

THE ENCOURAGER

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

BUILDING A LEARNING UNIT (CONTINUED FROM THE MARCH ISSUE)

The ENCOURAGER
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Teaching isn't just about talking!
Careful planning is so vital!

Last Month's very helpful Issue by David Shad Sluiter of Hermosillo, MX is completed here in this 3 page issue. The March Encourager is meant to start you on your way to building a Learning Unit and through the examples and conclusions of this issue will give you a good start in your journey.

More Examples of Learning Units for Sunday School			
Animals of the Bible – Noah, Balaam, Jonah, Elijah etc.	Parables of Jesus – Sower, Fisher, Lost Son, Vineyard Tenants, Two Builders etc.	Stories from the exile – Daniel's lions, Fiery Furnace, Jerusalem's Wall, Deams of the Future etc.	Heaven – Its requirements, features, inhabitants, location, duration, construction etc.
Seven people from John's gospel who were saved	The top 10 villains of scripture	The Hebrews 11 Hall of Fame	Jerusalem, the key city of the Bible
Journeys of Paul	Examining the Lord's Suffering – the supper, prayer, betrayal, the trials, the people at the cross, resurrection, propitiation, the Psalms of suffering	How we got our Bible – inspiration, prophecy, early forms of writing, preservation of the scripture, the reformation in Europe, translation	The Family Tree – Stories from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph
Missionaries of the Bible – Jonah, Stephen, Paul, Peter, Two Witnesses, 70 disciples, the Great Commission	Walk through Romans – Chapters 1 to 6 and the doctrines of the gospel	Exploring the Gospels – The authors, synoptic parallel studies, their audience etc.	New Testament books with only one chapter

PLANNING TEMPLATE – Here is a [Word Document template](#) you can save to your computer and use for creating your own unit. It includes a blank page as well as a completed document with ideas on teaching a series of stories from Exodus.

BRAINSTORMING HELP - Sources for ideas for themes come from a variety of sources. Brainstorming is usually done in pairs or in a small group. If you are working completely alone, here are some books to consider while developing themes:

- **The Complete Book of Bible Lists** by H. L. Willmington (Tyndale House Publishers, January 30, 1996, ISBN-10: 0842302905). The book simply enumerates lists of common themes in the Bible such as 34 murderers of the Bible, Major Covenants of Scripture, Songs of the Bible. Similar titles include **Bakers Handbook of Bible Lists** by Andrew E. Hill, **Meredith's Big Book of Bible Lists** by Joel L. Meredith.
- **All the Miracles of the Bible** by Dr. Herbert Lockyer (Zondervan; October 13, 1988; ISBN-10: 0310281512) Dr. Lockyer wrote a series of titles including **All the Women of the Bible**, the Prayers, the Messianic Prophecies, the Promises, the Doctrines, the Apostles etc.
- **Bible Dictionaries or Encyclopedias** provide a historical background or a scripture reference list for any conceivable Bible topic. For example, see the free version of the "[Jerusalem](#)" article from the [American Tract Dictionary](#) to read about all the places where Jerusalem appears in scripture.

Another 2 Helpful Pages Follow!

THEME EXAMPLES - Here are two learning units examples developed for a series of evening Bible school classes for 8-13 year old students.

God is... (according to Exodus)			Activities
Theme	Suggested verse for the day	Story from Exodus	Leave the specific activities and details of each day for later preparation. Too much detail will slow you down and you may lose the larger perspective of your learning unit's overall theme.
God is mercy	Titus 3:5	Joseph pardons his brothers.	
God is knowable	Isaiah 55:6	Moses meets God at the burning bush.	
God is love	Galatians 2:20	The Passover Lamb provided a way of escape.	
God is unique	Isaiah 45:22	God demonstrated his superiority through the 10 plagues.	
God is powerful	Exodus 14:13	God showed his power in the Red Sea escape.	
God is holy	Genesis 18:25	God shows his will through the 10 commandments.	
God is forgiving	Nehemiah 9:17	God provided forgiveness of sins through the sacrifices of the tabernacle.	
God is consistent	Isaiah 53:1	The people rejected the spies report about the promised land. They were not permitted to enter in.	
God is trustworthy.	John 3:14	God promised a solution for sin through a serpent of bronze.	
God is all-knowing	Proverbs 15:3	Achan was discovered in his sin at Jericho.	

BASIC ELEMENTS OF A BIBLE LEARNING UNIT -

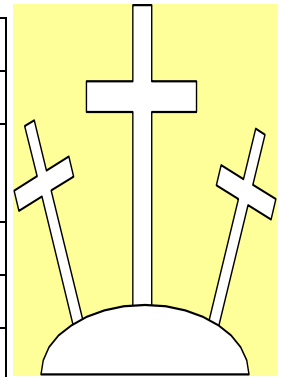
Here is a second example of a series of related Bible lessons.

2. SELECT A SERIES OF APPROPRIATE MEMORY VERSES.

Choosing a verse for the day (or the memory verse) is just as important as choosing the lesson itself. After all, what you say *about* the Bible, is not as important as learning what the Bible itself says.

- The verse you choose should be **age appropriate**. That is, select a short verse for young children.
- The verse should be **subject-appropriate**. That is, select a verse that is relevant to your main point.
- The verse should **stand alone**. That is, select a verse that is understandable outside of its immediate context.
- You may also consider selecting a **entire chapter** or entire paragraph from the Bible. For example, the following key chapters of the Bible are best understood when read in sequence:

Theme	Chapter
Sin	Romans 3:9-20
Suffering Savior	Isaiah 53; Psalm 22
God's comfort	Psalm 23
The Way	John 14:1-6
Jesus, the Son of God	Hebrews 1:1-8



For more help on selecting a verse read the article titled "Choosing a Memory Verse" (<http://gospelhall.org/teaching--preaching/sunday-school-helper/new-teacher-survival-guide--choosing-a-memory-verse.html>).

BASIC ELEMENTS OF A BIBLE LEARNING UNIT -

3. ONE OR MORE BULLETIN BOARDS

To give your unit a "Title Page", create something large for your classroom wall that tells students and visitors to your room what the current theme is. In addition to announcing a subject a bulletin board should be a teaching aid used in the lesson such as a map of the places you are talking about, or a timeline of the stories, a family tree of all the characters in your lessons or simply a picture of each lesson. At the very least, copy your lesson chart on the white board or on a poster to let the students know what you have taught and where you are taking them.

Students like their work to be recognized. The best "grade" you can give your student is to display their work for others to see. At the end of each class select one or more of the student projects and tack it to the wall or a bulletin board. Use the display area each week to review past lessons.

CONCLUSION

Learning units are standard procedure in most educational settings, but in the case of Sunday school or youth group Bible class the planning approach is sometimes done randomly. Teachers are often volunteers, are often given no Sunday school curriculum or Sunday school textbook to follow and they may be asked to teach on short notice. However, when you are given the opportunity to teach a class, you should use the most effective means possible in presenting the Bible to your students.

Some may believe it to be counter-biblical to create a schedule ahead of time what students will learn since the Spirit of God should guide the teacher each week. However a teacher, who is sensitive to the needs of his students and is prayerfully considering what God may impress on the class through the scriptures, can be guided by God in preparing to teach a portion of the Holy Scriptures. By creating (or borrowing) a series of related lessons, your students will benefit from better planning and you, as a teacher, will avoid the frustration of dreaming up what you might teach tomorrow.

**Your students will benefit from better planning
and you—as a teacher—will avoid frustration!**