Joseph Dreams Disturbing Dreams  
*Genesis 37:1-11*

First- and second-graders are developing a strong sense of competition with others, not only on the playground but at home as well. Use this lesson to help kids learn to relate to their siblings as God wants them to—with love and forgiveness.

**Bible Point**
Show Jesus’ love in our families.

**Key Verse**
“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another” (John 13:34).

**Weaving Faith Into Life**
Kids will show love to their families.

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| 1 Getting Started | **Color Cube Capers**  
(about 10 min.)  
Try to hit a target by themselves and then with help. | Bible, paper wad, tape  
**Teacher Pack:** “Game Board,” “Color Cube” | Tape the “Game Board” to a wall. Tape the “Color Cube” together as directed. |
| 2 Bible Exploration | **A Family Built**  
(about 15 min.)  
Listen to an imaginary account of Joseph’s family. | CD player, 1 wooden block per child  
**Teacher Pack:** CD | |
| | **A Family Broken**  
(about 15 min.)  
See how anger and jealousy affected Joseph’s family. | Bible, structure of blocks from “A Family Built” activity  
**Teacher Pack:** “Game Board,” “Joseph and His Brothers” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) | |

*Bold text* within the lesson is spoken text.
### Lesson 5

**Weaving Faith Into Life**

- **House of Love** *(about 10 min.)*
  Learn the Key Verse, and then draw pictures of their families and write kind words.
  - Supplies: Bible, My Bible Fun, crayons, scissors
  - Prep: Tear out the Lesson 5 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.

- **Rebuilt With Love** *(about 5 min.)*
  Rebuild the structure of blocks while singing the Key Verse song.
  - Supplies: Bible, CD player, 1 wooden block per child
  - Teacher Pack: CD

**Lasting Impressions**

- **Daily Challenges** *(about 5 min.)*
  Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God’s Word.
  - Supplies: My Bible Fun

- **Weaving Faith at Home** *(about 2 min.)*
  Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.

*Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.*
Joseph Dreams Disturbing Dreams
Genesis 37:1-11

Jacob Favors Joseph Over His Other Children
It’s interesting that Jacob’s display of favoritism toward his son Joseph ravaged his family in the same way his mother’s, Rebekah’s, favoritism toward Jacob had ruined Jacob’s family of origin. Jacob loved Joseph more than his other sons because Joseph had been born to him in his old age and because he was born by Rachel, Jacob’s most beloved wife—even more favoritism. Joseph’s “bad report” about his brothers (Genesis 37:2) only made things worse, fueling Jacob’s preference for Joseph and his brothers’ resentment toward him. The richly ornamented robe further intensified the brothers’ feelings.

Joseph’s Coat Creates Jealousy
The relationship between Joseph and his brothers was bad enough before Joseph began having dreams indicating that he would rule over his brothers. The eldest would naturally and culturally have held the role of family leader. For one of the youngest sons in line to claim such a position surely infuriated the other brothers. Joseph even incurred the rebuke of his father when he described these dreams.

Joseph’s Favored Position Creates Resentment
From our point in history, we know what Joseph’s dreams foretold. But Joseph’s brothers didn’t have our perspective. Their hatred of Joseph probably caused them to suspect that he was inventing these dreams in order to put his brothers down and to flaunt his father’s favoritism.

How Not to Treat Other Family Members
Although God ultimately reconciled the members of this family, the events in this passage serve as a model of how not to treat family members. None of the members of this family really loved the others as they should have. Joseph, his brothers, and their father all contributed to the rift between Joseph and the brothers. To honor God, family members must show God’s love to one another. For Jacob, that might have meant showing love equally to all of his sons. For Joseph, that might have meant keeping his dreams to himself, even if the dreams truly were messages from God. And for the brothers, it might have meant loving Joseph in spite of their father’s favoritism and Joseph’s attitude. No matter what or who the problem is within our families, God wants us to love our families with the same love he shows for us.

The Jesus Connection
Our families are the closest relationships we have. Whether we like it or not, the people in our families are going to be part of our lives in some way for the duration of our existence. That makes families the perfect place to begin to show God’s love. We can let God shape our reactions toward family members in large and small ways. What are some ways you can ask God to help you show love in your family? You can write your prayer below.
Color Cube Capers

What You’ll Do

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Gather everyone together, and say: Let’s play a game. Point out the “Game Board” on the wall, and say: Line up single file in front of this game board. Make sure the first person is about 5 feet from the “Game Board” and the line goes straight back from there.

