



10 SUMMER GAMES FOR JUNIOR HIGH MINISTRY

Created by juniorhighministry.org

Baby Food Baseball

Topic: Character

Bible: I Samuel 16: 7-12

Supplies:

- Wiffleball bat/fat bat
- A wiffleball
- 4 baseball bases or something you can use as bases
- Squeezable baby food

Directions:

1. You are going to be playing a wacky game of wiffle ball/baseball with a wiffle ball filled with a variety of baby food.
2. Before the pitch, you will squeeze in a good amount of baby food into the ball.
3. Every time the ball is hit, of course, baby food is going to go spinning out of the holes causing a mess.
4. Rules can be the same as regular game of wiffleball/baseball, or you can create your own house rules.
5. Here are some modified rules you might want to include.
 - a. You can throw the ball and hit someone to get them out.
 - b. Allow as many people on a base at a time as you like.
 - c. To make sure the less athletic students will have a good time, make a rule that there are no strike outs.
 - d. Also it might be good before the game to determine where in the outfield is a home run
6. A few additional Summer Time substitutions for baby food:
 - a. Ketchup
 - b. Mustard
 - c. Mayonnaise
 - d. Relish
 - e. EZ Cheez

Say: Clean up time! That was a bit messy but so delicious!

What made it fun and different was the thing that was hidden inside the ball.

Ask:

- What are some other things that would have been fun to squeeze inside our ball?
- What are something things that might have not been a good idea to put inside our ball?

Say: What is inside us and others is honestly what should matter, but so often we are more concerned with the outward appearance. God however is always more concerned with the inward. Check out this verse and story....

Read: I Samuel 16: 7-12

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The Lord has not chosen this one either." Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, "Nor has the Lord chosen this one." Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The Lord has not chosen these." So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," Jesse answered. "He is tending the sheep." Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives." So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; this is the one."

Ask:

- What was Samuel looking for in choosing a king?
- What were God's instructions?
- Who did God choose?
- Why does what's inside matter so much?
- In our game, when did what was inside come out?
- Once the ball was hit, what happened to what was inside?

Say: Let's look at one more verse....

Read: Luke 6:43-45

No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thorn bushes, or grapes from briars. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

Say: See what is stored up inside will come out in times of pressure and when we are "getting hit by the problems of life". You fill your inner self with evil, evil will come out. You fill your inner self with good things of God--good, godly things will come out.

Close in prayer.

Bun Length

Topic: Messing Up

Bible: Colossians 3:13; Hebrews 4:16

Supplies:

- Large sheet of plastic sheeting
- Packets of hotdogs
- Packets of hotdog buns
- Ketchup, Mustard, Relish
- Goggles
- Hose and Towels to clean up

Directions:

1. Lay out the plastic sheeting.
2. On one end, put the hotdog buns, opened and ready for a hotdog.
3. Make three different piles of buns: the number in each pile should equal the number of students on each team.
4. On other end of the plastic sheeting, break students into 3 teams.
5. On go, students will take a hotdog to the other side and place it in a bun.
6. They can only use their nose to move the hotdog across the sheeting.
7. The can only use their mouth to put it in bun.
8. And what hotdog is not complete without Ketchup/Mustard/Relish?
9. Dump condiments all over the plastic sheeting (either in piles or just spread all over).
10. Each hotdog must have all the condiments on it before students can put it in a bun.
11. The team who makes all their hotdogs the quickest wins.

Say: Well that was about as messy as you can get in a game. Who wants to eat their hotdogs right now? Just kidding! I am not going let you eat raw hotdogs that gross. Man, I don't think I have ever seen a bigger mess. I know I have messed up before, and some of mess-ups have been big. Let's talk about messing up today.

Ask:

- What is something you feel you messed-up so badly it couldn't be fixed?
- How did you feel when you messed-up?
- Who was upset at you for messing-up?
- How does it make you feel that your mess-ups may disappoint someone?
- Why do you think we mess-up?
- How do we stop messing-up?

Say: Well, I have some bad news for you; you are never going to stop messing-up. You may not mess things up all the time or maybe you only mess things up that affect you, but you definitely are going to mess-up stuff for the rest of your life.

How can you say that you may ask? Well, because no one is perfect; we all mess-up or sin. See what we are talking about here is sin.

We can work hard at trying not to mess-up, and when we mess-up anyway we can ask for forgiveness, and if someone messes-up and it affects us we need to give forgiveness.

See the bible tells us Jesus died for our mess-ups or sins against God. So why shouldn't we forgive those who mess-up in our lives?

Read: Colossians 3:13

Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.

