

Fool to Think

Bible: Fool to Think (Slow to Anger) • *Proverbs 16:32*

Bottom Line: Think before you lose your temper.

Key Question: What can you do to keep your cool?

Memory Verse: “His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life.” *2 Peter 1:3a (NIV)*

Life App: Self-control—Choosing to do what you should even when you don't want to

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Social: Setting the Tone for the Experience (9:00, 10:15, 11:30)

9:00 & 11:30

Just for Fun

- Timer or mobile device

10:15

Four Corners

- “Four Corners Scenarios” Activity Page; one for each small group
- “Four Corners Signs” Activity Pages; one set for each small group

Bible: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (9:15, 10:30, 11:45)

- Bible Presentation in Large Group

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (9:40, 10:55, 12:10)

9:00 & 11:30

Calm-Down Compound

- Corn starch; one cup for every three kids
- Inexpensive hand lotion; three oz. for every three kids
- Bright food coloring; two drops for every three kids
- Bowls; one for every three kids
- Large spoons; one for every three kids
- Baggies or small plastic containers; one for each kid
- Non-latex gloves; one set for each child

10:15

Blow Up!

- “Blow Up Story” Activity Page; one for each small group
- Large balloons; one for each kid

Prayer (9:50, 11:05, 12:20)

9:00 & 11:30

- Kids’ compound from the “Calm-Down Compound” activity

10:15

- No supplies needed

Dismiss (10:00, 11:15, 12:30)

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Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (Small Groups, 15 minutes)

Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Ask God to give your group creative and fun ideas for ways they can be generous and rich in good deeds. Pray that God would remind you of ways your few can use their time, talents, and energy to be generous toward others. Thank God for giving you that opportunity through leading your group.

9:00 & 11:30

Just for Fun

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Timer or mobile device

What You Do:

- **Invite** kids to put their offering in the offering container as they arrive.
- **Gather** kids in a circle.
- **Give** kids 10 seconds to do the following activities.
- **Challenge** them to see how many of each activity they can do in 10 seconds.
 - Push-ups, jumping jacks, or sit-ups
 - Say their name
 - Blink
 - Clap their hands or snap their fingers

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

10:15**Four Corners****What You Need:** “Four Corners Scenarios” and “Four Corners Signs” Activity Pages**What You Do:**

- Place the signs in four different areas of your small group environment. Corners are ideal, but you can use whatever space you have as long as the signs are fairly far apart.
- Tell the kids to listen carefully to the situations you read and then move to the appropriate sign.
- If you have mostly younger kids, take a few minutes to define the emotions on the signs (or let older kids take the lead on explaining).
 - Annoyed is a little frustrated with someone or something. Usually it means a small inconvenience or a person wants your attention when you’d rather focus on something else. You might be annoyed if your younger sibling kept putting their stuffed animal on your head while you were trying to watch a movie.
 - Upset is to be emotional in a way that doesn’t feel good. You might not be able to decide whether to cry or yell, to be sad or angry. When your favorite hoodie is destroyed going through the washing machine, you might feel upset.
 - Angry is just getting mad. You’re angry when you don’t get your way, like when your parents say you can’t watch the coolest YouTube® channel that all your friends like. You might get angry when you feel like someone isn’t being fair to you.
 - Furious is beyond mad. Furious is what happens when you find out that your hoodie wasn’t destroyed by accident, but your sister did it on purpose to pay you back for getting annoyed with her earlier. It’s hard to control furious. It feels like anger takes over your whole body.
- After you’ve gone over the emotions, read the scenarios and let kids decide how they’d feel in that situation.
- Kids might feel differently based on their personalities and experiences, and that’s okay! There’s plenty of room for interpretation here.
- Kids might also get fairly worked up about these ideas. Give them a minute or two to talk it out and cool down before ending the activity.

What You Say:

“Yikes! Those were some really intense feelings we’ve had! Let’s take a deep breath together. (*Inhale and exhale loudly.*) **[Transition] Emotions like anger can be hard to control, so let’s head to Large Group to see what could help us when we feel like we might blow our stack!**”

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

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Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Bible: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 25 minutes)

GETTING READY

1. Opener/Closer

What You Need:

- Host
- Host’s phone
- Table
- Prop box with lots of white Styrofoam/craft balls
- Two large, clear plastic bins
- Masking tape

2. Bible Truth

What You Need:

- Historyteller
- Bible
- Prop box with lots of white Styrofoam/craft balls

3. Worship

What You Need:

- “Enough For Us”
- “Every Move I Make”
- “I Can Do All Things”

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Bible: Communicating God’s Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 25 minutes)

Engage kids’ hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible Truth, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

CG: 10-Second Count Down

CG: Theme Loop Video

Host enters.

