

Introductory Letter to Kindergarten Sunday School Lessons

Thank you for your willingness to serve in Sunday School! We would like to share a few important things with you before you teach one or more of these lessons, and some of the thinking that occurred in developing these lessons.

When the elder body tasked us with creating a new Sunday School curriculum for the Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten, and Kindergarten grades, we endeavored to cover the Bible stories at a 3 to 6 year-old comprehension level. To reinforce the chronological flow of the Bible for little minds, the stories are arranged by grade level so students will cover Genesis through Revelation in Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten, and Kindergarten. As stories are repeated in this 3-year span, the following grade level themes are emphasized to encourage continued learning during the time frame.

Each grade level focuses on a theme:

Preschool – God’s faithfulness in making and keeping promises

Pre-Kindergarten – God’s power and love as he welcomes us into his family

Kindergarten – Character traits of men and women in the Bible

Across all grade levels, among other things, we aim to:

1. Faithfully teach the Bible (both Old and New Testament) as one continuous story that points to Jesus.
2. Come alongside teachers from a variety of large or small church settings that are teaching one grade or multiple grades in their classroom with a clear lesson goal, engaging questions, storytelling ideas, object lessons and crafts.

In the Kindergarten lessons, students will go through the Bible with the focus on character traits of men and women in the Bible, learning to define the various character attributes, see how they impacted real people in the Bible, and learn how they may impact their own lives.

We recognize that each teacher and each class is unique! Teachers are welcome to use the various components of the lesson: the scripture passage on which the lesson is built, the lesson goal and key ideas to reinforce as you teach, and the options for activities and crafts. The delivery, which activities you choose to use, and other aspects of the lesson may look different depending on your style as a teacher and the makeup of the class, and that is ok!

Scope and Sequence: A list of details for all 50 lessons for each grade level is available for Preschool – Kindergarten (this is also available for older grades). This helps show teachers how the grades tie together (especially if you have multiple grade levels in a single Sunday school class).

Core Components of Kindergarten Lessons:

1. Lesson Goal - The biggest change in this curriculum is our effort to identify a **Lesson Goal** for each lesson. For example, when teaching about Jesus multiplying the loaves and fishes, we could focus on the miracle itself, the sharing attitude of the little boy who gave his lunch to

Jesus, or the truth this miracle teaches us about Jesus, our provider. With our limited time each Sunday, we are forced to determine what is the most important learning goal we can achieve. What lesson emphasis will best celebrate God's character and care for his people? We hope the focus on a defined and limited Lesson Goal assists you in effective teaching with the brief time each week allows. The Lesson Goal is called out throughout the lesson for teachers to reinforce with the students in repetition. If there's one thing the student should be able to repeat when asked "What did you learn in Sunday School today...", it is the Lesson Goal. In Kindergarten, each lesson goal includes students defining and relating to a character trait, some positive and some negative, as shown through a character in the Bible story.

2. Bible Story (Scripture/Story Content) - Teachers are strongly encouraged to read the passage from the Bible as part of their preparation for teaching. Each story uses a storybook which best depicts the character trait for the goal of the lesson. We found that *Marian's Big Book of Bible Stories* included the vocabulary and story components for this age of students. It also gives teachers the freedom to draw out the character attribute from each story. Another storybook such as *One Big Bible Storybook* may also be used, or teachers may tell the story in their own words.
3. A Background Information section is included in many lessons and is intended as a resource to assist teachers as the students ask deep questions or react to the lesson. Explanations of terms and particulars of characters' lives are fleshed out. At times, cultural details that are lost to our twenty-first century consciousness are included for context. This section was not designed to be read aloud to students, but as preparation material for teachers.
4. A Simple Review of the Previous Lesson is included each week. Repetition is key for memory in young minds. It's helpful to use the poster or storybook illustration used in the previous lesson during this review time. Encourage students to briefly restate the lesson goal, main characters, and a few details if they can.
5. Songs – A selection of songs that go with the story are provided, but teachers should feel free to use others or sing the children's favorite songs.
6. Scripture Memory References – We provide passages for students to memorize throughout the year with various support materials – see the designated materials on the Kindergarten curriculum website for more details.
 - Matthew 5:3-12 (Beatitudes)
 - Matthew 6:9-13 (Lord's Prayer)
7. Journal - A student journal page, with room for students to draw a picture, is suggested to reinforce the Bible character trait.
8. "Hall of Fame" (or "Hall of Faith"!) - Students enjoy seeing the character posters arranged and displayed in chronological order on the wall. Posters may be displayed in story order by section using the Scope and Sequence unit titles or placed along the Bible Story Timeline that can be printed or purchased in the AC Bookstore.

When designing the Kindergarten Sunday School curriculum, developmental characteristics of 5 to 6 year-old children were taken into consideration:

1. Social / Emotional - Kindergarten aged children are beginning to see the world and ideas from another's point of view. Defining and relating to a character trait found in a Bible character will help develop this skill.
2. Fine Motor - Children are beginning to use a pencil to write manuscript letters, and they like to copy or repeat a known word or sentence. The journal page for writing the character trait using a sentence starter provides a repeatable and consistent way for students to use these writing skills. With the journal drawing activity, teachers can encourage realistic drawings by providing the "Hall of Fame" character poster as a model. Teachers can promote using "realistic colors" and adding details such as facial features and clothing. Crayons such as "Colors of the World" by Crayola really enhance the student's work and journal drawings. Children of this age take pride in their own work, so they enjoy drawing their own pictures.
3. Language and Vocabulary - Children learn and practice language skills through teacher modeling and guidance. The sentence starter on the journal page provides an opportunity for students to write a complete sentence with teacher guidance and learn a new word with each character trait.

Blessings on your teaching, and Sunday School year. It is a privilege to teach truth to the next generation!