

ALOVE+



The Salvation Army for a new generation

MOVING UP!

... to Secondary school



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... to Secondary school

ALOVE⁺

Moving Up! written by Liz Ball
*(with many thanks to the young
people who have contributed!)*

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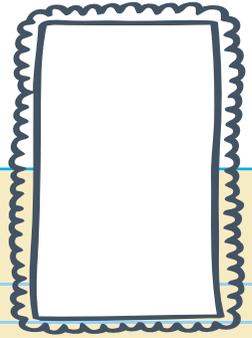
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Personal profile...



Name:

Primary School:

Favourite Subjects:

Secondary School:

First day of term:

Tutor group name/number:

Tutor's name:

Head of year:

What I am looking forward to:

What I am nervous about:

Friends I have made:

Contact no's:

MOVING UP!



So you're moving up to secondary school?

This is ALOVE's brand new resource written especially for you!

Moving to secondary school can be both exciting and scary. It's the start of a brand new journey; new friends to make, new subjects to learn, new opportunities and experiences. Maybe you can't wait to get there, or maybe you are feeling a bit sad and nervous about the 'big move'.

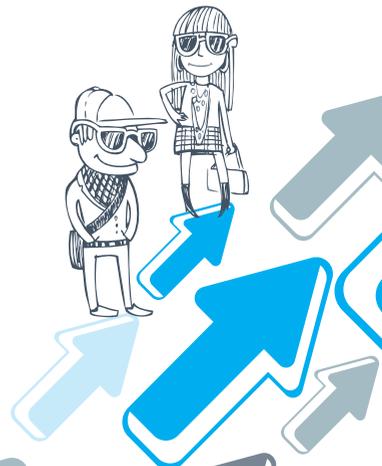
Many of us at ALOVE can still remember moving up to secondary school. We remember how important and helpful our faith was during this time of big change. Our church community, Christian friends, guidelines for holy living in the Bible and our own personal relationship with Jesus helped us embrace and enjoy our first year at secondary school to the max!

And that's what this booklet is all about. It's packed full of information, advice and stories to help you make the move to secondary school. We've even got some young people who have recently moved up to share their thoughts and encouragement with you. And importantly, we've included a series of simple and short Bible verses/activities - *Five-Minute Moves* - that we know will really help you to keep close to God and know that he is with you during this year of change (see page 25).

There will be lots of differences between your primary school and your secondary school but it won't take you long to learn how things work. You'll soon know your way around and have made loads of new friends.

If you are worried about anything to do with moving up to secondary school, it is really helpful to talk to someone about how you feel. You could talk to your teacher, tutor, or your parents or carers, or even your youth leader. And don't forget to talk to God about it too!

So, as you read through *Moving Up!* we trust that you will be reminded that God has promised to always be with you and, even though you are the youngest year group in the school, that he has a special plan and a purpose for you. We hope that you will be encouraged to stay strong in your faith, make good choices, work to the best of your ability and really enjoy your secondary school life!



Grace, age 13 writes:

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'Starting secondary school felt quite scary! I was worried about leaving my friends, my teachers and everyone I knew. I thought I would get lost in my new school, it looked that big!



But I soon realised that I shouldn't have worried, the teachers were nice and most of the older pupils helped us new students as well. I'm nearly at the end of my second year there now and I have had so much fun in secondary school so far!

I still miss having one classroom and one teacher though but you get used to all the different teachers and classrooms really quickly.

Starting secondary school may feel really scary at first but take a deep breath and remember to enjoy every second of it because before you know it your first year there will have gone and you won't be in the youngest year group anymore.

The most important thing to remember though... never put your hands under the desks as most of them are covered in chewing gum!



Tutor group

You will be placed in a 'class', usually called a tutor group or form, with a teacher who is your 'Tutor'. He/she is your first point of contact for any information or to share any worries with; their job is to guide you throughout your time at secondary school.

Timetable

One of the first pieces of information you will be given will be your timetable. This tells you which lessons you will have on each day, which classroom you will be in and the name of the teacher. Sometimes schools have a two week timetable, and you will need to remember whether you are on week one or week two.

School Diary

Many schools give their students a School Diary, Homework Diary or Student Planner – a very important booklet which will need to be with you every school day. It will contain your timetable and lots of other helpful information, as well as space to write down all your homework and when it is due in. Your parents can also use your school diary as a way to communicate with your tutor or other teachers by writing notes or comments as needed.

Homework

You will probably get more homework in secondary school than you did in primary school and maybe for a few different subjects at the same time. The teachers will probably be stricter about homework too! You will need to be organised to remember what homework has been set and when it must be handed in (see page 15).

Lessons

You will have 5 or 6 different lessons every day, with different teachers in separate classrooms. During the first few weeks it can be quite easy to get lost when moving between lessons as the school sites are so large, but most schools have good systems in place to help all the new students find their way round. Lessons will not necessarily be with the same people who are in your tutor group, but that presents a good opportunity to make some more new friends!

Your teachers want you to get involved in class discussions. Don't be shy about putting up your hand to answer a question. If you're not sure of something, ask. Chances are you'll be helping another student who was too scared to ask!

Break and lunch times

Break and lunch times can be a bit daunting as it is here you will mainly experience the older students. Waiting in the queue for lunch, trying to find a seat in the canteen, refilling your water bottle, even going to the loo, you will need to negotiate your way around the building and it can feel like you are fighting through an overwhelming tide of people!

Most schools will have systems in place to ensure the smooth running in the canteen and in all 'public' areas.

Sometimes there are even separate toilet blocks for different year groups. If you are nervous, stick together with your friends during break and lunch and find a quiet place to hang out. You'll soon feel confident enough to elbow your way through the crowds!

Tests and assessments

Tests and assessments seem to be a regular part of secondary school life. These can range from mini class tests for the teacher to check you've understood what she/he has been teaching, to assessments that will put you into different ability groups in a specific subject, through to your final exams as you leave school. Work hard and do your best, but don't get worried or anxious every time you are tested.

For more top tips on exams and tests check out the 'Quiet please – Exams in Progress' Bible verses (page 58)

Notes...



Hopefully you will get a chance to have a look round your new school and spend a day there with other new pupils (sometimes called a 'step-up' day). If you are able to do this, it will help you feel more confident about when you move.



First impressions last a long time, so make sure yours are good ones - for organisation, presentation, and behaviour! This is your chance to make a fresh start.

Secondary schools are well equipped to give you extra support if you have any special needs, such as a physical disability or difficulty with learning. So make sure your school understands what help you may need.

People want you to enjoy and succeed in your new school, so never be afraid to ask for help, or talk to someone you trust, like your mum or dad, tutor or youth leader.

Make the most of the school website to find out information, such as important dates, school trips, sports fixtures, homework expectations, clubs, behaviour policies etc.

If you or your parents have any questions about starting at your secondary school, be sure to contact the school before the summer holidays. Six weeks is a long time to wait with something on your mind!

Try out the journey you will take to your new school. Then you won't feel so worried on your first day.

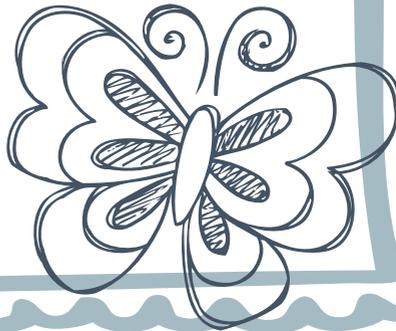
If you're worried about making friends at your new school remember that everyone will be in the same boat. They might not look it, but even the most confident people will be feeling just like you on that first day at school, so don't feel shy or scared.

You may hear loads of stories or rumours about bullying in your new school and sometimes other pupils can make you feel frightened that it is going to happen to you. Don't let stories of bullying scare you. Nine times out of ten that's all they are, stories. All schools now have a bullying policy so tell your parents or a teacher straight away if you feel you are being bullied and get the problem sorted out.

Naomi, age 11, says:

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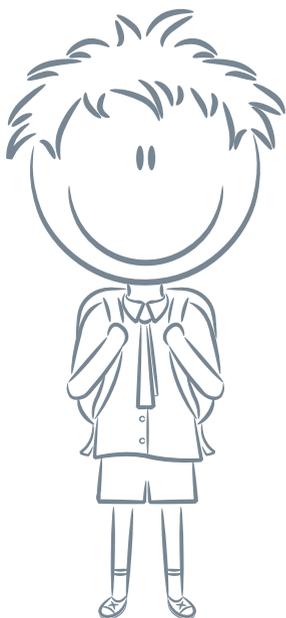
'I'm really excited about going to secondary school, meeting new friends, new teachers and the building. I can't wait to see what clubs I can be involved in like gymnastics, music and drama. I will miss my teachers at my primary school and the jobs I have like peer mediation and helping at playtime. I'm a bit upset because I will lose my friends in the different tutor groups. I am also worried about getting lost in the new building, hopefully I will get used to it, but I really can't wait until I go!'



