

INTRO

Jack woke up one morning with the sun shining brightly into his window. He yawned, rubbed his eyes, and remembered that it was Friday. Fridays were his favorite day of the week. Jack jumped out of bed and decided to go ahead and get ready for school. He put on his favorite T-shirt and a pair of jeans and headed downstairs for breakfast. He had a good feeling it was going to be a fantastic day.

INTRO

Jack rolled over in bed and immediately felt anxious about the day ahead. He had a huge math test at school later that morning. He hated math. Also, he always dreaded having to face Jareth on the bus. He was so mean to everyone! Jack took a deep breath and climbed out of bed. At least he knew his dad promised to make pancakes for him for breakfast.

INTRO

Nothing made Jack happier than when he got to go to art class at school. So when he woke up and realized it was art day, it was no problem to jump right out of bed. He headed downstairs to pour himself a bowl of cereal. Without being told to, he fed his dog, Luna, and packed his lunchbox. "Well, you're getting off to a great start today!" his mom praised him. "Nothing can mess up art day!" replied Jack.

INTRO

Jack was rudely woken up by the wet, sloppy, kiss of his dog, Luna. "Get off me!" he moaned, as he pushed Luna off the bed. He stared at the ceiling for several minutes before slowly sitting up. As soon as he put his feet on the floor, he screamed, "OUCH!" Perhaps he should have put that Lego airplane he built last night on his desk, like his mom recommended. Hopefully his day would get better once he got to school.

What to Do:

Print and cut along dotted lines. Provide one for each small group.

"Choose Your Own Story" Activity Page 1/4

August 2022, Week 3, Preteen Small Group
©2022 The reThink Group, Inc. All rights reserved.

CONFLICT

Once Jack stepped off the bus, he began walking up the sidewalk to the front steps of his school. Out of nowhere, his foot got caught on something and he landed, face first, onto the pavement. "Ouch!" he exclaimed, as he immediately put his hand to his skinned chin. As he turned over, he discovered the cause of his fall. Jareth was standing like a tower over him, laughing loudly. "Maybe you should watch your step!" he grunted with a mean grin.

CONFLICT

Later that morning in art class, Jack was happily painting a still life he had been working on for weeks. He was so glad to be painting and also relieved that Jareth was sitting at a table across the room. Just then, he noticed Jareth's hand go up in the air. "Yes, Jareth?" Mr. Jernigan said. "Can I rinse out my brushes in the sink?" asked Jareth. "Sure," Mr. Jernigan replied. But as Jareth walked by Jack's table, he sneakily put out his hand, causing Jack's water jar to spill all over his painting. His artwork was totally ruined!

CONFLICT

As soon as Jack got on the bus that morning, he spotted Jareth sitting in the seat where he always sits. He could feel Jareth staring at him to see what he would do. Jack decided to say something about it. But just as he was about to open his mouth, Jareth snatched his lunch box and threw it out the window! Inside Jack wanted to cry. He also wanted revenge.

CONFLICT

After breakfast, Jack's dad dropped him off at school. He rushed to catch up with his friends who were walking in. Once they made it inside the building, Jack noticed a kid much younger than him leaning against the wall with tears in his eyes. "Are you okay?" Jack asked him. "Jareth just stole my backpack," he explained between sniffs. "That Jareth sure is trouble!" Jack replied, as he patted the boy on his shoulder. "Did I hear my name?" rumbled a loud, scruffy voice down the hall. Jack looked up and saw Jareth standing there with a nasty grin, ready to pounce.

What to Do:

Print and cut along dotted lines. Provide one for each small group.

RESOLUTION

What Jack really wanted to do was retaliate. Anger burned inside of him, and he found himself breathing hard and fast. But then he remembered something they talked about in his small group at church that week: "God loves us no matter what." He believed that God loves everyone, including Jareth. He took a deep breath and said, "Hey, let's just forget what happened, and move on."

RESOLUTION

Jack looked at Jareth in the eyes and shouted, "I can't believe you did that!" But then he thought about something his dad had told him the last time he had a conflict with Jareth. "Put yourself in Jareth's shoes," he said. "Maybe all he needs is for someone to show him love." Even though it was the last thing he wanted to do, Jack patted Jareth's shoulder, and said, "Accidents happen. I forgive you."

RESOLUTION

Just then, Mr. Jernigan walked up and asked, "Is there a problem here, boys?" It would have been Jack's chance to tell his teacher exactly what Jareth did. And Jareth certainly would have deserved a harsh consequence. But Jack remembered how his mom had forgiven him for leaving his Legos all over the floor the other day. "God loves Jareth when he messes up, just like He loves me when I mess up," he thought. "Thanks, Mr. Jernigan, but everything is fine," Jack said. Jareth immediately looked surprised.

RESOLUTION

Just as Jack was about to take a swing at Jareth, someone took hold of his arm, mid-air. "He matters, too," whispered Mr. Jernigan, just loud enough so that Jack could hear. Mr. Jernigan, the art teacher, also happened to be Jack's Small Group Leader at church. Jack was thankful he had the accountability during a tough situation. He took a deep breath and put his arm back at his side. "No big deal, Jareth," he said.

What to Do:

Print and cut along dotted lines. Provide one for each small group.

ENDING

"I can't believe you did that," Jareth replied, shocked. He quietly walked off. Jack went home from school that day feeling relieved that he had done the right thing. And every day after that, he noticed that Jareth began treating people differently. The love that Jack showed him had made a lasting impact.

ENDING

Jareth blinked his eyes hard as he clearly fought back tears. "Why don't you want revenge?" he asked. Jack took the opportunity to explain to him why he decided to let it go. He told Jareth what he had been learning at church and even invited him to join him next Sunday. Jack and Jareth became friends from that day forward.

ENDING

Forgiveness didn't seem like something Jareth was used to. Dumbfounded, he walked away without saying a thing. But little did Jack know, what he did changed Jareth forever. Again and again, he remembered how Jack had treated him that day, and it became the catalyst for a lasting love that remained in his heart.

ENDING

At first, Jareth seemed like he wasn't willing to accept Jack's forgiveness. He frowned and said, "Whatever, man," as he shoved Jack aside. But sometimes change happens slowly. A few weeks later, when a kid ran into Jareth in the cafeteria, spilling his lunch tray and all his food, his mind went back to Jack. Jareth took a deep breath. "No big deal," he said. And he went to find some paper towels.

What to Do:

Print and cut along dotted lines. Provide one for each small group.