



AN INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS ROOTED?

Taking its name from Ephesians 3:17, this programme has been designed for groups aged 8-11 years (Key Stage 2) with little or no church background. It has been trialled in a midweek group, which was evenly split between those who go to church, those loosely linked to the church and those with no previous church experience.

Trial sessions lasted 90 mins (including time for socialising), but the programme could be adapted for a shorter or longer session. Activities work well in a setting such as a church hall, where possible, with access to an outside space for some of the programme.

Please do adapt these materials for your context!

SUGGESTED FORMAT

Each session includes a range of activities, following the below sequence. You may find this is too much for one session so edit as appropriate.

- Introductory activity
- Session introduction
- Activity
- Game
- Film Clip
- Activity
- Discussion
- Testimony
- Prayer
- Game
- Close





SERIES OVERVIEW: GETTING TO KNOW YOU!

INTRO

This five-session series has been designed to use with a brand new group, perhaps at the start of the year, helping them to get to know each other, you, the group set up, and for you to get to know them too!

Key theme: Introductions, Icebreaking, Relationship Building.

Key Bible text: Psalm 139

PROGRAMME

Session 1: First Impressions

Session 2: Getting To Know You

Session 3: What's In A Name

Session 4: Like / Dislike

Session 5: All In This Together





SESSION 1: FIRST IMPRESSIONS

OVERVIEW

Aim: To introduce Rooted, the meeting place, ourselves and the members of the group.

Intro: This session is all about introductions; Rooted as a club, the site where we will meet, ourselves as the team and the members of the group to ourselves and to each other. From this very first session we will introduce some of the things that matter to us and how we will operate as a group emphasising the core values: Friendship, Fun and Faith-exploring. Through the activities in this session we will give the children the opportunity to find out more about us and how we will run, make themselves comfortable in the site, share some of their own preferences (which will help us to shape future sessions) share some of their own thoughts about faith and encounter God for themselves.

1 Starter: People Bingo

Time: 10 mins

You will need: People bingo sheets, pens

Activity: As the children arrive, distribute the people bingo sheets and pens and explain that their challenge is to get a different person to sign in each box. As they do so, they will get to meet many other members of the group and learn some names. Look out for any stragglers on the outside who may need some help to get involved. This is just for fun!

The Point: To give children the chance to break the ice and begin to get to know each other.

2 Intro: Welcome

Time: 5 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Welcome the children to the group, ask each leader to share their name. Explain that today is called 'First Impressions' and is all about us getting to know each other, the group and the way we will run.

The Point: To introduce the theme.

3 Activity: Treasure Hunt

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Photo clues

Activity: The treasure hunt will need to be set up in advance. Before the session, take photos of key features in your venue and arrange them on a sheet of clues for the children to find and identify the locations.

Challenge the children to find all the clues around the site. Explain the perimeters of the site so that they know where they are allowed to go. Explain that they can complete the treasure hunt in pairs, threes or individually as they prefer.

The Point: To give children the chance to familiarise themselves with the site and feel comfortable here.

5 Game: Would You Rather

Time: 5 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Gather the children in the centre of the room and explain that you are going to give them a series of choices; would you rather A or B and they should indicate their choice by moving to one side of the room or the other. Today, all choices should relate to things they may enjoy here, e.g.

Would you rather:

- be indoors or outdoors
- do things on your own or with others
- be really quiet or really loud
- play games you've played before or for the first time etc.

The Point: To find out more about the children's preferences.

4 Film Clip: Finding Nemo

Time: 5 mins

You will need: The film, Finding Nemo, and the means to play it

Activity: This film clip begins at 15:58 and ends at 18:56. In this clip, Marlin meets Dory for the first time who introduces herself several times! Introduce and play the clip.

The Point: To illustrate the theme for this session.

6 Activity: Post-it Votes

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Post it notes, large sheets of paper, pens

Activity: Spread out around the room large sheets of paper with the following labels: games, crafts, outdoor activities, video clips, cooking, drama, chat, and a blank sheet. Give each child 5 post it notes and ask them to number them from 1-5. Explain that they should put the post it notes on their five favourite activities, awarding their first favourite five points and so on down to one point and leaving others pointless.

On the blank sheet, they can write any other activities they like to do. Explain that this will help us to decide on our programme over the coming weeks and months, we may not be able to do everything straight away but will work on it!

The Point: To find out more about the children's preferences.

