

Wayfinder

LARGE GROUP
RESOURCE BOOK



Hello, Friend!

On behalf of the entire GEMS Sisterhood, welcome to *Wayfinder: Following the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. Thank you for saying yes to leading and loving girls this season. Your willingness to serve creates spaces where girls can encounter Jesus—the One who stays with them, guides them, and lights their path.

Wayfinder invites girls to explore the Bible's "mountaintop moments" and discover that from Genesis to Revelation, Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. As they journey through God's Word, they will gain tools to strengthen their faith for the long haul, like prayer, worship, Scripture memory, service, and more.

As you guide your girls on the *Wayfinder* Trail, I hope you also feel invited to walk the path yourself. The lessons girls are learning are not only for them; they are for all of us. In a world filled with competing routes and questionable directions, may you be encouraged to follow Jesus with renewed confidence, rooted in God's Truth and led by the Holy Spirit. With the Bible as your compass and God as your guide, trust that you are equipped every step of the way.

Please know that you're not alone on this journey. We are here for you—praying for you, cheering for you, and ready to support you however we can. Thank you for faithfully pointing girls to Jesus and helping them discover their identity and purpose in Him.

With deep gratitude,



Wendy Hammond

Executive Director, GEMS Global



MEET THE

Wayfinder

CURRICULUM TEAM

Rachel Wierenga is the Content and Curriculum Manager at GEMS. She has a bachelor's degree in integrated ministry studies from the Moody Bible Institute and is working toward her master of divinity degree at Denver Seminary. She has many years of kids' ministry experience and is passionate about teaching girls that they are known, seen, and loved by God.

Rachel has lived in Indiana, Illinois, Connecticut, and Colorado, but now loves calling Grand Rapids, Michigan her home. She enjoys being a mom, getting coffee with friends, writing music and leading worship with her husband, running marathons, and delighting in God's goodness in ordinary, everyday moments.

Bethany Norris joyfully serves as the Creative Formation and Training Specialist at GEMS. After graduating from Cedarville University in 2023 with a BA in Christian education, Bethany moved from Maryland to Grand Rapids, Michigan, to join the GEMS Staff. She is currently pursuing a master of arts in Christian education and master in biblical and theological studies through Dallas Theological Seminary.

With years of experience leading worship and children's ministries, Bethany is passionate about reaching girls everywhere with the good news of Jesus Christ and equipping them to walk with Him for a lifetime. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, painting, singing, songwriting, and exploring God's beautiful creation.

Linda Haverkamp has been involved with GEMS throughout her life. She began with Calvinettes and has continued to serve as a GEMS Leader and Club Coordinator. Club meetings allow her to share her love of Jesus with the next generation of girls. She has served as an Area Coordinator and currently serves on the GEMS Global Board.

Linda lives in Ontario with her husband, Ralph, and assists him on their farms as needed. She values time with her family and likes nothing better than to have a house full of people. Crafting has always been a way for her to express herself and relieve stress. It's uncommon for her not to have some projects in the works.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Letter from the Executive Director	1
Meet the <i>Wayfinder</i> Curriculum Team	2
Why <i>Wayfinder</i> ?	4
<i>Wayfinder</i> : Overview and Breakdown of Lessons	5
How to Use <i>Wayfinder</i> : Three Options	6
Getting Started: What You Need	7
The Four P's for a Strong Club Season	9
<i>Wayfinder</i> Club Gathering at a Glance	11
<i>Wayfinder</i> Club Gathering Overview	12
The Joy of Sharing Jesus: Leading a Child to Christ	13
How to Explain the Trinity to Girls	14

WAYFINDER LESSONS

Lesson 1: <i>Wayfinder</i>	15
Lesson 2: The Way It All Began	23
Lesson 3: Going the Wrong Way	30
Lesson 4: God Made a Way	38
Lesson 5: Choosing God's Way	46
Lesson 6: Discovering God's Love on the Way	53
Lesson 7: Help Is on the Way	60
Lesson 8: Following the Way, the Truth, and the Life Forever	68

WAYFINDER SERVICE PROJECTS

75

WAYFINDER CRAFTS

76

WAYFINDER INDEX

92

BEFORE YOU GO

93



WHY *Wayfinder?*

Our girls are growing up in a world with many paths to choose from, each claiming to offer truth and fulfillment. Peers, media, and culture all pressure them to follow their own hearts and define truth for themselves. With technology and artificial intelligence (AI) at their fingertips, they encounter many voices offering ideas of truth and meaning. These pressures can encourage them to go down the wrong paths, like finding truth from the internet and AI rather than God's Word, exploring other spiritual practices, and even walking away from the faith.

Recent studies and statistics speak for themselves:

- In OneHope's 2024 survey on Generation Alpha (those born between 2010 and 2024), they found that "one in five Christians and almost one in three non-Christians regularly engage in activities like astrology, crystal healing, and manifesting."¹ They also found that Gen Alphas spend an average of four hours and six minutes online every day outside of schoolwork.²
- In Springtide Research Institute's 2024 study on thirteen-year-olds, the oldest Gen Alphas, they discovered that 44% of respondents have used AI³ and 75% of all respondents see an increased use of AI as neutral or good for society.⁴
- Lifeway Research has found that 66% of those who attended church regularly as a teen drop out of church as a young adult.⁵

We don't want to raise a generation of girls who just follow what the media or their peers tell them is true. Rather, we want to raise girls who boldly choose to follow Jesus, who is *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. This generation is hungry for truth and curious about which path to follow. Now is the time to engage them with God's life-changing Word and walk alongside them on their journeys with God.

Through *Wayfinder: Following the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, girls will explore the Bible's "mountaintop moments" from Genesis to Revelation and encounter the living, Triune God who is present every step of the way. They'll discover how every story points to Jesus—and how their own story is rooted in Him when they trust Him.

Along the way, they'll gain tools that strengthen their faith for the long haul, including prayer, worship, Scripture memory and meditation, service, and more. With the Bible as their compass and God as their guide, girls will persevere with courage and joy as they follow the path God has laid out for them. **They will become "wayfinders"—girls who boldly follow the Way, the Truth, and the Life and lead others to the Way too.**

¹Gen Alpha: The Next Generation (OneHope, February 2025), 11, https://onehope.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/eng_NA_US_Gen-Alpha-Report_20250103.pdf?utm_source=KB&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=NextLevel.

²Gen Alpha, 29.

³Thirteen: A First Look at Gen Alpha (Springtide Research Institute, 2024), 29, <https://springtideresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/thirteen-a-first-look-at-gen-alpha-springtide-research-institute.pdf>.

⁴Thirteen, 29.

⁵Aaron Earls, *Most Teenagers Drop Out of Church When They Become Young Adults* (Lifeway Research, January 15, 2019), <https://research.lifeway.com/2019/01/15/most-teenagers-drop-out-of-church-as-young-adults/>.

Wayfinder

OVERVIEW AND BREAKDOWN OF LESSONS

Through the *Wayfinder: Following the Way, the Truth, and the Life* curriculum, girls will explore the Bible's "mountaintop moments" from Genesis to Revelation and encounter the living, Triune God who is present throughout the entire journey. They'll discover how every story points to Jesus—and how their own story is rooted in Him when they trust Him.

Through *Wayfinder*, girls will:

1. Encounter the living, Triune God and be inspired to worship Him in awe and wonder.
2. Discover why Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life and see how the whole Bible points to Him.
3. Experience "mountaintop moments" in Scripture from Genesis to Revelation.
4. Explore eight key questions about the Christian faith and learn to articulate biblical answers.
5. Journey with God for a lifetime through prayer, Scripture memory, worship, service, and more.

The *Wayfinder: Following the Way, the Truth, and the Life* curriculum contains enough material for eight weeks of club gatherings and at least eight *Wayfinder* service projects (available through the Online Resources). Use the material every week, every other week, or in whatever fashion best fits your schedule.

LESSONS

LESSON	LESSON TITLE	LESSON MEMORY VERSE
Lesson 1	Wayfinder	John 14:6
Lesson 2	The Way It All Began	Genesis 1:27
Lesson 3	Going the Wrong Way	Romans 6:23
Lesson 4	God Made a Way	Romans 8:28
Lesson 5	Choosing God's Way	Psalms 86:9–10
Lesson 6	Discovering God's Love on the Way	1 John 3:1a
Lesson 7	Help Is on the Way	John 14:26 ESV
Lesson 8	Following the Way, the Truth, and the Life Forever	Revelation 21:5a

HOW TO USE *Wayfinder*

THREE OPTIONS

GEMS Girls' Clubs come in all shapes and sizes—from big to small clubs, city to rural clubs. Each club is as unique as our girls, so there is no one-size-fits-all. However, the one consistency across all GEMS Clubs is that they use the GEMS Curriculum. Based on how frequently your club meets, you'll want to select one of the options below for using the *Wayfinder: Following the Way, the Truth, and the Life* resources. Once you've chosen the option that best fits your club, set your schedule for the year and begin praying, planning, and preparing.

NOTE:

A 🌸 indicates that something is included in the *Wayfinder Online Resources*.

Option 1

WAYFINDER: FOLLOWING THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE ALONE

This option works well for clubs that meet monthly or for a shortened season (October through December, January through March, or June through August). Use *Wayfinder* as a stand-alone resource for up to sixteen weeks (eight weeks of lessons and at least eight service projects 🌸). You will have everything you need for a complete club gathering.

Option 2

WAYFINDER: FOLLOWING THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE + BADGES

This option works well for clubs that meet two or more times a month and desire to rotate lesson nights and badge work. Use the sixteen weeks of *Wayfinder* with GEMS Girls' Clubs badges. Go to gemsgc.org for more information on our wide variety of girl-friendly badges and information on how to incorporate these resources into your club.

Option 3

WAYFINDER: FOLLOWING THE WAY, TRUTH, AND THE LIFE + BADGES + OTHER GEMS SUPPLEMENTAL CURRICULUM

This option works well for all clubs, no matter the length of their season. Use the sixteen weeks of *Wayfinder* with other GEMS Curricula like *LOVED*, *Friended*, *Act. Love*, *Walk, Rise Up, Transformed*, or *Walk on Water*, plus badges. Additionally, you can consider incorporating GEMS Outdoors into your regular club season. Go to gemsgc.org for more information on these curricula, badges, and GEMS Outdoors.

GETTING STARTED: WHAT YOU NEED

The *Wayfinder: Following the Way, the Truth, and the Life* curriculum provides all the necessary components for helping girls explore God's Truth and discover how the entire Bible points to Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

✔ **WAYFINDER LARGE GROUP RESOURCE BOOK (LGRB)**—The LGRB contains eight Bible-based lessons, complete with Arrival activities, scripted Lesson Openers, Bible Teachings, weekly memory verses, meaningful Dismissals, crafts, and more! Order one LGRB for your Club Coordinator and one for each Co-Coordinator, craft leader, and worship leader.

✔ **WAYFINDER SMALL GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE (SGLG)**—The SGLG contains everything you need to lead Small Group with excellence. Each SGLG includes welcome activities, memory verse games, relationship-building ideas, questions for applying God's Word and prayer prompts. Order one SGLG for each Club Coordinator, Co-Coordinator, and Small Group Leader.

