



A Guide to Hybrid Sunday School

Tips and Ideas for Engaging
Early Childhood Children
and Their Families

(Preschool, Pre-K & K)



INTRODUCTION

Children’s ministry has never changed at a faster pace than it is changing right now. But what hasn’t changed—and will never change—is our goal to bring God’s Word to children and families.

This guide is designed to help you use the curriculum you know and trust as your children’s ministry adjusts to another new normal. We’ve provided tips and ideas to help you adapt the lessons for teaching and engaging with families—whether you’re meeting online, meeting in person, sending lessons home, or taking a hybrid approach.

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TEACHING—A HYBRID APPROACH

When we use the term “hybrid teaching,” we’re referring to combining virtual tools—tools that enable you to communicate and interact online with students and families—with physical options.

Check out this article on [teaching virtually](#). You’ll find technical suggestions as well as tips to keep your kids engaged online!*

Even when your ministry is ready to return to your church building, some of your families won’t feel comfortable coming back right away. Consider offering—or continuing to offer—an at-home Sunday school option. Providing lessons and resources for children at home is a great way to invest in and connect with the families you serve!

We’re also creating bonus curriculum content (coming soon) that is free to you as a current customer. It will be full of resources to help you engage the children and families you serve.

Prepare to Teach

EXPLORE IMMERSE

Immerse’s teaching resources are available in print and are also included in the Digital Resource files. We encourage you to explore *all* the files—especially if you don’t typically order all these resources—and see what works best for your ministry.

Immerse Early Childhood Resources at a Glance

Preschool

- *Preschool Teacher Guide*
- *Preschool Resources* (storytelling visuals and posters, audio tracks, printable student and teacher helps, Scamper the squirrel puppet patterns)
- *Preschool/Pre-K & K Teaching Pictures*
- *Preschool Make-n-Share* activity pages
- *Heart Tugs* family resource

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Pre-K & K

- *Pre-K & K Teacher Guide*
- *Pre-K & K Resources* (storytelling visuals and posters, audio tracks, printable student and teacher helps, Scout the dog puppet patterns)
- *Preschool/Pre-K & K Teaching Pictures*
- *Pre-K & K Make-n-Share* activity pages
- *Heart Tugs* family resource

*The Ministry Spark website has many articles and tips that you might find helpful as you reopen your church and navigate the new and exciting world of online resources that you can use to reach your students. This site is not created by 21st Century Christian and, as such, we do not endorse all of the content you may find there.

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FOR EACH QUARTER

- Decide which portions of a lesson will work best for teaching in your current reality. We've provided suggestions below. Remember that activities that call for pairs or groups of children will be more difficult to use online.
- *Preschool Teacher Guide* and *Pre-K & K Teacher Guide* provide materials for an extra hour of teaching. Choose from any of the activities provided.
- Set a time limit for each lesson. Include time for socializing before and after the lesson.
- Organize the digital files you will be using.
- Be sure you have a way to display story figures. If you don't have a story board, it's easy to make one. We've provided some ideas in our bonus curriculum content (coming soon)!
- Decide how you will get activity packs to families (physical pickup/drop-off, download links, or both).
- Let families know how to access the lessons and the activity packs.



Don't forget to read the special-needs tips and helps provided in the teacher guide and *Resources* printable files. Plan activities that include and work for all children.

FOR EACH LESSON

- Prepare your heart with prayer and the teacher devotion in the lesson.
- Familiarize yourself with the lesson focus, Scripture passage, and Bible Memory.
- Read the Bible background information.
- Prepare and organize your materials and digital files so you can access them easily while you teach.
- Consider creating a PowerPoint or Google Slides presentation for the lesson. You might get ideas from the sample PowerPoint presentation and guidelines in our bonus curriculum content (coming soon)!
- Practice leading the Bible Time with props and visuals so you are comfortable presenting them on-screen. You might want to ask families to gather props to share at appropriate times during the lesson.

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- Make samples of crafts so you can easily show and explain how to do them.
- Don't forget your [Scamper](#) (Preschool)/[Scout](#) (Pre-K & K) puppet! If you don't have a plush puppet, use the patterns in the *Resources* printable files to make a paper bag or stick puppet.
- Determine which materials you will provide to the children for use during the lesson.
- Let parents know ahead of time if there are additional materials their children will need (Bibles, crayons, etc.).



Teach the Lesson

BEFORE THE LESSON STARTS

- Begin streaming your lesson 5 to 10 minutes before the scheduled start time so kids can join in.
- If you know who is online, greet them by name. Scamper/Scout could help you.
- Show a countdown video or use PowerPoint or Google Slides to display a welcome message.
- Show a list of items that the children will need for the lesson. Remember that less might be more during this time!
- Choose a fun icebreaker video to share on-screen and capture kids' attention. We've provided dozens of icebreaker videos in our bonus curriculum content (coming soon)!

DURING THE LESSON

Getting Started

Keep this part of your virtual lesson short so there's plenty of time for the rest of the lesson.

- Do one of the Getting Started activities to introduce children to the Bible story or lesson focus.
- Choose an activity, game, or song that allows children to move. Or grab their attention by showing something interesting that relates to the day's Bible story.

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Bible Discovery

This part of the lesson can mostly be used as suggested in the teacher guide.

Sing and Pray

- Play and sing the unit songs suggested in the teacher guide. Audio tracks are included in the *Resources* digital files.
- Pray. Thank God for the Bible and what you and the children will be learning from His Word.
- Open your Bible and show where the Bible story is found. Invite parents to open a family Bible to the passage.

