

GRIFFIN'S GAMES

ON THE GREEN



Course Overview

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Title/Bible Content	The Two Kingdoms	The Belt	The Breastplate and Shoes	The Shield and Helmet	The Sword and Prayer
Bible Passages	Creator King and Prince of Darkness John 18:37-38; Ephesians 6:10-14	Savior King Genesis 1-3; Gospels; Ephesians 6:10-14	King Josiah 2 Kings 22-23; Ephesians 6:14-15	King Solomon 1 Kings 2-11; Ephesians 6:16-17a	King of Kings vs. Prince of the Air Matthew 4:1-11; Ephesians 6:17-18a
Lesson Focus	We're in a battle between two kingdoms.	Each child of the King needs to fasten on the belt of truth.	Put on the breastplate of righteousness and the shoes of peace.	Take the shield of faith and the helmet of salvation.	Take the sword of the Spirit and pray.
Apologetics Content	Absolute truth is true for <i>all</i> people, for <i>all</i> times, for <i>all</i> circumstances.	Build a biblical worldview to stand strong in the truth.	Put on what's right (Jesus' righteousness) then do right.	Guard against false teachings and temptations.	Be ready to give an answer for the hope that is in you.
Veritas Verses	Ephesians 6:10-11	Ephesians 6:14	Ephesians 6:15	Ephesians 6:16	Ephesians 6:17-18a
Rhyme Time	Of two, only one is true!	Decide your side!	Do right in God's sight!	Learn to discern!	Train your brain!
Animal Pals	Winifred ("Winnie") the Warhorse	Wily the Fox	Grimwald the Dragon	Byron the Ironclad Beetle	Skye the Peregrine Falcon
Kieran's Crafts in the Courtyard	Castle Catapult Kingdom Crown Juggling Balls	Suncatcher Cross Fox and Geese Board Game	Breastplate Tin Punch King Josiah Puppet Theater Dragon Sock Puppet	Faith Shield or Necklace Wordless Book	Train Your Brain Card Caddy Mini Sword
Kieran's Science in the Courtyard	What's Up? Light and Dark	Newton's Cradle Goin' in Circles	Force Field Pom-Pom Launcher	Spring Thing Balloon Jousting	Tests of Strength Battering Ram
Griffin's Games on the Green	Capture the Flag Jumping Jesters	Bucket Brigade Belt Bonanza	Dragon Dash Royal Games of Skill	Defend the Castle Hat Stack	Knights' Obstacle Course Sword Tag
Tessa's Treats in the Town	Kingdom Cookies Be Strong Barbells	King's Cups Fox Faces	Dragon Munchies (Versions 1 & 2)	Mini Pizza Shields Cracker Shields	Moat Floats Banana Swords
Cool Contests	Guess the Cannonballs	Team Tournaments	Royal Dress-Up Day	Design a Helmet	Mission Money Mania



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Griffin's Games on the Green

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Project Coordinator: Stacia McKeever

Writers: Evonne Krell, Linda Moore, and Randy and Barb Witt, with Wayne and Becky Fuller

Editor: Ryan Freeman

Interior Design: Diane King

Cover Design: Jon Seest

Game Illustrations: Paul Agner

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For more information, write:

Answers in Genesis, PO Box 510, Hebron, KY 41048

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Handy Helps

Huzzah!

Hooray! It's time to charge into medieval times—a world brimming with breathtaking castles, regal kings and queens, fire-breathing dragons and brave knights, and epic battles.

Amid the pages of *Keepers of the Kingdom: Standing Strong in Today's Battle for Truth*, your knights will learn how to be part of God's kingdom and wear the armor of God. Our Royal Majesty's kingdom is under attack, and we must prepare for battle!

Day 1: The Two Kingdoms—We will discover there are just two kingdoms—the kingdom of light versus the kingdom of darkness. One is ruled by the good King, Creator God. The other is ruled by the enemy, Satan.

Day 2: The Belt—We must decide our side. Those who become citizens of God's good kingdom need to wear the armor of God daily, starting with the belt of truth that helps us have an unshakable trust in God's Word, along with helping us live as truthful people.

Day 3: The Breastplate and Shoes—The breastplate helps God's children put on Christ's righteousness and grow in right living. The shoes show us we can be at peace with God, which helps us stand firm in our Christian convictions and share Jesus with others.

Day 4: The Shield and Helmet—The shield and helmet protect us from the enemy's attacks—wrong thinking, discouragement, and deception. We will learn to discern!

Day 5: The Sword and Prayer—The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, which helps us train our brains to know, memorize, love, and obey God's Word. And as we battle, we must pray!

Excitement and adventure await from the first minute of each day when kids meet in traveling troupes. The troupes gather at the **Apprentices' Assembly in the Great Hall**, a high-energy beginning that includes wacky intros, lively songs, a missions moment, and prayer.

Then they're off to rotate through five fun sites:

Truth Talks in the Keep, where God's Word is taught in hands-on ways.

Kieran's Science and Crafts in the Courtyard, where kids are bedazzled making special craft and science creations of their own.

Tessa's Treats in the Town, where kids can feast on tantalizing treats and eats.

Griffin's Games on the Green, where there are plenty of old-world games with new fun twists.

Minerva's Missions, Music, and Memory Verses at the Manor, where kids can sing songs, learn their memory

verses with fun games, or go in-depth with the mission moment featuring Children's Hunger Fund and the Wild Brothers.

Finally, everyone heads back to the **Apprentices' Assembly in the Great Hall** for the closing, where there's more singing, contest results, and the highly anticipated daily drama. This is situated in the royal chambers and features some regal (and not so regal) characters who are engaged in a classic battle between good and evil.

So prepare to step back in time, embark on the journey, and partake in one royally fun time!

Our Goal

We are so thankful for how God has chosen to use the Answers VBS programs over the past years! But why did we decide to embark on such an undertaking in the first place, and why are we still at it, by God's grace?

Our primary goal has always been to bring God glory by boldly and unashamedly proclaiming him to a strategic group—young people! From both a biblical and statistical point of view, young people are a big deal. They're not only awesome—we love 'em!—but they're also dearly cherished by our Lord and tend to be softhearted toward spiritual things. Researchers generally agree most people become Christians when they're children, so it's apparent this age group is a huge mission field!

