



GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

These additional games and activities can be used throughout the Rooted series. If you want to integrate more movement and interaction in your lesson, check out these options. We've included tips to make the games and activities inclusive for all kids and have designated which games are intended for each lesson in the series.

GAME 1: ROLLING THE LOVE

SUPPLIES: foam dodgeball, timer

Leader Tip: If you have a lot of kids, create groups of about 10 and have each group form their own circle to play. You'll need one foam dodgeball for each group.

This game works great with The Greatest Commandment lesson!

In this game, kids will attempt to roll a ball through someone else's legs. During the first round, kids will be out if the ball rolls through their legs. But during the second round, everyone will get to play the whole time!

Gather kids together and invite everyone to stand in a circle with their legs apart. Explain that the outside edge of each person's feet should touch the outside edges of their neighbors' feet. Demonstrate this stance for the kids.

Make It Inclusive! If some kids in your group have limited mobility, make a circle out of chairs with the front legs of each chair touching the chair legs next to it. Then have kids play the game while seated in chairs rather than standing.

In this game, we we'll try to roll the ball through someone else's legs. Demonstrate this by trying to roll the ball through the legs of someone else in the circle. **For our first round, if the ball rolls through your legs, you are out. No one is allowed to block the ball, and you must stay in one spot as the ball rolls. The people who are out can stand outside the circle and cheer as the game continues. We will play for three minutes or until everyone but one person is out.** Hand the ball to a willing kid to start the game by rolling the ball toward someone else and start a three-minute timer. Every time a kid gets out, the circle should tighten so everyone's feet are touching their neighbors'. At the end of three minutes (or when there's only one person remaining), congratulate the winner (or winners!) and invite everyone back to the circle.

We're going to play again, but this time if the ball rolls through your feet, that's OK. You can just fetch the ball, return to your spot in the circle, and continue playing! Set the timer for three minutes and have kids play again, with everyone remaining in the circle the whole time.

What was the biggest difference between the first and second rounds of this game? Allow kids to share their thoughts. **Yes, in the first round, you were out if the ball rolled through your legs, but in the second round, you got to keep playing no matter what! Today in God's big story, we learned that love for God and love for others go hand in hand. However, sometimes we miss the mark and don't love and care for the people the way Jesus does. Yet even when we miss the mark, God's love for us is like the second round of the game—it doesn't end!**

GAME 2: HOOP RACE

SUPPLIES: large plastic hoops (3), painter's tape or small cones

This game works great with the Rooted lesson!

Make It Inclusive! If some kids in your group struggle with coordination, or if you have a lot of younger kids playing, consider simplifying this game by having kids roll the hoop on its side to the finish line rather than jumping through it.

In this game, teams will race each other while jumping through large plastic hoops, much like they would jump ropes.

Ahead of time, use painter's tape or cones to create a start line and a finish line on the floor.

Gather kids together and help them form three equal-sized teams. (If your group and space are large, consider having more than three teams with a large plastic hoop for each. Alternatively, if time or space is limited, select three kid volunteers to race while everyone else cheers for them.)

For this game, teams will race from the start line to the finish line. When it's your turn, you'll swing your team's hoop over your head like a jump rope and jump through it. If you are able, demonstrate this for the kids. Or you may want to invite another leader or an older kid to demonstrate each step. **Then you will toss the hoop in front of you, jump into it, pick it back up, and swing it over your head again like a jump rope. You'll continue doing this until you reach the finish line. Once you've crossed the finish line, you'll run with the hoop back to your team and hand it to the next person in line. The goal is for everyone on your team to make it to the finish line!**

Once all the teams are set, say: **Ready, set, go!** Cheer for kids by name as they race and be ready to help any who need extra assistance. When everyone has finished, gather kids together.

Everyone did an amazing job! You all transformed into amazing jumpers! To get through the hoop, you had to jump pretty high. And to get across the room, you had to go a long way. But you did it, and you didn't stop! This game can remind us that God's love transforms us. It can also remind us of something else we learned today in God's big story. Paul wrote about God's love, saying, "May you know how wide and long and high and deep it is" (Ephesians 3:18). Always and no matter what, God's love for you will never end.

GAME 3: THE BIG CHEESE

In this game, kids will strike “cheesy” poses and learn quickly that being “The Big Cheese” might not be all it’s cracked up to be.

This game works great with the Humility lesson!

Gather kids and introduce them to the title “The Big Cheese.”

Explain that “The Big Cheese” is used to describe someone who is the most important or influential person in a particular group. For example, The Big Cheese might be the boss or a principal or the most powerful person at the office or in a school.

