

252 KIDS
DEVOTIONAL

FOOLISH
TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

FREE SAMPLE
HOLLY CRAWSHAW

AN 8-WEEK DEVOTIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR KIDS

We hope you enjoy this complimentary sample of
Focus: Take a Closer Look, by Holly Crawshaw.

This sample contains the introduction, a portion of the first week's devotions and activities, and other details about the book.

Available at OrangeStore.org.

To find out more, please visit FocusDevo.com, or
OrangeBooks.com for other books in the 252 Kids Devotional Series.

ORANGE BOOKS

Focus: Take A Closer Look

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INTRODUCTION

Let's talk about the obvious: you're holding a book.

I don't know what you thought about books before today, but here's the deal . . . this isn't just *any* book. Nope. This book is different. This book can teach *you* to be different. It can teach you to see things other people can't see.

No, I'm serious!

This book is all about a little word with a big meaning: *faith*.

Faith means trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see.

It's okay if that doesn't make sense yet. Because together, we're going to conduct an experiment. An experiment to investigate what it means to have faith.

And like with all good experiments, we need a plan—a method.

Here's how this is going to work:

Four days a week, you'll read one devotional entry.

On the fifth day, there's a Challenge that you can do or skip. (But I don't think you'll want to miss out on these!)

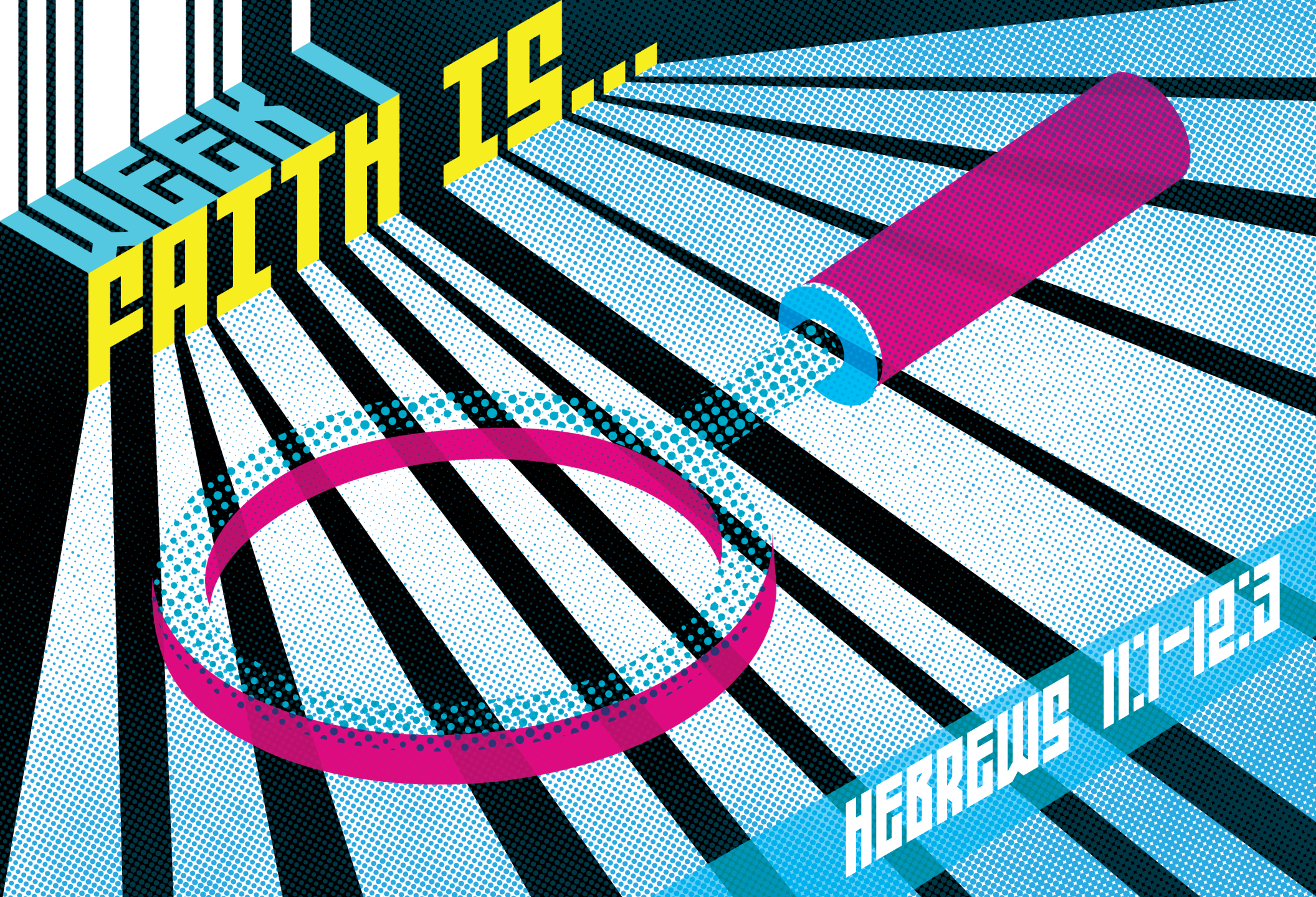
Oh, and make sure to keep track of your Focus Decoder. You can find it at the back of this book! With it, you can check out cool facts or helpful tips throughout the book. Put it somewhere safe! In fact, keeping this book along with a pen or pencil in the same place as your decoder is a great way to make the most of our time together.

