

Christian Education and Children

Learning and Children

What is learning? To gain knowledge, understanding or skill by study or experience

Complete Learning= Knowledge + Understanding + desire

Learning Process:

- Memorize (repeat Facts)
- Understand (Express ideas, concepts, principles)
- Proving (Giving evidence or support to ideas & beliefs (Why))
- Apply (Living out learned principles in daily life)

How do Children learn?

1. by their senses and involvement in their learning – the more the better: auditory, visual, kinesthetic
2. by building on knowledge or experience already gained.
 - Start with the known and move to the unknown!
 - Relate your teachings to their experiences
 - Keep up to date on their world without using worldly examples
3. by review and repetition
 - corrects wrong understandings
 - corrects wrong facts
 - uncovers gaps in the lesson
 - increases retention
 - ties past and future lessons

Language and Children:

Children learn language and the meaning of words by association with objects or actions.

It takes time for children to learn that there can be more than one meaning associated with a single word.

How does the teacher determine if he/she is understood by the children?

- a. Facial expressions and other body language
- b. simple questions
- c. ask them to repeat in their own words

What are principles to clear communication with Children?

- a. Simple words and sentences
- b. Visuals, objects and models
- c. Repetition using different words
- d. Examples using familiar words
- e. Speak loudly, clearly, slowly
- f. Body language, facial expressions, tone of voice
- g. Define difficult terms with examples

Never assume that children understand the meaning of spiritual terms such as “saved” “lost” “Christian” “believer” “eternity” etc

Preparing Lessons for Children: Some Guidelines

1. Prepare your heart

- Prayer (cleansing from sin)
- Power (ask Holy spirit to be the teacher)
- Perspective (concern for children's needs and God's glory)

2. Prepare your lesson

- Study the Bible text and all related passages
- Ask yourself questions and find the answers – use the reference books
- Think about how the characters feel so you can show their emotions in relating the story
- Select the “truth” that you want to stress as the main lesson
- Think of examples of applying the truth to today or ask the children to do this

3. Select your teaching method

- Lecture (not for children)
- Discussion, Neighbor Nudging, Buzz Groups (Older children, Adults)
- Storytelling
- Object lessons
- Visual aids: Flannel graph, Art-board, chalkboard, Whiteboard, Overhead; Diagrams, models, pictures, charts, etc
- Activities: games, artwork and crafts, hand out papers, projects

4. Prepare your visual aids and secure your teaching tools

5. Schedule the order of events

- change the order from time to time
- surprise and mystery makes your class more interesting
- know the attention spans of the children you teach

6. Prepare for the unexpected

- discipline problems
- sick children
- questions you can't answer
- visual aids that fail
- sick teacher

7. Methods of Review

- Repetition
- Question/ Answer
- Summarize
- Discussion
- Written quizzes
- Activities and Games

Ask review questions that get at the concepts and principles taught, not just the facts! Review before, during and after