7 Discussion: What do you think God is like?

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Paper and pens

Activity: Gather the children together in small age-banded groups. Ask them what they think God is like and invite them to draw a picture to show their ideas. As they draw, encourage them to talk about their ideas and take the opportunity to develop the discussion.

When they are ready, gather the pictures in, as these will be useful to refer back to in the future!

The Point: To get a sense of the children's first impressions of God.

8 Testimony: First Impression of God

Time: 10 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Share a little of your story about how you first discovered God and what your first impression was, perhaps how this was changed etc. Share the words of Matthew 16:15 and what they mean to you.

Take some time to discuss with the children and give them the chance to ask their own questions.

The Point: To share your testimony.

9 Prayer Activity: Questions for God

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Paper and pens, box or basket

Activity: Explain to the children that every week, we will have the chance to speak to God in prayer. Today, we want to give them the chance to do so, perhaps by asking God a question or writing a message, such as 'what are you like?' or 'are you really there?' Distribute the paper and pens and invite the children to write their question to God before putting it into the box.

Pray together for all the children and their questions, thanking God that we can know him. Touch briefly on how we can know God better and find answers to our questions.

The Point: To pray together.

8 Game: Ball in the Bucket

Time: 5 mins

You will need: Two buckets, ball, rows of chairs

Activity: Arrange the children in two teams and have them sit on a row of chairs facing the other team. Number the children from one ... and give the opposing team the numbers, with one diagonally opposite. At each end of the playing area, have a leader hold a bucket as a 'goal.'

Explain that when their number is called out, they should run to the middle, pick up the ball and get it into their team's bucket before the opposing player does so.

The Point: Just for fun.

9 Close

Time: 5 mins

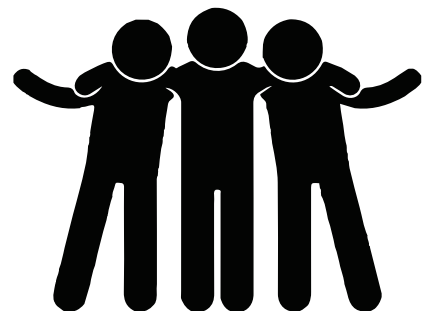
You will need: Points total and prizes (optional)

Activity: Gather the children together and draw the session to a close, reminding them of what we have done together. Award any points or prizes.

The Point: To draw the session to a close.

PEOPLE BINGO

Is in year 3	Is here for the first time	Has a pet dog
Hates Brussel sprouts	Is in year 6	Walked here today
Has a sister	Doesn't go to school	Can roll their tongue
Has ever caught a fish	Came in the car	Has more than three pets





SESSION 2: GETTING TO KNOW YOU

OVERVIEW

Aim: To give the children the opportunity to share more about themselves.

Intro: This session builds on last week and gives children and leaders the opportunity to share more about themselves and get to know each other a little better. This session also introduces the idea that we can get to know God too.

Bible ref: Psalm 139, Matthew 16:15

1 Starter: Personalised Number Plates

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Number plate templates (card), pens

Activity: As the children arrive, give them a 'number plate template' card and marker pen. Invite them to create a personalised number plate which would tell us something about them; it could include their name, or a nickname or something they would like to be associated with. When they are ready, the number plates can be put on display.

The Point: To give children the chance to introduce something of themselves.

2 Intro: Welcome

Time: 5 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Welcome the children back to the group, and remind them that the theme for this term is 'Getting to know you,' and in this session, we want to get to know each other a bit better!

The Point: To introduce the theme for this session.

3 Activity: Clay Faces

Time: 15 mins

You will need: Clay

Activity: Take the children outside and invite them to use the clay, together with natural found materials to create a self portrait on the trunk of a tree. When they are ready, invite the children to take a look around our natural art gallery!

If you don't have the option to do this outdoors, you can adapt the activity, and use simple base boards.

The Point: To give the children the opportunity to reveal how they see themselves.

4 Game: Sit Down If...

Time: 5 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Arrange the children in a circle of chairs facing inwards and ask them all to stand. Ask a series of questions, explaining that they should sit down if it's true for them.

For example; sit down if...

- You're in year 3.
 - You have a pet lion.
 - You've never eaten olives.
 - You've got a younger brother.
- Include a few humorous but not embarrassing ideas too.

The Point: To share a little more about ourselves.

5 Film Clip: Despicable Me

Time: 5 mins

You will need: The film, Despicable Me and the means to play it

Activity: This film clip begins at 30:41 and ends at 33:58. In this clip the girls begin to get to know Gru and vice versa! Introduce and play the clip.

The Point: To illustrate the theme for this session.

