



INITIATIVE | WEEK 1 | SEPTEMBER 5, 2021

2nd-3rd Lesson

Makin' Plans

Life App: Initiative—Seeing what needs to be done and doing it

Bible Story: Makin' Plans (Nehemiah Plans to Rebuild the Wall) • Nehemiah 1:1–2:18

Bottom Line: Don't wait for someone else to do what needs to be done.

Basic Truth: I am made for a purpose so the Holy Spirit will help me do big things now.

Memory Verse: Work at everything you do with all your heart. Work as if you were working for the Lord.
Colossians 3:23a (NIRV)

**KID CONNECT:
10 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:
30 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:
20 MINUTES**

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

God took the initiative by sending Jesus to show us how much He loves us and fix the relationship between us. When we see a need and choose to do something about it, we reflect God's image in us. Through our initiative, others can see the reality of God's love for them. As kids discover more about how we can reflect God's character through taking initiative, they'll spend the month studying the life of Nehemiah. Nehemiah's life is a perfect example of someone who heard about a need, decided to check it out, trusted God, and dropped everything to finish the project. We can't wait to see how God helps your kids discover how they can show initiative in their lives.

In our first week, we start at the beginning of Nehemiah's story in **Nehemiah 1:1–2:18**. We discover that Nehemiah was working for King Artaxerxes when his brother brought news from the exiles living in Judah. When he heard about the devastation in Jerusalem, Nehemiah was heartbroken. He recognized the vast need, but before he did anything, he prayed. Nehemiah knew that whatever he would do, he'd need God's help to accomplish it.

Bottom Line: **Don't wait for someone else to do what needs to be done.** When kids see something that needs to be done, they might think that someone else will take care of it. But what would happen if our kids saw they could be part of the job? We want kids to realize that when they know what needs to be done, God might be telling them they can be the one to do it. And if they can't do it all on their own, they can ask someone they trust for help.

KID CONNECT

WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: INTRO MUSIC)

Play intro music and greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group.

OPENING ACTIVITY:

(No supplies)

During this time, concentrate on getting to know your group and building a relationship between you all. Create a place where they feel like someone knows them and that they belong. A great way to do that is to pull them into an activity (coloring, LEGOs, etc.) and ask them questions. Here are some suggestions:

- What school do you go to?
- What do you like to do for fun?
- If you could ride on any animal, what would be the most fun/most difficult?
- Do you have any siblings/pets? What are their names?
- If you could build anything, what would you build?
- What is the worst smell in the world?

LARGE GROUP

COUNTDOWN AND WELCOME

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN, SLIDE: KIDCITY EXPECTATIONS)

Show the countdown video as you transition to Large Group. Set it to end as the session begins.

The Large Group Leader has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to KidCity. The LGL is relatable and inviting. LGLs can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, holiday, etc. The LGL tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

LGL: Welcome everyone! I'm so glad you are able to come hang out with us in KidCity today. My name is [INSERT NAME]. We are going to have a lot of fun today by playing a game, singing some incredible songs that worship God, and then we are going to hear an amazing true story from God's Word, the Bible.

But first, let's quickly go over our KidCity Expectations (rules) so we can make sure that we make the most of our time today: *(Don't dwell on these too long, but make sure you review them briefly so we can set everyone up for success.)*

1. Be Kind – We need to be kind with our words and actions to our friends, leaders, and the space that we are using
2. Be Safe – Make wise choices with your actions and words
3. Have Fun – Participate in what we are doing! It's no fun just sitting there...

Now that we know our expectations, let's kick off our day with a game!

LARGE GROUP GAME

ASTEROIDS

(Black or Gray Latex-Free Balloons – 1 per small group, Tape, Bin)

This month, we're getting 'ready for launch' and finding out how we can take initiative. Initiative is kind of a big word. Let's see what it means.

(SLIDE: LIFE APP)

"Initiative is seeing what needs to be done and doing it."

(SLIDE: THEME)

"Usually, we wait for someone to ASK us to do things...like cleaning our room, feeding the dog, or putting our dishes in the sink. But initiative means that we're always on the lookout for things that need to be done, and we don't wait for someone to ask us to do them. We don't wait for someone ELSE to do them. We just...do them!

"We need initiative whether we're flying through outer space or right here on Earth. And we don't have to do it alone, because God is always there to help us.

"Speaking of things that need to be done, we've got some asteroids around here (*reference the balloons by the taped line*), and they need to be moved away from the spaceship. This is kind of an asteroid relay race. So, everyone line up with your small group behind this line. (*Reference the tape starting line.*)

Give the small groups some time to line up behind the starting line.

"When I say, 'Go,' you'll take turns moving your asteroid over and under across the room like this, without dropping your asteroid. (*Demonstrate the over under visual with a balloon.*) The first person will go over their head and pass it to the next person who will go under their legs and then pass it to the next person who goes over their head etc.... But be careful that you don't pop it or drop it!