If you miss a day, don't give up. Just start back where you left off the next chance you get.

Want to know my hypothesis? What I think is going to happen? By the end of this book, you're going to know more, understand more—but more importantly, you're going to see more.

All you have to do is *focus*.

. . . oh, and you have to turn the page!



HEBREW IS PAITH

HEBREW 11-12'S

DAY 1

YOU CAN KNOW JESUS EVEN THOUGH YOU'VE NEVER SEEN HIM.

Focus.

Is that a word you've ever heard before? Maybe your dad was trying to get you to concentrate on your math homework, but a new episode of your favorite show just dropped on YouTube and you couldn't add one more decimal until you saw what happened next.

FOCUS.

Or maybe your soccer coach caught you daydreaming about what you were going to have for dinner.

FOOOO-CUUUUUUSSS!

Or your best friend stopped in the middle of their story about the new skateboard trick they landed because you were staring into space, wondering if ants sleep at night or not.

Focus.

But what does that really mean? To focus? In the space below, define "focus" in your own words:

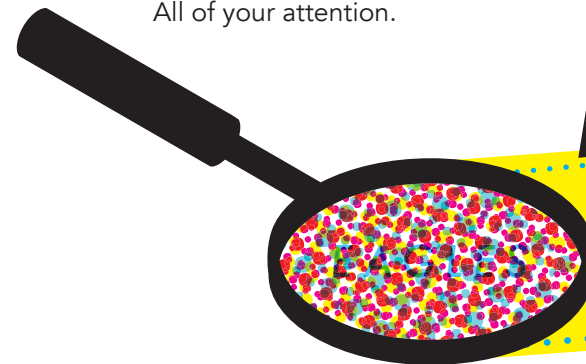
Put a check mark beside any of the following words that you used:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attention | <input type="checkbox"/> Distraction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mind | <input type="checkbox"/> Thoughts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eyes | |

Since the name of this book is *Focus*, we should probably agree on a definition. For us, let's define focus as . . .

Taking a closer look.

In other words, wherever your mind was before—or wherever your eyes were before—you move them back to what matters most. When you focus on something, you give it your attention. All of your attention.



DECODE IT!

Which birds of prey can quickly shift focus, allowing them to "zoom in" on their prey with their eyes?

This week, we want you to focus on the idea of *faith*.

We've already said that faith is trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see. So how are you supposed to do that? How are you supposed to focus on something you can't see?

You focus on what you can see.

Think of yourself as an investigator. If you were trying to solve a crime that no one witnessed, you would look for evidence of what happened. You'd look at what you *can* see to tell you what you *can't* see.

