



ORANGE GROUP IDEAS

MAIN IDEAS FOR THE NIGHT

“Gossip” is telling or listening to hurtful stories about others that have nothing to do with us and that they probably would not want us to tell. Gossiping is a form of bullying because it can make people feel embarrassed, sad, angry and hurt. That’s why God hates it when we gossip – it hurts people. We should always say kind things about others instead of hurtful things.

KEY VERSES:

“... a person who gossips ruins friendships.”
Proverbs 16:28b (ICB)

“When you talk, do not say harmful things. But say what people need—words that will help others become stronger.”
Ephesians 4:29a (ICB)

ICE BREAKERS

Orange Group Leader: Choose the icebreaker that you believe will work best for your group. Each of them works easily into the main ideas for the meeting so feel free to use them at any point.

TELEPHONE

Yep! The old-fashioned game of “Telephone” that we all grew up with.

WHAT TO DO: Have everyone seated around in a circle. Create a sentence using words that everyone in your group can generally understand (Example: *Someone told me that Mary’s bike had a broken bell that sounded really bad.*) Whisper the phrase one time to the person on your right. That person whispers it to the next person one time, and so on until you get to the last person around the circle. The last person then calls out what they just heard. Typically the phrase changes as it goes down the line, so it’s rarely the same phrase as the first person started with. (Repeat with a different phrase as desired.)

ASK: What happened to the original message? (*It was distorted; changed.*) Where did it get changed (between which two people)? (*Hopefully you can determine this.*) Why did it get changed? (*People didn’t say or hear it clearly and then added their own interpretation of the story.*) How might the person that the story was about feel, knowing that everyone around our circle shared her/his private information? (*Sad, angry, betrayed...*)

THE POINT: Words can either hurt or help people. Telling private stories about other people is hurtful. And once we tell a story to someone, we have no control over where that story goes or how that story gets changed. It might be a completely different story in the end and really hurt someone’s feelings, or worse! WE are responsible for that hurt, because we told the story to someone else. Real friends do not gossip about others, because we know it can destroy friendships.

The Bible says: “... a person who gossips ruins friendships.” Proverbs 16:28b (ICB)



AUTUMN MADLIB

Mad libs can be great fun, especially when a whole group helps out! Use the included “Autumn Adventures” mad lib. You can wait until everyone has arrived and gather all the needed words at once, or have someone get a word or two from each group member (kids included!) as he/she arrives.

WHAT TO DO: Once the mad lib is complete, ask your best reader (adult or child) to read the mad lib aloud to the group. Hopefully this will be silly and hilarious!

THE POINT: You can note that most of the words that were provided were not silly by themselves. What made them sound so crazy was how they were used in the sentences. Words are like that – they are really powerful and can be used to build people up or to tear people down. Today we’re going to see how stories that we tell and listen to about other people might be very hurtful. We call those hurtful stories GOSSIP.

OTHER ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT THE MAIN IDEAS:

WORD WAVES

YOU WILL NEED THE FOLLOWING:

Large bowl of water; Enough small objects that float in water for each child (I recommend breaking a piece of mulch into smaller pieces of wood); a medium sized pebble (1 inch diameter or less); a towel

WHAT TO DO: Tell the kids that you are giving each one of them a wooden “raft” – their very own little boat to go onto the lake (bowl). Invite them to place their rafts onto the water surface. *(Give time for the surface of the water to become still after all of the rafts are in.)*

Ask the kids to describe what will happen when you drop the pebble into the bowl. When a pebble is dropped into the water, it creates a ripple effect, and continues quickly across the water. There is no way to stop it once it begins. All of the rafts will start to move around.

THE POINT: Compare this to **gossiping**. Rumors spread quickly and can hurt people.

Next, change it up and tell the kids that we can spread **goodness** just as easily. Kind words also create a ripple effect and can strengthen and uplift others. Encourage your kids to say kind things about their friends and family.

The Bible says: *“When you talk, do not say harmful things. But say what people need—words that will help others become stronger.”* Ephesians 4:29a (ICB)

Discuss ways they can avoid being part of gossip. I like the old tried and true saying, “If you don’t have anything nice to say, don’t say anything at all.” It’s as simple as that!



THE TOOTHPASTE CHALLENGE

(Parents may wish to try this activity at home this week with their children.)

YOU WILL NEED THE FOLLOWING: One tube of toothpaste; a bowl; wet ones or another way for kids to clean their hands afterwards.

WHAT TO DO: Take a small bowl and a tube of toothpaste. Make some “gossip” statements while squeezing some toothpaste out into the bowl, such as “So-and-so is so stupid!” Keep making statements, and after each statement squeeze more toothpaste out into the bowl. Once the tube is empty, pass it around with the bowl of toothpaste and ask each person to try to put the toothpaste back into the tube. They can’t. Gossip and ugly comments, EVEN IF THEY ARE TRUE, can’t be taken back. Once it’s out, it’s out.

WHAT GOSSIP CAN DO

The message in this simple illustration is similar to that of the Telephone Game ice breaker. Simply talk through this story with the group:

Suppose your friend told you something that was very personal and asked you not to tell anyone else. Maybe it was something about his mom and dad disagreeing about something. Then...

- You tell someone else
- They tell someone else and the story starts going around
- While the story is going round, it is changing as each person adds a bit more that may have happened
- When the story gets back to him, it could be that everyone now thinks that your friends' parents are fighting, or even splitting up!

ASK:

1. How upset and worried would your friend be if he heard that particular bit of gossip about his parents and himself?
2. How would his parents feel?
3. How would you feel knowing that you hurt them by gossiping?



Can you see how gossip can hurt people? Let’s ask God to help us get caught saying something good and encouraging about others rather than something hurtful or mean.

AUTUMN ADVENTURES

It's a _____ fall day, the sky is _____,
(adjective) (color)
and we're going to the _____ patch!
(vegetable)

They have _____ rides there where
(noun)
you can _____ your own _____.
(verb) (vegetables)

There's also a _____ _____ where
(adjective) (building)
scary _____ jump out to try and
(nouns)

scare you. I like _____ my way
(verb -ing)

through the _____ maze, where the
(vegetable)
_____ are taller than the adults.
(nouns)

When we're done, we will _____
(verb)

some hot _____ and enjoy a _____
(drink) (adjective)

slice of _____ _____.
(fruit) (noun)

