

Ruth and Naomi

LOYAL → PETS!

RUTH 1

This will be a brief children's Church because of the animal blessing upstairs.

* Drawing activity, video, quick help/thanks

What's happening in this story?

After spending several years away from home, Naomi returns to her family in Bethlehem, despondent and bitter after her husband and two sons have died. Out of compassion, she encourages her widowed daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, to return to Moab, to their own people and their own gods. Orpah returns to Moab, but Ruth refuses, saying: "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you will go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God." So the two return to Naomi's home together.

What does this story mean for kids?

Most kids will need some help understanding the nuances of this text. All the names of people and places might trigger a glaze-over. Above all, help kids relate to Ruth's loyalty. They can't imagine living anywhere else but with their family. Older kids probably understand that not all cultures view men and women equally, even today. It is tough going for two widowed women in Ruth and Naomi's time; they're in a desperate situation without much power to help themselves. Ultimately their wisdom, their courage, and the close bond between them helps them to survive and thrive.

Why this theme?

Kids understand loyalty, whether it's the innate loyalty of siblings or the more nuanced loyalty of friendships. It's important, then, to point toward God's loyalty—a promise that will never be broken, no matter what happens.

TEACHING TIP

Certain concepts of this story will be easy for kids to grasp, such as loyalty and staying close to loved ones. Other elements, such as famine, death of family members, and the role of women might be harder to understand. Focus on how God's story includes everyone, despite our differences.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Markers
- Pencils
- Clear tape
- Colored pencils
- Scissors

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Mural paper
- Painter's tape
- Clothespins (1 per 2 kids)
- Watercolor paints
- Paintbrushes
- Cups of water
- Bandannas (as needed)
- Timer

WELCOME 15

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Set out markers and mural paper on a table. Draw hearts all over the paper, large enough for kids to write and draw inside. Invite kids to fill in the hearts with the names or pictures of family and friends they love.

↑
pets / animals

Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

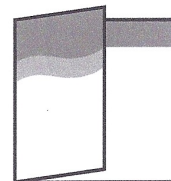
Who is someone in your life that you would want to be with no matter what happens? Maybe it's a family member or a friend. What's something you have in common with that person? What's something different about the two of you? Go around the circle and invite kids to share. There's a word for sticking by someone through good and bad times. It's called being *loyal*. We can be loyal to people, whether they are just like us or different from us. Today we'll hear about two women in the Bible who were from different places but who chose to be loyal to each other and stick together.

Pray together: ~~Dear God, thank you for giving us loyal friends and family who love us and stick by us. Help us to be loyal too. Amen.~~

Be still and know that I am God...

Pass out leaflets and pencils.

~~On your leaflet you see some pictures in groups of two. Circle your favorite between the two. Wait for everyone to finish their selections. Grab your leaflet and pencil and stand up. Find someone who circled the same thing as you, and ask them to sign their name on the line under that set of pictures. Then find someone who circled something different from you, and have them sign their name on a different line. Facilitate mingling as needed and repeat until all lines are filled. Who had something in common with you? Who chose something different? In our story today, two women choose to be loyal to each other and find that it's okay to have differences too! Collect their leaflets until Respond.~~



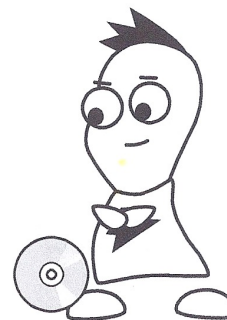
Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

In today's video, Ada sees Otto cause a problem. When there's a problem, will Ada be loyal to Otto, or not? Let's watch and find out!

View Episode 7, "SS Jungle Gym," on the Year Blue Fall DVD. (4 min, 25 sec)

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- What choice did Otto make?
- Why did Ada follow Otto?
- How was Ada loyal?
- Who are you loyal to?
- Why are you loyal to that person?



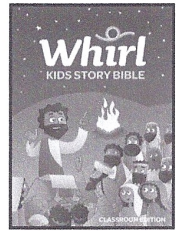
HEAR 15

skip reading?

→ page 75 in Whirl Kids Story Bible

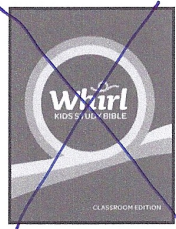
Open your Whirl Kids Story Bibles and Whirl Kids Study Bibles.

Have younger kids find an older buddy. Invite them to find Ruth 1 on page 323 of the Whirl Kids Study Bible. **Today's story is about two women named Naomi and Ruth. Naomi is Ruth's mother-in-law, which means that Ruth was married to Naomi's son. But both Naomi's husband and Ruth's husband have died. Naomi and Ruth are from different countries with different beliefs, but despite their differences, Ruth chooses to be loyal to Naomi.**



~~Invite kids to sit back-to-back with their buddy and lean on each other. Read the story aloud while kids listen.~~ **In a difficult time, Ruth and Naomi lean on each other like you are leaning on your buddy. Ruth loved Naomi very much and was loyal to her.**

Read what Gabe says about Ruth 1:15-18 on page 323. ~~Then read Ada and Otto's questions and comments on pages 75 and 76 of the Whirl Kids Story Bible.~~



Ask these questions after you read the story:

- Where did Naomi tell Orpah and Ruth to go?
- What did Ruth tell Naomi?
- How do you think Ruth felt? How about Naomi?
- What does it mean to be loyal?
- Why is it hard to be loyal sometimes?

Play together!

Using painter's tape, create a large spider web pattern on the floor. Choose a volunteer to be "It." ~~We're going to play Tag, but with a twist. You must stay on the lines you see on the floor—no jumping across lines. Instead of home base, you will look out for each other, like Ruth and Naomi did. If you are about to be tagged, or you see someone else about to be tagged, grab their hand and count to five, and you will both be safe. But you can't hold hands for more than five seconds. If you are tagged when you're not holding hands, you are out.~~ Play as many rounds as time allows.

BIBLE BIT

Today, Moab is a part of a strip of land in Jordan. The mountainous land lies along the eastern shore of the Dead Sea.

WATCH IT AGAIN

If you watch the video again, keep track of all the ways Otto tries to send Ada away.

OUR CHURCH

Find out if your church has a sister-church arrangement with another congregation; if so, write letters to them. If you don't have one, look into establishing one.

RESPOND 10

Pass out leaflets, watercolors, paintbrushes, and water. Have clothespins, bandannas, and timer ready.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. Help younger kids find an older buddy. **Naomi and Ruth were loyal to each other and stuck together. Today, you're going to stick together with your buddy—literally!**
2. Pass out one clothespin per set of buddies. Have them sit side by side and clip their sleeves together. If any groups don't have sleeves to clip, give them a bandanna to wrap around their arms and clip.
3. **Choose one buddy to go first, and have that buddy pick up the paintbrush. Using the arm that's attached to your buddy, paint your picture of Ruth and Naomi. Make sure your arm stays clipped to your buddy!**
4. After 15 seconds, have buddies switch who's painting. Repeat every 15 seconds until pictures are mostly painted.
5. **What was hard about painting while attached to your buddy? What worked well?**
6. **How does this activity help us think about being loyal?** It wasn't easy, but they didn't give up!

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Today we learned about Naomi and Ruth. Ruth was loyal and refused to leave Naomi, choosing to stick with her even during a difficult time. How can you be loyal?

Pass out leaflet panels, colored pencils, scissors, and tape.

Color in the words *loyal* and *friend* on your leaflet. Cut them apart and exchange one with a friend so you both have both words, but not both of your own. Tape the new set of words together. We can be loyal friends to each other.

Send kids out with a blessing. → *Help + Thanks*

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.