



TRAINING FOR CHILDREN'S DISCIPLESHIP AND MINISTRY

Dr. Teresa Roberts • 6 Sessions



**NEXT
LEVEL**  **ONLINE**

OZARK CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Training for Children's Discipleship and Ministry: For Leaders, Volunteers, and Parents

Greetings! Thank you for using these children's ministry training videos for your continued learning and for your children's ministries. In creating these videos, I have three potential applications in mind:

Option One: Use the video in large group volunteer training sessions

In the materials attached, I've provided suggested activities and discussions to be used before and after each video. You can show the short video as the content of the training in addition to these activities. A handout is provided to be used with the video.

Option Two: Review the video content to assist you in creating your own volunteer training sessions

The content of the videos comes from my research, reading, and experiences of the past 30 years in children's ministry, but none of these ideas are unique to me. Allow this content to provide some additional training for you as a leader and then share it in your own way with your volunteers. Feel free to use some of the additional activities, discussion, and handouts as works for your context.

Option Three: Send your volunteers a link to the videos to watch at their convenience

These videos can also be used for individualized volunteer training. Send your volunteers the appropriate links with the handouts for the video sessions. You can then provide a follow-up session using the supplemental materials attached.

How ever you choose to use these videos, I pray that they assist you in equipping leaders in the discipleship of kids in following Jesus.

Blessings,

Dr. Teresa Roberts
Children's Ministry Professor
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Session 1: Importance of Children's Discipleship and Ministry

Opening activity idea:

Ask a long-time volunteer to share what they love about children's ministry.

Ask a new volunteer to share why they feel called to children's ministry

Discussion:

In small groups, discuss the following:

- What makes you excited to serve with children?
- What makes you nervous about serving with children?

Preparation for video content or lead your volunteers in review of the following biblical texts. (See handout)

What does scripture say about children?

Genesis 1:27

Deuteronomy 31:12-13

Acts 21:5

Mark 10:13-16

Example of Jesus

Luke 2:6-7, 40, 52

What does scripture describe about ministry to children?

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Matthew 18:5-6

2 Timothy 3:14-17

Psalm 78:1, 4-6

Discussion Prompts:

What did you learn from the review of scripture that was new to you?

Which biblical text inspires you to teach children? Why?

What additional biblical texts or stories might you include in a list of scriptures that encourage us toward the importance of ministry to children?

What might you say to someone who says "Children are the future of the church" but they don't need much time and attention until they grow up?

Concluding activity:

Review your children's ministry vision statement with your volunteers.

Describe how volunteers are so important in achieving the vision of your congregation and the commands of God in discipling children.

Session 1: Importance of Children's Discipleship and Ministry (handout)

Introduction:

What does scripture say about children?

- Genesis 1:27
- Deuteronomy 31:12-13
- Acts 21:5
- Mark 10:13-16

Example of Jesus

- Luke 2:6-7, 40, 52

What does scripture describe about ministering to children?

- Deuteronomy 6:4-7
- Matthew 18:5-6
- 2 Timothy 3:14-17
- Psalm 78:1, 4-6

Children's ministry partners with God and parents to help lay a foundation of faith so that as a child grows physically, they might also grow spiritually so they will follow Jesus every day of their lives.

Session 2: A Teaching Pattern That Works

Opening Activity Idea:

- Create the outline of a “perfect teacher” on a marker board
- Ask volunteers to describe attributes of a teacher that made a positive impact on them as a child.
- As they describe each aspect, write these words around the “perfect teacher”

Preparation for video content or lead your volunteers in reviewing the four-step lesson approach (see handout)

Hook: Prepare children to learn from the Bible

Book: Teaching the Bible story

Look: Connecting scripture to today

Took: Applying scripture to our lives

Suggestions: Provide copies of the curricular materials used by your children’s ministry. Assist volunteers in identifying how the materials label each of these four steps. Note: If your children’s ministry uses a large group/small group model, describe which steps you desire to be covered in a large group and which should be covered in a small group.

Practice together:

- Choose a Bible story (example: Jesus calming the storm)
- Divide into small groups. Each group comes up with 1-2 ideas for each of the four-step lesson approach
- Share their ideas with the rest of the group

Discussion:

- Which step of the four-step approach comes easily to you?
- Which step of the four-step approach is a bit more difficult for you?

Concluding Activity:

- Share with your volunteers any additional resources you have to assist them in lesson preparation.
- Identify the various gifts and talents of each volunteer in the room and affirm how God is using them to teach children the Word of God.

Session 2: A Teaching Pattern That Works

Introduction:

4-step pattern: Hook, Book, Look, Took

Example: Luke 5:17-26 – Jesus forgiving the sins and healing a paralyzed man

HOOK: Prepare children to learn from the Bible

Key concepts:

1. Grab their attention
2. Connects to their life

BOOK: Teaching the Bible story

Key questions:

1. What does this story/text teach us about God?
2. What is the main point of this story?

Be sure to emphasize what the story teaches about God!

