

## Activity Overview

## Materials

### Small Group Discovery

5-15 minutes

**Goal:** Discover reasons why people become friends

#### Option A

Toss paper plates like Frisbees to show ways students are alike

#### Option B

Play a board game to discuss characteristics of good friends

**Option A:** Paper plates, markers

**Option B:** Lesson 1 *Student Guide* pages, paper clips, game markers, pencils

Lesson 1 ★ Unit 1  
Friends and Enemies  
**Brotherly Love**

### Large Group Study

20-30 minutes

**Goal:** Understand that God wants true friends to care for and protect each other just as they care for themselves

#### Character Study

Study 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-7; 20; 2 Samuel 1; 9 to find ways David and Jonathan showed true friendship

#### Skit Option

Read a skit about why Jonathan would make a good friend to David

#### Unit Bible Passage

Read Romans 12:9-14,21 and identify ways to treat others

**Character Study:** Bibles

**Skit Option:** Lesson 1 *Student Guide* pages

**Unit Bible Passage:** Romans 12 Poster from *Poster Pack*

### Small Group Application

20-30 minutes

**Goal:** Identify and plan ways to be true friends

#### Discussion Option

Talk about characteristics of true friends

#### Active Option

Complete a variety of games with a friend's help

#### Art Option

Create frames and decorate names of friends

**Discussion Option:** Bibles, Lesson 1 *Comics*

**Active Option:** Bibles, balloons, scarves or fabric strips at least 21 inches (53.5 cm) in length

**Art Option:** Bibles, poster board, scissors, measuring stick, pencils, stapler, glue, decorating materials, paper, markers

Distribute copies of the  
*Sonic Edge #1* CD to students!

Be a true friend!



Character Study

1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-7; 20; 2 Samuel 1; 9

David and Jonathan remained faithful friends, even though others thought they should have been enemies.

Unit Bible Passage

Romans 12:9-14,21

**NIV:** "Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

**KJV:** "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."



A true friend is a fine and amazing gift—a person who knows you (even your faults) and loves you anyway! A good friend understands you, cares about you and makes you feel refreshed simply by being with you. Even the most tedious task is easier to do when a good friend is with you.

Because a true friend is so valuable, the careful cultivation and attention it takes to grow a true friendship is well worth the effort!

The word "friend" comes from a combination of Old English words meaning "to love freely." All genuine friendship begins with God; He is our ultimate friend because His love for us is absolutely free—no strings attached! He must be the source of our human friendship; otherwise, we try to love each other out of our own strength. When our love fails, we substitute the world's kind of surface love that isn't love at all but self-interest disguised as sentiment. The Bible tells us, "Love must be sincere" (Romans 12:9). To be true friends, we must first receive God's freely given love for us so that we can then let His love flow through us to others freely and genuinely.

This Bible study demonstrates the power of sincere love and true friendship. Jonathan and David made vows of friendship to each other that revealed their deep affection and loyalty. Even when it cost them dearly, they remained faithful. You can help your preteens learn to be true friends in two ways: First, point them to the best friend ever—Jesus Christ. Second, be an example of genuine friendship and loyal love for each of them; your actions will teach them more about true friendship than your words alone ever could!



## Option 2 Common Ground

### Materials

Paper plates, markers.

### Procedure

#### 1. What are some things you like to do with your best friend?

Distribute paper plates and markers.

Students write their names on paper plates.

#### Let's play a game to think about some other things you like to do.

Students stand in the middle of the room. Ask one of the questions below and give two to four possible answers, pointing to a different location (on the table, under the chalkboard, next to the bookshelf, etc.) for each answer.

- **What is your favorite sport?** (Soccer. Figure Skating. Baseball. Hockey.)
- **What do you like to do for fun?** (Build something. Walk the dog. Talk on the phone. Bake cookies.)
- **What is your favorite movie?** Name movies students may have seen recently.
- **Who would you like to spend time with?** (A good friend. A pet. A TV star. A musician.)
- **What is your favorite ice cream flavor?** (Rocky Road. Chocolate Mint. Vanilla. Bubble Gum.)
- **Where would you like to go for vacation?** (Beach. Mountains. Aquarium. Zoo.)

2. For each question, students toss paper plates like frisbees, attempting to have plates land in designated areas to show their answers to each question. Students quickly retrieve their plates. Repeat with additional questions.

## Small Group Discovery

5-15 minutes

**Goal:** Discover reasons why people become friends

3. Conclude the activity by saying,
  - **Often, we become friends with people who like the same kinds of things we do.**
  - **What are some other reasons people might become friends?** (Go to the same church. Attend the same school.)
  - **In our Bible study today, we'll find out about two people who became friends, even though they really didn't have much in common with each other.**

### teaching tip

If several small groups meet in one room, play game as a large group and then divide into small groups to conclude the activity.

