

# Step By Step Instructions for Teaching

## 1. Trust in God

Take a deep breath and remind yourself that each of these children is on a journey of faith toward God. Something special and eternal is going on between God and them. God is doing the work in their heart, and you are His tool to help the child listen to His words.

Teach the best you can, but keep the focus on God. If you focus on yourself and strive to be some sort of “perfect teacher,” you can lose focus on both God and the children. Your stress over this can make the classroom environment tense or rigid.

Get to know the children and try to view them like God does. This will lead you to share God’s Word in ways that are intentional, stimulating and joyful.

## 2. Obey God

Children will listen to your words, but they will also watch your life and model after it. What kind of view of God will a child have if he or she hears you talk about God but sees you live a life that is immoral, insensitive, judgemental or apathetic?

## 3. Pray

Open your heart to God and ask Him to use you for His glory. Pray for the children in your group by name.

## 4. Stay True to Scripture

Select the Bible Story you will be teaching. [Click here for a List of Bible Stories and Suggested Themes.](#)

Read the Scripture and Background Information. Do any further study as needed. Outline the story and become very familiar with it. If you don’t believe what you are teaching, then the children won’t either. Check yourself- don’t get so excited about games, crafts or themes that you stray away from what God is saying in His Word.

## 5. Focus

Don’t try to teach everything you know in one lesson. You will have to be selective about the amount of information that you share, or you will overwhelm your students.

When choosing what to focus on, consider what point(s) are most important to the faith development of the children in your group. In this lesson, what is your goal for them to know, believe and be able to do? Your lesson plan should not just be a random collection of “busy activities,” but should help the children reach the goals you have for them in this specific period of time.

## 6. Plan Ahead

Use the suggested lesson plan outline below ([or click here for a printable blank lesson planner](#)) to prepare your lesson. I change the order and adapt things to the setting and ages of the children I am teaching, but I almost always have all of the elements listed in the planner.

As you plan what will happen in your lesson, you can use these [Teaching Ideas](#) or your own.

Consider what the learning experience will be like from the children's perspective. Sometimes, I even sit on the floor and look at the classroom from the height of my students so I can see things from their perspective. As a result, I sometimes change the way I use visual aids or display bulletin boards or posters. Gather all the supplies you need and do any necessary preparation, like photocopying or pre-cutting parts of the craft. When you gather supplies, consider the abilities and safety of the children (scissors that fit little hands, scissors specifically for left-handed children, glue that is not dried out, etc.). If possible, set up the space you'll be teaching in before the day of your lesson.

## **7. Create a Learning Environment**

The most important factor in teaching children is that their learning space is safe, pleasant, and free from distractions as much as possible. Consider the children's age level and learning needs as you create or arrange a space.

If you have a room for teaching, ensure it is clean and tidy. Room decorations should help the children focus on what is being taught and not be distracting. If you want the children to move around for a game or activity, arrange furniture accordingly.

- **Boundaries:**

Children are less anxious if they clearly understand what the teacher expects. Simply defining a "story area" and a "free play area" immediately implies how children should behave in each. A blanket spread on the floor or ground invites children to gather and sit in one place as the teacher speaks.

- **Temporary Spaces:**

If teaching in a space such as a home, library, rented hall, or garage, try to minimise distractions. Seating should face away from doorways or windows where children can see people walking by. Perhaps you could create a temporary "wall" between areas by placing a blanket over some chairs. Encourage the children to take ownership of the room by inviting them to help you problem-solve. How would THEY arrange the space to minimise distractions?

- **Large Spaces:**

Teaching in a large space like a gym or outside a park can also be challenging. The open space can be great for games or activities, but most of your meeting time will probably be spent gathering together in one space. The teaching space can be defined by laying out a rope or even a garden hose to create a large circle where everyone gathers. If possible, plan to gather the children near a fence or wall, so you have at least one clear boundary.

## **8. Really Be There**

The time you have with children is precious, so focus your thoughts and energies on sharing God's Word with them in this moment. Leave your burdens and problems with God (outside the classroom and class time) so you can be open to the needs of the children in your group.

Arrive at least 15 minutes before the lesson begins so you can pray again and make any last-minute preparations. If you are calm and collected when the children arrive, this sets the tone for the entire lesson. Greet each child with a warm smile and help them feel welcomed.

## **9. Step Out in Faith**

Even after many years as a teacher, I still get nervous sometimes. It might be a slip in confidence or perhaps I'm worried I might not relate to the children. I can say to you what I say to myself: "Jesus loves these children and I love these children. Their souls are more important than my inadequacies. I can do anything if God is with me."

