

Anchor for the Soul

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firm and secure. —Hebrews 6:19a



DECORATIONS

Decorate using a nautical theme. Incorporate anchors into the decorations as much as possible.

LEARN KNOTS

Gather thick yarn, twine or rope so that you have two one-foot pieces for each kid. Teach kids how to make at least one or two of the following knots. Consider continuing to teach this life skill in the next couple of weeks and use it as a chance to remind kids of Hebrews 6:19a.

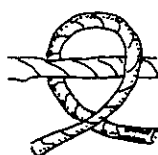
KNOT-TYING TERMS



Overhand Loop



Underhand Loop



A Turn



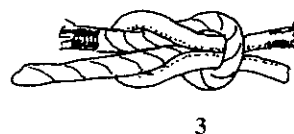
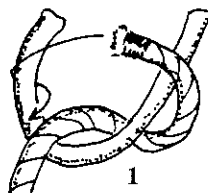
A Round Turn



Standing Part

SQUARE KNOT

This knot is also known as the "Reef Knot." The square knot joins together two ends of rope of the same thickness. Pass the left end over the right end, then under it. The ends are now reversed. Take the new right end over the new left end and then under it. Pull tight.



BOWLINE KNOT

The bowline knot ties a boat. Make an overhand loop with the end held toward you. Take the end up through the loop and behind the standing part, then back down through the loop. Pull tight.



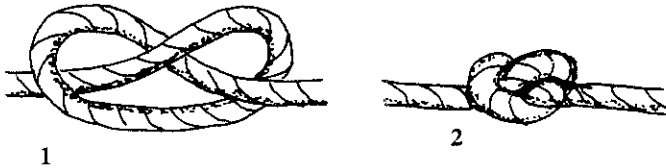
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OVERHAND KNOT

The overhand knot is used to put a stop at the end of a rope and to begin more difficult knots. Make an overhand loop and move the end up through the loop. Pull tight.



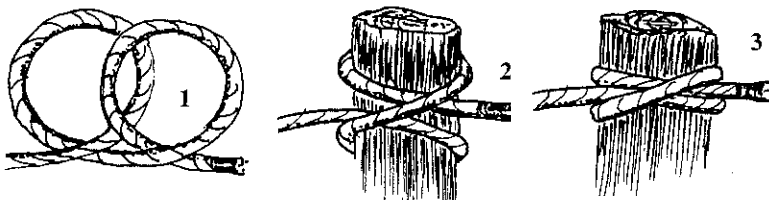
FISHERMAN'S KNOT

The fisherman's knot joins two lengths of twine or rope together. Put the two ends of twine together, laying in opposite directions and overlapping several inches. Tie an overhand knot around the standing part of the other. When pulled tight, one knot pulls against the other and will not slip.



CLOVE HITCH

The clove hitch quickly fastens a rope around a post and begins a lashing. Pass the end around the post and cross over the standing part. Make a second turn around the post. Pull the end up under the second turn. Pull tight on both ends. The clove hitch will slip if not secured with an overhand knot.



CRAFTS

WOODEN ANCHOR

Before club starts, purchase wooden decorative anchors (12" x 12") for each club group. Write Hebrews 6:19a on the anchor. During the club meeting, have kids sign their names on this wooden anchor. Hang the anchor up in your club room as a reminder of the theme verse throughout the year.

BOAT BUILDERS

Gather a variety of large boxes. Depending on your number of kids, have a large box for each kid, or for each group of 3-4 kids. Set down painting tarps or plastic tablecloths beneath the boxes and give kids materials like paint, markers, etc. to transform their boxes into boats. Make sure each boat has an anchor! If you have extra time, have kids vote on things like "the most sturdy boat," "the most colorful boat," "the prettiest boat," "the most creative boat," "the most realistic boat," etc.

WATER COLOR

Give each kid a piece of white cardstock paper, white crayon, water color paint and a paint brush. Have kids draw an anchor and a cross using their white crayons. Then using the water color paints, they will paint the sea using blues, greens, etc. over the whole page. Encourage them to swirl the paint to make it look like waves. As they paint, they will be able to see the cross and the anchor. After the paint dries, have them write the theme verse in a black marker or sharpie.



