

What Really Matters?



Is Being Liked What Matters?

Key Faith Foundation: Focusing on God's Opinion

Key Scriptures: Psalm 139:17-18; Matthew 10:29-32; John 5:16-18, 36-44; 2 Corinthians 10:12-18; Galatians 1:10

grapple schedule

5 minutes	grapple community
10-15 minutes	grapple games and clues
10 minutes	grapple time
15 minutes	grapple team time
10 minutes	grapple team reports
5 minutes	grapple prayer and dare

 Bibles, *Grapple* DVD, DVD player, Christian music CD, CD player, copy of the Grapple Team Guide for each person, paper, pencils, markers, 3x5 cards

grapple community: 5 minutes

Play Christian music as kids enjoy snacks and friendship, and then play an opening countdown from the *Grapple* DVD to wrap up Grapple Community time.

grapple games: 10-15 minutes

Lead kids in the games they chose ahead of time at mygrapple.com.

grapple clues

Have kids write the answers to this week's Grapple Clues. Award points for each correct answer. (Answers in parentheses are samples.) The winning team gets the Grapple Button.

CLUE 1 [436 points]: **Find two people Jesus liked to spend time with.** (*Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, Thaddeus, Simon, and Judas, Mark 3:13-19*)

CLUE 2 [968 points]: **Discover someone in the Bible others didn't like.** (*Joseph, Genesis 37; Zacchaeus, Luke 19; Jesus, John 5*)

CLUE 3 [893 points]: **Find out one thing each person in your Grapple Team likes about himself or herself.**

CLUE 4 [345 points]: **Find out if what others in our class like about themselves is the same as what you like about yourself.**

grapple time: 10 minutes

Give each person a marker and five blank 3x5 cards. Lead the entire class in the following:

Take a moment to quietly think of words you wish people would use to describe you. Then write a different word on one side of each card. After a minute, I'll collect the cards. Don't write your name or anything other than one complimentary word per card. Got it?

If kids get stuck, use these words to spark their creativity: *happy, thoughtful, helpful, funny, kind, generous, good listener, leader, friendly, talented, athletic, intelligent, enthusiastic, and energetic.* After one minute, collect the markers and cards and shuffle the cards.

Now I'll hand out five "compliment cards" to each of you. Don't look at them yet. When I tell you to, read and think about the compliments. Then look around our room for people the compliments fit. When I say "Go!" you'll have three minutes to give away all your cards, briefly explaining why you're giving the person that compliment. You can't keep any of the cards I just passed out, you can only give one card to each person, and you have to end the time with only five cards in your hand. Once you've given away your cards and received five new ones, take a seat.

Allow 30 seconds for kids to think about their compliment cards and who should receive them. Then allow time for kids to hand out one compliment card at a time to people they think best match that compliment.



How do you feel about the compliments you received and why? Which of your cards do you think fits you best?



How would you have felt if you hadn't received any compliment cards? How important is it to you to be well-liked by others?

We all want to be liked. It feels good to know we have friends who enjoy our company and want to be with us. It doesn't feel so good to be lonely and wonder whether anyone really likes us. Today we're going to grapple with this question: Is being liked what matters? Maybe we could ask if being liked is what matters most or if there is something even more important. Let's grapple!

grapple team time: 15 minutes

Break into Grapple Teams. Encourage Grapple Team leaders to check in with kids about their week. Grapple Team leaders will facilitate discussion, using the Grapple Team Guide on pages 5-6. Afterward, kids will report what they learned.

grapple team reports: 10 minutes

At the end of Grapple Team Time, match Grapple Teams that chose Option 1 with Grapple Teams that chose Option 2 from page 6. Have teams present their reports.

grapple prayer: 5 minutes

Read the Grapple Prayer options. Have the class choose one prayer option that everyone will do. Allow kids time to pray about what they discovered. Then close in prayer.

Option 1: Sand Prayers

Hold your hands in front of you, and imagine sand running through your fingers. Give thanks to God for his countless precious thoughts about you!

