

Christian Education

A Manual for Teachers

Reformed Presbyterian Church of North Hills

Pittsburgh, PA

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Objectives for the Christian Education Program

- 1) Each child would come to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a desire to do His will.
 - 2) Each child would have a thorough understanding of the Bible - having been exposed to the content of Scripture, its historical background and some basic theological issues.
 - 3) Each child would be helped to grow in the Christian life through scripture memory and learning to apply Scriptural principles to personal situations.
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The ideals of the Christian Education program are, by God's grace, to produce mature Christian believers who:

- Have come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- Become communicant members of their local church.
- Desire to know, and do, the will of God.
- Understand, love, and are committed to the doctrinal distinctives of the RPCNA.
- Love the Word of God, demonstrated by a consistent reading program through the Bible.
- Know how to study the Bible using various devotional and Bible study methods.
- Are aware of basic Christian resources for study and finding answers to questions.
- Demonstrate an ability to properly apply the scriptures to his/her own personal life.
- Demonstrate a consistent devotional life involving scripture memorization and prayer.
- Demonstrate a heart for serving others in the Body of Christ and in society.
- Demonstrate a love for, and a commitment to, the Body of Christ. This involves:
 - Active participation in the fellowship of the Church
 - A growing sense of belonging to the Covenant Community
 - Developing inter-generational relationships.
- Are able to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with the lost.
- Have personally read the entire Bible.
- Demonstrate practical personal godliness through the fruit of the Spirit in their lives.
- Are prepared to give a reasoned answer for the hope that lies within them, in a godly manner.
- Know how to listen to and take notes on, sermons.
- Have studied the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

Policy Statement on Background Checks

The session of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, in response to recent legislation in the state of Pennsylvania (PA Act 153), has, at its August 13th, 2015 meeting, adopted a formal policy that seeks to bring the church into compliance with the law.

All adults (defined as individuals 18 years of age and older) who work with children as part of the life and ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North Hills will be required to obtain the following Pennsylvania clearances:

1. Child Abuse Clearance (Appendix A)
2. State Police Criminal Record Check (Appendix B)

The session has identified four primary groups of individuals who will be required to obtain these clearances:

- 1) All Pastors and elders in the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North Hills
- 2) All Christian Education teachers and committee members
- 3) All Youth Group leaders and leaders at other youth events
- 4) Nursery Supervisors

Further details pertaining to the church's policy can be obtained by:

- 1) Reading the session document entitled: *"Policy in Response to ACT 153 and Related PA Acts – August 2015"* (Appendix 5) or by:
- 2) Talking to Pastor Blocki, Elder Sam Spear, or Elder Mark Sampson.
- 3) Visiting the church website at www.rpcnh.net

Outline of the Christian Education Program at North Hills

The morning Christian Education program is designed to be more “academic”. The morning program involves the impartation of core knowledge. (We are to love God with all our **mind.**)

The evening Christian Education program is designed to be more informal, focusing on application (discipleship, service, fellowship, and discussion).

To meet the objectives and ideals presented on the previous page, the Christian Education Committee has selected curricula and methodologies in an intentional manner. Some of the basic premises that lie behind these decisions include:¹

- A) The adoption and purchase of a “set” and cyclical curricula for the morning program:
- B) The adoption of set categories on a five semester rotation for the evening program²
- C) The purchase of a variety of curricular materials for the evening program that leave latitude for individual class needs and teacher preference.
- D) The requirement that any additional curricular materials/suggestions should be approved by the CE committee.

Morning Curriculum

Ages 2-3	Materials published by <u>Great Commission</u> Year 1: Show Me Jesus(2019-2020): Fall: God’s Family Winter: God’s Son Spring: God’s Love Summer: God’s People Year 2: Lessons from Bible stories of the Old and New Testament (2018-2019) or <u>Read with Me Bible</u> – NIV Story Bible for Children
Ages 4-5, K	Materials published by <u>Desiring God Ministries</u> Year 1: He has Spoken By His Son (2019-2020) New Testament Stories for Young Children Year 2: He Established a Testimony (2018-2019) Old Testament Stories for Young Children

¹ See Appendix 1 for additional criteria for curriculum selection

² See Appendix 2 for descriptions of specific categories

Grades 1-3 Materials published by Desiring God Ministries
 Year 1: Faithful to All His Promises (2018-2019)
 Year 2: Jesus, What a Savior (2019-2020)
 Year 3: ABCs of God (2020-2021)

