



## WEEK 3

### HYBRID TEACHING GUIDE



### THE BIG IDEA

Because of who God is, we can embrace the unknown.

### THE BIBLE

Ruth 1:1-22, 4:13-17; Matthew 6:25-27 & 34

**WHAT?** *What are we talking about today?*

### ACTIVITY | Humdinger: Movie Edition

- Welcome back to *True Story*, where we're exploring some true stories from Scripture (and some not-so-true stories from our favorite movies) and what they can teach us about who we are and who God is.
- Let's kick things off today with a game to get us reminiscing about some of our favorite movies through song!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Before your program, make a list of songs from animated movies that students would recognize. To play, bring at least two students to the front of the room to be your "hummers," while the remaining students guess which movie belongs to the song they're going to hum. For each round, put 30 seconds on the clock, give the hummer a song (either by whispering the title in their ear or playing the song for them with headphones), and have them hum the song until the crowd guesses the movie correctly or time runs out. Here are a few suggestions . . .*
  - "Let it Go" (Frozen)
  - "I Just Can't Wait to Be King" (Lion King)
  - "Reflection" (Mulan)
  - "Friend Like Me" (Aladdin)
  - "You've Got a Friend in Me" (Toy Story)
  - "Be Our Guest" (Beauty and the Beast)
  - **"Into the Unknown" (Frozen 2)**

## ACTIVITY | Shape Up

- You did pretty well identifying those "unknown" songs, but let's see how well you do when you're asked to create something "unknown" together.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you'll need [string](#), [blindfolds](#), [poster board](#), and a marker. Before your program, cut 10-foot lengths of string and tie the ends of each string together to make large loops, and draw one shape on each piece of poster board — start simple (square, triangle, circle) and get more complicated (octagon, heart, star). Break your students in groups of 6-8 with one adult in each group. Give each group a string and a blindfold for each player. Each round, make sure every student is blindfolded and holding onto the string. Reveal a shape (start simple!) and put 30-60 seconds on the clock. In that time, the adult leader in each group must direct their blindfolded students (using only their voice) how to move their hands in order to make the correct shape. At the end of each round, the group with the best recreation of the shape is the winner. After the first round, let students rotate into the leader role each round.*
- Of course, this challenge would have been much easier if you could have seen what you were making. Instead, you had to trust your leader's voice in order to create something "unknown."

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share.*
- **Have you ever done something new or scary that turned out to be really fun? What was it?**

## STORY | Talk about a time you faced the "unknown."

- These games probably weren't that terrifying, but I think we can all agree facing uncertainty in real life can be scary. There are a lot of reasons why you might feel like you're walking "into the unknown," like when you're . . .
  - Starting a new school or job.
  - Not sure how to resolve a major fight with a friend.
  - Wondering what you'll do after graduation.
  - Taking a risk or trying something new.
  - Trying to make a big decision.
  - Discovering that a loved one is ill and may not recover.
  - Living with a family member whose temper is unpredictable.
  - Hearing so much news about pandemics, wars, and tragedies.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Share a story from your own life (or ask a volunteer or student to share a story) about a time when you experienced fear or uncertainty because of an unknown future. Try to choose an example that your students can identify with. Don't talk about how you made it through this time of uncertainty — instead, simply share how it felt in the midst of it.*
- Uncertainty is scary, but there are some truths we can always trust to guide us, when we're not sure what's next. Like we did last week, today we're going to look at another true story from Scripture to discover what those truths might be.

## SO WHAT? *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

### VIDEO | **Up, Teaser Trailer**

- But before we get to that *true* story, let's take a look at a not-so-true story of a man who was very familiar with uncertainty.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play [the official teaser trailer](#) for the movie *Up*.
- *Up* is the story of a man named Carl who had a lifelong relationship with the unknown.
  - As a kid, Carl dreamed of going on adventures with his girlfriend Ellie. The uncertainty of the unknown was exciting!
  - They got married and grew up, but life became uncertain in other, more challenging ways. There were financial unknowns — how would they pay for unexpected expenses? There were health problems — what if they couldn't have kids like they planned?
  - Then, after many years together, Ellie died, and Carl faced the uncertainty of a life he would now have to face alone.

