



Daniel and the Lions

Welcome to the story of Daniel and the Lions! As the caring leader of your small group of kids, you are an important part of their Spark experience. You also support the other Rotation leaders by being a consistent and friendly presence with your group. Use these Small Group Builders, Conversation Sparks, and Transition Tips to generate conversation and build relationships with your kids. Have fun as you grow in faith together!

Small Group Builders

Try these tips to build relationships, trust, and friendship with your small group of kids when you have a few minutes at the beginning of Sunday school or between activities.

- **If I Made a Law**

King Darius made a law because others wanted him to make it. If you could make one law for your Sunday school class or your family, what would it be? Would your law help keep people safe? Would it help them be a good community? Take turns sharing the laws you would make and how they would help those who follow.

- **Safety Signs**

God kept Daniel safe, even in the scary and dangerous lions' den. Take some time to think of all of the different things that keep us safe. Work together to brainstorm a list of signs, rules, and people that keep your community safe. How many safety signs and people can you list?

- **What's the Worry?**

King Darius worried all night about how Daniel would stay safe in the lions' den. What makes the people in your group worry? Take turns sharing ideas or stories about things that make you worry. When you're done sharing, say a prayer together and remember that God protects us, just like Daniel, no matter how worried or scared we may feel.

Conversation Sparks

Spark some faith-filled conversation during the time you wait for activities to start or between activities. Use these questions with the kids in your group whenever you have a minute or two.

- How can you tell that King Darius and Daniel are friends?
- Why did King Darius pass the law about praying?
- How did the jealous men trick King Darius?
- Why was praying to God important to Daniel?
- How would you act around a king?
- Why was Daniel afraid of lions?

Transition Tips

As your group moves from one place to another, keep things fun and story focused! Try these tips as you transition.

- **Stop Light, Go Light**

God kept Daniel safe, and God keeps us safe, too. There are lots of things in our communities that help us stay safe—like traffic lights! As you move to your next activity, pretend you are obeying the colors of a stoplight. Invite an adult leader to call out the colors green, yellow, and red. Move to your next activity quickly when the light is green, slowly when the light is yellow, and stop moving altogether whenever the light is red. Let the traffic leader lead you to your next activity, and don't forget to use those turn signals!

- **Mane Wave**

When Daniel was in the lions' den, he probably saw great big male lions with shaggy manes of hair. Pretend you are a male lion with a busy mane. Wave and move your mane hair around as you move to your next location. Don't forget to use those lion voices. Rawr!

- **Jealous Jump**

Some of the people in today's story were jealous of Daniel because he had all of the king's attention. Pretend you are one of the people who wanted the king's attention. Jump up and down as you move along, and wave your hands as you say, "Look at me, king! Look over here!" How many people can you get to look your way?

- **On Your Knees**

Daniel prayed to God for help and safety in the lions' den. And, when Daniel prayed, he got down on his knees. Pretend you are praying like Daniel. Get on your knees and fold your hands, then walk on your knees to your next activity. Don't forget to keep those hands folded!

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- **Laws and Consequences**

Daniel was sent into the lions' den after he broke a law. What laws do you have to follow in your life? What might happen if you broke one of those laws? Talk together about laws and their consequences, and then say a prayer for God's help in following the rules that keep us safe every day.

- **No Lyin'**

The jealous men in today's story wanted to play a trick on Daniel, so they lied to King Darius to get Daniel in trouble. Even though we know it's wrong, sometimes it can be hard not to lie when it can get us what we want. Take some time to share stories about a time when you told a lie, or when someone lied to you. Was it a big lie or a small lie? What happened after the lie was told? Do you think God knows when we lie?

- **Who Is In Charge?**

King Darius had 120 satraps and three presidents in charge of ruling his country. That's a lot of rulers! Sometimes it can be hard to figure out who's really in charge. Talk together as a group about who is in charge in your communities. There may be different people in charge at school, at home, or in the nation. How do different leaders take charge in different ways? How do they do things the same?