### mentoring tip

Participate in this activity along with students in order to build relationships with them. As new students arrive, model appropriate interaction by introducing yourself and other students to each new arrival and inviting the new student to join in the activity.



# Option b best friends



### Materials

Lesson 1 *Student Guide* pages, paper clips, game markers (coins, buttons, etc.), pencils.

### Procedure

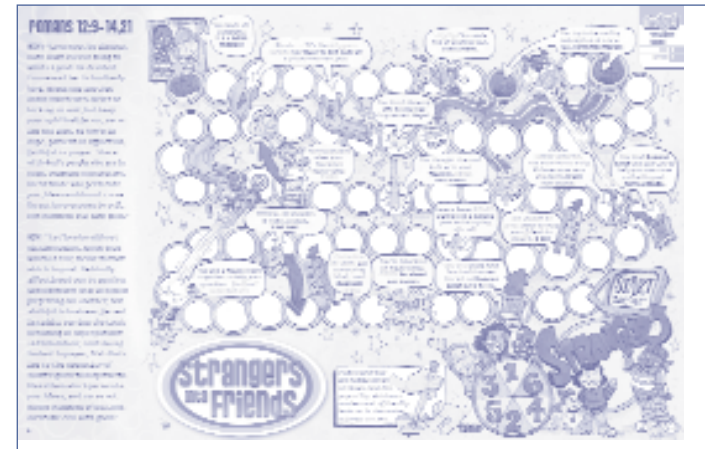
1. As students arrive, distribute *Student Guide* pages, paper clips, game markers and pencils.
2. In pairs, students play game on pages 1 and 4 of the *Student Guide* page, using a paper clip and pencil to make a spinner as shown on the page. Students take turns spinning and moving the indicated number of spaces and following the directions on the game-board path.
3. Several minutes before time is up, end the game and ask the questions below.
  - Why do you think people like to have friends?
  - What do you think is important for a friend of yours to do? (Be kind. Like to do stuff I like to do. Be willing to help me. Listen to me. Care about me. Laugh with me.)
  - What are some reasons that people become friends? (They like the same things. They have had some of the same experiences. They are on the same team or in the same class.)
  - What are some things that slowed you down along the game path? What might happen to a friendship if that happened in real life? Why?
  - What are some things that moved you ahead on the path? How do you think that action might help a friendship you have?

4. Conclude the activity by saying,

- Today we are going to learn about two people who became friends.
- See if you can find several reasons why they might have become friends and why they kept on being friends for their whole lives.

### Enrichment idea

Pairs of students select situations suggested on the game-board path and then take turns acting out situations in which kids can show friendship. **Tech Tip:** Videotape students acting out situations and then play back video for students to enjoy.



# Character Study

## brotherly love

1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-7; 20;  
2 Samuel 1; 9

### Materials

Bibles, Romans 12 Poster from *Poster Pack*; optional—Lesson 1 *Student Guide* pages, *Sonic Edge #1* CD and player, *Extra Edge #1* DVD and player, dictionary.

Lead students to read and discuss the Bible verses listed. Extend the discussion with the questions and comments provided, and refer to the poster as indicated.

**Introduction** Think about some of your friends. Did you become friends right away, or did it take time? The friendship of David and Jonathan, two faithful friends we read about in the Old Testament, began soon after they met.

**Let's read (watch) a skit to find out about the best friends we'll be studying today.** Distribute *Student Guide* pages. Let volunteers choose parts for the skit on pages 2 and 3. Students read skit aloud (or watch "The Friendship Game" on DVD). **Now let's find out how these two people showed their friendship for each other.**

**What do you know about David and Jonathan?** Saul was King of Israel, and Jonathan was his son, a prince. David was just a young shepherd who lived way out in the country. But after David defeated Goliath, Israel's enemy, Saul brought David to the palace to live with him. David and Jonathan quickly became very good friends.

The people who knew David and Jonathan probably would NEVER have predicted they would be friends—especially not BEST friends. But they

## Large group Study

20-30 minutes

**Goal:** Understand that God wants true friends to care for and protect each other just as they care for themselves

1 sam.  
18:3

### Why did Jonathan make this promise of friendship?

**Read verse 3.** Jonathan cared about what happened to David as much as he cared about what happened to himself! To prove his friendship, he gave David several of his prized possessions—his robe, sword, bow and belt.

