

# Read to Live

For teens ages 12–14 · about 45–60 minutes · Buried & Raised · game **Read to Live** · built on **Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:2, and 2 Timothy 2:15**

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Many baptized teens own a Bible — or have one on a phone app — but treat Scripture like homework due someday. They know they *should* read, so they skim a verse, check a box, and move on. Meanwhile TikTok theology, friend-group opinions, and mood-of-the-moment feelings steer real choices. This session teaches that reading God's Word is **feeding the soul**, not collecting gold stars. Meditation turns reading into obedience that can change a random Tuesday afternoon.

## **Before you teach anything, pray.**

Some students feel behind because they rarely open the Book. Others read only to win arguments. Ask the Spirit to make Scripture alive here — not guilt-heavy, but hungry for words that actually guide lunch tables, group chats, and hard conversations at home.

## **The heart of the lesson**

God told Joshua, “**Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night**” (Joshua 1:8). The blessed person in Psalm 1 delights in God’s law and meditates on it day and night (Psalm 1:2). Paul charged Timothy to “**present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth**” (2 Timothy 2:15). Reading is not the finish line — *living* what you read is.

*Don't just read the Book. Let the Book read you.*

The root issue is treating Scripture as information instead of invitation. Symptoms: Bible app installed but never opened, reading only when a leader assigns it, quoting verses to sound smart without obeying them. God’s way out is habit plus meditation — slow down, ask what God is saying, and let the Word correct attitudes before situations explode. A teen who journals one verse and obeys one command beats a teen who speed-reads three chapters and forgets by dinner.

*Meditation turns reading into obedience.*

Practical handles for ages 12–14: five-minute morning read, one-verse journal, read the same paragraph twice and ask “what should I do?”, pair reading with prayer. No shame for beginners — every deep Bible life started with small, faithful bites.

**JOSHUA 1:8**

“Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it.”

**PSALM 1:2**

“But whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law **day and night.**”

## How the session flows

- 1 Checkbox or feast?** Hook on skim-reading vs. feeding the soul. ~8 min
- 2 Read, meditate, obey.** Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1, 2 Timothy 2:15. ~12 min
- 3 Play the game.** “Read to Live” on screen. ~12–15 min
- 4 Quiet honesty.** Reference card, private reflection. ~5 min
- 5 Worksheet.** In class or take-home reinforcement. ~15 min
- 6 Start tomorrow.** One verse plan, prayer of hunger. ~8 min

Screen for the game, printed cards and worksheets, pens, optional Bibles or Bible apps for lookup. Leaders ready to help students pick a realistic daily reading plan.

## Leading it, part by part

### Checkbox or feast?

Ask: do you read Scripture to *check a box* or to *eat*? Show a snack vs. a full meal picture if helpful. Skimming one verse to feel spiritual is like licking the menu while staying hungry. Read Psalm 1:1–3 — the blessed person is like a tree planted by water because they **delight** in God’s Word, not endure it.

### Read, meditate, obey

Teach Joshua 1:8: speak it, meditate day and night, **do** what it says. Meditation is not emptying your mind — it is filling your mind with God’s sentence until it shapes your choices. Explain 2 Timothy 2:15: handle Scripture correctly — context, humility, obedience. Contrast worldly skimming (quotes for clout, debate ammo) with godly reading (listen, repent, act).

Give three teen habits: (1) same time daily, even five minutes; (2) one verse written in notes app; (3) one obedience step before bed.

### Play the game

Run “Read to Live” on screen. Round 1 sorts checkbox reading from live Word habits. Round 2 drills Joshua 1, Psalm 1, and 2 Timothy 2. Round 3 puts teens in real scenarios — Bible apps, boredom, peer pressure. Round 4 lightning. Twelve to fifteen minutes. Afterward, debrief: “Where does your reading still feel like a checkbox?”

### Quiet honesty

Hand out the reference card. Nobody collects it. Five minutes, private. Students admit where reading has gone cold, feels boring, or only happens when someone grades them. Honor the silence.

### Worksheet

The worksheet is structured learning — fill-in, true/false, lookup, one real-life answer. It reinforces Joshua 1, Psalm 1, and 2 Timothy 2 without duplicating the private card. Use in pairs if energy is high; send home if time is short.

### Start tomorrow

Invite each student to name one verse and one time they will read before Friday. Pray for hunger, not guilt. Offer leaders to help students stuck on where to begin (Gospels, Psalms, Proverbs). Don’t just read the Book — let the Book read you.

## Take it further

- What does Joshua 1:8 connect to meditation *and* obedience?
- How is Psalm 1:2 different from reading only when a leader assigns it?
- What does 2 Timothy 2:15 mean by handling the word of truth “correctly”?
- What is the difference between checkbox reading and feeding your soul?
- What symptom of “information only” reading do you see in your own habits?
- How could one-verse journaling change a Tuesday afternoon?
- Why does delight matter in Psalm 1 — not just duty?
- What would you obey this week if you let one verse read *you*?

## A final word

Do not shame students who rarely read, and do not praise speed-reading without obedience. Present the God who spoke, the Book that is alive, and habits small enough to keep. Give them Scripture, the game, the card, and a plan for tomorrow morning. Somewhere in your room a teenager is ready to stop collecting verses like trophies and start letting God’s Word steer real life. Don’t just read the Book. Let the Book read you.