

THE ENCOURAGER

Help for Sunday School Teachers— Dedicated to those who take the Word of Life to Children Everywhere

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THE REST OF THE POINTS

*This helpful article by Shad Sluiter (Hermosillo, MX) began in the November Issue and continues here. How pragmatic is the premise he commences with. **Students must read the Bible in order to know what it says.** We offer here the remainder of the 10 Ways to Read the Bible with Your Class.*

4. Fill in the blanks

Copy (or type) a Bible passage into your word processor. You can copy and paste the text from the Online Bible Search at www.gospellhall.org/bible. Remove 'key' words from the passage and replace them with underline characters (Shift key plus minus sign). Print a set of worksheets or display the result using PowerPoint. The whole process takes less than 10 minutes.

For example from John 3. Notice that each blank line is numbered so that the teacher can refer to "answer number 8" easily.

There was a man of the (1) _____, named (2) _____, a (3) _____ of the Jews:

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, (4) _____, we know that thou art a (5) _____ come from God: for no man can do these (6) _____ that thou doest, except God be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be (7) _____, he cannot see the (8) _____ of God.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be (9) _____ when he is (10) _____?

...

5. Proof Reader

Similar to the fill in the blank method mentioned above, copy a bible passage and intentionally create mistakes by substituting words that change the meaning. Ask students to correct the passage by first reading the passage in their Bible and then correcting the mistakes printed on their worksheet.

For example, the following words from Isaiah 53 have many errors. Type with double spaces to allow room for the student to write his/her corrections. (Technical note: In Microsoft Word, you can choose double spacing for a paragraph by clicking Format Paragraph, selecting "double" for the line spacing option.)

1 Who hath rejected our report? and to whom is the face of the LORD hidden?

2 For he shall go away before him as a wandering lamb, and as a root out of a watered field: he hath no idea nor intelligence; and when they shall see him, there is no reason that we should follow him.

If making corrections to the incorrect version is too difficult for a student to complete, provide a multiple choice correction method in the following manner:

1 Who hath [1] (*believed / rejected / purchased*) our report? and to whom is the [2] (*face / arm / voice*) of the LORD [3] (*revealed / hidden / heard*)?

2 For he shall [4] (*go away / purchase / grow up*) before him as a [5] (*tender plant / wandering lamb / strong tower*), and as a root out of a [6] (*watered field / sheep fold / dry ground*): he hath no [7] (*form / idea / money*) nor [8] (*intelligence / comeliness / ugliness*); and when [9] (*we / they / he*) shall see him, there is no reason that we should [10] (*follow / listen to / desire*) him.

This is a simple project that can be displayed in the classroom. It is a perfect way to review the material in the following weeks.

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10 WAYS TO READ THE BIBLE WITH YOUR CLASS

6. Story Board

Create a series of pictures with captions that re-tell a Bible story. Ask the students to decide what the pictures will be rather than telling them what to draw. You'll see more creativity and better understanding. They will have to think for more than a few seconds to come up with their idea. Re-telling a story with pictures utilizes several learning strategies. First a student must read and comprehend the written word. Second, he must select the most important details. Third, he must illustrate the meaning. Remember the point of the activity is not to create beautiful drawings. Rather, the point is to create a lasting impression in your student's memory of what the Bible says.

For example, in the story of Samson, ask each student to draw a picture from an assigned chapter of the Bible. Samson's life is told in four chapters in Judges 13, 14, 15 and 16. When finished, you will have four captioned pictures to put on the bulletin board. For more involvement, ask for more than one picture from each chapter. For example, three students in a group would draw three pictures illustrating the announcement of the birth of Samuel from Judges 13.

Extension: Bind the finished pictures into a book or display them on the wall in sequence.

7. Remove the Spaces

For a short passage, use your computer to remove all spaces from a passage. Print the worksheets. Ask students to draw a diagonal line dividing each word.

And it came to pass after these things that God did to emp Abraham and said unt

ohim Abraham: and he said Behold here I am And he said Takenow thy son thine only son Isaac whom thou ovestand get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of

How-to details for Microsoft Word:

- 1) Copy the text of a chapter from www.gospelhall.org/bible into a Word document.
- 2) Select the menu Edit Replace.
- 3) In the "Find What" field, type a single space.
- 4) In the "Replace With" field, do not type anything.
- 5) Click the "Replace All" button. All spaces will be replaced.
- 6) Repeat the previous steps to remove commas and periods.

Notice in the example above, the words are printed in a larger font to allow easier writing for the students.

8. Station Questions

You can vary the routine of answering questions about a passage, by creating various stations around the classroom. Fold a piece of paper in half with the top fold covering a single question inside. Tape the papers to various places in the room. Number each station. Getting students out of their chairs breaks the routine. Review the answers once students are back in their seats.

9. Version according to me

In the spirit of a Bible paraphrase, ask the students to re-word a passage using their own language. The students read the "version according to me" to the class.

For example, 1 Corinthians 1:18 Because explaining the death of Christ sounds like nonsense to people who are not saved – those people on their way to hell. But those who understand it, the cross gives them assurance of eternal life.

19 The Old Testament says, "God is wiser than the wisest man, the ideas of this world will end in nothing"...

Caution! The goal of the activity is not to make fun of Bible words or say things irreverently, but to clarify the understanding.

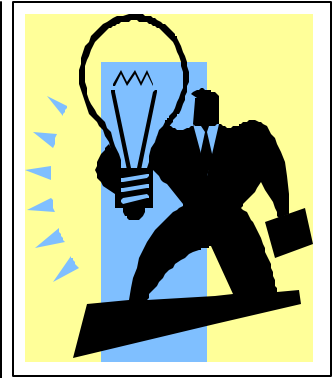
10. Power Point

One way to vary Bible reading is to display the verses with a computer and projector. Display short portions of the reading on each slide. This method helps students who find it difficult to locate passages on their own. It also helps keep the class together. Additionally, it breaks the routine so that this week's Bible reading class is not exactly the same as what you did last week.

Check for Comprehension

The goal of all Bible reading should be to understand what God says. Most basic methods of Bible reading should include a list of questions to check for understanding.

Create a list of written questions that the students answer either with pencil and paper or as a group discussion. For example a Bible reading from Romans 1:16-32 should include some basic questions such as: What is God's wrath revealed against? In verse 19-21, what can be known about God from creation? What do men choose to worship instead of God? Use these questions to start a discussion.



Try something new today!

The Goal of all Bible Reading should be to understand what God says!

Advice for the teacher

Vary your bible reading method and approach regularly. Some types of Bible chapters work better with certain methods. Even if one of the activities takes away from your "teaching time", that is, the time you get to talk, it might be a good learning time for the students since they are hearing the Word of God direct from the Source.

The "extension" ideas above provide not only an idea for a simple project that can be displayed in the classroom, it is a good way to review in the following weeks.

Conclusion

Remember, that the precious few years you have with teens and preteens are their formative years of understanding what the Bible says. An excellent assistant of the teacher is variety. Keep your students interest by providing a different approach to studying the scripture every week.