Children are loved by their Creator, and Jesus said to let them come to him (Luke 18:16). We want children to come to Christ and not be hindered in any way from doing so. To that end, we combine a biblically rich VBS with off-the-chart, irresistible fun. In a day and age when content sometimes suffers, we don't want to sacrifice rich teaching. But it's also crucial that the most exciting book in the world not come across as boring or irrelevant. We want to reflect our creative, inspiring, joy-giving God who made laughter and fun.

So why do we do it? We want kids around the world to hear about and personally meet our awesome God and understand how they can receive eternal life through repentance and faith in Christ Jesus. We believe VBS is a great way to introduce them to God, as it is one of the biggest outreaches of the year for most churches.

We pray you will find that every prayer prayed, every minute invested, every dollar spent, and every word spoken will bring God glory as you reach kids for Christ. Just remember—VBS is worth it. May God richly bless your VBS. We're praying for you!

Your Role

Your role as the game coordinator is outlined in the following pages. Your responsibilities may include:

- Planning games for all age levels
- Gathering game supplies ahead of time
- Setting up games daily during VBS
- Running game time and overseeing others who are running game time
- Making sure key lesson themes are reinforced through the games

- Overseeing the cleanup of the game area(s) each day
- Praying over all aspects of this job before, during, and after VBS

This is *your* guide. Read it carefully and prayerfully, using our suggestions combined with the ideas the Holy Spirit brings to your mind.

So get ready! Get set! God is about to use you and your church to impact lives.

Frequently Asked Questions

The content of *Keepers of the Kingdom* may be new to you. For a list of helpful articles on the topics covered in this VBS program, please visit AnswersVBS.com/keeperfaq.

Terms to Know

Throughout the VBS curriculum, various terms will be used. Here is a list of some of the most common terms to know.

Traveling Troupes: Groups of children (individual classes) named after people of the Middle Ages, such as Jesters, Bakers, or Troubadours.

Troupe Leaders: Group leaders who lead the traveling troupes from place to place during VBS. No teaching is required of this position.

Truth Talks in the Keep: Bible and apologetics lesson time in the most fortified part of the castle—the keep.

Royal Trainers: Teachers of the Truth Talks.

Kieran's Science and Crafts in the Courtyard: Rotation site where crafts are made and science experiments are explored.

Tessa's Treats in the Town: Indoor or outdoor location where snacks are served.

Griffin's Games on the Green: Indoor or outdoor site (outdoor is preferred) for recreation time.

Minerva's Missions, Music, and Memory Verses at the Manor: Rotation sites where kids can spend additional time learning songs, memory verses, and missions.

Veritas Verse: Daily memory verse. (*Veritas*, a good medieval word, means “truth is mighty and will prevail” and “true, trustworthy.”)

Animal Pals: Our friendly animal mascots that remind us of the main themes of each day.

Toddlers: 2–4-year-olds.

Pre-Primaries: 4–6-year-olds, or children ages 4 through those who have completed kindergarten.

Primaries: 6–9-year-olds, or children who have completed grades 1–3.

Juniors: 9–12-year-olds, or children who have completed grades 4–6.

For multi-age K–6 traveling troupes, we recommend using the material for the Primaries.

Top 20 Tips for Griffin's Games on the Green

1. Pray! Ephesians 6:18 reminds us to be praying at all times in the Spirit. This is your most important preparation. Give all concerns to the Lord and watch *him* do great things.
2. Decide which games you will play. Consider the age group and the amount of time you have scheduled. Two main game possibilities are given daily starting on page 15, geared primarily for Juniors and Primaries. There are also Toddler Games (page 7), Pre-Primary Games (page 10), and Super Simple Games (page 13). Additional game ideas that can work any day are given at the end of the *Game Guide*.
3. Keep in mind that younger kids like to do several simple games each period, as well as repeat favorite games played on prior days.
4. Before VBS, gather the game workers for a trial run. Play all the games to work out any trouble spots.
5. Invest in a megaphone for the game leader to use as a microphone.
6. Use bandanas, strips of material, jerseys, or wristbands to designate teams.
7. Use cones, rope, or tape to designate the playing area and start and finish lines. Use chalk if playing on pavement.
8. Change the size of the balls to make the activities easier for younger children (larger balls) or more challenging for older children (smaller balls).
9. Depending on the game, the amount of time you have, and the size and age of your group, consider setting up several games as stations and having kids rotate through them. This works especially well with large groups or young children who have short attention spans.
10. Teach children to always tag with two fingers on the shoulder.
11. Use water! Children love to get wet. Use water from buckets and get children wet with sponges, cups, or splash balls. (The football-style splash ball works great!)
 - » Note: Limit the wetness to a reasonable amount—don't get the kids dripping wet.
12. Make sure everyone who is physically able participates and no one feels left out. At the same time, be sensitive to those with disabilities who are unable to play, and model through your words and actions how you value and care about each person.
13. Announce the name and object of the game with excitement and energy. The kids will pick up on how you feel about it.
 - » Example: Hey, kids! We're going to play an awesome game today called _____. The object of the game is _____.
14. Keep instructions short and simple. Expect children to be quiet and respectful when instructions are being given.
15. Do a quick tie-in of the day's Bible content using the teaching tie-in suggestions. Games are great, but games with a point are better! Make sure to have a Bible so you can read any verses mentioned in the teaching tie-ins.
16. Form teams quickly and in fun ways. Once in teams, pump them up by asking questions:
 - » Who thinks their team is going to win today?
 - » Who thinks the Knights will win?
 - » Who thinks the Jesters will win?
17. Have a countdown to get started.
 - » Example: Everyone ready? 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, GO!
18. Keep children moving as much as possible.
19. Keep everyone hydrated.
20. Have a backup plan in case of bad weather.

Toddler Games

Consider having an outdoor playtime if you have a good space for it. It's nice to break up the day and have a new location to explore. The outdoor location should be enclosed so no one wanders off. If you don't have a safe area, use tarped hay bales or snow fencing to create one. Ask church families to bring in plastic slides, big wheel riding toys, and other age-appropriate outdoor equipment. Make sure they're labeled so they can easily be returned after VBS.

You may also want to consider having wading pools with a small amount of water for outdoor playtime. (Supervise

carefully.) Make sure parents are notified ahead of time to bring swim floats, a swimsuit, a towel, and extra clothes for their child. Ask if it's okay to put sunscreen on their child and apply it at least 10 minutes before going outside. If possible, place the pools in a shady area.