6 Game: Two truths and a lie

Time: 5 mins

You will need: Leader Info

Activity: Before the session, ask the leaders for three facts; two true and one made up.

One at a time, invite the leader to the front and share their 'facts' ask the children to guess which one they think is made up, before revealing the true answers.

The Point: To introduce a little more about the leaders.

7 Testimony: Getting to know God

Time: 10 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Share a little of your story about what it means for you to know God personally and the difference it makes in your life. Link to Psalm 139:1 as appropriate.

Take some time to discuss with the children and give them the chance to ask their own questions.

The Point: To share your testimony.

8 Prayer Activity: Knowing God?

Time: 10 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Gather the children together in small age-banded groups.

Together discuss:

- How do we know about God?
 - What do you think it means to know God?
 - How do we get to know God?
- Let the conversation flow naturally. If the children prefer, you could mindmap the discussion instead.

Pray, thanking God that we can know him and be known by him.

The Point: To pray together.

9 Game: Crab Football

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Football, 'goals.'

Activity: Arrange the children in two teams and explain the rules; players must be down on all fours and can only move sideways (like a crab!) working together to try to get the ball in the goal.

The winning team is the one who score the most goals.

The Point: Just for fun.

10 Close

Time: 5 mins

You will need: Points total and prizes (optional)

Activity: Gather the children together and draw the session to a close, reminding them of what we have done together. Award any points or prizes.

The Point: To draw the session to a close.



SESSION 3: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

OVERVIEW

Aim: To continue to get to know each other and think about the meaning of our names.

Intro: This session builds on the previous weeks, giving children and leaders the opportunity to share more about themselves and get to know each other a little better. This session further explores how we can know God more, when we think about God using some of his different names or titles.

Bible ref: Psalm 139, Matthew 16:15

1 Starter: Letter Tile Names

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Scrabble Letters

Activity: As the children arrive, work together to create a grid with all their names in, using the word Rooted as a base. You could also include the names of children not present today, together with the leaders.

The Point: To show the children that we are all linked together, and to intro our names.

2 Intro: Welcome back

Time: 5 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Welcome the children back to the group, and explain that tonight's theme is called 'what's in a name.' Explain that we will be continuing to get to know each other better and today we will be thinking about our names; what we're called, what our names mean, why we were given them and more besides.

The Point: To introduce the theme for this session.

3 Activity: Name Plaques

Time: 15 mins

You will need: Clay, letter stamps, natural found objects.

Activity: Gather the children together and invite them to use the clay to shape a small oval decoration, with a hole at the top to use to hang it when done.

Invite them to use the letter stamps to add their name, before decorating by pressing in naturally found objects to create decoration. (You could do this activity outdoors). Put the hangings on a small piece of card ready to take home with them.

The Point: To introduce and illustrate today's theme.

4 Game: Name that brand

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Logo quiz from youtube (there are many different ones available), and the means to show it.

Activity: Gather the children together in two teams and set up the 'guess the logo' quiz on youtube.

Invite the children to call out the answers to the quiz. Briefly explain how we know these brands by their logo, just as we are known by our name.

The Point: To explore the power of a name.

5 Film Clip: Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone

Time: 5 mins

You will need: The film, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, and the means to play it

Activity: There are two different clips you could use for this, depending on the children in the group.

Option 1: This film clip begins at 26:59 and ends at 29:42. In this clip, Harry is introduced to the idea of 'Voldemort' and why we do not say his name!

Option 2: This film clip begins at and ends at 39:37 and ends at 41:20. In this clip, the students discover who is who.

The Point: To illustrate the theme for this session.

6 Game: Ball of String Names

Time: 5 mins

You will need: Ball of string

Activity: Gather the children in a circle. Pass the first player the ball of string. Explain that they must keep hold of the end of the string while throwing the ball to another player, calling out their name at the same time. Players continue to pass the ball of string to one another, criss-crossing and forming a web. When they are done, they must then remember who passed the string to them, in order to reverse the process. You can play in competing teams to see who can do it most quickly, or repeat play against a timer to see if they can improve their timing.

The Point: To better learn each other's names.

7 Discussion What's your name?

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Baby names book, app or website

Activity: Gather the children together in small age-banded groups.

Discuss children's names; do they know what their name means? If not, you can look them up. Do they know why they were given their names? What about middle names or nicknames? Share stories of where your names come from.

The Point: To explore the meaning of names.

