



WEEKLY SUMMARIES

This document is for parents and hosts as they help their students through the Discovery Journal. It is a one page summary of the weekly unit, including highlights like the key verse, memory passages, and main points the student will be learning each week.

The Discovery Journal contains 8 units with five lessons each, meant to be studied over 8 weeks, 5 days a week. Before each week, there is a Launch page, which holds an overview of the week, and a guided prayer.

The Discovery Journal follows the inductive study method. The first two lessons focus on reading and observing, the third lesson focuses on interpretation, the fourth lesson on application, and the fifth lesson on review.

Check out the introduction in the Discovery Journal for a more in-depth overview of the Discovery Journal format and tools, including helpful study resources and how to do a word study.

Click the boxes below for game and activity ideas that correlate with each week's study.

PRIMARY

JUNIOR

SENIOR



UNIT I – THRIVE IN TESTS (JAMES 1:1-18)

James teaches believers how to respond when they face trials and temptations. Instead of becoming discouraged, Christians are called to rejoice because God uses trials to grow perseverance and maturity. God generously gives wisdom to those who ask Him in faith, without doubting. James also explains that temptation does not come from God but from sinful desires within us. Every good and perfect gift comes from God, who does not change, and He uses His Word to bring new life and make us spiritually mature.

KEY VERSE

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. – James 1:2-4 (NIV)

MEMORY VERSES

PRIMARY

James 1:2-3
Hebrews 11:16

JUNIOR

James 1:1-4
Hebrews 11:13-16

SENIOR

James 1:2-5
Hebrews 11:3-16

TEACHINGS OF JESUS

James reflects Jesus' teaching that suffering for righteousness is purposeful, calling believers to endure trials with joy, confidence in God's goodness, and an eternal perspective. Just as Jesus taught that blessing comes through steadfast endurance, James shows that faith proven under pressure leads to spiritual maturity.

Rejoice and remain faithful when tested (Matthew 5:11-12)

DISCOVERY DESTINATION

Maturity: Grow in Perseverance

TEACHING EMPHASIS: Encourage students to see trials as opportunities for growth rather than obstacles to faith.

APPLICATION: I grow in perseverance by choosing joy in trials and trusting God to use difficulties to strengthen my faith.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for using trials to grow our faith and perseverance. Help us trust You when life is hard and ask You for wisdom instead of doubting. Teach us to rejoice, knowing You are at work in every test. Amen.

UNIT 2 – THRIVE IN THE WORD (JAMES 1:19-27)

James urges believers to listen carefully to God’s Word and not just hear it but obey it. True faith is shown through action, not empty words. God’s Word acts like a mirror, revealing who we really are and how we should live. Those who humbly receive and obey Scripture are blessed. James emphasizes that genuine religion includes controlling our speech, caring for those in need, and remaining unstained by the world.

KEY VERSE

Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. – James 1:21-22 (NIV)

MEMORY VERSES

PRIMARY

James 1:21-22
Hebrews 11:24-26

JUNIOR

James 1:21-22
Hebrews 11:24-26

SENIOR

James 1:21-22
Hebrews 11:24-26

TEACHINGS OF JESUS

James mirrors Jesus’ warning that merely hearing God’s Word is insufficient. True followers act on what they hear. Jesus taught that obedience flows from love and produces transformation; James applies this by calling believers to live out the Word through self-control, compassion, and holiness.

Doers of the Word are like those who build on the rock (Matthew 7:24-27)

DISCOVERY DESTINATION

Maturity: Grow as Hearers and Doers

TEACHING EMPHASIS: Help students understand that obedience is the natural response to truly hearing God’s Word.

APPLICATION: I grow in maturity by not only hearing God’s Word but by obeying it and allowing it to shape how I live each day.

PRAYER

Father, thank You for Your Word that teaches, corrects, and guides us. Help us not only to hear what You say, but to obey it. Shape our hearts and lives so we reflect Your truth each day. Amen.

UNIT 3 – THRIVE IN RELATIONSHIPS (JAMES 2:1-13)

James confronts favoritism among believers and reminds them that God does not judge people by outward appearance. Showing partiality is sin and breaks God’s law of love. Instead, believers are called to love their neighbors as themselves, treating everyone with fairness and mercy. God’s law is perfect and impartial, and we will be judged by it. James teaches that mercy should guide our relationships because mercy triumphs over judgment.

KEY VERSE

If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. – James 2:8-9 (NIV)

MEMORY VERSES

PRIMARY

James 2:8-9
Judges 6:12-14

JUNIOR

James 2:8-10
Judges 6:11-14

SENIOR

James 2:8-10
Judges 6:11-16

TEACHINGS OF JESUS

James echoes Jesus’ command to love others impartially. Favoritism contradicts the heart of the gospel. Jesus welcomed the overlooked and showed mercy beyond social boundaries; James calls believers to reflect that same kingdom love.

Love your neighbor as yourself (Mark 12:31)

DISCOVERY DESTINATION

Maturity: Grow in Love

TEACHING EMPHASIS: Challenge students to examine their attitudes and actions toward others, especially those who are overlooked.

APPLICATION: I grow in love by treating others without favoritism and showing mercy, just as Christ has shown mercy to me.

PRAYER

God, thank You for loving us without partiality. Help us love others the same way—with mercy, humility, and compassion. Guard our hearts from favoritism and teach us to reflect Your grace in every relationship. Amen.

