


LESSON 8: PSALM 23: GREEN MEADOWS

Leader Guide for Grades 3 & 4

Classroom: Grades 3 & 4 Classroom

 Psalm 23:2-3; Matthew 11:28-30

04/22/2020

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Psalm 23:2-3; Matthew 11:28-30
- In This Passage: In these peaceful verses from Psalm 23, David writes that our shepherd, God, lets us rest in green meadows and leads us beside peaceful streams, renewing our strength. Jesus makes a similar promise when he invites us to take our heavy burdens to him and find rest.
- Bible Point: God gives us rest.
- Summary Verse: "The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need" (Psalm 23:1).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *God gives us rest.* To a kid, rest can sound boring. Help kids get past the idea of lying bored in a meadow and understand that the rest Jesus offers is a rest from the worries, stresses, and troubles that overwhelm us with anxiety.
- Think About: What do *you* need rest from? Take your troubles and cares to God.

Dig In to Prayer

- Talk to God about any specific challenges you know kids are facing, such as preparing to move across the country, the loss of a grandparent, or a parent with cancer. Ask God to give kids rest from their troubles.

Quick Tip

- There's one thing that's critical to a successful ministry; it's even more important than your curriculum! That key ingredient is *relationship*. This lesson is a great opportunity for you to build your relationship with kids. Share your own stresses and struggles, and listen well to theirs. As you share vulnerably and authentically, you'll build a trust with kids that encourages them to continue bringing their struggles to you and finding rest in the love of Jesus you show.

This Lesson at a Glance



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids take their burdens to Jesus and find rest in a green meadow.

Supplies

- Bible
- green sheet or tablecloth (big enough for everyone to sit on)
- river rocks (1 per child)
- permanent markers
- cross or picture of a cross
- marshmallows or meringue cookies (at least 1 per child)
- cups of water (1 per child)
- basins of water (1 for every 4-5 kids)
- paper towels

Easy Prep

- Set a cross near a wall, or hang a cross picture on a wall. Place marshmallows or meringue cookies at the foot of the cross.
- On the opposite side of the room, lay out a green sheet or tablecloth. You may need more than 1, depending on the size of your group.
- Scatter river rocks all over the green sheet or tablecloth.



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO

Kids watch a video and discuss the Bible point.

Supplies

- "ZZZ..." teaching video (watch or download [here](#))



CRAFT

Kids plant green meadows in decorative cups.

Supplies

- 16-ounce paper cups (1 per child)
- green construction paper
- scissors
- tape
- staplers
- rolls of blue cellophane (check the gift wrap section or dollar discount stores)
- cotton balls
- Glue Dots
- potting soil
- grass seed
- teaspoons
- water
- "Green Meadows Instructions" handout (download [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



TAKE-HOME

Kids receive a take-home page about the lesson.

Supplies

- this week's "Dig In @ Home" handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Add your church announcements to the "Dig In @ Home" handout.

**Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



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- Scatter river rocks all over the green sheet or tablecloth.

Tip

- This Core Bible Discovery time has less material in it than usual. This is intentional so you can maintain a more relaxed pace that helps you and the kids feel rested rather than rushed. Take your time!

Visit a Rocky Meadow

Stand with kids in an open area of the room.

Say: **We're learning Psalm 23, which is all about how God is our shepherd. Today's verses show how God gives us rest.**

Read Psalm 23:2-3.

Say: **Let's check out our green meadow!**

Lead kids to the green sheet, then say: **Oh no! This meadow is all rocky. Let's see what Jesus said to do with heavy burdens like these rocks.**

Read Matthew 11:28-30.

Say: **God gives us rest. We can take our burdens to him and exchange them for things God has for us that are light and easy to carry. Jesus talked about taking up his yoke; a yoke is something that's put on animals to help them pull heavy loads. But Jesus invites us to trade our heavy yokes for his light one. Let's do that now.**

Have each child pick up a river rock. Distribute permanent markers, and have kids write on the rocks burdens they're carrying. You may need to give examples, such as struggling in school, losing a friend, or parents who are fighting.

When kids have finished writing their burdens, they can take the rocks to the cross and exchange them for a light and fluffy treat. Have kids take their treats to the green meadow and sit down with you.