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SONGS

Sing songs about God as our hope and anchor for the soul. Consider choosing songs themed around Jesus being our source of peace and comfort during the storms of life.

DEVOTIONAL

Hold up a miniature anchor or show a picture of an anchor.

- **What is an anchor used for?** (An anchor keeps a boat from drifting in the water, either while the boat isn't being used, when the boat doesn't need to go anywhere or to keep the boat from going off course during a storm.)
- **How does an anchor work?** (The heavy anchor is attached to a large chain. The anchor is dropped into the water and connected to the boat through the chain. The "flukes" on the anchor hook onto to the sea floor.)

Give a brief demonstration of how this works. Take a wire hanger and tie a string to it. Set a chair, table or music stand near you. Holding onto the string, drag the hanger until it catches on the chair leg, table leg or music stand. Invite a kid up to pull on the string now that it has been "anchored" onto something. **It can only move so far from where it has been "anchored."** Remind kids that this is just an example of how an anchor works. **An anchor used on a ship would be much larger and much heavier than our experiment. Anchors can hold a ship between 5 to 200 times its own weight. Including the added weight of the chain, some anchors weigh over 60,000 pounds!**

Read Hebrews 6:13-20. These verses teach us that God is **unchanging**. God's love, His compassion, His patience, His mercy, His goodness and His justice never change. His purpose and plans never change.

God made a promise to Abraham that He would bless the world through Abraham's family—and God kept that promise many years later by sending Jesus Christ through Abraham's family. And He sent Jesus to live as a human, die a painful and humiliating death, be buried, come back to life three days later and ascend into heaven so that Jesus could pay the price for our sin. He did this because of His never-ending love for us. God had a plan to save people from their sin and kept His promise to Abraham.

Hold up a helium-filled balloon. **Let's imagine that this is a ship out in the sea.** Invite two to three volunteers up. **A storm is approaching, so the crew throws the anchor overboard to keep the ship from going off course.** Make sure the balloon has a weight on the end of the string and place the weight on the floor. Each volunteer will take a turn hitting the balloon to be the "storm" before returning to their seats.

The "ship" was tossed around by the wind, waves and rain, but it always came back. It didn't leave its' connection to the "anchor." That connection kept it safe, secure and steadfast.

In a similar way, life can seem to toss us about. We may go through suffering, trials and temptations. But our connection to Jesus Christ and His love for us is what gives us hope. His life, death, resurrection and ascension give us hope. The Bible tells us how the story ends—we know that Jesus is victorious over all of the evil in our world. Read 1 Peter 1:3-9.



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Sometimes we may be sad or discouraged because all we can see is the suffering or pain that we or someone we care about is experiencing right now. But we can have hope in spite of what we can't see. Read Romans 8:24-25 and 2 Corinthians 4:17-18.

Set the weight on the ground behind an object that is not see-through so that the kids can only see the balloon—they should not be able to see the weight or the string. **When an anchor is working, keeping a boat sure and steadfast in a storm, you can't see the anchor beneath the waves. That doesn't mean it is not there and not working on behalf of the ship! Even though we can't see God, that doesn't mean that God isn't at work in our lives. God the Father hears and answers our prayers. Jesus is preparing a forever home for His followers with Him. The Holy Spirit gives us comfort, helps us not give into temptation and helps us to understand God's Word.**

Depending on the number of kids you have, divide kids into small groups so that each group has at least one leader and discuss the following questions.

- **What are some "storms" that you or a kid your age might face?** (Being in a fight with a friend; Moving; Starting a new school; etc.)
- **How do "storms" make you feel?** (Worried; Anxious; Sad; Angry; Confused; Hurt; etc.) If you have younger kids, they might describe emotions such as anxiety with more physical attributes, like stomach aches, tiredness, etc.
- **What is hope?** (When you believe something is going to happen; Being confident that something will happen; It is more than just wishing something will happen—you know it will happen; etc.)

