

THE ENCOURAGER

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

The ENCOURAGER
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THE BUDDY SYSTEM!

LEARNING IS IMPORTANT. LEARNING SCRIPTURE IS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT.

Jim says "The buddy system for learning verses is something that Scott Yaekle's class of high school aged boys have been engaged in. An idea worth the effort!

Each young man was to pick a "mentor" from a list of assembly men the Scott had made up before hand. The young man is to say 2 or 3 verses without mistake to his mentor each week. The mentor in turn is to "touch base" with the student to encourage him to learn the verses and mention something about the verses to the young man to help him in understanding them and applying them to our lives today. Scott has a large class just now and the verse recitation was using up considerable class time so he came up with this mentor system. It seems to be working well and allows men in the assembly to make contact more easily with a young man (teenager) in Sunday School. Scott's wife Beth made the chart and the instruction sheets for those involved."

Now let's hear from Scott,

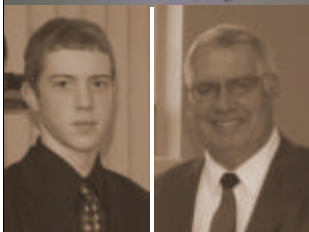
I wanted to encourage our young men in my senior class to improve their verse memorization but did not want to break the bank with monetary rewards as that did not work over the last year. I selected faithful regular attending brethren in the assembly on a list and presented it to my boys with the stipulation that they could not select a family member of any kind. I simply passed the list around class and allowed them to chose their older "buddy". I think this helped give them some say in the matter and improved the connections instead of me assigning the older brother. Once they picked them, I talked individually to the older brother so they understood just what I wanted to achieve (also passing along a letter brother detailing the expectations in follow-up if needed). I told them the student should find them at meeting on

Sunday or Wednesday or any time convenient and speak the verse to the older brother. Then, the older brother would sign a poster board that we made which listed the boys down the left column with their matching buddy on the opposite right column. The verses are written on the bottom of the board and correspond to each week moving left to right. The student is not allowed to mark it off. Sometimes I put one verse at a time and other times I put 3 weeks down but always stay just ahead of the farthest student. This process has had several positive effects. First, the students were just excited about something new. But after the novelty has worn it gives our older brethren a chance to interact with some younger folks that they may not have gotten to talk with. I suggested that they encourage the student during the week with email or text message or in-person reminders as well if they felt comfortable, showing discernment as needed. I also asked them, as opportunity allowed, to discuss a point or two about what the verse meant to the older brother and thus get the younger student moving from simple memorization to meditation on the content of the verses. I leave the poster on a tripod in the lobby or in the basement snack area to remind everyone this is an ongoing project. The boys have some competitive spirit so that helps spur on activity. So far it has not been embarrassing to any of the boys but one would need to show some sensitivity in this area.

It has attracted the attention of the whole assembly and has run now for three months without losing much steam. I have not discussed any prize and am contemplating just making it their expectation but I may have to reevaluate if interest wanes. It is exciting to see the pairs talking after meetings and I must admit as a teacher it is nice to share this responsibility with caring and capable brethren. One student thought the name 'buddy' was a little juvenile but I still can't think of a better name at the moment. Overall, it is a very simple process that requires just a few moments which has already yielded fruitful behavior and beneficial discussion.

VERSES FOR THIS WEEK GENESIS 1:1-3

- 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- 2 The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.
- 3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.



Erik Tack - Jim Clark

HERE'S ANOTHER IDEA.... Another poster for the older believers to do vice versa memorization?