✔ **WAYFINDER GRADES 6–8 SMALL GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE (SGLG)**—This age-specific SGLG will intentionally engage your sixth- to eighth-grade girls. The SGLG can be used alongside the Large Group Resource Book or as a stand-alone curriculum. It includes welcome activities, age-specific Bible studies, and activities for older girls to engage in creativity, connection, and self-care. Order one Grades 6–8 SGLG for your Club Coordinator and one for each Co-Coordinator and grades 6–8 Small Group Leader.

✔ **WAYFINDER JOURNAL**—The *Wayfinder Journal* is essential during Small Group. This journal corresponds with the main SGLG. The journal's pages are the perfect places for girls to record application thoughts, insights, and prayer requests. It also contains Bible verses for girls to study at your club and read at home. Order one journal for each girl.

✔ **WAYFINDER GRADES 6–8 JOURNAL**—This age-specific journal is crafted to engage sixth- to eighth-grade girls during Small Group. This journal corresponds with the Grades 6–8 SGLG. The pages are designed to provide space to reflect, apply the Bible Study, complete prayer prompts, and more. This is an essential tool to help older girls deepen their faith at GEMS. Order one for each sixth- to eighth-grade girl.

✔ **WAYFINDER KEY CHAIN**—The *Wayfinder* key chain contains thoughtfully designed tags with the Theme Verse, John 14:6, plus the seven other *Wayfinder* memory verses. Order one key chain per girl.

✔ **WAYFINDER STICKERS**—These stickers are perfect for a prize closet or to give as incentives as girls memorize their *Wayfinder* memory verses. Order one sticker sheet per girl.

✔ **WAYFINDER ONLINE RESOURCES**—This digital library includes *Wayfinder* printables, memory verse movement instructional videos, Real Talk videos, presentation slides, and more. The Online Resources are included with the purchase of the *Wayfinder* starter kit, but they're also available for separate purchase at gemsgc.org/store.

✔ **WAYFINDER THEME SONG**—"Wayfinder" by Steven Wierenga, as well as motion and tutorial video downloads, are available in the *Wayfinder* Online Resources. ✿

✔ **REAL TALK VIDEOS**—An intro video to meet the GEMS *Wayfinder* Real Talk team and eight Real Talk videos provide relevant and inspiring challenges to close each lesson. All videos are available in the *Wayfinder* Online Resources. ✿

NOTE:

A ✿ indicates that something is included in the *Wayfinder* Online Resources.

OPTIONAL RESOURCES

✓ **WAYFINDER VERSE POSTER**—This poster displays the Theme Verse, John 14:6. The digital download includes a high-resolution file and a license to print one copy at your chosen printer (see copyright information).

✓ **WAYFINDER IRON-ON LOGO**—This iron-on logo is perfect for T-shirts, fabric bags, and banners. It adheres to cotton and many other fabrics. Transfers are quick to apply, durable, and able to stretch with your garment.

✓ **MICAH 6:8 POSTER**—This poster displays the GEMS Girls' Clubs Aim, Micah 6:8. Girls and leaders recite this Aim each time they meet at club. The digital download can be purchased via the GEMS Store and includes a high-resolution file and a license to print one copy at your chosen printer.

✓ **BIBLE**—We recommend the NIV Ultimate Bible for Girls, Faithgirlz Edition, published by Zonderkidz. Purchase this Bible for your girls at gemsgc.org/store.

✓ **GEMS GOSPEL TREASURE BOX**—Use this tangible tool to share the gospel with your girls. See "The Joy of Sharing Jesus: Leading a Child to Christ" on page 13 for more information.

✓ **GEMS CURRICULA**—You can also incorporate other GEMS curricula like *LOVED*, *Friended*, *Act. Love. Walk. Rise Up. Transformed*, *Walk on Water*, or badges (physical or digital) from the Discovery Path/Place Badge Book. Additionally, you can consider incorporating GEMS Outdoors into your regular club season. See "How to Use Wayfinder" options two and three on page 6.

AND MORE! You may purchase additional resources from gemsgc.org/store or call 616-616-GEMS (4367) in the US or 519-424-9007 in Canada.

COPYRIGHT:

All *Wayfinder: Following the Way, the Truth, and the Life* materials are protected under copyright. Photocopying is not allowed, except for the printables in the *Wayfinder* Online Resources. The *Wayfinder* logo is not to be used in any manner other than for promotional materials without express permission from GEMS Girls' Clubs. These clip art images may not be used on any products. Products include but are not limited to mugs, special recognition awards, key chains, pens, pencils, and T-shirts.



THE FOUR P'S FOR A STRONG CLUB SEASON

Once you've selected the *Wayfinder* curriculum option that's right for your club, put these four P's into place to create a secure foundation for a strong, successful GEMS Club season.

PREPARATION

A chart at the beginning of each lesson lists the materials you need to prepare for each club meeting. Advance preparation includes:

- Asking God for His guidance as you prepare for club
- Reading over the lesson
- Studying the Bible passage (from the Bible Teaching) on your own
- Gathering needed supplies
- Coordinating your GEMS Leaders
- Praying for the girls

Here are helpful GEMS Club preparation tips:

PREPARING FOR ARRIVAL

- Download *Wayfinder* name tags. ✿
- Gather colored pencils, crayons, *Wayfinder* coloring sheets, ✿ and other recommended supplies (listed in each lesson) for the Sit & Chat questions.
- Print off the *Wayfinder* Grown-Up Guides ✿ for each lesson. Alternatively, consider emailing these guides to the girls' grown-ups. These helpful guides are available in English and Spanish.

PREPARING FOR LARGE GROUP

- Prepare an easy way for girls to read and recite Micah 6:8 and John 14:6. Download presentation slides ✿ or display the verses using the posters available at gemsgc.org/store.
- Select worship songs, including the *Wayfinder* Theme Song "Wayfinder" by Steven Wierenga, ✿ and provide the means to play them.
- Practice motions for the *Wayfinder* Theme Verse and each lesson's memory verse using the videos in the *Wayfinder* Online Resources. ✿

NOTE: A ✿ indicates that something is included in the *Wayfinder* Online Resources.

PREPARING FOR SMALL GROUP

- Prepare the gathering spaces needed for Small Group activities and crafts.
- Provide the materials needed for each Small Group Leader, including the *Wayfinder Small Group Leader's Guide*, writing utensils, Bibles, *Wayfinder Journals*, etc.

PREPARING FOR CRAFTS

- Watch the step-by-step video tutorial for each craft. ✿
- Gather necessary supplies. Consider having a completed craft example for girls to look at as they create the chosen craft.
- Look at the *Wayfinder* Pinterest board for additional craft recommendations. Visit www.pinterest.com/gemsgc/wayfinder/ to view the board.
- Consider having older girls lead younger girls through the crafts.

PREPARING FOR DISMISSAL

- Download the Real Talk videos ✿ and provide the means to play them.
- Distribute GEMS Club invitations ✿ to help girls invite their friends to your next club meeting.

PLACES

Create welcoming, safe, and fun places that tie into the *Wayfinder* theme. You will need one space to host Large Group, as well as separate Small Group meeting places and craft areas.

LARGE GROUP SPACE: Decorate with anything that will make your space feel like a trail in the wilderness—fun, contemporary, and compelling for all ages. Think of items needed for a hike through a meadow and mountains, like a hiking bag, a canteen, binoculars, a flashlight, and trekking poles. Consider additional items to create an adventurous wilderness scene, such as a “Wayfinder” trail sign, pine tree cutouts, large rocks, and tree stumps. Avoid camping decor such as tents and sleeping bags.

SMALL GROUP SPACE: Create a space where girls immediately know they have a safe, fun place to belong. Use checkered tablecloths, displays of wildflowers (real or fake), and fun wilderness accessories.

CENTERPIECE IDEAS:

- Clear jars or vases filled with wildflowers (real or fake) or evergreen tree branches
- Lanterns or flickering LED candles
- Pink checkered tablecloths with bundles of sticks and pinecones in the center of the tables



NOTE: For fun decorating ideas, visit the *Wayfinder* Pinterest board at www.pinterest.com/gemsgc/wayfinder/.

PEOPLE

Teamwork makes the dream work! In addition to the Club Coordinator, your club will need one GEMS Leader for each small group of six to eight girls. The Small Group Leader should stay with her small group throughout the year. Clubs may also have additional helpers for tech, worship, snacks, prayer partners, and crafts.

Well-trained volunteers will feel more comfortable in their roles and are more likely to stay invested. GEMS ReFresh is a relevant online training program available for all current GEMS Clubs. The GEMS ReFresh training videos are available on the portal. Current GEMS Clubs and Leaders can access the complete library by logging in at portal.gemsgc.org. The portal also has community boards where you can stay connected with other GEMS Leaders. If you need assistance with your login or password, please contact hello@gemsgc.org.

GEMS ReFresh
Equip • Encourage • Engage

PRAYER

A strong club season is covered in prayer. Be sure to take time to pray with GEMS Leaders before and after your club meetings, and pray with girls during your club meetings.

Wayfinder

CLUB GATHERING AT A GLANCE

Every GEMS Club gathering is broken into four essential pieces. They include:

ARRIVAL—GIRLS MATTER

Icebreaker Activity
Sit & Chat Questions

LARGE GROUP—GOD'S WORD MATTERS

Musical Worship
Recap & Review
Lesson Opener
Bible Teaching
Lesson Memory Verse
Closing Prayer

SMALL GROUP—RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

Welcome
Step In
Lesson Memory Verse
God's Word Is Truth
Digging Deeper (optional)
Walk It Out
Prayer
Craft, Badgework, or Service Project

DISMISSAL—LEAVING CHANGED MATTERS

Return to Large Group
Real Talk Video



Wayfinder

CLUB GATHERING OVERVIEW

While some clubs have the luxury of two-hour meetings, each *Wayfinder* lesson is structured for a one-and-a-half-hour club meeting.

ARRIVAL—GIRLS MATTER

Arrival is the time from when girls arrive until club officially starts. When girls open the club doors, the first people they should meet are their GEMS Leaders. The whole team is waiting for them, welcoming them, and letting them know that they matter! Because here is a girl's reality—a GEMS Leader may be the first person in her day who leaned in and asked, "How are you doing, *really*?"

Then direct girls into the Large Group space to play the Arrival activity. Engage in the pre-planned Icebreaker game or use the Sit & Chat questions to connect with each girl.

LARGE GROUP—GOD'S WORD MATTERS

Large Group is the twenty- to thirty-minute time frame where all the girls and leaders are in one space. Begin with a warm welcome and prayer. Recite the GEMS Girls' Clubs Aim and then worship God through music together.

After worship, the GEMS Leader will lead a quick Recap & Review of what the girls have learned in previous lessons.

After the Recap & Review, the GEMS Leader will transition to the Lesson Opener. Then they will open God's Word for the Bible Teaching. After the Bible Teaching, the GEMS Leader will help girls memorize the memory verse.

Finally, Large Group will end in prayer before dismissing to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP—RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

Small Group is a sixty-minute time frame when six to eight girls meet with their Small Group Leader. It's within these small groups that relationships are deepened and lives are changed.

During the first thirty minutes of Small Group, a leader will guide her group into God's Truth through the Bible and the *Small Group Leader's Guide (SGLG)*. The SGLG is key to building relationships, teaching memory verses, and exploring God's Word. Discipleship takes place as the leader guides girls in prayer and helps them apply God's Truth to their daily lives.