Essential Equipment...

Your new school will give you loads of information about the equipment that you will need to provide for yourself at secondary school, so make sure you check through the list carefully with your parents/guardians and get yourself kitted out!

Here are some things that we expect you will need:



Uniform



*Pens, pencils,
ruler pencil
case etc*



P.E Kit & bag



Calculator



Water bottle



Large, comfortable bag

Jonny, age 12, says:

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'I remember feeling very nervous about moving to secondary school, but also really excited!

I was worried about not fitting in with all the new students and not being with all my old friends that I had been with since reception. Although most of my friends were going to the same school, I knew I wouldn't be in all my lessons with them. I also wasn't sure what the teachers would be like and how it would feel to have several teachers instead of just one. And I also worried that I would get lost as the school is so big.



I found talking to my primary school teacher helpful as he had experience of those surroundings. My visit to the school before term started was really good as it gave me a feel of what it would be like. Most of all, I found the greatest help was from my sister because she helped me answer any of my questions as she is three years ahead of me. She stopped me from feeling worried because she said it would be OK. She was right.

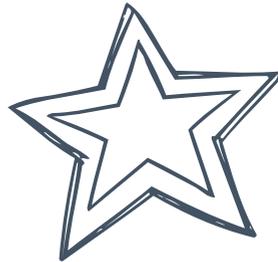
I have enjoyed having the variety of lessons that my secondary school offers. I have especially enjoyed PE, DT, art and science. Also I have enjoyed making new friends and being part of school teams.'

'I think the most challenging thing has been trying to be organised all the time – packing my bag with the right books, keeping a record of all my homework and getting it done on time.

The change from being the biggest in the school to being the smallest was hard to begin with. The other students seem so large and scary at first and their language and behaviour can be challenging.

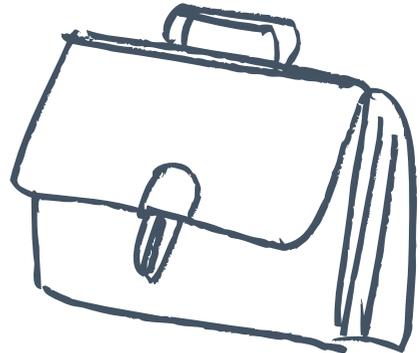
I think that praying with others like my parents has helped me have that feeling that I am not alone, that God and they are there for me so that no matter what happens in school they can help. I have a card on my wall that says 'Nothing's going to happen to me today that God and I can't handle together.' This really helped me through the first couple of weeks when I faced new things.

If you are worried about not making friends my advice would be try and find one person to be friends with and then meet the people they know and then your friendship group will grow easily.'



Getting organised...

- ➡ Keep all your books and school equipment in one place at home.
- ➡ Label everything with your full name.
- ➡ Make a copy of your timetable and stick it on your wall or desk (maybe give your parent/guardian a copy too).
- ➡ It's a good idea to make sure your bag is packed and you know what you are doing the next day before you go to bed so that you don't have any last minute panics. This is particularly important if you have a lesson like PE, for which you may need different types of kit on different days, or DT, where you may have to bring in all sorts of things like cooking ingredients, fabrics, pictures and so on.
- ➡ Get out your school uniform the night before.
- ➡ Work out how long it takes you to get ready for school in the morning... don't forget to have a good breakfast. Then work out what time you will need to leave to get to school on time (or what time you need to be at the bus stop). Set your alarm and get up early so you have enough time to get all of the above done.
- ➡ Keep a homework diary (some schools will give you one of these) and note down what homework you have been set and, importantly, when it is due to be handed in. Plan time during the week for homework, and avoid doing it on the bus on the way to school!



Bethany, aged 12, says:

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'When it came to the last day of primary school, I was desperate not to leave. It seemed that I had a brilliant school, amazing friends and I was enjoying every moment of it. When it came to saying goodbye, all of the worries and fears rushed to my mind. I was moving to secondary school, a vast maze of classrooms, an army of teachers and a massive mob of other students, about five times the amount that were in my primary school. Or so I thought.



You hear a lot of rumours before starting and during secondary school; it's hard to decide whether you will believe them. But the thing that I found important is to talk about the strange things that are going on with a close friend. It is likely that a lot of the things you hear or think will be a bit extreme, or just a load of nonsense, even if it worries you a lot.

One of my main worries was about losing my friends, and making new ones. But I am still very close to my old friends, and I have made so many new friends, and I'm glad about that.

Lessons were some of the hardest things for me to get used to, from working out which classroom you are in, to the little things like learning how each teacher likes the date to be written!'

The amount of homework was a big jump when I moved up to secondary school but I got the hang of it pretty soon, and I found that it's best to get it out of the way so that you can do the things that you enjoy.

I'm very glad that God has always been there as my friend and with me the whole way. I often say a small prayer to God under my breath usually when I am scared or confused, this has helped my confidence. During lessons such as Religious Studies, talking about God has made me feel happy, because I know that he is there with me. I'm pleased that my faith is there and I am not afraid to let people know that I am a Christian, it doesn't make you any different it just means that you have God there as your friend too.

Now that I have been in secondary school for a while, I am really enjoying it, and I probably wouldn't return to my primary school, although I do miss being in a smaller school sometimes and some of my old friends.

Moving up to secondary school has been such a great change that I can't wait to see what else will happen!



Making Friends...



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-  There will be plenty of opportunities to make friends at your new school – it's not just about having friends in your tutor group/form. Strike up a conversation with someone as you wait for the school bus together, or join an after-school activity, such as the football team, drama group or music club... most schools even have a Christian Union!
-  Make friends with as many people as possible, girls or guys, from different backgrounds and different academic abilities, with the same or different interests than you.
-  Of course, you don't only have to have friends who are Christians, but it is important to have some friends who share the same values and beliefs as you... that way you can support, encourage and pray for each other as you try to follow Jesus day by day.
-  Be friendly to everyone that you meet, be kind and helpful. Smile! Do something nice for another person. Compliment them.
-  Be interested in other people, ask their name... then remember it the next time you see them.
-  Always be yourself. Never change who you are to fit in with a particular group of friends. If your friends don't accept you for you, they're not really friends. For more top tips on being you check out the 'Being Me' Bible verses (page 67).
-  Be hygienic. Keep yourself smelling sweet and your breath minty fresh! (No-one likes a whiff of BO!)
-  Don't listen to gossip or possible rumours that judge other people. Get to know them yourself, and learn who they really are, not what others think of them.
-  Be patient. Making new friends takes time, but you'll eventually find great friends, which will make that time worthwhile.
-  Meet up with friends outside of school once you get to know them and enjoy doing non-school related stuff together.

For more top tips on making friends check out the 'Me, My Mates and God' Bible verses (page 36).

Mrs Colwill is a Humanities teacher and a class Tutor in a large secondary school. She has been with her tutor group since they started secondary school two years ago. (She is also the mum of 11 year old twins soon to be moving up to the same secondary school and of a 13 year old daughter!).

'Many young people feel worried or nervous when making the move to secondary school. It is really normal to feel anxious when faced with such a big change; in fact, most adults would probably feel the same way too! However, many of the things that concern people when moving to secondary school turn out not to be such a problem after all.



Staff in all secondary schools understand that moving up from primary school is a big change and they try to do as much as they can to ease the transition. Staff have usually been in touch with your primary school teacher to learn as much as they can about you as an individual, and not just about your academic abilities. A lot of thought goes into putting the right mix of pupils together within each tutor group, and your tutor will already know quite a lot about you!

Many schools have systems for the younger pupils to get to know some of the older students, whether through buddy systems or working on projects together. New students are guided around the building from classroom to classroom until they can confidently find their own way.

I have found that within a couple of weeks the new students usually know their way around the school better than me, as I usually only stay within the humanities department!

A lot of young people feel worried about bullying, especially when moving to a school with students who are much older. In all my many years of teaching I have never once seen a younger pupil's head flushed in the toilet by an older pupil! Bullying is less common than you may expect and these days almost no-one wants to be labelled as a bully.

Most schools have excellent policies on bullying and, in the rare instances when it does happen, usually deal with bullying very efficiently. You will be told that if you ever feel concerned about the way you are being treated, by staff or pupils, that you must talk to an adult that you can trust about it. Make sure you do speak out about bullying if you encounter it.

Making friends is often another big worry for new students. In the first few days you will have lots of opportunities to learn your classmates' names and to make friends through structured activities. I encourage you to be open to the idea that anyone you meet could potentially be a new 'best friend' and to see this time as an exciting opportunity to make some great new friendships that may last way beyond your school life!