Soon, Jonathan had a chance to show his friendship again. King Saul continued to send David out as a warrior for Israel. And David did a fantastic job! The Israelites were so proud of David's skill in protecting Israel that they made up this song: "Saul has killed his thousands, and David his tens of thousands!"

Hearing the words of that song did something to King Saul! He became jealous of David's popularity—so jealous that he threw a spear at David. One day Saul even commanded his servants and Jonathan to kill David!

1 sam.  
19:1-2

### Read 1 Samuel 19:1-2 to find out what Jonathan chose to do.

To show his friendship, Jonathan chose to warn David about King Saul's death threat. Jonathan also planned a way to make peace between the two men. And for a while, Jonathan's plan worked. David was once again accepted in the palace—but not for long!

David went to battle again for Israel and defeated the Philistines. And once again, Saul grew horribly jealous and hateful toward David. Eventually, Saul's anger grew so strong that David had to run for his life! But before he left, David went to see Jonathan.

Jonathan knew that David was God's choice to be the next king. So he helped David escape unharmed. Even though he knew that helping David meant he himself would never be king, he was glad to help his friend.

DVD

Skit  
option

1 sam.  
20:17

One of the last times they saw each other, David and Jonathan renewed their promise of friendship. **Read 1 Samuel 20:17 to find out why they did this.** Because David and Jonathan’s friendship was so strong, they promised they would always show kindness to each other and to each other’s children.

David kept his promise of friendship, too. Later in his life, David learned that King Saul and Jonathan had been killed in battle. David grieved terribly over the death of his friend. He wrote a song honoring Saul as a mighty king and describing what a loving friend Jonathan had been to him (see 2 Samuel 1:19-27).

2 sam.  
9:1

**Read 2 Samuel 9:1 to find out another way David kept his promise of friendship after he became king.** In those days, a new king usually killed everyone related to the old king. One of King Saul’s servants knew that Jonathan’s son, Mephibosheth, was alive. Mephibosheth’s legs had been broken when he was young and he became crippled.

2 sam.  
9:7

**Read 2 Samuel 9:7 to learn how David showed kindness to Mephibosheth for his friend Jonathan’s sake.** David gave Mephibosheth everything he needed. Mephibosheth ate his meals in the palace as part of the royal family.

romans  
12:9-14,21

A long time after David and Jonathan lived, Paul, one of Jesus’ followers, wrote some words to help the believers in the church at Rome know how to treat each other. These instructions help us know how to treat others, too, and they give us good advice for building friendships.

(Students read Romans 12:9-14,21 from Bibles or Romans 12 Poster. Optional: Play “Love Must Be” song from CD or DVD.)

- “Brotherly love” means to care for someone as though he or she were a deeply loved member of your family. **How did David and Jonathan show they were sincere, or honest, in their feelings of friendship?**

- “Affliction” is a word used to describe a hard or difficult time. **How did David and Jonathan show their friendship in difficult times?**
- When we bless someone, we wish and pray that good things will happen to him or her.

**conclusion** God gave us a great example of true friendship in the record of David and Jonathan. David and Jonathan cared for each other, and Jonathan protected David, even when it was difficult to do so. They stood up for each other and kept their promise of friendship throughout their lives. God wants us to care for and protect each other to show that we are true friends, too.

Jesus calls people who love and obey Him His friends (see John 15:15). When we become Christians, Jesus cares for us as “best friends.” (Pray with students and then talk with interested students about salvation, referring to “Leading a Student to Christ” on p. 105.)

“Love must be sincere.  
Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.  
Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.  
Honor one another above yourselves.  
Never be lacking in zeal,  
but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.  
Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction,  
faithful in prayer.  
Share with God’s people who are in need.  
Practice hospitality.  
Bless those who persecute you;  
bless and do not curse.  
Do not be overcome by evil,  
but overcome evil with good.”  
Romans 12:9-14,21, NIV



Talk with students about putting into practice the Bible truths discovered in this lesson. Use these **discussion questions** as you lead students to complete one of the activities on the following pages. Conclude the activity with the Life Application Challenge below.