Grades 4-5 Materials published by Desiring God Ministries
 Year 1: My Purposes Will Stand (2019-2020)
 Year 2: To Be Like Jesus (2018-2019)

Grades 6-8 A Study of God’s Faithfulness to His Covenant Promises,
 developed by Kathy Blocki

Year 1: Old Testament (2018-2019)
 Year 2: Old Testament (2019-2020)
 Year 3: New Testament (2020-2021)

Grades 9-12

Year/Quarter	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
1	Bible Study (Choose book of Bible – alternate genres and time periods)	Theological Study e.g. Doctrine of Church, RP Distinctives, Eschatology, etc.	Westminster Confession of Faith Larger Catechism	Practical/Topical Study e.g. prayer, missions, church history, apologetics
2	Bible Study	Theological Study	Westminster Confession	Practical/Topical Study
3	Bible Study	Theological Study	Westminster Confession	Practical/Topical Study
4	Bible Study	Theological Study	Westminster Confession	Practical/Topical Study

Evening Curriculum

The categories on a five-semester rotation for the evening program (See Appendix 2)

- ❖ Creation (Spring 2019)
- ❖ Missions and Evangelism (Fall 2019)
- ❖ Church History (Spring 2020)
- ❖ Christian Worldview (Fall 2020)
- ❖ Christian Living (Fall 2018)

Church Membership class

The church membership class provides an opportunity to invite our children to become communicant members of the congregation. Typically, this involves a study of the questions contained in the covenant of church membership. This class is taught by one of our pastors and is not part of the topical rotation. It meets as the need arises.

Memory Work Program

Reformed Presbyterian Church of North Hills

The Session of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North Hills having received the recommendation of the Christian Education Committee, has adopted a new Congregational memory program. It is the hope of the session that this will be a tool that will 1) assist parents in the spiritual training of their children and 2) encourage memorization by all members of the RPCNH. A description of the new program follows:

Content:

The scripture passages we will work on memorizing as a congregation will be taken from a five year sequence developed by Children Desiring God ministries. Children Desiring God calls their selection of verses “*Fighter Verses*” (The entire Five Year program of verses can be found in Appendix 4. The length of the passages range from 1-3 verses in a unit. We currently use curriculum published by Children Desiring God Ministries in our Lower and Upper Elementary Classes during our morning Christian Education classes, so there will be a degree of natural overlap between class content and scripture memorization. We will also work on memorizing one question selected from the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* every two weeks. Children under the age of 12, will memorize one corresponding question selected from the *Children’s Catechism*. All “*Fighter Verses*” will be memorized in ESV, the translation found in our pew bibles. As a church we will begin our memorization on September 9, 2018 with the first verse of the second year of the “*Fighter Verses*” program. The memory program will continue through the Christian Education summer break.

Administration of the Program:

Each week a bulletin insert will publish the following materials:

- 1) The memory verse from the previous week
- 2) The memory verse for the upcoming week
- 3) A question from the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* (one every two weeks)
- 4) A question from the *Children’s Catechism*, that parallels the selection taken from the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*.
- 5) The memory verses and Catechism questions will be recited during announcements and led by the presiding elder for the week.
- 6) Our evening classes will also be used as an opportunity for review.

Resources:

Shorter Catechism set to music: <http://www.reformedmusic.com>

Children's Catechism set to music:

<http://www.askmewhooo.com/series.html> or

www.crownandcovenant.com (412-241-0436) Ask for the CD entitled *Teach Them the Faith*

Fighter verses set to music: <http://fighterverses.com/set-1-core-esv/week-1/>

Children Desiring God Website: <http://fighterverses.com/memory-resources/the-battle-plan>

Children Desiring God Ministries offers the following resources on its website (listed above):

- A memory App for Android, Apple, and Kindle

- Make your own memory Cards

- Devotionals for each memory verse (helpful for family worship!)

- Actual memory cards

- Bookmarks with memory verses.

- Progress charts

This is a parent-driven program, with each family being responsible for what they wish their children to learn. Obtaining signatures from members of the congregation encourages us to fulfill our membership vows and promotes intergenerational relationships. The session hopes that this program will be easier for families to manage as each member of the family will be working on the same materials simultaneously. Further, it is hoped that by congregational participation in the program, we as the people of God, will demonstrate the value of the Word of God to visitors and be further built together as we are conformed to the Word together. Finally, it is hoped that these changes to our memory program will free the teachers in our morning Christian Education classes to focus on the excellent content of the curriculum.