The *Wayfinder Journal* is the perfect place for girls to record application thoughts, things they are learning in the Bible, and prayer requests. Be sure each girl also has a physical Bible and a *Wayfinder* key chain to keep Scripture memorization going at home.

During the last thirty minutes of Small Group, grow relationships with hands-on activities. This is the time to complete a craft, earn badges, or participate in a service project.

DISMISSAL—LEAVING CHANGED MATTERS

Dismissal is the last five to ten minutes of club. Gather all girls and leaders into the Large Group space to reiterate the focus of the club meeting and pray.

Show a Real Talk video from the *Wayfinder* Online Resources, and then pray with the girls before dismissing them.

THE JOY OF SHARING JESUS: LEADING A CHILD TO CHRIST

Leading a girl to Christ is one of the most wonderful things you may do as a GEMS Leader. After all, GEMS stands for Girls Everywhere Meeting the Savior. This is the heart of what we do!

Sharing the gospel with your girls is important and might feel nerve-racking, but take heart and trust that the Holy Spirit will give you the words you need. If a girl asks how to follow Jesus, remember the ABC's.

A: ADMIT YOU NEED HELP. We have all sinned against (or disobeyed) God with our thoughts, words, and actions (Romans 3:23), so we need to tell God that we know we have sinned and we are sorry.

B: BELIEVE IN JESUS. Sin comes at a cost; it deserves punishment (Romans 6:23). But Jesus took on this punishment by dying on the cross for our sins. He defeated sin and death by rising from the dead and offering us forgiveness and redemption in Him. So we need to tell God that we believe Jesus is truly God's Son who took the punishment for our sins by dying for us and rising from the dead.

C: CONFESS THAT JESUS IS LORD. This is a twofold confession. One meaning of "confess" is "to admit." We need to admit that we need God's help. Another meaning of "confess" is "to declare." Romans 10:9 says, "If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (see also 1 John 1:9). So we need to tell God that we believe Jesus died for us and rose again and that we trust Him.

Remember, sharing the gospel doesn't need to be rushed, and it's not just a one-time conversation. It may take girls some time before they fully grasp the gospel and decide to follow Jesus. In the meantime, keep sharing the gospel, praying for your girls, and answering their questions. When you continue to serve faithfully, God will use you to reach your girls.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

GEMS has more resources to help you share the gospel with your girls.

GEMS GOSPEL TREASURE BOX—This box is a girl-friendly, tangible resource that helps leaders walk girls through the gospel message. Use this treasure box in Large Group, Small Group, or one-on-one settings throughout the season. It includes a three-part video message series for training and equipping. To order, go to gemsgc.org/store.

GOSPEL TRAINING VIDEOS—Training videos to equip GEMS Leaders to share the gospel are available on the GEMS ReFresh page on the club portal.

HOW TO EXPLAIN THE TRINITY TO GIRLS

As girls discover more about God, they will likely have questions about the Trinity. There is no accurate metaphor to explain the Trinity; nothing and no one is three distinct persons with one essence like God. And, of course, we will spend our entire lives trying to comprehend the profundity of who God is.

But here is a start in explaining the Trinity to your girls.

Explain that God isn't like us. He created us to be one human being (*what* we are) living as one person (*who* we are). Unlike us, He is one God living in three persons. This means he is triune; He exists as the Trinity.

"Trinity" means "three in one." He is three persons, but one God. The three persons are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit. He is all three at the same time, but each person is separate and distinct. Each person is equal, so the Father isn't greater than the Son, the Spirit isn't less than the Father, etc. Each person has always existed; He has always been one God in three persons.

The three persons of the Trinity have unique roles but work together in our salvation and redemption. The Father initiated creation, sustains the universe, and chose us for redemption (Genesis 1:1; Romans 8:28–30). The Son died for us and advocates for us to the Father (John 1:4; 1 John 2:1–2). When we proclaim the Son as our Savior, the Spirit works within us to make us more like the Son (Romans 8:10–11).

You may find it helpful to share the story of Jesus's baptism (Matthew 3:13–17). When Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit came down and rested on Him. Then, the Father declared that Jesus was His Son. This passage shows how each person is distinct yet fully God and how they work together for God's redemptive purposes.

Then you can continue by sharing how we are to go out and baptize others (Matthew 28:16–20). Jesus commands to baptize others "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). Again, the Father, Son, and Spirit are distinct yet fully God and work together for God's redemptive purposes.

Younger girls tend to be concrete thinkers, but lean into the mystery here. There is so much about God that we will never understand—at least not until glory. Teach girls that His ways are higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8–9), so we won't fully understand everything there is to know about Him. And that's okay!

Encourage girls to keep asking questions—it deepens their faith. And it's okay if they don't understand or have all the answers, because no one has all the answers about God. God is incomprehensible, meaning that no human will ever fully understand God. So keep encouraging the girls to ask more questions, and you can study the Bible together to better understand. If a girl asks a question you are unsure how to answer, connect with a ministry leader or pastor. Then, circle back with the girl the following week.

Even if you feel like you lack the right words, remember that the Holy Spirit is helping you. You've got this!

Lesson 1

WAYFINDER

DATE OF LESSON: _____

KEY QUESTION: What is a “wayfinder”?

KEY TRUTH: A “wayfinder” follows Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

THEME VERSE: “Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’” (John 14:6).

NOTE: A 🌸 indicates that something is included in the Wayfinder Online Resources.

📍 ARRIVAL SUPPLIES

- Wayfinder name tags 🌸
- Lesson One Wayfinder Grown-Up Guide 🌸 (one per parent/caregiver)
- Icebreakers: “Four Ways” or Sit & Chat questions
 - Sit & Chat supplies: colored pencils/ crayons, Wayfinder Theme Coloring Sheet One 🌸
- Optional: Wayfinder photo booth
 - Photo booth supplies: any props that belong in a mountain setting (trekking poles, binoculars, canteen, “Wayfinder” trail sign, etc.), Photo Release Form 🌸

LEADER NOTE: Ask each parent/caregiver to sign a Photo Release Form. 🌸 Give each parent/caregiver a Lesson One Wayfinder Grown-Up Guide 🌸 at drop-off so they can review it before picking up their girl(s). These guides, available in both English and Spanish, help girls’ grown-ups invest in their girls spiritually and feel equipped to start Truth-filled conversations with their girls throughout the week.

👥 LARGE GROUP SUPPLIES

- Selected worship songs, including the Wayfinder Theme Song, “Wayfinder” by Steven Wierenga, 🌸 and the means to play them
- Micah 6:8 presentation slide 🌸
- John 14:6 presentation slide 🌸
- “John 14:6 Theme Verse” video 🌸
- Lesson Opener and Bible Teaching supplies: Bible, backpack, compass (place this inside the backpack), “Wayfinder” Teaching Outline, “Lesson One Key Question” presentation slide, 🌸 “Lesson One Key Truth” presentation slide 🌸

👥 SMALL GROUP SUPPLIES

- Bibles (one per girl and leader)
- One Wayfinder Journal per girl
- One Small Group Leader’s Guide per leader
- Writing utensils: pencils, pens, crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Small Group Welcome supplies: timer; two inflated balloons or plush balls (optional)
- Step In supplies: One GEMS Club Impact Survey 🌸 per girl, large paper map
- Theme Verse supplies: “John 14:6 Theme Verse” video 🌸
- God’s Word Is Truth supplies: Wayfinder Lesson One Coloring Page 🌸 (optional)

FOR GEMS GROWN-UPS:

(Choose a time at the beginning or end of club to meet with the GEMS Grown-ups.)

- Your GEMS Club schedule
- Club Registration Form 🌸
- Wayfinder GEMS Grown-Up Letter 🌸

The “Connect with GEMS Grown-Ups” Sample Script 🌸 is available in the Online Resources to guide your grown-up meeting. Share the Wayfinder Grown-Up Message 🌸 with your girls’ grown-ups.

LEADER NOTE: You will want to share this short, encouraging video with GEMS Grown-Ups during your club meeting, in the Wayfinder GEMS Grown-Up Letter, 🌸 or via email (bit.ly/WayfinderGrownUps). Know that the Wayfinder GEMS Grown-Up Letter is available in both English and Spanish in the Wayfinder Online Resources.

CRAFT SUGGESTION

TRAILHEAD SIGN

See page 76 for craft supplies and instructions. For a video tutorial of this craft, view the “L1-Trailhead Sign” video. 🌸



DISMISSAL SUPPLIES

- “Meet the Real Talk Team” video 🌸
- “Lesson One Real Talk” video 🌸
- Wayfinder key chain
- One “Wayfinder” key chain card per girl
- Several GEMS Club Invitations 🌸 per girl

ARRIVAL

[Time: When girls arrive until club begins]

LEADER NOTE: Today, girls will be introduced to the Wayfinder venue and Theme Verse, John 14:6. This GEMS season, as girls learn more about Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life—they will walk confidently in their God-given purpose and identity and point others to Him!

Welcome each girl at the door with a warm smile. Let the girls know you’re so happy to see them and that this is where they belong. SAY “_____ [girl’s name], welcome to _____ GEMS Club [the name of your GEMS Club]! I’m so glad you’re here! You are LOVED.”

Next, direct the girls into the Large Group space. There, younger girls may prefer to engage in the Icebreaker game “Four Ways” while shy/older girls may be more comfortable with the Sit & Chat questions as they color.

LEADER NOTE: You have a fantastic opportunity to ensure each girl feels special and loved. Get to know their names, learn some of their favorite things, and ask how you can pray for them. When building trust with your girls, it is so important not only to learn their names but also to pronounce them correctly. Every girl has a beautiful name, and it’s important to her that you try to learn her name until you get it right. Your intentionality matters!

“FOUR WAYS”

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Before club begins, designate the four corners of your space as corners one, two, three, and four. You can tell the girls which corner is which or use number signs. If possible, have a leader stand in each corner and display the number on their fingers.
2. (As girls arrive) **SAY** We are going to play a fun game called “Four Ways,” which is similar to Four Corners. I will ask you some fun questions, and each question will have four ways to answer. You will show your answer by choosing one of the four corners. (Point out the number each corner is designated.) Let’s play “Four Ways!”
3. **ASK** the following questions (or make up your own):
 - Is your favorite season summer (corner one), fall (corner two), winter (corner three), or spring (corner four)?
 - Do you prefer math (corner one), history/social studies (corner two), reading/writing (corner three), or science (corner four)?
 - Which activity would you enjoy the most: playing a sport (corner one), reading a book (corner two), drawing a picture (corner three), or playing an instrument (corner four)?

- Where would you rather go: the beach (corner one), the mountains (corner two), a big city (corner three), or into the forest (corner four)?
4. If time allows, make up your own questions or ask the girls to share some options.
 5. *(After playing)* **SAY** That was a fun way to learn more about one another! It may have been hard to respond to some of those questions in just one way. Speaking of different ways, today we are going to learn what it means to be a “wayfinder” this season at GEMS. I can’t wait to tell you more!

SIT & CHAT QUESTIONS

LEADER NOTE: Some girls may feel more comfortable in smaller settings with their hands busy while they talk. Older/shy girls may open up more if you ask open-ended questions while they draw or color.

