



Stand Alone Option  
Power of Words  
September 5, 2021



## LEADER PREP

### GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students recognize the power of their words and to develop the habit of thinking about the impact of what they say.

### SCRIPTURE

#### Main Scriptures:

- James 3:5-6 (NLT)
- Psalm 141:3 (NLT)

### THINK ABOUT THIS

This conversation is about words, the way we use them, and the impact they can have on others. Think about everything from hate speech, cuss words, racial slurs, dirty jokes, name calling, bullying and more. Of course, this can be tricky because what's a "bad" word to one kid may be fine to another. That's why the goal isn't to identify "bad" words, but to help students think beyond just the words themselves. You're taking them from concrete to abstract thinking when it comes to the words they say, text, type, post, and even think. We want them to see that there's impact beyond the words themselves. The goal is to build a little self-awareness and control when it comes to their words, as well as help them exercise empathy toward others who might be on the receiving end of their words.

*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

Pay attention to the power of your words.

### GET THEM TALKING

Without naming names, share about a time someone used their words to encourage you.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Without naming names, share about a time someone used their words in a way that hurt you.
2. On a scale of 1-10, how often do you think about the words you use?
3. Why do you think it matters if our words hurt other people?
4. What's one thing we can do when our words have hurt someone else?

#### **READ JAMES 3:5-6 & PSALM 141:3 together.**

#### **Then answer the following questions:**

5. In your own words, what are these verses saying?
6. How do they describe the way God made us? How are our words described?
7. What are ways we can pay attention to the power of our words?

### ACTIVITY

Ask your students to honestly think about whether they've used your words for good or bad recently. For each scenario you list, have them either give a "thumbs up" for if they used their words to build someone up or a "thumbs down" if they used their words to tear someone down. Encourage them to not feel pressure to always have a thumbs up: this is a safe space and it's a better to be real and admit the truth than just pretend - this helps us grow.

- Last text you sent?
- Last phone call you had?
- Last time you talked to a sibling?
- Last time you talked to a parent?
- Most recent conversation on the school bus?
- Last time you talked ABOUT someone?
- Most recent response on social media?

### NEXT STEP

Brainstorm this question and have everyone share the next step they want to take this week: What's one thing that might help you be more aware of your words?

### PRAYER GUIDE

Ask students for their prayer requests and close your time together in prayer.

## SCRIPTURE

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

### JAMES 3:5-6 (NLT)

“In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. And 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.”

### PSALM 141:3 (NLT)

“Take control of what I say, O Lord, and guard my lips.”