The memory program previously developed by the church will continue to be available as a resource on the church's website: www.rpcnh.net

Appendix 1

Rationale for Curriculum Selection

Although God alone brings the fruit of conversion and sanctification, He uses various means. We have every reason to believe, even expect, that as we set up a deliberate plan of instruction, God will use it to bring our covenant children to Himself. The *spiritual* development of our children is far more important than any other aspect of their lives (physical, intellectual, social, etc.) We take our responsibility to be faithful stewards of God's covenant seriously. By God's grace, and expected blessing, these goals will be accomplished through the establishment of a "set" curriculum at every level of instruction. The advantages of a "set" curriculum include:

- 1) The ability to achieve goals.
- 2) The ability to set high standards.
- 3) Not having continually search for curricula each year.
- 4) No longer being subject to the materials published by commercial producers of Sabbath School curricula which may not conform to our Reformed faith and standards.
- 5) More effective oversight of Sabbath School curricula by the Session.
- 6) The reduction of teacher preparation. During subsequent repetitions of the curriculum, teachers can focus more on fine-tuning effectiveness of lessons and praying for the class.
- 7) The C.E. committee will seek to periodically review the effectiveness of our chosen curricula. Any potential curriculum change will be evaluated by the criteria set forth in our Christian Education program objectives.
- 8) The ability to properly balance morning and evening topics.

Additional Goals that Conceptually Drive the Choice of Curriculum:

- 1) Encouragement of parents to be involved on a daily basis in their child's spiritual growth.
- 2) Provision of curricular materials that can serve as the basis for preparing parents to lead family devotions.
- 3) Establishment of a "whole church" vision for discipleship.

Note on Cyclical Curricula:

Classes are structured on a 2, 3, or 4 year rotation of materials, depending upon age groupings of the classes. Each student will spend the same number of years in a class level, but they will encounter the material in differing sequence depending when they enter that class of the C.E. program.

Evening Program Description

Rotating by semester, the evening classes will use the following categories to define their instruction and interaction.

Worldview

“The philosophical or theological “spectacles” through which we view the world and all reality; the framework within which we interpret the data of the world and life. Biblical revelation is the foundation for a proper understanding of the nature and purpose of our existence. That revelation establishes divine truth about God, man, sin, salvation, purpose, and our destiny. Thus both our belief and our behavior are governed, not by changeable theories, but by God’s immutable truth.” (Dictionary of Theological Terms, by Alan Cairns)

The morning CE program is designed to lay the groundwork for, and to build the structure of, a Christian world view, by teaching the gospel and Christian doctrine. The evening program seeks to provide the opportunity for our children to struggle with the real issues of life. *What does Christianity have to say about “x” or “y”? How do I think about and respond to the world that I live in and what it is trying to tell me?* We might examine culture in the form of music, advertising, and movies. We might discuss social issues. There is not a single area of life where Christ does not currently reign as king. As creator, Christ has established His truth in every facet of life, including politics, marriage, and the sciences. To impact the world, our children must come to see everything they learn (in church, school, or from society), and everything they do, through a Biblical lens.

Christian Living (occurs twice during the three year rotation)

Christianity should be neither dead intellectualism nor a vapid emotional experience. Vibrant Christianity is rooted in the facts of God’s redemptive love as expressed in the work of Christ. Saving faith includes knowledge and assent to that knowledge. Once embraced, our faith in the work of Christ changes the way we think and therefore the way we live. The scriptures tell us that God writes His law on our hearts and minds (Jeremiah 31:31-34) and that we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:1-2). Furthermore, faith without works is dead (James 2:26). True faith transforms our actions. Therefore Christian Living would encompass such topics as:

- Personal disciplines (e.g. Bible memory, Bible reading, prayer, Sabbath observance, giving)
- Personal godliness: (e.g. family relationships, school performance, attitudes toward work, money, and marriage)
- Service (the practical expression of our love for one another and for others outside the church)
- Psalm singing