Option 2: Hair Prayers

God loves you so much that he knows how many hairs are on your head. Shake your head as you thank God for knowing and caring about the details of your life.

grapple dare

Being liked is wonderful, but sometimes, no matter what we do, people still don't like us. Knowing that we are valuable to God is what matters most. This week I dare you to stop whenever you compare yourself to someone else and remember how precious you are to God. Then offer a compliment to the person you're comparing yourself to. Instead of saying, "Oh, she's so popular, and I'm all alone," praise God that she has friends. Look for an opportunity to tell her something you appreciate about her. God loves you so much that you can afford to spread God's love all around. You might even find you like yourself more, too!

Remember to go to mygrapple.com this week to choose the opening games for next week, look for Grapple Clues to win the Grapple Button, play an online game, and connect with each other—and me.

grapple team guide

In your Grapple Team, use this guide to grapple with today's question.

Close your eyes and decide, on a scale of 1 to 10, how liked you think you are. Be honest with yourself; you won't need to share your rating with anyone else.



What makes someone the kind of person others really like? Which of those character traits do you have? Which traits would you like to strengthen in yourself?

Unfortunately, not everyone will like you. Jesus had encounters with people who didn't like him at all.

Read John 5:16-18, 36-44.

How does Jesus "defend" himself against those who don't like him? What does Jesus say about what really matters? In your own life, whose approval matters most to you? Can you think of something you would do to make that person like you? something you would never do to make that person like you?



Share a time someone didn't like you or hurt you and how you felt. Compare what you felt to what Jesus said in John 5.

Read Galatians 1:10.

What does this verse say about being well-liked by others? How is this verse similar to or different from Jesus' attitude about being liked by others? How can you apply this verse to your life?

Read Matthew 10:29-32.

What does Jesus say in this passage about what really matters? How can knowing this change how you might respond or feel the next time you think someone doesn't like you very much?

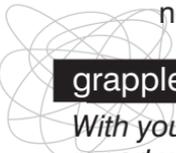
Read Psalm 139:17-18.

What do you think about when you have free time? How does knowing that God thinks about you make you feel? How could your life be different if you realized that God is with you and thinking precious thoughts about you all the time? Explain why knowing this does or does not change your opinion of whether or not being liked by others matters?

Read 2 Corinthians 10:12-18.

What work do kids your age do? When do people compare themselves to others? How might comparisons get in the way of remembering how very valuable you are to God?

Close your eyes again and think back to the “likability” rating you gave yourself earlier. Now give yourself a new rating based on how much God likes you.



grapple team reports

With your team, choose one of the options below to report what you discovered.

Option 1: Clap!

Share the most important thing you learned from God’s Word today, and then clap wildly for each person here because each person matters to God.

Option 2: Shout!

Come up with a sentence or two to explain what you learned today, and then shout it so the world can hear what really matters.



What Really Matters?

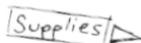
Is Being Right What Matters?

Key Faith Foundation: Being Kind

*Key Scriptures: 2 Samuel 9:3-7; Jonah 3-4;
Galatians 5:22-23; Colossians 3:12-13*

grapple schedule (see pages 4-5 for descriptions)

5 minutes	grapple community
10-15 minutes	grapple games and clues
10 minutes	grapple time
15 minutes	grapple team time
10 minutes	grapple team reports
5 minutes	grapple prayer and dare



Bibles, *Grapple* DVD, DVD player, Christian music CD, CD player, copy of the Grapple Team Guide for each person, paper, pencils

grapple community: 5 minutes

Play Christian music as kids enjoy snacks and friendship, and then play an opening countdown from the *Grapple* DVD to wrap up Grapple Community time.

grapple games: 10-15 minutes

Lead kids in the games they chose ahead of time at mygrapple.com.

grapple clues

Have kids write the answers to this week's Grapple Clues. Award points for each correct answer. (Answers in parentheses are samples.) The winning team gets the Grapple Button (see page 5).

CLUE 1 [322 points]: **Find one example in the Bible of people fighting over who was right.** (*The two women fighting over a baby in 1 Kings 3; the Pharisees and the Sadducees fighting over religious beliefs in Acts 23*)

CLUE 2 [167 points]: **Discover someone in the Bible who chose to be kind instead of fighting over who was right.** (*Abram in Genesis 13; Abigail in 1 Samuel 25*)

CLUE 3 [261 points]: **Find someone in your Grapple Team who argued with a parent or sibling this week about who was right.**

CLUE 4 [485 points]: **Discover someone in our class who is the opposite of you in some way.**

grapple time: 10 minutes

GET READY ▶ Cue the Grapple DVD to the “Spelling Bee” clip.

