

Suggested Plan for a Day at Vacation Bible School

Opening Worship

Before worship, make sure your area is set up. Helpers should arrive early to help greet the children. Helpers should sit among the children. If you are going to divide your children into groups or classes, consider having them sit in assigned areas for worship.

- Song
 - *Use a gathering song or song that fits the theme*
 - *Keep it short and easy to learn so new children can participate*
 - *Consider using a poster with words for older children and helpers*
 - *Use actions or movement*

- Words of Welcome

- Skit or Socio-drama
 - *Use a short skit that applies the theme to real life*
 - *On the first day, consider using a skit to demonstrate the rules you want the children to follow at Vacation Bible School*
 - *Include your helpers and youth as actors*
 - *Consider using props, puppets and humor*

- Song
 - *Use a quiet song*
 - *Consider having the children kneel or hold their hands out in prayer*

- Prayer
 - *Consider using an “echo prayer”*
 - *On the first day, an adult should lead the prayer, but as children become comfortable, they may wish to volunteer to lead the prayer*

- ☆ Announcements and Instructions

Notes:



Allow 15 minutes for worship. On the first day, or if you have a long skit, you may need 30 minutes. Children will lose interest after 30 minutes.



Depending on your situation, you may consider dividing the children according to age. Identify each group or class with a color or number or name that the children can remember. Help the children to build group spirit. For example, if you use colors, hand out small pieces of fabric for the children to use as flags and lead a cheer for each color group.



Rotation Model

Consider setting up four learning sites for the children:

- ▲ Bible Story
- ▲ Art
- ▲ Recreation
- ▲ Music

If you have a small number of children at VBS, the whole group can visit the sites one after another. In this case, one teacher (and some helpers) could lead the activities at all of the sites. You could also teach more than one activity in the same location.

If you have a large number of children at VBS, you can divide them into 2 to 4 groups. Use a leader or shepherd to accompany each group. Groups can visit the different sites simultaneously, and then rotate from site to site. In this case, in addition to a shepherd for each group, you will need 4 different locations for teaching (use different rooms, or different corners of one room, or areas outside). You will need one teacher (and helpers) for each site. Each site teacher will teach the same content up to 4 times.

Consider using the following schedule:

8:30 – 9:00 am	~	Teachers and helpers arrive and set up their areas
9:00 – 9:30 am	~	Whole group worship
9:30 – 10:00 am	~	Rotation 1
10:00 – 10:30 am	~	Rotation 2
10:30 – 11:00 am	~	Snack, Bathroom break
11:00 – 11:30 am	~	Rotation 3
11:30 – 12:00 am	~	Rotation 4
12:00 – 12:30 am	~	Optional lunch or whole group closing

Notes:



Example: You have 4 groups of children (red, blue, green, yellow). After the opening, the red group goes to the Bible Story site, the blue group goes to the Art site, the green group goes to Recreation, and the yellow group goes to Music. After 30 minutes, the groups rotate. Red goes to Art, blue goes to Recreation, green goes to Music and yellow goes to Bible story. After snack, the groups rotate again, and so on.



Bible Story Site

Suggested Activities:

- ☆ Introduce the Bible story
 - Is the story from the Old or New Testament?
 - What is the setting?
 - Are there any words the children need to know? (for example: parable)
- ☆ Use a story book or pictures to tell the Bible story
 - If you do not have pictures or a book, you can make them
 - Use the internet
- ☆ Read the story directly from the Bible
 - If the Bible story is long or difficult, only read a small portion, or simply tell the story
 - Even if you do not read the story directly from the Bible, teach the children that the story you are telling them is **from** the Bible
 - Consistently teach children that the Bible is God's word for us and is one way God teaches us about himself
- ☆ Encourage the children to act out the story
 - Have children gather props or use props you have provided
 - The children can dramatize the story while you or a youth reads the story from the Bible, or
 - The children can speak the words of the story, or
 - Use puppets or toys to dramatize the story
- ☆ Ask questions and explain the meaning of the story
 - Help the children to apply the story to their lives
 - Allow the children to ask you questions
- ☆ Reinforce the story with coloring pages
 - Make photocopies of pictures from books in the Children's Ministries office
 - Find pictures to copy from the internet
 - Draw your own pictures
 - Have children draw their own pictures
 - Idea that works: Reinforce the top of the coloring page, punch holes in it, and hang a piece of yarn from the top. Children can wear their pictures around their necks as a way to take them home and share them with their families.
 - Idea that works: Allow the children to show off their coloring pages to the class, and have the children clap for work that is well done.
- ☆ Teach a memory verse from the story
 - Reward children who memorize the verse
 - Use a short verse for the younger children, and a longer one for the older children

Notes:



Art Site

Helpful ideas:

-  Gather and prepare everything you need ahead of time. For projects that require much preparation, ask youth and parents to help you.
-  Get ideas from books, from other teachers, from parents, from things you see in homes, in stores, on TV...
-  Adapt project ideas to fit the materials that are available to you.
-  Allow children to bring in items to use for crafts.
-  Collect and save items that can be used to make things...
 - Pictures from magazines and newspapers can be used to make collages
 - Small scraps of paper can be used to create mosaics
 - Save seeds, buttons, bottle caps, sticks (especially from frozen treats), toilet paper tubes
-  Create projects that help to reinforce the theme of your Bible story

Examples from the Workshop:



Notes:



Recreation Site

Ideas for games:

- ☛ Relay races – divide into teams. Have the first member of the team run to a marked place, turn around and come back, then the next member runs, etc. Make it fun by...
 - Having runners balance items on their heads, or carry them between their knees
 - Having runners carry items or balance items on spoons
 - Having runners do the crab walk or run backwards
 - Using sacks (sack races)
 - Having an activity at the far end, such as putting on clothing items or answering a question

- ☛ Pin the tail on the donkey

- ☛ Kickball

- ☛ Water games (Drip, Drip, Splash)

Examples from the Workshop:

- ☛ Seed sack races
- ☛ “Seed on a Spoon” relay
- ☛ Pin the seed in the good soil

Notes:



Music Site

Guidelines for Selecting Songs

- ♪ “Echo songs” or “call and response songs” are easy to teach and easy to learn. Use repetition (I will sing it first, then you sing it back to me) to teach new songs. For older children, you can write the words for the songs on a poster.
- ♪ Choose a variety of songs to keep the attention of your children. Choose some songs that are familiar, and some that are new. Choose songs that have hand or body movements.
- ♪ Choose a few songs that fit your theme. You can add words to a familiar song, or write new words for a familiar song to create a song that fits your theme.
- ♪ Choose at least one song that is fun or silly.
- ♪ Many Bible verses have been written into songs. Use these scripture songs to help children to memorize verses of the Bible. (You can even make up your own tune for a Bible verse to help the children memorize it.)
- ♪ One song can be sung in different ways for different purposes—slowly before prayer or quiet time, fast and loud to celebrate

Examples from the Workshop

- 🔔 Theme songs
- 🔔 Adapted songs
- 🔔 Action songs
- 🔔 Multi-purpose songs
- 🔔 Scripture songs
- 🔔 Songs that other participants recommend