Church History

History is ultimately the record of God's providence in the affairs of men as He works all things according to His purpose. History is "His Story"! If we fail to understand church history, then we fail to understand God's sovereignty and we lessen our roles in the achievement of His plan. Studying church history encourages and emboldens us as we see the great heroes of the faith. Studying church history helps us to understand heresy and the impact of sin. As the author of Ecclesiastes notes: "There is nothing new under the sun!" (Ecclesiastes 1:9). Therefore to know history is to know where modern false teachings find their roots. It is to know how to refute them. A proper understanding of church history builds confidence that God has protected His church in the past and will continue to do so in the future. Possible time periods to be studied include the following:

- The Gospels and Acts
- Apostolic Fathers, Post Apostolic Fathers, Constantine, The Fall of Rome
- Medieval Church History
- Reformation History: Luther, Knox, Calvin, Bucer
- Scottish Covenantors
- Modern American Church

Creation

The book of Genesis is foundational to the Christian Faith. Secular humanism and atheistic Darwinism (evolution) seek to undermine our confidence in the scientific and historical accuracy of this book. The *Answers in Genesis* ministry has rightly noted that if the church fails to defend the first three chapters of Genesis as literal, space-time history, the Christian Faith is undermined and rendered powerless. Committed to science that starts from Christian pre-suppositions, AIG shows how a Christian world-view actually provides answers that more accurately interpret the world around us. Six day creation and the Noachic flood are shown to be scientifically superior to an evolutionary interpretation of the evidence. The intricacies of creation are explored and the evidences of God's careful design are laid out, filling the heart with wonder at the majesty of God! AIG has numerous high quality DVD's, story books and other print materials, that could be used at various age levels. (Under this umbrella, other publishers and materials may be used to promote the same ideas.)

Missions/Evangelism

Jesus commanded us to "go and make disciples" of all nations" (Matthew 28:19), and this component of the evening program would seek to equip our children with the tools to do so by providing:

- A chance to review and present the gospel and call our children to faith.
- Methods for sharing the gospel: The Bridge, the Romans Robe, Bill Fay's 5 questions
- Instruction, preparation, and practice in Apologetics (positively answering objections and promoting the faith).
- A chance to be inspired by stories about the "heroes of the faith"

- Opportunities to relate to our own missionaries (visitation, support through offerings, letters, care packages, etc.)
- A chance to present denominational programs: Theological Foundations for Youth, International Youth Leadership Conference, Short Term Missions Teams, summer trips to E.C.H.O (Ecological Concern for the Hungry Organization)

Teacher Resources for Christian Education³ i

Reformed Presbyterian Church of North Hills

I. Introduction

Note of Caution for all resources: You should omit those activities that depict Jesus graphically. This is a practice with many of these sources. It is especially evident in categories such as “printable” activities or “coloring” pages. So as with anything in life, ‘Eat the chicken and throw away the bones’.

Another note: With no intention of reinventing the wheel, these resources are, for the most part, free online from various sites. I have attempted to give credit to each source where possible.

These resources are included here to support two primary premises. The most successful teaching utilizes:

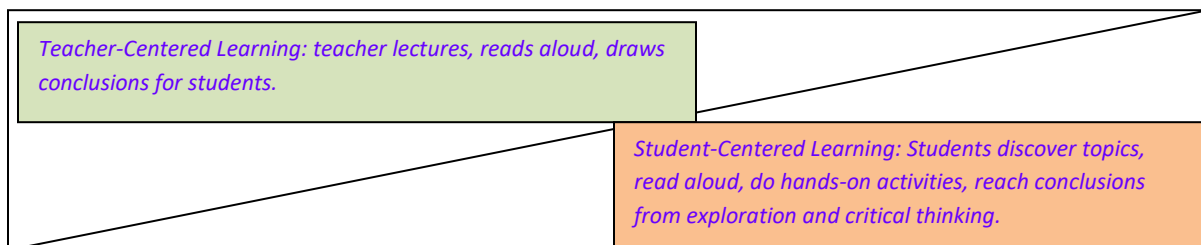
- 1. Interactivity/participative learning***
- 2. Variety***

Interactivity/participative learning: *In other words, there are virtually no Christian Education classes that will not be more engaging and effective WITH participation by the students than without. This is true from youngest to adult classes. The younger the student, the more emphasis there should be on participation.*

A way to view this is on a continuum.

100% Teacher-centered

100% Student-Centered



This does not imply that all teaching should be at the extreme right of the continuum. Where teaching/learning should fall on the continuum depends primarily on the age and abilities of students and on the subject matter.

