

THE ENCOURAGER

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

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101 WAYS TO TEACH A VERSE

Teaching a Bible verse is perhaps one of the most important things a Sunday School teacher can do. After all, the Bible tells us “..And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15)



Also see – [Selecting and Teaching a Verse](#) in Sunday School Teachers Helper.

Creative Ideas

The following is a list of suggestions for how to help students memorize a verse during class. Actually “101 ways” is a slight exaggeration in the total number of methods presented here, but it makes for a good headline.

Whatever methods you choose to use, always leave enough time for your class to repeat the verse at least 6 times. Say it in groups. Say it as individuals. Learn it. Explain it. And yes, memorize it. You can make this part more interesting with several strategies below. Some are very simple and require no preparation. Others are slightly more involved.

Grouping

Simply by getting different ‘groups’ within the class to repeat the verse with other people in their group, you will be able to do rote repetition more effectively. Group the class by boys, girls, those with blue eyes, brown eyes, older sisters, younger brothers, colored socks, etc. etc. Of course, don’t forget to ask for individual volunteers who have already memorized it.

Speed or Volume

Some children are actually better at remembering a verse if you get them to repeat it as fast as they can. Give it a try, if only for the sake of variety! Try to repeat the verse in a whisper or in loud voices.

Write it

As simple as it sounds, simply have your students write the verse on their own paper. After practicing together a few times, ask the students to write as much as they can from memory without looking at the original. Then reveal the white board to the class again to correct their mistakes. Writing a word uses a new thinking process other than the verbal exercises. Also consider asking one of your students before class to write the verse on the board for you.

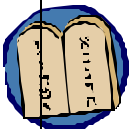
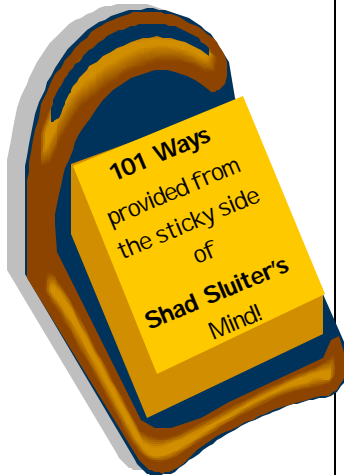
Sticky Note Scramble

Write each word of the verse on a ‘3M Post It’ note and paste them onto the white board in their correct order.

- Pull the words off the board and have a student re-assemble the words in their correct order.
- Alternatively, you could randomly hand out the sticky notes, each paper to a random student. Ask “Will the person with the next word in the verse please come to the board and place the word on the board?” Or say “Everyone please place your sticky note on your shirt, come to the front of the class and form a line with the words in correct order.”
- Start (or resume) with the full verse on the board. Eliminate the words, one or two at a time, and recite the verse each time until all the words are gone. Let a student decide which word(s) to eliminate by eliminating a word that contains the first letter of the student’s name. e.g. Jenny would eliminate all words that contain the letter “J”.

“Eye Exam” the verse

Write the memory verse about 6 or 7 times on poster board or large pieces of paper. However, each time you write, gradually make the words smaller. The words on your last card should be as small as you can possibly write them. You can use a computer word processor to write fonts very small – smaller than 8 point font - if you type the number into the font size choice instead of simply select it with the mouse...



A Navy Commander began teaching Sunday School for young children.

One Sunday, a preacher asked one of the Commander's 4-year old students what she had learned that day.

"Well," she said, "I learned all about the ten commanders. Isn't it sad that they're always broke?"

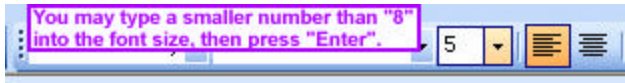


EYE EXAM

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Show your first card (Biggest words) to your group, and have them say the verse. Then simply work your way through to the last card - children repeating the words each time. As you get to the smaller words, start to compliment the group on their eyesight. Act amazed when they manage to "read" your last card. Then say "I think you are trying to fool me. I don't believe you can really read this last card. I think you have memorized the verse. I think you can repeat the verse without any card at all" - And they will!

Invisible Writing

Write the verse with a white crayon on white cardboard or paper. Get volunteers to gradually paint over the cardboard with red food coloring. The words will then 'magically' appear as the food coloring adheres to the crayon. This is a good way to teach verses concerning the blood of Jesus

Wheel of Fortune - Guess the letter.

This is another popular method, but it does take a little longer than most other ways. Write out your verse by putting "blanks" for letters e.g. _____ Luke 19.10.

The idea is for the children to guess the correct letters that make up this verse. As they do so, fill in the blanks.

There are two ways of using this method.

Competing teams (e.g. boys v. girls). One person from each team guesses a letter in turn. If team 1, for example, guesses 'n', and there are three n's, they get three points. If team 2 guesses 'e', and there are six e's, they get six points etc. The team with the most points when the verse is complete is the winner.

The class competes against 'teacher'. Explain that if they guess a letter and it is not in the verse, the teacher gets a tick. If you get four ticks before the verse is completed, you win.

Mirror image

Write the verse backwards, so that you could only read it properly by looking at it through a mirror. (Ensure that the individual letters are written 'the wrong way round'). Get the children to try and read the verse. In my experience, most children do not have any trouble doing this.

Decipher Codes

Perhaps more appropriate with a small group of students at a table instead of a large audience only in chairs. Decipher codes can be used for students to "solve" the verse and write it correctly.

a. **Extra letters.** Write the verse on the whiteboard adding two extra letters between the words. Leave no gaps. Here is an example:

Thegxsonkb ofswmanqkcamerptoooseekzjandfrtouwsvaxrthegglostaalukejy19.hh10.

b. **Jumbled letters.** Jumble up the letters of each word. Example:-

"het sno fo mna acme ot eeks dna ot aves het tlos." Lkeu 19.10.

c. **Substitutions** - Write the verse with a number of deliberate mistakes. See if the children can spot them all.

e.g. The brother of God arrived to find and shave the poor. Matthew Chapter ninety verse eleven. (Luke 19.10. - Students are to underline what they think are mistakes).

d. **Use Spoonerisms** - to add humour to the presentation. (for eg- "the speed of light becomes - the leed of spite" or "go and shake a tower" ...go and take a shower.

"The mon of san is some to ceek and to save that lich was whast." Luke 19:10

"Drop Out" Game

Arrange the students in a circle or around a table. Randomly choose a student to start the game by saying only the first word of the verse. The student to the left says the second word. The next student says the third word and so on. No hesitating is allowed. If a child cannot say the next word, they "drop out". Once the verse is complete, get them to do it again, only faster! Alternatively, you could make the game a team effort by saying the verse perfectly as a group two or three times in order to receive a reward or earn "best time" status (using a stopwatch).

Sing It

Invent a tune to carry the words in the student's mind. Choose a sing-songy tune such as "wheels on the bus" or "Peter peter, pumpkin eater" or better yet invent your own. Remember, the goal is not to become the next Mozart, but to teach the words of the verse. Putting words to a tune is an extremely powerful memorizing technique for children.

More Ideas? Have you used other suggestions for teaching a verse? Please [Contact us](#) and describe them