

Breaking Barriers Leader's Guide

Four missions experiences on overcoming barriers to the Gospel

Location: North Africa and the Middle East (country of Syria)

Focus verse: Romans 8:31 “What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?”

Overall message: Only 1 percent of people in North Africa and the Middle East (NAME) are believers in Jesus Christ. Most have never even heard of Jesus, and they face many barriers to the Gospel. Even children can be used by God to break down those barriers. *Note to leaders:* Because this area of the world can be dangerous to believers, we cannot name Christian workers. While we will focus on specific countries for learning purposes, we will use these experiences to help children understand all NAME people groups and God's plan for them to know Him.

Before you begin: This resource is a collection of experiences to plug your kids into global missions. We hope you will take the ideas included here and expand your children's view of missions and their role in God's kingdom.

<p>This leader's guide includes plans for four, short missions experiences that can be added to your existing programs or events:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Cultural experience  Prayer experience  Giving experience  Serving experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each of these missions experiences is designed to last 10 to 15 minutes. • Use these as an addition to a weekly meeting or combine for a longer missions focus. • Customize these resources to fit your needs. • [Note: If you are using the DVD-ROM, all videos and handouts are included. Please follow the directions on the cover to access all files.]
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Here is a simple glossary that may be useful to you as you communicate these ideas to children:

Mission(s)—A job God gives a person He has chosen to tell another group of people the Good News about Jesus. The person God sends is called a missionary.

Missionary—A Christian chosen by God who obeys His command to go and tell another group of people the Good News about Jesus. (Preschool version) A Christian chosen by God who obeys and goes to tell another group of people about Jesus.

People group—A group of people who share the same language and way of life.

IMB (International Mission Board)—A group created by Southern Baptist churches in one sacred effort to share Jesus with people around the world who wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to know and follow Him.

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Breaking Barriers Cultural Experience

Prepare

- From the DVD-ROM or kidsmission.org, prepare to show the **One percent** video.
- Download and print the **NAME map (Syria)**, **Breaking Barriers focus verse**, **Barrier Breakdown** and the **What makes it a barrier?** documents.
- Set up a simple obstacle course, like a stack of chairs or a box that children have to walk around, at the entrance to the room. You will be discussing barriers to the Gospel, so help them understand barriers using the obstacles.

Introduction

Welcome your group and say that you're glad they were able to get past the barriers and into your room. Tell them that you are going to be learning about barriers that people in the North African and Middle Eastern region of the world are facing.

Explain that the North African and Middle Eastern (NAME) region is a term that IMB and other organizations use for the part of the world that includes countries such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Israel. Most people think of Arabs in this part of the world, but other people groups like Jews, Berbers and Ethiopians also live in this region. One country can be very different from another, and the people groups are unique. Islam is the predominant religion in NAME countries, but tribal beliefs and traditional faith – that aren't Christian – are also present.

One percent

- After the introduction, explain that only 1 percent of peoples in NAME are believers in Jesus Christ.
- That means that we really need to be learning about and praying for this part of the world and Christians who are there.
- Watch the **One percent** video together so you can see some of the people in NAME.
- After the video, ask the kids to describe the people they saw. What did they notice about how they were dressed or the expressions on their faces?
- Point out the diversity of people (like some with very light skin, some with very dark skin) who live in NAME. All those people – the men, women and children – need to know about Jesus.

Barrier breakdown

- Explain that the main reason so few believers live in NAME is because so few people in NAME have even heard of Jesus! It's not that most people have rejected Christ, it's that most people have not even had a chance to accept Him.
- Ask your group, "What is a barrier?"
- Discuss that a barrier keeps us from something or makes it hard to reach.



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- For the people in NAME, there are many barriers to the Gospel – things that keep them from hearing about or knowing about Jesus.
- Distribute the **Barrier Breakdown** activity sheet. Let kids work in pairs or small groups to unscramble some of the barriers to the Gospel.
- After they have finished, ask for volunteers to read the **What makes it a barrier?** explanations for each unscrambled word.
- Say that these are just a few things that keep NAME people from accepting Jesus as Lord.
- Read the **Breaking Barriers focus verse**. Ask how this verse should encourage us when we are facing barriers.
- God is more powerful than any barrier! We just need to get busy supporting His work among NAME people!

Pray

Ask God to break down the barriers in NAME so that all the people will hear about Jesus and believe.



Breaking Barriers Prayer Experience

Prepare

- From the DVD-ROM or kidsonmission.org, download and print the **Barrier Bricks** and the **NAME Faces** collage. Make one copy of each for every child.

Recap

People who live in North Africa and the Middle East (NAME) face many barriers to the Gospel – things that keep them from hearing about Jesus. It's not that the people have rejected Jesus, it's that no one has told them about Him and the gift of eternal life. Only 1 percent of the people in this region know Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Prayer time

- Review the **Breaking Barriers focus verse**.
- Explain that our prayers are very powerful. It's a way that Christians can claim God's power over circumstances.
- Tell the kids that the Christian workers in NAME desperately need our prayers.
- Our prayers can break through the barriers that are keeping people from hearing about Jesus.
- Distribute the **NAME Faces** collage and **Barrier Bricks** handouts.
- Instruct the kids to cut out the bricks and lay them over the faces.
- Take a few minutes to discuss each barrier, then ask for volunteers to pray aloud that God would break the barrier.
- After you have prayed against each barrier, ask the kids to remove that brick, revealing the faces underneath.
- Let this prayer time be a visual representation of God's power to remove the barriers and reveal Himself to the people of NAME.
- Ask them to take home the picture of the faces as a reminder to pray.