Why should we forgive those who mess-up in our lives? Because God tells us to, and we need to remember we are also not perfect and we shouldn't expect others to be perfect either. One thing we can be assured of is once we put our faith in Jesus there is nothing we can do to lose God's grace and love. See we don't deserve God's grace but He gives it to us no matter how bad we mess-up, and that is when we need it the most.

Read: Hebrews 4:16

So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive His mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.

Find a partner and pray for each other to have grace for others. If there is someone you need to give grace to because they have messed-up in your eyes, give it to them. Pray about them, and ask for God's grace on you, and forgive them.

If you are having a hard time dealing with this, you may be feeling guilty about how you have not had grace for someone. Or you may be dealing with something you have messed-up that you think you don't deserve God's grace for. Please come find a leader, we want to walk with you and figure out some next steps.

Close in prayer

Cool-Aide Gummy Dunk

Topic: Valuing Others

Bible: Psalm 139:13-16

Supplies:

- 3 large kiddie pools
- Large bags of gummy worms all different colors, large bag of gummy bears different colors
- Three different colors of cool aid mix (enough to color a kiddie pool of water)
- 3 small buckets
- Large roll plastic sheeting
- Shaving cream and balloons

Directions:

1. Lay out plastic sheeting and begin to water it down to make slippery.
2. Fill the three pools with water and add a different color cool-aide to each until the color is strong enough.
3. Put an equal number of gummy worms and bears in each pool, colors do not matter.
4. Divide your students into three teams and line them up on the opposite end of the plastic.
5. On go one student from each team will run or slide down to the pools.
6. They will choose any pool and dunk their head in and fish out a gummy. They can only take one, and they cannot spit it back into the pool.
7. Only one student is allowed at each pool.
8. Gummies are worth different points
 - a. Green Worms 5pt
 - b. Red Worms 3pt
 - c. Yellow Worms 2pts
 - d. All but red gummy bears are worth 1 pt a piece
 - e. Red gummy bears are minus 1pt
9. Once they get a gummy they run back to their team and put it in their team's bucket. A leader will add their points up as the game goes on.
10. The winning team is the team who reaches 50 pts. first.

Say: That looked like it was harder than it sounded. But the biggest question I have right now is, what is your favorite cool-aide flavor? Mine is (your favorite cool aide flavor), but the color really doesn't matter as long as it has enough sugar in it.

Ask:

- What did it feel like when you got just a gummy bear? What did it feel like if it was red?
- As you were getting closer to 50 pts did you take extra time to choose a gummy that was worth more points? How do you choose friends?
- What makes one person worth more than another when it comes to people to hang around? Have you ever felt like a red gummy bear, someone that's not as important as others?

Say: The world is the most common place we turn to when we begin to determine the value or worth of having someone as a friend. We then begin to think of others as unworthy or lower than us.

Ask:

- What does the world tell us makes a person worth more?

Say: There is something amazing I want to let you all in on. God designed and created you in His image. This does not mean you look exactly like God, but you are designed and created to be like Him. When we break this down and try to define our worth or value, it is very easy to figure out. No one is worth more than another because God values everyone the same.

Read: Psalm 139:13-16

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

Say: God designed each of us differently, but He did not create one to be better than another. He values each of us the same even though we are different. When you are starting to put value judgments on others, remember that God loves everyone and values everyone the same, no matter what. It is ok to not want to be friends with everyone, but you still need to respect them and love them.

Ask (students don't need to answer out loud):

- Have you ever know someone that just annoys you for some reason?
- How do you treat this person?

Close: Have students take some quiet time alone to pray about the person that they thought about. Encourage them to ask God for forgiveness for the way they treated this person. Tell them that they need to also talk to God about how they value others.

Hungry Games

Topic: Blessings
Luke 6:38

Supplies:

- Large roll of plastic sheeting
- 4 Donuts
- Various messy foods such as ice-cream and toppings, Spaghettios or canned pasta, cereal and milk, fruit roll ups, cooked spinach, cans of pop/soda
- String
- Chocolate syrup / whipped cream
- Large folding table

Directions:

1. This is a team relay game where students will have to race to the end of the plastic sheeting and eat or drink different foods on the table without using their hands.
2. Lay out the plastic sheeting and put a table at the end. Cover the plastic with chocolate syrup and whipped cream.
3. Before students arrive, have two leaders hold a string taught across the end of the plastic sheeting. Suspend 4 donuts from the taught string with additional string. Put it away until you are ready to play the game.
4. Divide students into four teams.
5. On go each team will slide down the sheeting and eat whatever is placed in front of them on the table. Students cannot use their hands. You may choose to put the soda pop in cups (still no using hands), but don't use plates for the other foods.
6. Put a different food or drink on the table each round. For the first round, use the suspended donuts. Have leaders suspend them over or in front of the table.
 - a. You can rinse the table off with a hose if you want to between rounds.
 - b. You can use the same foods for different rounds depending on the number of people on each team.
7. When a student finishes an item, he or she should call check, and a leader will give them the ok to return to their team or tell them they are not finished yet.
8. Teams will get points based on how quickly they finish each round.