Ellie, age 11, says:

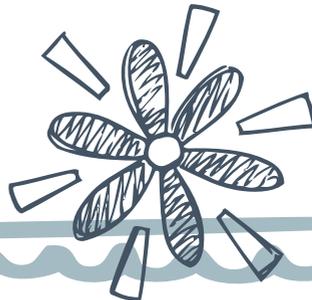
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'I'm feeling really nervous about moving up to secondary school but I want to see what its like. Getting lost is one of my worries, as is not knowing how the timetable works, I might pack for the wrong lessons. But I know that God is with me.



I am looking forward to meeting new friends and not having to stay in my old friendship groups, although I would like to still be friends with them. I will miss having a teacher that knows my way of learning inside and out.

On my step up day, I'll try to take in my surroundings as much as I can, so I don't feel so lost on my first day. I'm also asking my sister about how the system works, as she already goes to this school, I find this really useful.'



Jacob, age 12, says:

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'Before I moved up to secondary school I felt nervous and I wasn't sure if I was going to fit in. I was worried about getting lost in the school considering how big it is. I knew a lot of children in the older years as my brother went there and I knew people from my primary schools.



Step up day helped to make me feel less worried about getting lost and I got to do some science experiments and other things I hadn't done before, so that helped me to feel excited about going to the school. PE is the best because at my primary school we didn't do much PE and if we did it wasn't very physical or competitive.

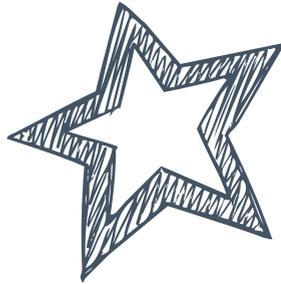
Everything has been better than primary school – you get to change lessons and rooms every hour which is good for me as I have ADHD so need a change of scenery and the chance to move around a bit. I definitely don't miss primary school at all!

The most challenging part for me at secondary school is needing to be more organised and having to take the right books and the right equipment in each day, and having more homework.

I'm quite happy because people seem to like me and I was hoping they would and I was praying that I would make lots of new friends which I have. It was nice when I first started knowing that my family was praying for me made me feel a lot better.

My advice if you are just starting secondary school is to be yourself and people will like you - don't try and be someone you're not just to fit in. It's easy to make new friends because everyone is new.'

Back
TO
SCHOOL!





How did the dinner lady get an electric shock?

She stepped on a bun and a current went up her leg!



What kind of food do maths teachers eat?

Square meals!

PUPIL: Teacher, would you punish me for something I didn't do?

TEACHER: Of course not.

PUPIL: Good, because I didn't do my homework.

Why did the teacher have crossed eyes?

Because she couldn't control her pupils

TEACHER: When do you like school most?

PUPIL: When it's closed!



Five-Minute Moves!



PRAY



READ



EXPLORE



QUESTION



DIG



LIVE

Five-Minute Moves are very mini Bible reflections on topics that will be important to you this year. Don't worry, you don't have to spend an hour a day in prayer and Bible reading... just a few minutes will do!

In those few minutes *Five-Minute Moves* will guide you to hot Bible passages, people and themes that will help you to make right choices, set your own boundaries, enjoy school, forge new friendships, guide you closer to Jesus and encourage you to continue to live a holy life pleasing to God.

We really want to encourage you to get stuck in as we are so confident that dipping into the Bible through *Five-Minute Moves* will be an incredible support and guide to you as you start your new school.

You can start at the beginning and work your way through the whole series of *Five-Minute Moves*. Or you could dive right into a topic that is the most applicable to you at the moment.

Each *Five-Minute Move* should only take about 5 minutes. You need to decide when the best time is for you. Are you a morning person or a night owl?

Find 5 minutes where you know you won't be distracted by the TV, homework... or fall asleep! And what day works best for you? Could you spare 5 minutes two or three times a week? Or perhaps you have more time on the weekend, so you could find 5 minutes every Saturday and Sunday. You decide... write your commitment here... and then stick to it!

*You decide... write your commitment here...
and then stick to it!...*



We use lots of different Bible translations in *Five-Minute Moves*. Here's what each of the letters refer to:

- (CEV)** Contemporary English Version
- (NCV)** New Century Version
- (NLT)** New Living Translation
- (GNT)** Good News Translation
- (NIV)** New International version
- (MSG)** The Message
- (TLB)** The Living Bible

You won't need lots of equipment for *Five-Minute Moves*. A pen or two will be essential and a Bible extremely useful... and that's about it. You may also like to use a journal to write down your thoughts, questions and feelings.

What are those symbols in Five-Minute Moves?



They are the *Shelf Life* Bible app symbols:



PRAY

as you read.



READ

the Bible passage.



EXPLORE

the Bible text in more detail.



QUESTION

what's going on? who's who? what stands out?



DIG

getting the Bible into you.



LIVE

living the words of the Bible in your life.

Shelf Life is our Bible discovery guide written for young people and it includes six different elements that are a vital part of quality Bible study. (We'll send you *Shelf Life* if you'd like. Send us an email at the ALOVE office or ask your CYS to get a copy for you!)

So, in *Five-Minute Moves* when you see the 'Read' symbol, you know this is the bit where you read the Bible passage, when you see the 'Pray' symbol, you know this is where you can pray. When you see the 'Dig' or 'Live' symbol, you may be prompted to consider a question or make a change in your life somehow. Make sense?!

So, let's get started!

Series One: **New Beginnings**

Joshua
Esther
Saul
Isaiah

Series Two: **Me, My Mates and God**

Mates matter
Mates traits
Friendship proverbs
Real friends, virtual friends

Series Three: **Everyone with Good Sense Wants to Learn**

Work becomes worship when done for Jesus
If you don't work, you don't eat
Facing Failure
Respect for teachers

Series Four: **Wholly Holy**

Speaking
Watching
Doing
Thinking

Series Five: **Quiet Please – Exams in Progress**

Worry and fear
Pray
Peace
Wisdom

Series Six: **Being Me**

Someone who is loved
Someone who has a purpose
Someone with unique gifts and abilities
Someone who is known

Series Seven: **A Closing Prayer**



NEW BEGINNINGS

This year you will have some big changes in your life. Change of school, change of friends, change of routine... Any other changes you can think of?

In the following four Five-Minute Moves we're going to look at four Bible characters that experienced big changes in their lives too and had to start over in a brand new environment.

These people are Joshua, Esther, Saul and Isaiah.

These guys will remind us that God has promised to always be with us, and that he has a special plan and a purpose for each one of us, even in our new school! We will be encouraged to stay strong in our faith and draw on God's supernatural energy to keep us going when we feel too tired to get out of bed in the morning!

If you or your younger siblings have a children's Bible story book, open it up and read about these characters again. Reading a story like this can really help you understand the Bible text in more detail. It will give you a bird's eye view of the life of our character before and after the events where we find them in our Bible readings.

Notes...



Five-Minute Moves

Series One



1. New Beginnings: Joshua



Joshua 1:1–9(NCV)

After Moses, the servant of the Lord, died, the Lord spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant. The Lord said, 'My servant Moses is dead. Now you and all these people go across the Jordan River into the land I am giving to the Israelites. I promised Moses I would give you this land, so I will give you every place you go in the land... Just as I was with Moses, so **I will be with you. I will not leave you or forget you.**'

'Joshua, be strong and brave! Always remember what is written in the Book of the Teachings. Study it day and night to be sure to obey everything that is written there. If you do this, you will be wise and successful in everything. Remember that I commanded you to be strong and brave. **Don't be afraid, because the Lord your God will be with you everywhere you go.**'



Joshua was on the brink of something new. Moses had been Joshua's best friend, leader and mentor for many years but now he was dead. Joshua had to continue the journey (and lead thousands of people) without Moses beside him. No wonder he was feeling fearful and anxious. He probably felt pretty sad as well and maybe even a bit of excitement at all the new experiences that lay before him.

This big mix up of emotions is all normal to feel when big changes happen in our lives, such as starting a new school. The verses above tell us what God said to Joshua to reassure him that everything was going to be OK.



What do you feel you will 'leave behind' at primary school?

Notes...



Write down some of the emotions that you have been feeling.

Notes...



Five-Minute Moves

Series One

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1. New Beginnings: Joshua (cont.)



Have a go at memorising the last part of verse 3

'I will not leave you or forget you'

or verse 9

'Don't be afraid, because the Lord your God will be with you everywhere you go'



Say these verses to yourself whenever you start to feel fearful, anxious or sad.



'Dear God, thank you that you promise to never leave me or forget about me, even in secondary school! Thank you for all the exciting opportunities and experiences that await me! Amen.'

Notes...



2. New Beginnings: Esther



Mordecai sent back this answer: Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. **And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?**

Esther 4:13-14 (NIV)

If you want to read more go to the book of Esther, chapters 1-10



Mordecai sent the message we read above to his niece Esther when she found herself in a difficult and potentially dangerous situation. Months previously she had been forcefully removed from her normal life and chosen by King Xerxes over hundreds of other girls to become his new queen. This new life of hers was completely different from what she was used to. Rather than being a dream come true it was a living nightmare.