Variety: *The more varied your teaching methods, the more engaged the students will be. Even the best, ‘fun-est’, most memorable activity loses its punch when it is used too frequently.*

³ Throughout the document, italics and purple text color indicate comments and additions by S. Myrick. Otherwise, ideas are from the resource under which they are listed.

II. Preparing To Teach⁴

As always, start with prayer. Ask God to help you expand your teaching expertise and to guide you in the best use of teaching methods.

Think about the children you teach. What learning styles do they exhibit? Note which children seem to be verbal, visual, logical, physical, musical, natural, relational or reflective learners. Consider the needs of the children as you choose how to teach.

Try at least one new teaching method each quarter. Look at the curriculum for the focus age you teach. Circle an activity that uses a teaching method you have never or rarely used. Read it several times. Ask other teachers who have tried similar activities for their suggestions to help the activity flow smoothly. Set a time when you plan to use this method.

Enjoy teaching the activity and then evaluate the experience. Did children learn as you intended? What would you do differently if you were to do the activity again? Talking about these experiences with a group of children's leaders can help the entire group improve teaching.

III. Sunday School Activities for Your Class and Why You Need Them

Source: <http://www.sunday-school-ideas-for-new-teachers.com/sunday-school-activities.html>

Why do we include Sunday School activities in our lessons? Is it just to encourage hyperactive toddlers to let off some steam? To give our voice a break? To receive one vital sign of life from our teenagers?

Added Extra?

If you've always viewed Sunday School activities as an added extra – fine for craftsy-type teachers or flighty educators who can't keep their kids under control, but not for the serious-minded instructor – think again. Sunday School activities are actually fundamental for a child's learning process; as a hands-on approach, they fit perfectly with the theoretical principles of child development and learning. In fact, research shows that adults also grasp core concepts more thoroughly through a discussion- and activity-oriented approach.

Benefits

The bottom line is that you want the children or teenagers in your Sunday School class not just to accumulate a bunch of interesting biblical trivia or moral theories in their heads, but to truly take Sunday School lessons to heart and into their daily life. You want to see changed lives – children who truly know and love God and who are being transformed by his love. Transformation is much more than theory or information only. It's also more than simply throwing out an application at the end of class. Rather, your goal is to have your class interact with God's truths in such a way that they realize that God is talking to them through Bible stories, shedding light on their attitudes, understanding of God's character, relationships, communication, problem solving, decision making and selection of values, for example. You must incite your children to think and interact, not just passively sit in the Sunday School

⁴ Kathy Strawn. <http://www.lifeway.com/ArticleView?storeId=10054&catalogId=10001&langId=-1&article=using-creative-teaching-methods>

classroom – often engaged in their own daydream world – while you earnestly preach at them. Sunday School activities are vital in the process of encouraging this participation.

Activities in the Lesson

Involvement in Sunday School activities stimulates children to learn by doing – even (can it be?) by having fun and playing, something that is highly motivating for them and contributes to their emotional, social, intellectual and moral development. While Sunday School activities don't replace formal instruction, they reinforce the concepts you teach, so your class time ends up looking something like this:

- Lesson
Introduce the big idea you want them to grasp.
- Activity
Involve them in a Sunday School activity that will further bolster that big idea.
- Discussion
During the activity or after, incorporate meaningful discussion that will help them tie the lesson and Sunday School activities together, drawing out the main principles. Using easy, nonthreatening questions to begin with, discuss what happened during the activity, then merge into comparing the activity with real life, getting them to share their opinions, and finally talk about their own daily life, behavior and attitudes.
- Application
Summarize and then guide them in translating the big idea to their daily lives.

Sunday School activities bring many benefits to the classroom and to you as a teacher, not only to the individual student's life. Among other things, they increase your students' motivation to learn by arousing curiosity; help involve children with different learning styles; allow them to make mistakes in a safe setting (and thus learn more effectively); make them more receptive; unveil their thoughts and interests; and encourage group participation and socialization, thus building relationships and creating shared memories.

Conclusion

With these issues firmly in mind, you can see the importance of turning to the Sunday School activities that we offer at Sunday School Ideas for New Teachers. And while these activities are a definite aid in helping your toddlers get rid of excess energy, giving yourself a breather or actually getting your teenagers to respond, they will especially help you in reaching that important goal of life transformation

IV. Some specific ideas to add interest to your classes. Source:

<http://www.sundayschoolresources.com/>

Excellent ideas for various interactive teaching methods. The following are some highlights copied from the site, but you should explore the site for yourself. The home page of their web site will get you to the various topics sampled below.