Hand the first person in line the “Color Cube” and a paper wad. Say: On your turn, roll the “Color Cube” and then toss the paper wad at the “Game Board” to try to hit the same color as that which you rolled. You’ll have five seconds to try to hit the right color, and you can toss the paper wad as many times as you want to within the five seconds. Check for understanding.

Say: One last rule for our game: When tossing the paper wad, you must stand with your back to the “Game Board,” and no one may help you. Give each child five seconds to play.

Say: Now let’s try this game again, but this time let’s see what it’s like to have some help. Have the children get into “families” of three to five. Ask the families to line up together with the first group in line at least 5 feet from the “Game Board.”

Say: In each family, one member will roll the “Color Cube,” one member will toss the paper wad, one or two members will help the tosser aim, one member will retrieve the paper wad, and all members will call out encouragement to one another. Give each family five seconds to toss the paper wad.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was the game like for you when you were alone?
- What was it like to try this as a family?
- How was the game like or unlike being part of a family?
- What things do your real family members help you with?

Say: God knew that we’d do better in life with caring, loving help. He created families to provide a lot of that help. Like in our game, our whole experience is better when we work together with kindness and love. God asks us to SHOW JESUS’ LOVE IN OUR FAMILIES because he knows that’s what’s best for us. Today
we'll learn about a family that was jealous and angry instead of loving. As you learn, think about the difference it would have made if the family members had treated one another with love.

### 2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

**A Family Built**

#### What You’ll Do

Have children sit in a circle, and distribute at least one wooden block to each child. Say: *Today we’re learning to ► SHOW JESUS’ LOVE IN OUR FAMILIES. Let’s start by hearing about a boy named Joseph and his family. As you listen, find at least one good thing that came from the family’s time together.*

Play “Joseph’s Family” (track 13 on the CD).

Say: *You’ll each have a chance to tell one good thing that came from the family’s time together. When it’s your turn, place your block in the center of our circle. Ask each child to name one way the family members benefited from being part of the family. For example, kids might mention that the family members helped one another with work. As kids add blocks, encourage them to build a strong structure. You can help them decide where to put the blocks so the structure stands strong.*

**Talk With Kids**

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What did we do to make our building strong?
- What good things happen in your family to make it strong?
- What can you do to show Jesus’ love in your family?

Say: *A family is built by doing things for and with one another and by loving and taking care of each other. Like the building we built, it gets bigger and stronger as we ► SHOW JESUS’ LOVE IN OUR FAMILIES. The boy, Joseph, who we just heard about, is actually like a man named Joseph in the Bible. But something very bad happened in his life when his family stopped showing love and started treating one another with anger and jealousy. Let’s hear what happened.*
A Family Broken

**What You’ll Do**

Open your Bible to Genesis 37:1-11, and show kids the passage. Then show the “Joseph and His Brothers” poster. Say: **As we hear what happened to Joseph in the Bible, we’ll see what happens when we don’t ▶ SHOW JESUS’ LOVE IN OUR FAMILIES.**

Read aloud Genesis 37:1-4. Invite a child to come to the middle and wear the “Game Board” around his or her shoulders like a cape. Say: **Let’s pretend our friend here is Joseph and that he’s wearing the colorful robe his father gave him.**

Say: **Tell a friend about a time you had trouble being kind to your family.** Allow time. Then say: **Joseph’s brothers were so jealous that they couldn’t say a kind word to him. Let’s do the opposite of the brothers right now.** Have the children demonstrate love by saying kind things to the child wearing the “colorful robe.” If time allows, let several children play the role of Joseph. Then set aside the “Game Board.”

Say: **Tell a friend why you like it when your family is kind to you and you’re kind to your family.** Allow time. Then say: **It’s kind words and actions that make a family strong. Let’s hear what the brothers did next.** Read aloud Genesis 37:5-8.

Have a child remove a block from the middle of the structure. Say: **The brothers’ jealousy hurt the family.**

Read aloud Genesis 37:9-11. Invite a different child to take away a block from the bottom of the structure. Invite more children to remove blocks until the structure has been destroyed. Say: **The hatred in the family was so bad that it destroyed their family. We built this structure to represent a family of love. It was strong when we shared positive things that encourage and love the people in a family. But now it’s destroyed.**

**Talk With Kids**

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:
- Tell about something important to you that was destroyed.
- Why do you think jealousy or hatred destroys a family?
- Tell about a time you were really upset with a family member.
- When you feel like that, what can you do to show love?

