

TAKE THE LEAD

WEEK 1

BIG IDEA

Everyone can be a leader.

BIBLE

Deborah: Judges 4; (Psalm 130)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT?

MUSIC | Lead with Praise

- Welcome, friends! We are starting a new series today called, "Take the Lead," which is basically a month-long parade!
- **Have you ever seen a parade?** The best thing about a parade is that it's so joyful – everyone is smiling, waving, clapping, and generally having a good time.
- Every parade has a leader! And this month, we are going to learn how to follow God as our leader and become great leaders ourselves! Let's kick off our own parade by celebrating God!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Lead the kids in a time of worship with songs about our God who leads us! This week, lead the kids in creating a conga line around the room. Consider adding these songs to your playlist:*
 - "[Greater Than My Fears](#)" by Kids on the Move
 - "[Echo](#)" by Elevation Worship (motions by Table Kids)

ACTIVITY | Follow Which Leader?

- This month, we are going to hear about epic leaders from the Bible and the God who led them. Now, a leader is not a leader if no one is following them! Let's play a game that shows what that means.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Write an action on each of the ten index cards (e.g., run in place, jumping jacks, touch your nose, hop around, do a dance, push-ups, etc.). Call up three volunteers and show them the card. Discreetly pick one of the volunteers to be the "real leader" who does the motion on the card. The other two have to make up something else to do. The kids will choose who the "leader" is by following the motions of one of the three volunteers.*
- **Was it easy to guess who the real leader was?** It felt pretty random, right? The leader could have been anyone!

ACTIVITY | Build-a-Parade

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can play this game with Phase 10, Uno, or regular playing cards, but make sure to use only the number cards. Pass out one card to each kid and tell them not to reveal it to anyone. Tell the kids to pick a partner and show each other their cards. The person with the lower number has to go stand behind the higher card holder, making a train. Then, they go off to challenge another person, and if the person in the front wins again, the challenger joins their train. If they lose, everyone has to line up behind them. In the event of a tie, have the person in front go to the back of their line, and have the next players compete. Play until you're left with one train!
- Even though there were many leaders near the beginning and we were all over the room, we ended up with only one leader left to follow!

QUESTION | What Makes a Leader?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Prepare paper streamers and give one strip to each kid. Instruct the kids to write their answers on the streamers and then hang them around the room!
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** Give groups a large piece of paper to trace a body and fill in the body with words and pictures of qualities of a great leader.
- **In your opinion, what are some things that every leader says, does, or has that makes them a great leader?**
- These are some great descriptions of leaders. But we are going to find out today that not all leaders have the same traits, and sometimes, the greatest leaders are not who you'd expect!

SO WHAT?

SCRIPTURE | Judges 4

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show this [video](#) to introduce the kids to today's Bible story in Judges 4. Recruit an adult volunteer or two to help you further recap today's story through this short skit. You might want them to dress the part, too!
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** Communicate with a few older kids beforehand and ask them to play different parts in the skit! Encourage them to practice online using Zoom or another safe remote meeting app. Or, give them a few minutes to work on the script together during another activity that's happening in the room.
- Many parades give someone the title of "grand marshal," who is the leader of the parade. Usually influential, popular, or heroic leaders are given that honor. Our grand marshal for today is . . . Deborah! And guess what? She's here today! Please welcome Deborah and Barak!
 - **Deborah:** Hi, I'm Deborah! I am a judge and a prophet for the people of Israel.
 - **Barak:** And you can call me Barak! I follow where Deborah leads.
 - **Deborah:** Well, not always!
 - **Barak:** That's true. I try to, but sometimes I doubt myself. Ugh . . . if I had followed your lead and fought the Canaanites in the first place, maybe I could have finished off that menace, Sisera,

myself!

