



INITIATIVE | WEEK 3 | SEPTEMBER 19, 2021

2nd-3rd Lesson

Ain't No Stopping Us Now

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

Bible Story: Ain't No Stopping Us Now (Nehemiah and Sanballat) • Nehemiah 2:19-20, 4, 6

Bottom Line: Stay focused on what needs to be done.

Basic Truth: I am loved by God no matter what so I can trust God to guide me.

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 week three, we see how Nehemiah deals with some distractions in **Nehemiah 2:19-20, 4, and 6**. Not everyone liked what Nehemiah was doing. He had enemies who tried to get the people distracted from finishing the wall. But he sees through their plan and focused on the job God gave him to finish.

Bottom Line: Stay focused on what needs to be done. From cleaning their rooms to finishing their homework, kids have all sorts of things that need to be done. But it often doesn't take long for cleaning a room to become playing with the toys you're supposed to be picking up. We hope kids will see that focusing on the task at hand is important. God has all sorts of jobs for us to do. We can trust Him to give us the focus we need to finish them.

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

MOON ROCK TENNIS

(Bin of Ball Pit Balls, Blue Tape, Tan Tape, Broom)

"I love it when we come to KidCity and find out how we can live God's way, every day. One really cool way we can do that is by taking initiative.

(SLIDE: LIFE APP)

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

(SLIDE: THEME)

"That means you don't wait around for someone to TELL you to do things. You decide to do them yourself! You notice things that are messy, broken, or just not right . . . and you step up to make them better.

"I've got a fun way to start us off today with a game that ALL of you can play. And in case you're wondering, it'll take some initiative. I call it 'Moon Rock Tennis!'

"As you can see, there's a blue line dividing the room in half. That means all of you are a team (*point to one half of the room*), and all of you are a team (*point to the other half of the room*). When the game starts, I'll toss out some of these 'moon rocks.' (*Hold up one of the ball pit balls.*) While staying on your knees, you'll try to get all of the moon rocks to the other side of the blue line. (*Demonstrate with one of the ball pit balls across the blue line.*)

"But this is important: you must stay behind the tan line on your side. That way you can stay out of this middle section here, where all the moon rocks will be flying like crazy! And you're gonna want to spread out so that you can cover your entire side of the moon. Cool? Cool.

"When time runs out, I'll say, 'freeze,' and everybody will freeze. (*Demonstrate.*) The team with the LEAST amount of moon rocks on their side wins that round.

"Are you ready? (*Pause for response.*) Let's play Moon Rock Tennis. Three, two, one, go!

(AUDIO: FUN SPACE MUSIC)

If you're not using a screen countdown, set a timer on your phone for 30 seconds.

Dump the container of ball pit balls into the center of the room, on top of the blue line. Use the broom to whisk them onto both sides, so the kids can get to them.

Comment on the action as the kids move the "moon rocks." Make sure they stay out of the middle section between the tape lines.

After 30 seconds, you can declare a winner (if it's obvious), but make sure to celebrate how well everyone played.

Move on to round two; but first, use the broom to whisk the “moon rocks” that are in the middle onto both sides.

“Let’s play round two! Three, two, one, go!”

(AUDIO: FUN SPACE MUSIC)

Set another 30-second timer. Comment on the action and encourage the kids as they play.

“All right—for our third and final round, the game will go in reverse. I need all of you to try to kick the moon rocks up here, into this plastic bin. Once you’ve gotten yours in, go around the back of the room and see if you can find any more that we missed. Do you think we can get ALL of them back in here in 30 seconds? Let’s try it! Ready, set, go!”

(AUDIO: FUN SPACE MUSIC)

Set another 30-second timer. Place your container on its side so it’s like a soccer goal. Encourage the kids as they toss all the “moon rocks” back into the container. (You can use the broom to help sweep them in as they get close.)

“I love that game! I hope you did, too. And now we’re all cleaned up and ready for worship. Let’s keep the fun going as we sing to God!”

WORSHIP

(VIDEO: WAVEWALKER, GOD IS ON THE MOVE)

BIBLE STORY

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

(Bible)

LGL: “All this month we are talking about our Life App, Initiative. Just a reminder…”

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

“We’ve already seen how God helped Nehemiah show initiative in a BIG way. Let’s recap where we’ve been so far.

“At first, Nehemiah was living in the land of Persia. But then he heard that the city walls of Jerusalem were broken down, which meant that God’s people there had no protection. Nehemiah decided to travel to Jerusalem. When he got there, he saw the broken-down walls for himself. He knew that somebody had to do SOMETHING . . . so he talked to the people, and they agreed to help him rebuild.

“There was a problem, though. The people in the lands around Jerusalem weren’t very happy about Nehemiah’s rebuilding project. They knew that if the wall of Jerusalem was rebuilt, the Jewish people would be able to defend themselves again.”



“That’s where our story picks up today. Let’s watch...”

(VIDEO: BIBLE STORY)

“It must have been really tough for Nehemiah and the people to keep working on the city wall when Sanballat and Tobiah were rude to them. I mean, they could have felt overwhelmed by all the hard work they had to do to begin with. Then they had to listen to people say awful things to them and try to get them to stop!

“But even in that tough situation, Nehemiah knew exactly what to do. He chose to stay focused and trust God. He led the people to keep working and building. He saw what needed to be done, and he did it! He didn’t let anything distract him or stand in the way.

“With God’s help, we can show that kind of initiative, too. God is strong and faithful! He can give us the strength we need as we do what He’s asked us to do.