❖ Games

22 different games are described on the site! Below are a few examples.

Eraser-a word:

- ✎ Write each word of the Memory Verse on a separate piece of paper.
- ✎ Hide the individual words around the room.
- ✎ Ask the children to find the words and lay them out in the correct order.
- ✎ Recite the Memory Verse.
- ✎ Repeat several times.

Quick Draw.

- ✎ You will need a dry erase or chalk board or large pieces of butcher paper and chalk or markers.
- ✎ Make cards with subjects you want the children to draw.
- ✎ Divide the class into two or three groups.
- ✎ Have one child from Group 1 select a card and draw the picture.
- ✎ As the child draws the picture, Group 1 tries to guess what the picture is portraying.
- ✎ You may want to set a time limit for drawing the picture and guessing what it is.
- ✎ If Group 1 cannot guess what the drawing is before time expires, another group can guess.
- ✎ Rotate so each child in each group has an opportunity to draw.

Word Scramble.

- ✎ Divide the class into two or three groups.
- ✎ Write each word of the Memory Verse or Challenge activity on a separate piece of paper.
- ✎ Mix up the words and ask the children to put the words in order.
- ✎ First group finished wins.

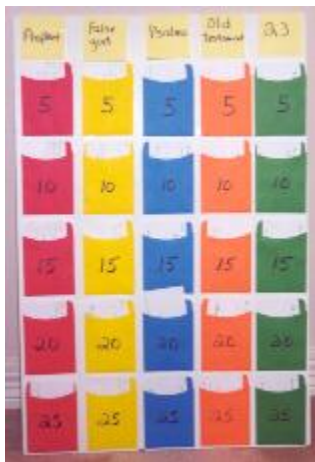
Mancala.



- ✎ Mancala is a board game that was played during biblical times.
- ✎ Use plastic bowls (or masking tape) to set up a large Mancala board on the floor. The board is divided into two rows of 6 bowls each with two large bowls on each end. You will need 48 rocks or marbles to use for stones.
- ✎ Divide the class into two teams.
- ✎ Each team has one row of 6 bowls with the larger bowl to the right of the row serving as that team's mancala or scoring bowl.
- ✎ The game begins with 4 stones in each of the 12 small bowls.
- ✎ Ask a team to recite a Memory Verse, or Challenge, or answer a review question.

- ☞ If the team answers correctly, that team, or an individual on that team, can take a turn.
- ☞ To take a turn, pick up all the stones from one of the bowls. Put one stone in each bowl, including your mancala but not the other team's mancala, going in a counter-clockwise direction.
- ☞ If you put the last stone in your mancala, take another turn. If not, the other team takes a turn.
- ☞ If you put the last stone in one of your bowls that is empty, take all the stones from the other team's bowl that is directly across from that bowl. Put the stones in your mancala.
- ☞ When a team has no more stones left in its bowls, the game is over. The team with stones left in its bowls moves the stones to its mancala.
- ☞ The team with the most stones in its mancala wins.

And the Question Is.



- ☞ Arrange 25 small envelopes (can be found in a teacher supply store *or Dollar Tree*) in 5 columns of 5 envelopes each. Number the envelopes in each column from top to bottom as 5, 10, 15, 20, and 25.
- ☞ Each column is a different category, such as angels, prophets, Old Testaments, etc. Or you could make it a review, with the categories being the last 5 stories you have discussed.
- ☞ Write 5 questions of increasing difficulty for each category. Put the least difficult question for the category in the envelope numbered 5, the next hardest question for that category in the number 10 envelope and so on, with the most difficult question being placed in the number 25 envelope.
- ☞ Divide the children into two or three teams.
- ☞ Have the children pick a category and the number of points they want to go for. Explain that the difficulty of the question increases as the points increase.
- ☞ If the team answers correctly, they get the points.
- ☞ If the team answers incorrectly, the other team gets a chance to answer the question and get the points.
- ☞ The team that accumulates the most points wins.

❖ Teaching Techniques

Note: where words or phrases are in blue and underlined, they are 'click-able' and explained on the web site.

What is the most effective teaching method? The answer depends on the children in the class. Some children can listen and learn. Others learn by doing. Some learn well on their own. Others need the interaction of a group. Using a variety of methods may be the best approach. The following teaching techniques might give you ideas that will work well in your class.