8 Talk: Names for God

Time: 5 mins

You will need: Flipchart paper and pens

Activity: Gather the children together and ask them if they have heard of any other names we might use for God? Write some of these up on display and talk through what they mean and where they come from. Take some time to answer some of the children's questions about this.

The Point: To discover more about God.

9 Prayer

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Names for God, music

Activity: Gather the children together and remind them of some of the things we have explored during this session.

Spread pieces of paper with different names for God such as Father, Creator, Friend, Saviour etc, out across the floor. Invite the children to walk around the room, really quietly, as the background music plays and take a moment to pause at some of them, thinking about what it means to them if God is this. Gather the children together and pray to close.

The Point: To pray together.

10 Game: Tower Smashing

Time: 5 mins

You will need: Plastic / paper cups, small balls

Activity: Arrange the children in two teams and divide the playing area in half. Explain that each team needs to build their own cup tower, whilst at the same time knocking down their opponents. Each team must stay in their own half during play.

When time is up, the winning team are those whose tower remains standing (or is the tallest).

The Point: Just for fun.

11 Close

Time: 5 mins

You will need: Points total and prizes (optional)

Activity: Gather the children together and draw the session to a close, reminding them of what we have done together. Award any points or prizes.

The Point: To draw the session to a close.



SESSION 4: LIKE / DISLIKE

OVERVIEW

Aim: To continue to get to know each other and celebrate the diversity in our group.

Intro: This session builds on the previous weeks, giving children and leaders the opportunity to share more about themselves and get to know each other a little better. This session explores how God has made us all different; we don't all have to like or dislike the same things, that's part of what makes us unique.

Bible ref: Psalm 139

1 Starter: Find Someone Who...

Time: 10 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Gather the children together. Challenge each child to find someone who likes or dislikes the same ... as them. For instance, find someone who has the same favourite colour as you, find someone who dislikes the same vegetables as you, who has the same favourite animal etc.

The Point: To help the children to get to know each other better.

2 Intro: Welcome back

Time: 5 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Welcome the children back to the group and explain that tonight's theme is called 'like/dislike.'

Explain that we are all made differently and that is something to celebrate; we will be finding out more about the things we like or dislike but we don't have to agree; we want to celebrate our differences.

The Point: To introduce the theme for this session.

3 Activity: Like / Dislike

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Pictures of random objects, thumbs up and down symbol cards or symbols

Activity: Put a selection of pictures on display of random objects such as different types of shoes and clothes, food, cars etc and give each child a number of thumb symbol cards or stickers. Invite them to stick them up or down on each of the pictures to vote whether they like it or dislike it.

Talk briefly about the fact that we all like different things, because we're all made differently, and that's great!

The Point: To explore the idea that we all have different likes and dislikes.

5 Film Clip: The Emoji Movie

Time: 5 mins

You will need: The film, The Emoji Movie, and the means to play it

Activity: This film clip begins at 7:40 and ends at 12:40. In this clip, Gene is introduced and reveals that he can't stay Meh!

Introduce and play the clip.

The Point: To illustrate the theme for this session.

4 Game: Would You Rather?

Time: 5 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Gather the children in the centre of the room and explain that you are going to give them a series of choices; would you rather A or B and they should indicate their choice by moving to one side of the room or the other.

Today's choices can be random, e.g.
Would you rather:

- Walk on your hands or slide on your belly?
 - Have a dog or a cat?
 - Holiday in the sun or the snow?
- Only eat chocolate for the rest of your life or never again?

The Point: To explore the idea of different preferences.

6 Activity: Try It

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Different foods

Activity: You will need to check for allergies beforehand. Present a number of different foods and drinks and invite the children to try them, e.g. different flavoured crisps, unusual fruits etc.

Ask the children to share which they really liked (and which they disliked!) Where they surprised by any of these? Have they tried anything for the first time? What did they think?

The Point: To explore the idea of trying new things and discovering new likes or dislikes!

7 Testimony: God Made Me

Time: 5 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Share a little of your story about what it means that God has made you the way you are, with all your likes and dislikes!

Link back to Psalm 139.

The Point: To share your testimony.

9 Prayer: Playdough Prayers

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Psalm 139, Playdough

Activity: Give each child a lump of playdough and ask them to listen as you read a bit of the Bible, from Psalm 139 (this can be selected verses) and as they do so, form the playdough in their hands into a person (or something else if they prefer) to think about what it means that God has made them. Close in prayer.

The Point: To pray together.

11 Close

Time: 5 mins

You will need: Points total and prizes (optional)

Activity: Gather the children together and draw the session to a close, reminding them of what we have done together. Award any points or prizes.

