoo. But he knew that Jesus and God's Word could never be chained or locked up!
- In the good times and bad, you can count on the fact that **I'm not alone — God is with me!**

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

ACTIVITY | Find the Animals

- Sometimes, it can be easy to forget that God is with us. In times when we feel overwhelmed, busy, nervous, or frustrated, our vision becomes a bit blurry and it may be difficult to feel that God is with us.
- The apostle Paul took the time to stop and remember that Jesus was with him. He chose to focus on Jesus and find him in the middle of his difficult situation. In a similar way, Jesus invites us to take the time to stop and look for Jesus.
- **Have you ever seen a "magic eye" picture?**
- At first glance, these images seem crazy and chaotic! It doesn't seem like there is anything there, but there are actually animals hidden inside! Let's see if we can find the animals in these "magic eye" pictures.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show kids some magic eye (stereogram) images, like these from "The Lion King" ([Image 1](#), [Image 1 answer](#), [Image 2](#), [Image 2 answer](#)). You can check out a tutorial [like this](#) before you do this with the kids.
- Some of you were able to see the animals, and even if you weren't that's okay! Sometimes our lives feel a lot like these pictures — wild and overwhelming! Even when we have a hard time seeing Jesus in the messy moments of life, we can trust that he is there. We're never alone!
- Let's say our Big Idea together: **I am not alone — God is with me!**

ACTIVITY | Postcard from the Zoo

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid materials to make a card for a friend or family member, especially someone who is going through a difficult time. Consider providing postcard stamps for kids to take their cards home and mail once they've located the recipient's address.
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Provide stickers or cut-out images and glue for friends who have difficulty writing.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Encourage preteens to send a text or video message, or set up a time to FaceTime their friend or family member.
- We've all felt alone at one time or another.
 - Maybe you've felt alone when you started attending a new school or joined a sports team.
 - Maybe you felt alone if your parents had to separate, or if your best friend moved away.
 - No one likes to feel alone. God often reminds us we aren't alone by giving us friends and family members to support and encourage us.
- Today, we've been reminded that we aren't alone — God is with us. So, let's take a few minutes and remind someone else they aren't alone.

- **Who is a friend or family member who may need some encouragement this week?**
- Write them a postcard from the zoo and remind them they aren't alone. God is with them and so are you.

MEMORY VERSE | Nahum 1:7 (NIV)

- **"The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him."**
- We've been running around like cheetahs so much today, we almost forgot to review our memory verse, Nahum 1:7! Let's do that right now . . . I feel like this is going to be a breeze because we'll be working together!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Break the students into animal groups, assigning each group a portion of the verse. Have each group include something in their segment of the verse that has to do with their animal (noises, motions, etc.). After a few minutes, bring them back to recite the whole thing together, with each group saying their respective part. **(Don't forget to also check out the memory verse signs — a combination of SEE and ASL — available in your Programming folder or at growcurriculum.org/Nahum1-7.)**
 - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Keep in mind some friends may prefer to recite their portion of the memory verse from a piece of paper or a picture prompt, rather than memory.

PRAYER

- God, thank you that I'm not alone. Even when I feel like there's no one to help me, I trust you are there. Thank you for my friends and family who remind me of your love. Help me be there to support and help others in the way you've helped me. Thank you for making impossible things possible. Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **Why did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego not bow down to the gold statue?**
- **How do you think they felt when they were told they would be thrown into the fiery furnace?**
- **What do you think helped Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be brave when they faced the flames?**
- **Read 2 Timothy 2:8–10. What do you think Paul meant when he said that "God's word is not chained (or bound)"?**
- **When was a time you felt alone?**
- **How did that make you feel? What did you do about it?**
- **When was a time you felt God was with you?**

ACTIVITY | Tiny Zoo

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Lay out a large piece of butcher paper on a table for each group and give them a box of supplies for the day.
- We're not made to do life alone! God made us to be social creatures. We need each other and we need God. When we aren't alone, we feel safe, secure, and at home.
- We're going to continue working on our Tiny Zoo! Today, we're going to create homes for each of the animals by adding grass, ponds, and enclosures for each animal's exhibit!