

TITLE OF GAME: JOY

Bible: Psalm 98:4 (NLT)

SUPPLIES

- 10 Balloons
- 10 Marbles
- 2 Large Garbage Cans

GAME PREP

Divide students into two teams of equal size.

For this game, you will use ten balloons and ten marbles.

Open the top of each balloon and place a marble inside.

Then, inflate the balloons, but not too much.

Place the balloons on the sideline.

Place a garbage can at each end of your game play space.

Each team will choose a person that will stand by their team's garbage can throughout the game.

Have the rest of the students on both teams stand in the space between the two garbage cans.

Each team will stand facing in the direction of their team's garbage can.

When everyone gets in place, tell them they can't move from that place throughout the game—very similar to the way the players are arranged in a game of foosball.

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

Say: Raise your hand if you have ever walked on a balance beam.

They can be a little tricky.

If you walk too fast, you can get thrown off your balance and you could fall.

If you walk too slowly, it can do the same thing.

But when you find your balance and the perfect pace to cross the balance beam, it becomes much easier.

In the game we are about to play, it's all about finding that perfect speed to help you win the game.

For our game, we will use ten balloons with marbles inside of them.

When the game begins, I will toss a balloon into the area where you are standing.

You will begin to hit the balloon towards your team's garbage can.

The goal is to get the balloon into your team's garbage can.

Because it has a marble inside of it, you will notice that it's more difficult to hit the balloon in a straight direction – it's going to be wibbly wobbly.

In fact, if you hit it too hard, it will go everywhere.

If you hit it too softly, then it's not going to go in the right direction either.

Now, to make things a little more challenging, every minute or so, I'm going to toss another balloon into the game space.

There might be several balloons in the air at the same time.

If at any point a balloon falls on the ground, the team with the least number of balloons in their garbage can will have to sit down for 15 seconds.

That will give the other team a big advantage.

After the 15 seconds, your team will be back in the game again.

After all of the balloons have made it into one of the team's garbage cans, the game will be over.

Count each team's balloons and announce a winner for the game.

TEACH

Say: That game was a lot of fun to play and to watch!

I saw a lot of you laughing throughout the game because you were having a good time!

Did you know that the average 4-year old laughs 400 times a day?

That might not be difficult for some of you to imagine because you have a younger brother or sister, or cousin, who laughs all the time.

Little kids will laugh at anything—funny faces, silly sounds, crazy dances.

It's easy to make them laugh!

But as people get older, they don't laugh as much.

In fact, people your parents' age only laugh about 17 times a day.

Ask: Why do you think people laugh less as they get older?

Allow a few responses from students.

Most little kids don't have much stress in their lives, especially compared to adults.

Adults have to go to work, take care of their families, pay bills, run errands, and prepare meals, because kids like to eat!

So, it seems like stress can take the happiness out of your life, but only if you allow it to.

Read Psalm 98:4.

Shout to the Lord, all the earth; break out in praise and sing for joy!

Say: Raise your hand if you really like to sing.

If you're in a bad mood, try singing—it can really perk you up.

I mean, it's hard to sing a happy song and feel sad.

But in the Bible verse we just read, we see the key to singing a joyful song is to sing and shout to the Lord.

There will be times in your life when you don't feel happy because sometimes bad things happen.

Maybe your pet goldfish dies or you don't make it on the sports team you had hoped to join.

But, you can still have joy in your heart.

When you stop and think about how much God loves you and everything He has done in your life, you become thankful, and that thankfulness can produce joy.

Ask: Can you name some things that God has done in your life?

Allow a few responses from students.

Those were some really great answers!

We're all alive, we've eaten food today, we have a place to live and a family to live with.

Our planet has living animals and plants all over it.

Every morning the sun comes up, and every night the moon and stars light up the sky.

We have so much to be grateful for!

The next time you feel sad, take a moment to thank God for everything you see all around you.

I hope that when all of you are grown-ups, you still laugh as much as you do right now.

When God's joy fills your life, it will not only make your life happier, but also those all around you too!