

LEADERS GUIDE

GREET –

From the moment the first child walks into your class, you have an incredible opportunity to make a difference! Because of this, it's so important to be fully present, warmly greeting each boy, girl, and parent as they arrive. When you are ready with a big smile, you communicate things like "You belong with us!" and "We want you here!" Who wouldn't want to walk into a room like that?

We also want to encourage you to use the greeting time to get to know your students. Most kids (and adults) want to be known, and they love talking about themselves, so ask all kinds of questions! We'll provide conversation starters each week, but as you get to know the children, you'll be able to ask specific questions they'll love answering. If you have a lot of children in your class, consider writing down what you learn about each one, so you can follow up with them later. Keeping a written record of their responses will also provide ways you can pray for them throughout the week.

WORSHIP –

Corporate worship is a foundational spiritual practice and we hope you'll make it a part of your time together. If you are blessed with a worship team for your children's ministry, feel free to sing at your normal time and skip this part of the lesson. If you do not have a worship team for your kids, you still have many great options that will give your children opportunities to worship their King. For example:

1. Play worship songs from YouTube, Spotify, or CD's through a projector or speaker. Group Publishing (www.group.com) also has some fantastic worship CDs and DVDs.
2. Children can sit as a group or with their parents in the main service for worship, and then be dismissed to their class after the singing has concluded. We love it when children worship with their parents and the broader church body, so this is a great option for churches who want to keep a "family" element in their services.
3. A simpler worship time led by a single worship leader (adult or youth) who plays the guitar or sings acapella can also be meaningful and interactive. This is a great option for many churches, especially when the worship leader becomes another adult who is regularly connecting with the children.

PRAY –

We've intentionally outlined a prayer time in order to teach children how to have a growing relationship with God. Alternate between modeling prayer (as they listen to you) and giving them a chance to pray aloud for others. One of the greatest gifts we can give children is to teach them to pray.

Always be aware of those children who are nervous about praying out loud. It's our job, as leaders, to make this block of time a "safe zone" for kids to practice praying—maybe even for the first time.

REVIEW –

Scripture repeatedly commands us to remind ourselves and our children of our great God and His great work in our lives. One way we do that is by reminding children what we have learned in the previous weeks and months. We have chosen to use a weekly "puzzle piece" to help with this review. As you post

these puzzle pieces on the wall each week, you will easily be able to go back to previous week's lessons and remember together how God's Word fits together to tell the story of our Savior: Jesus.

Because this review section is completely written out, there's no need to worry if you only teach once a month or once every year. You will know what the children talked about in the previous weeks and be able to connect that to the broader Christian story.

ENGAGE —

Children learn best when a variety of learning styles are incorporated, and for many young ones, playing and hands-on activities are some of the best ways to reinforce what is being taught. We've included the ENGAGE section prior to the Bible story to hint at the truth that will be presented, preparing the students to better hear and understand the passage.

LEARN —

In the learning block children will open their Bibles and read/hear the designated Scripture passage together. We recommend that the children bring their own Bibles to class. However, purchasing a class set so that children who forget their Bibles or do not have one, is also one of the best investments you can make. As children follow along with the passage they will better stay engaged and begin to familiarize themselves with God's Word.

We have chosen the International Children's Bible (ICB) as the official translation for the IPHC Kids' Curriculum. It has been created specifically for children and was carefully translated by many of the same experts that helped create the New King James (NKJV) and New International Version (NIV). To learn more about the ICB visit the Tommy Nelson website at: <https://www.tommynelson.com/kids-can-read-the-bible/>.

DISCUSS —

We love giving children the chance to discuss what they're hearing! In fact, we believe that a lot of learning takes place as children are challenged to think about Scripture and verbalize their thoughts.

Our recommendation is that LARGER CLASSES break into small groups of no more than six children per adult/youth leader to discuss the story. SMALLER CLASSES, on the other hand, can continue with the discussion as one group. Remember to foster discussion that involves everyone. We know you'll be encouraged and blessed as you hear the things God is teaching these little ones.

RESPOND —

After a time of discussion, children will move into a hands-on response time. Your creative kids will love making story-related crafts, and this hands-on approach will help them remember what they've learned. Often, they will leave with something they can take home and share with their parents, once again reinforcing the truth from the day.

MEMORIZE —

Research shows that there is no easier time to memorize than when we are young. Let's capitalize on this God-given ability with a focus on memorizing Scripture. This discipline is a short but important way to teach our children truth, highlight major Bible principles and help them hide God's Word in their hearts. Be intentional and purposeful in your approach as you emphasize the importance of knowing the Bible for

themselves. By the end of the year they will know twelve new passages of Scripture! Although we will give you suggestions on different ways to remember their verse in each lesson, some basic practices include:

1. Repeating the verse multiple times.
2. Making a game out of the memorization time.
3. Completing challenges that make the verses more fun to recite.

REFLECT –

The reflection portion of the curriculum is a time of review, conclusion, and primarily prayer. We encourage you to write down each prayer request, creating a written record of what children are asking God for. One idea we love is to create a class “prayer journal.” This would also allow you to regularly look back as a class and see how God is answering your prayers!

RELEASE –

At the end of class, it's easy to just focus on getting kids out the door, but we hope you'll remember that every moment with these children matters. Use this time, as you did with the greeting, to build relationships and connect with parents. A key component to the children remembering the truth is having parents review what they're learning at home. To make that easier, we've provided a downloadable Monthly Parent Guide. Don't forget to pass this out to parents and remind them that you are partners in the discipleship of their children. Finally, you can use this time to review the lesson from the day or teach classroom ownership by having the kids help tidy the room.