1. What's your favorite season and why?
2. What's your favorite way to spend a Saturday?
3. What is one thing you are looking forward to at GEMS this season?

WAYFINDER PHOTO BOOTH (OPTIONAL)

Help girls know they have a purpose and place at your GEMS Club by posting their photos on a special wall in your GEMS space. Be sure you have parental permission from the Photo Release Forms 🌸 before taking photos of girls.

(When it's time for your club to begin, start Large Group.)

LARGE GROUP

WELCOME & PRAYER

[Time: 2 minutes]

SAY Welcome to _____ *[name of your club]* GEMS Girls' Club. I am so glad you are here. *(Look around the room.)* Our club wouldn't be the same without each of you!

At GEMS, we believe that prayer is powerful, so we start each club meeting with prayer. Prayer is how we talk to God.

PRAY

(Take one minute to thank God for your girls and ask Him to bless your time together.)

GEMS GIRLS' CLUBS AIM

SAY At every club gathering, we will say the GEMS Girls' Clubs Aim together, which is based on Micah 6:8. GEMS Clubs all over the world begin their meetings like this. This may be your first time hearing this verse. Listen in to God's Truth that we're speaking about today!

Micah 6:8 presentation slide 🌸

ASK _____ *[name of your club]* GEMS and GEMS Leaders, what does the LORD require of us?

(Leaders and girls respond): “To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God” (Micah 6:8).

GEMS GIRLS' CLUBS AIM HISTORY

GEMS started in 1958. In 1972, GEMS Girls' Clubs adopted Micah 6:8 as the organization's Theme Verse and Aim. At the start of many GEMS Clubs around the globe, girls and their leaders recite the Aim together to remind one another how God wants us to live.





MUSICAL WORSHIP

[Time: You decide! About 4 minutes per song]

LEADER NOTE: Check out the GEMS YouTube playlist (bit.ly/WayfinderSongs) for worship song ideas. You may want to sing songs about Jesus being the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

SAY GEMS stands for Girls Everywhere Meeting the Savior. At GEMS, we worship our Savior, Jesus, in many ways, including prayer, studying His Word, and serving others. One way we worship God at the beginning of every GEMS Club meeting is by singing. Let's sing our praises loud to God, the only One deserving of our worship.

LEADER NOTE: Be sure to use the helpful "Wayfinder Creative Movement Instructions" video  and the "Wayfinder Creative Movement Performance" video,  or make up your own motions to help girls learn the Wayfinder Theme Song. 

(Sing one or more songs as a whole group.)

SAY Wow, you sound amazing together! You can have a seat.

LEADER NOTE: If your club has older girls meeting separately with the *Wayfinder Grades 6–8 Small Group Leader's Guide*, this is the time to dismiss them to their small groups.



LESSON OPENER

WELCOME TO THE WAYFINDER TRAIL

[Time: 5 minutes]

LEADER NOTE: Each Wayfinder Large Group Lesson has a Teaching Outline  available in the Online Resources. This tool will help you have an efficient, fun Large Group time. Be encouraged to use the full script below to prepare and rehearse for Large Group, and use the outline as a reference as you lead the girls through the Lesson Opener, Bible Teaching, and Theme Verse.

SAY Welcome to the Wayfinder Trail! *(Modify the following sentences to match your club's unique props and scenery.)* Look at the amazing pine trees and wildflowers around us. In the distance *(teni one hand above your eyes)*, we can even see some huge mountain peaks! And what's that I hear? It's a waterfall!

I can't wait to explore this amazing trail with you here at GEMS. Along the way, we'll ask some big questions and discover wonderful Truths about God together.

Girls, we all have questions, including questions about the Bible, God, what it means to follow Jesus, and more. GEMS is the place to explore your questions.

Before we set out on the Wayfinder Trail, we will need our backpack. *(Hold up the backpack with the compass in it.)*

LEADER NOTE: You will utilize the same backpack in every Large Group time. Each lesson features a key prop that helps girls remember what they have learned. Starting in Lesson Two, you will spend time doing a Recap & Review, where you will hold up the prop(s) used in previous lesson(s) to help girls remember what they have learned so far through Wayfinder.

SAY This backpack will have one new prop every week to help us remember what we learn! This compass *(take the compass out of the backpack and hold it up)* will help us remember what we're learning today in Lesson One, "Wayfinder."



ASK Does anyone know what a compass is used for? *(Take responses.)*

SAY Yes, compasses help hikers stay on the correct path so they don't wander off and get lost. A compass is a steady, trustworthy guide, pointing the way.

The Bible *(hold up the Bible)*, the capital-T Truth, is like this compass *(hold up the compass)*. The Bible is God's story, and it helps us know God and discover the best way to live. Because God doesn't lie, we can trust that the words in the Bible are steady, unchanging, and the capital-T Truth *(hold up compass)*, guiding us on the path we take.

Girls, think about the paths you have taken today. Maybe you walked to school, or maybe you took the bus. Maybe you chose to sit with your best friend at lunch, or maybe you decided to sit with a new friend. Maybe after school you helped your sibling with their homework, or maybe you helped your mom prepare dinner. All of our days have looked different; we've all been on different paths.

On the Wayfinder Trail, we recognize that we all took different paths here because our paths are as unique as we are, but we share the same joy in learning more about Jesus, our Savior.

No matter how different our own paths may be, together we can follow Jesus, whom the Bible calls the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We can be "wayfinders."

Now, you might be wondering, *Why should we follow Jesus? What does it mean to be a "wayfinder?" Does this mean anything to me?*

Again, bring your honest questions. They are always welcome. That's why today's Key Question is . . .

KEY QUESTION: ASK What does it mean to be a "wayfinder"?

"Lesson One Key Question"
presentation slide ✿

SAY Let's turn to God's Word, the Bible *(hold up the compass)*, to learn more about what this means!



BIBLE TEACHING

WAYFINDER

[Time: 10 minutes]

LEADER NOTE: Before each Wayfinder Bible Teaching, get alone with God and your Bible and ask the Holy Spirit to prepare your heart to teach. Explore the Bible Teaching passage, John 14, on your own. You may want to write down what stands out to you, any questions that arise, and how God is inviting you to respond to the passage. Then spend time in prayer over the passage, your fellow GEMS Leaders, and your girls. This preparation time will make a world of difference as you prepare your heart to share the Truth with your club.

SETTING THE SCENE

SAY I'm going to open my Bible to the book of John to find our Wayfinder Theme Verse, which will answer today's Key Question. *(Open your Bible to John 14:6.)*

The Theme Verse is John chapter 14, verse 6. This is in the New Testament, the second part of the Bible, which tells us about Jesus's life on earth and His return to Heaven. It also includes letters written to His followers, teaching them how to have a relationship with God and how to live.

In John 14, Jesus is talking to His closest followers, called His disciples. They had spent years learning from Jesus; they loved Him.

Imagine their shock when Jesus told them He was about to leave them and they couldn't come with Him (John 13:33). They were confused and terrified, and Jesus knew it.



BIBLE STORY

SAY One of Jesus's disciples, Thomas, asked Him an honest question.

Girls, remember, it's good to ask our honest questions. Sometimes it takes courage to ask our honest questions, but they are welcome here. Jesus also welcomes our questions. *(Read John 14:5.)*

Thomas wanted to know the location where Jesus was going. He wanted to follow Jesus wherever He went! But Jesus wasn't only directing them to a location. He was also talking about a *relationship*. Jesus wanted a relationship with His disciples. He wants a relationship with each of us too.

Let's listen to what Jesus said to Thomas's question.

(Read John 14:6.)

John 14:6 presentation slide ✝

This is the Wayfinder Theme Verse.

Girls, repeat after me: "Jesus is the Way."
(Extend your arms in front of you. Wait for girls to repeat after you.)

Trusting and following Jesus is the only way to live forever with God today and in Heaven one day.

But what *exactly* does it mean to trust and follow Jesus forever?

GOSPEL CONNECTION: To trust Jesus means that you believe what He said and did is true. While He was on earth, Jesus said and did some pretty incredible things. He told people about His Father, God, and showed them His incredible love. He even showed His love in the most amazing way by dying on the cross for everyone's sins. "Sin" is anything we think, say, or do that disobeys God.

But Jesus is so powerful that He rose from the dead three days later, defeating all sin! He took the punishment for every person's sins so if they ask Him for forgiveness, they can be forgiven and spend forever with Him.

Girls, this is true for you too! If you have any questions about what it means that Jesus died on the cross for sins or what it means to follow Jesus, please ask. I'd love to tell you more.

Jesus loves us so much that He made a way for us to be forgiven of our sins and live with Him forever. Jesus is *the Way*!

Jesus also said He is the Truth. Girls, repeat after me: "Jesus is the Truth." *(Make a T with your hands. Wait for girls to repeat after you.)*

Jesus is God's Son; God does not lie. What Jesus said and did was true. Girls, we all hear lies and things that aren't true, like that we aren't smart enough or pretty enough. But God's Word, the Bible *(hold up compass)*, and God's Son, Jesus, only tell us the Truth.

Jesus also said He is the Life. Girls, repeat after me: "Jesus is the Life." *(Lift both arms in the air. Wait for girls to repeat after you.)*

Jesus is the Life because He is the only way to live with God today and forever.

APPLICATION

SAY Girls, at GEMS, we believe that following Jesus, *the Way*, is the best way to live. He wants a relationship with each of us!

No matter the different paths we all take each day, we can follow Jesus. We can follow Him by trusting that He loves us so much that He died for us and rose again, inviting us to live with Him today and forever. And we can share this incredible Truth with others! We can follow Him by not listening to lies and rumors we may hear in the lunchroom or on the soccer team; instead, we can memorize and remember God's Truth. We can follow Jesus when we feel afraid or nervous by praying to Him and asking for His help.

This means we can follow Jesus when we are in the lunchroom, playing dodgeball in the gym, or writing our school assignment. We can keep following Jesus when our friend says something behind our back, when we feel anxious about tryouts, or when we feel insecure about our appearance. We can always follow Jesus and know that He is with us wherever we go.

That's why this GEMS season, we are going to be "wayfinders"—girls and women who follow Jesus. Together, we will ask our big questions and explore the Bible, God's Truth *(hold up the compass)*. We will learn how to follow Jesus through prayer, tell others about Him, study and think about His Word, and more. We will learn how to be girls and women who confidently walk in Truth, pointing others to

Jesus through our words and actions. We will be “wayfinders!”

That brings us to today’s Key Truth . . .

“Lesson One Key Truth” presentation slide ✨

KEY TRUTH: A “wayfinder” follows Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Let’s pair today’s Key Question and Key Truth. I’ll ask the Key Question, and you’ll answer with the Key Truth.

ASK Girls, [Key Question] what is a “wayfinder”?

GIRLS SAY [Key Truth] A “wayfinder” follows Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

SAY Great job, girls!

I can’t wait to continue our journey down the Wayfinder Trail this GEMS season to get to know Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life—even more and explore our questions together.

Now, let’s try out these fun motions to the Wayfinder Theme Verse, John 14:6. At GEMS, we believe that memorizing verses helps God’s Truth stick!