In the Bible, we hear about a guy named Paul. Early in his life, Paul hated Christians. His job was to find people who followed Jesus and punish them. But then one day, God spoke to Paul and his life was changed forever. He began to have faith.

We're going to learn a lot about Paul in this book, but for right now, all you need to know is that Paul's faith grew and grew until he had big, big faith. People couldn't believe how big Paul's faith was. The author of Hebrews explains faith like this:

**Faith is being sure of what we hope for.
It is being sure of what we do not see.**

HEBREWS 11:1

If we want to have big, big faith, we can look at what we *do* see to be sure of what we *do not* see. You do this all the time! Have you ever seen the leaves moving when there's a breeze? You can't see the wind. But you know it exists because of what you *can* see.

Even though we can't see Jesus, we *can* see evidence that He exists.

If you can, go outside. If you can't, find a window to look out of. Draw a sketch of what you see. (Stick figures are totally allowed!)



See that? He did all of that. Created all of that! The people, the trees—even the stuff the buildings and houses are made of. He made all of it. When it feels hard to have faith, look at what you can see to believe in what you can't see.

DAY 2

FAITH IS ... ONE WAY WE CAN CONNECT WITH GOD.

Did you know that in 2003, scientists discovered another planet? Sure, it's a dwarf planet (meaning it's too small to be an actual planet, but too big to be classified as anything else).² But it's a super cool dwarf planet. Check out these stats on the dwarf planet Haumea:

- About the same size as Pluto
- Has two moons
- Spins super fast on its axis
- Is shaped like a football
- Takes 285 Earth-years to orbit the sun
- Is encircled by a ring of particles³

Isn't that incredible? A football shaped dwarf-planet that spins super fast? What's not to love?!

What if you could create your own planet or dwarf-planet?

What would you name it? _____

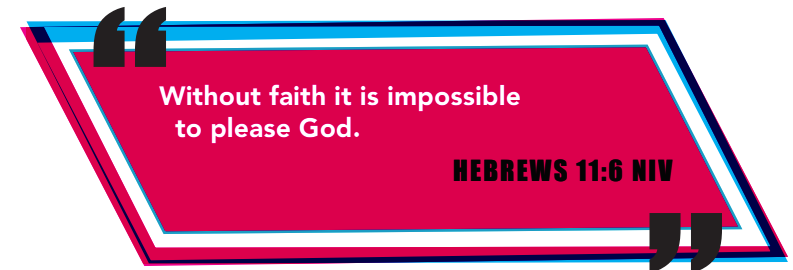
What shape would it be? _____

What would be its best feature? _____

Isn't it fascinating that even though scientists and astronomers have been studying the galaxy for centuries, they are still discovering new things?

That's because plenty of things exist that we can't see. In fact, scientists estimate that there are at least 100 billion undiscovered stars and planets in our Milky Way Galaxy alone.⁴ In their own way, these scientists have faith—they believe in what they can't see (undiscovered planets and stars) because of what they can see (evidence, research, and context clues).

The author of Hebrews tells us one very important fact about faith:



You want to know how to connect with God? Have faith in Him. Believe that He created you, loves you, and wants you to be in His family forever.

You are one of God's favorite things, ever!