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Bible Time and Bible Review

- Use the *Resources* visuals and show the teaching picture that goes with the lesson. You can find digital copies of these pieces in the *Resources* printable files.
- As you tell the Bible story, include actions that involve the children whenever possible.
- When included in a lesson, do the Bible story activity. The recorded stories and scripts with suggested motions can be found in the *Resources* digital files.
- Ask questions to help the children remember basic details of the Bible story.
- Play “I Spy” and describe someone or something shown in the teaching picture. Children can shout or show thumbs-up when they see what you are describing.

Bible Memory

- Open your Bible and show where to find the Bible Memory.
- Show the unit Bible Memory poster found in the *Resources* printable files.
- Say the verse and ask the children to repeat it with you.
- Play and sing the unit Bible Memory song. The audio tracks can be found in the *Resources* digital files.
- Teach the Bible Memory motions included in the *Resources* printable files.
- For some great ideas, check out this post on [MinistrySpark.com](#): “[13 Creative Bible Verse Memory Games and Activities for Kids](#).”*

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Grow and Go

- Continue to reinforce the focus of the lesson and help children apply the Bible story to their young lives. You'll find the Focus statement at the top of the page in each section of the lesson in the teacher guide.
- Show the *Make-n-Share* activity for the lesson and tell children what they will do to complete their activity at home. At the start of your next session, ask the children to show what they made. Or have parents send you videos or photos that show the child with the completed activity. Share these on-screen at the start of your next session.
- Using Scamper/Scout, tell the puppet story included in the Extra Hour More! Grow and Go. If families have both preschool and pre-K & K children, you can use both Scamper and Scout puppets. If you'd like to explore options for purchasing plush puppets, check out Immerse's [Scamper](#) and [Scout](#).
- For extra fun with Scamper and Scout, use the puppet scripts in [Puppet Scripts for Preschool Worship](#).

Closing the Session

- Remind parents of any resources you have provided to them (*Make-n-Share* activity pages, *Heart Tugs* family resource, craft materials).
- Tell children when you will contact or see them again. (Example: "Ask your parents to watch their e-mails. I'm going to send you a surprise on Wednesday.") Be sure to follow up on this!
- Sing another song. Let Scamper/Scout bounce along and then wave goodbye.



EQUIPPING FAMILIES

Help Families Prepare for Virtual Ministry

If you're teaching virtually using Zoom, Facebook Live, prerecorded videos, etc., be sure to let parents know what to expect and what you need from them.

- Where and when can they access the lessons?
- Do they need to be with their children during the lesson?
- How can they keep their child engaged spiritually even if they miss a week?

Create Activity Packs

Activity packs are bundles of resources for students and families that encourage them to interact with the lesson. You could send these packs home or provide them to kids attending a family worship service.

Here are some resources you might include in the packs:

- A personal note to the child
- Ministry announcements
- *Make-n-Share* activities and stickers, along with any special materials needed (paper fastener, length of yarn, etc.)
- Unit family letters, Bible Memory pages, Bible Memory motions, and coloring pages found in the *Resources* printable files
- Song tracks from the *Resources* digital files (Remember that these are reproducible!)
- *Heart Tugs* family resource
- Activities that correlate to the lesson—coloring pages, crafts, songs, rhymes—like those in our Big Books series (available in print or digital versions):
[*Bible Songs and Action Rhymes*](#)
[*Bible Stories to Color and Tell \(Reproducible ; Ages 3-6 \)*](#)
[*Bible Stories to Color and Tell \(Reproducible ; Ages 6-8 \)*](#)

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Decide when and how you will provide the activity packs to families.

- Once per quarter? Once a month? Every week?
- Will they be physical or a digital download?
- Will families need to pick them up from the church building?
- Can volunteers deliver them in person?
- Are you able to mail them to families?

These answers will be specific to the needs of your ministry and are likely to change as the needs of your ministry change.

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Engage Families at Home

- Encourage families to find and use a children's Bible that will help their child grow in understanding God's Word. The *God's Story for Me* mini books make great gifts for families too! Here are some children's Bibles we recommend:
 - [Twenty-First Century Christian Bible Storybook](#)
 - *God's Story for Me Bible*
 - *HeartShaper Bible Storybook*
 - *The Preschooler's Bible*
 - *The Action Storybook Bible*
 - *The Picture Bible*
- This is a great time to start a daily family devotional. We recommend:
 - [The Jesus Resolution](#)
 - [Living the Jesus Resolution](#)
- Send parents quick tips and features pulled from the *Heart Tugs* family resource. The Read-to-Me Bible Story could become part of the family's bedtime routine.
- Make the most of your *Resources* digital files. The Teacher Helps files include postcards and certificates you can print and mail to children. The audio files can be shared with families so they can sing the songs all week long!
- Don't miss the online helps available for teachers and families:
 - [Family Connections](#): These quarterly letters keep parents informed about what their child is learning from God's Word. Modifiable—just add your ministry name and information!
 - [Holiday Helps](#): Use these craft ideas in the classroom or send them to families to do at home.
 - [Family Together Time for Preschool, Pre-K & K](#): These weekly pages correlate to the lessons that children are learning in their Immerse class and can help parents continue faith conversations at home during the week.
 - [Scamper](#) and [Scout](#) Puppets: Encourage families to buy or make their own Scamper and Scout puppets. Patterns for paper bag and stick puppets are available in the *Digital Resources*. Their children can use the puppet to sing and wave hello and goodbye.