Enjoy a Snack

Say: **To us, a green meadow is a pretty, restful place to be. To a sheep, it's all that...and food! Sheep eat grass, so going to a green meadow is like going to an all-you-can-eat buffet restaurant. God gives us rest by giving us peaceful places to go and be free of worrying about what we'll eat. So let's enjoy our snacks.**

Have kids eat their snacks. Distribute cups of water, and say: **Psalm 23 says our shepherd leads us beside peaceful streams. That's another peaceful place to be, and it provides for another one of our needs: water.**

As kids eat and drink, lead them in this discussion.

Ask: • **If you're willing, share about the burden you wrote earlier on your rock.** Share an example of a burden you've been carrying to help set a tone of vulnerability.

• **What would it look like for God to give you rest and take that burden?** Share first using the example you gave above.

• **What's a place that makes you feel restful and peaceful?**

Say: **God gives us rest.** We can take our heavy burdens to him, and he will let us trade those burdens for things that are light and easy to carry. Let's thank him by praying in a special way.

Pray

Set out basins of water in the green meadow so each child can reach one.

Reread Psalm 23:2.

Say: **Let's run our hands through the peaceful streams as we ask for God to give us rest.**

Allow a minute or two for kids to run their hands through the water and pray. Then provide paper towels for kids to dry their hands.

Pray: **Thank you, God, for giving us rest. We ask you to give us rest from our burdens and renew our strength. We pray that you will guide us along right paths. In Jesus' name, amen.**



Supplies

- "ZZZ..." teaching video (watch or download [here](#))

Tip:

- Don't have internet in your classroom? That's okay! You can download the videos before class using the "download" button at the link provided, or just purchase this quarter's DVD [here](#).

Discuss and Watch "ZZZ..."

Say: God gives us rest. He brings us to quiet waters and green meadows when we need a break. We all need times to play and work—and times to rest. But how much do *you* know about sleepy animals? Let's test your knowledge. Shout out the answers when you think you know them!

Watch "ZZZ..."

Ask: • Which animals were you surprised to see on the list?

- Which animals did you expect to see but didn't?
- If you could, would you want to sleep as much as a koala? Why or why not?
- Why do you think some animals need so much sleep?

Say: We don't need as much rest as a koala or a python...but God gives us rest when we need it.



Supplies

- 16-ounce paper cups (1 per child)
- green construction paper
- scissors
- tape
- staplers
- rolls of blue cellophane (check the gift wrap section or dollar discount stores)
- cotton balls
- Glue Dots
- potting soil
- grass seed
- teaspoons
- water
- “Green Meadows Instructions” handout (download [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Make a Green Meadow

Show kids the sample craft you made. Give each child a paper cup. Set out the remaining supplies to share, and have kids follow the directions on the “Green Meadows Instructions” handout to make green meadow cups.

- Cut four strips of green construction paper, each about 2 inches wide and 12 inches long.
- Fold them in half into 1x12-inch strips, and cut fringe along both edges.
- Wrap one strip around the rim of your cup, fringed edges up. Use a stapler to secure it in place.
- Cut a strip of cellophane that’s about 1 foot long and the width of the roll.
- Twist the cellophane and wrap it around the cup under the grass to make a stream. Secure it with staples.
- Add three more rows of grass underneath the stream, working your way down so the fringe sticks up. Depending on the length of your stapler, you may need to use tape to secure the bottom row.
- You can run your fingers through the fringe to make it stick out more.
- Use Glue Dots to add cotton-ball sheep to your meadow.

Plant Grass

Allow time for kids to plant grass following these instructions.

- Fill your cup with potting soil, leaving about 1 inch open at the top.
- Sprinkle a teaspoon of grass seed into the cup, and push the seeds about an inch below the surface with your fingers.
- Pour some water on the seeds to water the grass.

Talk About It

Ask: • **How can hard times be like the dirt in your cups?**

• **What can God do to turn your dirt into green meadows?**

Say: **With daily peaceful watering, the seeds in your cups will grow into green meadows in just a few days! That's a great picture of how Jesus can take our heavy burdens and help us find rest in green meadows. God gives us rest.**

Have kids take their green meadows home and keep watering them, waiting for the meadows to grow.

**Supplies**

- this week's "Dig In @ Home" handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Add your church announcements to the "Dig In @ Home" handout.

Distribute a copy of the "Dig In @ Home" handout to kids as they leave, or email it to parents during the week.

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