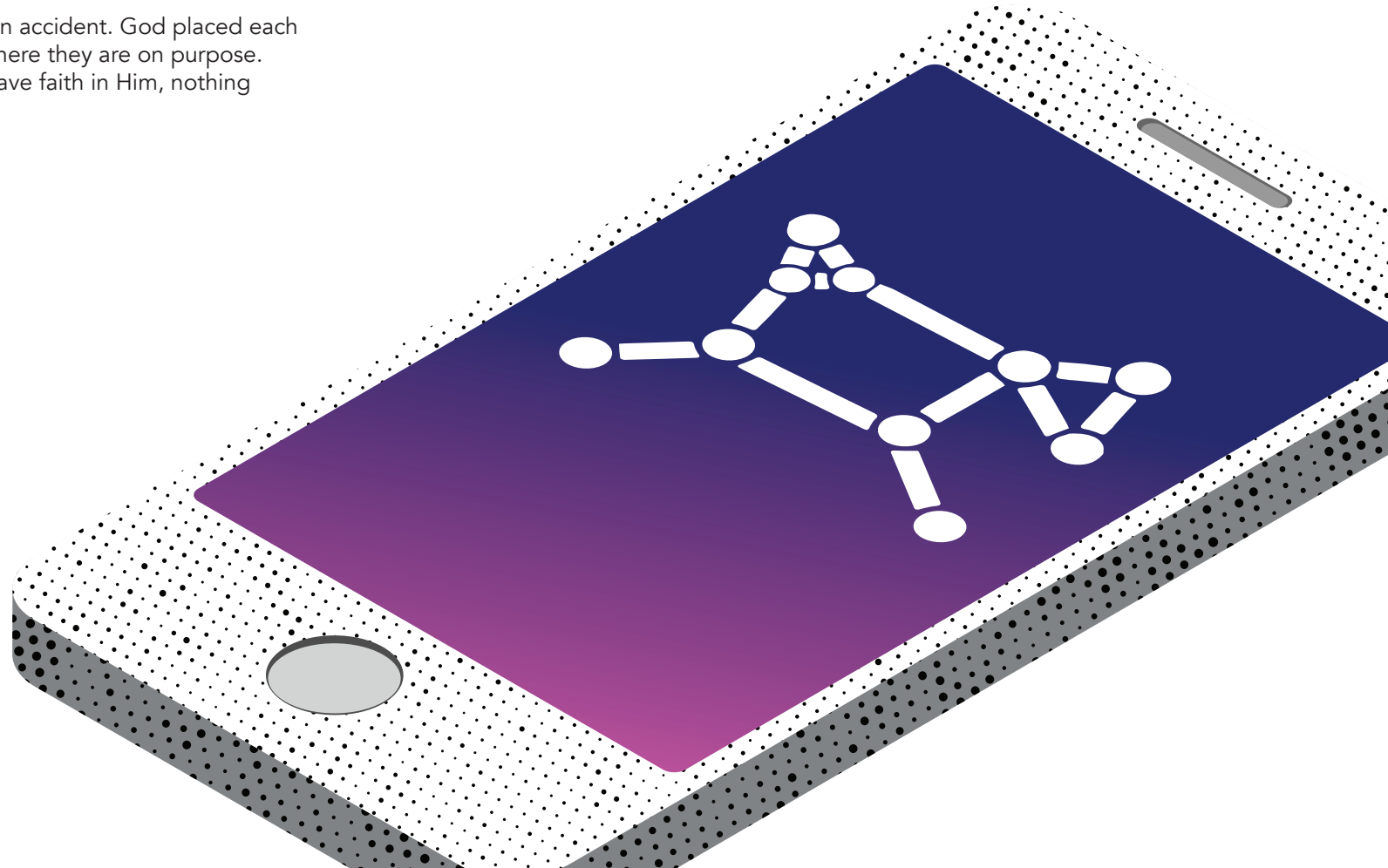
Maybe you have no problem believing in God. Or maybe you still have questions. That's okay; keep reading!

Spend a couple of minutes talking to God. Ask Him to help you focus on what matters most. Ask Him to show you evidence that He is real. Ask Him to help you believe in what you can't see because of what you can see.

BONUS ACTIVITY

Grab a device (smartphone, tablet, etc.) and download the app **Night Sky**. (Always get a parent's permission before using technology or downloading new content!) Using the app, move your device's camera around to see which stars, planets, and constellations surround you. You can know all this without even walking outside!

Everything you see didn't happen on accident. God placed each and every star and planet exactly where they are on purpose. When you believe that, when you have faith in Him, nothing gets God more excited!



DAY 5

FAITH IS ... SOMETHING THAT MOVES US INTO ACTION.

