

# Jesus Welcomes Children

Grades  
**1-2**

**GREATNESS • LECTIONARY 25 • YEAR B**

**MARK 9:30-37**



25

## What's happening in this story?

Jesus turns the world upside down with a new idea of what God's world looks like. The last will be first, and it's all about serving others. As Jesus explains it, the power of the kingdom of God is completely opposite of how the world understands power and why he uses the example of a child. Children are among the most vulnerable and powerless members in society, but those who welcome and serve people without power here on earth exhibit the power that is commended in the kingdom of God.

## What does this mean for kids?

Little kids will love this story because Jesus is using *them* to teach that when we welcome someone vulnerable among us, we welcome Jesus himself. Kids will hear they are welcomed into the life of Jesus and that they really matter to him. They can also recognize "Whoever wants to be first must be last" as a radical teaching. Kids are tuned in to who is more skilled, who is older, who is stronger, who has more power. Jesus' turning this idea on its head will make an impression on them.

## What is the lectionary connection?

While still early in the academic year, talk with kids about what servanthood looks like in a school setting. Ask kids how teachers serve them throughout the day and how they in turn can practice servanthood toward their peers, teachers, custodians, food service workers, and others—especially those in positions society ranks "last."

## AGE LEVEL TIP

Keep class rules to a minimum. State the expected behavior in short, clear sentences. Review the expectations with the class. Providing healthy boundaries helps kids know what is expected of them.



### GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Clear tape
- Markers
- Scissors
- Construction paper
- Sponge brushes

### LESSON SUPPLIES

- Jenga® or block tower-style game
- Herbs (green)
- Bowls of tempera paint
- Warm, soapy water
- Towels

**WHIRL SUPPLIES**

**• WHIRL STORY BIBLES**

**• DVD**

**• WALL CHART**

**• LEAFLETS**

## Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Set out a Jenga® or block tower-style game for the class. Remove blocks one at a time, placing them on top of the stack. Don't let the tower tip over! **The blocks on the bottom eventually wind up on the top. Which blocks are the greatest?**

## Invite kids to gather near the Wall Chart.

Point out today's date, season (Season after Pentecost), color (green), and icon (footprints).

**During the Season after Pentecost, we talk about things that are alive. The color for the Season after Pentecost is green. What are some things that are green and living? Allow kids to respond. Herbs are green and living too. Invite kids to tape some herbs on the wedge. Another thing that is alive during the Season after Pentecost is our faith. The Season after Pentecost is a time to celebrate our life with Jesus!**

Kids stand in a circle and say their names. They hold their hands in front of themselves and together say, "These are my hands. I use them to serve."

## Pass out leaflets.

**Who do you see in these pictures?** Help kids identify disciples, Jesus, child, pastor, and firefighter. **We are talking about greatness today. What makes a person great? Is it the way they look? How tall they are? Their job? Something else?** Allow kids to respond. **Who do you think is great? Another word for greatness is *importance*. What do you think makes a person important? Greatness takes many forms. True greatness may surprise you.** Collect their leaflets until Respond.

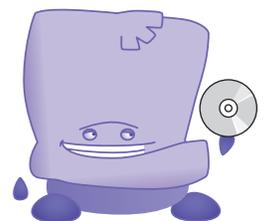
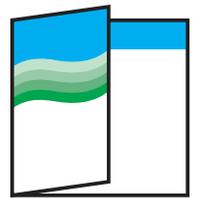
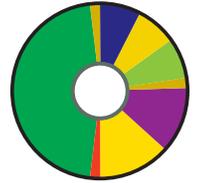
## Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

**The kids are getting ready to audition for the Harvest Festival Pageant. Let's watch what happens!**

View Episode 2, "Odditions," on the Whirl Year B Fall PreK–Grade 2 DVD.

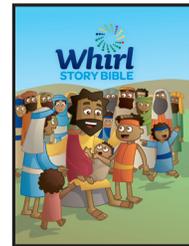
Ask kids these questions about the video:

- **Who did almost everyone want to be?**
- **Why do you think everyone wanted to play Jesus?**
- **Who did Chet pick to play the role of Jesus? Why?**
- **Name some things that you think make Jesus great.**
- **Who else do you think is great?**



## Pass out Whirl Story Bibles to kids.

**Let's find our story today!** Help kids find "Last and Least" on page 282. Start by pointing out the graphic that shows the footprints in the green circle for the Season after Pentecost. Before you read, invite kids to look for the disciples following Jesus, disciples having a discussion, and Jesus teaching with a child.



Read the story and Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page.

## Ask these questions after you read the story:

- Why do you think Jesus chose the disciples to follow him?
- What were the disciples arguing about?
- Do you think some of the disciples were greater than the others?
- What did Jesus say people should do to be great?
- Do you think children can be great? Why or why not?

## Play together!

**The video kids were acting. Let's do some acting too! First we'll act out the Bible story as it is in our Bibles. Then we'll act out the story as if it were taking place today.** Invite a group of kids to act out the story as it appears in the Whirl Story Bible.

Invite another group of kids to act out a modern version of the story. **Pretend you and your friends are arguing about who is the greatest. What things would you talk about? Sports? Grades? Popularity? What might Jesus say if he heard you?** "Jesus" might want to use words from the story or come up with his own.

### BIBLE BIT

- Children were not valued during the time of the Roman Empire. A father could legally disown, sell, or even kill his child for making him angry.
- Jesus makes it clear that God values children!

### WATCH IT AGAIN

- Even though Jesus was seen as the greatest character in the pageant, not everyone wanted to be Jesus. Who wanted to be something different?

### OUR CHURCH

- Look for reminders of founding members, elders, or past pastors around your church. What stories or qualities made them worth honoring?

**TODAY'S READINGS** Proverbs 31:10-31 📖 • Jeremiah 11:18-20 📖 • James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a  
Mark 9:30-37

# RESPOND 10

## Pass out leaflets, markers, sponge brushes, and bowls of paint.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. **In the story, Jesus said, “If you want to be the *greatest*, you have to *serve* everyone.”** As a class, read the words around the edges of the leaflet.
2. **Some of these words represent a way to serve others; some do not. Which words do not represent ways to serve others?** As a class, decide which words are not ways to serve, and cross those words out on the leaflet.
3. **What are some ways to serve that are not listed here?** Help kids think of ways they serve, like picking up toys or feeding a pet, and write those words in the empty space along the left edge of the leaflet.
4. Help kids paint their hands with sponge brushes and make handprints in the center of the leaflet. Clean off with warm, soapy water and towels.
5. **Take this picture home and put it somewhere to remind you to serve others. Greatness takes many different forms; true greatness may surprise you.**

# LAUNCH 10

## Circle up with kids for a quick review.

**What were the disciples arguing about in the story?** Allow kids to respond. **What were the kids in the video arguing about? We made pictures about what it means to be great. What did Jesus say people should do if they want to be great?**

## Pass out leaflet panels, markers, scissors, construction paper, and tape.

Decorate and cut out the crown. Use construction paper to extend the sides. Tape the two sides of the paper into a crown. **Give the crown to a younger kid from another class. Children are important to Jesus!**

## Send kids out.

Stand in a circle. Have kids say their names, then hold their hands in front of themselves and together say, **“These are my hands. I use them to serve.”**

Pray together: **Dear God, thank you for giving me opportunities to serve others like Jesus did. Teach me how to be great. Amen.**

Thank kids for serving others during class. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.