- **Deborah:** But you said you wanted me to come with you so that particular honor went to my girl, Jael.
- **Barak:** Ooh! She is fierce! The way she tricked Commander Sisera and then. . . you know.
- **Deborah:** Yup. Aren't you glad she's on our side?
- **Barak:** Mmhm. And Deborah here is also fierce! Because we listened to her, we had peace in the land for forty years!
- **Deborah:** You bet we did!
- **Barak:** The thing is, a lot of people underestimated Deborah because she is a woman — back in those days, women just weren't given a fair chance, especially in leadership positions. But boy, did she prove them all wrong!
- **Deborah:** Well, I can't take all the credit. Sure, being a female judge and prophet wasn't an easy gig, but because God was with me, I was able to help our people through some tough times. I hope that's something all of you can remember, too.
- **Barak:** That's right. It doesn't matter if you think you're too young, too shy, or too different. Any one of you can be a great leader with God's help!
- **Deborah:** Alright, it's time to go now. Thanks for letting us talk with all of you today! Say bye, Barak.
- **Barak:** See ya, everyone!

THE BIG IDEA | Everyone can be a leader.

- Big Idea: **Everyone can be a leader.**

VIDEO | Take the Lead, Episode 1

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

ACTIVITY | Lead By Example

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Line up the kids and tell them to stand in order, based on categories you give them. The challenge is to do it without saying a word or touching each other, and finding creative ways to communicate instead. Also, they can't just let one person do all the sorting. Some of the categories can be: birthday, age, grade, height, alphabetical order of first name, etc.

- **PRETEEN HACK:** Have the entire group blindfolded except for one kid. Let that kid direct the group to line up in the correct order by the assigned category. Select different kids to lead each round.
- **What did each of you do to lead yourselves through this activity?**

NOW WHAT?

REFLECTION | Makings of a Leader

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a Makings of a Leader printable. In the circles around the outside of the paper, tell them to write positive words that describe themselves. Then, ask them to swap papers with another kid. Make sure to have leaders walk around and help the kids come up with ideas so that no one's paper is blank. Once finished, tell them to cut out their "banner" and tape it on to a dowel rod.
- Remember today's Big Idea is that **everyone can be a leader**. That means everyone here can lead in some way.
- Look at your friend's paper. Using the words they wrote to describe themselves, **what are some ways you think they can lead?** Write your idea in the blank space in the middle and return the paper to them.
- Not everyone is meant to lead in the same way, but God made us all to be leaders in some way. Take your paper and put it up somewhere in your home to remind you that you can be a leader, too!

MEMORY VERSE | Puzzled Verse

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Upload the Memory Verse graphic provided in your programming folder to an online jigsaw puzzle maker like this [one](#). Open the puzzle on a device that is connected to a projector and tell the kids to take turns putting the puzzle together one piece at a time. Once assembled, read it together out loud a few times.
 - **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Print out the memory verse graphic and cut them up into pieces to create a physical puzzle for kids to solve. Jigsaw puzzles are one of the go-to free time activities for kids with special needs. This may be a great resource to keep it handy.

PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for showing us that being a leader doesn't mean we have to fit into any box or category. Help us to lead in places that we can by listening to you and doing what is right. Give us opportunities to be the kind of leader that leads others to the ultimate leader – you! Amen.

DISCUSSION

- **Why did Israel have judges?**
- **What message from God did Deborah tell Barak?**
- **How was the commander from Canaan defeated?**
- **Read Psalm 130:3-4. How can you tell from today's Bible story that God forgives?**
- **In your own words, what is a leader?**
- **Do you like being a leader? Why or why not?**
- **Can you think of some ways God might want you to be a leader?**

ACTIVITY | Sash of Honor

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give each kid a three-inch-wide piece of ribbon — long enough to be worn as a sash — and set up alphabet stamps that spell "LEADER" in bowls of acrylic paint. Tell the kids to stamp the word on the bottom half of their ribbon, vertically or horizontally. Alternatively, you can provide stencils and paintbrushes. Once dry, kids can drape their sash over their shoulder. Help fasten the ends together at their opposite waist with a safety pin.*
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** *Encourage students to also include words from the Makings of a Leader activity earlier that share about what makes them a unique leader!*
- Sashes are usually worn by pretty important people in a parade. Today, that important person is you! There's no telling all the amazing ways you can lead with God on your side. After all, **everyone can be a leader!**