

TEACHING METHODS
Children's Ministry
Resource Ministries
By Jean Stephens

STORYTELLING

Storytelling is suitable for all age groups, depending on method of presentation and reason for telling the story. Stories are good as lessons in themselves or to illustrate a point. Stories can be told straight, illustrated, dramatized, or pantomimed. They are great attention-grabbers.

LECTURES

Lectures should never be used with small children. Adults may appreciate lectures if they answer questions that they have, and provide facts. Teachers should be careful not to over-use this method, being mindful that people retain only 15% of what they hear.

QUESTIONING

Questioning can be good to stimulate thinking. A skillful questioner will lead students on a path to arrive at conclusions related to specific themes. Questions are good ice-breakers, introduce lessons, allow for interaction between teachers and students and among student, evaluate comprehension and highlight needs.

INTERVIEW

Interview is a type of questioning, but can be more dramatic. Bible characters can be interviewed on location of various Bible events (e.g., Miriam after the crossing of the Red Sea). The man-in-the-street or Roving Microphone or TV feature slot can be used. This is a great teaching tool for teens and for adults.

DISCUSSIONS

Discussions are most effective when planned around popular 'burning' issues. Panel Discussions are also effective. This method is good for teens. The teacher should 'wrap up' a discussion with the Biblical perspectives on issues discussed.

DEBATES

Debates can be exciting for teens, although they may need to be taught basic debating skills and procedures. The research they will have to do in preparing should be stimulating. Give adequate time for preparation and practice. Choose topics wisely. Don't argue issues where scripture already gives clear guidelines. Good for teen and adults.

RESEARCH

Research can be used on given topics in groups or singly, for information or presentation. Presentations can take the form of lectures, demonstrations, written reports, etc. It is good to encourage personal comments and responses to topic researched. Researches can be used as preparatory work for lesson, discussions or action. Good for teens and adults.

PROJECTS

Include research and presentation of findings. A project may involve displays, making models, doing interviews, etc. A project may also take the form of a service or ministry (e.g., hospital visitation, adopting a children's home...).

DRAMA

Drama can include role-play and pantomimes.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH

Scripture search is really Bible study and can take the form of Sword Drills or other 'fun' or competitive activities.

CREATIVE WRITING

Creative writing can be in the form of scripts (plays), songs, stories, Psalms, litanies, poems (structured or free-form), or prayers.

OBJECT LESSONS

Object lessons are very effective and leave a lasting impression. They are good for all except very small children.

PUPPETS

Puppets can be used by the teacher to tell the story or by the students themselves as they relate the story.

AUDIO-VISUALS

Audio-visuals can include flannel graph, pictures, maps, graphs, etc.

QUIZZES AND PUZZLES

Quizzes and puzzles are good for introductory activities – to introduce a new topic or lesson. They can also be good to finish off a lesson.

GAMES

Games used here are just for fun - although they should be fun – but as Bible learning activities. Bible verse games, board games, Bible character charades, etc. are just some of the possibilities.