CG: Countdown Video

CG: Theme Video

Opener

HOST: “Welcome back to the Hideout! It’s already the second week in January. Wow, this year is flying by already! Hopefully no one has broken their New Year’s resolution yet. I personally resolved to eat more chocolate and watch more TV, and so far, I’m two for two.

“I’m KIDDING. In fact, if anything, I’m working on a better me right now, because there’s no better time than January to reboot the old operating system. Some people start working out or watching what they eat—all of which is good—but here at [your environment’s name], we’re talking about something even bigger. In fact, if you get this right, it will help you no matter what your New Year’s resolution is. This month we’re talking about self-control.

CG: Life App Video

“Self-control is choosing to do what you should even when you don’t want to.

CG: Theme TransBack Video

“If you want to have self-control, you need to update the way you react. That’s not easy, but we can do it with God’s help.

“Are you ready to kick things off today with a fun game? *(Pause for response.)* Great!

Hold up one of the foam “snowballs.”

“Last week you used these snowballs to take a wall down, but today I want you to use them to fill something up. Let’s have a little competition! First, let’s get into two teams.

Divide the kids in half and line them up behind the masking tape line.

“On the count of three, you’ll start throwing these snowballs and trying to get as many as you can into your team’s bin. But you’ve got to have some self-control, because you can’t throw your ball until the person in front of you has thrown theirs. After you throw, you’ll go to the back of the line and wait your turn before you can try again. If you miss, go grab the snowball you just threw and put it back in the pile here in front of the line. After 60 seconds, we’ll check the bins and see which team landed the most snowballs.

“Are you ready? On your marks, get set, GO!

Set a 60-second timer on your phone.

SFX: Upbeat music (optional)

Make sure the kids are showing self-control and waiting their turn. If the game is too easy or too difficult, you can move the tape line forward or backward.

After 60 seconds, count the snowballs in each bin and declare the winning team. Set the snowball box and bins to the side.

“Great job! Everyone have a seat, but I’ll need your help in just a minute.”

Host exits as Historyteller enters.

SETTING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH

HISTORYTELLER: “All month long we’re hanging out in one book of the Bible called Proverbs. (*Hold up Bible.*) Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings that were mostly written by King Solomon, who was one of the wisest people who ever lived. Throughout the book, King Solomon shares wisdom from God about how we should live our lives. Today we’re looking at Proverbs 16:32.

CG: Proverbs 16:32 Slide

Open the Bible to Proverbs 16:32 (NIRV) and read.

“It is better to be patient than to fight. It is better to control your temper than to take a city.”

TEMPER TRIGGERS

HISTORYTELLER: “Solomon says, ‘It is better to control your temper.’ Let’s think about that for a minute. What are some of the things that sometimes cause us to lose our temper? If you’ve got one, raise your hand and share it. When you share something, I’ll toss you a snowball. Remember what you said when I throw you one, okay?”

As kids give examples, toss them each a foam “snowball.” You can toss up to two or three to each kid.

If the kids get stuck, or if you need to rein things in, you can mention the following examples: someone interrupting you; someone taking your stuff; fighting with your sibling; being misunderstood; somebody breaking your stuff; when your parent tells you that you can’t have something; etc.

CONSEQUENCES

HISTORYTELLER: “You’re right. Those are some pretty frustrating situations. If you’re not careful, when one of those things happens to you, you might lose your temper.

“Let’s see what might happen if you were to lose control. Can one of you help me demonstrate what I mean?”

Choose a kid with his hand raised. Bring him up on stage.

“All right. As you can see, [kid’s name] already has [number] snowballs. That means he already has a couple of ‘temper triggers’—things that might make him lose his temper. What were those, [kid’s name]? *(Pause for response.)*”

“Now each of you will take turns sharing your temper triggers with [kid’s name]. Call them out as you hand him the snowballs you’re holding. We’ll go one at a time, and [kid’s name] is going to take on all of our temper triggers for as long as he can.

Allow the kids to come up, one at a time, share their temper triggers, and hand their snowballs to the volunteer kid. Continue until the kid can no longer hold them all and will inevitably start dropping them.