"If you drop the asteroid at any point, you have to pass it back up to the first person again and start over. Once your asteroid balloon gets handed to the last person, they run up here and put it into this asteroid recycler bin. Then sit down and cheer on the other teams until all of our asteroids have been recycled! Are we ready to go? (*Pause for response.*) Let's count it down. Three, two, one, GO!

(AUDIO: FUN SPACE MUSIC)

Provide funny commentary during the relay and celebrate as everyone finishes. This game won't have a winner, but everyone can celebrate when all teams are done.

"That. Was. AMAZING! Great job, everyone! Let's all head back to where we were before; but stay on your feet, because it's time for us to sing and worship God together!"

WORSHIP

(VIDEO: GOD IS FOR US, ALIVE)



BIBLE STORY

(SLIDES: LIFE APP, BOTTOM LINE, MEMORY VERSE, BASIC TRUTH; VIDEO: BIBLE STORY)

(Bible)

LGL: That was some great singing! Well, it's a new month so we are talking about a brand-new Life App. Remember, a Life App is something that God does within us to change the world around us...and the Life App we are learning about this month does just that! This month we are talking about INITIATIVE.

(SLIDE: LIFE APP) **"Initiative is seeing what needs to be done and doing it."**

"Some examples of initiative would be seeing that the dishes in the sink need to be put in the dishwasher so you do it, or you find out that some kids around the world don't have enough to eat so you earn money to send them to an organization that helps kids like that. Whether it seems big or small, showing initiative makes a BIG impact on the world around us!

All of this month we will be looking at the life of a man who showed a LOT of initiative and took on a very important job. His name was Nehemiah. It was such a big job that he took on that there is a whole book in the Bible that tells his story. Let's check out the first part of his story..."

(VIDEO: BIBLE STORY)

"What a cool story! It's pretty amazing how Nehemiah took the initiative to help the people of Jerusalem. I mean, Nehemiah wasn't even LIVING in Jerusalem. Remember, he was far away in Persia! So, it would have been easy for him to think, 'Well, that's too bad about what they're going through...but maybe someone else will do something to help.'

"That's not what Nehemiah did, is it? Nope. He decided that HE would be the one to help. He asked the king to let him go to Jerusalem...he saw the damage for himself...then he rallied the people to start rebuilding. I think it's safe to say that God worked through Nehemiah in a BIG way!

"God can work through us, too. Like our Basic Truth says,

(SLIDE: BASIC TRUTH) **"I am made for a purpose so the Holy Spirit can help me do big things now."**

The Holy Spirit is God and when we decide to ask Jesus to be our Friend and Savior, the Holy Spirit comes and helps us grow into people that love God, love others, and love the life that He has given us. The Holy Spirit helps us to see what needs to be done and to do it.

We can trust God no matter what! He can help us see the things around us that need to be done or the people who need our help. He can help us take initiative and do something to lend a hand.

(SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE) **"Don't wait for someone else to do what needs to be done."**

We can also look at the life of Jesus and see how HE took initiative. When Jesus saw a need, He did something about it! He healed people who needed healing. He taught people who needed to learn. And Jesus took care of our greatest need when He died on the cross for our sins.

“So this week, let’s try to SEE what needs to be done around us...then let’s do something about it! If you see your dirty socks lying on the floor, take initiative and toss them in the hamper. If you see that your brother forgot to feed the fish, don’t go tell your mom that he forgot. Feed the fish FOR him, then let him know you’ve got it covered. If you notice that one of your friends seems sad, don’t just walk on by. Stop and ask her what’s wrong. Maybe she just needs a good friend like you to let her know you care!

“Here’s our memory verse for this month, Colossians 3:23:”

MEMORY VERSE

(SLIDE: MEMORY VERSE)

Work at everything you do with all your heart. Work as if you were working for the Lord. (Colossians 3:23a, NIRV)

“We can take initiative to do what needs to be done—and we can work at it with all of our hearts! Sounds like a plan, don’t you think?”

PRAYER

“Dear God, thank you for the story of Nehemiah. It’s so cool to see how Nehemiah trusted you and took initiative to help the people of Jerusalem. He showed them how they could work together to fix the problem with your help. Please help us trust you like he did. Help us look around for ways that we can show initiative... and help us take action instead of waiting for someone else to help. We love you, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS

SMALL GROUP

Life App: Initiative—Seeing what needs to be done and doing it

Bible Story: Makin’ Plans (Nehemiah Plans to Rebuild the Wall) • Nehemiah 1:1–2:18

Bottom Line: Don’t wait for someone else to do what needs to be done.

Basic Truth: I am made for a purpose so the Holy Spirit will help me do big things now.