Esther must have been so confused... why would God have allowed all this to happen to her? But throughout Esther's story we see that God is completely in control. God had a unique purpose for Esther, he needed her in the palace for an important reason. And Esther rose to the challenge! Her obedience and brave actions actually saved the lives of all the Jews, and her name has gone down in history. God has a plan and a purpose for you being at your school too, ask him what it is!



Rewrite the highlighted part of the Bible passage substituting the name of your school, like this:

And who knows but that you have come to

.....
for such a time as this?



Are you willing to obey God and be part of his plan for your school?



Tell God about how you feel and ask him what he would like you to do for him in your school.

3. New Beginnings: Saul



Acts 9:1–9; 17–20 (GNT)

Read more in Acts 9:1–31

In the meantime Saul kept up his violent threats of murder against the followers of the Lord... As Saul was coming near the city of Damascus, suddenly a light from the sky flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?'

'Who are you, Lord?' he asked.

'I am Jesus, whom you persecute,' the voice said. 'But get up and go into the city, where you will be told what you must do.'

The men who were travelling with Saul had stopped, not saying a word; they heard the voice but could not see anyone. Saul got up from the ground and opened his eyes, but could not see a thing. So they took him by the hand and led him into Damascus. For three days he was not able to see, and during that time he did not eat or drink anything...

So Ananias went, entered the house where Saul was, and placed his hands on him.

'Brother Saul', he said, 'the Lord has sent me – Jesus himself, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here. **He sent me so that you might see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' At once something like fish scales fell from Saul's eyes and he was able to see again. He stood up and was baptised; and after he had eaten, his strength came back.** Saul stayed for a few days with the believers in Damascus. He went straight to the synagogues and began to preach that Jesus was the Son of God.



Saul found himself dramatically changed by a really powerful encounter with God. He went from being someone who passionately and murderously hated Christians, to accepting Jesus into his own life and then telling others all about him! This encounter removed all Saul's doubts and turned his life around. He was filled with the Holy Spirit and became a powerful messenger for God – one of the most well known and successful early missionaries in the Bible!

3. New Beginnings:
Saul (cont.)



Saul's story reminds us that we can all get a fresh start. And starting a new school is an ideal opportunity to put the past behind you, along with any mistakes, disappointments or worries, and begin again... perhaps even do some amazing things for God!

What attitudes or behaviours would you like to leave behind as you make a fresh start in a new school?

Imagine yourself meeting with Jesus like Saul did.

Ask Jesus to transform you and help you make a fresh start. Ask for his Holy Spirit to fill you and help you become all that God made you to be.

Notes...



4. New Beginnings: Isaiah



Isaiah 40:28–31(GNT)

Read more in Isaiah 6:1–13

Don't you know? Haven't you heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God;
he created all the world.

He never grows tired or weary.

No one understands his thoughts.

He strengthens those who are weak and tired.

Even those who are young grow weak;

young people can fall exhausted.

But those who trust in the Lord for help

will find their strength renewed.

They will rise on wings like eagles;

they will run and not get weary;

they will walk and not grow weak.



The man who wrote these words was the prophet Isaiah. He lived around 700 years before Jesus was born. A prophet's role was to bring God's message to the people of the time. Often this was an unpopular job as it meant confronting people about their sin and urging them to change their ways. Not a message most people wanted to hear!

The life of a prophet was hard work... lots of travelling, public speaking, meeting new people; some who accepted you and some who rejected you. An exhausting job, and perhaps that's why Isaiah wrote these words about trusting in God for strength.

Any new start, such as moving to a new school, can be extremely tiring; so many new people, places, rules and lessons to get used to. Maybe you even have to get out of bed earlier in the morning than ever before. Isaiah's words tell us that we can ask and trust God to give us strength and energy to tackle all the new challenges to the best of our ability!

Five-Minute Moves

Series One



4. New Beginnings: Isaiah (cont.)



Have a go at paraphrasing verse 31; that means write it out in your own words.

'But those who trust in the Lord for help will find their strength renewed.'

Don't change the meaning of the verse; simply use words that are more familiar to you.

(For more on paraphrasing see page 32 of Shelf Life.)



When you feel so tired that you don't think you can make it out of bed in the morning, say these words to yourself and let the strength of God fill your body and mind!



Turn your paraphrase into a prayer and thank God for the energy that you need to get through today!

Notes...



ME, MY MATES AND GOD

Friends, friends, friends...

Friends will be so important in your school life, and having good friends around you is one key to how well you settle in and enjoy your new school. If you find it difficult to make friends then it's possible you may be feeling a bit down in the dumps about the change to secondary school.

The Bible has heaps of good stuff to say about friendships; advice on how to be a good mate, who to choose for friends, how to care for people and of course, all about knowing Jesus as our friend!

Of course, you don't only have to have friends who are Christians, but it is important to have some friends who share the same values and beliefs as you... that way you can support, encourage and pray for each other as you try to follow Jesus day by day.

One key principle is that if you want to have lots of mates – you need to be a good mate! Try out some of the friendship tips in the following four Five-Minute Moves, and see how your friends react and how your friendships change!

Don't forget that Jesus is the best of everything we look for in a friend. He accepts us for who we are; loves us unconditionally; is always there; gives us encouragement and strength... and has literally laid down his life for us!

Notes...



1. Mates Matter!



Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 (NLT)

Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.



'You've got a friend in me...
...You've got a friend in me!'

All together now!!!

'You've got troubles, well I've got 'em too,
There isn't anything I wouldn't do for you!
We stick together and we see it through, cos
You've got a friend in me...
You've got a friend in me!'



Remember those two friends Buzz and Woody? What adventures they had together! They really illustrate how 'two are better than one'! The above Bible verses are telling us how important it is to have friends!

Friends are for fun and laughter, help and encouragement. Friends help you feel good about yourself and knock off those rough edges. Christian friends are especially important as you can support each other and pray together as you live life for Jesus in your school.



Write down the names of as many of your friends as you can think of. Make your writing bigger for your closest friends, getting smaller for those who you are less close to.

Five-Minute Moves Series Two



1. Mates Matter!



Notes...	
	Fill in the spaces below with name of a friend who:
	Helps me live as a Christian:
	Doesn't laugh at my beliefs:
	Makes me smile when I feel down:
	Always has time for me:
	Helps me at school:
	I can pray together with:
	Listens to my problems:
	Likes me for who I am:



Make a new friend today and add him/her to your list above!



'Dear God, thank you for the amazing bunch of friends that you have given me. Amen.'

Five-Minute Moves Series Two

ALOVE⁺

2. Mate's Traits!



1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (NIV)

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.



Let's try re-writing these verses relating to a good friend:

A good friend is kind and patient, never jealous, boastful, proud, or rude.

A good friend isn't selfish or quick tempered.

She/he doesn't keep a record of wrongs that others do.

A good friend rejoices in the truth, but not in evil.

A good friend is always supportive, loyal, hopeful, and trusting.

A good friend is a friend to the end!



Five-Minute Moves

Series Two



2. Mate's Traits!



1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (NIV)

Rate yourself on the following qualities of friendship (be honest... no-one else is going to see this!)

1 = I'm always like this; 2 = I'm sometimes like this;
3 = I need to work on being more like this!

Kind	1	2	3
Patient	1	2	3
Don't get jealous	1	2	3
Not rude	1	2	3
Don't boast about stuff	1	2	3
Generous, not selfish	1	2	3
Don't gossip	1	2	3
Keep my temper	1	2	3
Loyal	1	2	3
Forgiving	1	2	3
Supportive	1	2	3
Encouraging	1	2	3
Trusting	1	2	3
Trustworthy	1	2	3

Which quality or qualities did you rate as 3? Pick one of these and work on it today, eg, if you put 3 on generous make an effort to be really generous to one of your friends today.



'Dear God, thank you for the qualities of a good friend that you have put in me. Please help me with my weaknesses. Amen.'

Five-Minute Moves

Series Two



3. Friendship Proverbs



Giving an honest answer is a sign of true friendship.

Proverbs 24:26 (CEV)

Don't be jealous of crooks or want to be their friends.

Proverbs 24:1 (CEV)

Wise friends make you wise, but you hurt yourself by going around with fools

Proverbs 13:20 (CEV)

Some friends don't help, but a true friend is closer than your own family.

Proverbs 18:24 (CEV)

Gossip is no good! It causes hard feelings and comes between friends.

Proverbs 16:28 (CEV)

You will keep your friends if you forgive them, but you will lose your friends if you keep talking about what they did wrong.

Proverbs 17:9 (CEV)

Kind words are like honey – they cheer you up and make you feel strong.

