

PREPARING THE LESSON

Psalm 119:133 Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me.

Everyone who contributed their ideas had several different ways to plan their lesson. I will try to list most of their ideas here and hopefully you can pick and choose what works best for you.

As a teacher of many years my best advice to you is that before you begin to prepare for your lesson, that you PRAY for help to teach God's Word. The very first time I had to prepare a lesson for Sunday school, I was so worried and nervous about doing things correctly. I really wanted to be successful at such an important job. Before starting my planning I prayed for help in my teaching and preparing. I really wanted to make learning God's Word fun and memorable for the students. I also wanted to be sure to teach the scripture correctly. From that very first lesson on, I rely on prayer to ensure a successful day in Sunday school.

Take your time reading through the lesson.

It is helpful to read the Bible accounts related to the story. One teacher writes in brackets in her Bible around passages that are referred to in the lesson. Then you break these down into sections, so that later when teaching you can see where to stop/start to ask students questions.

One teacher said they have always needed to take notes to remember information. This method may work well for you.

Read the Bible at least twice before teaching and read it once aloud so you can look up the pronunciations or meanings of any unfamiliar words. The NIV Compact Dictionary of the Bible is especially helpful for tough Hebrew or Aramaic words. It is available at Northwestern Publishing House. It serves as an excellent reference to the places, people and objects mentioned in the Bible.

Use other sources such as Ruprecht, Kretzman, The People's Bible, and Franzmann Bible History Commentary. The People's Bible Series uses simple language. These books either increase or reinforce your knowledge about that portion of scripture. After 15 years of teaching Sunday school I still find new ideas and supporting information to talk about.

Writing down the key points, aims, and truth questions can help you focus on what the lesson is about.

Plan discussion and application questions to use so that students can offer their own view points and talk about how the lesson points apply directly to their own lives.

Look for the "Jesus key point". In every lesson there is a key point of how Jesus is central to the theme, whether in the New Testament directly or as a foreshadow of the promised Savior as revealed in the Old Testament.

Have all materials for class one week in advance (lesson sheets, color sheets, activities etc.).

Practice teaching the lesson, so it is pretty well memorized. Many times I like to tell the lesson in my own words.

Pray for each student individually.

Remember that each child who is in your class is one God wants you to share heaven with. Think of this as you prepare and teach your class. This is helpful to remember when teaching isn't easy or the children are not cooperative.

Remember you can use teens or parents as Sunday school helpers.

Read the information in the "Christ Light" teacher's guide. There is a lot of good information in this.

There is a course of audio tapes and a course guide called "Principals and Methods of Christian Education" by David P. Kuske that is recommended by a teacher.

Prepare every lesson as if it is the first time you taught it. By the upper grades most children have heard these lessons before, but still teach it like they have never studied it before.

Have more planned than you think you will need!!!

I like to come early to class, and be sure to dismiss on time.

Remember to keep up with your personal study of the bible. Set aside time for reading and studying the Bible. Attend Bible studies when you can.

Don't be satisfied with what you already know. Read new sources.

Use the Bible as much as possible in class. Before class write passages on the board pertaining to the lesson. During class have students volunteer to look up the passages and read them aloud. Write down any key points that apply, next to the passages for them to see.

A learner keeps:
10% of what they hear
20% of what they read
50% of what they see
90% of what they do

Keep this in mind when teaching the lesson.

Try to use visual aids, songs, and hands on experiences in the lesson.

Compare items in your lesson to things of today. For example, if the lesson talks about 3000 people, that might be close to the number of people living in your town. If it talks about a large size, compare it to a football field etc.

Ask the students: How would you feel if this happened to you? How did the person in our story feel?

Hook the students with a good intro. Bringing in props is always an attention getter.

Write a list of Sunday school rules and review them every week. This helps the children behave.

Gather any pictures or prepare items to show during the lesson.

Complete all worksheets yourself and make sure you know the answers.

Always be an example of the Christian way of life.

It is a good idea to give each student a folder with their memory book in it. These are brought back and forth between home and Sunday school. You can put any worksheets in it, their lesson and any notes that parents need to see. It works out really well. I give a sticker for each student to put on their folder each Sunday they bring it to class. This really encourages them to bring their folders.

It is helpful to have a note card for each student that you keep with you. On it I put their name, address, phone number, grade, parents names, birthday and food allergies. This helps when you need to send them mail, want to bring in treats, etc.

We have a teacher meeting twice a month. Pastor leads the meeting and goes over 2 weeks of lessons with us. We try to keep the meeting on the same day of the week. It is also a good time to bring up any questions you have, and anything you want to share with other teachers. Our pastor usually has an agenda for each meeting. We read the Bible lesson in sections and go over questions at the end of each session. The following page shows an example of the agenda for one lesson.

Lesson: Jacob's Flight and Vision Genesis 28:10-22

Review: Isaac & Rebekah > prophecy of two sons in womb >
Esau & Jacob > Jacob steals Esau's birthright & blessing

Locations: Beersheba, Bethel, Haran (we usually look these up on a map)

28:10-15

- What were the images in Jacob's dream and what was their significance?
- Identify the specific promises the Lord gave to Jacob in the dream.

28:16-18

- What was Jacob's emotional response to the dream? Why?
- What was the significance of pouring oil on the stone?

28:19-22

- Note Jacob's response to the Lord's promises. Was his vow faith filled?

Here is a small checklist a teacher submitted:

1. Read the prayer for the teacher
2. Lesson materials
3. Devotion – scripture and prayer
4. Review previous lesson
5. Introduction
6. Keypoints, truth, application
7. Review memory work to teach
8. Review closing prayer
9. Prepare activities / worksheets

The following page is an example of another teacher's checklist.

Sunday School Checklist

Lesson Name _____ Week _____ Lesson _____

Teaching Date _____ Attendance _____

Text _____ Aim _____

Text Outline

Main Point

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Truth _____

_____ Prayer for the teacher

_____ Read the text

_____ Look up unknown words for pronunciation or meaning

_____ Read commentary or secondary sources

_____ Geography applied if possible

_____ Map(s) Packed

_____ Memory treasures cut

_____ Bag Packed

_____ Pencils packed

Student Workbook Page(Illustration Page) _____ Lesson Introduction Ideas _____

_____ Activity Prepared: _____

_____ Jesus Key Point: _____

Vocabulary:

Word

Pronunciation

Meaning

Discussion Points/Application

1. Option _____ Plan:

2. Option _____ Plan: