

DON'T BE A JERK
Wk 1/3: Speak Life, Text Life, Snap Life
November 9 & 10, 2019

LEADER PREP

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To walk students to the understanding that our words have power, even words from behind a screen when we can't see the consequences.

SCRIPTURE

James 3:3-6

THINK ABOUT THIS

None of us want to deal with the fallout of hurting someone's feelings. It's uncomfortable, so we made a way to not deal with it—communicate from behind a screen. Phones aren't bad, but they make relationships impersonal. If we believe that life is all about people, we need to keep reminding ourselves that those on the other side of the screen are people, too—people whom God loves.

THINGS TO KNOW

Not all students have social media, but the main point and scriptures we are looking at today can be applied whether we are typing our words or speaking them. If a student complains they don't have social media yet because their parent won't let them, support the parents' decision for their child.

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here. Let the students and the Holy Spirit guide the conversation, too.



CONVERSATION GUIDE

MAIN POINT

Your words have power, so don't be a jerk.

GET THEM TALKING

What are some of your favorite apps or games that you have played on your phone, a tablet, or a parent's phone?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever been in a situation where someone hurt you with their words? What about in the social-media world?
2. How do you handle it when these situations come up?

READ James 3:3-6 and answer the following questions:

3. Why does James compare the tongue and the words we say to the rudder of a ship or the bit of a horse?
4. If we don't control our tongues, what do these verses say about how it affects our body [aka, the rest of us]?
5. Even the smallest insults you throw at someone can affect someone for years. Have you ever considered that your words are so powerful?
6. Do you agree with the comment made that 'we prefer communication behind a screen because it keeps us from dealing with the consequences of someone else's pain?' Why or why not?
7. Have you ever considered that your words have the same potential to make someone's week or even month? How does that make you want to treat others—even on social media?
8. What can we do this week to use our influence on social media, or with friends, to build up rather than destroy?

NEXT STEP

Keep up the group chat—a digital way to encourage one another. Encourage them to also post ONE encouraging thing on someone's Snap or Insta post—someone who isn't on social media can find someone to encourage in person.

PRAYER GUIDE

Ask them their prayer requests and close your time together in prayer.

MS students are concrete thinkers, so opening your Bible to read the Scripture with them is a preferred visual cue.

SCRIPTURE

JAMES 3:3-6 NLT

³We can make a large horse go wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth. ⁴And a small rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot chooses to go, even though the winds are strong. ⁵In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. ⁶And among all the parts of the body, the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.”