The Point: To draw the session to a close.

8 Discussion: Made This Way

Time: 10 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Gather the children together in small age-banded groups. Discuss some of the things we have explored during this session:

- What has surprised them about the things they or others like or dislike?
- Why do you think we are all different?

What does it mean that God made us this way?

The Point: To explore the theme through discussion.

10 Game: Swing Ball

Time: 10 mins

You will need: two 'legs' cut from a pair of tights, foam balls.

Activity: Ask for two volunteers. Give each player a leg from a pair of tights with a foam ball in the toe end.

They should pull the tights leg over their head, before swinging their head around to interlock with the other players 'tight' and try to pull it off their head. The winning player is the one who gets it off first. Repeat with other volunteers.

The Point: Just for fun



SESSION 5 : ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

OVERVIEW

Aim: To continue to get to know each other and celebrate what it means to be together as one!

Intro: This session builds on the previous weeks where we have been getting to know each other better and build the group together as a team, celebrating what it means to be together as one family.

Bible ref: Psalm 139, 1 Corinthians 12:12

1 Starter: Thumb Print Logo

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Copy of logo, paint, washing up bowl and towel.

Activity: Provide an outline of the logo and paint.

As the children arrive invite them to help to decorate the logo with their thumb prints. Work together until it is filled with colour!

The Point: To come together as a group and celebrate this in art.

2 Intro: Welcome back

Time: 5 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Welcome the children back to the group and explain that tonight's theme is called 'all in this together'

Explain that over the last few weeks, we've been getting to know each other better and today we want to think about what it means to be a team together, a family or a community, what does it mean to belong here?

The Point: To introduce the theme for this session.

3 Game: Team Relay

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Obstacles

Activity: Arrange the children in two teams and line them up at the start. Set out a matching obstacle course for each team. On the signal to go, the first player in each team completes the course before returning to the start. They should then return to the start and take the hand of the second player, before completing the course hand in hand.

The game continues like this, adding a new player each time until the whole team is hand in hand completing the course.

The Point: To celebrate being a team.

4 Game: Work Together 1

Time: 5 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Gather the children in two teams at one end of the room and give each team three lengths of guttering and a ball. Challenge the team to work together to get the ball from one end of the room into a bucket at the end without dropping it. If the ball falls, they must return to the beginning. If they are successful, challenge them to work together to do a lap of the hall!

The Point: To work together as a team.

6 Game: Work Together 2

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Newspapers, masking tape

Activity: Divide the children into teams and give each team a pile of newspapers. Challenge them to build the tallest free-standing tower they can within the time given.

When time is up, judge the winning team!

The Point: To work together as a team.

5 Film Clip: High School Musical

Time: 5 mins

You will need: The film trailer, High School Musical, and the means to play it

Activity: This film clip begins at 1:30 and ends with this credits. In this clip, the whole cast sings 'all in this together.' Introduce and play the clip.

The Point: To illustrate the theme for this session.

6 Testimony: In The Family

Time: 5 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Share a little of your story about what it to be a part of the family of God and how we can all belong to that family. Link back 1 Corinthians 12:12.

The Point: To share your testimony.

8 Prayer: Together Prayers

Time: 5 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Gather the children together in a circle facing inwards and say that this is what God wants for us, to be altogether. Then ask the children to turn outwards and say that God doesn't want us just to look in at ourselves, but to look out around us to everyone else too, and to invite them to join us. Pray for the group.

The Point: To pray together.

9 Game: Newspaper Wars

Time: 10 mins

You will need: Newspapers

Activity: Divide the children into two teams and divide the room with a wall of chairs. Give each team a pile of newspapers and ask them to screw them up into balls. On the signal to go, each team should try to throw as much newspaper as they can onto the opposing team's area. When time is up, the winners are those with the least newspaper on their side. You can repeat the game.

The Point: Just for fun.

7 Discussion: Compliment Consequences

Time: 10 mins

You will need: None

Activity: Gather the children together in small age-banded groups. Give each child a piece of paper and ask them to write their name at the bottom of the sheet before passing it to the person to their right.

Each child should then write something positive about the named child, before folding the paper over and passing it on. The sheets are passed around the group, with each child writing something positive about each other.

When they return to the beginning, they can be unfolded and read by the child in private.

The Point: To encourage and build up each other.

10 Close

Time: 5 mins

You will need: Points total and prizes (optional)

Activity: Gather the children together and draw the session to a close, reminding them of what we have done together. Award any points or prizes.

The Point: To draw the session to a close.