9. When a leader says they finished students run back to their team and score points as follows.

1st team-4 pts. / 2nd team-3pts / 3rd team-2pts / 4th team-1pt

10. The team with the most points wins.

11. Feel free to hose down students when done.

Say: Well that was about the grossest things I have ever seen. But you all stepped up and did your teams proud, and who needs some Pepto? There is a great message behind the messiness of this game. What do you think we were trying to teach you?

Take responses

All of those are great points we could learn from this game, but the one I was looking for was we should be grateful for our blessings from God. We are very blessed to be able to play a game that is based on eating food. Most if not all of us never have to think about where our next meal is coming from. We don't have to worry about having decent clothes or even a roof over our heads. One thing you probably don't think about is how blessed we are to be able to go to school.

Ask:

- Have you ever thought about how blessed we are?
- What are some blessings you have others may not?
- What are some things you take for granted?
- How should you feel about your blessings? Why?
- What can you, as students do to bless others?
- Are there places in your community where you can bless others?

Say: First of all is you should not feel guilty about the blessings God has given you and not given to others. God's plans and blessings are perfect for each person in this world, and He has his reasons for the way He does things. But we do need to look at the blessings God has given you and how can you use those to help others.

Gods blesses those who give back to His people. When we begin to look at the things in our lives as blessing from God and understand that they really aren't ours, we can begin to look at ways we can use His blessings for others. This should not be to make us look good but to show God's love to others who may not know Him.

Read: Luke 6:38

Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.

Say: See the things we are blessed with are not ours; they are God's. Yes we should use them to live decent and good lives, but it is what we do with our lives and our blessings that really matters. If we are serving others, showing God's love and using what we are blessed with to help those in need, then we are passing God's blessing onto others. And the blessings we will receive in return are better than anything we can think of.

Close: Break students back into their teams to pray:

Have them ask God to help them see where they can use the blessings He has given them. Where can the blessings He has given them be used to further His kingdom and show God's love to others?

POP-SICK-LES

Topic: Taste and See the Lord is Good
Psalm 34:8

Supplies:

- Plastic popsicle maker forms
- A wide variety of gross or unusual liquids.
 - Lemon Juice
 - Pickle Juice
 - Mustard
 - Ketchup
 - Vinegar
 - Prune Juice
 - Soy Sauce
 - Mayonnaise
 - BBQ Sauce
 - A-1
 - Sauerkraut Juice
 - Gravy (looks like a fudgesicle)

Directions:

1. Ahead of time, make and freeze 6-8 "Pop-SICK-les", each a unique and special flavor.
2. To play, either call up 2 volunteers to each eat 3-4 or as many volunteers as you have "pop-sick-les" and have everyone just eat one.
3. Tell them that it is going to be a "brain-freeze" challenge to see who can eat their Popsicle the fastest.
4. Ready, Set, Go...and let the funny faces and surprises begin.

Say: Wow-that was fun and really gross! How did that taste?

Ask:

- What is your favorite flavor of REAL popsicles on a hot summer day?
- Are you a person that is willing to taste new foods or new flavors?
- Have you ever done a taste test in a store?

Say: Here check out this short verse....

Read: Psalm 34:8

Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him.

Ask:

- What do you think it means in this verse to “taste and see”?
- Why would David choose the word “taste” to describe getting to know God?
- How is seeing something and tasting something different?
- How have you seen and tasted that God is good in your life?

Close in prayer.

Scoop Ball Lacrosse

Topic: Sin
Romans 2:22-24

Supplies:

- Multiple backyard "scoop ball" sets
- 2 goals - garbage cans, large buckets, ultimate frisbee goals, frisbee golf goals...
- A way to identify teams, consider using colored bandanas
- Large playing area

Directions:

1. The rules of the game are very simple each team is trying get the ball into their goal.
2. The ball is passed from person to person (lacrosse style) using only the "scoops".
3. One option is to play full running style similar to a real game of lacrosse, and the ball is scooped, passed, and shot with no real stop in the game.
4. A second safer option is to play "ultimate Frisbee-style" where each player has 2 steps to either pass or shoot. If the ball hits the ground team possession changes.
5. For both versions, it also optional if you want to have a goalie. You can also include "fouls" where team possession switches for unnecessary roughness or contact.