THEME VERSE

[Time: 3 minutes]

LEADER NOTE: Encourage your girls to create motions or a tune to help them remember the verse, or use the motions provided in the “John 14:6 Lesson One Memory Verse” video. ✨ Alternatively, you can play the “John 14:6 Lesson One Memory Verse” video and have the girls practice the motions while the video plays.

SAY Great job! I encourage you to practice that verse this week and to remember that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Girls, if you need a Bible of your own, want to talk about your day, or want to learn more about how you can have a relationship with Jesus, please meet with me or (say the name of another leader), or talk to your Small Group Leader.

Before we head to our small groups, let’s pray.



WRAP-UP & PRAYER

[Time: 1 minute]

(Pray our own prayer or conclude with this one.)

PRAY God, thank You for bringing us together for this new GEMS season. We have so much to explore and learn about You and Your amazing love for us. Thank You for making a way for us to live with You forever by sending Your Son, Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Help us to have excitement and curiosity as we discover what it means to follow Jesus. In Jesus’s name, amen.

SAY (Hold up the Wayfinder key chain.) To help us remember this week’s lesson, there is a “Wayfinder” card on your Wayfinder key chains. (If your girls don’t have the key chain with all the cards, distribute the “Wayfinder” card as they leave Large Group.)

Have an awesome time in Small Group! There, you’ll have a blast playing some games and getting to know each other more while you dive deeper into what we learned in Large Group.

(Dismiss girls to their small groups. See the Wayfinder Small Group Leader’s Guide for further instructions. Gather the girls back together for Dismissal during the last 5–10 minutes of club.)



DISMISSAL

LEADER NOTE: Play music as girls return to the large group room. How you end the night matters as much as how you begin. Have fun!

(Play the Meet the “Real Talk Team” video and the “Lesson One Real Talk” video. Use the scripts found in the Wayfinder Online Resources if there are technical difficulties.)

Let's pray together.

(Pray your own prayer or use this one below.)

PRAY God, thank You for everything we learned about You today. Thank You for each of these girls. Thank You for loving us so much that You sent Your Son, Jesus, to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life so we can live with You forever. Help us have the courage to come to club with our questions and eagerly grow in our relationships with You. In Jesus's name we pray, amen.

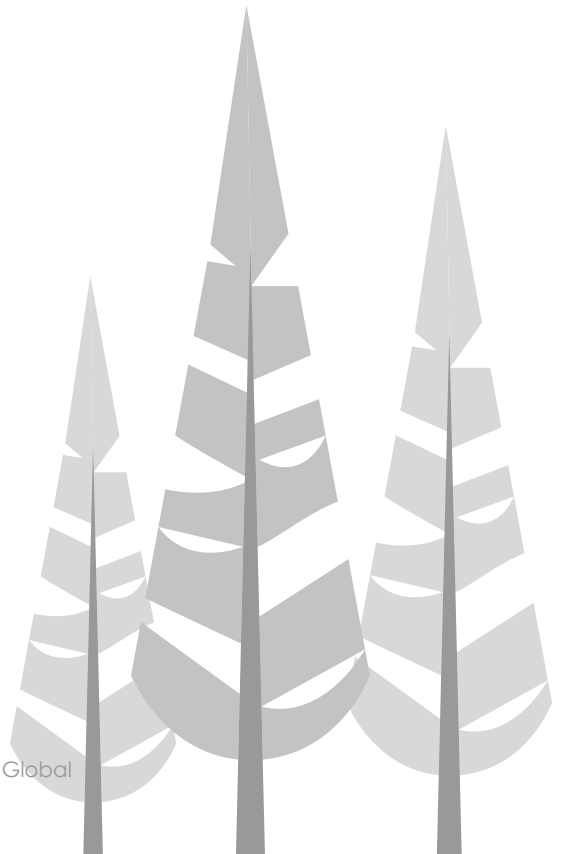
DISTRIBUTE any take-home information, including the *Wayfinder* key chain cards and several GEMS Club Invitations 📄 to help girls invite their friends to your next club meeting.

OPTIONAL OPPORTUNITY:
**CONNECT WITH GEMS
GROWN-UPS**

[Time: 15–20 minutes, depending on Q&A time]

LEADER NOTE: There are many helpful resources (listed on pages 15-16) available in the Online Resources to help you run a GEMS Grown-Ups meeting. Take this time to help grown-ups understand the importance of GEMS Club and give an overview of why the *Wayfinder* curriculum was made for their girls. Have fun!

LESSON



Wayfinder

FOLLOWING THE WAY,
THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

JOHN 14:6

SMALL GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

GEMS Girls' Clubs

GEMSGC.ORG

Lesson 1

WAYFINDER

DATE OF LESSON: _____

KEY QUESTION: What is a “wayfinder”?

KEY TRUTH: A “wayfinder” follows Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

THEME VERSE: “Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’” (John 14:6).

NOTE: A  indicates that something is included in the Wayfinder Online Resources.



SMALL GROUP WELCOME

[Time: 3 minutes]

LEADER NOTE: Are you ready to embark on the adventure of a lifetime as you invest in the hearts and lives of the girls in your small group? Together, you'll laugh, craft, grow, and journey through the pages of Scripture to discover the One whom every story points to: Jesus! Know that the GEMS Staff is praying for you and that God equips you.

♥ SMALL GROUP SUPPLIES

- Bibles (one per girl and leader)
- One *Wayfinder Journal* per girl
- One *Small Group Leader's Guide* per leader
- Writing utensils: pencils, pens, crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- Small Group Welcome supplies: timer, two inflated balloons or plush balls (optional)
- Step In supplies: One GEMS Club Impact Survey  per girl; one large paper map
- Theme Verse supplies: “John 14:6 Theme Verse” video 
- God's Word Is Truth supplies: *Wayfinder Lesson One Coloring Page*  (optional)

SAY Welcome to Small Group, everyone! My name is _____, and I am so excited to be your GEMS Small Group Leader. I'm glad each of you is here.

(If time allows, tell the girls your name, a few fun facts about yourself, and how long you've served in GEMS.)

This is a safe place for us to laugh, cry, make fun memories, dig into God's Word, and discover who God is.

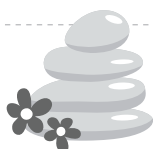
Whether you've heard about Jesus before, you already have a relationship with Him, or all of this sounds new to you, you are welcome here. When we're together, no question is too big or too small, too silly or too serious. I'm excited to get to know each other this GEMS season as we hang out together.

Let's get to know one another a little better with this fun activity, “World Record Name Game.”

CRAFT SUGGESTION

TRAILHEAD SIGN

See page 60 for craft supplies and instructions. For a video tutorial of this craft, view the “L1-Trailhead Sign” video. 



LEADER NOTE: If girls already know one another's names, have them close their eyes for an added challenge. If you have fewer than three people, consider adding two inflated balloons or plush balls to the activity and try to keep them in the air for extra fun while you quickly say names.

“WORLD RECORD NAME GAME”

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Invite girls to stand or sit in a circle facing one another. Go around the circle twice to share names aloud.
2. Use a timer to see how fast the girls can go around the circle, saying the name of the person on their right.
3. Play as many rounds as possible and try to set the “world record” for the fastest name game.

SAY Great job! You girls catch on quick. We'll have lots of fun getting to know one another this club season.



STEP IN

[Time: 5 minutes]

“STARTING POINT”

LEADER NOTE: Rather than doing the activity below, consider having the girls complete the brief GEMS Club Impact Survey at the very beginning and end of your GEMS season. You can find this printable in the GEMS Portal on the Resources page. Be sure to follow the instructions on the survey to share your feedback with the GEMS ministry.

SAY Girls, check out this map! (Hold up the map or pass it around to the girls to touch and see.) Before using GPS, we used to find our way around with a paper map like this. It's big and a little confusing, right?

To use a map and think about where you want to go, you first have to figure out where you are now, which is called your starting point.

Girls, today, we're at the starting point of our GEMS season together. As we journey together this club season, we will grow in friendships with one another and explore God's Word, the Bible, to discover more about who He is, who we are, and the best way to live. By the end of the club season, it is my prayer for each one of us that we will love and trust Jesus more, grow in godly friendships with one another, and discover many Key Truths in God's Word along the way.

I want you to know that we are in this together. Our small group is a place where we can ask

our questions, laugh together, build strong friendships, learn from one another, and cry together. This is a safe place. Together, we're going to link arms and help each other make the journey with Jesus as we grow in our relationships with Him.

Maybe today, you're just starting out hearing about Jesus. Maybe you've heard about Him before. No matter where you're starting out in your faith today, I want you to know that you are welcome here and you are not alone. There is always room for growth. We can learn a lot from one another. I'm so glad you're here!

THEME VERSE

[Time: 5 minutes]

SAY Girls, something we'll do together in our small group is memorize Bible verses. This is a great way to get to know God and His Truth more. This season, we'll memorize our Wayfinder Theme Verse and seven other verses together.

LEADER NOTE: As you practice memorizing the memory verses this season, be sure girls are grasping the context and meanings of the verses. Help girls understand *why* they are memorizing God's Truth. Explain that the Bible is the true story of God's interaction with the world. Scripture shows us how to know God and live for Him.

SAY Let's practice memorizing our Wayfinder Theme Verse, John 14:6. This verse shows us the powerful Truth about who Jesus is.

HAVE EACH GIRL FIND THE VERSE IN HER BIBLE

Learning to use the table of contents and navigate God's Word takes time, but it is a skill worth teaching.

PRACTICE WITH MOTIONS View the “John 14:6 Theme Verse” video ✨ or get creative and make up your own motions.





GOD'S WORD IS TRUTH

[Time: 10 minutes]

LEADER NOTE: Distribute *Wayfinder Journals* and writing utensils to each girl and ensure that each girl has a Bible. Engage girls with the meaningful questions and activities in their *Wayfinder Journals* and help girls navigate their Bibles to find the Scripture references that come up.

You can find the *Wayfinder Lesson One Coloring Page* ✨ in the Online Resources, should you wish to print it off for the girls in your group to color as you discuss it together.

LESSON RECAP: In today's Bible Teaching, we learned that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

As we get to know God by exploring His Word, the Bible, and by asking our questions together, we'll discover what it means to follow Jesus in our everyday lives.

Girls, life with Jesus is a great adventure—it's not always easy, but it's always worth it. Let's dig a little more into this idea with some questions to get us thinking.

1. **ASK** What do you remember hearing earlier in the Large Group Bible Teaching? **(Listen to responses. Share what stood out to you as well.)**

SAY Great memory, girls! *(If girls struggle to recall the Bible Teaching, briefly summarize it for them before moving on.)* Whether today is your first time hearing about Jesus or if you already have a close relationship with Him, you are welcome here.

2. **ASK** When it comes to Jesus, who do other people say He is at school, at home, on your sports team, etc.? **(Listen to responses.)**

SAY Thanks for sharing, girls. Here at GEMS, we believe Jesus really is who He said He was—the Son of God, who deserves our praise!

Let's open our Bibles to our *Wayfinder* Theme Verse, John 14:6, to remind ourselves of the words Jesus used to tell His followers (and us!) who He really is. *(Encourage girls to open their Bibles to John 14:6. Have one volunteer read the verse aloud. If girls already have it memorized, encourage them to say it from memory.)*

3. **ASK** How does Jesus describe Himself? **Jesus says He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Trusting in Jesus is how we can have a relationship with God.**

SAY Jesus invites each of us to get to know Him more this GEMS season. If you have questions about how you can trust in Jesus and have a relationship with Him, I would love to talk with you.