“Oh, no! Losing your temper can cause a big mess, can’t it? It can cause broken relationships. It can get you in trouble. It can cause other people to think badly of you. [Kid’s name], thank you for your help. You can have a seat now.”

STOP AND THINK

HISTORYTELLER: “Now that we’ve seen what can happen when we lose our temper, let’s think about how we can prevent that from happening. How can we stay in control when something happens that makes us angry?”

“Well, it starts with remembering that you can CHOOSE self-control. When annoying or frustrating things happen to you, you can choose the way you react.

“What can you do? You can stop *(hold out your hand like a crossing guard stopping traffic)*, think *(point to your head)*, and pray *(fold your hands)* BEFORE you lose your temper. Try it with me.”

KIDS and HISTORYTELLER: “Stop *(hold up your hand like a crossing guard stopping traffic)*, think

(point to your head), and pray (fold your hands) BEFORE you lose your temper.”

HISTORYTELLER: “When you take time to stop and think *(do the motions)*, you can stay in control before you end up with a big mess on your hands.”

Point to the pile of snowballs on the floor.

WRAPPING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH

HISTORYTELLER: “Remember the verse we read earlier?”

CG: *Proverbs 16:32 Slide*

“It is better to be patient than to fight. It is better to control your temper than to take a city.

“Stop and think *(do the motions)* first before you lose control. If you do that, you’ll give yourself a chance to get control BEFORE you do something you might regret.

CG: *Bottom Line Slide*

[Bottom Line] “Think before you lose your temper.

“Anytime something happens that triggers your temper, take a moment to think about what the consequences might be. And most importantly, pray and ask God to help you choose self-control. Let’s pray and ask Him for help right now.”

CG: *Blank Bottom Line Slide*

Pray

HISTORYTELLER: “Dear God, thank You for always being patient with us. There are so many reasons You could lose Your temper with us, but You don’t. Please help us stop and think before we lose our temper with others. Help us turn to You in those moments so we can **[Basic Truth] make the wise choice**. We love You, and we ask these things in Jesus’ name, amen.”

“If you have an offering with you today, go ahead and bring that on up.”

“Now, please get up on your feet and join me in singing praises and worship our truly amazing God.”

Historyteller exits as Host enters.

Worship

CG: *“Enough for Us”*

CG: *“Every Move I Make”*

CG: *“I Can Do All Things”*

Closer

HOST: “I think all of us have lost our temper from time to time. When something happens that makes us mad, we forget to be patient. If we’re not careful, we can let those angry feelings take over. We can

lose control.

“But it doesn’t have to be that way. There’s a BETTER way. God wants us to stay safe. He wants us to choose self-control. The next time you feel that anger rising up inside you I want you to do this.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] “Think before you lose your temper.

“Remember, other people can see the way we act. When we choose self-control, they notice!

“How do we do that? How can we choose self-control when we feel things getting out of control? Well, we can stop, think, and pray. We can get control BEFORE we say or do something we’ll regret. We can take a second to think about what the consequences of our actions might be. And we can pray and ask God to help us to think before we lose our temper. God loves us very much, and He wants the very best for us!

“Our memory verse this month is 2 Peter 1:3a.

CG: Blank Memory Verse Slide

CG: Memory Verse Slide

“His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life.” (NIV).

“With God’s help, you can have self-control. You can **[Bottom Line] think before you lose your temper**, and so can I! You’ll get to talk about that some more back in Small Group. Have fun!”

Dismiss children to their Small Groups.

CG: Small Group Slide

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Life App: Self-control—Choosing to do what you should even when you don't want to

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (10 minutes)

9:00 & 11:30

Calm-Down Compound

What You Need: Corn starch, lotion, food coloring, bowls, spoons, baggies, non-latex gloves

What You Do:

- Divide your group into teams of three.
- Give each team a bowl, a spoon, one cup of corn starch, and three ounces of lotion. If you're using the gloves, make sure everyone is wearing them before they start mixing.
- Direct kids to put the corn starch into their bowls and then squeeze the lotion on top of it.
- Add a couple drops of food coloring to the mixture. If you're using essential oils, add this too.
- Let kids take turns mixing the compound first with the spoon and then, as it gets stiff, kneading it with their hands.
- This is a homemade compound, and your lotion might be a different consistency than our testers.
 - If you find your compound too sticky, add just a little more corn starch.
 - If you find your compound a bit too doughy, add a small squirt of lotion.
 - This compound should feel soft and smooth.
- When the compound is smooth and stretchy and there is no more corn starch left in the bowl, divide it into three pieces and hand out baggies or containers for kids to store their portion of Calm-Down Compound.
- If time allows, let kids knead, stretch, and play with their compound. Make sure it goes back into the bag or container after they're done.