Have you ever been to the doctor and had them place two fingers on your wrist while watching a clock? They were taking your pulse—measuring the number of times your heart beats per minute.

Have you ever seen your own heart? Nope. Do you believe that you have one? Yup. Because of the evidence: you're walking, talking, breathing, and living.

Your pulse is even *more* proof that you have a heart. Did you know there are lots of ways to take your pulse? Let's try a few together!

You're going to need a watch or timer for this activity. Go grab one now!

First, take your *Radial Pulse*.⁵

Place your middle and pointer finger from one hand on the wrist of your other hand, just below your thumb and palm.

Once you feel your pulse, start the timer for 60 seconds.



Count the number of pulses and record it below.

----- beats per minute

Next, take your *Carotid Pulse*.

Place your middle and pointer finger on the side of your windpipe just below your jawbone. You may have to move your fingers around a little until you easily feel your heart beating.

Once you feel your pulse, start the timer for 60 seconds.

Count the number of pulses and record it below.



----- beats per minute

This last method is the coolest one by far. Take your *Pedal Pulse*.

Place your middle and pointer finger on the highest point of bone that runs across the top of your foot.

Once you feel your pulse, start the timer for 60 seconds.

Count the number of pulses and record it below.



----- beats per minute

The heart is a pretty cool organ. Check out these facts about the heart:

- **The average heart in an adult is the size of a fist.**
- **Your heart will beat around 115,000 times per day.**
- **Your heart pumps about 2,000 gallons of blood every day.**
- **Your heart is controlled by an electrical system called the cardiac conduction system.**
- **The heart can keep beating even when it's disconnected from the body.⁶**

That last one sounds a little freaky, right? But it's true! The heart is one of the most important organs in the body.

But "heart" has more than one meaning, right? Heart can be our actual, physical heart, but it can also mean the place our feelings, emotions, and thoughts live. When we're kind to others, it's said that we "have a good heart."

In Hebrews we read about all the people from God's Story who had big, big faith. Each one of these people had something in common. Check it out:

Abel had faith. So he brought God a better offering . . .

HEBREWS 11:4a

Noah had faith. So he built an ark . . .

HEBREWS 11:7a

Abraham had faith. So he obeyed God . . .

HEBREWS 11:8a

Isaac had faith. So he blessed . . .

HEBREWS 11:20a

Joseph had faith. So he spoke . . .

HEBREWS 11:22a

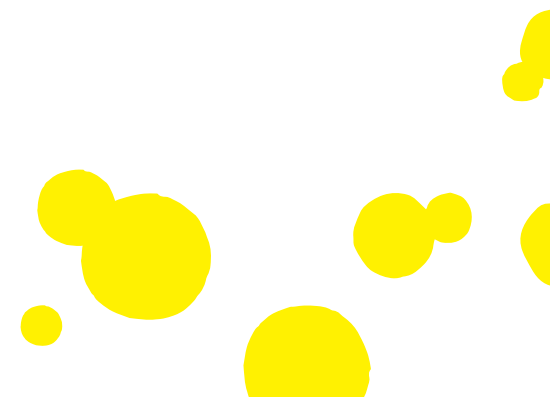
See a pattern? Each person who had faith *did* something because of their faith. Faith is something that makes people *move*. It makes people act. It makes people treat others a different way—a *better* way.

If you want to grow your faith, one place to start is by being a kind person. Does that mean you have to be in a good mood every minute of every day? Of course not. It simply means that you treat people the way you want to be treated.

Who is someone you can show kindness to tomorrow?

How can you show them kindness?

Grow your faith by having a heart—a heart that loves and respects others.