Say: **Joseph and his brothers had so many reasons to be happy with their family. But instead of focusing on loving one another, Joseph’s brothers let jealousy and hatred break down the family, just as our building broke down. As we see how Joseph’s brothers hurt their family, we can remember why we want to ▶ SHOW JESUS’ LOVE IN OUR FAMILIES.**

**Supplies**

- Bible
- Structure of blocks from “A Family Built” activity
- Teacher Pack
  - “Game Board”
  - “Joseph and His Brothers” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)
Weaving Faith Into Life

House of Love

What You’ll Do

Say: Today we heard how a family was hurt when they didn’t love each other. When Jesus lived on earth, he commanded us to love. In fact, that’s what our Key Verse today says. Open your Bible to John 13:34, and show children the verse. Read aloud the Key Verse: “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another” (John 13:34). Have kids repeat the verse aloud with you several times.

Say: Let’s create our own houses of love to help us remember why it’s important that we love our families instead of letting jealousy and hatred break them down like in Joseph’s family.

Distribute this week’s My Bible Fun pages and crayons, and point out the “House of Love Door Hanger” section. Point out the Key Verse at the bottom of the page, and invite a child to read it to the group. Then say: In the windows, draw your family members. If children have large families, they can draw more than one family member in a window. Allow time.

Say: Now that you have your whole family in your house of love, write or draw one special thing about each person. For example, if your brother helps you with math, you can write “math,” or if your sister makes you laugh, you can draw a smiley face. Point out the section below the windows, and help kids think of ideas as they work. If children have more windows than people in their families, have them write or draw in the other windows what they love about their families—for example, “help one another” or “stick up for one another.”

When kids finish, form them into groups of five and let them introduce their families to their small groups.

Distribute scissors, and have kids cut the house from the page. Then have kids cut out the hole as indicated on the page so they can hang their pages on their doors.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like to think of kind things about your family members?
- How is Joseph’s family like or unlike yours?
- How can you react differently in your family from the way Joseph’s brothers did?
Say: Jealousy and hatred really hurt Joseph’s family, and they hurt our families, too. That’s why Jesus commands us to love others. We have a choice to focus on the great things about our family members, like the things we wrote on our door hangers, or to be angry. Let’s hang our door hangers in our homes to remind us why we ➤ SHOW JESUS’ LOVE IN OUR FAMILIES.

Rebuilt With Love

What You’ll Do
Have kids sit in a circle. Say: Today we’re learning that we ➤ SHOW JESUS’ LOVE IN OUR FAMILIES. Let’s think of ways we can really love each of our family members.

Give each child a wooden block. Say: Think of someone in your family who you haven’t been kind to lately. What are some things you can do to show love to that person? Don’t answer now—think about it silently.

Say: Let’s rebuild a strong building with our blocks. I’ll play a song about our Key Verse, and as you listen, tell God what you want to do to show love to your family. Then ask God to help you. When you’re ready, bring your block to the middle of our circle and help us build a strong building.

Play “As I Have Loved You” (John 13:34) (track 14 on the CD). Encourage the children to sit quietly as they listen to the song so everyone has a chance to pray and add a block.

Talk With Kids
Say: Thanks for taking the time to think and pray about ways we can ➤ SHOW JESUS’ LOVE IN OUR FAMILIES. As we learned in the Bible about Joseph and his family, it’s not always easy, and sometimes we may feel we have a good reason to be angry. But we know that Jesus’ commandment to love each other is the best way to live and to make our families strong and happy.

Daily Challenges

What You’ll Do
Say: Let’s think about how we ➤ SHOW JESUS’ LOVE IN OUR FAMILIES.

Have kids find this week’s Daily Challenges on their My Bible Fun pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- Give a sibling your allowance, and tell that sibling you love him or her.
- Tell each of your family members something you love about them.
 Visit a nursing home with a parent, and spend time with someone who doesn't have a lot of family to show him or her love.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

**Talk With Kids**

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: When we don't show love and kindness to our families, it really hurts us, just like it hurt Joseph's family. This week, let's do our best to **SHOW JESUS' LOVE IN OUR FAMILIES** by following through on our Daily Challenges.

**Weaving Faith at Home**

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about how we show love to our families. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their My Bible Fun pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, thanking God for our families and asking him to help us love them. Give each child a chance to ask God for help with loving his or her family by mentioning a way to do so. For example, a child might say, “God, help me love my brother by letting him play with my favorite toy sometimes.” Then close the prayer. Pray: God, we know you want us to love others as Jesus loved us. Help us let go of our anger and do our best to love our families. In Jesus' name, amen.