Proverbs 16:24 (CEV)

The sweet smell of incense can make you feel good, but true friendship is better still.

Proverbs 27:9 (CEV)



Proverbs is a book in the Bible written by the wisest man that ever lived – King Solomon! The book of Proverbs gives us wise guidance for living a godly life, mainly in the form of short statements, known as Proverbs. Proverbs cover a wide range of different topics, from family life, self discipline, to relationships and money management. A person who follows the advice in Proverbs will stick close to God and live in a way that pleases and honours him!

Five-Minute Moves Series Two



3. Friendship Proverbs



Circle the Proverb above which you think applies to you and your friendships the most at the moment.

Now rewrite it in your own words, making it personal to you, eg, Proverbs 17:9

'I must stop holding against Ben those horrible things he said to me now that he has apologised.'



Now turn it into a prayer!

Notes...



4. Real Friends, Virtual Friends



Romans 12:9-19 (MSG)

Love from the centre of who you are; don't fake it. Be good friends who love deeply; practice playing second fiddle. **Laugh with your happy friends when they're happy; share tears when they're down.**

Get along with each other; don't be stuck-up. Make friends with nobodies; don't be the great somebody. Don't hit back; discover beauty in everyone. If you've got it in you, get along with everybody.



Facebook friends, Twitter followers, Phone contacts...these days we can make 'friends' without ever even meeting someone! Technology has definitely changed our social relationships, we can keep in touch with each other through so many different ways.

But sometimes this means we spend more time 'talking' with people via computer or texts than we spend with them face to face. This can make it harder for us to pick up cues as to whether someone is happy or sad as we can't tune into their non-verbal signals; things like their facial expression, their body posture, the way they say something. It's easier to be a fake mate this way too!

If you want to be a genuine caring friend who is able to 'laugh with your happy friends when they're happy and share tears when they're down', be sure to spend lots of time actually with your mates in person and take care how much technology runs your friendships!



Do you think technology improves friendship? Detracts from it? Does it do both?

Notes...



Look out for a mate who seems down today. Ask them what you can do to help.

Look out for a mate who seems happy today. Share their excitement with them!

Call someone up and speak to them instead of texting!



'Dear God, help me to be a friend who notices how people are feeling. Amen.'

EVERYONE WITH GOOD SENSE WANTS TO LEARN!

Proverbs 18:15 (CEV)

Picture the scene – you are about to head off on your family holiday when you realise your little brother is nowhere to be seen! He should be getting into the car right now... everyone is mad because he is making you late. Your entire family search everywhere for him until finally someone rings the school. ‘Yes’, they say, ‘he’s here in class as normal’. You all pile into the car and storm down to the school to get him. To your amazement he can’t understand why you are all so angry... ‘surely you knew I wouldn’t want to miss a single minute of my learning’! This confirms the suspicions you’ve had since his birth... he really is a freak of nature! After all, who would want to be in school instead of going on holiday?!

In the Bible we read a similar story when Jesus was 12 years old. Instead of heading home with his parents from Jerusalem, they eventually found Jesus several days later in the temple with the teachers, learning!

The Bible has lots to say about the importance of gaining wisdom and knowledge, one way you can do this is through your school education. The more you know the better you can get along in the world. People say that there are many advantages to gaining a good education, such as better job opportunities when you are older, including higher salaries and more job satisfaction.

In the following four Five-Minute Moves let’s take a look at why learning is good and how we can honour God by doing the best we can possibly do at school!

Notes...



1. Work Becomes Worship When Done For Jesus!



Colossians 3:23 (NCV)

In all the work you are doing, **work the best you can.** Work as if you were doing it for the Lord, not for people.

Work hard so God can say to you, 'Well done'! Be a good workman, one who does not need to be ashamed when God examines your work.

2 Timothy 2:15 (TLB)



The apostle Paul actually wrote these words to people who were slaves, encouraging them to view their work as if they were doing it for Jesus, not simply for their human masters. Since the creation of human beings God has given us work to do... and we honour God by being the best we can be at the job he has given us.

For you at this moment in time, one of your jobs is your school work. You may not feel that your school work is of particular importance in your relationship with God, but it is if you see it so and do it for God's glory. You please God if you do your work with care, diligence, honesty, and to the best of your ability.



Have you ever regarded your school work as an act of worship or service to God?



If you have a school diary or homework note book, find a space and write the above Bible verses in it. Remind yourself this week in each lesson to work to the best of your ability... you are doing it for Jesus, not just your teacher!



Pray and commit yourself and your school work to God.

2. If You Don't
Work You Don't
Eat!



Proverbs 13:4 (NCV)

Proverbs 12:24 (CEV)

(TLB)



The lazy will not get what they want, but those who work hard will.

Work hard, and you will be a leader; be lazy, and you will end up a slave.

Lazy men are soon poor; hard workers get rich. A wise youth makes hay while the sun shines, but what a shame to see a lad who sleeps away his hour of opportunity.

Ever heard your mum or dad say to you 'If you don't work you don't eat'? In other words... get off your backside and do your job! This saying actually originates in the Bible as a warning against laziness.

The Bible has a great deal to say about laziness. Proverbs especially, is filled with wisdom concerning laziness and warnings to the lazy person.

Proverbs tells us that a lazy person hates work (21:25); he loves sleep; he gives excuses; he wastes time and energy; he believes he is wise, but is a fool (26:16). The Bible verses above tell us what is in store for a lazy person!

Being a lazy person is not honouring to God or living in his way. But a person who works hard at what God has put before him/her will receive lots of rewards.

Do you give your school work the time and energy you should to do the best that you can, or do you try to get away with as little work as possible?

(NB Laziness is different from tiredness. If you feel tired all the time make sure you are getting enough sleep, exercise and the right kind of foods.)

Five-Minute Moves Series Three



2. If You Don't Work You Don't Eat!

Choose one task that you have to do today, put in that little bit of extra effort and see what happens.



'Lord Jesus, I am sorry for the times when I let laziness become part of my life and I haven't been bothered to do my school work or other responsibilities. Please give me energy, enthusiasm and motivation to work hard at my studies. Amen'

Notes...



Five-Minute Moves

Series Three



3. Facing Failure



Proverbs 13:4 (NCV)

Psalm 40:2-3(NCV)



Even if good people fall seven times, **they will get back up**. But when trouble strikes the wicked, that's the end of them.

He lifted me out of the pit of despair,

out of the mud and the mire.

He set my feet on solid ground
and steadied me as I walked along

He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.

Many people will see this and worship him.
Then they will trust the Lord.



Whether it is a class test, not making the team, or letting down a friend, we all experience failure from time to time. Fear of failure can stop us trying out new things. Sometimes we even feel like we've failed God. The Bible talks a little bit about failure, and helps us realise that God is with us all the way through it, as the two verses above illustrate.

Many of the great figures of Scripture experienced failure at one time or another, think of Abraham, Moses, Elijah, David, and Peter. But what we can learn from these guys is that they didn't allow failure to keep them down. They got back on their feet, sought God's forgiveness where necessary, dusted themselves off and began again. They didn't let their experience or fear of failure hold them back, and they learned from their mistakes.



Can you identify with the writer of the Psalm you have just read?

In other words, have you ever felt so bad about something that you messed up that you felt like you were in a 'pit of despair' or stuck in the deep mud? How did you pick yourself back up afterwards?



Don't let a fear of failure stop you trying!



'Thank you Jesus that you are with me in my failures as well as my successes, and you still love me the same whatever I do. Amen'

4. Respect



1 Peter 2:13, 17 (CEV)



The Lord wants you to obey all human authorities... Respect everyone and show special love for God's people. Honour God and respect the Emperor.

In this Bible passage Peter is teaching about the importance of respecting others, even our teachers!

The word 'respect' comes from the Greek word timao which literally means placing a great value on something. You may feel like your teachers are a real pain, but consider the following points:

- ✓ Teachers, for the most part, want you to be the very best you can be in your lifetime.
- ✓ Teachers have dedicated years of their life to learn their subjects and how to impart their knowledge.
- ✓ Many teachers also spend a lot of extra time providing activities to support their students.
- ✓ Teachers generally care about and understand young people, otherwise they wouldn't be teachers!

Of course, there are good teachers and some not so good, (and if you feel you are being bullied or unfairly treated by a teacher speak to another adult who can help and advise you) but remember that God has given these teachers a position of authority in your life, and if you let them they will help you as you learn, grow and find your place in the world!

4. Respect



In what ways can you show respect to your teachers?

For example:

- Behave appropriately in class.
- Listen when your teacher is teaching.
- Complete your work to the best of your ability.
- Hand work in by given deadlines (or explain in advance if you are having a problem meeting the deadline).
- Don't gossip or talk negatively about the teacher with your friends.
- Say 'thank you' at the end of a class!



Write the name here of one teacher who you really respect and think about why that is?