For this game, we need to know three poses. Demonstrate each pose and invite kids to stand and try each one:

1. **Cheddar Cheese.** Hold your hands out in front of you to form a circle.
2. **String Cheese.** Stretch arms straight above your head with your palms together.
3. **Stinky Cheese.** Wave your hand in front of your nose.

Explain that for the first round, you are The Big Cheese. Say: **I am The Big Cheese.** Then prompt kids to respond, “You are The Big Cheese.” Explain that you will count down from three, and everyone will strike one of the three poses: Cheddar Cheese, String Cheese, or Stinky Cheese. Everyone striking the same pose as The Big Cheese is out and will sit down. Continue to play until just one person remains. The last person standing gets to be the next Big Cheese.

When it’s time for the new Big Cheese to have a turn, that person can choose to give up her spot and “The Big Cheese” title to someone else who wants to be The Big Cheese.

Play several rounds or as long as time allows. Then gather kids together.

Leader Tip: Keep kids who were eliminated involved by inviting them to a designated area where they can do something particularly cheesy, such as standing on one foot (like string cheese), doing cheesy dance moves, or doing jumping (pepper) jacks!

We learned today in God’s big story that Jesus is the all-time Big Cheese! As Paul wrote, “Jesus was equal with God ... Instead, he made himself nothing” (Philippians 2:6–7). Jesus didn’t show off; He didn’t use His power and importance to take advantage of others. Instead, He was humble and obeyed His Father God completely. God calls us to be humble like Jesus!

GAME 4: ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS SQUAD

SUPPLIES: whiteboard (optional), dry-erase marker (optional)

This game works
great with the God Is
Loving lesson!

In this game, kids will play a whole-body version of Rock, Paper, Scissors. Only instead of being eliminated when they lose, they will join the winner's team, sharing in the ongoing fun of the game.

Gather kids together. **You've probably played Rock, Paper, Scissors before, but you've probably never played it quite like we're about to! We're going to play Rock, Paper, Scissors Squad, and there are two things that make this version of the game unique.**

First, rather than make the rock, paper, and scissors motions with our hands, we're going to use our whole bodies!

Demonstrate each motion (or invite another leader or older kid to demonstrate) and have kids try each one:

1. Rock: Crouch down into a ball, like a big rock.
2. Paper: Stand up straight with your hands pressed to your sides, like a flat piece of paper.
3. Scissors: Stand with your feet shoulder length apart and arms extended above your head; then make a "cutting" motion with your arms like a giant pair of scissors.

Make It Inclusive! If kids in your group have limited mobility, you can play Rock, Paper, Scissors Squad using the customary hand motions rather than the whole-body actions.

Some kids, especially those who are younger, might be new to Rock, Paper, Scissors. So briefly explain how each motion defeats another: rock beats scissors, paper beats rock, scissors beats paper. Consider writing this on a whiteboard to help kids remember.

Second, if you lose in Rock, Paper, Scissors Squad, you're not out! Instead, you will join the winner's team—or squad. When you join someone else's team and face off against another opponent, you'll talk quietly together to decide which motion to do next. Eventually, small teams will join up together until everyone is on one large squad!

Call up a kid or adult volunteer to join you in demonstrating the game. Count down from three and do your rock, paper, or scissor full-body motions. Explain to kids that if they show the same motion, it's a tie, and they can go again. Then invite kids to stand up, find a neighbor to pair up with, and begin! Circulate among the kids as they play, helping them as needed. Play until everyone is on one large squad. Then gather kids together.

As the game went on, your squads became larger and larger as more and more people got to share together in the fun! Similarly, we learned in God's big story today that love comes from God, and we get to share it with others!

GAME 5: HOT AIR

SUPPLIES: painter's tape (prep only), tables, drinking straws (1 per kid), table tennis balls (1 per 2 kids), timer

This game works great with the Speaking with Wisdom Lesson!

In this game, kids will face off against their partners, each blowing through a straw to move their table tennis ball across a line on a table.

Ahead of time, set up tables. If you plan on having all the kids participate at once, you'll need enough table space for every pair to stand across from their partners with 1–2 feet between them and the people next to them. Use painter's tape to mark a line that divides the tabletop in half the long way. Alternatively, you can use fewer tables, and have the kids take turns playing the game.

Gather kids and help them form teams of two. Explain that they'll stand across the table from their partners with the tape line dividing the space between them. You'll set a timer for 30 seconds, and during that time, kids will blow through a straw toward a table tennis ball. Their goal is to move the ball off the line using only the wind coming through their straws. At the same time, their partners will also be blowing through straws and trying to get their balls to move in the opposite direction. Select a kid or adult volunteer to help you demonstrate how to play.