## 10. Expect to Improve

Every time you teach, you will also learn. Sometimes, you will learn through making mistakes. That is okay. When they know you care about them, children are very forgiving and patient.

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## The Parts of a Lesson Plan

One way that helps teachers prepare for a lesson is to create a lesson plan. This document helps you think through and write down information about each activity or component of your class. Breaking a lesson into these different components helps you plan effectively and feel less overwhelmed. We have created a [blank lesson plan template](#) you can print and fill out as you plan your lesson. Below is a description of each part of a typical lesson in order. You will also find each of these parts on the lesson plan template.

### 1. Lesson Title:

Choose a Bible story and create a title. A title gives focus and reminds you, as the teacher, that this lesson is unique and has a purpose. The title may be for your use as the teacher, or you may share it with the children. You can make up your own title or use one of the ones listed in [Bible Stories and Suggested Themes](#).

### 2. Scripture References:

Once you have chosen the Bible story you want to teach, write down the scripture reference for that story. You may also want to write down the memory verse or other related scriptures. You can find the verses on your own or check any lessons at [Bible Stories and Suggested Themes](#).

### 3. Emphasis/Theme:

Rather than try to cover everything in one lesson, try to narrow the focus down to one basic theme. There are often many themes or subjects you could emphasise, so you will have to choose the best one for your lesson and the children you teach. To choose, first think about the important truths those hearing the story for the first time will learn. What does the story reveal about God? Then think about what the children in your class would find relevant. How can you help them learn who God is and what it means for their lives? If you need help choosing a theme, you will find suggested ones for each lesson in [Bible Stories and Suggested Themes](#).

### 4. Welcome:

For children to learn, it is important that they feel safe, wanted, and welcomed in their environment. Just as Jesus welcomed the little children, it is important we help each child feel welcomed too! Make sure that you arrive earlier than the children and are prepared for the lesson to begin. This will allow you to welcome each child with intentionality and genuineness.

As the children arrive to the session, use the time to discover together what you have in common. Whether you have one or many children present, you can use what you have in common to create a warm and inviting atmosphere. Children also feel welcomed when they are valued. Some ways to show children that they are valued and welcomed in class include:

- letting them help you prepare materials or set up a table
- chatting while you colour pictures together that will be used as a visual during the story
- looking through a book or pictures that relate to the day's story or emphasis
- making something out of play-dough that relates to the story or emphasis
- finding a verse in the Bible, [singing songs](#)
- or any other activity that helps them feel welcomed.

## **5. Introducing the Story:**

After the children have arrived, you will gather them to one space and help them get settled before telling the main story of the day. This can be done by asking a leading question, describing a current-day (and age appropriate) situation that relates to what is happening in the story, showing an object that relates to something in the story, etc. As you get to know the children in your group, you will learn what really grabs their attention.

## **6. Telling the Story:**

You will choose a [method](#) to present a lesson from the Bible. No matter how you decide to present the story, remember that the most important step is that you first read and understand the scripture yourself. Then when you share the scripture, your presentation will be natural and from the heart.

Some teachers are excellent storytellers and use a combination of this and reading directly from the Bible as their main method. Others are artistic and draw pictures as they tell the story. Many of us find good pictures to use at some point while telling the story. Using a variety of methods helps the children understand and remember the story the best. I suggest challenging yourself to try something different so that your teaching does not become stale. [Visual Aids and Ways to Tell the Story](#)

## **7. Application:**

A powerful part of your time together will be in the activities you choose to help relate the story to the children's lives. This can be done through interactive games, singing, [prayer](#), discussion, memorising or reading verses from the Bible, projects, crafts or any other method that you and the children enjoy. This is not a time for "busy work" but a time to plant God's word in their hearts. [Ideas for application activities](#)

## **8. Review:**

Re-emphasising the important points of the day's story will help the children remember it. Again, this can be done through games, crafts, songs, memory verse activities, letting a student retell the story by reusing your visual aids, etc. [Ideas for review activities](#)

## **9. Closing:**

Making it clear when your time together is over helps the children have closure, process what they learned, and transition to what they will be doing after the session. You can close with [prayer](#), a quiet game, a particular song you sing each week, handing out homework or any activity that you and your students find helpful.

## **10. Teacher's Preparation List:**

List the supplies you need to gather for the session. List any other preparation you need to take care of before the day of your session.

[Click here for a blank lesson plan to print.](#)

## **Date**

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