Choose one of the above points to action with a teacher today!



'Thank you God for my teachers. Please help me to show them the respect they deserve. Amen.'

WHOLLY HOLY!

In your first year at secondary school you will meet lots of people into lots of different things, living in different ways. You may find yourself getting into new TV programmes, new books, new websites, new activities, new computer games, even using new words!

Write some of these new things here!



Your school friends and teachers may have different opinions from you, even think about life in a completely opposite way to you and your family. All these new experiences are exciting and an important way to find out about the world. But, as a Christian, you are faced with some important questions. How can you become part of school life without compromising your faith and Christian values? How can you know what to get involved in and what to avoid? How can you live differently without being seen as a little odd?

Peter, in the Bible, tells us to

'Be holy in all you do, just as God, the One who called you, is holy.' (1 Peter 1:15)

And in Romans 12:2 the Bible says:

Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. (NLT).

As Christians we live with different values and priorities to many of those around us. We want to live in a way that is pleasing to God, with values such as honesty, kindness,

generosity, faith, love and hope top of our agenda. We call this holy living.

God asks us to live holy lives, not just to please him, but because he wants the best for us. It means staying away from the things that may hurt us or get in the way of our friendship with Jesus.

The great news for us is that, when we became Christians and committed our lives to Jesus, God made us holy. Yes, he really did! He took away all the sin and washed out all the ugly stains. Then he gave us the Holy Spirit to help us to continue to live in a way that please him and keeps us clean.

So the Holy Spirit is our power source – we can do what pleases God because his Spirit gives us the power. He is our life and strength. The Holy Spirit inside us is how we can be truly Wholly Holy!

In these four Five-Minute Moves we will look at how we can live Wholly Holy lives... in the things we say, do and think. Living 'wholly holy' may be different from those around us, but it fills us with peace, joy and love, and keeps our friendship with Jesus strong. And then other people notice and they may want to get to know Jesus to!

Five-Minute Moves

Series Four



1. Speaking



Matthew 15:18 (GNT)



But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart.

Want to know what is really going on inside you... then listen to the words that come out of your mouth!

In this verse Jesus was teaching the people that the way we are deep down (where others can't see) matters so much to God. And so do the things that we say.

Being careful not to gossip and pass on rumours about others, not swearing or blaspheming (that means using God's name in an irreverent manner), using our words to build up and encourage other people are all ways we show the work of the Holy Spirit within our lives... and are Wholly Holy!



Write down some of the things you have heard yourself say to your family and friends over the last 24 hours.

What do these words tell you about what is going on in your heart?

Notes...

Five-Minute Moves Series Four



1. Speaking



Gossip

Swear

Say unkind words

Speak negatively about yourself or others

Highlight one of the above which you find most difficult NOT to do?

Make an extra effort today, with the help of the Holy Spirit, not to do it!



'Lord Jesus, help me to use the words that I speak to build up others and to honour you. Amen.'

Notes...



Five-Minute Moves

Series Four



2. Watching



Matthew 6:22-23 (NLT)



Psalms 101: 2-3 (NLT)

Your eye is a lamp that provides light for your

body. When your eye is good, your whole body is filled with light. But when your eye is bad, your whole body is filled with darkness.

I will lead a life of integrity in my own home.
I will refuse to look at anything vile and vulgar.



TV, books, magazines, films, websites, pictures, adverts... all these things we look at everyday and are letting into our life through our eyes. And what goes in has got to come out!

A 'good' eye is one that is fixed on God and means that our heart focuses on the right things, rather than allowing ourselves to look at things which could harm us and hurt our relationship with him. Of course it's fun to relax with a good book or film, but living Wholly Holy lives means considering more carefully what we let into our lives through our eyes.



Ask yourself the following questions as you watch or read:

- is this making me think about things that are not pleasing to God?
- is this teaching me more about living a holy life or distracting me from it?
- is it promoting God's values ?



Would you rather your life was full of light, or full of darkness? How can you make it so?



'Holy Spirit, please make me uncomfortable whenever my eyes are looking at something that is not pleasing to God or consistent with living a Wholly Holy life. Amen.'

Five-Minute Moves

Series Four



3. Doing



Galatians 1:10 (GNT)



Does this sound as if I am trying to win human approval? No indeed! **What I want is God's approval!** Am I trying to be popular with people? If I were still trying to do so, I would not be a servant of Christ.

'Dear Diary

Two of my close mates in school are getting themselves into trouble. Yesterday they told me that they went into a newsagent and stole some sweets and chocolate. They said it was so easy – one of them distracted the shop keeper by asking him for something behind the counter, whilst the other one stuffed a couple of chocolate bars into the pocket! After school tomorrow they want me to go with them, as they said that with two of us filling our pockets we can get more stuff from the shop. I know this is not right, but if I say no my friends will make my life miserable... What shall I do?'

What would you do?

At school we can be under so much pressure to get involved in things that we know are not pleasing to God. We often feel that we can't possibly say no as we will end up without any friends or perhaps even being bullied or ridiculed. Being Wholly Holy sometimes means saying no and standing up for what you know is right. Start now and your friends will come to accept and respect you for staying true to what you believe!



Is it more important to you to be popular with God or with people?



Make a decision now that you will not get involved in anything that you know is not right or pleasing to God.



Ask God for the courage and faith to take a stand for him!

4. Thinking



Philippians 4:8 (CEV)

Finally, my friends, **keep your minds on whatever is true, pure, right, holy, friendly, and proper. Don't ever stop thinking about what is truly worthwhile and worthy of praise...** Then the God of peace will be with you.



Romans 12:2 (NLT)

Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world, **but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.** Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.



This is a picture of a famous statue called 'The Thinker', created in 1903 in Paris. It shows a man thinking very deeply about something, perhaps even battling inside himself with his mix up of thoughts and emotions. What are your thoughts like? Are you a clear thinker, or a jumble of emotions? Do you think negatively about yourself or others? Do you worry or get anxious? Troubling thoughts can hold us back from being the people that God has made us to be and from living his way. Paul tells us in these verses to spend time thinking pure, right and holy thoughts so that we can have God's peace in our lives. By changing the way we think we can become transformed people, ready to live Wholly Holy everyday!



Draw some thought bubbles around the picture of The Thinker and write in it some of your most frequent thoughts. Consider if they are true, pure, right, holy, friendly, and proper thoughts?



If you are having troubling thoughts, decide now to speak to a good Christian friend who can help you and pray with you to be 'transformed by the renewing of your mind.'
(Write his/her name here.....)



Ask God to begin to 'transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.' Tell him about the thoughts you have that trouble you and ask the Holy Spirit to fill your thoughts with his peace and love.

QUIET PLEASE - EXAMS IN PROGRESS!

A college professor stood before his class of 20 biology students, about to hand out the final exam. 'I want to say that it's been a pleasure teaching you this term. I know you've all worked extremely hard and many of you are off to medical school after the summer holiday.

'So that no one gets their overall grades messed up because they might have been celebrating a bit too much this week, anyone who would like to opt out of the final exam today will receive a B for the course.'

There was much rejoicing among the class as students got up, passed by the professor to thank him and sign out on his offer. As the last taker left the room, the professor looked out over the handful of remaining students and asked, 'Anyone else? This is your last chance.' One final student rose up and took the offer.

The professor closed the door and took attendance of those students remaining. 'I'm glad to see you believe in yourself,' he said. 'You all have A's.'

There's a certain time of year, usually around May/June when schools go exam crazy! Every corridor has a sign up saying 'Quiet Please - Exams in Progress'; previously cheerful 16-year olds look pale and drawn; you can't get to your locker; your teachers are not in the right place at the right time; and if you have a family member taking important exams, home may not be as relaxing as it used to be!

In your first year at secondary school you will also have exams and tests, whether that's formal exams, class tests, or perhaps things out of school, such as musical instrument exams, or even sports trials.

So how do you cope with tests or exams?

- ➡ Do you take them all in your stride, or do you get worried and anxious?
- ➡ Do you put in a lot of work, or just hope you can 'wing it'?
- ➡ Do you usually end up top of the class, or somewhere nearer the bottom?
- ➡ Are you usually confident that you will pass, or eaten up by a fear of failure?

The Bible tells us over and over that God is with us in all situations and we especially need to hear this when faced with an exam or test. Of course, it's absolutely essential that we work hard to prepare for our exams and put in the time and energy required so that we can perform to the best of our ability.

But it's just as important to take time to pray, to ask God for help, to put our trust and confidence in him, and be filled with his peace and energy. And of course, we definitely need to understand that no matter what the result of our test God will still love us and has good plans for our lives!

1. Worry and Fear



Isaiah 41:10 (NCV)



So don't worry, because I am with you.

Don't be afraid, because I am your God.

I will make you strong and will help you;

I will support you with my right hand that saves you.

