

PRESENTING A LESSON

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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) Tables and chairs for children
- c) Available blank wall space or easels
- d) Arrange class in a way that minimizes distractions

2. Know your staff

- a) Have additional adults with carefully designed roles: team leader, worship leader, teacher, small group leaders (for large classes)
- b) Communicate expectations to helpers and children

3. Know your children

- a) Use name-tags and plan other simple activities to get to know your children
- b) Develop a comprehensive behavioral policy and clearly communicate this with parents, children and staff
- c) Notice and deal with behavior issues right away
- d) 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) Design an organized class structure – transition, worship, lesson presentation, small group time – that incorporates the curriculum as a whole and is child friendly
- c) Peruse through all of the lessons paying attention to the overall flow of the curriculum
- d) Understand the “Hook, Book, Look, Took” method as described 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 (ex. My Purpose Will Stand on the providence of God.)

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* 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) Assemble and organize visuals. Make them colorful, easy to see and/or read. Are there visuals that you will be adding to aid in the presentation of the lesson? Make sure these do not distract the children from the key points and flow of the lesson. Practice using the visuals and doing the illustrations.
- b) Decide how you plan to use the room, visuals, and children throughout the lesson. Think through the logistics of this. For example, Does an interactive illustration lend itself to a bold child or a quiet one? If you have an activity that requires special space or numbers of children (i.e. a race or treasure hunt) have you thought through if it will work as written in your classroom?
- c) How will you present the Bible text? What texts will the children look up in their Bibles? Will you have Sword Drills? What passages? Will you have one or more children read a passage? Think about writing out some the passages on index cards and handing them out to selected children before class.
- d) If you are presenting a Bible story, at which points will you read directly from the text? How will you engage the children's attention?
- e) How will you craft the questions you ask in order to obtain appropriate responses.
- f) Think through the vocabulary that you will use to make sure that it is age-appropriate.
- g) Do you need the participation of prepared adults or children for this lesson?
- h) 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?
- i) 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?
- j) Run through the lesson informally at home to check for flow and timing.
- k) Remember: the lesson is not a script! Make the lesson your own.
- l) How will you close the lesson? What particular application will you be making in order to challenge the hearts of the children in response to the Word?

3. Present the lesson

- a) Have a familiar lead-in before the lesson: i.e. a special song. Whatever you choose it should have a calming effect on the children.
- b) Follow your prepared lesson and stayed focused.
 - o If a visual or illustration is presenting difficulties, simply explain how it is meant to work and move on.
 - o 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.
 - o 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.
- d) Be expressive with your face, hands, and movements.
- e) Encourage active participation where applicable and watch for signs of attentiveness in the children.
- 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 tell them of your expectations ahead of time, before they volunteer.
- h) Identify and repeat the main points. Ask the children to repeat these.