Lead the entire class in the following:

How many of you like to be right? Raise your hand if you do. Pause. **Now, how many of you like to be wrong?** Pause. **Yeah, that’s what I figured. It’s way more fun to be right than wrong, isn’t it? Sometimes we’ll even argue with people until they know we’re right and they’re wrong. Those arguments are sometimes called debates.**

Give kids a minute to find a partner.

Let’s have our own mini-debate right now. After I give you a topic, you and your partner will debate who is right and who is wrong. Here’s the catch: You don’t know anything about what you’re going to argue about!

Here’s the issue up for debate: Do purple karfunugles live on planet Zing, or do they just live on planet Zong? Repeat the question for kids. **If you are wearing darker clothes than your partner, you’ll argue that purple karfunugles only live on planet Zong. If you’re wearing lighter clothes than your partner, you’ll argue that purple karfunugles live on planet Zong and on planet Zing. You can make up any facts you want to support your cause. For example, one partner could argue that planet Zing is much too cold for karfunugles. The other partner might argue that karfunugles on planet Zing have adapted to the cold by wearing pink feather boas. It’s up to you!** Give kids about five minutes to have fun debating this silly concept.



What kind of argument or logic did you use to try to win your partner over to your side? Explain why your argument did or didn’t work well.



Have you ever had an argument when the outcome didn’t really matter but you kept fighting about it anyway? What happened? How would you handle yourself similarly or differently if you could go back and talk about the issue again?

Let’s watch a video to explore this idea further.

Show the “Spelling Bee” clip from the *Grapple* DVD.

Sure, sometimes we know we’re right and other people are wrong—just like that kid in the spelling bee. But is it really worth it to make other people feel bad just so we can prove we’re right? Is being right more important than being nice? Let’s grapple with that.

grapple team time: 15 minutes

Break into Grapple Teams. Encourage Grapple Team leaders to check in with kids about their week. Grapple Team leaders will facilitate discussion, using the Grapple Team Guide on pages 65-66. Afterward, kids will report what they learned.

grapple team reports: 10 minutes

At the end of Grapple Team Time, match Grapple Teams that chose Option 1 with Grapple Teams that chose Option 2 from page 66. Have teams present their reports.

grapple prayer: 5 minutes

Read the Grapple Prayer options. Have the class choose one prayer option that everyone will do. Allow kids time to pray about what they discovered. Then close in prayer.

Option 1: *Picture Prayers*

Draw a picture of someone you argue with a lot. Pray and ask God to help you be kind to that person and not always need to be right.

Option 2: *Whispered Prayers*

Whisper your prayer as a reminder that arguments and loud words are not the best way to communicate. Pray that God would give you kind and encouraging words to say to others.

grapple dare

Sure, being right is nice. We feel good when we know the right answer or have the correct information. And it's tempting to want everyone else to know how much we know. But the truth is that when you care too much about being right, you can hurt other people's feelings. Eventually they won't want to be around you anymore. So I dare you to let a few things go now and then. Don't always try to prove you're right—especially when it doesn't really matter who is right or wrong. I dare you to put other people's feelings over your need to be right. I dare you to stop the argument and be kind instead.

Remember to go to mygrapple.com this week to choose the opening games for next week, look for Grapple Clues to win the Grapple Button, play an online game, and connect with each other—and me.

grapple team guide

In your Grapple Team, use this guide to grapple with today's question.



Who do you argue with most? Why is it important to you to prove you're right with that person? How would you rate your relationship with that person?

Read Jonah 3–4.

Why do you think Jonah cared so much about being right? How did being wrong affect Jonah's life? Tell about a time you wanted to be right so badly you didn't care if you were unkind to someone? What did God show Jonah through the life and death of the plant? What can Jonah's situation teach us about the importance of being kind versus being right?

Read 2 Samuel 9:3-7.

Mephibosheth was a descendant of Saul, the man who tried to *kill* David...over and over again. So why do you think David was kind to Mephibosheth? How would you have treated Mephibosheth if you were David? Explain why you do or don't think there is ever a time being right might be more important than being kind.

Read Colossians 3:12-13.