- **When we follow God, what is our hope in?** (That Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins; Our sins have been forgiven; Jesus is preparing a forever home for us with Him; God's character doesn't change; etc.)
- **How can our hope in God help us during "storms?"** (It can comfort us when we are worried; It can remind us that we aren't alone; etc.)
- **What are some ways we can remember to place our hope in God?** (Put a reminder somewhere we will see it often; Come to church or club to learn about God; Pray to God and ask Him to help us; Talk to other people who follow God; Read the Bible to know more about who God is and what He has done; etc.)

Give each kid a notecard and have them write down or draw one thing they will do this week to remember to hope in God. Encourage kids to share what they will do this week.

Option: Give kids a notecard and an envelope. Allow time for kids to write a letter to themselves or draw a picture of an anchor to help them remember to put their hope in God. Mail these cards to each kid about one month into the club year.



Memorize Hebrews 6:19a. Give each kid a piece of paper with an anchor on it. Have them write the verse in small print over and over again around the shape of the anchor. Encourage them to whisper the verse as they write. After they have filled their paper with the verse, have them practice saying it to a partner without looking.



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GAMES

RAIN

Players sit silently in a circle and keep their eyes closed and keep them closed throughout the game. They wait for the leader to begin and then do what the player to the right does.

The leader slowly starts the rain by rubbing his or her palms together. When the player on the leader's left hears the sound, he or she makes it too. The other players begin making it when they hear it on their right.

When all players are making the sound, the leader increases the sound of the rain by snapping fingers. Players begin making that sound.

For each round, the leader increases the sound of the rain by slapping thighs, clapping and stomping feet.

When the rain is as loud as possible, the leader begins to quiet the storm. By reversing the order of the sounds, the leader works the players back to silence.

Select another leader and play again with the leader making different sounds.

Talk about how even during the "storms" of life, Jesus' work on the cross gives us hope, like an anchor keeps a ship steady in a storm.

CAPTAIN OF THE SHIP

The leader will take on the role of "Captain of the ship." The Captain will give orders for the crew (the club members) to follow. Immediately after the Captain gives an order, all members of the crew must stop what they are doing and follow the new order.

Add one or two orders at a time to help kids remember. As you continue playing, add more orders.

- **Bow**—Crew members run to the "front" of the boat.
- **Stern**—Crew members run to the "back" of the boat.
- **Port**—Crew members run to the "left side" of the boat.
- **Starboard**—Crew members run to the "right side" of the boat.
- **Hit the Deck**—Crew members lie down on the ground on their stomachs.
- **Attention on Deck**—Salute the captain and yell, "Aye, aye captain!" (Crew members must stay saluting until the captain yells, "At ease!")
- **Scrub the Deck**—Crew members get on their hands and knees and pretend to scrub the floor.
- **Three in a Lifeboat**—Crew members grab two partners and stand one in front of the other, facing the same direction. They will pretend to row like they are in a lifeboat. (*Option:* They may sing "Row, row, row your boat.")
- **Crow's Nest**—Crew members must pretend that they are climbing up to the crow's nest.
- **Captain's Quarters**—Crew members run to the captain.



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WEATHER FORECAST

In this game, players have to pretend that a parachute is the ocean and move the parachute to the "weather forecast" they hear.

Have kids pull the parachute in front of them. **The weather forecast says that today there will be a slight breeze over the ocean. How would that look?** The children will respond by making small waves in the parachute.

For example, if you say: There will be lots of heavy winds over the ocean; the kids will have to make big waves. Keep making up weather conditions until you are done or let the kids make them up until they run out of ideas.

Option: Place two balls of similar weight on the parachute. On one of the balls, use duct tape or another strong tape to attach the ball to a string (about one foot long), and the other end of the string to the parachute. Leave the other ball loose. Let kids make light and strong waves in the parachute. While they are shaking the parachute, the unattached ball may fly off of the parachute, but the ball that is "anchored" to the parachute should stay secure.

Discuss situations they or kids their age may face that may feel like "storms" (i.e.—fight with friends, sick loved one, moving, new schools, etc.).



FISHERMAN'S NET

Create a snack mix from goldfish, swedish fish and pretzel squares (nets).

WATERMELON BOATS

Cut watermelon into slices. Cut paper into 2" x 2" triangles and tape to wooden skewers. Place one in each watermelon slice. The watermelon slices will transform into ships with sails.