## Small Group Application

20-30 minutes

**Goal:** Identify and plan ways to be true friends

- **According to Romans 12:9-14,21, how should we treat our friends? How do you act when you show brotherly love to someone?** (Treat the other person as if he or she is more important than yourself. Help the other person without expecting anything in return.) **How is that different from the way some kids treat their friends?**
- **When might it be hard to be a true friend?** (When other kids don't like your friend. When you feel angry or upset about something your friend has done.) **What can you do in these situations?** (Talk to God about it. Read the Bible. Ask parents or other adults for help.)
- **Think about someone God has given you as a friend. What has this person done to show friendship to you?**
- **What can you do to show friendship when two of your friends are angry with each other?** (Say only kind things about both friends. Pray for the friends. Encourage them to talk to each other.)
- **When might you need to stand up for a friend?**
- **What are some ways you can show that you care for a friend the same way as you care for yourself?**

## Life Application Challenge

**Take a moment to think about one of your friends. Plan one or two specific things you will do to be a true friend to that person.** Give students a short time to think, and then pray with students, asking God's help in showing true friendship to others.

## Discussion Option Creato-Friend



### Materials

Bibles, Lesson 1 *Comics*.

### Procedure

1. Students look at "Acme Creato-Friend!" on page 4 of comics. Ask the questions below.
  - What are some characteristics of friends shown on this page?
  - What characteristics of true friendship did David and Jonathan show? What are some other characteristics of true friendship mentioned in Romans 12:9-14,21?
  - Which characteristics of a friend are most important to you? Why?
2. Challenge students to think of ways to develop these important characteristics of good friends. **What can you do to become that kind of friend?** Ask the **discussion questions** to extend the conversation.



### Enrichment Idea

Distribute paper and markers. Students draw people shapes and then write qualities of friendship they would like to show, referring to "Acme Creato-Friend!" for ideas.

### Mentoring Tip

Encourage positive mentoring relationships by inviting several adults to visit your class near the end of the session. Groups work together to write several interview questions to ask the adults about friendships. (Refer to the **discussion questions** if students need help writing questions.)

**Tech Tip:** Students videotape or tape-record interviews with adults. Play recordings for all students to enjoy.


## active option friendly games



### Materials

Bibles, balloons, scarves or fabric strips at least 21 inches (53.5 cm) in length.

### procedure

1. Divide class into pairs to play at least one of the games below. Choose games appropriate for your facility.
  2. After students have had a chance to play several rounds of these games, ask,
    - **What was easy about doing these games? What was hard to do?**
    - **How did you help each other to play these games? What are other ways friends help each other?**
-  3. Use the **discussion questions** to lead students in discussing ways to be true friends.

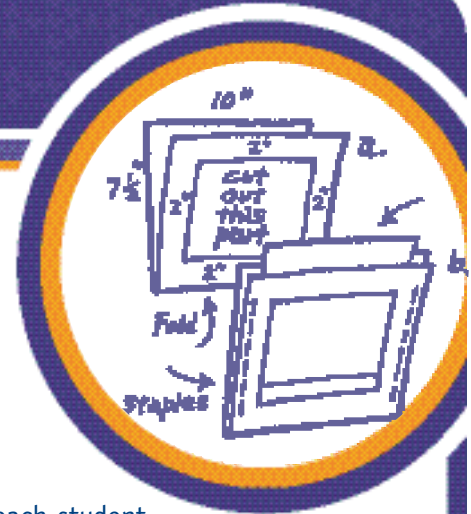
### games

**Balloon Squash:** Partners stand shoulder to shoulder with arms behind their backs. Partners carry a balloon across the room and back by holding it between their shoulders or elbows (see sketch). Variation: Partners carry balloon by holding it between hips.

**Three-Legged Race:** Partners stand side by side and tie inside legs together with a scarf or fabric strip. Pairs race to the other side of the room and back.

If you have a large group, divide group into teams and time each team with a stopwatch. The two fastest teams compete in a gold-medal race.

## art option framed friends




### Materials

Bibles, poster board, scissors, measuring stick, pencils, stapler, glue, decorating materials (craft sticks, colored straws, twigs, etc.), paper, markers.

### preparation

Cut poster board into 10x15-inch (25.5x38-cm) rectangles, one for each student.

### procedure

1. Give each student a poster-board rectangle. Student folds rectangle in half like a book and then uses pencil to outline a frame on one of the halves, leaving about 2 inches (5 cm) on all four sides. Student cuts out center rectangle, leaving a frame (see sketch a). Student staples together side edges of frame, leaving top edge open (see sketch b).
2. Students decorate frames by gluing on decorating materials. Students write names of friends on paper, decorate the letters of the  names and place name papers in their frames. As students work, use the **discussion questions** to lead students to identify and plan ways to be true friends.

### enrichment idea

Instead of gluing on decorating materials, students use pencils to roll wrapping paper into small tubes. Students secure the tubes with glue or tape and then glue tubes onto frames, starting at the centers of the frames.

**Tech Tip:** Use a camera (instant or digital) to take pictures of students posing with friends. Give pictures to students to put in the frames they create.