

## WEEK 1 ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

## Ever After

### THE BIG IDEA

God gives us companions.

### THE BIBLE

**Ruth and Naomi Leave Moab:**

Ruth 1; Acts 2:1-6

## LARGE GROUP TIME

**WHAT?** *What are we talking about today?*

### MUSIC | Worship

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *You can lead kids in worship with any songs you like best, but here are a few songs that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)*
  - "Something Good" (Gateway Kids Worship)
  - "Never Gonna Stop" (Bright Ones)
  - "My Best Friend" (Hillsong Kids)
  - "I Am Yours" (Life Church Kids Worship)

### ACTIVITY | Have You Scene It?

- This month we are in a series called Ever After. We are going to look at the story of Ruth to see how God truly writes the best stories for us! Let's try and find some characters in popular fairy tale scenes.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Use the "[Eye Found It](#)" game from Disney (or create [a DIY version](#) if you'd like) for this activity. Show ten cards, scene-side showing. The leader will hold the rest of the cards and show one item card that the kids will need to look for in the scenes. Divide kids into teams and have representatives from each team go up to the front to play each round. The player who finds the item first in the ten scene cards laid out wins. Repeat until all the cards are gone. The team with the most cards wins!*

### ACTIVITY | Fairytale Friends

- There are so many cute animal friends, sometimes called companions, that help fairy tale heroes live happily ever after. Let's try to draw our own fairy tale friend.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Print out or project step-by-step drawings of common fairytale friends, like a [mouse](#), a [horse](#), or a [bird](#). You can also show a video [like this one](#) and print the worksheet from the link in the description.*
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Ask kids how they would define a companion or friend. Brainstorm together a list of characters in the Bible and pop culture who were good companions. Ask kids to think about how the real-life companions compare to these characters.*
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Have kids draw their ideal companion. Discuss popular companions from movies then give kids time to draw or describe what their ideal companion would be like. You can partner kids up with a peer or leader who can draw based on the descriptions given if needed.*
- Show us your new companion! **Why did you choose them?**

### POLL | You've Got a Friend in Me

- A companion is someone who goes along with you on a journey. No matter where you're going, they've got your back – or more like – they'll be at your side! Let's play a fun trivia game about companions.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Create this poll as a powerpoint slide or use a fun poll maker online (like this [one](#)). To make it more fun, consider showing an image or clip to accompany each answer.*
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Depending on the technology available, consider making this into a [Kahoot!](#) quiz, and add more questions! This would be a fun way to digitally gamify the trivia questions.*
- **Who was Woody's closest companion, even though they started off as enemies (Toy Story):** *Bo Peep, Bullseye, Zurg, or [Buzz Lightyear](#)?*
- **Who was Kristoff's closest non-human companion (Frozen):** *Olaf, [Sven](#), Grand Pabbie, or Hans?*
- **What was the name of Riley's imaginary companion (Inside Out):** *Ray, [Bing Bong](#), Genie, or Joy?*
- **Who is Lightning McQueen's best companion (Cars):** *Jackson Storm, Cruz Ramirez, [Mater](#), or Mac?*
- **Who was Rapunzel's animal companion (Tangled):** *Maximus, Fang, Vladimir, or [Pascal](#)?*
- **Who started off as an invention but became a companion to Hiro (Big Hero 6):** *Fred, Honey Lemon, Wasabi, or [Baymax](#)?*
- **Which of her companions was the one to teach Raya how to trust (Raya and the Last Dragon):** *[Sisu](#), Tuk Tuk, Namaari, or Boun?*
- **What would have happened if these main characters did not have their companions?**

**SO WHAT?** *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

### BIBLE STORY | Ruth and Naomi Leave Moab

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Recruit a volunteer to play the Storybook Maker every week. Consider setting them up as though about to paint on an artist's easel. The Storybook Maker will tell the Bible story*

from Ruth 1 by either reading the Bible passage or summarizing the Bible story while drawing out the scene. (Don't worry, it doesn't have to be super artistic . . . stick figures are fine! You can also recruit someone else to be the artist behind the scenes and call them your apprentice.) You could also use this [video](#) (without sound) to use as your visual guides if you are uncomfortable with drawing.

