

# 2021-22 PIONEER CLUBS THEME VERSE



## Decorations

Cut out large shields from cardboard. Create designs on them with paint or markers. Hang them around the club room. Twist black and gray or brown and gray streamers together and hang throughout the room.

Consider expanding the decorations by decorating with a medieval theme (medieval-looking stone castle, etc.) or a viking theme (round shields, etc.).

## Activities

### Bible Bookmark

Ahead of time, cut white cardstock paper into 2.45" x 8" pieces, so that you have at least one per child. Also consider making a sample bookmark to show as an example while giving instructions.

Give each kid one of the pre-cut pieces of cardstock to use as a bookmark. Let them write out their favorite verse on it (or offer suggestions, such as Psalm 119:114), and decorate their bookmark with coloring supplies and stickers.

Punch a hole at the top of the bookmark. Tie a ribbon to the bookmark.

#### Supplies:

- White cardstock paper
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Ribbon
- Coloring supplies
- Stickers

### Acrostic Poster

Psalm 119 is an acrostic of the letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Give each kid or small group a poster to create an acrostic using each letter of the English alphabet to describe/praise God and His Word. Ideas can be one word or phrases. If you have mostly younger kids, be sure to pair non-readers with stronger readers, give kids fewer letters, or work together as a large group. Allow time for kids to decorate their acrostic posters. Hang the posters in your club room(s) throughout the club year.

#### Supplies:

- Posters (1 per kid or small group)
- Markers
- Pencils

### Design a Shield

Ahead of time, print out enough shields from the shield printables at the end so you will have one per child.

Give each kid a shield outline, or let them choose which shield shape they would like to use. Kids will create a design for their shield by drawing things that give them hope, comfort, or remind them of God and His Word.

Consider hanging the shields on a bulletin board throughout the club year to remind kids to hope in God's Word.

#### Supplies:

- Shield printables (1 per child)
- Coloring supplies
- Scissors

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## Page. Paragraph. Word. Secret Code

Ahead of time, gather identical copies of the Bible, enough so that each child has one. Copies need to be not only from the same translation, but from the same version and edition (such as ones you might have in the pews of the worship center).

Write a "page, paragraph, word" secret code for kids to decipher (such as writing out Psalm 119:114). For this code, each group of three numbers tells you how to find a single word. For "1.3.2" you look at the first page, find the third paragraph on it, and write down the second word there. Ignore titles and headings. "2.5.1" refers to the second page, fifth paragraph, and first word.

If you have extra time, or some kids finish early, let them create their own message using the same code, and then trade with a partner.

### Supplies:

- Bibles from the same translation and edition (1 per child)
- Paper
- Pencils

## Carve Shields

Use one of the shield templates to cut out pieces of cardboard. Cover the cardboard with aluminum foil. Tape down the edges of foil on the backside. Give kids colored pencils. They will use the unsharpened end of the pencils to create designs in the foil. If you have extra time, have kids practice using their shields. Kids will toss cotton balls at other kids, while trying to use their own shields to block the cotton balls being thrown at them.

### Supplies:

- Aluminum foil
- Cardboard
- Colored pencils
- Cutting tool
- Masking tape
- Shield template
- Cotton balls

## Songs

Sing songs about God's Word and hope found in Him.

## Devotional

**I have a riddle for you. Let's see if you can figure it out. When you think you know what it is, put your hand on top of your head, but wait to share your idea until I ask, "What am I?"**

**I can cheer you up when you are sad. I can guide you into the best path for your life. I have answers to many of your questions. I can help you solve your problems. I can keep you on the edge of your chair with my exciting stories. You need me every day of your life. What am I? (The Bible.)**

- **When you think of other books that you know about or have read, what do you think are some of the best-selling books, or most popular books of all time?** (The Bible; *Harry Potter* series; *The Lord of the Rings*; *The Chronicles of Narnia* series; *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*; *Anne of Green Gables*; etc.)
- **What do you think makes a book so popular?** (Take responses.)

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- Can you guess which is the most popular book worldwide of all time? (The Bible.)
- Can you guess how many copies of the Bible have been printed? (Over 5 billion.)
- Why do you think the Bible is so popular? (Take responses.)
- How is the Bible different from other books? (Take responses.)

- Does anyone know what an acrostic is? (A poem or piece of writing, in which the first letter of each line spells out a word, message, or the alphabet.)

**The psalm is divided into 22 sections, and each section starts with the next letter in the Hebrew alphabet. The entire chapter celebrates God's Word.**

Here are some trivia questions you may know.