Say: Wow-that was fun and tiring. Good job on working together as a team.

There were some really good shots on goal, but also a bunch that really "fell short"....

Ask:

- Did you find it hard to aim the ball at first?
- What made it so hard to aim, pass, and shoot?
- How many times did a shot on goal "fall short" or miss compared to the times there was a actually a goal?

Say: That reminds me of a word that we use quite a bit around church; it is the word sin. We have probably all heard that word and know what it means in English and around our church, don't we?

The word is "Sin" actually comes from the word to "miss the mark" in archery.

Ask:

- Why do you think the word sin is related to a word that means to miss the mark?
- How do you think sin is related to missing a mark in our lives?

Say: Check out this verse about sin and missing the mark...

Read: Romans 2:22-24

This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Say: This game is much like our life. God has set up a goal of holiness for us to aim for, so often we fall short of that goal, that standard, and falling short is sin. Thankfully God sent His son, Jesus, to give us forgiveness for all the times over and over again that we have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Close in prayer.

Slip N Slide Slapshot

Topic: Failure
Proverbs 24:16

Supplies:

- A large square or rectangle tarp
- Tent Stakes
- Slippery liquids: dish soap, baby oil, sun tan lotion, chocolate syrup, condiments, etc.
- Hose
- Sprinklers
- Hockey sticks
- Hockey puck
- 2 goals (hockey goals or use cones)

Directions:

1. Using a large tarp create a summer time slip n slide hockey rink.
2. Spread out your tarp(s) on a flat grassy area.
3. Using your tent stakes, stake down the corners and sides of the tarp.
4. Set up goals on either end of the tarp.
5. Cover the entire tarp with slippery liquids, thoroughly.
6. Divide your group into 2 equal teams.
7. Give each player a hockey stick.
8. Ask everyone to remove their shoes so that they are playing barefooted
9. Line teams behind the defending goals on either end of the tarp.
10. Place a puck in the center of the playing area/tarp.
11. On "Go!" players all may go onto the tarp and begin to play.
12. Use similar rules to that of street hockey.

Say: Is everyone alright? No broken legs or bones? I was really impressed how quickly some of you got right back up after falling. Some of you really fell down quite a few times.

Ask:

- How was it running on the slippery surface of the tarp?
- How did it feel to fall down?
- Did you ever just want to lay there for a minute and not get back up?

Say: The Bible actually talks about us falling spiritually. It is actually not what you think though. You might think that the Bible would be critical or harsh on those that fall, but it actually it has a little something different to say.

Read: Proverbs 24:16

...for though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again, but the wicked stumble when calamity strikes.

Ask:

- How many times do the righteous fall?
- What do you think the significance of “7” is?
- What happens when they fall?
- Who continues to fall and stays down?

Say: Let’s be real; we will fall. We all do. Falling down whether physically or spiritually is just a part of life. The key is whether or not we get back up and what we do then.

Close in prayer.

SILLY SLOPPY SLINGSHOT SCRAMBLE

Topic: The Good News
Matthew 28:18-20

Supplies:

- Water balloon slingshot
- Towels and/or old t-shirts: enough for one per group of 4 students
- A wide variety food: preferably gross, weird or sloppy but soft (safe) food, but something that can "fly" such as the following:
 - Hot Dogs (the original)
 - Twinkies or any other snack cake
 - Eggs (be careful with this one)
 - Pickles
 - Chunks of Spam
 - Large Marshmallows
 - Bananas
 - Dog Biscuits
 - Bread of various kinds
 - Limburger Cheese
 - Tomatoes (or various other "not too hard" fruits and veggies)
 - A Fish

Directions:

1. Break everyone into teams of 4.
2. Give each team a towel/t-shirt.
3. Have all the teams spread out in the large OUTDOOR playing area.
4. Each team will be holding the 4 corners of their towel/shirt.
5. On go using the water balloon sling, you and your leaders will be shooting the silly sloppy food items out into the playing area.
6. Teams must try to catch the food item with their shirt or towel.
7. Score as follows: 5 points for food items that are caught in the shirt and minus 1 point for food items that hit a player.
8. Tally up the points at the end of the game. The team with the most points wins.

Say: Wow-that was fun and really gross! Did everyone survive that?

It was interesting to see all that food being sent your direction and everyone trying to catch it...receive it?

Ask:

- Was it hard to know where the food was going in order to try to catch it as a team?
- What were the hardest items to try to catch?
- What happened when there was not enough power behind the throws?
- What happened when there was too much power and stuff was coming straight at you?

