

A. General classroom issues

1. Know your room and use it to your best advantage

- a) The room should be bright and cheerful and not overly messy or cluttered.
- b) Available blank wall space or easels.
- c) Arrange class in a way that minimizes distractions and maximizes visibility.

2. Know your staff

- a) Have additional adults with carefully designed roles: team leader, worship leader, teacher, small group leaders (for large classes).
- b) Clearly communicate expectations and roles to staff—active involvement and participation during all parts of the class.
- c) Work together with your team members to establish a schedule for your time.

3. Know your children

- a) Use name tags and plan other simple activities to get to know your children.
- b) Develop a behavioral policy and clearly communicate this to parents, children and staff.
- c) Clearly explain and post classroom routines and schedules for the children.
- d) Notice and deal with behavior issues right away—agree on a plan with your team.
- e) Understand the abilities and limitations of the age-group in which you are teaching (i.e. reading and language skills).

B. Before you teach

1. Know your curriculum

- a) Read through the whole curriculum Introduction carefully!
- b) Work with your team leader to design an organized class structure that incorporates the curriculum as a whole and is child friendly. This should include: transition, worship, lesson presentation, and small group time.
- c) Look over all of the lessons paying attention to the overall flow of the curriculum.
- d) Understand the “Hook, Book, Look, Took” method from *Creative Bible Teaching* by Larry Richards:
 - “Hook” = attention-grabbing illustration to lead to Bible
 - “Book” = Bible presentation and explanation
 - “Look” = guide children to relate truth to life
 - “Took” = child’s response
- e) Make use of the appendix sections which offer additional explanations of key concepts presented in the study.

C. Teaching a lesson

1. Know the lesson

- a) At least a week ahead of time, carefully read through the entire lesson including the application section. Look up all the Bible texts and pray and meditate. Make your own personal application.
- b) If you have any questions about the concepts or theology that is presented in the lesson, ask for help right away. Use resources such as *Systematic Theology* or *Bible Doctrines* by Wayne Grudem.
- c) Understand the lesson format: italics, bold fonts, illustrations, etc.
- d) Carefully examine how the lesson fits in with the previous lessons and future lessons. Repetition is very important for children.
- e) Understand each illustration and how it is meant to demonstrate and explain key biblical concepts. Change an illustration only if necessary, making sure that the new illustration makes the same point as the one it replaces.

2. Prepare the lesson

- a) What will you actually teach from—a marked photocopy of the lesson, the original with post-it notes, or your own handwritten outline? Work to develop a system that is most helpful to you and least distracting to your students.
- b) Assemble and organize visuals so they will not be a distraction. Make sure you have them all prepared. Are they large enough? Have you practiced using them? Put them in order.
- c) Decide how you plan to use the room, visuals, and volunteers throughout the lesson. Think through the logistics of this.
- d) Do you need the participation of prepared adults or children for this lesson? Have them fully prepared and make your expectations very clear. Make sure they know when, how, and exactly what you want them to contribute. Specific written directions are helpful.
- e) How will you present the Bible text? What texts will the children look up in their Bibles?
 - * sword drills * bookmark assignments * beginning readers * strong readers
 - * read together * directed reading * adult readers * echo reading

It is helpful for the flow of the lesson to have a variety of Bible reading activities. Include several methods in each of your lessons. We want the students to learn to use their own Bibles, and grow in their understanding of the Bible text.

- f) When you are presenting the Bible story for the lesson, at which points will you read directly from the text? When is a summarizing appropriate?

Your goal should be to read directly from the Bible as much as possible.
- g) How will you craft the questions you ask in order to obtain appropriate responses?
 - » Ask questions clearly and specifically.
 - » Direct students back to the text—building their study skills.
 - » Assign specific words or information to listen for before the reading.
 - » Repeat phrases, leaving out words they must search for in the text.
 - » Don't be afraid of "wait time" after asking questions.
 - » Connect responses to previous teaching and knowledge.
 - » Vary your level of questioning to draw in broader participation.

- h) Think through the vocabulary that you will use to make sure that it is age-appropriate.
- i) Are there ways in which the lesson themes have a special relevance in the life and people of your church? If so, is there a way to incorporate these briefly into the lesson without distracting from the overall flow of the lesson? (works well in opening/closing of a lesson)
- j) Do any of the concepts covered in this lesson tend to lead to certain types of questions from the children? How might you answer these questions?
- k) Run through the lesson informally at home to check for flow and timing.
- l) Remember: The lesson is not a script! Make the lesson your own.
- m) How will you close the lesson?
 - » Recap key themes.
 - » Challenge hearts to respond to God's word.
 - » Pray with the children re-emphasizing themes and challenge again.

3. Map Out Your Lesson—work with lesson handout

4. Present the Lesson

- a) Use a familiar lead-in before the lesson (e.g., pray together, sing a special song, theme verse, etc.) Whatever you choose it should have a calming effect on the children.
- b) Follow your prepared lesson and stayed focused.
 - » If a visual or illustration is presenting difficulties, simply explain how it is meant to work and move on.
 - » If necessary, defer unrelated or difficult questions. Tell the child that you will talk to him after the lesson about his particular comment or question.
 - » Handle distractions quickly and calmly.
- c) Use the appropriate tone and volume during the lesson. For example, when speaking of something powerful, use a powerful voice. Often, you can add emphasis by speaking very softly.
- d) Be expressive with your face, hands, and movements.
- e) Encourage active participation where applicable and watch for signs of attentiveness in the children. Use a variety of response techniques. If necessary, stop, and redirect their focus.
- f) Allow the children moments of silence to think about important points and serious questions.
- g) When you ask children to participate in a particular illustration, remember to explain your expectations ahead of time, before they volunteer.
- h) Identify and repeat the main points. Ask the children to repeat these. Use your visuals again. Summarize and review the main points by having the children say them out loud. Pray together reinforcing the key themes.

Recommended Teacher Resources:

Systematic Theology or Bible Doctrines by Wayne Grudem

Creative Bible Teaching by Larry Richards

Tell the Truth by Will Metzger