

# Lower Elementary Leader Guide Week 1

## GETTING READY

Christmas pageants are a tradition in many churches. Kids get excited to dress up as Mary and Joseph, wise men, shepherds, and animals to share the story of the night Jesus was born. *Ruby's Runaway Pageant* continues this tradition in the silly style of the Whirl kids. Throughout these weeks, you'll play several important roles.

**Greeter:** You'll welcome kids in your group as they gather in the large group space. Be prepared for early birds, latecomers, and everyone in between. Ask questions about kids' lives, do quick run-throughs of lines, and encourage them to invite family and friends to the pageant. (Also, make sure they know when the pageant is scheduled!)

**Casting Director:** You'll help decide who will play each part. If you have multiple small groups of lower elementary kids, you'll need to coordinate with other leaders of lower elementary groups so that each part is only assigned to one kid. (Trust us—you would not want two Victors on stage!)

**Prop Creator:** During the second week you meet, you'll guide kids to assemble and create props for the production. Since this pageant is about a pageant that is not going according to plan, the props do not need to look perfect. In fact, several of them can look charmingly imperfect. The script provides more details.

**Script Supervisor:** It will be up to you to rehearse with the kids in your small group during the three weeks before the dress rehearsal. Read and reread the script so you know when kids are supposed to speak their lines.

**Director:** While the overall pageant has a director who is coordinating all groups of kids, you will serve as the director during your small group time. Be prepared to give direction to kids—help them speak up, add inflection, and practice their lines in a whole-body way.



## LARGE GROUP TIME

Prepare to welcome your group of lower elementary kids as they gather in the large group space.

The large group gathering leader will introduce the story, play the Whirl video, read the Bible story, and ask some questions to get kids ready for the day. Help your kids be good listeners, and encourage them to participate and answer questions.

After you're invited to transition to small group time, lead kids to your small group space.

## SMALL GROUP TIME

Today you'll focus on casting each role in the pageant and reading through the script. Before reading the parts that are available, make sure you coordinate with other small group leaders of lower elementary kids so that roles are not assigned to more than one kid.

Once you settle into your space for small group time, tell kids a little more about the pageant. **This pageant has a lot of parts for kids who are your age. I'm going to read some descriptions of them.**

**Tot is Ruby's personal assistant. She does not have many lines, but she does follow Ruby around a lot. Her character is helpful and outgoing.**

**Ada is the Stage Manager of the pageant. She is a girl who is very responsible and wants things to be perfect. She is a twin to Otto. Tot is their little sister.**

**Otto is the Prop Master. He is adventurous, a little reckless, and looking to make a big impression. His twin sister is Ada. Their little sister is Tot.**

**Monty is the Lead Shepherd. He is a boy who is positive, imaginative, and often seems out of touch with reality because he marches to the beat of his own drummer (or maybe another instrument entirely).**

**Clara is the Set Construction Leader. She is highly safety conscious and always wears a bike helmet. Clara sometimes struggles with anxiety. She has exceptional knowledge of construction code due to her fear of buildings.**

**Victor is the Lighting Design Director. He is a very precocious kid with a big vocabulary. Victor is overconfident and has a flair for the dramatic. One of his habits is making up new names for his friends.**

## BIBLE TIME

Today's Bible story, Mary Visits Elizabeth, is from Luke 1:39-55.

## SUPPLIES

Copies of the script with parts highlighted

Pencils

"Joy to the World" song

Music source

"Nativity 2.0" video (optional)

Video source (optional)



**We also have some Supporting Cast members that you might expect in a Christmas pageant.** Read the list of parts to kids and see what they know about each character.

**Angel**

**Shepherds** (two or three total)

**Barn Animals** (as many as desired)

**Drummer Kids** (as many as possible)

**Two or Four Wise People** (not three)

Once you have described the parts to kids, you can assign roles, distribute scripts, and do a read-through of the pageant. Pair kids who are prereaders with strong readers so they can follow along. Be prepared to read the parts of the older elementary kids.

After you're finished reading, teach the kids the first verse to the song "Joy to the World." Play the song track or teach it a cappella line by line.

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come.  
Let earth receive her king.  
Let every heart prepare him room.  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

If time allows, play the Whirl video "Nativity 2.0."

Before kids head out, make sure they know necessary details of the performance, and then offer this prayer.

**Dear God, you were with Mary when she rejoiced. You helped her get ready for Jesus. Help us get ready for Jesus too! Amen.**

## **CASTING TIP**

If you know your kids well and think it may work better to assign parts, try casting parts in this way instead.