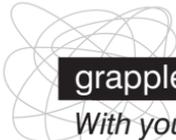


Talk about an argument you had in the last week or so. Share with your partner using only words that describe emotions to tell how you feel about the argument now after reading these verses. How could you have "clothed yourself" differently? How could those verses help you next time you're in an argument?

Read Galatians 5:22-23.

How can the fruit of the Spirit change the way you interact with the people in your life? Think of someone you have an especially hard time getting along with. How could the fruits of the Spirit help you in that relationship?

How can you show kindness to that person this week during an argument—even if you know you're right?

**grapple team reports**

With your team, choose one of the options below to report what you discovered.

Option 1: The Fruit

Tell what you learned in terms of fruit. For example, say, “We learned a bushel this lesson,” or “One thing we learned was so obvious it fell on our heads like a coconut,” or “Another thing was as sweet as a strawberry.”

Option 2: Hugs

Give each other hugs as you report what you learned about kindness.



What Really Matters?

Is Being the Best What Matters?

Key Faith Foundation: Being Faithful

Key Scriptures: 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Philippians 3:12-14;
1 Timothy 4:6-12; Hebrews 11

grapple schedule

5 minutes	grapple community
10-15 minutes	grapple games and clues
10 minutes	grapple time
15 minutes	grapple team time
10 minutes	grapple team reports
5 minutes	grapple prayer and dare

Supplies Bibles, *Grapple* DVD, DVD player, Christian music CD, CD player, copy of the Grapple Team Guide for each person, paper, pencils, 5 self-adhesive notes per child, 5 large pieces of paper, markers

grapple community: 5 minutes

Play Christian music as kids enjoy snacks and friendship, and then play an opening countdown from the *Grapple* DVD to wrap up Grapple Community time.

grapple games: 10-15 minutes

Lead kids in the games they chose ahead of time at mygrapple.com.

grapple clues

Have kids write the answers to this week's Grapple Clues. Award points for each correct answer. (Answers in parentheses are samples.) The winning team gets the Grapple Button.

CLUE 1 [738 points]: **Find one person in the Bible who was the best at something.** (*Samson was strongest in Judges 14; Solomon was wisest in 1 Kings 3*)

CLUE 2 [393 points]: **Discover someone in the Bible who was faithful and obeyed God.** (*Noah in Genesis 6; Abram in Genesis 12; Moses in Exodus 7*)

CLUE 3 [626 points]: **Find out one thing each person in your Grapple Team is best at.**

CLUE 4 [293 points]: **Discover one person in our class who has received a first-place award.**

GET READY ▶ *Make five signs and post them at the front of your room. The signs should read: "Sports Team," "Friend," "Singing Group," "Actor/Actress," and "Christian."*

Lead the entire class in the following:

Pass out five self-adhesive notes and a pencil or marker to each child.

Let's play Opinion Poll. Write your answers on your sticky notes as I read some questions. Make sure you use one sticky note per question.

- **Which is the best professional sports team?**
- **Who is your best friend?**
- **Which is the best singing group?**
- **Who is the best actor or actress?**
- **Who is the best Christian you know?**

When kids have finished writing their answers, have them stick their answers on the appropriate poster. As kids do this, encourage them to take a minute to look at others' answers to see if they are similar or different.



*What criteria did you use to decide who or what is the best?
Why don't we all agree on what makes something the best?*



What makes someone a best friend or the best actor? What would it take to be the best Christian?

What does God look for in a Christian? Does he want the person who's memorized the most verses? the person who has gone to church the most Sundays? or the person who's helped the most old ladies across the street? Do we need to be the best at something for God to use us? Is being the best what matters? Let's grapple with that!

grapple team time: 15 minutes

Break into Grapple Teams. Encourage Grapple Team leaders to check in with kids about their week. Grapple Team leaders will facilitate discussion, using the Grapple Team Guide on pages 5-6. Afterward, kids will report what they learned.

grapple team reports: 10 minutes

At the end of Grapple Team Time, match Grapple Teams that chose Option 1 with Grapple Teams that chose Option 2 from page 6. Have teams present their reports.

grapple prayer: 5 minutes

Read the Grapple Prayer options. Have the class choose one prayer option that everyone will do. Allow kids time to pray about what they discovered. Then close in prayer.

Option 1: *Little Prayers*

Curl yourself up in a little ball; make yourself as small as you can. Thank God that you don't have to be big, tall, or the best at anything for him to use you.

