

TAKE THE LEAD

WEEK 4

BIG IDEA

God gives me leaders I can follow.

BIBLE

Ruth: Ruth 1:1-8; (Lamentations)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT?

MUSIC | Lead with Praise

- It's our final week of, "Take the Lead!" Let's all jump on this praise float and worship together!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *This week, invite all the kids to the front with you and pretend you're all on a parade float together. Then, lead the kids in a time of worship with songs such as:*
 - ["We Go Deep"](#) by Grow Kids
 - ["I Will Follow"](#) by Chris Tomlin (motions by Calvary Kids)

ACTIVITY | Musical Chair-ades

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *This is a hybrid of musical chairs and charades! Set up for musical chairs like usual. When the music plays, tell the kids to walk around the chairs while acting out a word you give them. When the music stops, everyone scrambles for a chair, and the kid without a chair is now the "musical chairperson." The chairperson comes to the front and will come up with a word for the group to act out while walking for the next round. Keep playing until there is one winner!*
 - **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Some kids may find it confusing with these typical games combined into one. If that is the case, just stick to one game. For example, kids with special needs can play the game following the rules of only musical chairs.*
- **Wasn't it cool how when you got "out" in the game, you actually got to lead the game?**

QUESTION | Who Would You Follow?

- Think about some of the people – real or imaginary – you look up to. Maybe they are people you've read about, seen in a show or movie, or people you know in real life.
- Now, imagine you had to pick one of them to follow around and do what they do for the rest of your life. **Who would you choose? Why?**

SO WHAT?

SCRIPTURE | Ruth 1:1-18

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show this [video](#) to introduce the kids to the Bible story in Ruth 1:1-18. Recruit a volunteer to play Ruth for this brief interview to further develop today's Bible story. Consider playing an instrumental soundtrack in the background to add to the vibe.
- Our final grand marshal in "Take the Lead" is a woman named Ruth! She wasn't one of the judges, but she lived during the time when the judges were in power. Let's get to know her a little, shall we?
 - **Interviewer:** Welcome to [Name of your kids ministry environment], Ruth. We are so glad you can join us!
 - **Ruth:** It's a pleasure! Thanks for having me.
 - **Interviewer:** Now, your story is almost like a fairytale! But I think we would all like to hear your side of the story. (Looks at kids.) Am I right?
 - **Ruth:** Well, I was born and raised in Moab. I met a nice man who had immigrated to my country from Bethlehem. We got married, and things were great for about ten years. But then, sadly... he passed away. As did his brother. So, then it was just my mother-in-law, my sister-in-law, and me.
 - **Interviewer:** I'm so sorry to hear that. That must have been really tough. So, how did you end up in Bethlehem?
 - **Ruth:** My mother-in-law, Naomi, wanted to go back to her hometown. I had grown to admire her so much, especially being all by herself in a strange land. She felt like my own mother to me, so I couldn't bear the thought of her going back all alone. I wanted to take care of her.
 - **Interviewer:** That was incredibly brave of you. And you barely even knew much about God at the time, but you told Naomi that you would follow her and her God forever, is that right?
 - **Ruth:** Yes. That would probably sound a bit extreme for most people, but I somehow knew that I had to follow Naomi.
 - **Interviewer:** And what a good thing that you did! Against all odds, you and Naomi did so well! I hear you are remarried to a stand-up guy – Boaz, was it? – and you're expecting a baby soon, too? Congratulations!
 - **Ruth:** Yes, thank you! We are thinking about naming him Obed! Doesn't that sound like a really important name?
 - **Interviewer:** "Obed" it does! (Chuckles to self, but upon seeing no reaction from anyone else, clears throat.) Well, that's all the time we have today. Thank you for dropping by today, Ruth. It has been a real treat!

THE BIG IDEA | God gives me leaders I can follow.

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VIDEO | Take the Lead, Episode 4

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's [teaching video](#).