“Remember . . .

(SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE) “stay focused on what needs to be done.”

“That’s something we can see when we look at the way Jesus lived. There was a lot that could have distracted Jesus from doing what He had come to do: die on the cross for our sins. But Jesus stayed focused on what was most important. He had come to save the world and make it possible for us to have a relationship with God, forever!

“So when there’s something you need to do, don’t let things distract you. Don’t let people who are making unwise choices distract you. Ask God to help you **[Bottom Line] stay focused on what needs to be done**. Because we know that...

(SLIDE: BASIC TRUTH) “I am loved by God no matter what so I can trust God to guide me.”

“God will always help those who trust Him...even help them stay focused on what’s most important.

“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, NIV)

“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 helping Nehemiah stand strong, even when people were mean to him. You helped him focus so he could keep going when others tried to distract him. God, we know that we need to stay focused, too. We need to

keep doing the things that You want us to do. Help us remember that You're always with us and that we can trust You no matter what. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS

SMALL GROUP

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Bottom Line: Stay focused on what needs to be done

Basic Truth: I am made for a purpose, so I have value.

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

FOCUSED OR NOT

(No Supplies)

What You Do:

- Divide kids into two teams.
- Explain that you will share a scenario, then the teams will work together to act-out the scenario.
- Include a twist: one of the groups will have to act-out the scenario as "distracted" while the other group will act-out the scenario as "focused."
- If the group is the "distracted" group, instruct them to think about what could distract them and what it looks like to be distracted from what they should be doing.
- Share an example.
 - I need to feed the dog and get him water before I go to school. But I'm distracted by my dog's new really cool toy. Instead of feeding him, I take him outside and play with him and his new toy. Then I'm distracted from feeding him because I have to get ready for school. Then I'm distracted because the bus shows up. By the time I get to school, I realize I never fed the dog!
- Encourage the kids to be funny and creative (and appropriate!).
- If the group is the "focused" group, encourage them to act-out how to do the task at hand efficiently and thoroughly.
- Before you read a scenario, tell the teams which one will be focused and which one will be distracted.
- As you progress through the scenarios, alternate which team is distracted and which one is focused.
- Continue until all scenarios have been acted out or as time and interest allow.
- Once all scenarios have been read and acted out, discuss the scenarios that were acted out.
- Wrap up and ask:
 - Have you ever been distracted or focused while doing any of those things?
 - What are some other ways we could potentially be distracted from things we need to do?

"Focused or Not" Scenarios:

4. Completing a really difficult math test
5. Brushing your teeth
6. Doing assigned reading from school

7. Picking up around the house
8. Feeding and getting water for the dog
9. Choosing to eat lunch at school with someone who doesn't usually eat with anyone
10. Clearing the table after dinner at home

What You Say:

“Those were some amazing acting skills on both the focused and distracted sides of our scenarios! Thanks for reminding us how to stay focused—and how not to!

“One way I like to stay focused is by creating small goals for myself each week. This week, I want to challenge you to set a goal for yourself. You could even pick one of our examples we talked about today. Actually brush your teeth when you're asked to, without getting distracted; or finish your reading for school without leaving your reading spot until you're done. Write down your goal on a sheet of paper and put it somewhere you'll see it every day. Then come back and tell us how you did next week! I'm going to do the same thing. My goal for this week is **[Make It Personal] (share one goal you will make for yourself)**. You'll have to come back next week to see if I chose to **[Bottom Line] stay focused on what needs to be done.**”

[Make it Personal] (Share about a time you remained focused on a goal or job that God set before you and how it paid off in the end since you chose to stay focused.)

MEMORY VERSE FOCUS

(Bibles, Plastic or Dixie Cups – 30 per group, “Memory Verse Focus Cards” printed on address labels – 1 sheet for 3 teams)

What You Do:

- Divide your kids into teams of three, mixing up the teams from the previous activity.
- Hand out Bibles to each group.
- Look up this month's memory verse, Colossians 3:23, and read it out loud together.
- Give each team 10 cups and one sheet of verse labels.
- Instruct kids to put on one label per cup.
- As they put on labels, encourage one team member to begin stacking the cups one by one in verse order.
- Instruct the kids to stack the first cup right side up and the second upside down—and to follow that pattern as they stack the rest of the cups in verse order.
- As kids stack their cups, compliment them on how well they're focusing!

What You Say:

“You're learning our memory verse so well! Memorizing our verse requires a lot of focus, and so did stacking those cups. I could tell you were working with your whole heart, just like our verse tells us to do! Take that same kind of initiative you just showed me into your week as you **[Bottom Line] stay focused on what needs to be done.**”



DISCUSSION

Ask the following questions and lead the group to discuss:

- Give examples of ways you might get distracted when doing the following activities:
 - Listening in class
 - Reading a homework assignment
 - Telling someone about Jesus
 - Cleaning your room
 - Memorizing a Bible verse
 - Stepping out of your comfort zone and trying something new
 - Praying
 - Helping someone in your family
- What are some signals you can watch for that help you know when you are being distracted?
- If you know that you will be easily distracted by something, what can you do to remind yourself to stay focused?

PRAY AND DISMISS

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

What You Say:

“Heavenly Father, we love You. Just like You helped Nehemiah stay on task when he had a big job to do, please help us **[Bottom Line] stay focused on what needs to be done.** This week, when we get distracted, help us keep going and finish what we start. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. 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.