

Tips for Teaching Sunday School

We will assume (for practical purposes) that you already have a group of students to teach, a place to meet, a lesson to present, and the support of your pastor.

Step ONE – Pray

- Ask God to enable you, through His Holy Spirit, to understand the lesson and to be able to teach it
- Pray that God will bless the members of your class, so that they may understand the lesson and learn His ways from it
- Psalm 37:5 tells us, *“Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.”*

Step TWO – Become a Student

- Learn what is in the lesson
 - In order to be a good teacher, you must know what is in the lesson
 - It must mean something to you, before you can share it with others
 - You can try to skip this step, but then your teaching will not be effective
- How to get started learning the lesson
 - Read over the lesson to get the basic idea and to find the scripture verses
 - Look up the scriptures yourself in a Bible and read them, along with the other verses around them
 - Ask yourself what the scripture verses are saying
- Find the Major Points in the lesson
 - There are probably 2 – 3 major points in each lesson
 - These are the important things you want your students to learn in class
 - Make sure you have a Bible verse that confirms each major point in the lesson (*You don't have to share these with the students. You just need to make sure that what you are teaching the students is Biblically-based.*)
 - For Example:
 - Major Point – God Loves You
 - Scripture Verse – John 3:16 *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...”*

Step THREE – Move Your Students Forward

- It is the job of any good teacher to take his/her students from where they are and to move them forward.
 - In order to do this, you must first know where they are.
 - Ask yourself, “What do they know already?”
 - EXAMPLE: You cannot teach children to add and subtract, if they do not already know their numbers.
 - Hopefully you can find out what your students know BEFORE you start teaching the lesson, but this is not always possible.
- Start where your students are and move them forward
 - Begin simply. Make sure everyone is following you
 - Evaluate as you are teaching. If your students don't seem to understand a word or an idea, stop and explain it, especially if it is very important.
 - This approach may slow you down.
 - You may only make it through 1 or 2 of your Major Points, but that is alright... you can always do the other ones later on! 😊
 - The goal is to move your students forward successfully.

Step FOUR – Remember Your Students

- Students' attention spans vary with their age
 - For younger students, plan 5-10 minute sections for activities/lessons
 - For older students, plan 15-20 minute sections for activities/lessons
- Students' abilities vary with their age
 - Plan activities/ crafts that are challenging, but not exasperating!
- Remember that children learn while they are playing
- For youth, be sure to incorporate opportunities for service and leadership

Step FIVE – Pray With Your Students

- It is important for students to learn to pray
- When you pray with your students, it teaches them how they can pray
- Always thank God together
 - Thank Him for His truth that you learned today
 - Thank Him for who He is
 - Thank Him for what He has done for us
 - Loved us
 - Come for us
 - Saved us
- When the time is right, ask your students if they would like to pray for the class.

How to Teach a Lesson

Prepare Yourself

- Pray
 - Confess your sins to God and accept His forgiveness
 - Ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand the lesson and be able to teach others

Prepare Lesson

- Start a few days early
 - It doesn't work as well if you start at the last minute
 - It gives you a few days to let the Holy Spirit inspire you
- Read the lesson
- Look up the Bible verses and read them in context (with the verses around them)
 - Get the idea of what the Bible passage is talking about
 - Ask yourself, "What is God trying to teach us through these verses?"
- Read through the lesson again
 - Decide how this lesson applies to yourself and your class
 - What sounds really important?
 - Make some notes
 - Think of personal stories or other creative ways to present the Truths of the lesson
 - Think about what you will say, and what you will emphasize
- Make plans for class
 - Gather any necessary items to take with you. For example:
 - Your Bible
 - Your Notes for the lesson
 - Something to "show and tell" to help others understand the message
 - Any materials for activities, games, or arts and crafts
 - NOTE: *If you are planning a craft project, I always suggest trying it out at home first! It helps you to know if it works, and what you will need to do it. And it makes a nice sample for you to show your students!*
- Pray for your class and the lesson

Go To Class

- Welcome
- Pray with and for students
- Be excited! Present the lesson
- Pray, thanking God!
- Activities/ Games or Discussion
- Dismiss

While in Class

- Have a plan
- Stick to the plan (if at all possible)
- Watch your time
 - Don't allow conversations or other distractions to completely sidetrack you
 - (For instance, don't start talking about things that get off the subject too much)
- If things in class aren't working, switch things up
 - *This is really necessary with children, but it also works with adults*
 - Change positions in classroom
 - Move just yourself or the entire class!
 - This works great with children, sometimes they just need to move
 - Move class to a different place in room (and maybe just sit on the floor)
 - Have the class stand and/or do something
 - Have someone read out loud
 - Ask some "volunteers" to act out part of the story
 - Sing a song
 - Play a quick game
 - Ask the class (or just a few students) a question or two from the lesson
 - Make some other impromptu change (something you think up on the spot)
- If you are working with children, make sure that they see you reading out of the Bible, or that you talk about the verses of scripture being from the Bible.
 - This encourages the students to know that God's Word is for them too
 - It helps them realize that they can look for answers to their questions there
- Always pray with and for your class