- Oh, hello. I didn't see you all there. I am the Storybook Maker. Why am I called the Storybook Maker? I'm glad you asked. See, I like to record all the wonderful stories I hear so I can share them with others. Everyone loves a good story, right?
- Well, I just read the most wonderful fairy tale. No there were no princesses, dragons, or enchanted forests. But it is a story of love and friendship and I think you will enjoy it because the best part about this particular story is that it's true! It's straight from the Bible!
- **Wanna hear it?**
- Wonderful. Once upon a time, in a land far, far away, there was a great famine.
- (Draw this scene or play [video](#) from 0:37 to 0:50 without sound.)
  - A man named Elimelech moved from Bethlehem to the country of Moab with his wife, Naomi, and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. But things just got worse.
  - Sadly, Elimelech died and Naomi was left with her two sons.
- (Draw this scene or play [video](#) from 0:50 to 1:00 without sound.)
  - Mahlon and Chilion married Moabite women named Orpah and Ruth. But even more tragedy occurred to this family and both sons passed away, too.
- (Draw a scene or play [video](#) from 1:00 to 1:35 without sound.)
  - Naomi, knowing life would be difficult without anyone to take care of them, told her daughters-in-law to go back to their mothers' houses because she saw no hope for them with her.
  - Naomi felt incredibly sad and alone and decided to move back to her hometown.
  - Orpah listened to her mother-in-law and left.
  - But Ruth said she would stick with Naomi. She said that she would go wherever Naomi went, be among Naomi's people, and she would serve Naomi's God, too.
- Ruth didn't have to stay. Her husband, Naomi's son, was no longer around, so she had no duty to Naomi. But Ruth left her own home to follow Naomi. And we're going to find out soon enough that it was the best decision she would ever make!

### **BIG IDEA | God gives us companions.**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Every week, have a volunteer dress up as a woodland animal (e.g., bird, squirrel, rabbit, etc.) to deliver the Big Idea to you (written on a paper rolled into a scroll). You could even use a puppet, if available. Have the kids join you in singing a [fairy tale-like vocalization](#) to call this fairytale friend in!
- Oh, it's time to reveal today's Big Idea but I can't remember where I wrote it down. Maybe I can ask one of my animal friends to help me. **Can you all help me call them?**
- [Volunteer appears and hands over Big Idea paper.]
- Thank you fairytale friend! Today's Big Idea is: **God gives us companions.**

**VIDEO | Ever After, Episode 1**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week's episode of [Grow TV](#).*

**STORY | In Good Company**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Talk about a time when you were having a hard time and God sent you a companion to give you hope and encouragement.*
- God gives us companions in our own fairytale-like story called life. So even when we walk through the hardest journeys or even if we were to experience tragedies, we can know we are not alone. There is always someone you can count on!

**OBJECT LESSON | Shadow Companion**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Take the kids outside if possible. If not, have several flashlights available for kids to use. Instruct kids to get in groups of two. Have the partners take turns drawing the other's shadow on the ground. Use chalk if you're outside or a large sheet of paper with a washable marker if you are inside.*
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *Instead of tracing themselves, have kids trace shadows of two things side by side (e.g., two dinosaur toys, two stuffed animals, two dolls, etc.). Check out this video for ideas.*
- God sent Ruth to be Naomi's companion during a difficult time in her life.
- God can send friends, family, maybe even animal friends, like many fairy tales, to give us hope and encouragement.
- But there is another companion that is always there for us, that we can't really see . . . kind of like our shadow. And that's God. Of course, your shadow disappears when there's no light, but God is there all the time – especially when things look dark!
- **God gives us companions**, and sometimes that companion is God!