📖 **Teach by Example.** *What does this mean to you?*

For example: Be thoroughly prepared for class; know your Bible, turning easily to verses, or quoting verses; speak in a tone of voice that you want students to use; make sure to focus equally on all students, regardless of how extroverted or willing to answer questions they are. Etc. etc.

📖 **Alternate between active and inactive approaches.**

Variety is the key to holding the interest of students. The younger they are, the more important this is. The BEST teaching technique will quickly lose its effectiveness if it is used to regularly.

For example, you could start with [Brain Teasers](#). Then you could lead a nature walk to identify all the things God created (see [Bible Story Activities](#)). Follow that with the Bible story where the children listen quietly and answer questions. Then you could use a [Game](#) to help the children learn the [Memory Verse](#). This approach provides for planned energy releases and helps prevent boredom.

📖 **Go Outside.** Children love the outdoors. You can teach about [Life in Biblical Times](#) by serving a snack of unleavened bread and dates on a blanket spread on the ground outside. Or you can reenact the story of the Fall of Man (Genesis 3). Or let them learn to play together on the playground. Just be sure to come in with the same number of children you went out with.

Per Martin Blocki: Use sidewalk chalk to mark off the dimensions of the ark.

📖 **Use Music.** Recruit a guitar, piano, or keyboard player to lead songs that will help the children learn the books of the Bible or the Ten Commandments *or catechism questions*. Or be brave and lead it yourself.

📖 **Use Art.** Children love to express themselves. Choose an activity they can complete by themselves or with minimal supervision to build their confidence. They can draw a picture showing what they learned. Or they can color a [Coloring Page](#). Or they can write the [Memory Verse](#) on papyrus paper using ink and a stick.

Artwork should never be an end in itself but only used to reinforce learning. Therefore, the more closely related it is to the lesson to be taught, the more effective it will be.

📖 **Use Repetition.** Choose a [Bible Story Activity](#), [Brain Teaser](#), [Memory Verse](#), and [Game](#) that all reinforce the same lesson you are teaching that day.

This is key to learning: less is more. A single lesson topic taught in several ways is more effective than 'trying to cover a lot of material'.

📖 **Use Visual Aids.** *Good:* Prepare a wall-sized version of the [Challenge](#) activity, such as memorizing the Ten Commandments. List the books of the Bible on the wall. Print out the [Clip Art](#) and hang it on the wall to remind the children of what they have learned. *Better: Let the children draw pictures of what they learned and hang those on the wall, or create the charts, etc.*

📖 **Use Bible Drills.** Provide a list of the [Memory Verses](#) they have learned for the past month and ask them to find the verses in the Bible. Or ask them to find one book named after a lady and one book named after a man. First one finished, stand up.

📖 **Use Individual Activities.** Schedule at least one activity each Sunday that will require each child to learn individually. Each student can say the [Memory Verse](#) alone during a relay race. Or each student can draw a picture or write in a journal.

📖 **Use Group Activities.** For example, divide the class into groups and play "[Who Wants to be a Christian Heir?](#)" to review the [Bible Truths](#) or facts learned during the month (See [Games](#)). This encourages the development of social skills and reinforces the [Bible Truth](#) that God wants us to have friends and work together (Genesis 2:18).

- 🗨️ **Use role play to act out the story.** Write each of the parts on a separate card using words the children can read.
- 🗨️ **Play Bible Detective.** For example, let the children discover words they can use to praise God in **Prayer**. Provide a list of verses they can read to find the words. Write their discoveries on the board. Use this approach for other activities, such as learning about a person in [People of the Bible](#) or [foods of the Bible](#) in [Life in Biblical Times](#).
- 🗨️ **Celebrate Successes.** A job well done deserves a pat on the back. Applaud for the students after they learn a [Memory Verse](#). If the entire class masters a [Challenge](#), such as memorizing "The Lord's Prayer," consider celebrating with a *snack or other small reward*.

V. Using Creative Teaching Methods

Written by Kathy Strawn

<http://www.lifeway.com/ArticleView?storeId=10054&catalogId=10001&langId=-1&article=using-creative-teaching-methods>

Children who are **doing something** retain 75 to 90 percent of what they learn as compared to 5 to 10 percent of **what they hear** or 20 to 30 percent of **what they see**. Creative teaching methods enhance the benefits of activity learning.