For game time, use the following suggestions or other options from the *Game Guide*. Some of the Pre-Primary games can work for Toddlers. Also, it's fun to repeat favorites throughout the week.

If you have kids with disabilities, be sensitive and adapt so they can participate as much as possible.

Thematic Game Ideas

Day 1

Knights' Ride

Ahead of time, gather a half pool noodle for each child and one blue sheet or plastic tablecloth for everyone to use. Check online for fun ways to make pool noodles into horses if you want to jazz them up.

Give each child the half pool noodle to ride as a horse. Have the kids follow a leader, riding around the play area. The blue sheet or tablecloth acts as a moat for kids to jump over as they ride. At some point, the leader should stop and say, "Oh no! This is the bad kingdom. Quick, ride back to the good kingdom!" Then have kids ride in the opposite direction. Finally, have children sit down to let their "horses" rest while you share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

There are two kingdoms. Who's the ruler of the good kingdom? Take responses. God rules over the good kingdom. God is perfect and true. Who rules the bad kingdom? Take responses. Satan is the ruler. He's bad and he lies. Let's be part of God's good kingdom!

Bible Quest

Ahead of time, gather some Bibles. Keep in mind the toddlers will be holding and hugging whichever Bibles you choose to use.

Stack some Bibles at one end of the play area, and have the children line up on the opposite end. Each child will have a turn running to the stack, picking up a Bible, and running back to start while hugging the Bible. If you have

older kids who are more coordinated, they can ride a half pool noodle "horse" to pick up a Bible and bring it back. After each child has had a chance to run at least once, share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

The Bible's a very special book because it's God's Word. It tells us the truth about God and his good kingdom. And best of all, the Bible tells us how we can be part of God's kingdom!

Day 2

Belt of Truth Relay

Ahead of time, gather one belt for every two children. Optional: Blow up at least one balloon for each child.

Gather the children at one end of the play area and share the teaching tie-in. Then have two kids each hold an end of a belt and run together to the other end of the area and back. If using balloons, have each child running with the belt pick up a balloon at the other end to bring back with them.

TEACHING TIE-IN

This game uses regular belts. Show a belt from the game and put it on. These belts can help us remember the belt in God's armor. What's that belt called? The belt of __ (truth)? We should fasten on the belt of truth. It helps us remember that the Bible's true and that we should always tell the truth.

Decide Your Side

Ahead of time, place a long piece of tape on the floor. Attach the **Good and Bad Kingdom Posters** (from the Teaching Posters) to the wall or to two chairs on either side of the tape.

Have the kids stand on the tape. Call out “good side” or “bad side” and “good kingdom” or “bad kingdom” while kids jump off the tape to the correct side. Add in other words like “God’s kingdom” or “the enemy’s kingdom”; “the loving kingdom” or “the mean kingdom.” Play several times, then share the teaching tie-in while the kids sit down and rest.

TEACHING TIE-IN

We’ve learned that there are two kingdoms, a good one and a bad one. But in real life, you can’t go back and forth like you did in the game. Every person must choose which kingdom they want to be a part of. You must decide your side. Let’s choose the good side—God’s side!

Day 3

Dragon’s Treasure

Using a small ball, play this game somewhat like Red Light, Green Light. Choose a leader to be the dragon and stand at one end of the play space. Have the children line up at the opposite end. Explain that the ball is the dragon’s treasure, then place it near the dragon. Whenever the dragon turns away from the kids, they will all sneak toward the treasure. When the dragon turns back, all the kids must freeze in place. If anyone moves, the dragon may tell them to return to the start. The first child to grab the treasure must run back to the start while the dragon chases him. When finished playing, share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Some stories say that dragons love treasure like gold and jewels. But what’s our greatest treasure? Hold up a Bible. God’s Word, the Bible, is our greatest treasure. It tells us how to do right in God’s sight.

Don’t Wake the Dragon

Use a small object that can be easily hidden. Have students sit in a semicircle on the floor. Place a chair at the open end of the circle facing away from the kids. Put the small object under the chair. Choose a leader or child to be the dragon. Have the dragon sit on the chair (facing away from the kids) with his eyes closed. Silently choose a child in the circle to quietly pick up the treasure, then go back and sit down, placing it behind him. Have the dragon turn around. Give him three guesses to find the one who took the treasure. If he guesses correctly, that

child becomes the dragon. If he guesses incorrectly, the teacher chooses the next dragon. Play several rounds, then share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

We were playing with the dragon’s treasure, weren’t we? Did you know that God’s truth is like a treasure? Where can we find God’s truth? Hold up a Bible. We can find wonderful truth about God whenever we read the Bible.

Day 4

Shield of Faith Defenders

Ahead of time, gather stiff paper plates, one for each child. Use duct tape to make simple handles on the back of each plate. (If the kids did the Faith Shield craft, you may use those shields.) Make a line of tape or cones across the middle of the play area. Place a large amount of sponge balls, ping-pong balls, or crumpled paper balls on either side of the tape.

Share the teaching tie-in. Divide the children into two teams and have them line up on either side of the tape. Pass out one shield/plate to each child. Show them how to put their hand through the tape handle and hold the shield up in front of them. When you say go, the children on both sides will toss the balls at the other team, using their shields to defend themselves. Leaders can help toss the balls and encourage kids to hold up their shields.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Sometimes the enemy’s lies and bad ideas will come at us like arrows. Hold up a Bible. But if we know and obey God’s Word by faith, God will help us to turn from those sins and he will protect us like a shield. Let’s pretend the balls are sins like lies. We’ll use our shields to keep them away.

Put Your Helmet On!

This game of tag requires space to run. Share the teaching tie-in, then play the game. Have the children stand in a circle in the middle of the play area. Choose one or two leaders to be It. Show the children how to put their helmets on by placing their hands on their heads. When you say go, they must keep their helmets on as they run. If they put their hands down, that means their helmet fell off, and they can be tagged. (You may need to remind the kids to put their helmets on during the game.) When a child is tagged, he must show It that his helmet is back on by putting his hands on his head before he may run again.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Which part of the armor of God is worn on the head? Take responses. The helmet of salvation helps us

remember that Jesus saves us from our sin and doesn't want us to sin anymore. We must keep our helmet on so we can win against sin and obey God.

Day 5

Bible Treasure Hunt

Ahead of time, print, laminate (if possible), cut out, and hide the [Bible Cutouts](#) around the room, and bring a timer.