### VIDEO | "Stuff I'm Going to Do," from *Up*

- When they were young, Carl and Ellie made a book together they called their Adventure Book. Check out what happens when Carl rediscovers it during a moment of uncertainty.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play [this clip](#) from *Up* of Carl revisiting the Adventure Book.
- Carl's future seemed uncertain, but remembering Ellie helped him remember something else — that the unknown doesn't need to be scary. The unknown can be an invitation to a new adventure.

### DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.
- **What's one reason someone your age might feel uncertain or worried about the future?**
- ☆ **Talk about a time when you felt uncertain or worried about your future.**
- ☆ **How do you usually react when things feel uncertain or out of control?**

### SCRIPTURE | **Ruth 1:1-22**

- In the Bible, in the book of Ruth, we read about two women who had a lot in common with Carl. Their names were Naomi and Ruth.
  - Naomi was married to man named Elimelek. They had two sons named Mahlon and Kilion, and the whole family knew and followed God.
  - Naomi and Elimelek moved their family to a foreign country where most people didn't know or follow God.
  - Shortly after they moved, Naomi's husband Elimelek died.
  - Naomi's sons each married women from their new country who had different cultures and and believed in different gods.

- Ten years later, both of Naomi's sons died too.
- There was no handbook for this situation — nothing that could have prepared Naomi for life in a foreign country without her husband or sons. In the face of so much uncertainty, Naomi decided to return to her home country, alone.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read or summarize Ruth 1:1-22.*
- One thing we need to understand about the time and culture Naomi and Ruth lived in is that unmarried or widowed women were extremely vulnerable. Without husbands to support and care for them, they weren't just mourning — they were in danger and their futures were uncertain.
- When Naomi and Ruth faced the unknown, a few surprising things happened.
  - Naomi, a follower of God, was devastated. When reading the Bible, you might expect to find stories of people who always trust God and are hopeful, no matter what. But these were real people with real questions, struggles, and emotions.
  - Ruth, a woman who did not know God, embraced the unknown differently. After many years of watching her mother-in-law follow God, Ruth was willing to take a risk. She chose to commit her loyalty not only to Naomi, but to Naomi's God as well.
- Together, Naomi and Ruth returned to Bethlehem, not knowing what the future might hold for them.

### SCRIPTURE | Ruth 4:13-17

- We won't read all of Ruth today (although you can read it on your own), but here's a spoiler: God doesn't leave Ruth and Naomi without hope.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Ruth 4:13-17.*
- While nothing could replace the loss of their husbands and Naomi's sons, God rebuilt their family. They may have been uncertain about what their futures held, but God had a plan.
- Obed became the father of a son named Jesse, who became the father of a man named David, the future king of Israel. And many generations after that, David's descendants brought another son into the world named Jesus, the Savior of the world.
- So what does the story of Naomi and Ruth reveal about who God is? It shows us God . . .
  - Isn't afraid of our doubts, questions, or emotions (1:21).
  - Meets our needs (4:13).
  - Is a redeemer (4:14).
  - Knows our future (4:17).
  - Has a plan (4:17).
  - Is in control (4:17).
- If you add all of that up, it shows us that God is good.

### STORY | Return to your story about facing a time of uncertainty.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Reflect again on the personal story you shared earlier. This time, share how you can now look back on that experience and see that God was in control and had a plan, even when you couldn't see it.*
- Like Naomi and Ruth, we're all going to someday face uncertainty about what to do or what will happen next. But when we do, their story can be a reminder that God is good and in control, even when we can't see it.

