

Tell It like It Is

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1

**Lesson 8****Focus:**

Come and see Jesus
with me.

Lesson 8**Bible Basis:**

John 1:35-45

Lesson 8**Memory Verse:**

I will tell of the kindnesses of the LORD,
the deeds for which he is to be praised.
—Isaiah 63:7a

As they focus on coming to see Jesus, your students will hear about TikTok challenges—and talk about what it takes to draw a crowd.

Materials:

Internet access

What draws a crowd these days? Is it a celebrity sighting? An accident or natural disaster? Maybe a concert or sporting event? People are programmed to follow a big crowd, whether in person or online, so when something exciting happens, most of us will sit up and take notice.

Many of you have probably heard of or used the social media platform TikTok. Through this platform, many social media influencers issue “challenges,” encouraging followers to replicate and film certain activities.

➤ **Have you heard of any TikTok challenges? What was the challenge asking participants to do?** (Accept all reasonable responses.)

Share the following information from a LinkedIn business article:

TIP 3: Challenges: Engaging the TikTok Community through Viral Trends

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/tip-3-challenges-engaging-tiktok-community-through-viral-powers-jr/>

TikTok “Challenges often serve as an essential driving force behind TikTok’s virality, enabling users to engage with each other and access an instantaneous community of like-minded creators... Challenges can act as a bridge, connecting creators with their audiences and other creators in a fun, interactive manner.”

Although TikTok is a virtual platform, many of its users, videos, and challenges attract a large virtual crowd of people wanting to see the latest trends.

➤ **Can anyone share about a time when you saw something surprising—and a crowd gathered to watch?** (Let students share their experiences—either with the entire group or with a partner. Be prepared to share your own experience.)

➤ **Before events and performances could be transmitted via the Internet, how did news travel? How long would it take?** (The concept of viral news, Internet memes, videos, and re-tweets may be relatively new, but middle schoolers can't identify with word-of-mouth or face-to-face information. Take a few minutes to explain that for thousands of years, news traveled slowly through traditional storytelling or eyewitness accounts.)

Even though the way we share information has changed dramatically, the message of Jesus has stayed the same. When we learn about the good news of Jesus, we can't help but invite others to come see what it's all about!

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

middle school



Lesson 8 / January 19, 2025

Tell It Like It Is

for use as
STEP 4 

Lesson 8

Focus:

Come and see Jesus
with me.

Lesson 8

Bible Basis:

John 1:35-45

Lesson 8

Memory Verse:

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the deeds for which he is to be praised.
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Materials:

- Poster board or butcher paper (or screenshared document)
- Markers

Ahead of time, preview the following Wikipedia information on the most-followed TikTok accounts. You will use these to illustrate the public's fascination with fame.

List of most-followed TikTok accounts

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_most-followed_TikTok_accounts

For some reason, people just love celebrities. Websites, magazines, and television shows feature famous people, what they eat, where they shop, and what they do. It's not called "celebrity worship" for nothing. For example, the following people are listed as the most-followed TikTok celebrities.

Read off some of the names from the list one at a time, asking kids to raise their hands if they're familiar with these individuals.

List of most-followed TikTok accounts

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_most-followed_TikTok_accounts

Despite the public's fascination with famous people, the Bible tells us that only Jesus Christ is worthy of our worship. His disciples wanted to tell everyone about who He is and what He has done. If we know Jesus is the Son of God—how are we telling other people about Him?

On your poster board or butcher paper (or screenshared document), make two columns: one labeled THE GOSSIP and the other labeled THE GOSPEL. Instruct students to list things that they hear about famous people (online, school conversations, television, etc.). These can be things like what they're wearing, where they shop, what movie they're in, who they broke up with, and so forth. Make sure that your students stay away from inappropriate subjects. Write items in the first column as students list them.

When they finish with the first column, have students share things about Jesus that are *really* worth talking about! Students can write down miracles they've read about in the New Testament,

the details of His birth, events in the Book of Acts, His salvation message, His divinity, and so forth. (You might need to help some students with this column, especially if they have not grown up around biblical teaching.) Write items in the second column as students list them.

Afterward, discuss the following questions with your group:

➤ **When you look at these two columns, what is the most striking difference between them?** (The celebrity gossip is superficial and temporary, but the Gospel is eternal and life-changing.)

➤ **Why is it easier to talk about the stuff on the left and harder to talk about the stuff on the right?** (It can be hard to talk about Jesus with people who have not grown up learning about the Good News. It can feel awkward or hard to bring up in a conversation. Celebrity gossip is everywhere, and young people are constantly confronted with all the silly news about famous people.)

➤ **What are some practical ways we can focus more on sharing Jesus and His love with others?** (Personal conversations, inviting friends to church or youth group, open dialogue about the Bible, introducing someone to a trusted adult leader, sharing a testimony, or even posting encouraging messages on social media are ways to share what students know about God with others.)

Before class is dismissed, encourage each group to choose one specific item in the GOSPEL column to share with someone this week. If time allows, students can even put it into practice by role-playing, posting an encouraging message on social media, or inviting someone to church.

Close in prayer, asking God to empower your students to be brave and counter-cultural in sharing the Gospel with their communities.

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