Option 2: *Stick Prayers*

Using only stick figures, draw some ways God can use you this week. Ask God to help you be faithful.

grapple dare

God doesn't need you to be the strongest athlete, the smartest student, the best musician, or the most creative painter. God just wants you to be faithful to him. Today you read about people in the Bible who weren't the best—they were weak or old or not that smart—but God still used them because they were faithful. God wants you to continue becoming more like Jesus, but God can use you even though you're not perfect. This week, I dare you to let God use you exactly as you are. Stop comparing your talents and abilities to others, and be open to the unique adventure God has just for you.

Remember to go to mygrapple.com this week to choose the opening games for next week, look for Grapple Clues to win the Grapple Button, play an online game, and connect with each other—and me.

grapple team guide

In your Grapple Team, use this guide to grapple with today's question.



What is something you would like to be really good at? What would it take to be the best at it? Describe how you think people might treat you differently if you were the best.

Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13.

Obviously David wasn't the oldest, the strongest, or the most obvious choice for God to choose as the next king of Israel. Why do you think God picked David? What does that say about how God can use you, even if you're not the strongest, smartest, or best at something?

Read Philippians 3:12-14.

Paul admits that he isn't perfect, but he's trying to be! Doesn't God expect the best of us? Then how and why would God use people who aren't what the world sees as the best?

Read 1 Timothy 4:6-12.



In these verses, what are some things Paul says not to worry about? What should we focus on instead? How can God use you if you're faithful, even if you're not perfect?

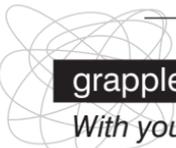
Skim Hebrews 11.

Have each person in your Grapple Team pick one person from this chapter who was faithful and then fill out a line of the chart. Then report back to your team. Fill in your chart with everyone else's information. See the example on the next page.

PERSON	HARD THING HE OR SHE HAD TO DEAL WITH	HOW GOD USED HIS OR HER FAITHFULNESS
Sarah	Not being able to have a baby	God used her family to start a huge nation.

Awards shows single out the best in some category—the best singer, actor, or athlete, for example. With your team, make up a heavenly awards show. What categories would God have—what kinds of things would be important to God? Decide what the decorations would look like, how God would announce each award, and what the prizes would be (if any).

So what would you tell a friend who asked if being the best is the most important thing?



grapple team reports

With your team, choose one of the options below to report what you discovered.

Option 1: Act It

Act out the award show you made up. Don't forget your acceptance speeches!

Option 2: Calculate It

Create a mathematical equation that compares what the world values to what God values.



What Really Matters?

Is Being Happy What Matters?

Key Faith Foundation: Being Content

Key Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 6:4-10;
Philippians 4:11-14; Colossians 3:10-11

grapple schedule

5 minutes	grapple community
10-15 minutes	grapple games and clues
10 minutes	grapple time
15 minutes	grapple team time
10 minutes	grapple team reports
5 minutes	grapple prayer and dare

Supplies

Bibles, *Grapple* DVD, DVD player, Christian music CD, CD player, copy of the Grapple Team Guide for each person, paper, pencils, markers

grapple community: 5 minutes

Play Christian music as kids enjoy snacks and friendship, and then play an opening countdown from the *Grapple* DVD to wrap up Grapple Community time.

grapple games: 10-15 minutes

Lead kids in the games they chose ahead of time at mygrapple.com.

grapple clues

Have kids write the answers to this week's Grapple Clues. Award points for each correct answer. (Answers in parentheses are samples.) The winning team gets the Grapple Button.

CLUE 1 [782 points]: **Find one description in Acts of someone being content and thankful in spite of difficult circumstances.** (Paul and Silas sang in prison, Acts 16)

CLUE 2 [555 points]: **Discover one song of joy in the Bible.** (1 Samuel 2; Psalm 100; Isaiah 26; Luke 1)

CLUE 3 [336 points]: **For each member of your Grapple Team, discover an activity that makes that person happy.**

CLUE 4 [150 points]: **Find out who in our class has said "Thank you" to someone most recently.**

Lead the entire class in the following:

Let's play a game of Would You Rather? I'll call out two options, and you'll have to choose one of them. There are no right or wrong answers; just pick the first option that sounds good to you. You'll demonstrate which option you've chosen by yelling out your choice and forming a group with everyone else who chose the same option. Then take a moment to talk about why you chose what you did before I call out two more options. Ready? Let's go!