DAY 4

**FAITH IS ...
SOMETHING WE ALREADY
HAVE EVERY DAY.**

Let's take a quick survey:

Favorite song: -----

Favorite singer/band: -----

Worst song you've ever heard: -----

Song you know every word to: -----

Song you're embarrassed that you know every word to:

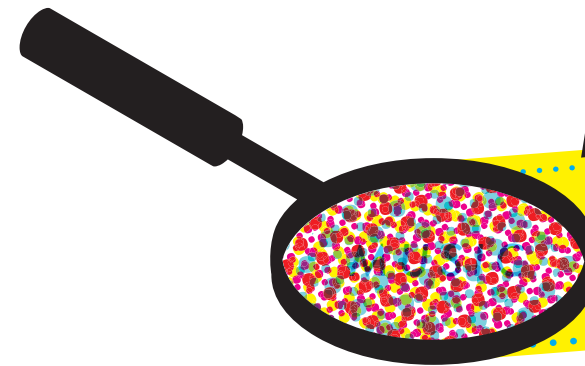
Music is amazing, right? Think about it.

There's music for every mood: exercising, relaxing, walking to the bus stop, hanging out with friends. Music can make us remember a different time, like how that song you played over and over again last summer still reminds you of the beach. Music can say things that we can't. Life without music wouldn't be nearly as fun.

Have you ever thought about what makes music . . . music?

All music is made up of musical notes. Notes can be made by any type of instrument⁷—voices, guitars, flutes, pianos, xylophones. And when you repeat those notes over and over again in a pattern, you get music!

When you think about it, music is really just different sounds. Sound. Now, *sound* is pretty cool. Sound is a type of energy made by vibrations. When any object vibrates, it causes movement of air particles. These particles bump into the particles close to them, which makes them vibrate too, causing waves in the air that you can actually hear.⁸



DECODE IT!

What sound do scientists think may alter the structure of the brain?⁹

Sound is something we don't see every day, but it is something we *have faith in* every day.

- **When you open your mouth, you believe you'll be able to speak.**
- **When you plug in your headphones and put them on, you believe you'll hear your favorite song as soon as you press play.**
- **When you turn on your favorite YouTube episode, you believe the volume will increase when you press that button.**

Come up with your own example of when you have faith in sound:

When I . . .

I believe that . . .

Sound is something you believe in even though you can't see it.

In Hebrews we read . . .



Since we already believe in so many things that we can't see, why do you think it's sometimes hard to have faith in Jesus? List a few of your own reasons below. (And if it's easy for you to have faith, think of some reasons it may be challenging for others.)

1. -----

2. -----

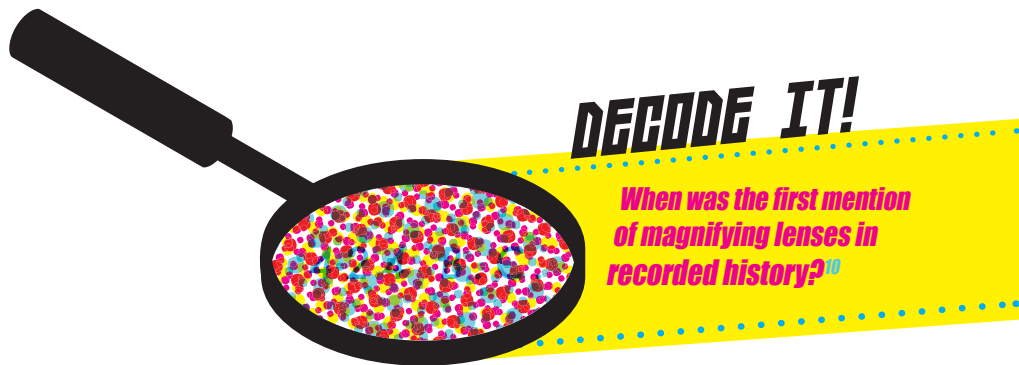
3. -----

The author of Hebrews tells us that we should “throw off” everything that stands in the way of having faith.

Copy down each of those reasons onto the sheets on the next page. Tear those pieces out of this book and make one, giant ball. (Feel free to use your own scrap paper to make it bigger!)

Now, throw that ball of reasons. No, seriously. Give it a huge, heaving, with-all-your-might throw. Slam it against the wall. Smash it into the floor. Use a book like a bat and hit the ball as if you’re in the World Series and the entire game rests on your shoulders.