**SCRIPTURE | Acts 2:1–6**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read the passage or select volunteers to read.*
- After Jesus rose from the dead, when the disciples were all gathered for a time called Pentecost, they experienced something like never before.
- All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak other languages so that everyone could understand what they were saying about Jesus.
- Jesus promised the disciples that even though he would no longer be with them, the Holy Spirit would be! The Holy Spirit would be their companion to help them as they spread the word about Jesus everywhere. The Holy Spirit also would comfort them whenever they felt afraid or alone.
- And the great news? The Holy Spirit is our companion too.

**NOW WHAT?** *What does God want us to do about it?*

**REFLECTION | The Lion and the Mouse**

- There are so many more fairy tales and folk tales from all around the world. We won't have time to read all of them, but let's start with one that you might have heard before!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the classic fable “The Lion and the Mouse” aloud (or show a video like [this one](#)). Ask kids to reflect on the following questions.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Briefly review this story with preteens then have them make up their own fable with a similar “moral of the story.” Alternatively, have preteens pick any classic fairytale, folktale, or fable (e.g., Little Red Riding Hood, Peter Pan, Snow White, Jack and the Beanstalk, etc.) and talk about why the story they chose needed companions.
- **Why do you think the lion thought the mouse would not make a good companion?**
- **How did the mouse prove the lion wrong?**
- **Does anything about this story remind you of today’s Bible story about Naomi and Ruth? In what ways?**

### RESPONSE | Once Upon a Time

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids create a [mini storybook](#) to help them remember today’s Bible story and Big Idea by drawing the story of Naomi and Ruth in eight pages or less. They can add words to the story, too!
- The best part of a story is retelling it to someone else. Let’s make our own storybook so that we can remember what we heard today and share with others that **God gives us companions.**
- **Who is someone you consider a good companion that you can share this story with?**

### MEMORY VERSE | Hansel and Gretel’s Trail

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write out each of the words of the memory verse on separate pieces of paper, along with other words not in the verse. You may choose to tear the edges of the paper to make them look like giant bread crumbs. Create a path with all of these words in a random configuration around the room. Have one person from each team go along the path and pick up a word. Keep going until all the words are picked up. Then reveal the memory verse and have them say it with you. The team with the most words from the memory verse wins!
- **“The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.” Psalm 121:8 (NIV)**

### PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for all the people in my life who stand by me and encourage me during both good times and hard times. Thank you for sending us the Holy Spirit to be our companion for ever after. Amen.

## SMALL GROUP TIME

### DISCUSSION

- **Why did Naomi and her family leave their hometown and move to Moab?**
- **What kinds of difficulties did Naomi face in Moab?**
- **What did Ruth say when Naomi told her not to follow her?**

- Read Acts 2:4. Why do you think the Holy Spirit allowed the people to speak other languages?
- Describe a time when you would need a companion.
- What are some ways you can be a good companion to others?
- What can you do to remind yourself in hard times that God (and the Holy Spirit) is your forever companion?

#### ACTIVITY | Pick a Pal

- Naomi and Ruth had to travel over 1,800 miles (2897 kilometers) to go back to Israel together. That is a hard and long journey, but a great opportunity to be better companions. **Who would be the best companions to have on each of these adventures?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a copy of the printable and have them think of what kind of companion would be the best to have in each of the given scenarios then write or draw in the spaces provided.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Consider providing pictures of well-known TV and movie characters kids can choose from to glue on the printable. You could also purchase stickers or print images on adhesive sheets and turn them into stickers.
- Let's think about one more together . . . **what kind of companion would you want with you to talk to others about God?**

#### MEMORY VERSE | Psalm 121:8 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Practice this month's memory verse with the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) we've provided in your Programming folder or at [growcurriculum.org/Psalm121-8](http://growcurriculum.org/Psalm121-8).
- Let's practice this month's memory verse together!
- **"The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore."**