Share the teaching tie-in, then set the timer and see if the kids can find all the cutouts before time runs out.

TEACHING TIE-IN

The Bible's like a treasure because it tells us the truth about God. It's also part of the armor of God. What

part is it? [Take responses](#). It's the sword of the Spirit. The more we know about the Bible, the more we can share God's truth and hope with others.

Knights' Training Course

Ahead of time, set up a course using obstacles such as walking across a board (a moat), riding a hoppity ball (a horse), throwing a pool noodle (a javelin), and knocking down play bricks or boxes (a castle wall) with a pool noodle.

Have the kids take turns going through the course, then share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Knights had to practice to get ready for battles and learn to use their armor. We need to practice using the armor of God by reading the Bible and obeying it!

Pre-Primary Games

Each day, three options are listed for Pre-Primary Games. Some are the same as Toddler Games; some are different. Because the children's attention spans are short, it's good to have several quick games like these. Use one at a time, or if you have at least three leaders and twelve kids, it works well to set up three daily stations using the three options. Have the kids rotate in small groups from one option to the next, spending approximately a third of their time at each. You can also substitute other games in this guide in place of any of these options or repeat favorite ones. Some of these can also be used with older kids.

Keep in mind that there may be children with disabilities. Be sensitive and adapt the games so they can participate in some way if at all possible.

Day 1

Option 1: Cross the Moat

Ahead of time, gather a blue plastic tablecloth or sheet, a piece of poster board that will be the "drawbridge," and (optional) a squirt gun. Put down the tablecloth or sheet with the poster board on top.

Share the teaching tie-in, then play. The kids will pretend they are crossing the moat (the sheet or tablecloth on the ground) to get to the good castle in God's kingdom. Have them cross the moat in different ways: jump over it, run around the ends of it, hop over it, or walk over it on a "drawbridge." Optional: Have a leader with a squirt gun in the moat where he can squirt the kids as they cross.

TEACHING TIE-IN

A moat is a big ditch filled with water that goes all the way around a castle. Why would a castle need a moat? *Take responses.* The moat helped protect the castle. This week, we're going to learn about ways we can protect ourselves from the enemy and say no to sin.

Option 2: Knights' Ride

Ahead of time, gather a half pool noodle for each child and one blue sheet or plastic tablecloth for everyone to use. Check online for fun ways to make pool noodles into horses if you want to jazz them up.

Give each child the half pool noodle to ride as a horse. Have the kids follow a leader, riding around the play area. The blue sheet or tablecloth acts as a moat for kids to jump over as they ride. At some point, the leader should stop and say, "Oh no! This is the bad kingdom. Quick,

ride back to the good kingdom!" Then have kids ride in the opposite direction. Finally, have children sit down to let their "horses" rest while you share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

There are two kingdoms. Who's the ruler of the good kingdom? *Take responses.* God rules over the good kingdom. God is perfect and true. Who rules the bad kingdom? *Take responses.* Satan is the ruler. He is evil and a liar. Let's be part of God's good kingdom!

Option 3: Castle Guards

Ahead of time, divide the play area into three parallel spaces using masking tape or cones. One end will be the woods. The middle area is the moat where the castle guards (leaders) move around. The third section is the castle.

Explain that players must begin in the woods and cross the moat to the castle without being caught (tagged) by a guard. If someone is tagged, he must go back to the woods and begin again. Play for a set amount of time, then count how many made it safely to the castle, and share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

The moat made it harder for enemies to get into the castle and easier for guards to catch the enemies. When we read the Bible and learn to obey God, we will have his strength to stay away from the enemy, which will make it harder for the enemy to "catch us" and tempt us to sin.

Day 2

Option 1: Belt of Truth Relay

Ahead of time, gather one belt for every two children and (optional) one balloon per child.

Gather the children at one end of the play area and share the teaching tie-in. Then have the kids line up in two teams. Attach a belt around the upper arms of two kids. They must run side-by-side to the other end of the area and back. Optional: Blow up at least one balloon for each child. Have each child pick up a balloon at the other end to bring back with them. When finished, share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

This game uses regular belts. Show a belt from the game and put it on. This belt can help us remember the belt in

God's armor. What's that belt called? The belt of what? *Take responses.* The belt of truth helps us remember that the Bible's true and that we should always tell the truth.

Option 2: Dragon Dash

A leader acts as the dragon. At first the dragon is sleeping. The kids run around and get as near to the dragon as they dare! Then the dragon wakes up and chases the kids around. Optional: Give the dragon a small object to be his treasure. Have him hold the treasure while he sleeps or set the treasure down while he turns his back. The kids will try to sneak up and grab the treasure. You may also give the dragon a squirt gun to squirt anyone who comes too close. When finished playing, share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Some stories say that dragons love treasure like gold and jewels. But what's our greatest treasure? *Hold up a Bible.* God's Word, the Bible, is our greatest treasure. It tells us how to do right in God's sight.

Option 3: Decide Your Side

Ahead of time, place a long piece of tape on the floor. Attach the *Good and Bad Kingdom Posters* (from the Teacher Illustration posters) to the wall or on two chairs on either side of the tape.

Have students stand on the tape. Call out "good side" or "bad side" and "good kingdom" or "bad kingdom" while kids jump off the tape to the correct side. Tell them to jump back onto the tape when you say, "Decide your side!" Play several times, using opposites that describe each kingdom, such as truth/lies; God/Satan; light/darkness. When finished playing, share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

We've learned that there are two kingdoms, a good one and a bad one. But in real life, you can't go back and forth between the two like you did in the game. Every person must choose which kingdom they want to be a part of. You must decide your side. Let's choose the good side—God's side!

Day 3

Option 1: Don't Wake the Dragon

Use a small object that can be easily hidden, and have players sit in a semicircle on the floor. Place a chair at the open end of the circle facing away from the kids. Put the small object under the chair. Choose a leader or child to be the dragon. Have the dragon sit in the chair (facing away from the kids) with his eyes closed. Silently choose a child in the circle to quietly pick up the treasure, then go back and sit down, placing it behind him. Have the dragon turn around. Give him three guesses to point out the one who took the treasure. If he guesses correctly, that child becomes the dragon. If he guesses incorrectly, the teacher chooses the next dragon. When finished playing, share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

We kept hiding the dragon's treasure, didn't we? He had to keep trying to find it! Did you know that God's truth is like hidden treasure? But where can we find God's truth? *Hold up a Bible.* We can find wonderful truth about God whenever we read the Bible.