Allow time between each set of options so kids can choose an option and then discuss the choice with others who chose the same one.

Would you rather

- **go without television or go without junk food for the rest of your life?**
- **not be able to shower or bathe for one whole month or not be able to brush your teeth for six months?**
- **pick your own nose or pick someone else's?**
- **always have to say everything on your mind or never be able to speak again?**
- **publish your diary or make a movie of your most embarrassing moment?**
- **get caught singing in the mirror or get caught spying on your crush?**
- **be stranded on an island alone or be stranded with someone you fight with all the time?**
- **be the most popular person or be the happiest person you know?**



During our game, how did you decide which option to choose? Explain what was most important in your decision-making process—making yourself happy, making others happy, or doing the right thing either way?

Lots of factors go into our decision-making process, and some are more important than others. How important is it that we're happy? Is being happy what matters most? Let's grapple with that.

grapple team time: 15 minutes

Break into Grapple Teams. Encourage Grapple Team leaders to check in with kids about their week. Grapple Team leaders will facilitate discussion, using the Grapple Team Guide on pages 5-6. Afterward, kids will report what they learned.

grapple team reports: 10 minutes

At the end of Grapple Team Time, match Grapple Teams that chose Option 1 with Grapple Teams that chose Option 2 from page 6. Have teams present their reports.

grapple prayer: 5 minutes

Read the Grapple Prayer options. Have the class choose one prayer option that everyone will do. Allow kids time to pray about what they discovered. Then close in prayer.

Option 1: *Thumbs Up Prayers*

Think of a difficult situation that's making you unhappy. As you pray about that situation, hold your thumb in the "down" position. Then turn your thumb up toward God.

Option 2: *Smile Awhile Prayers*

As you talk to God, put a smile on your face, even if you don't feel like smiling. You'll be amazed at how your feelings change!

grapple dare

People tell us to focus on what makes us happy, but God's Word tells us that being happy isn't what's most important. What matters most is trusting God in difficult circumstances and learning to be content with the life God has given us. We can be joyful and content in all situations because we know God is with us, but that doesn't mean our lives will always be "sunshine and lollipops." This week, when something difficult happens to you, I dare you to look for God within the situation and remember to be grateful and content at all times.

Remember to go to mygrapple.com this week to choose the opening games for next week, look for Grapple Clues to win the Grapple Button, play an online game, and connect with each other—and me.

grapple team guide

In your Grapple Team, use this guide to grapple with today's question.



When you think about being happy, what's the first thing that comes to mind? Explain what you think you need to have to be happy.

Read Colossians 3:10-11.

Based on these verses, fill out the chart below with the opposites on either side of the "or." Then fill in the rest of the spaces with other opposites people might be, such as "rich" or "poor" that would also apply to these verses.

_____	or	_____



What do these verses tell us is the most important thing above and beyond any of the comparisons mentioned above? Why do you or don't you think this still applies if you put in the words happy or unhappy?

Read 2 Corinthians 6:4-10.

On a separate sheet of paper, draw a graphic to demonstrate some of the things listed in these verses.

We endure... (verses 4-5)

We prove ourselves by... (verse 6)

What we do...(verses 7-9)

Read verse 10 again.

What does this verse tell you about being happy? Explain why you do or don't think it's possible to be happy in the midst of trouble and danger. According to the Apostle Paul in his writings to the Corinthians, what really matters? What's the difference between happiness and joy?

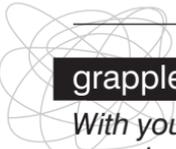
Read Philippians 4:11-14.

What do you think this passage has to do with happiness? What does it look like to be content in your own life? Think about something you're facing right now that may be quite difficult for you. Fill in the blank in this verse with what you thought of:

"I can do _____ through Christ, who gives me strength."

How does knowing that Christ gives you strength and power make you feel?

What would you tell a friend who asked you if being happy is what really matters?


grapple team reports

With your team, choose one of the options below to report what you discovered.

Option 1: Human Sculptures

Have one or two people act as "artists" and sculpt their "clay" (the other members of the team) into forms and shapes to share what you learned.

Option 2: Roving Reporter

Pick one member of the team to act as the "roving reporter" to interview other team members about what they learned.