4. **SAY** Let's open our *Wayfinder Journals* to page 4. No matter how long we have known Jesus, there is always more to discover about Him and God's Word, the Bible.

Let's take some time to brainstorm some questions about God and the Bible we may be wondering about as we journey together this GEMS season.

LEADER NOTE: The *Wayfinder Journal* encourages girls to dig deeper into God's Word and reflect on their learning. If girls do not have a *Wayfinder Journal*, they can still follow along and answer the questions verbally. You can also give girls plain paper to use or draw the journal activities as they appear below on a whiteboard. Purchase journals for your girls through the online GEMS Store at gemsgc.org/shop or call the GEMS Office to place an order. See page 77 for contact information for the GEMS Office.

WAYFINDER



Key Question: What is a "wayfinder"?

Key Truth: A "wayfinder" follows Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Write or draw some questions you have about God, the Bible, or faith as we begin our *Wayfinder* adventure this GEMS season.

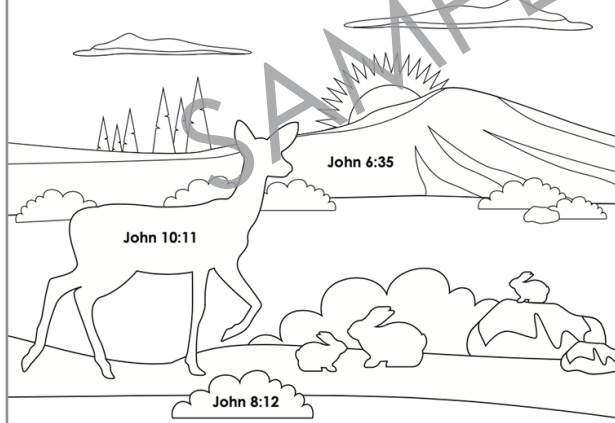
LEADER NOTE: Invite girls to share some of what they wrote down, but don't force them to do so. Remember, you may not be able to answer every question a girl asks in club, and that's okay. It's all right to say you're not sure of the answers, but commit to searching Scripture alongside girls. Teach them to explore God's Word and ask for His wisdom in prayer. Seek godly counsel from other GEMS Leaders and your pastor.

SAY As you think of more questions this week, write them down somewhere so you can add them to your *Wayfinder Journals* next time.

- Bonus journal activity (optional): SAY** Look at page 5 in your *Wayfinder Journals*. Team up with someone nearby to look up each Bible verse and read it aloud. Think about what each passage shows you about who Jesus is. Then color in the spaces where the verses were.

GOD'S WORD IS TRUTH

INSTRUCTIONS:
Team up with someone nearby to look up each Bible verse and read it aloud. Think about what each passage shows you about who Jesus is. Then, color in the spaces where the verses appear.



Pray

Dear God, thank You for _____.

I am wondering _____.

Please help me trust You with _____.

_____ and help me to follow You this week. In Jesus's name, amen.

5

DIGGING DEEPER QUESTIONS

LEADER NOTE: If there are older or more mature girls in your group who are ready for a deeper study of Scripture, work on this section as time allows.

- ASK** Who do you know that has followed Jesus for a long time? What do you notice about that person? **(Allow for responses. You may want to share an example to get the conversation started.)**

LEADER NOTE: This question is intended to help girls see real-life godly examples of what it means to follow Jesus for a lifetime. People who follow Jesus, "wayfinders," are meant to journey through life differently than those who choose not to trust in Him. Help girls understand this point.

- SAY** Not everyone chooses to follow Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. **ASK** How can you choose to follow Him at home, at school, in your neighborhood, and in your community, even if others do not? **(Allow for responses.)**

LEADER NOTE: For girls who are new to learning about Jesus, take time to share the gospel and your own testimony about how you chose to follow Jesus. For spiritually mature girls, challenge them to share their faith with others, guiding others to Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. By the end of your time together, make sure each girl has her own copy of God's Word at home, and if they don't, give a Bible to those in need.

- ASK** What is one way you can point others to Jesus through your own attitude, actions, and words this week? **You can ask Jesus to help you think, act, and talk like Him, showing His love and kindness to others, sharing what you learn at church and/or GEMS, sharing the gospel, and more.**



“TRAIL GUIDE TESTIMONY”



LET'S PRAY

PRAYER REQUESTS

Wayfinder

FOLLOWING THE WAY,
THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

JOHN 14:6

GRADES 6-8

SMALL GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

GEMS Girls' Clubs

GEMSGC.ORG

SAMPLE LESSON

GEMS Girls' Clubs

GEMS Global
Bringing girls into a living, dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ

Mailing Address
US: 1847 R W Berends Dr. SW, Wyoming, MI 49519
Canada: 261 Woodall Way, Woodstock, ON N4T 0K9

gemsgc.org

Content & Curriculum Manager: Rachel Wierenga
Content Contributors: Lenae Bulthuis and Linda Haverkamp
Content Editor: Meaghan Minkus
Creative Director: Michelle Lenger
Page design and layout: Kerri Bowditch
Executive Director: Wendy Hammond

Scripture quotations taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used with permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com.

Scripture quotations marked ESV are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. ESV Text Edition: 2025. The ESV text may not be quoted in any publication made available to the public by a Creative Commons license. The ESV may not be translated in whole or in part into any other language. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2026 GEMS Global, 1847 R W Berends Dr. SW, Wyoming, MI 49519

ISBN: 978-1-967607-08-2

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission from the publisher.

Printed in the USA

Copyright © 2026 GEMS Global

Lesson 1

WAYFINDER

DATE OF LESSON: _____

KEY QUESTION: What is a “wayfinder”?

KEY TRUTH: A “wayfinder” follows Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

THEME VERSE: “Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’” (John 14:6).

NOTE: A 🦋 indicates that something is included in the Wayfinder Online Resources.

♥ SMALL GROUP SUPPLIES

- Bibles (one per girl and leader)
- One *Wayfinder Grades 6–8 Journal* per girl
- One *Wayfinder Grades 6–8 Small Group Leader’s Guide* per leader
- Writing utensils: pencils, pens, or Bible highlighters (if they have their own Bibles to highlight)
- Bible Study supplies: one index card or sticky note per girl
- Connection supplies: one Get to Know You Sheet 🦋 per girl

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

See page 15 for Craft, Connection, and Caring for Self options to engage with your girls after your Bible Study.



WELCOME/CHECK-IN

[Time: 5 minutes]

LEADER NOTE: You have been entrusted with one to two hours with this small group of girls; this time has the potential to impact them for eternity. Listen attentively, love every girl as if she’s your favorite human on the planet, and lead with an energy you may or may not feel right now. Pray that girls have a greater understanding of who Jesus is and what it means to follow Him.

SAY Welcome to GEMS! My name is _____, and I’m excited to be your Small Group Leader. Whether this is your first time at GEMS or you’ve been coming for years, you belong here, and I’m so grateful you’re part of this group.

LEADER NOTE: If girls did not meet in Large Group during praise, worship, and opening prayer, open with prayer now.

“NAMES MATTER”

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **SAY** Introduce yourself to the group by saying your first and last name. Let’s start with _____ (choose a girl) and go to the right.
2. **SAY** Now share your first name and one thing you enjoy doing. Let’s start with _____ (choose a girl) and go to the left.
3. **SAY** Last time! Say your first name backwards. For example, Olivia would be Aivilo. Let’s begin with _____ (choose a girl) and go to the right.

TRANSITION

(After everyone has shared) **SAY** This is a fun and creative group. I can see that already! There are many ways to introduce ourselves. Whether we're sitting in a circle together, chatting in the hallways, or waiting to be picked up after GEMS, let's keep sharing and getting to know one another more.



OPENER

[Time: 5 minutes]

LEADER NOTE: Rather than doing the activity below, consider having the girls complete the brief GEMS Club Impact Survey at the very beginning and end of your GEMS season. You can find this printable resource in the GEMS Portal on the Resources page. Be sure to follow the instructions on the survey to share your feedback with the GEMS ministry.

"ONE WAY"

ASK On a scale of 1 to 10, how important is friendship to you? Show your answer by extending your fingers. *(Wait for responses.)*

SAY Friendships matter. To have good friends, we need to be good friends.

ASK What is one way to be a good friend? *(Go around the circle and have each girl share her answer. Do not accept duplicate answers.)*

ASK Do you think we could go around the circle again and share even more ways to be a good friend without duplicating our answers? I believe we can. Let's try it. *(Go around the circle again and have each girl share another answer.)*

SAY Excellent. You get what it means to be a good friend!

Even though I asked you to share one way to be a good friend, there are actually many ways to do so. You proved that with your amazing answers.

A relationship or a friendship with God is different. There's only one way to have a relationship with God. There's only one way to be God's child and live in relationship with Him today and one day in Heaven.

ASK Does anyone know what that one way is? *(Wait for responses.)*

SAY Yes. It's through God's Son, Jesus.

TRANSITION

Maybe you know a lot about Jesus; maybe you don't. Maybe you want to know Him more; maybe you're not sure. No matter how much or how little you know about Jesus, you're always welcome here.

This year, we're going to focus on some big questions that girls your age are asking. But I don't want to be the only one asking questions. I want to hear your questions. All of your questions are welcome. Whether you have questions about Jesus, yourself, relationships, or our world, be brave and ask.

You can ask your questions when we're together at club, you can ask me before or after club, or you can even ask me outside of club. I will never think your question is too small, silly, or stupid. If it matters to you, it matters to God and to me, so please ask.

We're going to do a lot of fun activities this year. *(List some of the highlights you have planned.)* But the most exciting part of club is what we're going to do next—opening our Bibles to learn who God is and what He says about you. Are you ready to begin? I can't wait!



BIBLE STUDY: WAYFINDER

[Time: 15 minutes]

LEADER NOTE: If possible, have girls bring their personal Bibles to GEMS, or provide a Bible for each girl. Be sure to ask girls if they need a Bible at home and provide one for any girl in need. If girls are new to reading the Bible, direct them to the contents page. Explain the division between the Old and New Testaments, chapters, and verses.

Distribute the *Wayfinder Grades 6–8 Journals* when cued to do so. Distribute the Bibles now.

BIBLE READING: JOHN 14:1–6

SAY Please turn to John 14. This is a story about Jesus and His closest disciples. The disciples had spent years learning from Jesus; they loved Him.

So imagine their shock when Jesus told them that He was going to leave and they couldn't come with Him (John 13:33). They were confused and terrified, and Jesus knew it. Let's pick up the story in John 14. Put yourself in the disciples' shoes as we read.

LEADER NOTE: Ask one girl to read John 14:1–6, or split it between two girls. One can read Jesus's words, and the other can read Thomas's question.

(After John 14:1–6 is read . . .)

1. **ASK** If you were in the room with Jesus and His disciples, what are some of the thoughts and feelings you would have had about Jesus's news? (Take personal responses.)
2. **ASK** What did you learn about Jesus from this passage? Girls' responses may include . . .
 - **Jesus sees and understands our troubled hearts.**
 - **Jesus is preparing a place in Heaven, His Father's house, for all who believe in Him.**
 - **Jesus will leave, but He will return for all those who believe in Him so they can live with Him forever.**
 - **Jesus welcomes our questions.**

• **Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one can come to God the Father except through God the Son.**

SAY Thomas thought Jesus was only talking about a location. If Thomas had a phone, he would've pulled up a map app and asked for the address. But Jesus wasn't directing them only to a location but to a relationship. He wanted a relationship with Thomas. He wants a relationship with us too.