Option 2: Charge

Ahead of time, gather half a pool noodle and a cone for each team. Set the cones up a distance from the start line. Share the teaching tie-in, then divide the group into teams, with each having half a pool noodle to ride like a horse. When you say, "Charge!" the first children in line will mount their horses and race to the opposite side of the area, around the cone, then back to their line to pass their horses to the next teammate. The first team to finish wins.

TEACHING TIE-IN

In the days of castles and kings, the knights were like soldiers who charged into battle on their horses. They fought for what they thought was right. How do we know what's right? *Take responses.* God's Word tells us what's right and true. And God has given us his special armor so we can do right in his sight. Let's play "Charge!" to remind us of that.

Option 3: Dragon Egg Hunt

Ahead of time, hide plastic Easter eggs or filled water balloons around the play area. Place a box or laundry basket (the nest) in the center of the area.

Share the teaching tie-in, then have students race the clock to find as many "dragon eggs" (plastic eggs or balloons) as they can within the allotted time. They must bring them one at a time to the nest before searching for another. Optional: Hide bonus "hatched" dragons (toy dragons/lizards). When time is up, count the eggs. Optional: Assign bonus points for each "hatched" dragon if you want to keep score.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Dragons are cool creatures! There are stories about them all over the world. Many of the descriptions of these dragons sound a lot like the animals we call "dinosaurs." The Bible says God created these animals on day six of creation week. That's the same day he created the first two people. That means dragons (dinosaurs) would have lived at the same time as people! Let's have fun playing a game to find pretend dragon eggs!

Day 4

Option 1: Put Your Helmet On!

This game of tag requires space to run. Share the teaching tie-in, then play the game. Have the children stand in a circle in the middle of the play area. Choose one or two leaders to be It. Show the children how to put their helmets on by placing their hands on either side of their heads. When you say go, they must keep their helmets

on as they run. If they put their hands down, that means their helmet fell off, and they can be tagged. When a child is tagged, he must show that his helmet is back on by putting his hands by his head before he may run again.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Which part of the armor of God goes on our heads? *Take responses.* The helmet of salvation helps us remember that Jesus saves us from our sin and doesn't want us to sin anymore. We must keep our helmet on so we can say no to sin when the enemy tries to get us to do something wrong.

Option 2: Shield of Faith Defenders

Ahead of time, gather stiff paper plates, one for each child. Use duct tape to make simple handles on the back of each plate. (If the kids did the Shield of Faith craft, you may use those shields.) Place a line of tape or cones across the middle of the play area. Use sponge balls, ping-pong balls, or wadded up paper balls, and place half of them on either side of the tape.

Share the teaching tie-in. Divide the children into two teams and have them line up on either side of the tape. Pass out one shield/plate to each child. Show them how to put their hand through the tape handle and hold the shield up in front of them. When you say go, the children will toss the balls at the other team, using their shields to defend themselves. Leaders can help toss the balls. Play one or two rounds of a few minutes each.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Sometimes the enemy's lies and bad ideas will come at us like arrows. Hold up a Bible. But if we know and obey God's Word by faith, God will help us to turn from those sins and he will protect us like a shield. Let's pretend the balls are sins like lies. We'll use our shields to keep them away.

Option 3: King Solomon, May I?

This is played like Mother, May I? King Solomon stands at one end of the play area, and the children line up at the opposite end of the playing area. They take turns asking King Solomon questions, such as: "King Solomon, may I take three giant steps?" King Solomon either answers, "Yes, you may" or "No, you may not, but you may _____ instead." He then suggests something else they can do. The first child to make it to King Solomon wins. Suggested actions: giant steps, baby steps, backward steps, twirls, hops, skips, horse gallops. When finished playing, share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

King Solomon was very wise. God gave him wisdom to understand so many things! But Solomon made bad choices and disobeyed God. What parts of God's armor will help us be on guard and make good

choices? *Take responses.* The shield and helmet will help us say no to sin so we can obey God.

Day 5

Option 1: Knights' Training Course

Ahead of time, set up a course using obstacles such as walking across a board (a moat), riding a hoppity ball (a horse), throwing a pool noodle (a javelin), and knocking down play bricks or boxes (a castle wall) with a pool noodle.

Have the kids take turns going through the course, then share the teaching tie-in. For a large group, build two or more courses for groups to race through.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Knights had to practice to get ready for battles and learn to use their armor. We need to practice using the armor of God by reading the Bible and obeying it!

Option 2: Bible Treasure Hunt

Ahead of time, print, cut out, and hide the [Bible Cutouts](#) around the room and gather a timer.

Share the teaching tie-in, then set a timer and have the kids search for the cutout pictures. They should bring them to you and see if they can find them all before time runs out.

TEACHING TIE-IN

The Bible's like a treasure because it tells us the truth about God. It's also part of the armor of God called the sword of the what? *Spirit.* And the more we know about the Bible, the more we can share God's truth with others.

Option 3: Catch the Dragon's Tail

Ahead of time, gather dark socks.

Give the leaders (the dragons) a dark sock to tuck inside their back pocket, letting some of it hang out like a tail. When you say go, the kids will chase the dragons around and try to catch their tails by pulling the socks out of their pockets. Dragons may run after the kids just for fun once their tail has been taken. The game ends when all the dragons have lost their tails. Optional: Have a basket nearby to place the socks in. Allow dragons to try to snatch a new tail from the basket. When finished playing, share the teaching tie-in.

TEACHING TIE-IN

Most people think that dragons are only make-believe. But there are stories and pictures of dragons from people all over the world who lived a long time ago. Since these pictures and stories tell a lot of the same things, it seems that there must have been real dragons that these people saw. And you know what? These dragons sound a lot like dinosaurs!

Super Simple Games

Each day, two super simple game ideas are suggested—one outdoor and one indoor. Depending on your space, however, some of the outdoor games may be able to be

played indoors and vice versa. Check them out and adapt for your area. These require few supplies and prep.

Simple Indoor Games

Day 1: At the Castle

Have players form a circle with chairs, with one chair fewer than the whole group. Choose one player to stand in the middle (without a chair) as the caller. The caller shouts out the phrase, “At the castle, everyone _____ moves.” Fill in the blank with a feature, such as “wearing red” or “with brown hair” or “who likes pizza.” Everyone with that feature must get up and find a new seat as quickly as possible while the caller also tries to get a seat. The player left without a chair becomes the new caller.