UNIT 4 – THRIVE IN OUR WORKS (JAMES 2:14–26)

James explains that faith without works is dead and ineffective. While salvation is not earned by works, genuine faith always produces action. Examples like Abraham and Rahab show that true faith results in obedience and trust in God. Works do not replace faith but reveal its reality. A mature believer's life visibly reflects a living, active faith.

KEY VERSE

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. - James 2:17-18 (NIV)

MEMORY VERSES

PRIMARY

James 2:17-18
Joshua 2:10-11

JUNIOR

James 2:15-18
Joshua 2:8-11

SENIOR

James 2:14-18
Joshua 2:8-11

TEACHINGS OF JESUS

James aligns with Jesus' insistence that true faith is active, not empty. Words alone do not prove discipleship—obedient action does. Works do not save, but they reveal saving faith, just as Jesus taught that good trees bear good fruit.

Serving others in love is an act of obedience to Christ. (Matthew 25:35-40)

DISCOVERY DESTINATION

Maturity: Grow in Obedience

TEACHING EMPHASIS: Reinforce that obedience flows from faith, not from a desire to earn God's favor.

APPLICATION: I grow in obedience by living out my faith through actions that demonstrate trust in God, not just words.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for the gift of faith. Help our faith be alive and active, shown through obedience and good works. May our actions reflect our trust in You and bring glory to Your name. Amen.

UNIT 5 – THRIVE IN OUR WORDS (JAMES 3:1-18)

James warns that the tongue, though small, has great power to cause harm or bring life. Careless or prideful speech reveals spiritual immaturity. Believers are called to control their words and seek wisdom from above. God’s wisdom leads to peace, humility, mercy, and righteousness, while worldly wisdom results in disorder and conflict. Mature believers use their words to honor God and build others up.

KEY VERSE

Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water. Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom—James 3:10-13 (NIV)

MEMORY VERSES

PRIMARY

James 3:10-13
1 Samuel 25:32-33

JUNIOR

James 3:7-13
1 Samuel 25:32-33

SENIOR

James 3:7-13
1 Samuel 25:32-33

TEACHINGS OF JESUS

James develops Jesus’ teaching that words are not neutral—they expose inner character. The tongue can bless or destroy. Jesus warned that careless speech carries eternal weight; James applies this truth to everyday life and spiritual leadership.

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Matthew 12:34-37)

DISCOVERY DESTINATION

Maturity: Grow in Wisdom

TEACHING EMPHASIS: Encourage students to think before speaking and to seek God’s wisdom in their communication.

APPLICATION: I grow in maturity by exercising wisdom and self-control in my speech, knowing my words reveal what is in my heart.

PRAYER

Father, help us control our words and speak with wisdom and grace. May our speech honor You, build others up, and reflect hearts shaped by Your truth. Teach us to seek wisdom from above. Amen.

UNIT 6 – THRIVE IN OUR WALK (JAMES 4:1-17)

James calls believers to examine divided hearts and turn away from pride, selfish desires, and worldliness. Friendship with the world leads to opposition against God. James urges believers to humble themselves, resist the devil, repent of sin, and draw near to God. He also reminds them that life is brief and plans should be made according to God's will. A faithful walk is marked by humility, repentance, and purposeful obedience.

KEY VERSE

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up. – James 4:7-10 (NIV)

MEMORY VERSES

PRIMARY

James 4:7-10
1 Kings 18:38-39

JUNIOR

James 4:7-10
1 Kings 18:36-39

SENIOR

James 4:6-10
1 Kings 18:36-39

TEACHINGS OF JESUS

James directly parallels Jesus' teachings on humility, purity of heart, judging others, and dependence on God. Pride, boasting, and worldliness are confronted. Jesus taught that exaltation comes through humility and that God's will, not self-will, must guide life.

Humble yourselves and be exalted (Luke 14:11)

DISCOVERY DESTINATION

Maturity: Grow with Purpose

TEACHING EMPHASIS: Help students recognize the importance of daily repentance and dependence on God's will.

APPLICATION: I grow with purpose by humbling myself before God, repenting of sin, and choosing to live according to His will.

PRAYER

Lord, we humble ourselves before You. Help us turn from pride and worldly desires and draw near to You each day. Teach us to live according to Your will, with repentance, purpose, and trust in You. Amen.

UNIT 7 – THRIVE IN WORSHIP (JAMES 5:1-20)

James encourages believers to patiently endure suffering while waiting for the Lord's return. He emphasizes the power of prayer in every circumstance—whether in hardship, joy, sickness, or repentance. Prayer strengthens faith, brings healing, and restores wandering believers. James closes by reminding believers to care for one another spiritually, demonstrating faith through prayerful worship and perseverance.

KEY VERSE

Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. – James 5:7-8 (NIV)

MEMORY VERSES

PRIMARY

James 5:7-8
Job 42:10

JUNIOR

James 5:7-11
Job 42:10-15

SENIOR

James 5:7-11
Job 42:10-17

TEACHINGS OF JESUS

James returns to Jesus' teaching on watchfulness, endurance, and prayer. True worship is not confined to words but is expressed through patient trust, persistent prayer, and hopeful anticipation of the Lord's return.

Ask in prayer and believe (Mark 11:24)

DISCOVERY DESTINATION

Maturity: Grow in Patience and Prayer

TEACHING EMPHASIS: Model and encourage prayer as an essential part of daily worship and faith.

APPLICATION: I grow in patience and prayer by trusting God's timing, remaining faithful in prayer, and worshiping Him as I wait for Christ's return.

PRAYER

God, thank You that You hear our prayers and walk with us through every season. Teach us to be patient, faithful, and prayerful as we wait for You. Help our lives be an act of worship that honors You. Amen.