3. **ASK** If you were in that room and could ask Jesus one question, what would it be? (Take personal responses.)

SAY Please don't hold back in asking your questions. Asking questions is what we're going to do all season in our *Wayfinder* study. We're going to take all our questions to Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

DISTRIBUTE WAYFINDER GRADES 6–8 JOURNALS

LEADER NOTE: The dotted boxes contain the text within the girls' journals. The additional teaching and questions will help you transition and lead the discussion.

SAY Please turn to page 2 in your journals. (Ask one volunteer to read the opening paragraphs.)

This isn't how they pictured things. Jesus's disciples were confused and worried, and they had big questions about where Jesus was going and what way they were supposed to take to be with Him.

You're in _____ (number) grade. It's a big deal, and you may have some big worries and questions of your own.

The disciples took their questions to Jesus. His response to them is also for you. Jesus said, "Trust Me. Trust who I am and what I'm doing." Trust is the way of "wayfinders."

ASK What is a "wayfinder"? (Have girls read the Q&A *Wayfinder* sidebar together.)

Q: What is a “wayfinder”?

A: A “wayfinder” follows Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

ASK Have you ever heard of a “wayfinder” before? (*Listen to responses.*)

SAY “Wayfinder” is an important word because you can be a “wayfinder.” We’re going to find our way through this school year, big questions, hard stuff, and ordinary days by following Jesus.

(*Ask a volunteer to read the paragraphs under the “Jesus Is Trustworthy” heading and the Q&A sidebar on page 3. Work through the questions together.*)

JESUS IS TRUSTWORTHY

READ JOHN 14:1.

Are you anxious? Stressed? Overwhelmed? Jesus called it having a troubled heart. Here’s what He said about it.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.” – Jesus

1. Draw a stop sign around the words “Do not.”
2. Jesus is bigger than your biggest worry. What does Jesus tell us to do instead of worrying? Circle the answer in John 14:1.

Q: What does it mean to believe in Jesus?

A: To believe in Jesus means that we trust Him. We trust that He is who He says He is and He will do what He says He will do.

ASK Do you think girls have worries and problems that are unique to your age? If so, what are they? (*Listen to responses.*)

(*Group girls into twos and threes to answer the journal question. Then have them share their answers with the whole group.*)

What causes girls to be anxious, fearful, or troubled? There are three examples below to get you started.

APPEARANCES

FITTING IN

GRADES

Share your answers with the whole group. Then write “Trust Jesus” across your list.

GOSPEL CONNECTION: SAY When God created the world, there was no sin, anxiety, worry, or fear. Everything was good (Genesis 1). But that all changed when the first humans disobeyed God (Genesis 3). Sin—which is anything we think, say, or do that doesn’t please God—entered the world and destroyed everything. Only God could put things back together again.

That’s why God’s Son, Jesus, left Heaven to come to earth. Out of His great love, He died on the cross to take the punishment for our sin. Three days later, He rose from the dead, becoming the way for us to be forgiven, have a relationship with God, and live with Him in Heaven one day.

Jesus is more powerful than sin, death, worries, and fear. You can trust Him.

Please write “Trust Jesus” in big letters across your whole list of worries.



(Ask a volunteer to read the paragraphs under the heading "Jesus Can Be Trusted with Your Questions" on page 4.)

JESUS CAN BE TRUSTED WITH YOUR QUESTIONS

READ JOHN 14:5

Sometimes what Jesus says can be confusing. Thomas was confused. But he didn't stay confused by remaining quiet; instead, he was brave and asked Jesus what He meant.

"Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" – Thomas

Maybe you have questions too:

- How can I know if I'm God's child?
- How can I know if I'm going to Heaven?
- _____?

Don't hold back on your questions. Ask Jesus. Pray, read your Bible alone and with others, and keep coming to GEMS.

(Distribute an index card or sticky note to each girl.)

LEADER NOTE: Since this is your first lesson with the girls, they may not know you or one another well. Provide a safe way for them to ask their questions by having them write them on an index card or sticky note. They do not need to include their names. Collect the cards, read the questions, and invite girls to answer, contributing as necessary to ensure all responses align with Scripture. If you don't know the answers, that's okay. Seek wisdom by digging into Scripture and talking with your pastor, Club Coordinator, or other godly leaders, then return to these questions when you meet again. Rest in the mystery of God for what we can't know on this side of eternity.

(Thank the girls for the good questions, then ask a volunteer to read the paragraphs under the heading "Jesus Is the Way, the Truth, and the Life" on page 4. Work through the activities together.)

JESUS IS THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

READ JOHN 14:6.

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." – Jesus

Jesus Is the Way. Draw an arrow above "the way." Jesus is the one and only road to God the Father. Those who trust Jesus can belong to God's family and live with Him today and forever.

Jesus Is the Truth. Draw a capital T above "the truth." We can only know the Truth about God (and everything else!) through Jesus, the Truth.

Jesus Is the Life. Draw a stick person above "the life." Jesus is the source of life. He gives a real and never-ending life to all who trust in Him.

SAY John 14:6 is key to knowing who Jesus is; let's memorize it together.



THEME VERSE

[Time: 2 minutes]

Memorize John 14:6 by using the "Draw It" activity.

Memorize It

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'" (John 14:6).

"DRAW IT"

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Direct girls to the memory verse in their journals. If they are using their own Bibles, invite them to highlight John 14:6 with the Bible highlighters.
2. Ask girls to draw an arrow, a capital T, and a stick person above "way," "truth," and "life." They should take a long look at these pictures until they can close their eyes and still see the images.
3. Picturing the images, have them recite the verse together.

(Ask a volunteer to read the paragraphs under the heading "Make It Personal." As they make their "I will" statements, give clarity to what it means to have a relationship with Jesus. Pray with anyone who desires to ask Jesus to be their Savior, Lord, and Friend. Follow up by talking to her parents or guardians, your Club Coordinator, and your pastor.)

Following Jesus is bigger than a one-time prayer; it's a whole new life. Encourage girls to trust Jesus with their questions, worries, and daily lives. If they're not currently reading a Bible at home, have them start reading in the book of John. If they have questions, ask them to write their questions down and bring them to GEMS Club. Encourage them to pray about everything and to stay connected to other believers by coming to club and to church. If they don't currently have a church home, invite them to go to church with you. There's room for them, their family, and their friends.)

Make It Personal

Jesus is the Way to God, the Truth about God (and everything else!), and the Life that is real and forever. Make it personal by answering these questions.

- Is Jesus your way, truth, and life?
- If you trust Jesus, how are you following Him?

Not sure? Talk to a parent, grandparent, or GEMS Leader who follows Jesus.

I will _____

SAY Let's read the three key truths about Jesus from our Bible study. If you learned even more, write your thoughts in your journal. *(Invite girls to share what they learned.)*

The Truth

1. Jesus is trustworthy.
2. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life—the only way to God.
3. Jesus invites everyone to trust in Him.
4. Add your own thoughts about what you learned: _____



PRAYER & BLESSING

LEADER NOTE: Invite the girls to pray, pray your own prayer, or use the one below.

Dear Jesus, You are the Way to God, the Truth about God, and the Life that is real and never-ending. Use this GEMS season to teach each of us to follow You. In Your name, amen.

(Before you transition to another activity or dismiss your girls, speak this blessing over them.)

SAY Girls, may you find your way through good days, hard days, and all days by following Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.



ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

After Bible study, choose one of the activities below to engage your girls in creativity, connection, or caring for themselves. By learning new skills, engaging in relationships, and having fun, they will grow into girls of faith, inside and out.

CRAFT



LEADER NOTE: For additional craft ideas, visit the Wayfinder Pinterest board at pinterest.com/gemsgc/wayfinder.

LESSON ONE CRAFT: TRAILHEAD SIGN

[Time: 20 minutes]

LEADER NOTE: For a video tutorial, view the "L1- Trailhead Sign" video. ✿

SUPPLIES:

- One wooden arrow or square cut out per girl
- Optional: paint or stain

OPTION ONE

(if you have a Cricut® machine):

- "Wayfinder Stencil" download (available at bit.ly/WayfinderStencil)
- At least one 7.5 mil blank stencil sheet (Each sheet will create three stencils that can be used multiple times.)
- Stencil adhesive
- Craft paint
- One foam paint brush per girl

OPTION TWO

(if you do not have a Cricut® machine):

- One wired I-cord (30 in [76 cm] long) per girl
- Glue gun

LEADER NOTE: Welcome to the first craft of Wayfinder! What better way to start this season's crafts than to learn the John 14:6 Theme Verse and reinforce the Truth that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life? During the craft, consider reviewing the Wayfinder Theme Verse, John 14:6.



INSTRUCTIONS:

5. Paint or stain the wooden arrow or square cutout, if desired.
6. Choose to either stencil the John 14:6 Theme Verse (option one) or use the cord and wire to create the word "Jesus" (option two).

OPTION ONE

3. **IN ADVANCE:** Download the "Wayfinder Stencil" (available at bit.ly/WayfinderStencil) in Cricut Design Space. Using your Cricut® machine, print out the stencil on a stencil sheet.
4. Using the stencil adhesive, apply the prepared stencil to the wooden arrow or square cutout.
5. Using small quantities of paint, fill in the stencil. (You only need a tiny bit of paint, so it should be dry within a few minutes.) Once complete, carefully remove the stencil from the sign.

OPTION TWO

3. Create the word "Jesus" using the wired I-cord.
4. Glue the corded word to the sign.

LEADER NOTE: As the girls work on the craft, ask the craft & chat questions.

CRAFT & CHAT QUESTIONS

1. Have you gone on a hike with your family or friends? If you said yes, tell us about it!
2. What types of things do you read about on trailhead signs?
3. If you were on a challenging hike, who would you want with you and why?



- ## CRAFT & CHAT QUESTIONS
1. Have you gone on a hike with your family or friends? If you said yes, tell us about it!
 2. What types of things do you read about on trailhead signs?
 3. If you were on a challenging hike, who would you want with you and why?
- 

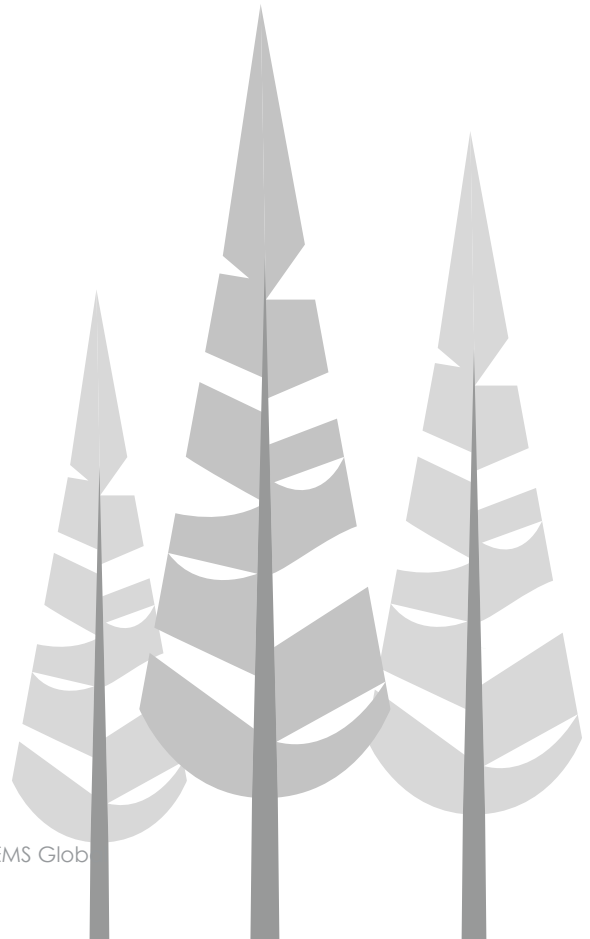
Connecting with the girls and having fun is essential for every lesson, but especially for Lesson One. Building a connection with your girls creates a community of believers where they can grow in their faith.