Day 2: Dragon Egg

Ahead of time, gather a plastic Easter egg.

This is played like Hot Potato, using the Easter egg instead of a potato. Sit in a circle and pass the egg around. With younger kids, pass it in order. With older kids, throw it across the circle or pass around randomly. You can play with music (when the music is turned off, the person with the dragon egg is out) or without music (a leader with his back turned shouts, “Hot!” at which time the person holding the egg is out). Play as an elimination game with older children.

Day 3: Juggling 101

Ahead of time, gather plastic grocery bags (2 per child) and cut the handles off. An option is to have 2 small balls per child as well.

Juggling was a very popular form of entertainment during medieval times. It means “to keep several objects in motion

in the air at the same time.” Most jugglers agree that to juggle you must keep at least two objects moving. Give each child two plastic grocery bags to work with. Have them place one bag on the floor, then grab the center of the other bag with their thumb and index finger. To toss the bag, lift that arm up high and extend fingers to the ceiling like a high five. The bag should then be caught by grabbing straight down, like a lion’s claw. Have them practice for a bit with one bag. Next, try these variations: throwing it and clapping in between each catch, throwing and catching with one hand, and catching the bag on their shoulder, knee, foot, elbow, or back. Finally, have them try to juggle both bags, tossing the second bag when the first bag is at the top of its arc. (If desired, try using 2 small balls per person.)

Day 4: Games of the Times

Try your hand at indoor games that were popular during the Middle Ages, such as chess, checkers, backgammon, and marbles.

Day 5: Bible Books Line-up

Ahead of time, write the names of the books of the Bible on separate index cards (or just Old Testament, or just New Testament), and gather some Bibles.

Divide into teams and give each team one set of cards and a Bible. See which team can get the cards in order the fastest using the table of contents in the Bible. Repeat as time and interest allow.

Simple Outdoor Games

Day 1: Cannonballs

Ahead of time, gather “cannonballs,” which can be wet or dry foam balls, tennis balls, or beanbags, one for every two players.

Divide the group into pairs. Form two long lines, with each pair standing across from each other. Each pair takes turns tossing the “cannonball” back and forth. Each time the ball is caught, the pair takes a step back and throws it again. When a pair misses, they sit down. See who can get the farthest away from each other. The last team tossing wins.

Day 2: Belt of Truth Relay

Ahead of time, set up a start line and a finish line using tape or cones. Place a large belt for each team at the start line.

Divide the class into teams. (If there’s a different amount of kids on different teams, have one or more kids go twice to even it out.) Have half of each team line up at the start line and half at the finish line. At the go signal, the first kids in line put on the belts and run to the finish line. They take the belts off and go to the back of those lines. The first kids at the finish line put on the belts and run back to the start line. The first team to get everyone back to their original positions is the winner.

Day 3: Soccer

Soccer was a popular game during the Middle Ages. The main goal was to carry a ball across a goal line, with rules that were sort of a cross between football and modern-day soccer. Soldiers even missed archery practice sometimes

because of their love for the game. Try your hand (or foot) at a game today.

Day 4: Blind Man’s Bluff

Ahead of time, gather a blindfold (eye mask, scarf, or bandana).

This game is best played in a large space free of obstacles. Choose a child to be the blind man and blindfold him. Have the blind man stand in the middle of the playing area and count to 40 (or 30 for a small area). While he’s counting, the other children walk away. When the blind man reaches 40, the children must freeze in their spot for the remainder of that round. The blind man will walk around the area, calling out “Blind man’s,” and the children must answer, “Bluff!” Children can try to move out of the blind man’s way (duck down or sway to the side), but they can’t move their feet. The first child to be found and tagged becomes the new blind man, and the game starts over.

Day 5: Tug-O-War

Ahead of time, put down a blue plastic tablecloth or piece of material for the moat. Gather a long rope for tugging and a squirt gun.

Divide the group into two teams, with half on each side of the moat. On the go signal, everyone starts pulling the rope. The first team to get pulled over the moat loses and gets squirted with water. Remind them that there’s a war going on between the two kingdoms. Try several rounds with variations, such as everyone using just one arm to pull, everyone seated, or everyone facing backward.

DAY 1

Capture the Flag

Supplies

- ❑ 2 flags—see Tip Corner
- ❑ Bandanas, jerseys, or wristbands to denote teams
- ❑ Whistle
- ❑ Cones, tape, or rope to mark boundary lines—see Tip Corner

Prep

Set up the field using four large cones to create a large rectangular play space. Use cones, rope, or tape to construct a center line. Place one flag at the back middle of each team's side. Create a safety zone around each flag using cones or tape. Create a jail on each side by placing cones or other boundary materials in a square at the back corner.