- What are the things we as Christians send out into the world and want people to catch?

Say: Here check out this verse....

Read: Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Say: See Jesus is about to leave the planet, but before He leaves He puts His power behind His followers before He launches them out into the world....

Ask:

- Look back at the verse. Jesus doesn't just give power but something else. What is it?
- What are the things that the followers of Jesus then and now are to be doing as we are launched out in to the world?
- How are you doing and living out each of those things in your life as a follower of Jesus?

Close in prayer.

Toilet Seat Croquet

Topic: God's Way
Matthew 7:13-14

Supplies:

- 5 cheap plastic open ended toilet seats
- Some large long nails
- A variety of clean, new plungers and toilet brushes
- A package of wrapped rolls of toilet paper

Directions:

1. You will be creating a unique game of croquet. The hoops/wickets will be created using toilet seats. Mallets will be the plungers and toilet brushes, and the balls will be replaced with rolls of toilet paper.
2. Create your hoops/wickets by first running a long nail through the end of either side of your open ended toilet seat, which should be vertical.
3. Push the nails into the ground, creating a hoop.
4. Make your own pattern on your lawn or using a more traditional set up.
5. To start the game have every player select a "mallet" and hand them a wrapped roll of toilet paper.
6. Take turns hitting and playing, using similar rules to the traditional backyard version of croquet. (<http://www.toycrossing.com/croquet/>)

Say: Good game everyone! That was fun and a little different than your grandma's backyard game, wasn't it?

Ask:

- Was it easy to get those toilet paper rolls through the toilet seats?
- Did the rolls actually roll in the grass?
- Did our replacement mallets work as good as the regular ones?
- How about our "toilet seat" hoops/wickets, were they wide enough?

Say: It was kind of hard to get those rolls of toilet paper through those NARROW toilet seat opening wasn't? It would have been much easier if we could have had something wider to hit through. Christ actually taught about the difference between the narrow and the wide.

Read: Matthew 7:13-14

Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

Ask:

- What do think Jesus meant when He said the wide gate leads to

- destruction?
- What do you think He meant when He taught that small is gate and narrow is the road that leads to life?
 - Why do you think only a few find it?
 - What are some of the “wide ways” people live that they think will not ruin their life?
 - What are some the “narrow ways” we try to live as Christians?

Say: It is not always easy to live a “narrow way” life, especially when so many of our friends and even families live the “wide way”. In the end however, we have a promise of blessing and life eternal if we lie the narrow way. I think we need to take a minute to pray for each other as we try to live differently this summer.

Close in prayer.

Sandworms

Topic: God's Word
2 Timothy 2:15

Supplies:

- 2 Large Roaster Pans
- 4-6 Boxes of Krispie Rice Cereal
- Candy Gummy Worms

Directions:

1. Players will use only their toes have to dig through the "sand" (cereal) to find as many gummy worms as they can and feed them to their partner.
2. Dump an equal number of gummy worms in the bottom of each roaster pan.
3. Dump an equal amount of cereal into each roaster pan, completely covering and hiding the worms.
4. Call up 2 teams of 2 people.
5. Have one person from each team stand by the roaster pan while the other kneels or sits by it.
6. Standing player will then have to remove their shoes and sock and be barefoot.
7. Explain the rules.
8. Each team will have 60 seconds to dig out as many "sand worms" as possible.
9. Standing player using only their toes will dig and then grab the gummy worm with only their toes, then feed them to the seated player to eat.
10. Seated players must not use their hands.
11. The team that has found and eaten the most worms wins.

Say: Wow, I really "DIG THAT GAME!"... Ha! Just kidding! That was pretty good stuff you all have some very talented toes.

Ask:

- Was it hard to find the gummy worms?
- Was it hard to feed your friend the worms once you found them?

Say: Think about this game and how it relates to us as Christians. We have the opportunity to freely dig into God's word to find the sweet truths that are hidden in there. When we find them they feed us spiritually, but we don't stop there. We also have the great challenge, as we discover those things, to share them with others. Let's look at a quick verse together.

Read: 2 Timothy 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

Ask:

- What are we to do our best at, according to this verse?
- What do think it means to be a worker who handles the word of truth?
- Do think there is a correct way and an incorrect way to handle God's word? Share some examples for both.

Say: We really do have this amazing opportunity to work at studying and digging into God's word DAILY. When we do that God is pleased, but He also wants us to work at doing our best to correctly use and study His truth. That's so that we can feed ourselves spiritually but also so we can turn and share it with others as well.

Close in prayer.