Conversation Sparks

Spark some faith-filled conversation during the time you wait for activities to start or between activities. Use these questions with the kids in your group whenever you have a minute or two.

- Why do kings make laws?
- How did the people in Darius's kingdom become followers of God?
- Why do leaders like King Darius sometimes need advice?
- How did the satraps and presidents feel when the lions did not eat Daniel?
- I wonder how King Darius felt when Daniel was thrown in with the lions.
- Why did the king fast all night when Daniel was with the lions?

Transition Tips

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- **Yay, God!**

When Daniel didn't get eaten up by the lions, the people of King Darius's kingdom knew that God was a good protector. Pretend you are one of these people. Cheer for God as you move toward your next location. Jump up and down, raise your hands to the sky, and shout praises to God!

- **Raining Kings**

King Darius *reigned* during the time of Daniel. Spend a few moments thinking of others that have reigned as leaders. Now think about that water that washes the world, *rain*. Make motions that look like rain coming down with your fingers. Relocate, make rain with your fingers and say, "King Darius is reigning. Don't get wet!"

- **Mane Man**

When lions go out looking for food, they often travel in packs. Pretend you are pack of lions on the hunt. Prowl your way to your next activity. Make some scary lion noises and keep your eyes wide open. Work together to find food and your next location.

- **Three-Step**

In today's story, we learned that Daniel prayed to God three times a day. Use a three-step (1-2-3) rhythm to dance your way to the next activity. Do a polka or do a waltz down the halls as you remember how Daniel prayed three times a day.

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- **Roar, Roar, Growl**

Remember that game about ducks and geese? Try playing a little variation with lion sounds. Instead of “duck, duck, goose” say “roar, roar, growl” as you work your way around the circle. As you play, remember Daniel in the lions’ den and all the lion sounds he must have heard through the night.

- **What’s for Supper?**

The people who sent Daniel to the lions’ den probably thought he’d be eaten up for supper, but we know that God protected Daniel. Imagine that you are hungry like a lion and share stories about the best supper you’ve ever had. When you’re through, say a supper-time prayer together to thank God for all of the food we eat—and for making sure we’re never eaten up like lion food!

- **Tricking Others**

When the jealous men tricked King Darius into making a law about prayer, Daniel was thrown to the lions. I wonder how God feels about people playing nasty tricks on others. As a group, brainstorm a few ways to respond when people play tricks on each other. Share your feelings about being tricked with your group.

Conversation Sparks

Spark some faith-filled conversation during the time you wait for activities to start or between activities. Use these questions with the kids in your group whenever you have a minute or two.

- Why is it important to follow God’s laws?
- How did God protect Daniel throughout the story?
- I wonder how the jealous men felt when Daniel lived.
- Why is prayer important?
- Do you ever worry about your friends? Why or why not?
- Why did Darius decide to believe in God?

Transition Tips

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- **Pass the Bone**

When Daniel spent a night in the lions' den, he may have seen a few lions chewing on some tasty animal bones. Pretend that your group is sharing a yummy, animal-bone snack. Pass the bone down the line while you move to your next activity so that everyone can have a bite. Be careful not to drop your snack!

- **Home Is Home**

A lion's den is a fancy name for a lion's home. Think of the different kinds of animal homes you see in nature. Form two side-by-side lines as you head to your next activity. One line will name different animals, and the other line will answer with the names of those animals' homes. How many animals and homes can you name before you get to your next location?

- **Rulers Rule**

There are many different kinds of rulers. A foot (or centimeter) ruler helps us measure, and the king rules the land. Move ahead toward your next activity a foot (or centimeter) at a time. As you move, chant, "Rulers, rule". How many rulers is it from the beginning to the end of your journey?

- **Lion Eyes**

Lions' eyes are golden in color. Sometimes in the dark, Daniel may have only been able to see the eyes of the lions. Make a lion mask with your fingers and hands. Look through the mask with glowing eyes at everything that might be dinner as you head toward your next activity.