Make It Inclusive! Kids can play this game standing or sitting! If some kids are unable to stand for long periods of time, set chairs at the tables so all the kids play while seated.

Invite pairs to find their places at tables, and give each kid a drinking straw. If there aren't enough tables for everyone to play at one time, have pairs take turns playing. Hand a table tennis ball to each pair and instruct them to set the ball on the tape line when you say, "Go." Start the 30-second timer and say, **Go!** Be available to chase after table tennis balls that fall off the tables. Once all kids have had a chance to play, gather everyone together.

Today in God's big story, we learned from the book of James how words impact us and others for good or for bad. When we use our words to hurt others, they're like the hot air coming through our straws toward our table tennis balls. James compares our tongues to a fire, for "a small spark can set a big forest on fire" (James 3:5). But God's wisdom helps us use our words to bring peace and to build others up.

GAME 6: HUMAN TIC-TAC-TOE

SUPPLIES: chairs (9) or painter's tape, ribbon or bandanas (1 per kid, 2 colors)

This game works great with the Rooted series!

Make It Inclusive! Kids with mobility challenges can answer questions and help direct their teammates to the most strategic spots on the Tic-Tac-Toe grid.

In this game, kids will be the Xs and Os in a giant game of Tic-Tac-Toe that helps them review what they've learned during the Rooted series.

Ahead of time, set up a giant Tic-Tac-Toe grid where each square is large enough for a kid to sit or stand in. You can use chairs and/or tape on the ground to create the grid.

Gather kids and do a quick group review of the five Wonder Truths from the Rooted series. Ask kids if they recall each of the truths and prompt them as needed to help them remember. Here they are for your reference:

Lesson 1 (The Greatest Commandment) Wonder Truth: God Wants Us to Love Him and Love Others

Lesson 2 (Rooted) Wonder Truth: God's Love Transforms Us

Lesson 3 (Humility) Wonder Truth: God Calls Us to Be Humble Like Jesus

Lesson 4 (God Is Loving) Wonder Truth: Love Comes from God

Lesson 5 (Speaking with Wisdom) Wonder Truth: God's Wisdom Helps Us Live at Peace with Others

Help kids form two teams. Designate a color for each team, and give each kid a ribbon or bandana in that color to tie loosely around their wrists.

Explain that each team will take turns answering questions about the lessons in the Rooted series. Teams can work together to remember the answers. When they answer a question correctly, one person on the team will take a spot on the giant Tic-Tac-Toe grid. If they answer a question incorrectly, the other team will get a chance to answer it. The goal is to get three in a row on the Tic-Tac-Toe grid!

Play multiple times as time allows or until kids have answered all of the following questions:

- **Fill in the blank to form our lesson 1 Wonder Truth: God Wants Us to Love Him and Love _____. (Others)**
- **Fill in the blanks in the Rooted series Word of Wonder: “Jesus replied, ‘Love the Lord your _____ with all your _____ and with all your _____. Love him with all your _____.’ This is the first and most important _____.” (God, heart, soul, mind, commandment)**
- **What is the Scripture reference for our Word of Wonder? (Matthew 22:37–38)**
- **What do many people refer to these verses as? (the Greatest Commandment or the Most Important Commandment)**
- **Fill in the blank to form our lesson 2 Wonder Truth: God’s Love _____ Us. (Transforms)**
- **Who wrote the book of Ephesians? (Paul)**
- **Fill in the blanks from Ephesians 3:18 about God’s love: “May you know how _____ and _____ and _____ and _____ it is.” (wide, long, high, deep)**
- **Fill in the blank to form our lesson 3 Wonder Truth: God Calls Us to Be _____ Like Jesus. (Humble)**
- **Who wrote the book of Philippians? (Paul)**
- **Fill in the blank about Jesus from Philippians 2:8: He was humble and obeyed God completely. He did this even though it led to his death. Even worse, he died on a _____! (cross)**
- **Fill in the blank to form our lesson 4 Wonder Truth: Love Comes from _____. (God)**
- **Who is believed to have written the book of 1 John? (John)**
- **Fill in the blanks to complete 1 John 4:11: Since God loved us this much, we should also _____ one _____.” (love, another)**
- **Fill in the blanks to form our lesson 5 Wonder Truth: God’s _____ Helps Us Live at _____ with Others. (Wisdom, Peace)**
- **Who wrote the book of James? (James)**
- **What part of the body did James say we need to control to have peace with others? (tongue)**

Gather kids together. You did an amazing job remembering so much of what we’ve discovered during the Rooted series! I hope we can all remember that God wants us to love Him and others, God’s love transforms us, God calls us to be humble like Jesus, love comes from God, and God’s wisdom helps us live at peace with others. You are known, loved, and led by God!