TRACK TWO

Kids Ministry

A complete 45-60 minute lesson for elementary classes (about grades K-5), with notes for preschool and a take-home page for parents.

THE BIG IDEA

I can trust God and talk to Him every day, even when it's hard.

LESSON PLAN

	45 MIN	60 MIN
Welcome and opening game	8	10
Bible story (told or film)	10	12
Object lesson	5	6
Craft	10	15
Small groups	7	10
Memory verse	3	4
Prayer and goodbye	2	3

THE STORY IN PLAIN WORDS

Leaders who could find nothing wrong with Daniel's work got King Darius to sign a law: for thirty days, pray only to the king, or be thrown to the lions. Daniel kept praying and giving thanks, as he always had. In the den, God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths. Daniel was not hurt, because he trusted in his God.

READ BEFORE CLASS

Daniel 6, the whole chapter, and Hebrews 11:32-34. If you will show the film, watch it all the way through first.

What Kids May Ask

"Was Daniel scared?" The Bible doesn't say how Daniel felt, only what he did: he kept praying, gave thanks, and trusted God (6:10, 23). Say: *Even when we feel scared, we can trust God.*

"Did the lions go to sleep?" The Bible says only that God "has shut the lions' mouths" (6:22). Say: *We don't know everything about that night, but God kept Daniel safe.*

"What did the angel look like?" The Bible doesn't say. It's fine to say *we don't know.*

What happened to the men who set the trap (6:24). With K-2 and preschool, leave it out. If an older child asks directly, say it once, simply: *The king punished the men who tricked him. The Bible says their families were thrown in too. That was the king's command. God's own law said children must not be punished for what their parents did* (Deuteronomy 24:16). Don't add details.

"Will God always keep me safe?" Be honest and gentle. People who love God sometimes still get hurt, but God never leaves His people (Hebrews 13:5). Say: *God may not stop every hard thing, but He will never leave you.*

Telling the Story

YOU'LL NEED a paper crown, a large sheet of paper rolled up like a scroll, a big sheet of brown paper for the den, taped flat to the floor away from walking paths (no one steps on it), and a large piece of gray paper for the stone. *SAY lines are a dramatized paraphrase for children; READ lines quote the WEB.*

DO Teach the cues. When you hear "lions," roar softly. When you hear "shut their mouths," cover your mouth with both hands.

SAY Old Daniel did his work for King Darius so well that the king wanted to put him in charge of everything. Other leaders looked for something wrong. They found nothing!

DO Put on the crown and unroll the scroll.

SAY The leaders said, *O king, sign a new law! For thirty days, no one may pray to any god or person except you. Anyone who does goes to the lions!* The king signed it, and a law of the Medes and Persians could never be changed.

DO Take off the crown. Kneel, facing a window if you have one, with open hands.

READ Daniel 6:10 aloud: "When Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house (now his windows were open in his room toward Jerusalem) and he kneeled on his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did before."

SAY The men caught Daniel praying. The king tried until sunset to save him, but he couldn't change the law. So Daniel was put in the den with the lions. A big stone covered the opening. *(Lay the gray paper over the den.)* All night the king couldn't eat or sleep. Early in the morning he hurried to the den and called, *Daniel! Was your God able to rescue you?*

READ Daniel 6:22 aloud: "My God has sent his angel, and has shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me..."

SAY God shut their mouths! Daniel was lifted out, and he wasn't hurt at all, because he trusted in his God. Then the king told everyone in his kingdom to honor Daniel's God, the living God.

ASK What did Daniel keep doing, even when the law said no? What could you talk to God about today?

USING THE FILM INSTEAD. The film runs about 10 minutes. Preview it before class, and set your stop point ahead of time (prepare the clip in advance, or mark the stop time in your player) so no one is racing the clock. For grades K-2, show 1:24 to 6:54 (the search for a fault through Daniel lifted out). **STOP THE MOMENT DANIEL IS LIFTED OUT UNHARMED (ABOUT 6:54),** before the narration at 6:57 describes 6:24. The words may upset young children. For grades 3-5, show 0:33 to 8:22, the whole story through Daniel 6:28, or also stop at 6:54. If you play on, first tell children briefly that the king punished the men who tricked him and their families, and that the Bible reports the king's command; it doesn't say God commanded it. No attack is shown on screen. Times are from the film's final caption file.

Opening Game: What Changed?

Kids look at you for 20 seconds, then close their eyes while you change three things (put on a hat, roll up a sleeve, take off your watch). Kids raise a hand to say what changed. Play two or three rounds; no one is out.

Wrap up: *Today a king makes a new law, and lots of things change. But one thing about Daniel doesn't change. Watch for it!*

Object Lesson: Sealed In

YOU'LL NEED a shoebox with a lid, wide tape or a big sticker, and a card that says GOD IS WITH ME.

