



JANUARY THEME

**OPERATING
SYSTEM**

Update the Way You React

BIBLE STORY

Proverbs 12:18

What Would You Say? | Choose Your Words Carefully

BOTTOM LINE

Choose your words carefully

MEMORY VERSE

“God’s power has given us everything we need to lead a godly life.”

2 Peter 1:3a, NIV

LIFE APP

Self-Control | Choosing to do what you should even when you don’t want to

BASIC TRUTH

I need to make the wise choice...and with God’s help I can!

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **SELF-CONTROL** and God’s character, as shown through God’s big story.

THIS WEEK—Key Question: Why are your words so important? We don’t always do a good job of thinking before we speak. We hope that families will get the chance to see that their words have power to hurt or help. God can help them make the wise choice with their words even when they might be upset.

In week three, we discover more about self-control in **Proverbs 12:18**. Solomon talks about the power of our words. We want families to learn that when they choose the right words in a difficult situation they can actually bring healing to the situation rather than destruction.

Bottom Line: Choose your words carefully. We want families to think about the words they use throughout different situations, because our words can help point others to Jesus.

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today’s story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each group member by name. Ask God to help kids understand the consequences of not choosing their words carefully. Pray that they would have hearts that seek to build up relationships with others, not tear them down. Ask God to provide opportunities for kids to choose their words carefully and to give them the self-control to act on what they learn today.

•• JUST FOR FUN

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: Index cards, pens

What You Do:

- For the kids who were here last week, ask: Did anyone memorize their Proverbs verse from last week? Did anyone recite their Proverbs verse from last week to help them keep their cool?

- Hand out an index card and a pen to your small group members. Ask them to write a question on their card. Some examples of questions include:

- What’s your favorite dessert?
- What did you do last summer?
- What is your favorite activity/why?
- What is your favorite animal/why?
- What would you do with \$10,000?



- What did you do last week?
- Where would you most like to go on vacation/why?
- Collect the cards. Shuffle them. Randomly redistribute them to your group members.
- Challenge kids to answer the question they were given for 30-60 seconds without saying “um,” “ah,” “like,” “you know,” etc.
- The winner is the kid who can talk the longest about their question. If there is a tie, the group can pick a question for a showdown.
- Encourage the group to listen carefully for any “ums” or “ahs” or “you know.”
- Ask: What was important to remember as you participated in this activity? *(To talk slowly and select your words carefully)*

•• GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME

Made to Move | An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Select a volunteer.
- Whisper to him or her a word or words to say to the group while holding his or her tongue.
- Challenge the group to guess what he or she is saying. The first kid to guess gets to be the next volunteer.
- Select words from the list below or make up your own. If time remains, allow kids to come up with words for the group to guess.
- Potential words:
 - Cheddar cheese
 - Sailing on the sea
 - Ton of bricks
 - Chicken dumplings
 - Penguins and pirates
 - Sweet apple pie
 - Catching fireflies
 - Green grass
 - Tongues are slimy
 - Crocodiles drink Coke

What You Say: “Imagine if we had to hold our tongues all the time when we spoke. Not only would it be slimy and gross, but also it would be hard to understand what we were saying to each other. However, there are times when ‘holding our tongues’ or watching what we say can be very important. **[Transition] Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship, we’ll hear/we heard what Solomon has to say about ‘holding our tongues.’**”

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Children’s Ministry worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

•• TAKE A SNAPSHOT [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Imagine | An activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment



What You Need: Red slips of paper, green slips of paper, pens

What You Do:

- Ask: When do we use words? (*talk, text, social media, letters—this is an opportunity to discuss how “words” include not just the words we speak but the words we type or write*)
- Ask kids to create a speech bubble using the GREEN slips of paper with an example of healing words. For example: Good job! You are really creative! Thank you! I am sorry!
- Ask kids to create a speech bubble using the RED slips of paper with an example of thoughtless or cutting words. For example: You’re bothering me! You can’t do it! Why would you wear that?
- Group the healing speech bubbles together; group the cutting/thoughtless speech bubbles together.
- Discuss the examples:
 - Can you change healing words to cutting words by the way you say them? (*If necessary, prompt kids by using one of the examples and saying it with a sarcastic tone or with an eye-roll. This is an opportunity to talk about how our tone and body language are important as what we choose to say.*)
 - How do you feel when someone speaks to you with healing words? How about thoughtless or cutting words?

•• **BIBLE STORY EXTENSION** [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Create | An activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

What You Need: Speech bubbles from the “Take a Snapshot” activity, copy paper, pens, markers

What You Do:

- Review the words in the speech bubbles from the “Take a Snapshot” activity.
- Encourage kids to brainstorm the types of words that bring healing.
- Encourage kids to brainstorm the types of words that cut like a sword.
- Examples could include:
 - Healing: praise, encouraging, nice, kind, true/fact, necessary
 - Cut like a sword: thoughtless, mean, hurtful, lies, embarrassing, negative, overcritical
- Challenge kids to create an acronym to help them choose words their words carefully. To help them, ask them to start with the sentence, “Before I speak, I should ask myself are my words . . .” An example:
 - THINK (*Is it true? Is it helpful? Is it inspired by God or would God want me to say it? Is it necessary to say? Is it kind?*)
 - FLAP (*Is it a fact? Is it loving? Is it affirming? Is it praising?*)
- Once the group has created an acronym, pass out copy paper and pens and ask kids to write down the acronym and its meaning to help them remember it. If you have extra time, kids can use markers to decorate their paper.
- Challenge kids to use their acronym to help them to choose their words carefully.

•• **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask some of the following discussion questions...
 - What are the consequences of forgetting to choose your words wisely?
 - What effect do thoughtless words have on relationships? What about healing words?
 - Just because something is true, does it mean it is okay to say it? Why or why not?
 - How do you determine if something is necessary to say?