What You Say:

“I like this Calm-Down Compound because it gives me something to do with my hands when I'm trying to cool down and think before losing my temper. I can knead it or squeeze it really hard because my anger is really strong, or I can stretch it out as I imagine a way that I could be less angry and make peace with myself and others in this situation.

“Sometimes you need a little help using your self-control and trying to **[Bottom Line] think before you lose your temper.** Have you ever been really angry, but once you calmed down, you realized it wasn't such a big deal in the first place? (*Allow for responses.*) Me, too. One way I calm myself down is by asking, ‘Will I still be angry about this in ten minutes? What about tomorrow? Will I still feel upset over this?’ The answer is usually maybe . . . and probably not. When I feel angry over something small, I need to buy some time to peek into the future and see if FUTURE ME thinks this is a big deal. She usually doesn't. So hang on to this Calm-Down Compound and use it when you need to **[Bottom Line] think before you lose your temper.**”

10:15**Blow Up!****What You Need:** “Blow Up Story” Activity Page, balloons**What You Do:**

- Give each kid a balloon. Instruct them not to mess with the balloons until you tell them it’s time.
- Once everyone has a balloon, tell the group that when they hear something in the story that makes them feel angry, annoyed, or upset, they should blow into their balloon and then pinch the neck of the balloon closed to keep the air inside.
- Conversely, if they hear something in the story that would cause them to feel calmer, less angry, or peaceful, they should let a little air out of the balloon by stretching the neck of the balloon a little. This will let some air out and produce a delightful burbling squeak that kids like a lot.
- While kids hold their balloons at the ready, read the script.
- Once the story ends, make sure everyone discards the balloons.
- Then circle up for discussion.

What You Say:

“There were times in this story when I wished I had a balloon to blow into, too! What part made you the most angry, and why? *(Allow for response.)* What do you think would have happened at that point if there had been a big temper blowup? Who would have experienced bad consequences, and why do you think so? *(Allow for discussion.)* Have you ever felt as upset as our character? What was that like? *(Allow for discussion.)*

“I was glad when our character took some time to calm down. What strategy would have worked the best for you, if you were that upset? *(Allow for answers.)* This story showed a lot of good ways you can **[Bottom Line]** think before you lose your temper.

“I know that I often think a lot after I lose my temper. I consider ways I could have handled things differently, things I shouldn’t have said or done, or people I wish I hadn’t hurt.” **[Make It Personal]** ***(Share an age-appropriate example of a time when you actually lost your temper and how it affected your relationship with others, God, or yourself. Focus on what happened because of your anger and not the initial offense.)***

All Service Times**Pray and Dismiss (10 minutes)****What You Need:****9:00 & 11:30**

- Kids' compound from the "Calm-Down Compound" activity

10:15

- No supplies needed

What You Do:**9:00 & 11:30**

- Gather kids in a circle and let them take their compound out of the bags or containers.
- Encourage them to use the compound as they pray silently.
- Invite them to tell God about a time when they were angry and lost their temper OR about a frustrating situation in their lives that often brings out feelings of anger.
- After kids have prayed silently for 30 seconds, close in prayer.
- After you pray, make sure the putty goes back into the containers before kids take it home.

10:15

- Gather kids in a circle.
- Invite them to tell God about a time when they were angry and lost their temper OR about a frustrating situation in their lives that often brings out feelings of anger.
- After kids have prayed silently for 30 seconds, close in prayer.

What You Say:

"Dear God, thank You for giving us emotions—even big confusing ones. We are grateful to be able to feel things. Please help us to use self-control when we are starting to lose our temper so that we can think about what's really important: following You and caring about others. Amen.

9:30 & 11:30 Only "Don't forget to put your putty away for now. But keep it nearby this week so you can use it if you need some time to ***[Bottom Line]*** think before you lose your temper."

Encourage adults to talk with their kids about strategies they learned to help them think before they lose their temper.

You're trying to read a book for school and your little cousin keeps running their toy train on the open pages.

Your best friend writes on the whiteboard at school that you still sleep with a stuffed Elmo. It's not true.

