3-6 | Nov 1, 2026

Loop Teaching: Shaping Sportsmanship
Teaching Focus: Show respect, selflessness, and gratitude in competition.
Scripture: Colossians 3:17 NIV (read the full verse from an NIV Bible)

1. Opening & Prayer

Welcome children by name with a smile, wave, high-five, or fist bump. Invite children with an offering to use the offering container. Put toys away for worship and the lesson.

"Today's Loop video is about being a good sport. Think about how you react when you win or lose. Watch for ways Jesus can help us honor other people during a competition."

Let's pray.

"Dear God, thank You for the people we get to learn and play with. Help us listen today and treat others with kindness. Shape our hearts so our words and actions honor Jesus, whether we win or lose. In Jesus' name, amen."

2. Video Lesson on Jellyfin

3. Discussion

"Today's lesson connects godly character with being a good sport. Respect means treating others as people who matter. Selflessness means caring about someone else's needs instead of only getting our own way."

"Winning can feel exciting, and losing can feel disappointing. Those feelings are real. With Jesus' help, we can choose kind words, fair play, and gratitude in either situation."

"Our unit verse is Colossians 3:17. Listen for how our words and actions can honor Jesus, and for the reminder to give thanks to God."

Open an NIV Bible to Colossians 3:17 and read the full verse aloud. Read it again in short phrases for children to repeat. Ask how the verse applies to a game, a classroom contest, or a team activity.

- "When you win or lose, what would respect, selflessness, and gratitude look like?"
  (Examples: congratulate the other team, encourage someone who made a mistake, share a turn, and thank God for the chance to play.)
- "How does it feel when someone brags after winning or gets rude after losing? What could you say or do instead?"
  (Examples: say 'Good game,' notice the other team's effort, take a calm breath, and thank the people who helped.)
- "If a friend struggles to stay respectful during games, what could you suggest? Who can help us make a better choice?"
  (Examples: pause, pray, use an encouraging phrase, and ask a trusted adult for help. Jesus helps us grow in character.)

"Being a good sport does not mean we stop trying or never feel disappointed. We can give our best effort and still honor others. Remember our teaching focus: ***Show respect, selflessness, and gratitude in competition.***"

4. My Good Sport Playbook



What You Need:

- ☐ Plain white paper, one sheet per child
- ☐ Pencils, one per child
- ☐ One completed four-page playbook sample
- ☐ Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Prepare a sample by folding one plain sheet in half like a greeting card. The front, two inside pages, and back make a four-page playbook. No printed template is needed.
- Label the front ‘My Good Sport Playbook.’ Label the inside left ‘Respect,’ inside right ‘Selflessness,’ and back ‘Gratitude.’ Add one short example on each page.
- Set out paper, pencils, and coloring supplies. Keep the sample open so children can see where each page goes.

During the Activity:

- Show the sample. Explain that a playbook helps a team plan what to do. This playbook will help each child plan words and actions that honor Jesus.
- Give each child one sheet of paper. Help them fold it in half and label the four pages as shown in the sample.
- Invite children to choose one idea for each page. They may copy an example, change it to fit their life, or draw a picture instead.
- **Respect examples:** “I will say ‘Good game.’” “I will listen to the rules.” “I will cheer for the other team.”
- **Selflessness examples:** “I will let someone else go first.” “I will help a teammate.” “I will share turns.”
- **Gratitude examples:** “Thank You, God, for my friends.” “Thank you for helping me learn.” “Thank you for cheering me on.”
- If a child is stuck, ask: “What could you say after someone else wins?” “How could you help another player?” or “Who helps you when you play, and what could you thank them for?” Offer two examples and let the child choose.
- On the front, add Colossians 3:17 NIV and a sports, board game, or team design. Color and decorate all four pages.

After the Activity:

- Invite children to show a partner one idea from their playbook. They may use a fictional example instead of sharing a difficult personal experience.

- Ask each child to put a small star beside one idea they want to practice this week. Remind them to take the playbook home.
- Collect shared supplies. Help children close their playbooks with the title on the front.

What You Say:

Before the Activity:

"A playbook helps a team get ready for a game. Our playbook will help us get ready to show good sportsmanship. We will plan ways to show respect, selflessness, and gratitude."