Breaking Barriers Giving Experience

Prepare

- Download and print the **Syrian Refugee photos** and the **NAME map (Syria)** if you haven't already.
- Look up current news happening in Syria. For information from IMB, go to **commissionstories.com** and search "Syria."
- Bring a simple hygiene kit to show children. Fill a plastic bag with a bar of soap, washcloth, toothbrush, toothpaste and comb. This will illustrate the kinds of kits that Christian workers distribute in refugee camps. Also, bring a plastic sandwich bag that seals for each child.

Recap

People who live in North Africa and the Middle East (NAME) face many barriers to the Gospel – things that keep them from hearing about Jesus. It's not that the people have rejected Jesus, it's that no one has told them about Him and the gift of eternal life. Only 1 percent of the people in this region know Jesus as Lord and Savior.

What's happening in Syria?

- Show kids the **NAME map** highlighting Syria.
- Point out this small country and ask the kids if they have ever heard of it.
- Share current information about Syria from the news.
- Explain that Syria has had a great deal of war. Thousands of people have been killed or wounded. Many others are left homeless or are refugees.
- More than 2 million Syrians are considered refugees – people who have been forced to leave their homes because of the violence, but really don't have anywhere else to go. Other countries have agreed that refugees can come live there, but the living conditions are terrible.
- Show the **Syrian Refugee photos** and ask for volunteers to read the captions aloud.
- Be sensitive to this issue with young children who might be frightened by the images.
- Give time for your group to discuss these images and how it feels to see children living like this.

What's happening in Syria?

- Show the hygiene kit that you brought. Let the kids pass it around and look at the contents.
- Ask why a kit like this might be so precious to a refugee. (They do not have access to a store where they can buy these things. Most of them left their homes very quickly and did not take any personal items with them.)
- Explain that Christian workers are doing their best to provide these items, food and



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- shelter but they need our help.
- Since it's too difficult to mail bags like these to the refugees, it's best to help by giving money that can be used in ministry.
- Give each child a plastic bag and ask them to collect money (loose change, portion of their allowance, etc.) for a specified time period.
- Make a note to yourself to have a collection day for their offerings.
- Send the money to the Syrian refugee relief efforts of Baptist Global Response by going to gobgr.com and clicking on the project "Syria Crisis."

Pray

Ask God to strengthen workers who are ministering to the refugees. Pray that refugees will come to know that Jesus loves them.



Breaking Barriers Serving Experience

Prepare

- From the DVD-ROM or kidsonmission.org, prepare to show **Making dreams come true** video.
- Check with your church staff, association or other local ministries to see if refugees live in your area. You can also check online with the United Nations Refugee Agency. Be prepared to tell the kids about it.

Recap

People who live in North Africa and the Middle East (NAME) face many barriers to the Gospel – things that keep them from hearing about Jesus. It's not that the people have rejected Jesus, it's that no one has told them about Him and the gift of eternal life. Only 1 percent of the people in this region know Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Syria is one country in NAME that has experienced a great deal of war. Millions of Syrians are now refugees and have little chance of learning about Jesus unless Christians tell them.

Meet Noora

- Explain that you are going to introduce them to Noora,* a 16-year-old Syrian refugee.
- Explain that Noora was a regular kid like them, until the war broke her family apart, and she was forced to raise her brothers and sisters.
- Show the **Making dreams come true** video.
- After the video, follow up with a few discussion questions:
 - What did Noora want to be when she was a young child?
 - Why was she forced to leave her home?
 - What was life like in the refugee camp?
 - What is her life like today?

Bring Jesus to others

- Tell your group that many refugees from other countries come to the U.S. It's usually much safer for them here, but they are still very poor and often have many needs.
- When refugees come to our cities, we have a great opportunity to share Jesus with them.
- Help them realize that the refugees are real people with hopes and dreams, just like Noora. Many of them want to return to their home countries, like Noora does.
- They don't face as many barriers to the Gospel in the U.S., so God has given us the perfect chance to serve them and tell them the Good News.
- If you are aware of refugees living in your city, tell the kids about them.
- Give them time to brainstorm how they might minister to refugees (collecting clothes, food, school supplies for them).



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- Research the languages they speak and order Bibles in those languages to distribute.
- If you did the Breaking Barriers Giving Experience, remind kids about the money they should be saving to help minister to Syrian refugees.

Pray

Pray, as Noora asked in the video, for the war to end in Syria and for her safe return to her home. Pray also that Noora and her family would accept Jesus and have eternal life through Him.



Breaking Barriers Going Further

More ideas using this theme

- Download and print the **Breaking Barriers parent letter**. Give to parents so they can continue talking about this theme as a family.
- Follow through with a mission project to refugees in or near your city. Consider a clothes or canned food drive. Refugees often live together in a community, so consider a Bible club or children's event. Ask your church's association if other churches have a regular ministry to refugees. You might be able to partner with them in a mission project that would be appropriate for your kids.
- Go to **commissionstories.com** and search "Syria" for videos, photos and stories about God's work among the Syrians. For more on IMB's work in all of North Africa and the Middle East, go to **namepeoples.imb.org**.
- Don't forget to visit **kidsonmission.org** for more activities and KOM experiences you might have missed. Also, like us on Facebook and see how other churches are using KOM.
- Download and print the Breaking Barriers newsletter. This includes activities on all three missions packages in this release. Use it as an introduction to the 12 Breaking Barriers experiences or as a review. Make enough copies for each child to have one to take home.