- What are some words we use besides the Bible to refer to the Bible? (God's Word; Scripture; The Law; etc.)
- What languages was the Bible originally written in? (Hebrew; Greek; Aramaic.)
- What are the two "groups" the Bible is divided into? (The Old Testament and the New Testament.)
- What is the longest book in the Bible? (Psalms.)
- What is the shortest book in the Bible? (2 John.)
- What is the longest chapter in the Bible? (Psalm 119.)

Today, we'll be looking at the longest chapter in the best-selling book of all time. Let's turn there in our Bibles now. Psalm 119 is almost exactly in the middle of the Bible. Assist kids in turning to this chapter.

When Psalm 119 was first written, it wasn't written in English, it was written in the Hebrew language—the language the Israelites spoke during this time. The book of Psalms is a poetic book filled with songs of praise, and prayers for help, sadness, and more. Psalm 119 was written as an acrostic.

Divide kids into groups with 2-4 kids in each group. Be sure to have a strong reader in each group. Assign each leader to 1-3 of the groups to assist the kids as they work. Give each group a paper with a different passage from Psalm 119 written on it in the translation of your choice (all of the verses, not just the verse reference): Psalm 119:1-8; 9-16; 25-32; 33-40; 49-56; 57-64; 65-72; 73-80; 81-88; 105-112; 113-120; 129-136; 137-144; 145-152; 161-168; 169-176. Give each group a few minutes to do the following with their passage: highlight each reference to God's Word (law, testimonies, ways, precepts, statutes, commandments, judgments, words, sayings, path); underline actions related to God's Word; circle emotions related to God's Word; write a one-sentence summary of their passage.

After a few minutes, come back together, and have a representative from each group share their one-sentence summary and what they learned. On the board, make a list of the actions and emotions the kids found.

- Why do you think the author felt this way about God's Word? (Take responses.)
- What are some of the benefits of knowing and obeying God's Word, according to this psalm? (Take responses.)

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- **What is your attitude towards God's Word?** (Take responses.)
- **Does your attitude towards God's Word impact your actions at all? For example, does it cause you to read the Bible more, or avoid it?** (Take responses.)

Let's look at our theme verse for this year a little bit closer. Read Psalm 119:113-120.

- **There are two kinds of people in this passage. Can you compare them?** (Some are double-minded, do evil, act wickedly, don't follow God's laws, etc. Other people love God's laws, keep God's commands, trust that God will do what He says He will do, etc.)
- **Which of these two groups of people do you think the author falls in?** (The author loves God's laws, keeps God's commands, trusts that God will do what He says He will do, etc.)
- **Reread Psalm 119:114. The author says God is like a hiding place. What is the purpose of a hiding place?** (To be a safe refuge during conflict or a difficult time.)
- **The author says God is like a shield. What is the purpose of a shield?** (To provide protection during a fight.)
- **Why do think the author uses describes God as his hiding place and shield?** (Take responses.)
- **What other word does the author use to describe how he thinks or feels about God's word?** (Hope.)
- **What do you think it means to have hope in something?** (To trust it; To depend on it; To have confidence in it; etc.)
- **What characteristics of God could give us reason to place our hope in Him and His Word?** (Take responses.)

There is a big difference between knowing something and believing/hoping in something. We can know the facts about something, such as the ingredients of a favorite recipe or a posted speed limit.

When you look at the ingredients of a recipe and decide to make it because the combination of ingredients sounds good, you are putting some trust in that recipe that it is going to taste good when you are done. When you actually decide to make the recipe, you are following through and acting in a way to show that you have confidence or a hope that this will be a delicious dish.

In a similar way how can you tell if someone truly believes in a speed limit. You can see a number on a sign and know what the posted speed limit rule is on a road. But people who truly believe or trust in that speed limit will act or drive accordingly. They believe that there will be consequences for not following that speed limit. Perhaps they will want to avoid a speeding ticket. Or they have confidence that following the speed limit will be best for themselves and the other drivers and cars around them in order to help avoid an accident. They will change the way they drive. That shows that they putting their hope and confidence in that speed limit.

In an even better way, all that we can learn about God from the Bible can give us hope. The Bible is full of interesting information to learn about. But the Bible is so much more than just a bunch of facts. It shows us God's character and how amazing He is, and the awesome things He has done. It tells stories about people who were completely changed be-

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cause they knew God. It gives us encouragement and comfort when things are hard or when we are afraid. It gives us wisdom when we need to make tough decisions. It helps us know what is right and what is wrong. All of these things are characteristics of God and His Word that make Him the ultimate hiding place, shield, and hope for our lives. And we can act in obedience and trust when we follow His Word in our lives. That is true hope. What a great reason to come together for club every week this year to learn from the Bible!