ACTIVITY | Leaders Got Talent

- Today, you are all judges in "Leaders Got Talent!" There are many leaders in this world, and you will get a chance to narrow it down to the Top Four by pressing your buzzer for a person you think is a true leader.
- Only leaders who get three or more votes will advance to the next round. Each team also gets one golden paddle which they can only use once. But whatever name you vote on with the golden paddle will automatically make it to the Top Four, so choose wisely!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Compile a list of about 20 pop culture icons, social media influencers, world leaders, and other influential figures your kids would know (a quick web search will help you build this list). Write the names on a large piece of paper, dry erase board, or chalkboard. Separate the kids into 4 teams, and give each team a buzzer (or something like it) and a golden paddle. Narrow down the list by eliminating names that don't get majority vote until only four names remain.
- Alright, let's take a look at your Top Four.
- **Why did you vote for these four?**
- **What makes them good leaders?**

REFLECTION | Influencer vs. Leader

- You probably all know who influencers are – they are usually the people who follow the trends and tell people what they think about it. They are called "influencers" because they can influence people's decisions about something.
- For example, after you watch a YouTube video about a toy you've wanted, you might want it more, or it could change your mind to not wanting it anymore.
- **What do you think is the difference between an influencer and a leader?**
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** Ask a preteen to help write down a list of influencers and leaders (and their qualities) so that the group can visually see the differences in front of them.

- Let's think about it in terms of today's Bible story. Naomi was not an influencer. She did not tell Ruth to come with her to her hometown – in fact, she tried to influence Ruth and her sister-in-law, Orpah, to go back to Moab!
- But Naomi showed that she truly cared about what was best for Ruth. And Naomi continued to love and trust God even though terrible things had happened in her life. Things like these made Ruth leave her home and follow Naomi. This is one of the things that made Naomi a leader worth following. And just like God did for Ruth, **God gives us leaders we can follow!**

NOW WHAT?

ACTIVITY | Shoebox Floats

- What is a parade without a float! For our last day of, "Take the Lead," we are going to get into groups of two or three and build a shoebox float. Each pair or group can choose any one of our Bible "grand marshals" we've been talking about – Deborah, Gideon, Samson, or Ruth – and imagine that they are going to be honored on that float!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each pair/group a shoebox and a bunch of different supplies (check your shopping list for suggestions). Afterward, tell them to put it on a table for display! Check out some of these to give you an idea: [example one](#), [example two](#), [example three](#). You might also want to play some music while they decorate!
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** For an added challenge, give groups a word or theme to incorporate into their design.

MEMORY VERSE | Cotton Candy Relay

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the group into two teams. Give each team a roll of tulle ([pink](#) and [blue](#) to represent cotton candy) and something they can wrap the tulle around (a [straight mic stand](#) would work well). Tie one end of the tulle to the stick and pass the rest of the roll to the first kid. When you say, "Go," the first kid yells the first word of the memory verse, and wraps the tulle around the stand once, then passes it to the next kid. The second kid will yell the second word of the memory verse and wrap the tulle around, too. The first team to build their "cotton candy" and complete the verse wins!
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** Consider using a kid in place of the mic stand to wrap the tulle around for added humor!

PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for giving us leaders we can follow, leaders who are kind and real who show us how to trust you and do the right thing. Help us to take the lead by imitating leaders who love you and care about us, instead of spending a lot of time being influenced by people who don't help us grow. We know that when we follow the right people, we are actually following you! Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **How was Ruth related to Naomi?**
- **Why did Naomi decide to return to her hometown?**
- **What did Ruth say when Naomi told her to go back to Moab?**
- **Read Lamentations 3:22-24. How does this verse remind you of Naomi's actions? Of Ruth's actions?**
- **Who are some of the people you trust the most when it comes to picking what to wear, eat, buy, watch, or listen to?**
- **How do you decide whose opinion matters most in your life?**
- **What are some things you do when you follow someone?**

ACTIVITY | Leaders IRL (In Real Life)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give each kid a Leaders IRL printable and tell them to fill it out with facts about a "real leader" in their life. Then, instruct them to draw a stick figure drawing of the person they chose.*
- Now, let's get real for a little bit. It's great to have leaders from all sorts of places to look up to, but the most influential ones are going to be the ones who know us and care about us. **Can you think of a leader you know in real life who follows God and can help you follow God, too?**