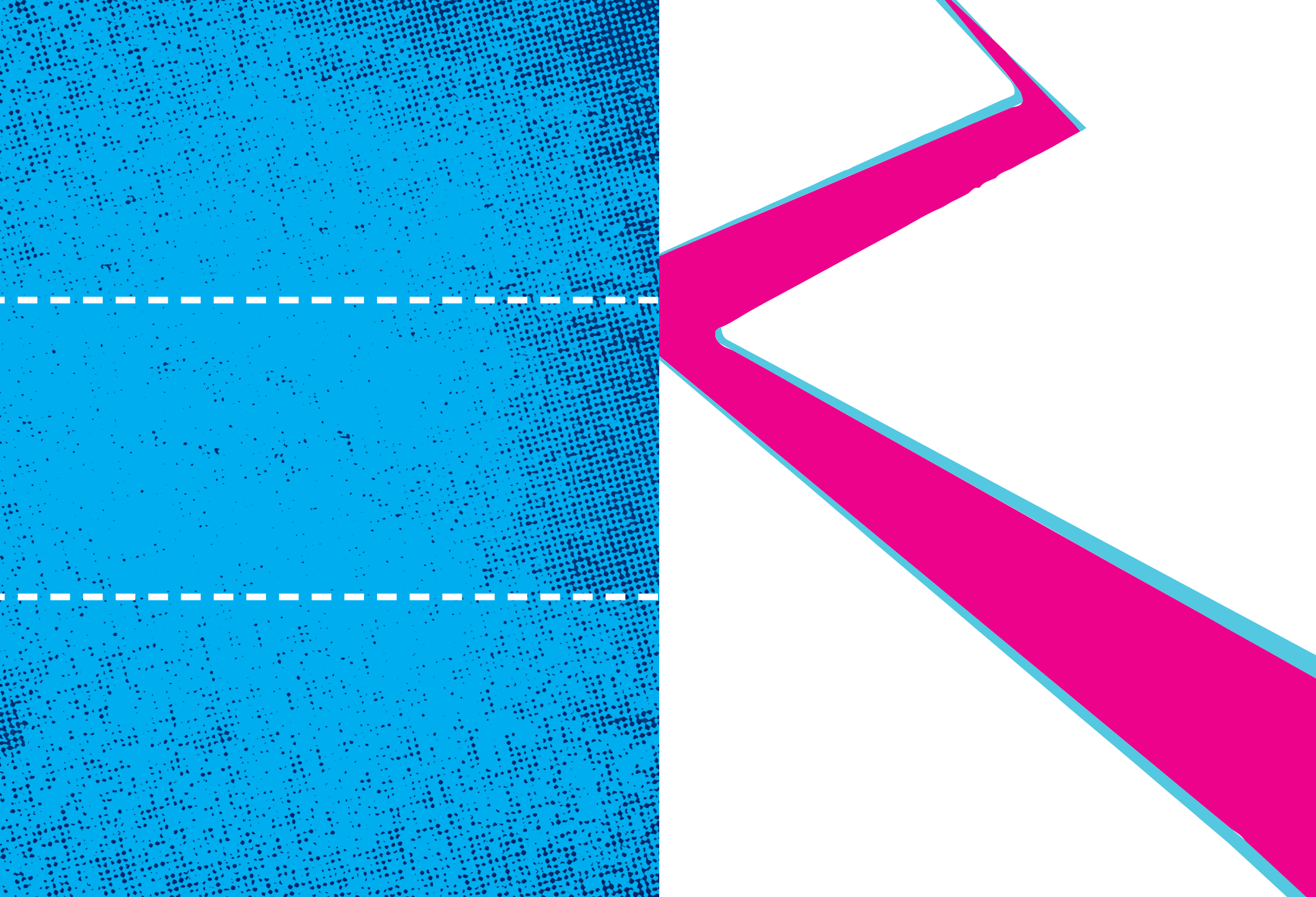
When you’re finished “throwing off” your reasons not to have faith, spend a couple of minutes talking to God. Ask Him to help your faith grow bigger and bigger. Tell Him that you have thrown off all the reasons you had before not to have faith. Then, ask Him to help you have faith in what you can’t see, because of what you can see.



