

How to Be a Good Friend

Quarter 3 • Lesson 11

Focus on Life Skills

- 1. Connecting:** Use clay to see how friends affect each other.
- 2. Teaching:** Learn how to be a good friend (Proverbs 17:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:11a).
- 3. Responding:** Think of a way to be a good friend.

SUPPLIES

- Bible
- Clay or thick mud
- Sticks (1 for each child and 1 for you)

Optional Supplies:

- Memory Verse poster
- Student Pages
- Crayons
- Scissors

Before class, prepare a small ball of mud or clay for each child. If using mud, be sure it is thick enough to use to mould into a shape.

Teacher Devotion

Love one another deeply. Honor others more than yourselves.
Romans 12:10

What makes you a good friend? Is it the way that you listen to others? Is it the forgiveness you offer them when they hurt you? Whatever your friendship strengths are, you recognize the importance of loving your friends. God asks that we love and honour others. Good friends support each other and they care deeply about one another.

Think about someone who has been a good friend. You have likely learned how to support one another. You no longer guess how to help your friend because you know him so well. His heartache has become your heartache. His celebration has become your celebration. Take a moment to recall a time when you hurt deeply because of what a friend was experiencing. Recall a time when you were very excited for a friend. When you are unselfish with your words and actions you honour your friends and love deeply.

Family Connection: Encourage families to talk to their children about how they honour their friends. Ask family members to respond with the ways they honour their friends.

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Use clay to see how friends affect each other.

Greet the children as they come to class. Ask each child to name 1 quality of a good friend.

The last time we met, we talked about the qualities good friends have.

- **What are a few of the qualities good friends have?**

They are kind. They listen. They tell the truth gently. They want what is best for others. They forgive others.

Last week, you did an activity to show that friends reflect each other's actions. Today, we will talk about the importance of how we can be a good friend. Clap your hands if you want good friends.

Pause for children to clap. Signal for children to stop after about 5 seconds.

Teacher Tip: Take the time to remind the children what kindness is. Kindness is love shown through words, actions, and thoughts.

If you want to have good friends, you need to start by being a good friend. If you are kind to your friends, your friends will want to be kind to you. When you are kind to others, you reflect the type of friendship that pleases God. Let's try an activity. Please hold 1 hand out.

Put a small ball of clay or mud in each child's hand.

Look at the clay or mud. It is in the shape of a ball. Now, place your other hand on the clay and gently squeeze the clay. Move your hand so that you can look at the shape of the clay now.

- **How did squeezing the clay change its shape?**

Allow 2–3 children to respond. There should only be a slight change to the shape of the clay.

Even when you do not spend a lot of time with someone, you still change that person a little bit just as the clay changed a little when you squeezed it gently.

Let's try squeezing the clay again. This time, press your hands together as hard as you can. Move your hand and look at the shape of the clay.

- **How did squeezing the clay change its shape this time?**

Allow 2–3 children to respond.

When you squeezed the clay hard, the shape changed a lot. It looks a lot like the shape of your hand, right? When you spend a lot of time with someone, that person can begin to look a lot like you. You can affect the decisions your friends make, the things they like to do, and the things they do not like to do. When you make good decisions and are kind to others, you can help your friends to do the same.

Collect the clay so it is not distracting to the children during the rest of the lesson.

2. Teaching: Learn how to be a good friend (Proverbs 17:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:11a).

Have the children find partners to sit with for the following activity.

Last time we learned that it is important to choose good friends. It is just as important for you to be a good friend as it is to have good friends. Think for a moment about ways you can be a good friend. I will ask a question and give you 30 seconds to think about your answer. Then share your answer with your partner.

Pause about 30 seconds after asking each question to allow the children to think about their answers. Then give them about 1 minute to talk with their partners about their answers. After each question, ask 2 pairs to share their ideas with the whole class.

- **Tell your partner about the qualities of a good friend. Remember, qualities are the things that show us who someone is.**
- **What do good friends do for one another?**

You had some wonderful ideas about the qualities of a good friend and how good friends act. Good friends help, encourage, and show love for one another. This makes them stronger. Listen to our memory verse. It tells us what a good friend does.

Read the verse directly from your Bible.

A friend loves at all times. They are there to help when trouble comes.
Proverbs 17:17

Good friends love each other! They also help one another when something bad happens.

- **What do you think it means to love your friend all the time?**

Allow 2 children to respond.

Those are all good ideas. Here are some more ways you can be a good friend.

1. You want the best for your friend. Your words and actions show her that you think more of her than you do of yourself. I want a friend like that! Do you? To have a good friend, you must also be a good friend.

2. You say and do kind things for your friend. It feels good to hear someone say kind things about you. A good friend says and does kind things for others. He does not expect people to repay him for the kind things he says or does.

Raise your hand if you want to act out what it looks like to say and do kind things for a friend.

Teacher Tip: As pairs of children act out the following situations, engage the rest of the class by giving them a task. For example, you might ask them to clap when they see the actors show an example of friendship. By allowing the entire class to participate in the activity, they will feel like they are part of the lesson and their learning will be reinforced.