Worry and fear can be one of the biggest reasons why people don't do as well as they could do in a test. In this one Bible verse there are **five** promises as to why we shouldn't worry or be afraid about anything in our lives... and that includes exams!

i. 'I am with you!'

You are not alone. God is always beside you. You will not go anywhere without God being there, even in the exam room

ii. 'I am your God!'

The great 'I am' is your God! We are talking here about God... who created everything and keeps the whole world spinning! He is yours and you are his! And just think, this awesome God is right beside you in your exams!

iii. 'I will make you strong!'

When you feel exhausted and don't feel you can continue, you can rely on God's strength to keep you going. He will make you strong enough to get through any situation you have to face.

iv. 'I will help you!'

Not only does God have the strength to help, he also has the ability to help. He will help you with wisdom and understanding, guide you in your revision and in your preparation, and definitely help you in the exam.

v. 'I will support you!'

There is no fear of falling with God to hold you up! God is true and faithful and he will always be there!

Five-Minute Moves

Series Five



1. Worry and Fear



Which one of these five promises do you need to hear most at the moment and why?

Notes...

Memorise Isaiah 41:10

Thank God for all the promises in this Bible verse and ask him to make them more real for you everyday.

Notes...



2. Pray!



1 Thessalonians 5:17 (MSG)



Be cheerful no matter what; **pray all the time**; thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live.

Do you know anyone who is a real chatterbox and who never stops talking? Can get kind of annoying at times can't it? But God wants us to be chatterboxes with him! This verse tells us to 'pray all the time.' We can talk to God about anything and everything, and he is interested in all that we've got to say! And talking to God about our exams can help us feel more confident and peaceful, which then helps us focus better on what we have learned.

So what can you talk to God about during exam time? Well, while there is probably no prayer that will get you top marks on a test that you haven't prepared for, you can tell God about how you are feeling, what you are worried about, ask him for his help, and tell him in when things go well!

You can ask him to be with you as you prepare and study, and if you get stuck in the middle of the test you can ask God to help you recall the information that you need.

Be a chatterbox!



Some prayer ideas at exam time.

-  Give out your exam/test date(s) to your family and other friends and ask them to pray for you.
-  If you have friends taking the same exam or test, make some time to pray together.
-  Write out a prayer about your exams and stick it up beside your bed. Pray it regularly.
-  Create a prayer notice board. Write out your prayers on Post-it notes and stick them up as you pray.

2. Pray!



A prayer for exams

'Lord Jesus, today I am just really stressed. You know, that I am having some trouble with the test I am about to take. I know it's probably not the biggest world problem, with people starving, people turning away from you, people in wars, and more. But it's what I'm facing right now, and I need you in this time. I know that no problem is too big or too small for you to handle, and I need to turn this stress over to you to help me with.

Lord, please help me as I prepare. Help me to focus. Help me to look at this information so I can remember and apply it well on my exam. I need you to help me feel more confident going into the test and feel relaxed enough so that I can concentrate. Give me peace, and help me to do my best. Let me be aware of you beside me in the exam, encouraging and supporting me through it.

Lord, thank you for all the blessings you have placed in my life. Thank you for being here in this time when I feel a bit overwhelmed. Thank you for always being there and allowing me to rely on you. Thank you that, whatever happens, I will never be a failure in your eyes. I know that you have good plans for me and you will always love me. Amen.'

Notes...



Five-Minute Moves

Series Five



3. Peace!



Philippians 4:6-7 (CEV)

Don't worry about anything, but pray about everything. With thankful hearts offer up your prayers and requests to God. Then, because you belong to Christ Jesus, God will bless you with peace that no one can completely understand. And **this peace will control the way you think and feel.**

John 14:27(CEV)



I give you peace, the kind of peace that only I can give. It isn't like the peace that this world can give. So don't be worried or afraid.

Isaiah 26:3 (NCV)



You, Lord, give true peace to those who depend on you, because they trust you.



'I just need some peace and quiet!'

Bet you've heard your parents or carers say that to you plenty of times. Perhaps what they really mean is 'Will you please just go away and leave me alone for a few minutes. I can't hear myself think!'

When the Bible talks about peace though, it means something quite different. Peace is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22) and it means that somewhere, deep within our hearts, we feel confident, calm and untroubled.

We don't get this peace by just trying not to get anxious or thinking positive thoughts. Neither is this peace about experiencing life without stress, trouble or worries. When we trust and depend on God, the Holy Spirit fills us with his amazing gift of peace in a way that we can't understand.

When other people wonder why we are not getting anxious or worried by the difficult situations around us, we know that we are experiencing the peace of God!

Five-Minute Moves

Series Five



3. Peace!



On an internet image search, type in 'Peace of God.' Find a picture that helps you to feel peaceful, then print it out or set it as your wallpaper on your phone/computer. Whenever you start to feel anxious, take some time to look at it and allow God's peace to fill your heart again!



	<i>In what area of your life do you need God's peace right now?</i>
Notes...	



Set up a 'worry box' in your bedroom. Every time you feel worried about your school work, write it on a slip of paper and place it in the box, with a prayer thanking God that you can give all your worries and anxieties to him.



'Dear God, At the moment I am really worried about

.....
Right now I want to give this worry to you and ask you to fill me with your true peace. (Wait for a little while in silence, focusing on God, and expect him to answer your prayer!) Amen.'

Notes...



Five-Minute Moves

Series Five



4. Wisdom



Proverbs 3:5-6 (NCV)

John 14:27(CEV)



Trust the Lord with all your heart, and don't depend on your own understanding.

Remember the Lord in all you do, and he will give you success.

If any of you need wisdom, you should ask God, and it will be given to you. God is generous and won't correct you for asking.

Have a read of some of these funny answers that students wrote in their exams!

- ➡ *The people who followed the Lord were called the 12 opossums.*
- ➡ *The spinal column is a long bunch of bones. The head sits on the top and you sit on the bottom.*
- ➡ *The inhabitants of Moscow are called Mosquitoes.*
- ➡ *The blood circulates through the body by flowing down one leg and up the other.*
- ➡ *(Define H₂O and CO₂.) H₂O is hot water and CO₂ is cold water.*
- ➡ *Mushrooms always grow in damp places, which is why they look like umbrellas.*
- ➡ *Name the four seasons: Salt, mustard, pepper, vinegar.*
- ➡ *Noah's wife was Joan of Ark.*
- ➡ *For a nosebleed: Put the nose much lower than the body until the heart stops.*

(Yes, these really are real exam answers!)

God is 'all-knowing'. He is wise beyond words. And he offers to share his wisdom with us! God's wisdom can help us make right decisions and discover the best course of action to take. It's great to know that when we have exams or tests we don't have to just rely on ourselves. Sure, we have to put in the work, but remember that the God who knows everything is our Father. Asking God for his advice and wisdom, and not just relying on our own cleverness, is a sure recipe for success!

Five-Minute Moves Series Five



4. Wisdom



Asking God for wisdom doesn't mean he will supernaturally give you answers to exam questions which you haven't prepared for.

How can God's wisdom help you during exam time?

Notes...



Solomon, who was the wisest man that ever lived, said: "All wisdom comes from the Lord, and so do common sense and understanding." (Proverbs 2:6) In what areas do you need more:

wisdom

Common Sense

understanding



Pray about this now.

Notes...



BEING ME!

Sooner or later we all get round to asking ourselves the question 'who am I?' We want to know why we are here on the planet, why we are the way we are, and what we've got to offer to the world!

These are very important questions and it's essential that each one of us finds a satisfactory answer for ourselves. Understanding these big questions help us become more secure, confident and happy people. We can be completely ourselves, even in a new environment; we don't have to pretend to be someone that we're not. And who wouldn't want to be a person like that!

The Bible has some very clear answers to these questions, and that is what the next four Five-Minute Moves are all about.

As you read allow God to cement the truths about who you are deep inside your heart; you are someone who is loved, chosen, known, beautifully created, forgiven, has a purpose, and unique gifts and abilities!

Understanding and believing these truths about who you are as a child of God will make it less important what other people think about you, and give you more freedom to be your beautiful self.

Notes...



Five-Minute Moves

Series Six



1. Someone Who Is Loved



John 3:16 (NCV)

1 John 3:1 (NLT)

God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life.

See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are!



Can you imagine ever loving someone else so much that you would be willing to die in their place to ensure they could continue to live? The Bible says that this is the biggest kind of love imaginable (John 15:13). Well, that's exactly what God did for you. He allowed his son Jesus – part of himself – to die for you on the cross so that you could have the best life possible! God loves you so much; you are a beloved son or daughter of his. He is crazy about you!

You are loved.



God's love for you is unconditional? What do you think this means? (Go ask someone if you're not sure.)



When you really understand God's love for you, it doesn't matter so much what everyone else thinks about you!



'Thank you God that you love me so much – more than anyone else on the planet!'