Have kids sit in a circle. Hold up a cardboard or paper shield. Kids will pass the shield around the circle, taking turns saying the phrase, "Thank You, God, for being my shield. Please help me to place my hope in You." Once the shield has been passed around the circle, close in prayer.

## Bible Memory

Memorize Psalm 119:114. Use the following motions to help them remember the key words.

- You (*point up, or use sign language motion for "God"*)
- My (*point to self*)
- Hiding place (*squat and cover head with arms*)
- Shield (*pretend to hold up a shield*)
- I (*point to self*)
- Hope (*clasp hands together in front of heart*)
- Your Word (*hold hands out as if reading the Bible*)

Supplies:

- Bible

## Games

### God's Word

Give each kid a notecard with one of the ten synonyms used for God's Word in Psalm 119 (law, testimonies, ways, precepts, statutes, commandments, judgments, words, sayings, path). Make sure you have at least two kids have each word you pass out. If you have fewer kids, give each player more than one word, or use fewer words.

On a board or easel pad, write the numbers 1-176.

Have kids sit in a circle on chairs, facing the center, with one fewer chair than the number of players. One player will be IT and start by standing in the middle of the circle. IT will call out a number between 1-176 on the board. When they call out the number, read that verse from Psalm 119, and erase or cross out that number from the board.

When you read a verse that has a synonym for God's Word that matches the card they hold, players will stand up and switch seats. The person who is IT that round, will also try to grab a chair. The person who is left without a chair will be IT for the next round and choose which verse is read from Psalm 119.

Supplies:

- Notecards (1 per kid)
- Markers
- Bible
- Dry erase board
- Dry erase markers

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## Sardines

Remind kids that God is their "hiding place" with this fun game.

One person hides in a snug spot, such as under a bush or tree, while the others count to 25. Players split up to look for the hidden player. As players find the hiding spot, they quietly climb in. When all players are squished in and have found the hidden player, the game is over. The first person to find the hiding place starts the next game and selects a new hiding spot.

Supplies:

- N/A

## Sword Drill

Make sure each child has a Bible. When you call out a verse, kids will use their Bibles to look up the verse. Once they have found the verse, they will stand up. After most of the kids have found the verse, let a volunteer read it.

- Hebrews 4:12
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- Psalm 119:105
- Isaiah 40:8
- Psalm 18:30
- Proverbs 30:5
- Colossians 3:16
- Job 23:12
- Ephesians 6:17
- Psalm 119:114

Supplies:

- Bibles

## Pin Shield

Divide players into four teams. Give each team a bowling pin and a hula hoop. Each team will place the bowling pin standing up in the center of their hula hoop. Teams will choose some of their players to be defensive "shields" and some to be on offense. The goal of the game is to knock over all of the other teams' pins, except your own. No defensive or offensive player may go inside a hula hoop. Play for a set amount of time, or until all but one of the pins have been knocked down.

Supplies:

- Hula hoop for each team
- Bowling pin for each team

## Snacks

### Graham Cracker Shields

Ahead of time, set out bowls on a table filled with small candies, with plastic spoons in each bowl.

Give each child a full graham cracker. Let kids break off some of the edges to make it look like a shield. Then give each kid frosting and a plastic knife. They can use the frosting and the candies from the bowls you set out earlier to decorate their shields.

Supplies:

- Graham crackers
- Frosting
- Bowls
- Plastic spoons and knives
- Paper plates
- Small candies

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## Protective Shields

Give each kid a paper plate, a full graham cracker, some frosting, and a plastic knife.

Kids will create a thin layer of frosting on their graham crackers. Then pass out a few teddy grahams and graham cracker quarters to each kid. Kids will stand the teddy grahams up by sticking them in the frosting. Then kids can stick the graham cracker quarters in front of the teddy grahams to be their "shields."

### Supplies:

- Graham crackers
- Frosting
- Plastic knives
- Paper plates
- Teddy grahams

## Tortilla Scrolls

Ahead of time, cut out tortillas into thin wide rectangles, at least one per child.

Give each kid a tortilla. Pass out cream cheese and plastic knives. Spread a thin layer of cream cheese onto the tortilla.

Optional: Add extra items on top of the cream cheese layer such as slices of lunch meet, cheese slices, thinly cut tomatos, spinach leaves, etc.

Once any toppings have been added, roll the torilla up from both sides to create a scroll.

As kids eat, talk about how God's Word was written on scrolls before it was printed in books like we have now.

### Supplies:

- Tortillas
- Cream cheese
- Plastic knives
- Paper plates
- Slices of cheese
- Slices of lunch meat
- Tomatoes
- Spinach leaves
- Other toppings