Before class, put the GOD IS WITH ME card inside the shoebox, close the lid, and seal it with the tape. Ask: *Can anybody get into this box now without breaking the seal?* **Say:** *The king sealed the den with his ring so nothing could change for Daniel* (6:17). *No person could get in to help him. But no stone and no seal can keep God out. God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths.* Open the box and show the card. *God was with Daniel, and He is with you.*

Craft: The Open Window

Kids glue two paper shutters onto a sheet of construction paper so they open like a window. Under the shutters, they draw themselves praying and write **I will talk to God every day.** Beside the window they write *Morning*, *Noon*, and *Night*. Grades 3-5 can copy the memory verse on the back.

SUPPLIES (PER CHILD)

- Two sheets of construction paper
- Shutter flaps, pre-cut for K-2
- Crayons or markers
- A glue stick
- Rounded-tip scissors (grades 3-5, supervised)

Small Groups

GRADES K-2

1. What did Daniel do when the law was signed?
2. Who shut the lions' mouths?
3. What are some times you can talk to God, like when you wake up or at dinner?

GRADES 3-5

1. The leaders looked for something wrong with Daniel's work and found nothing (6:4). What does doing your work honestly look like at school?
2. Daniel prayed the same way he always had (6:10). Why do you think he didn't change?
3. Daniel gave thanks even when he was in danger. What can you thank God for when things are hard?
4. The king couldn't change his own law. What does this story show about who is more powerful?

Memory Verse Practice

MEMORY VERSE

"When I am afraid, I will put my trust in you."

PSALM 56:3, WEB

Motions: on "afraid," hug yourself; on "trust," open your hands; on "you," point up. Say it softly, then like a roar, then in a whisper. K-2: learn "...I will put my trust in you."

Prayer

Invite kids to name one thing they're thankful for, out loud or silently. Anyone may pass. Then pray: *Dear God, thank You that You hear us every time we pray. When we are afraid, help us trust You. Thank You for Jesus, who is always with us. Amen.*

CLASSROOM TIPS

- **Attention signal:** say "Lions!" and kids roar softly; say "Shut!" and they cover their mouths and go quiet.
- Pair younger kids with an older buddy for the game so everyone can join.
- Use only large, safe items. No coins, rocks, beads, or other small objects: they are choking hazards for little ones.
- **Safeguarding.** If a child or teen tells you about abuse, neglect, self-harm, harmful drinking or drug use at home, or anything else that makes you worried for their safety: stay calm, listen, and thank them for telling you. Don't promise to keep it secret, don't question them for details or investigate, and don't confront anyone involved. Write down what they said as soon as you can, and report it the same day to your church's designated safeguarding lead, following your church's safeguarding policy and any mandatory-reporting law that applies to you. If anyone is in immediate danger, stay with them and call emergency services. Telling a church safeguarding lead does not replace any report the law requires you to make directly to child-protection authorities or police.

FOR PRESCHOOL (AGES 3-5)

- Plan 20-25 minutes: story with cues, the sealed box, the craft with pre-cut shutters, and prayer.
- Tell it as *Daniel kept praying, and God kept him safe.* Leave out what happened to the men who set the trap.
- Questions: *Who did Daniel talk to? What did God do to the lions' mouths?*
- Practice "...I will put my trust in you." with open hands.

TAKE-HOME PAGE · FOR PARENTS

Today in Kids Ministry

Daniel in the Lions' Den

DANIEL 6

WHAT WE LEARNED

A new law said no one could pray to anyone but King Darius for thirty days. Daniel kept praying and thanking God three times a day, as he always had. He was thrown into the den of lions, but God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, and Daniel was not hurt, because he trusted in his God. **Big idea:** *I can trust God and talk to Him every day, even when it's hard.*

TALK ON THE WAY HOME

1. What part of Daniel's story do you remember most?
2. When are good times for our family to pray together?
3. What makes you afraid? How could we pray about it?

MEMORY VERSE

"When I am afraid, I will put my trust in you."

PSALM 56:3, WEB

TRY THIS AT HOME

Make an open-window prayer card: fold the edges of a sheet of paper in to make two shutters, and write *Morning*, *Noon*, and *Night* inside. Tape it by a window, and pray together at those times this week.

Watch the film together

Scan, or visit phillacolla.com/biblestories. Free, about 10 minutes, listed there from release day. Parents, preview the film first; it narrates the hard events of Daniel 6:24. No attack is shown on screen.

GO DEEPER AS A FAMILY

The **Family Study** track of the full companion guide has the story, questions for every age, an activity, and a prayer. Get the full guide free at phillacolla.com/biblestories. Next in the series: *A Queen in Persia* (Esther).

PRAY TOGETHER

God, thank You that You hear us every time we pray. Help us trust You and talk with You every day. In Jesus' name, amen.

KIDS: DRAW DANIEL PRAYING AT HIS OPEN WINDOW

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