<i>Doing: retain 75%-90%</i>	<i>Seeing: 20%-30%</i>	<i>Hearing: 5% - 10%</i>	<i>Use them all!</i>
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Creative teaching methods...

- Help children express their feelings in ways in which words do not.
- Encourage original and independent thinking.
- Encourage a child to invest himself in the learning.
- *Make learning easier and more memorable.*
- *Make learning fun which leads to a child's desire to learn. This fosters positive attitudes toward church school and can result in good attendance.*

Some creative teaching methods include drama/*skits*, music, [simulations](#), and learning games. All require active participation. Simulations *are* a teaching method you may want to try in your quest to find a better way to teach.

Following is a description of a [simulation](#). As presented by Kathy Strawn, this is more commonly called "Role Playing".

Simulations (*role playing*) are pretend situations that enable a child to:

- Discover a way he might respond.
- Probe emotions he might experience.
- Evaluate behavior from different points of view.

Children of any age can pretend to be in a school environment inviting other boys and girls to church. One child can pretend to invite another to church while the second child gives an excuse for why he cannot come. Others in the group can help the first child think of ways to deal with the excuse. Children can trade parts and decide how to deal with different excuses.

Other suggestions might be for children who already are Christians to practice telling others how to become a Christian or for children to practice resisting temptation while in a safe environment.

Simulations can help children understand biblical times. Recently, a first-grader hurried into our Sunday School room asking "Are we going anywhere today?" You might think we regularly take field trips, but the only trips we take are those in our imaginations. We have toured Solomon's temple, and, on a bus trip, scouted out the land where Jesus lived.

Plan simulations based on the ages and abilities of the children you teach. Children of different ages enjoy simulations on different levels. Younger children may be quite willing to simulate a bus trip with rows of chairs, while older boys and girls will want to be more realistic.

VI. <http://mintools.com/>

This site sells a CD or download with 57 teaching methods described. Below is the list of contents. I have ordered a copy you can borrow. scm

Look at the Possibilities!

Following is a list of 57 possible methods. And, that list of methods does not include the variations within these teaching techniques.

- Agree/Disagree Statements
- Assignments
- Book Reports/Reviews
- Brainstorming
- Buzz Groups
- Case Studies
- Chain Reaction Forum
- Choral Reading/Speaking
- Circle Response
- Colloquy
- Computer
- Crafts
- Debate
- Demonstration
- Discussion
- Drama
- Drawing
- Drills
- Exhibits & Displays
- Field Trip
- Film/Video Talkback
- Fingerplays
- Forum
- Games
- Guided Conversation
- Inductive Bible Study
- Interview / Interview Forum
- Learning Centers
- Lecture
- Listening Activities
- Mime / Pantomime
- Modeling
- Monologue
- Music
- Neighbor Nudge
- Object Lesson
- Object Manipulation
- Panel Discussion
- Picture Methodology
- Play
- Projects
- Puppets
- Puzzles
- Question/Answer
- Reaction Panel
- Research & Report
- Role Play
- Screened Speech
- Simulation
- Storytelling
- Story Playing
- Symposium
- Testing
- Word Association/Reaction
- Work Group
- Workshop
- Writing

VII. Source for Bible Board Games:

http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/946253/entertain_your_youth_group_or_sunday.html?cat=4

Descriptions of board games for church activities plus links to other sites. (These can be purchased. However, you can also create your own versions using the ideas.)

VIII. www.youtube.com

Utilize/adapt the many ideas available on YouTube by searching under "Sunday school games, Sunday School crafts, Sunday school lessons, etc.

IX. Creating Interesting Handouts

If you are going to take the time to create some of your own handouts, make them interesting and engaging. Here are some tips:

- *use graphics, pictures, and icons scattered throughout the document to emphasize key points. There are many of these in Microsoft Word® or on the internet. Look for copyright-free sources.*
- *leave blank spaces for students to fill in words or draw...make the handout interactive.*
- *include a title that highlights the purpose of the handout in the day's lesson.*
- *create sub-titles to organize the material.*
- *use color instead of only black and white to highlight elements.*
- *limit the amount of verbage. Use short sentences or bullets.*
- *Use online sites that enable you to make puzzles and other kinds of handouts with templates.*

<http://havefunteaching.com/worksheets/create-your-own-worksheets/>

ⁱ Prepared by Susan Myrick, 2012. Edited for 2013.