- And what does this story reveal about who we are?
  - You were created by a God who is good (a provider, a redeemer, and in control).
  - Your future is known by your Creator. No matter how confusing or uncertain things feel, God is never confused or uncertain and will always guide and provide for you.
- If you've ever faced an uncertain future and felt confused, defeated, anxious, or afraid, remember this: because of who our Creator is, we don't have to worry. **Because of who God is, we can embrace the unknown.**

### ***NOW WHAT?** What does God want us to do about it?*

#### **REFLECTION | What are you worried about?**

- So what are you worried about? What's uncertain about your life right now? Where do you need some guidance or reassurance that God is in control?
- It can be something small or everyday, like . . .
  - Starting a new school or job.
  - Not sure how to resolve a major fight with a friend.
  - Wondering what you'll do after graduation.
  - Taking a risk or trying something new.
- Or it could be something scarier or more significant, like . . .
  - Trying to make a big decision.
  - Discovering that a loved one is ill and may not recover.
  - Living with a family member whose temper is unpredictable.
  - Hearing so much news about pandemics, wars, and tragedies.
- During times of uncertainty, it's easy to feel (like Naomi did) that God has abandoned you or that help will never come. That's when it's helpful to remember what God has done for us in the past.
- As you think about your uncertain situation now, see if you can remember a time when God came through for you in the past.
  - Have you ever felt uncertain before, but God helped you make the wise choice?
  - Have you ever felt afraid before, but God gave you peace?
  - Have you ever needed support, but God gave you a friend?
  - Have you ever been in need, but God provided for you?
- Whatever uncertainty you're facing right now, picture that situation clearly. Then pray this with me, if you'd like.
  - God, thank You for not being afraid of my doubts, questions, or emotions.
  - I believe You can meet my needs.
  - I believe You can redeem any situation.
  - I trust You know my future, even when I don't.
  - I know You have a plan for me.
  - Thank You for always being in control.

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.
- **Does your life feel at all uncertain or out of control right now? If so, what's going on?**
- **Read Matthew 6:25-27 & 34. How does this passage relate to your life right now?**
- ✧ **What's one new or interesting thing you noticed about God today? If that's true about God, what's true about you?**
- ✧ **Have you ever seen God come through for you when you've worried in the past? What happened?**
- **How can we help each other handle uncertainty or worry?**
- **This week, what's one way you want to worry less and trust God more?**

## RESPONSE | Because God Is, I Will

- We're going to close with a song. While we sing, I want to challenge you to step into the unknown by making a decision. What you decide to do will depend on what kind of uncertainty you're facing right now. Maybe you'll decide to . . .
  - Trust God, instead of worry.
  - Take a risk God is calling you to take.
  - Get guidance for a situation you're struggling to navigate.
- You can face uncertainty, but remember the reason why — because of who God is.
  - Because God is good, you can embrace the unknown.
  - Because God has a plan, you don't have to worry about what you can't control.
  - Because God is with you, you can ask for guidance.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before your program, set up a large cork board, markers, and push pins, and print and cut the handouts provided in your Week 3 folder. If you'd like, decorate the board by placing the words "Because God . . ." in the top left and the words "I will . . ." in the top right. Play or perform an on-theme worship song (like "King of My Heart, by John Mark McMillan). While you sing, invite students to fill out a card that says, "Because God \_\_\_\_, I will \_\_\_\_, " and pin it to the board.
- Whatever uncertainty you're currently facing, I want to challenge you to remember what's true about God, and what's true about you. Like Naomi and Ruth, God can guide and go with you during times of uncertainty, and redeem what's gone wrong. Remember . . .
  - God can handle your doubts, questions, and emotions.
  - God is a provider, a redeemer, and always has a plan.
  - Because God is in control, you don't have to worry.
  - **Because of who God is, you can embrace the unknown.**

## MUSIC | "Into the Unknown" (Frozen 2)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** As you dismiss, play the song or music video of "Into the Unknown" — either the version by Panic! At the Disco or the movie version.