Memory Verse: Work at everything you do with all your heart. Work as if you were working for the Lord.
Colossians 3:23a (NirV)

SHOW ME INITIATIVE

(Finger Rockets – 2 per group, Bin)

What You Do:

- Divide your group into two teams. Give each team a finger rocket. Place the bin a short distance away from the two teams
- Read a list of scenarios that require initiative.
- Instruct the groups to listen to the scenario and work together to come up with a solution. Then each team chooses one kid to shoot their finger rocket into the bin. The team who is the closest gets to share first.
- Explain that the team who wins may not necessarily be the ones who get the rocket closer but will be the team who came up with the most creative solution.
- After each scenario, determine which team wins a point based on the creativity of their answer.
- Once you’ve read through all the scenarios, invite the group to a bonus round where they come up with their own problem and a solution to that problem.

Initiative scenarios:

1. Your classmate needs help understanding a math problem.
2. It’s spaghetti night at your house and your little brother made a complete mess on the table and walls!
3. All of your friends in the neighborhood want to ride bikes, but your neighbor doesn’t have a bike.
4. A kid in your class forgot his pencil box, but no one wants to let him borrow a pencil because he loses them.
5. You see a group of kids making fun of someone.
6. Your mom has worked all day and is really tired, but your little sister wants a lot of attention.
7. You notice a kid at school never brings a coat to wear outside at recess.
8. You notice a kid in your class always plays by himself at the park.

What You Say:

“We sure have some creative thinkers in our group! I loved hearing all of the ideas you had about how to show initiative to solve a problem you see.

“Showing initiative isn’t just the right thing to do, it can really help others get out of a problem they find themselves in. When you show initiative to help a classmate pick up the books he dropped, he’ll feel less embarrassed about dropping them. When you help your dad clean up after dinner time, he won’t be stuck doing it all by himself. When we don’t show initiative, those people are left getting things done by themselves.

“God didn’t make you a creative problem-solver so that you can sit back and watch a problem pass you by. God has wired you to be bold and dare to walk towards the mission He set before you. He can use you to change the world through changing your classroom, your home, your church, or even your neighborhood.

[Bottom Line] Don’t wait for someone else to do what needs to be done. Show initiative this week in every opportunity God gives you.” **[Make it Personal] (Share about a time you showed initiative with something small and it helped someone in a big way.)**

MEMORY VERSE ASTEROIDS

(“Memory Verse Cards” Activity Page Cut Apart and Wrapped in Foil)

What You Do:

- Pass out one Bibles to every three kids.
- Use the navigation tips to help your few look up Colossians 3:23a. Read the verse together.

Finding verses with kindergartners: Guide children to open the Bibles to the marked page. Point to “Colossians” at the top of the page as you read it aloud. Then guide children to find the big number 3 on the page. Explain that this is the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big 3 for the little 23; this is the verse number. Tell them to leave their finger on the verse as you read the verse aloud. Then lead everyone to say the verse together.

Finding verses with 1st graders: Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like. When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find Colossians in the list under “New Testament.” You can help by telling them that Colossians starts with the letters C-O. When the kids find Colossians, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find Colossians. Help the kids find the page. When they find Colossians, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 3. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 23 in chapter 3.

- Scatter the “Memory Verse Card” asteroids on one end of your small group area.
- Line your kids up several feet away.
- Instruct the kids that when you start the game, they should moonwalk (pretend they’re walking lightly on the moon like a slow skip) one at a time to the pile, grab an asteroid, and head back to tag the next kid in line to grab another asteroid.
- Once all the asteroids are gathered, encourage the kids to unwrap them and put the cards in verse order.

What You Say:

“This verse reminds us to work at everything with all of our heart for God! What an AWESOME verse. What does ‘everything’ include? (Pause.) Yes, every single thing! Any time we are working, helping, or showing initiative, we should think about how we are working for God. He sees everything, and He is SO happy and proud of us when we see a need and do something to help! Let’s pay attention this week to see what needs to be done then busy helping. Remember, **[Bottom Line] don’t wait for someone else to do what needs to be done.**”

DISCUSSION

Ask the following questions and lead the group to discuss:

- Sometimes we ignore a job that needs to be done because it's not technically OUR responsibility—not OUR problem. Is there anything wrong with that way of thinking? Why or why not?
- How would things be different if Jesus had taken on that way of thinking?
- When you think of people who have shown initiative (seen what needs to be done and doing it), who comes to mind? What do you appreciate or admire most about them? What can you learn from them?
- What can you do if you see something that needs to be done but you don't know what to do? How can you figure out where to start?

PRAY AND DISMISS

(2nd/3rd GodTime Card - 1 per kid)

What You Say:

“Heavenly Father, thank you for the story of Nehemiah and his willingness to help, even when it was a big job. This week, help us see what needs to be done and get busy helping. Thank you for loving us, always. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.”

Pass out the GodTime Cards to each kid. If there's spare time, encourage kids to start looking over their GodTime card and point out how it relates to today's lesson.