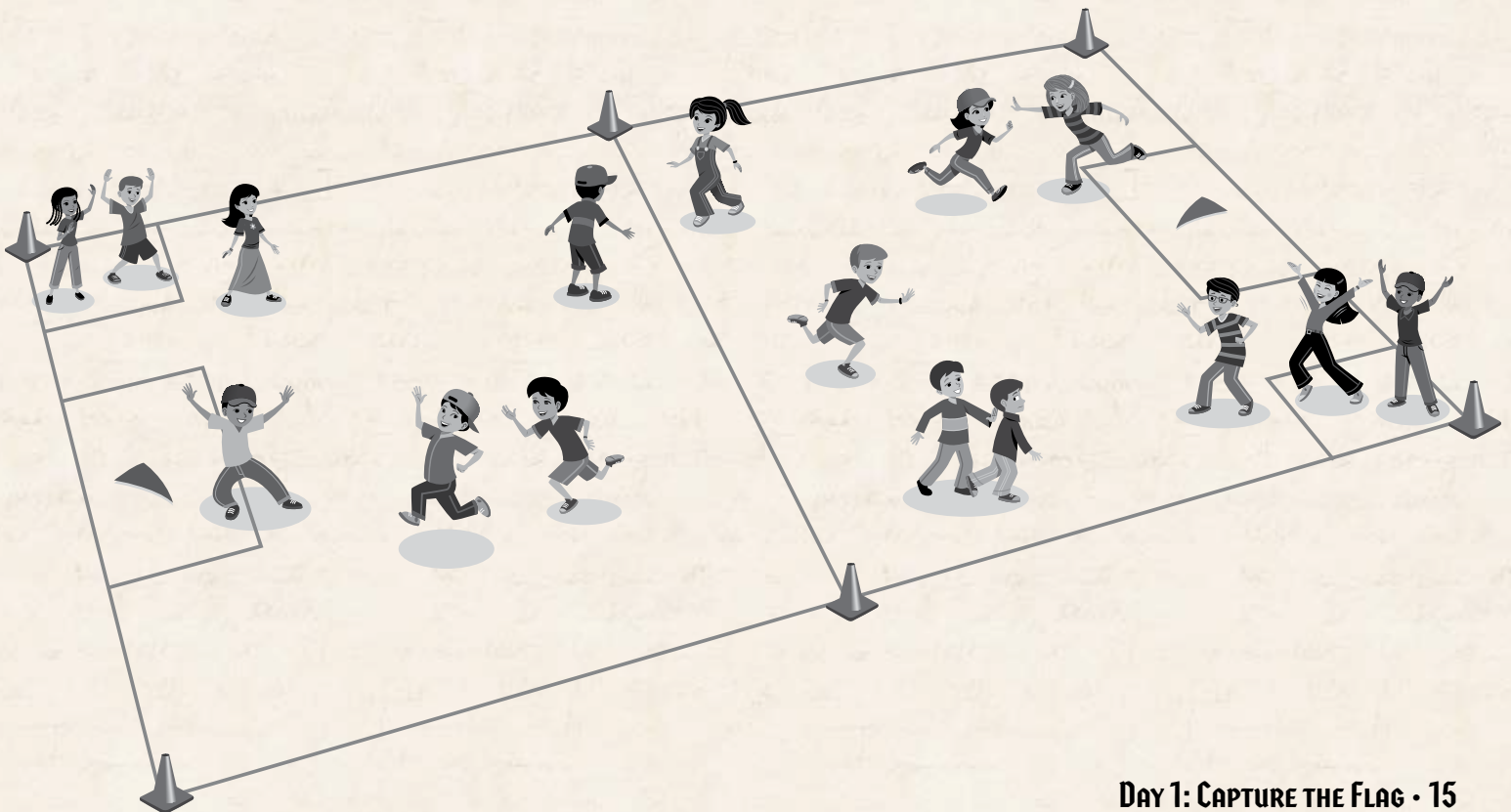
Teaching Tie-in

Today we're playing Capture the Flag, a strategy game in which you try to capture your enemy's flag and get back to your side before the enemy catches you. This game is a fun battle between the two sides, but it's also a reminder that there really is a battle going on

between two kingdoms—the good kingdom and the bad kingdom. The Bible uses the word *kingdom* 116 times in the first four New Testament books alone, which shows that God is serious about our needing to be ready and alert for the spiritual battle? Take answers (read your Bible, pray, go to church to learn about God, etc.), then remind them to be ready and alert as they play Capture the Flag.

Class Time Directions

1. Divide the children into two teams. Have one team wear bandanas, jerseys, or wristbands. Each team will have its own territory (side) with a flag. The object of the game is to capture the other team's flag while protecting your own flag. Give the children time to make strategies and to assign jobs. Some children may be in charge of guarding the flag. Some children will be runners who will try to get the other team's flag. Some children may guard their jail or rescue prisoners.



2. Play begins with a whistle. Players entering enemy territory can be captured (tagged on the shoulder with two fingers). If tagged, the captured child will go to the opposing team's jail. Prisoners can be released by being tagged by a teammate. The released prisoner and the tagger receive a free walk back to their territory. They must walk together with their arms up.
3. The children guarding the flag may not enter the safety zone that surrounds their flag.
4. A team wins the game by capturing the other team's flag and bringing it to their territory. If the child is tagged while running back, they go to jail and the flag is returned to its spot. If a game ends before the flag is captured, the winning team is the team with the most prisoners.

Tip Corner

- The flags can be a brightly colored piece of material that's a foot or so across. Bandanas or scrap fabric work too.
- The boundaries can be made from any combination of cones, rope, tape, or paint. If you have a woody, larger area, the boundaries can be based on the lay of the land.
- If it's hot, have at least one leader stationed near the center line on each side of the playing field. They will squirt intruders as they cross the line into enemy territory.

Day 1 Overview

The Two Kingdoms

Lesson Focus		Bible Passage	
We are in a battle between two kingdoms.		Creator King and Prince of Darkness John 18:37-38; Ephesians 6:10-14	
Memory Verse	Animal Pal	Cool Contest	
Ephesians 6:10-11	Winifred the Warhorse	Guess the Cannonballs	
Science and Crafts	Treats	Games	
Experiments: What's Up? / Light and Dark Crafts: Castle Catapult / Kingdom Crown / Juggling Balls	Kingdom Cookies Be Strong Barbells	Capture the Flag Jumping Jesters	

DAY 1

Jumping Jesters

Supplies

- Jump ropes—see Tip Corner
- Cones, tape, or chalk to mark line for Rope Relays
- Cups with equal amounts of water for Jump & Splash

Prep

Set up a “jumping” area on a hard, flat surface, such as a parking lot or gym floor.

Teaching Tie-in

Today we’re going to play some jump rope games. No one knows exactly when and where people started to use jump ropes for fun, but there are pictures of European children jumping rope during the Middle Ages.

