

The Ten Commandments

Grades
1-2

LAW

EXODUS 20:1-17

What's happening in this story?

God is speaking the Ten Commandments. Although this passage is familiar to most, it's worth observing that God is speaking them, and that the number of commandments is somewhat arbitrary. God is speaking a set of core laws for the community that will help humanity in its relationship to God and one another.

What does this story mean for kids?

Some kids will have heard the Ten Commandments and learned how this text relates to our lives. Other kids will hear the words shall and shall not used several times but not understand what this text has to do with us and our times. Invite the class to consider, "If the law doesn't make us right with God, what is our reason for obeying the law? If it isn't there to make God like us or love us, what is the law for?" The answer is simple: the law is for the good of our neighbors and ourselves. It keeps us safe in community and protects us.

Why this theme?

It's important to remember that the law is not a burden; it's about helping us (both adults and kids) find freedom to live well with one another.

AGE LEVEL TIP

Living together in peace is hard work at any age! Kids can be overwhelmed by all the rules they are to follow. Show kids that rules teach, help, and remind us how to work together toward living the peace of God on earth.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Clear tape
- Strips of paper
- Markers
- Scissors

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Play dough
- Craft sticks (large)
- Unsharpened pencils (1 per kid)
- Yarn

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Set out play dough, markers, and craft sticks. As kids arrive, ask them to build a mountain out of the play dough, and write a rule from home, school, or church on a strip of paper, then tape to a craft stick. To finish, kids place the sticks in the mountain. **Why do we have rules?**

Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

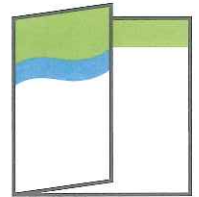
Let's do some guessing. First, I am thinking about something that is full of sand, and cacti grow there. **Any guesses?** Pause. Now I am thinking about a tall kind of land that is made of rocks and trees. Pause. **Did you guess mountain? Today's Bible story is about a man named Moses who climbs a mountain. Is it easy to climb a mountain? Why or why not? Moses got something important at the top of this mountain. God gave Moses some important rules.**

Pray together: **Dear God, help us learn about and follow the rules you gave to Moses. They will help us live together in peace. Amen.**

Pass out leaflets and markers.

Hold up a leaflet. **God really wants to grab our attention in the story today. How do the things in these pictures grab our attention?** Allow kids to

respond. **Let's match each photo to one of our five senses.** Kids may match more than one sense per photo. As kids work, ask, **Why do these photos grab our attention? Why is grabbing our attention important?** Discuss together. **We can listen in our story to the many ways God grabs the people's attention.** Collect their leaflets until Respond.



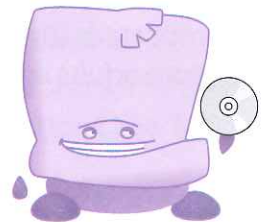
Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

Today we are talking about rules. Let's see what the video kids do when they think they have no rules to follow.

View Episode 5, "Law Limbo," on the Year Blue Fall PreK–Grade 2 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- **Whose idea was it to break the rules? Who went along with breaking the rules?**
- **What did the kids learn about living together without rules?**
- **What rules have you broken at school, home, or church?**
- **How does it feel to break rules? Do you have more than one kind of feeling?**
- **Who loves you even when you break rules?**



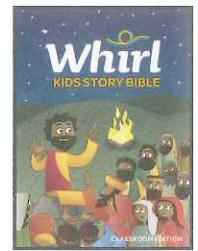
Open your Whirl Kids Story Bibles.

Let's find our story today! Help kids find "The Ten Commandments" on page 62. Before you read, invite kids to look for peaceful people.

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

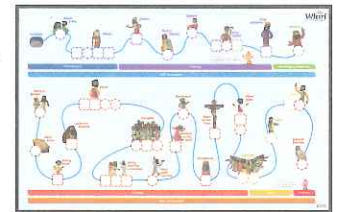
Ask these questions after you read the story:

- **Where did Moses go to speak to God?**
- **How did God get the people's attention?**
- **When the Israelites were slaves, they followed the rules of their masters. We are free people, but we still have rules. Whose rules do we follow?**
- **How does God speak to us now?**
- **What can we do to live together in peace?**



Gather near the Wall Chart to place today's sticker.

Point out the Testament (Old), Bible section (Pentateuch), and character image (Moses). **Today's Bible story is about God giving Moses rules to help the people love God and care for each other. Let's add a sticker to remind us of what the rules were written on** (stone tablets). Point to the corresponding images of Moses and the stone tablets on pages 62 and 65 in the Whirl Kids Story Bible.



Play together!

Choose a kid to lead a "moving rules" game. The game is similar to "Simon Says." Invite a volunteer to be the leader. The leader tells kids how they can move from one end of the space to another, and is in charge of stopping and starting the movement. Encourage kids to use movements that call back to the day's story (e.g., "roll like thunder" or "bolt like lightning"). The first kid to get across the space while performing the movement becomes the new leader. **How did it feel to be the leader who could change the rules? How does it feel to follow the rules? I wonder if God's rules ever change.**

BIBLE BIT

The commandments remind us of our relationship to God and others. We hear about ways that name calling hurts relationships, and how we need special time together with God on the Sabbath.

WATCH IT AGAIN

Discover and count how many times Victor replaces the old rules with new rules for himself and his friends.

OUR CHURCH

Ask a lay leader in your church to show kids how church meetings use special rules for organizing, setting agendas, voting, and keeping minutes.

RESPOND 10

Pass out leaflets, markers, and Whirl Kids Story Bibles.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. **Our square today is ready to become the two tablets of rules that Moses brought down the mountain. First, let's fold these two green triangles back.** Fold green triangles toward the back of the square.
2. **Next, let's fold these two gray stone sections back so that we only see the gold section.** Fold stone sections back toward the Family Square.
3. **Now it's time for these two blue triangles to fold in toward the gold section so that they touch this blue heart.** Point to the heart.
4. Point to the top point of the folded piece. **Fold this top point down so it also touches the blue heart.**
5. Flip the whole thing over to the "God's Rules" side. **Now we have our tablets! Let's look at our story again. Find a reminder word for each of God's rules in our story today. For example, "Sabbath" reminds us of God's rule about using one day a week for worship and rest.** Point to the word "Sabbath."
6. Make sure kids write on the two flaps only. The inside of the tablets is the take-home Family Square.
7. As kids are finishing up, see if they can guess which words on each other's tablets go with each rule.

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Let's think about our day together. What did we learn and do today? Allow kids to respond. **We learned how God gave the Israelites rules to help them live in peace as free people. How did we use this story today in our time together?** Allow kids to respond.

Pass out leaflet panels, markers, yarn, scissors, and unsharpened pencils.

Invite kids to write one of God's rules on each lightning bolt, then cut them out, punch holes, and add a yarn loop. Hang the bolts from an unsharpened pencil. **Use your lightning sticks to tell others about the Ten Commandments.**

Send kids out with a blessing.

Circle up with kids. **God blesses all of us. And that means me** (place a hand on your chest). **And that means you** (place your other hand on the shoulder of the kid next to you). Each kid passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, **Go and bless the world.**

Thank kids for coming today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.