Your other best friend tells the teacher that you once said she smelled like tuna fish. This is true.

Someone steals your bike from your front yard.

Someone takes your spot in the school lunch line.

Someone locks you in the bathroom, lies to the teacher that you have the flu, and takes your place in the state spelling bee.

You're just finishing your model airplane when your sister comes in your room, slamming the door so hard the room shakes and you mess up the last decal.

Your little brother spills something on your favorite sweater by accident.

Your little brother spills something on your favorite sweater on purpose.

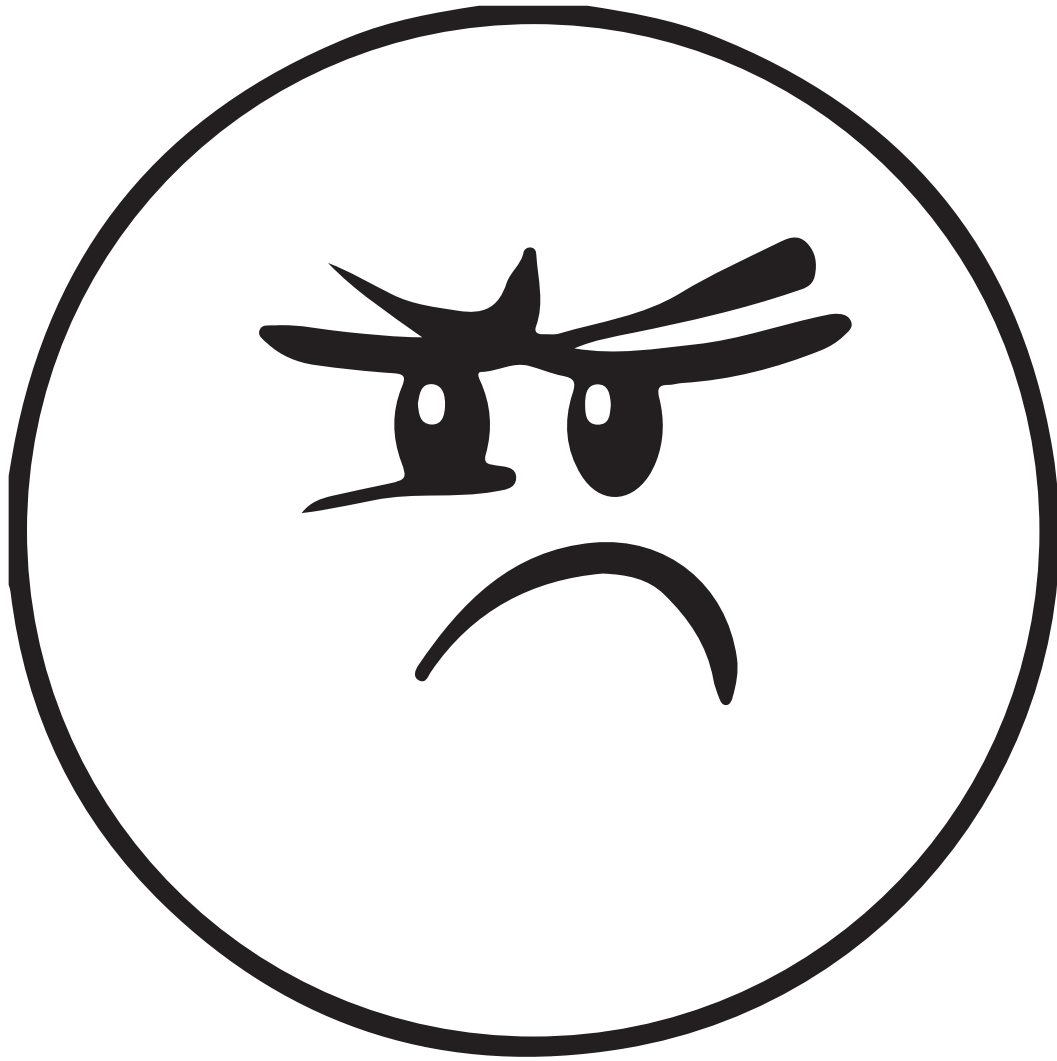
You walk straight in to the screen door you'd asked your cousin to keep open, and drop a giant blob of your favorite potato salad onto your new sneakers. The door is broken, your nose is bruised, your meal is ruined, your sneakers are smelly, and your toes are purple.