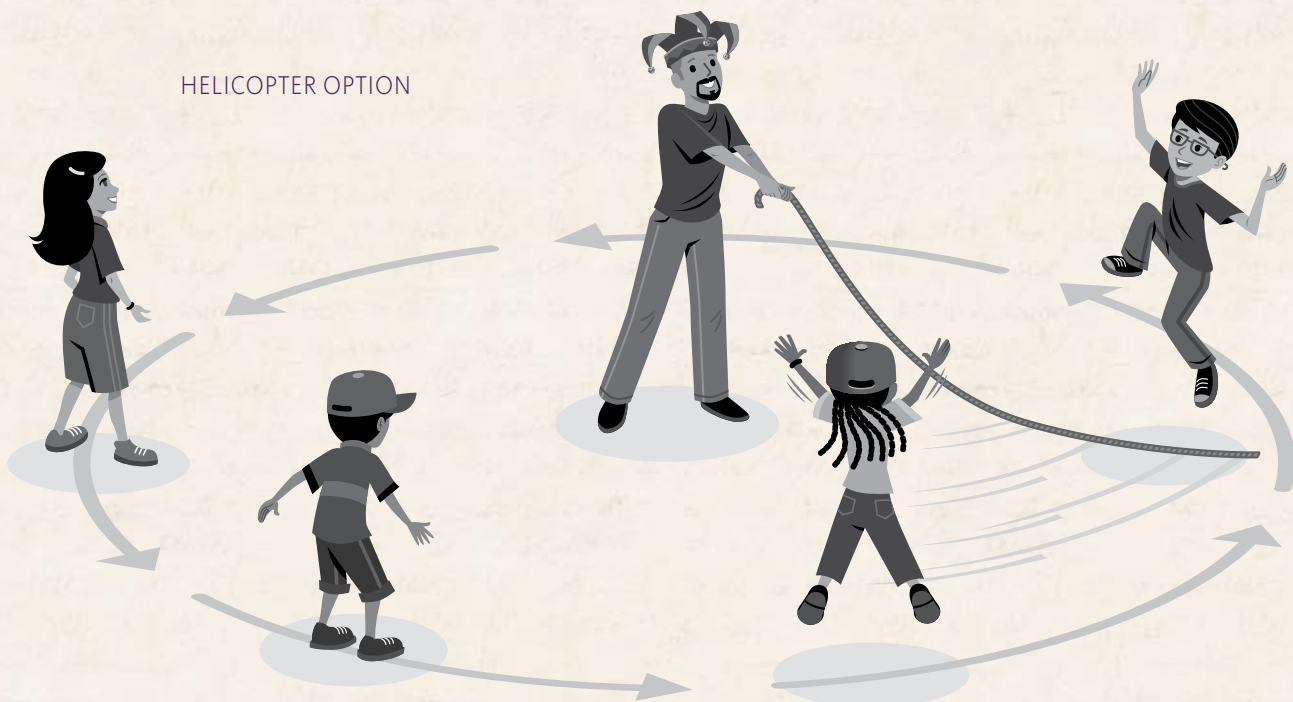
Jumping rope takes strength and coordination. As we play these games, let’s remember that God has given his children armor to help them stand strong against the enemy.

Class Time Directions

You may divide the class into smaller groups after explaining the chosen game or keep everyone together. Try one or more of the following games:

1. **Rope Relays:** Gather several individual jump ropes (6–8 feet long). Mark start and finish lines using cones, tape, or chalk. Divide the class into equal teams. Place jump ropes at the finish line. When you say go, the first children in line will run to the ropes, complete three jumps, leave the rope, and run back to tag the next teammate in line. First team to finish wins. Play again, changing the number of jumps or adding a variation such as jumping on one leg, with high knees, or crisscrossing feet. For a challenging version, give a jump rope to the first kids in line and have them run while jumping rope to the finish line and back.
2. **Helicopter:** Give the leader a long rope (or two ropes tied together) and have the kids stand in a wide circle around him or in a semicircle in front of him. The leader carefully twirls the jump rope in a circle over his head (make sure kids are far enough

HELICOPTER OPTION



back so they don't get hit) and then onto the ground, either spinning or crossing the rope behind his back, while saying, "Helicopter, helicopter, over my head, I choose a color and the color is ___!" All players wearing the color that is named must jump into the circle and try to jump over the "helicopter blade" without it touching them, then step back outside the circle. The leader should call different colors or even multiple colors or try different calls, such as, "I choose a letter and the letter is ___!" Kids who have that letter in their first/last name must jump over the rope. Make sure the leader keeps the rope along the ground to reduce risk of injury. For a large class, have several leaders with ropes playing the game in smaller groups.

3. **Zero and Counting:** This game keeps everyone involved. Divide the class into groups and give each a double dutch rope. Two leaders (or kids) turn the rope. Each player runs through the rope on their first turn (zero), jumps once on their second turn (one), jumps twice on their third turn (two), and so on. If they miss a jump, they redo that number the next time through. Have players keep track of their own numbers as they jump. You may play up to a certain number of jumps or play for a set time.
4. **Follow the Leader:** Divide the class into groups of six to eight kids with two leaders (or kids) as rope turners. Give each group a double dutch rope. Have players form a line next to one of the rope turners. The first player enters the rope, jumps once, and exits on the diagonal, going around the opposite rope turner to form a new line. As the first jumper exits, the second jumper enters and jumps once. Continue with the jumpers entering, jumping, exiting, and rejoining the new line. See if they can get through the whole line without a missed jump. Change up the leader for the second round, which starts from the new line next to the other rope turner. Once the group can do one jump, have the leader try varying the number or style of jump when they enter the rope (complete two jumps in the center or jump on one foot). To keep things moving, have the new leader ready to enter right after the last jumper exits.

JUMP & SPLASH OPTION



5. **Stack Up:** This game works well for larger groups. The longer the double dutch rope, the better. Two leaders turn the rope. One child starts jumping in the center, then another joins in. Keep adding jumpers until there is a missed jump or the jumping space is full. Play again, starting with the next child in line. See how many jumpers you can "stack up"! This game can be played with multiple groups competing to get the highest number of players jumping together or being the first to reach a certain number of jumpers.
6. **Jump & Splash:** Gather plastic cups and fill them up equally with water. Use one double dutch rope (minimum 14-foot long). Two leaders (or children) turn the rope, and one player jumps a specified number (e.g., three times) while holding a cup of water and trying to keep it from spilling. The winner is the player who has the most water left at the end of the round. This game is great to play outdoors on a hot day!

Tip Corner

- Remind kids to tie their shoelaces to avoid injury when jumping rope.
- Sizes for individual jump ropes range from 6 to 8 feet. The handles should reach about armpit height when kids are standing on the rope.
- Double dutch ropes are available in a variety of lengths ranging from 14 to 64 feet! A 14-foot rope can accommodate 1–3 jumpers while a 30-foot rope can accommodate up to 10. Choose your rope size based on the number of kids.
- All sizes of jump ropes are available in three main materials. Beaded jump ropes are the most durable and provide a rhythmic "clack" when they hit the ground, but they can hurt when kids miss a jump. Cloth ropes are lighter and softer so they are good for beginners and indoor use. Vinyl (speed) ropes are light and fast but may tangle.
- Test the ropes you have with the games you plan to play to make sure they are the appropriate length and material.