

The Purpose of Small Group

Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.—Colossians 1:28

PREPARATION

At the Beginning of the Year

- Understand your responsibilities and locate materials.
- Familiarize yourself with the material.
- Prepare any special materials.
- Communicate with parents and meet the students.

Weekly Preparation

- Send cards/notes, make phone calls as appropriate
- Prayerfully work through:
 - » *the lesson (every day)*
 - » *the Parent Resource Page*
 - » *the workbook activity*
 - » *other optional activities*
- Think through personal application of the lesson to your life
- Plan and write out interaction with whole small group
 - » *Check understanding of themes*
 - » *Application*
 - » *Apply skills: using the Bible, quoting scripture from memory*
 - » *Relate to previous lesson*
 - » *Follow up*
- Plan interaction with individual children
 - » *Note anything that needs follow up*
- Pray for children by name

CLASS TIME

Before the Children Arrive

- Set up for success
 - » your area and materials
 - » the room
 - » Connect with your team
- Pray

Transition Time

- Greet and visit with children and parents
- Help children with nametags
- Introduce visitors and assimilate them into the group
- If there is a transition activity, involve children in the activity

Worship/Lesson Time

- Pray for the students
- Actively engage in the class time—model the behavior you expect
 - » *Sit with children*
 - » *Sing during worship time*
 - » *Look up Bible verses*
 - » *Don't be talking with other leaders or disengaged from worship/teaching*
- Be ready to assist the children—help them to participate
- Keep alert for distracting or inappropriate behavior
- Be alert to student interactions and heart indicators
- Help the teacher
- Take notes and if needed, adjust your plan for small group time

Small Group Time

- Open the small group time with prayer
- Make introductions (if needed)
- At the beginning of the year: state your expectations
- Follow up from the previous week
- Work through your flexible plan
 - » *Be open to Holy Spirit's leading and children's grasp of material*
 - » *Direct the conversation—focus on the spiritual perspective*
 - » *Involve all children*
 - » *Help the students to make concrete personal application*
- Pray with the group
 - » *This can be a very sweet time of sharing for the group*

» *It is important to leave enough time for everyone who wants to share*

- Assist with workbook activity
- Take advantage of one-on-one interaction time
- Additional:
 - » *Bible memory work*
 - » *Activity*
 - » *Challenge thoughts or questions*
 - » *Workbook assignments*
 - » *Research assignments from the lesson*

End of Class

- Have children help you clean up group space
- Collect nametags
- Encourage each child
- Send home materials
- Interact with parents
- Take home anything you need for the next lesson
- Thank God for His help and ask Him to work in the students' hearts

POST CLASS TIME

- Communicate with students during the week
- Recognize birthdays and special occasions
- Consider an outside class activity
 - » *This does not have to be a major production*
- Pray for each of your children and the prayer requests from previous weeks

Idea Sheet: Hints, Tips, and Thoughts

- Sunday school begins with the arrival of the first child.
- Read the next week's lesson on Sunday night or Monday to let God work on your heart & mind through the week about the lesson.
- Fighter Verse program is an excellent activity for small group Bible memorization.
 - » FighterVerses.com
- Let the Holy Spirit help guide your preparation: maybe read the lesson Bible verses out of the Bible directly two or three times before reading the entire lesson. Pray God gives you His words.
- When you teach have a PAU and a PAS. (Child Evangelism Fellowship)
 - » PAU—personal application to unsaved
 - » PAS—personal application to saved
 - » How does this lesson apply to our lives today?
- Use Quizzes to review prior lessons and important Bible truths
- LOVE your kids... **Matthew 22:36-39** Jesus teaches us the second greatest command is to love.
- Personal Stories: God's providence of working in your life brings faith to life.
- What are some behaviors that you want to promote? (e.g. bring Sunday School book to class, read their Bible during the week, do the weekly study assignments, bring their Bible to church, memorize Scriptures, bring a guest, etc.)
 - » Design some fun activities to help the kids achieve the goals. (e.g., stickers, points, mystery box, etc.)
 - » Once goal achieved have a reward (more frequent better). (e.g., bring treats to class, outside class activity (i.e. swim party, sports, cookie making party, games, etc.), mystery box, etc.)
- Silence is OK at times. Be careful not to feel the need to fill silence with your talking. God may be working on one of your kids and they aren't ready to share yet. Moving on too fast may miss that moment.
- Plan ahead. Use a white board or blackboard. Maybe use pictures or flannel graph. Using things that the kids can see and feel help make points real.
- Outside class activities with your small group do not have to be major productions: Simple is fine.
 - » Board games or game activities
 - » Football, snow football, sports, frisbee
 - » Make pizza, cookies
 - » Go out for a pop or malt
- Prayer Time is very sweet, don't short change it because of running late or getting in one last point.
- Close: Can use a Challenge Question...something they can think about and/or discuss with their family to apply the lesson. **Matthew 5:13-14**: Lesson on Salt & Light. Challenge question: Is the world influencing you, or are you influencing the world for Christ?

NOTES:
