



INITIATIVE | WEEK 3 | SEPTEMBER 19, 2021

K-1 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, 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 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...

"Let's kick off today by playing 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!”

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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BIBLE STORY TOWER REVIEW

(Plastic or Dixie Cups – 50 Per Group)

What You Do:

- Divide your group into two teams.
- Give each team an equal number of cups.
- Demonstrate how to stack three cups in a pyramid formation to create a strong tower.
- Instruct each group to stack three cups to start a tower.
- Tell kids that you will ask questions about today's Bible story, and each team will have a chance to answer.
- Each time a team answers correctly, direct *both* teams to add two new cups to their tower.
- The goal is for both teams to build the tallest tower they can before it falls.

Bible Story Review Questions

1. What was wrong with the walls around the city of Jerusalem? (*They were broken down, leaving the city unprotected.*)
2. What did Nehemiah do about the broken-down walls? (*He gathered the people in the city to rebuild the wall.*)
3. People from neighboring nations weren't happy about Jerusalem rebuilding the wall. Why? (*Because if the wall was rebuilt, the people living there could defend themselves again.*)
4. What did Nehemiah do when Sanballat and Tobiah laughed and made fun of the people as they worked on the wall? (*Nehemiah did not get upset. He kept working.*)
5. How did Sanballat and Tobiah feel when the people started to make progress on the wall? (*They weren't happy! They made fun of the people working to try to get them to stop.*)
6. When the people heard Sanballat and Tobiah making fun of them, did they stop working or keep going? (*The kept going.*)
7. When Sanballat tried to get Nehemiah to stop working, how many times did Nehemiah message him with a NO: two times, three times, or five times? (*five times*)
8. Even when Sanballat made up stories about Nehemiah, did Nehemiah keep going? (*Yes, Nehemiah trusted God and kept working.*)
9. How many days did it take to rebuild the wall and the gates around the city: 25 days, 52 days, or 552 days? (*52 days*)
10. Today, we learned to "stay focused on what needs to be _____." (*Done*)

What You Say:

"Can you believe it? They finished the wall! Think about ALL the work it took to finish such a big job! And not only that, they had all these distractions. Sanballat and Tobiah tried as hard as they could to get them to stop working. But

Nehemiah he was doing something great, So he couldn't lose focus and stop working! Nehemiah chose to **[Bottom Line] stay focused on what needs to be done.** And because he stayed focused, they rebuilt the walls and towers and gates."

[Make it Personal] (Tell the kids about a time you finished a BIG task. Maybe you completed a big home improvement project or finished a degree. Talk about the distractions along the way and how you chose to stay focused so you could get the job done.)

MEMORY VERSE BUILDING

("Verse Word Bricks" Activity Page – 2 per group pre cut, Bible, Memory Verse Poster, Crayons)

What You Do:

- Hand out the "Verse Word Bricks" to the kids. Be sure to keep the sets separate!
- Set out the crayons and let kids color the bricks.
- Open the Bible to Colossians 3:23 and read the verse out loud.
- Collect the "bricks" from the kids, shuffle each set, and lay them out face down on the floor on one side of your small group area.
- Divide kids into two teams and line each team up across from a pile of "bricks."
- Encourage the kids to race, one at a time, to the pile of bricks, collect one, and bring it back, then tag the next friend in line.
- Once all the bricks are collected, instruct the kids to work together to put them in verse order.
- When the kids finish, encourage them to sit down.
- Review by reading the verse together.
- If time allows, repeat the verse again with the motions you learned last week.

"Work (*pound fists together*) at everything you do (*fan arms out in front of you*) with all your heart (*both hands over heart*). Work (*pound fists together*) as if you (*point thumbs to chest*) were working (*pound fists together*) for the Lord," (*point to the sky*) Colossians 3:23.

What You Say:

"We all have big jobs to do. It's easy to get distracted and think about giving up before the job is done. But it helps when we remember that God is with us! He will help us. Let's do everything—every big or small task—as if we're working for God! Then when we're tempted to get off course, let's **[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

(K/1st GodTime Card, Crayons or Markers)

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 card to each kid. If there’s spare time, the kids can start coloring their GodTime Card.