Notes...



2. Someone Who Has A Purpose



Jeremiah 29: 11 (NCV)



I say this because I know what I am planning for you, says the Lord, I have good plans for you, not plans to hurt you. I will give you hope and a good future.

You may have already been asked at school what you want to be when you 'grow up'. In a couple of years you'll have to choose the right subjects to get you on the right path towards that chosen career. It can be confusing and complicated, and you may worry that one wrong choice now might mess up the rest of your life.

This Bible verse tells us that God is in control of our future... and what he has got in mind will be way better than anything we could dream up for ourselves! So relax, follow God's lead, and walk with him into the good future that he has planned for you!

You have a purpose.



Rewrite the Bible verse, substituting your name, eg,
I say this because I know what I am planning for, says the Lord, I have good plans for, not plans to hurt I will give hope and a good future.

Jeremiah 29: 11 (NCV)



Five-Minute Moves Series Six



2. Someone Who Has A Purpose



God spoke the words in this verse through the prophet Jeremiah to the Jews after they had been captured and taken to Babylon. What do you think these words would have meant to people in that situation?

Notes...



How do these words encourage you?



'Thank you God that whatever situation I am in I can take encouragement by remembering that you are in control. Please help me to always ask you before making any decisions about my future because I want your best plans for me to come true! Amen.'

Notes...



3. Someone With Unique Gifts and Abilities



Romans 12:6–8 (CEV)

God has also given each of us different gifts to use. If we can prophesy, we should do it according to the amount of faith we have. If we can serve others, we should serve. If we can teach, we should teach. If we can encourage others, we should encourage them. If we can give, we should be generous. If we are leaders, we should do our best. If we are good to others, we should do it cheerfully.



1 Peter 4:10 (CEV)

Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well.



Look around your class mates and you'll probably see someone who is good at art, another who excels in sport, and someone who can do maths equations with their eyes shut! Perhaps you see someone else who is always cheerful, with a ready smile and a kind word for everyone.

We are all different and, in line with God's plan for our lives, he has given each of us different talents and abilities. You may know already the main thing that you excel at and enjoy doing. But if you don't, that's OK. Now is the time to experience lots of different things, to see which ones excite you and make you happy. Discover what you feel passionate about or where you can make a difference. You see, God has given us gifts and abilities so we can serve others, as well as give part of ourselves back to him.

Be thankful and content with the unique you!

You are someone with unique gifts and abilities.



What gifts and/or abilities do you feel God has given you? (ask someone if you're not sure!)

Five-Minute Moves Series Six



3. Someone With Unique Gifts and Abilities



How can you use these gifts/abilities to help others and to serve God?



'Thank you God for my special gift and abilities of

.....

I really want to use these gifts to help others and serve you.
Please show me how. Amen.'

Notes...



Five-Minute Moves

Series Six



4. Someone Who Is Known



Psalm 139: 1-5 (CEV)

You have looked deep into my heart Lord, and **you know all about me.**

You know when I am resting or when I am working, and from heaven you discover my thoughts. You notice everything I do and everywhere I go. Before I even speak a word, you know what I will say, and with your powerful arm you protect me from every side.



Matthew 10:29-31 (NCV)

Two sparrows cost only a penny, but not even one of them can die without your Father knowing it. God even knows how many hairs are on your head. So don't be afraid. You are worth much more than many sparrows.



'You just don't understand!' How many times have you said that to your parents or friends? You get frustrated because they just don't seem to get what you're feeling or thinking.

But God does understand! He gets you. He really does know you. He knows your thoughts, feelings and actions – good and bad. He even knows how many hairs you have on your head! Amazing!

You are known.



Try counting how many hairs are on your head... that's got to be impossible!



When you feel like no-one really gets you or understands turn to God and talk to him about it instead.



'Dear God, thank you that really know me, inside out. You know my thoughts, feelings and actions. And you understand me. Amen.'

A CLOSING PRAYER



Ephesians 3:14–21 (NCV/CEV)

I kneel in prayer to the Father. All beings in heaven and on earth receive their life from him.

God is wonderful and glorious.

I pray that his Spirit will make you become strong followers and that Christ will live in your hearts because of your faith.

Stand firm and be deeply rooted in his love.

I pray that you and all of God's people will understand the greatness of Christ's love – how wide and how long and how high and how deep that love is. I want you to know all about Christ's love, although it is too wonderful to be measured. Then your lives will be filled with all that God is.

With God's power working in us, God can do much, much more than anything we can ask or imagine. To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus for all time, forever and ever. Amen.



"I volunteer as tribute!" screams Katniss Everdeen in the smash hit movie *The Hunger Games*. (Have you seen the film or read the book?) With these words Katniss is selflessly exchanging her own life for that of her sister's. Katniss volunteers to take her sister's place in the 'Games', putting herself up for the terrifying and traumatic ordeal that almost certainly means a horrifying and excruciatingly painful death.

Does that remind you of anything? The Bible passage above is a prayer for each one of us, that we will understand and experience the vastness of Jesus' love in our lives; a love so huge that compelled him to take our place on the cross and give his life so that we can live; a love so massive that when we really 'get it' our fears and insecurities fade away and our lives make sense!

And this is the prayer that all of us at ALOVE are praying for you during your first year at secondary school. We pray that you will understand and experience the greatness of the love of Jesus and be deeply rooted in this the love. We pray that you will be strong followers as you seek to live out your faith day by day, and that you will see God do much, much more in and through you than you could ever ask for or imagine!

Five-Minute Moves

Series Six



A CLOSING PRAYER



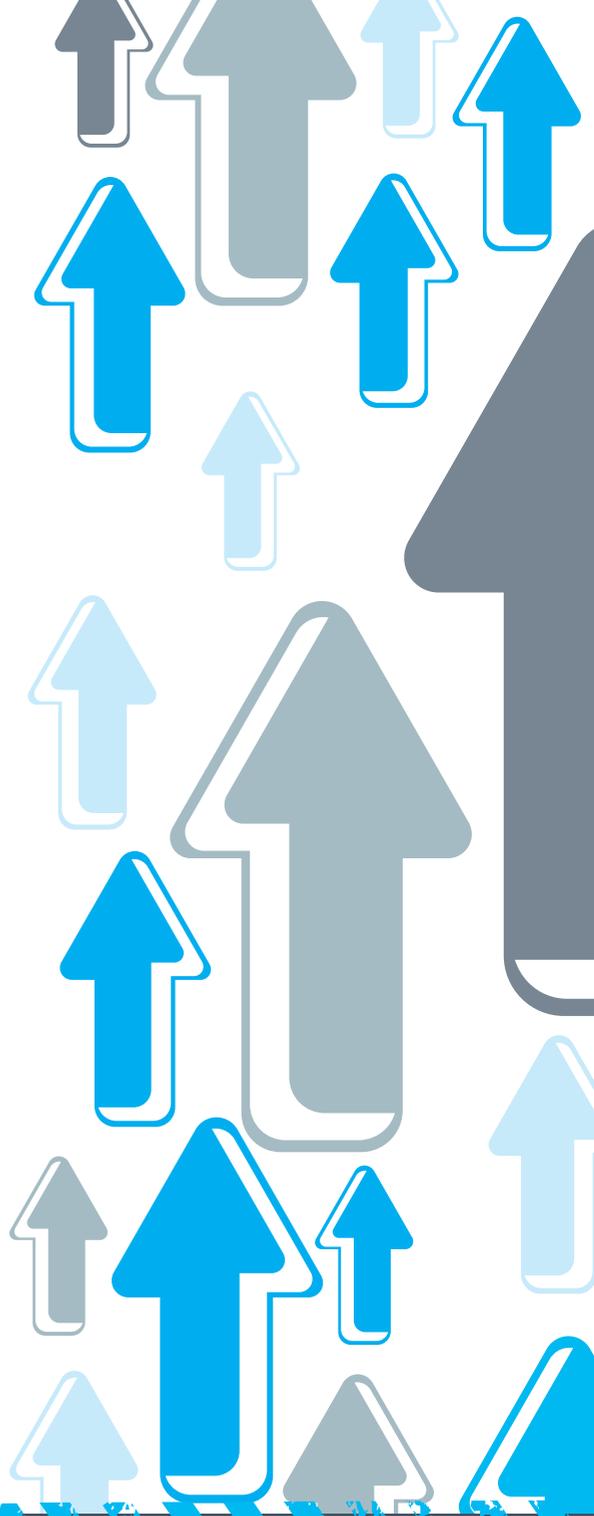
Highlight any words, sentences or phrases that you like or really mean something to you from this prayer.

Now turn those thoughts into a prayer for your own life... and for your continued journey with God throughout your time at secondary school.

Is there someone else you would like to pray this prayer for? Write it out on a piece of card and give it to them (or text/email/message if you prefer!)

Notes...





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