



ELEMENTS

CONNECT GUIDE



We are thankful that you chose to come to Crossings this summer! We know that Connect time is an important time for your group to spend together. With that in mind, we have created Connect curriculum that you can use at your leisure with what best fits your group.

This is a time created to give you, as the leader, an opportunity to learn and grow your group and help the camp connection continue after you return home. We believe this time can be used in many ways.

4 WAYS WE BELIEVE THIS TIME CAN GROW YOUR GROUP:

1. Teach your group about how to spend time alone with God each day. Use the first part of Connect time for kids to complete their TAWG and have your adults available to help answer questions.

Establishing a quiet time is sometimes difficult for kids. This is a great opportunity to teach how important time alone with God is every day. Talking about how we learn at camp, when there are no distractions versus at home when life is busy, is always a good place to start. Many times at camp, VBS, and retreats, our faith has a growth spurt. Everything is intentional and fun, but when we get home, we get back into a routine and forget that those times with God helped us.

Have students think about what it would be like if we were as intentional about spending time with God at home as we are here.

- What do you think would change?
- Would you grow more in your relationship with Jesus?
- Would you know more Bible verses?
- Would you know more about God?
- How do you think you would react to hard things if you were spending time with God every day?

Here are a few tips on how to help kids establish a quiet time, see the importance, and follow through:

- A. Pray, Read, Write
- B. Study a Book of the Bible
- C. Five Finger Prayer method
- D. Teaching the “Why.” Being connected to God helps us to get to know Him. Reading His Word helps us understand even more about Him, how He loves us and helps us to grow in our faith, as we learn to trust Him more.
- E. Memorize a verse and discover what it means.

2. Build relationships in your group. Team building activities are a great way to help kids learn about one another and work together. This breaks down boundaries and distractions from home that prevent kids from really having deep relationships with others. And let's be honest, they need one another and their leaders. We were designed to be in relationships: first, the vertical one with the Father, and second, all the horizontal ones that help us each day to be encouraged and loved.

Here are a few team building games/activities to try with your group:

Seeing spots

For this activity, you'll place a colored sticker dot (blue, red, green, or yellow) on each student's forehead without them knowing what color it is. When the game begins, each "team" of students (with the same color) must find each other—*without speaking*. This is a wonderful team-building activity because it encourages non-verbal communication and cooperation.

Sneak peek

This problem-solving activity will help students learn to communicate effectively. Before the game begins, build a small sculpture with LEGO bricks or building blocks and keep it covered in an area that is of equal distance from all the groups. Divide your students into teams of four or five, and give each team enough blocks to duplicate the structure.

To begin the game, reveal the structure, and one member from each team is allowed to come up to look at it closely for 10 seconds, trying to memorize it before returning to their team. Once they return to their team, they have 25 seconds to instruct the group on how to build a replica of the structure. After one minute of trying to recreate it, another member from each team can come up for a sneak peek before returning to their team and trying again. The game continues until one of the teams successfully recreates the original structure.

Flip the Sheet Challenge

This activity takes a little creative thinking. Divide students into two teams. One team will do the challenge first while the other team watches, then they will switch places. Have all members of the team stand on a flat bedsheet, tarp, or blanket (kids should fill up all but about a quarter of the space). Challenge the team to flip over the sheet/tarp so that they are standing on the other side of the sheet/tarp without stepping off or touching the ground.

Rock, Paper, Scissors Tag

You'll need some space for this activity. Divide students into two teams. Before you begin, stake out the boundaries and position a home base at either end for each team. For each round, each team must confer and decide whether they will be rock, paper, or scissors. Have the two teams line up facing one another, and on your signal, have all players flash rock, paper, scissors, shoot! The kids on the losing team must run back to their base before they are tagged by one of the kids on the winning team.

The Perfect Square

This activity requires strong verbal communication and cooperation. All you need is a long rope with the ends tied together and something to serve as blindfolds for students, such as bandanas or fabric strips. Have students stand in a circle holding the rope in front of them. Signal them to put their blindfolds on and set the rope on the ground in front of them. Ask students to turn and walk a short distance away from the circle. Assign a partner to any students who may need help. Finally, have everyone come back to the rope and try to form a perfect square with their blindfolds on. Set a time limit to make it more challenging.

Hula Hoop Pass

This activity helps kids work on listening, coordinating, and strategizing skills. It works best with smaller students. Have your students stand in a big circle. Place a hula hoop on one student's arm and have them join hands with the student next to them. Ask all the other students to join hands to close up the circle. The objective of the game is to pass the hula hoop all the way around the circle without unclasping hands. Students will have to figure out how to maneuver their bodies all the way through the hoop to pass it on.

Spider Web

This team-building game will teach your students that even though they may be different in many ways, they are still connected to one another. Gather in a circle, standing or sitting. The game begins when the first person, holding a large ball of twine, tells the group a funny or embarrassing story about themselves. Once they finish, they will hold onto the end of the twine and throw the ball to someone else in the circle. That person grabs hold and tells a funny or embarrassing story about themselves and then passes it on to another student. Play continues until the twine has been passed to each person. The end result will produce a "spider web" out of the twine, connecting each student to all of the others.

3. Recap what you are learning at camp and let kids talk and support one another. Use Connect time as a safe place to debrief Bible study as a group. Ask each child to share. They may want their TAWG books to help them recall some of the main points.
 - Day 1: Created by God- Romans 5:7-8
 - Day 2: Separated from God- Romans 3:23
 - Day 3: God Prepared / The Gift of Jesus- 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - Day 4: Our Answer- Romans 10:9-10, Matthew 28:19-20

Some questions to ask:

- a. What is one thing you learned today that you did not know?
 - b. Tell us an activity you did that helped you understand the lesson better.
 - c. How will you apply what you learned today when you get home?
 - d. Is there anything you didn't understand? If so, would you share so we can help one another.
4. Play. Another way you can use Connect time is for kids to play. This can be card games, board games, or Minute-To-Win-It games, but mostly use the time to just have fun together. This is also a great way for adults to play with kids, something many kids don't get otherwise. Natural conversations will happen here strengthening relationships that will make impact, both kid-to-kid relationships and adult-to-kid relationships.
 5. Rest. If your kids are exhausted by day three of camp, use your time to have everyone rest and/or take some time to begin to pack up.

Most importantly, we want this time to be used for your group to have what they need. There are no strict rules here. As the group leader, take some time to pray about the best way to use this time and go for it. We'd love to hear how your time was spent and how it benefited your group upon returning home!

