

# Memory Verse:

James 3:2

*If you can control your tongue, you are mature.*

# Give it all you've got!

ages 10-12

The Book of James talks about some really big things that are controlled by very small parts—a ship controlled by a tiny rudder and a horse controlled by a tiny bit in his mouth. James also teaches us that huge problems can start when a very small thing gets out of control—an entire forest can burn down because of one small spark that starts a fire. Our tongues are a very small part of our bodies, but they have a lot of power in our lives.

The best way to keep control of your tongue is to think before you speak. Evaluate what you are going to say. Ask yourself: Is it kind? Is it the truth? Will it make the other person feel good about herself? Does it even need to be said at all? Would Jesus say it? Will it bring people closer to God? If the answer to any of these questions is no, don't say it!

**Your Challenge:** Make a checklist to help you stop and think before you say the first thing that pops into your head. Draw a picture of a horse, a ship or a forest fire to remind you of the things James compared to controlling our tongues. Then write the questions listed above. Add any other questions you think will help you control your language. Tape your checklist inside your locker or on the front of one of your notebooks. Use it to think before you speak.

*At the end of the week, evaluate:*

*Did your checklist help you to control your tongue? If you messed up, keep trying.*

*Remember, what you say determines your way. If you want to have a successful "way," always think before you speak.*

What I say determines my way.

★ Lesson 50 ★  
Bible Lesson: James 3:1-10