Take the girls to a coffee shop or create your own coffee drinks, smoothies, or ice cream shakes. Download the Get to Know You Sheet  from the Wayfinder Online Resources. It's an engaging and fun conversational tool to get to know more about one another. Have girls share their answers, and be sure to share about yourself too.

As you gather with the girls, they gain inner strength of heart as they learn who God is and what He says about them. Staying physically strong matters too, so get your girls moving!

For the remainder of your club night, take a hike or create an outdoor scavenger hunt. Discuss how Jesus is the Way and the Bible serves as our map. If outdoor activities are not possible, invite someone from your faith community who is passionate about physical fitness to lead strength training and exercises. Encourage your girls to care for their bodies through exercising, drinking water, and sleeping well.

LESSON



Wayfinder

JOURNAL

THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO:

DATE:

WAYFINDER



Key Question: What is a “wayfinder”?

Key Truth: A “wayfinder” follows Jesus—the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Write or draw some questions you have about God, the Bible, or faith as we begin our *Wayfinder* adventure this GEMS season.

SAMPLE LESSON

Theme Verse

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’” **JOHN 14:6**

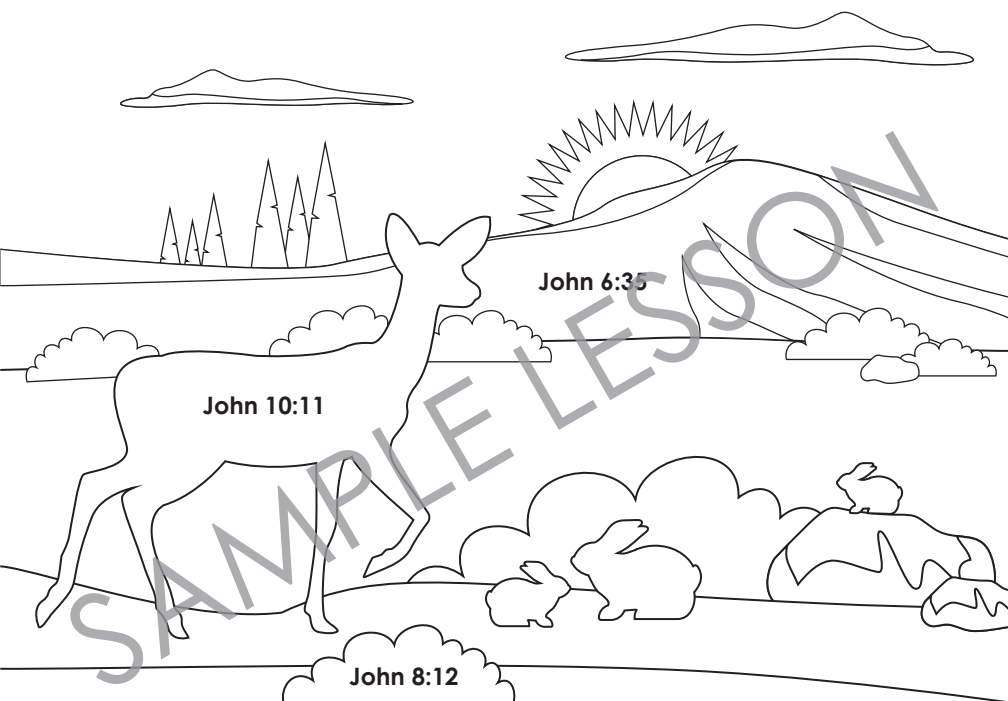
Copyright © 2026 GEMS Global

GOD'S WORD IS TRUTH

INSTRUCTIONS:

Team up with someone nearby to look up each Bible verse and read it aloud. Think about what each passage shows you about who Jesus is.

Then, color in the spaces where the verses appear.



Pray

Dear God, thank You for _____.

I am wondering _____.

Please help me trust You with _____.

_____ and help me to follow You this week. In Jesus's name, amen.



Wayfinder

JOURNAL

THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO:

DATE:

Lesson 1

WAYFINDER

JOHN 14:1-6

Q: What is a
“wayfinder”?

A: A “wayfinder”
follows Jesus—
the Way, the
Truth, and the Life.

This isn't how they pictured things. Jesus's disciples were confused, worried, and had big questions about where Jesus was going and what way they were supposed to take to be with Him.

You're in _____ (number) grade. It's a big deal, and you may have some big worries and questions of your own.

The disciples took their questions to Jesus. His response is also for you. Jesus said, “Trust Me. Trust who I am and what I'm doing.” Trust is the way of “wayfinders.”

JESUS IS TRUSTWORTHY

READ JOHN 14:1

Q: What does it mean to believe in Jesus?

A: To believe in Jesus means that we trust Him. We trust that He is who He says He is and He will do what He says He will do.

Are you anxious? Stressed? Overwhelmed? Jesus called it having a troubled heart. Here's what He said about it.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me."

—Jesus

1. Draw a stop sign around the words, "Do not."
2. Jesus is bigger than your biggest worry. What does Jesus tell us to do instead of worrying? Circle the answer in John 14:1.

What causes girls to be anxious, fearful, or troubled? Three examples are below to get you started.

Appearances

Fitting in

Grades

Share your answers with the whole group. Then write "Trust Jesus" across your list.

JESUS CAN BE TRUSTED WITH YOUR QUESTIONS

READ JOHN 14:5

Sometimes what Jesus says can be confusing. Thomas was confused. But he didn't stay confused by remaining quiet; instead, he was brave and asked Jesus what He meant.

***"Lord, we don't know where you are going,
so how can we know the way?" —Thomas***

Maybe you have questions too:

- How can I know if I'm God's child?
- How can I know if I'm going to Heaven?

?

Don't hold back on your questions. Ask Jesus. Pray, read your Bible alone and with others, and keep coming to GEMS.

JESUS IS THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

READ JOHN 14:6

***"I am the way and the truth and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through me."
—Jesus***

Jesus is the Way. Draw an arrow above "the way." Jesus is the one and only road to God the Father. Those who trust Jesus can belong to God's family and live with Him today and forever.

Jesus is the Truth. Draw a capital "T" above "the truth." We can only know the Truth about God (and everything else!) through Jesus, the Truth.

Jesus is the Life. Draw a stick person above "the life." Jesus is the source of life. He gives a real and never-ending life to all who trust in Him.

Make It Personal

Jesus is the Way to God, the Truth about God (and everything else!), and the Life that is real and forever. Make it personal by answering these questions.

- Is Jesus your way, truth, and life?
- If you trust Jesus, how are you following Him?

Not sure? Talk to a parent, grandparent, or GEMS Leader who follows Jesus.

I will _____

Memorize It

***"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life.
No one comes to the Father except through me.'"***

(JOHN 14:6)

The Truth

1. Jesus is trustworthy.
2. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life—the only way to God.
3. Jesus invites everyone to trust in Him.
4. Add your own thoughts about what you learned:

**FOLLOWING THE WAY,
THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE**



John 14:6

Wayfinder

Online Resources Supply List

I. LESSON RESOURCES

- *Wayfinder* Lesson Resources (Slides, Color Sheets, Handouts)
- Letter and Grown-up Guides for each lesson
- Name Tags
- Teaching Outlines
- Impact Survey (Lessons 1, 8)
- GEMS Club Invitation (English, Spanish)
- Club Forms - Registration and Photo Release (English, Spanish)
- Real Talk Script and Videos
- Instructional Memory Verse Videos
- Grown-Up Video
- 25 Service Project Ideas
- And more!

2. MUSIC AND CREATIVE MOVEMENT

- *Wayfinder* Theme Song, “Wayfinder” by Steven Wierenga
- Creative Movement Videos (Performance and Instructional)
- “Wayfinder” Lyric and Lead Sheet

3. CRAFT VIDEOS

- Craft Videos
- Craft Templates

4. LOGOS AND BACKGROUNDS

- *Wayfinder* Logos
- *Wayfinder* Graphic
- Blank Presentation Slide

The *Wayfinder* Online Resources are included with the purchase of a *Wayfinder* Starter Kit or sold separately



FOLLOWING THE WAY,
THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

Price Sheet



Curriculum Supplies

DESCRIPTION	ITEM #	MEMBER USD	NON-MEMBER USD	MEMBER CAD	NON-MEMBER CAD
Wayfinder Starter Kit	6301	\$109.95	\$159.96	\$149.99	\$204.97
Large Group Resource Book	6302	\$16.95	\$24.96	\$23.99	\$33.97
Small Group Leader's Guide	6303	\$14.95	\$19.96	\$20.99	\$27.97
Grade 6-8 Small Group Leader's Guide	6304	\$14.95	\$19.96	\$20.99	\$27.97
Online Resources	6309	\$89.95	\$129.96	\$128.99	\$167.97
Journal	6310	\$5.95	\$9.96	\$8.99	\$12.97
Grade 6-8 Journal	6311	\$9.95	\$14.96	\$13.99	\$19.97
Downloadable Poster	6312	\$5.95	\$9.96	\$8.99	\$12.97
Bulletin Insert download (sample)	N/A	Included w/ Membership	Member Club Only	Included w/ Membership	Member Club Only
Badge	6300	\$1.05	Member Club Only	\$1.29	Member Club Only
Verse Cards and Keychain	2613	\$6.95	\$9.96	\$9.59	\$12.97

Gifts and other Wayfinder Supplies

DESCRIPTION	ITEM #	MEMBER USD	NON-MEMBER USD	MEMBER CAD	NON-MEMBER CAD
T-Shirt	6318	\$18.95	\$18.95	\$24.99	\$24.99
Logo Iron-On Transfer	6317	\$4.45	\$6.96	\$6.59	\$8.97
Sticker Sheet (6 stickers)	2683	\$4.45	\$4.45	\$6.59	\$6.59
Everything New Tote Bag	2711	\$9.95	\$9.95	\$14.99	\$14.99
Pen	2677	\$1.05	\$1.05	\$1.99	\$1.99
Notepad	6306	\$2.95	\$2.95	\$3.99	\$3.99
Poster Print (8 x 10)	6313	\$5.95	\$9.96	\$8.99	\$12.97

Items with are included in the *Wayfinder* Curriculum Starter Kit.
Check out this list of items and more on our online store.