During the Activity:

"On the inside left, add respectful words you could use after winning or losing. On the inside right, add a way to put someone else first. On the back, name someone you can thank and something you can thank God for. Use words or pictures. Add our verse reference to the front and make the design your own."

After the Activity:

"Colossians 3:17 reminds us to honor Jesus in our words and actions and to give thanks. Star one idea to practice. You can ask Jesus for help before your next game or competition."

EveryChild Pro-Tips

- Let children draw their ideas or dictate short labels to a leader.
- Pre-fold the paper or help children press the crease if fine motor work is difficult.
- Offer these starting words: 'Good game,' 'Your turn,' and 'Thank you.' Older children can add a specific situation for each.
- Include board games, video games, class contests, and team projects so children who do not play sports can connect with the lesson.

5. Optional Game: Team Stack Challenge

What You Need:

☐ Six reusable plastic cups per team of two or three children
☐ Clear table space for each team
☐ Timer or phone timer, one for the leader
☐ NIV Bible marked at Colossians 3:17, one for the leader

What You Do:

Before the Activity:

- Clear a table area for each team. Give every team six cups. Teams stay at their table. Do not run, throw cups, or reach into another team's space.
- Demonstrate a six-cup pyramid: three cups on the bottom, two in the middle, and one on top. Then unstack the cups into one nested stack.
- Form teams of two or three. Explain that each round lasts 45 seconds. Children take turns moving one cup, then pass the turn to the next teammate.

During the Activity:

- Explain the goal: finish as many full pyramid-and-unstack cycles as possible in each round. Count a cycle only after all six cups return to one nested stack. Everyone stays in the game for all three rounds.

- Say ‘Ready, set, build!’ and start the timer. Each child moves one cup per turn. If a pyramid falls, the team may rebuild it; count the cycle only when it is complete. Encourage calm voices and helpful words.
- When the timer ends, say ‘Stop, hands off.’ Teams report completed cycles honestly. Celebrate the highest total and notice specific examples of respectful teamwork. If teams tie, celebrate both; no tie-breaker is needed.
- Reset all cups before the next round. Rotate who starts so everyone has a chance. Between rounds, read the matching prompt below and let each team practice an encouraging response.

Three Rounds:

- Round 1: Play with the basic rules. Each child takes a turn moving one cup.
- Round 1 prompt: ‘Your team finished fewer cycles than another team. What could you say to them?’ Invite teams to say ‘Good game’ or offer another respectful response.
- Round 2: Keep the turn order, but each child uses only one hand to move a cup. Use the same 45-second timer.
- Round 2 prompt: ‘A teammate knocks down the pyramid. What could you say that helps instead of blaming?’ Practice an encouraging phrase before continuing.
- Round 3: Return to the basic two-hand rules. Before starting, each child thanks a teammate for one helpful action.
- Round 3 prompt: ‘Your team wins. How could you celebrate and still honor the other teams?’ Let teams practice a kind response after the round.

After the Activity:

- After the third round, invite each team to name one way another team showed respect or selflessness. Name specific actions, not which children were ‘best.’
- Ask: ‘What did you notice about your words and actions when the round felt easy or frustrating?’ Children may pass.
- Briefly reread Colossians 3:17. Connect giving our best effort, encouraging others, and being thankful with honoring Jesus.
- Have teams nest the cups and return them to the leader. Thank everyone for playing and helping clean up.

What You Say:

Before the Activity:

“Build and unstack your team’s pyramid, taking turns with one cup at a time. Try your best and encourage each other. Everyone will play all three rounds.”

During the Activity:

“Pass the turn after moving one cup. If the pyramid falls, help rebuild it. When I say ‘Stop, hands off,’ pause and respect the result.”

After the Activity:

“When you want to blame, brag, or complain, pause and ask Jesus for help. Our words and actions can show respect, selflessness, and gratitude, whether we win or lose.”

EveryChild Pro-Tips

- Let children play seated and bring the cups within comfortable reach.
- With only two children, play as one team trying to improve its own cycle count.
- For a large group, use several small teams so children do not spend the game waiting for a turn.
- If one-hand movement is difficult, allow two hands or offer a partner’s help. Participation matters more than matching another team’s speed.

- If someone feels frustrated, offer a brief pause and a calm reminder. Let the child rejoin the next turn or round; avoid shaming or forced public sharing.