1

2

3



CHALLENGE 1

This week, we've learned a lot of things about what faith is. What's the *main* thing you learned this week that you don't want to forget? (Look back at the bottom lines if you need a reminder!)

Ready to do a little experiment? You probably have the following supplies around your house:

- Dry rice (or dry cereal, dry noodles, sugar, salt—any dry, lightweight food!)
- Sheet of paper
- Rubber band (or hair tie)
- Cup
- Large, metal spoon (Make sure an adult is cool with you banging this around.)
- Baking sheet (Ask an adult to show you what this is if you're unsure!)
- Bonus: a speaker you can use to play music

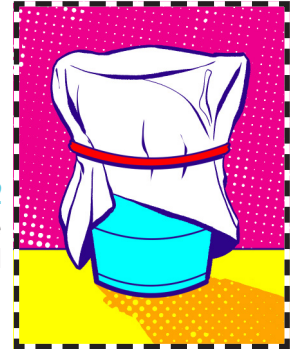
On Day 4 of this week, we talked about sound. We said that sound is a type of energy made by vibrations. While you can't really see sound, you know it exists because you can observe its effects. For example, you can *hear* it.

But today, you're going to see sound's effects.



Step 1

Place the sheet of paper on top of the cup's opening.



Step 2

Fold down the paper over the cup's opening and secure it using the rubber band.



Step 3

Place a spoonful of dry rice on top of the sheet of paper, spreading it out.



Step 4

Warn your family that things are about to get loud—really, really loud. (You should probably make sure it's cool with a grown-up, while you're at it.)



Step 5

Using the metal spoon, bang the baking sheet close to the rice **without touching the rice.**



BONUS STEP

Hold your speaker close to the rice and blast your favorite jam.

Write down what happens to the rice:

Any hypotheses (guesses) on why the rice moves when you bang the baking sheet?

You can't see the sounds you're making, but you can see their effects.

In the same way, you can't see Jesus, but you can see all that He has done for you and for others.

Our bottom line this week is **you can know Jesus even though you've never seen Him.**

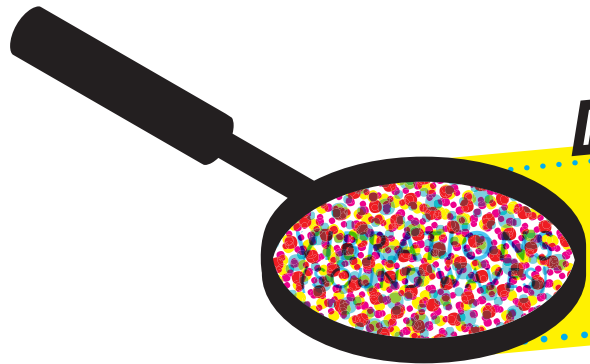
What are some things Jesus has done for you or for your family? (Think: Do you have a warm bed to sleep in at night? Do you have food to eat? Friends? A healthy body?)

1. -----

2. -----

3. -----

Remember, faith is trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see.



DECODE IT!

The banging and the music causes what to move through air, causing the rice to dance?

FOCUS: AN 8-WEEK DEVOTIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR KIDS

This book is all about a little word with a big meaning: faith. Faith means trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see.

It's okay if that doesn't make sense yet. Because together, we're going to conduct an experiment. An experiment to investigate what it means to have faith.

Like with all good experiments, we need a plan—a method.

Four days a week, you'll read one devotional entry.

On the fifth day, there's a special Challenge Day that you can do or skip. (But you won't want to miss out on these!)

We've also included a special **FOCUS** Decoder. Use it to discover cool facts and helpful tips throughout the book.

Want to know my hypothesis—what I think is going to happen? By the end of this book, you're going to know more and understand more—but more importantly, you're going to see more—about faith. All you have to do is focus.

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