What to Do:

Print one for each small group.

Four Corners Scenarios

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ANNOYED

What to Do:
Print one for each small group.

Four Corners Signs 1/4
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UPSET

What to Do:

Print one for each small group.

Four Corners Signs 2/4

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ANGRY

What to Do:

Print one for each small group.

Four Corners Signs 3/4

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FURIOUS

What to Do:

Print one for each small group.

Four Corners Signs 4/4

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Clara woke up on Tuesday morning feeling pretty great! But when she went downstairs, she could smell that her mom had burned the toast and eggs. She'd been really looking forward to a big breakfast and her mom had just gotten distracted and walked away from the stove. Clara felt a little annoyed, a tiny bit mad that her mom hadn't paid attention.

Clara got out some cold cereal and saw her little sisters happily playing with their yogurt. They were wearing the cutest hair bows—oh no! They were her hair bows! Somehow the twins had gotten into her drawer and were coating her cheer-leading bows with strawberry yogurt. This was not turning into a good day. She went from grumpy to upset.

At school, things were no better. Her teacher misplaced her spelling test (but then found it again) and Clara almost got a zero for the week. The teacher logged it on the computer right away but couldn't see if it had gone through to the grading records. That made Clara feel really angry—the teacher is supposed to be in charge of all that stuff! Then, Max cut her in the lunch line and grabbed the last chocolate milk even though his allergy wristband says “lactose intolerant.” He was probably just taking the milk to be mean to her, Clara thought. Her anger kept building. It's a good thing Max sits far away in the cafeteria—she was tempted to bump into him and spill the milk all over his clothes.

When Clara got home from school, her temper was simmering on a slow burn; when she saw that her aunt had sent the twins MegaMall3000, the board game she'd been wanting for a year, it started to bubble over. Sure, it was the twins' birthday next week, but that was a game for big kids and they couldn't even play it!

The landline phone rang, which surprised Clara out of her angry thoughts. Her mom picked it up and put it on speaker. Clara heard her principal on the phone. She was saying that there was a problem with Clara's spelling test—it had been turned in too late and it looked like she may have cheated from someone who'd taken the test earlier. Clara knew it wasn't her fault—the teacher had messed up—but her parents didn't believe her. They grounded her for two weeks. She stomped up the stairs to her room.

'At least I still have my phone,' she thought and then noticed a text from her friend, Amara. Amara had told Max to take the last chocolate milk right in front of Clara because Amara was mad at Clara for something she said last week.

This was too much! Clara was beyond annoyed, or upset, or

angry. She was furious! Her whole body seemed to fill up with anger! She saw red and practically felt smoke come out of her ears. She was about to type out a mean reply to Amara and then storm downstairs and make her family pay for all the ways they'd made her angry that whole day.

But then, a little voice inside her head reminded her to **think before you lose your temper**. It was the exact opposite of what she wanted to do. But that little voice often reminded her what she knew about following Jesus. Losing her temper and hulking out was not the wise choice.

She took a deep breath, and she thought first about Amara and how upset she must be to do something mean. She thought about how much Max must want to be Amara's friend to go along with it. She decided, then and there, to be nice to them tomorrow. She texted Amara and apologized for whatever she had said. Amara texted back. Tantrum averted.

She picked up her tablet and emailed the school principal and her teacher and even her parents. She calmly explained what happened. She wrote and rewrote and made sure her spelling was perfect, just in case. No matter what happened, she had tried to put that situation right without blowing up at any of the people who were actually on her side.

She went downstairs and opened up the MegaMall3000. It was such a cool game! She felt a flash of anger that her sisters couldn't even play it right because they were so little. But she counted to 10 and decided that maybe she could figure it out. Pretty soon, she worked out a way to make the game simple enough for preschoolers. She set it up and invited her sisters to play. She even took a selfie of the three of them and sent it to Aunt Megan, saying the twins thanked her for the fun game. The twins and Megan didn't need to be punished for her anger. She could make this into something positive for all of them.

She soaked her yogurt stained hair bows in laundry detergent and water—they'd probably be fine tomorrow. She should have been calmer about it. The twins didn't mean to make a mess.

And the last thing she did, was make muffins and set them in a big basket for the morning for her mom. Things burn, stuff happens. Clara decided to do something nice instead of something unkind.

As far as it depended on her, and keeping her temper, tomorrow was going to be a great day.

What to Do:

Print one for each small group.

Blow Up Story

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