Choose 2 children to act out how good friends are kind. Tell them the following situation: 1 child has been asked to carry a basket to the market. The children may use words or actions

to show how friends can be kind to one another. Allow the children 30 seconds to act out the situation.

3. You value who your friend is. It does not matter who is better at doing something or who is smarter. You understand that your friend is special and there is no other person quite like her. You value her for being the way she is because you know God made her and loves her very much. You do not want her to change who she is just to be your friend.

Choose 2 different children to act out how good friends value each other. Tell them the following situation: You have just received your grades for your class. One friend received better grades than the other friend. Ask the children to use words or actions to show how they can value each other. Allow the children 30 seconds to act out the situation.

4. You pray for your friend. Sometimes you may not know how you can help a friend. You can love and help your friend by praying for him throughout the day. Pray for him when you are with him and when you are away from him. Put your hands together if you have prayed for a friend this week.

Choose 2 different children to act out how friends can pray for each other. Ask them to act out the following situation: 1 child just had something very sad happen to her. The other child will pray for the sad child. Allow the children 30 seconds to act out the situation.

5. You encourage your friend. A good friend cheers for her friend when she tries something new or difficult. A good friend encourages her friend. If you have ever encouraged a friend, wave your hand.

Choose 2 different children to act out how friends can encourage each other. Ask them to act out the following situation: 1 child will pretend to climb a difficult mountain. Ask the other child to use words and actions to encourage the other child. Allow the children 30 seconds to act out the situation.

6. You listen to your friend. A good friend knows how to pay attention to his friend. He focuses on what his friend tells him. If your friend is excited about something, hurting, or has a problem, you can help him by being a good listener. Hold your hand up to your ear if you have ever listened to a friend.

Choose 2 different children to act out how friends can encourage each other. Ask them to act out the following situation: 1 child will talk about a problem she has. The other child will listen without interrupting. Allow the children 30 seconds to act out the situation.

Thank you, my wonderful volunteers! If you love your friends in ways like the ones we talked about, you will be a good friend to others. Think about the ways that we talked about to be a good friend. The Bible says:

So encourage one another with the hope you have.

Build each other up.

1 Thessalonians 5:11a

When you love, help, and encourage your friends, you honour them and build them up. You make your friends stronger and happier.

Optional: If you are using Student Pages, give the children 5 minutes to colour and cut or tear out friendship bracelets.

3. Responding: Think of a way to be a good friend.

Ask the children to sit in a circle in the middle of your teaching space.

Do you know anyone who is a good runner? Some people are naturally good runners. Other people must work hard to become good runners. Whether someone is naturally a good runner or not, that person can get better through practice. Practicing something is when you do it many times. Practicing something helps you to get better at it. Friendship becomes better when you practice it.

When you practice listening to a friend, you become a better friend. When you practice forgiving a friend, you become a better friend. Do you know anyone who is a good friend to others? This week, watch and see how that person treats her friends. You can learn from her. For now, we will practice being good friends.

Close your eyes for a moment. Picture a good friend. What does he look like? What good things does he do? Keep this picture of your friend in your mind. Does everyone have a picture of your friend? (Pause) Good! Open your eyes. Listen to what the Bible says:

So encourage one another with the hope you have.

Build each other up.

1 Thessalonians 5:11a

This verse tells us that good friends encourage each other and build each other up. Let's do an activity to help us remember the ways good friends can build each other up and make each other stronger.

Place a pile of sticks in front of you.

These sticks will help you to talk about ways you can practice being a good friend. These are ways you can build your friends up. As you say something that encourages, helps, or shows love to your friends, you will take a stick from in front of me and add it to the middle of the circle. When you encourage, help, or do something to show your love for a friend, you honour that person.

Remember, we talked about some ways that you can show you care about your friend.

1. You want the best for your friend.
2. You say and do kind things for your friend.
3. You value who your friend is.
4. You pray for your friend.
5. You encourage your friend.
6. You listen to your friend.

You may use these to guide your thoughts as you place your sticks. Think of a way that you can practice being a good friend. For example, I will place my stick in the middle of our circle and say, "I will listen when my friend is sad."

- What is another way that you can be a good friend?

Allow each child to name 1 way to be a good friend. The child will then place 1 stick in the middle of the circle. Continue in this manner until all the sticks are in a pile with your stick.

Just as we built up this pile of sticks, when you are a good friend, you will build your friend up or encourage her. Look at the sticks in the middle of the circle. When you are a good friend, you build strong relationships with your friends. Friends love each other and are always there for one another. Our memory verse today says:

Show the Memory Verse poster if you are using it.

A friend loves at all times. They are there to help when trouble comes.
Proverbs 17:17

Sing or chant this verse using the same melody or rhythm from the last time. If you were not present for the last lesson or do not remember how to sing the song, ask the children to help you. Have the children sing or chant with you. Repeat the words to the memory verse 3 times.

End class by saying this blessing, based on Proverbs 17:17, over the children.

Blessing: May you always show love to your friends. May you help them by listening, praying, and showing kindness when trouble comes.

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song if possible.

"Waymaker" by Sinach: <https://youtu.be/DFGDU3XZmms>