LOOK: Connecting scripture to today

Key questions:

1. What did this text mean over 2000 years ago?
2. What does it mean for us today?

TOOK: Apply scripture in our lives.

Key concept:

1. Discover together concrete actions to help us look more like Jesus

Review the curricular materials your children's ministry uses and identify the elements of Hook, Book, Look, and Took.

Session 3: Teach So Every Child Can Learn

Opening Activity Idea: Memorable stories

- Provide a piece of paper and marker for each volunteer
- Ask each volunteer to identify a story they remember from childhood.
- Ask them to write down one line from the story on the piece of paper.
- Have each volunteer hang up their piece of paper at the front of the room.
- Read each line aloud and ask the remaining volunteers if they can guess what story the line is from.
- You could award a prize to the volunteer who identifies the most stories correctly.

Preparation for video content or lead your volunteers in reviewing Multiple Intelligences materials (see handout)

Verbal: Retain information through hearing stories, reading, or writing

Logical: Retain information through patterns, numbers, lists, timelines

Visual: Retain information through pictures and images

Musical: Retain information through songs and rhythms

Physical/Tactile: Retain information through movement of their bodies or hands

Solitary: Retain information when given time to reflect, ponder, and consider

Social: Retain information through interaction with others and hearing their thoughts

Practice together:

- Choose a Bible story (example: Joseph is sold into slavery by his brothers)
- Divide into small groups: each group comes up with 1-2 ideas for each of the multiple intelligences categories
- Share their ideas with the rest of the group

Discussion:

- Which of the multiple intelligences categories most connect with you as a learner/teacher?
- Which of the following do you need help in finding ideas to connect with children who learn differently than you do?

Concluding Activity:

- Challenge your volunteers to use a new method during their next lesson to try to connect with children they might not easily connect with because of their learning preferences.

Session 3: Teach So Every Child Can Learn (Handout)

Introduction:

Children learn best through:

1. Concrete experiences
2. Active participation
3. Connection with their learning strengths (intelligences)

Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Howard Gardner)

Verbal: Retain information through hearing stories, reading, or writing

Logical: Retain information through patterns, numbers, lists, timelines

Visual: Retain information through pictures and images

Musical: Retain information through songs and rhythms

Physical/Tactile: Retain information through movement of their bodies or hands

Solitary: Retain information when given time to reflect, ponder, and consider

Social: Retain information through interaction with others and hearing their thoughts

Consider: Which of the above categories would describe your learning preferences?

Challenge: Use a new method this week to connect with children who learn differently than you do.

Session 4: Discipleship in Children's Ministry Small Groups

Opening Activity Idea:

- Provide a piece of paper and something to write with to every volunteer.
- Ask them to draw an image that represents their discipleship journey
- Have them add to their drawing the individuals and groups that were important in their discipleship.
- Ask for volunteers to share their drawings.

Preparation for video content or lead your volunteers in reviewing the content (see handout)

Space for Connection:

- Connection to God
- Connection with leaders
- Connection with other students

Space for Conversation (how to lead discussion)

- Plan
- Start the conversation
- Guide the discussion
- Create time for quiet
- Listen well
- Watch non-verbal cues
- Allow for participation
- Conclude the discussion well

Practice together:

- Choose a Bible story (example: Parable of the Good Samaritan)
- Divide into small groups. Ask each group to write 4-5 discussion questions/prompts that could guide a discussion of the story.

Discussion:

- List ways you can help kids connect to God in your small group time.
- How have you seen kids connect with others during small group? List ways to facilitate this.
- What struggles do you have in leading a conversation in your small group?

Concluding Activity:

- Review the list of ways to help kids connect to God and one another. Identify something you could try during your next small group.
- Identify one thing you can try to lead a discussion differently during your next small group.
- As a group, brainstorm ways leaders can appropriately connect to the kids in their small group. Ask each leader to commit to one of these activities in the next month.

Session 4: Discipleship in Children's Ministry Small Groups (Handout)

Introduction:

Space for Connection:

1. Connection to God
2. Connection with leaders
3. Connection with other students

Space for Conversation:

1. Plan
2. Start the conversation
3. Guide the discussion
4. Create time for quiet
5. Listen well
6. Watch their non-verbal cues
7. Allow for participation
8. Conclude the discussion well

Session 5: Classroom Management Like Jesus

Opening Activity Idea: Describe the 12 disciples

- Read Luke 6:12-16
- Write the name of the 12 disciples on a markerboard
- Ask volunteers to describe what they know about each of the disciples.
 - Encourage your volunteers to use their phones to search the disciple's name in a Bible app or from a Bible resource such as youversion or biblegateway to research the disciples
 - Review how different the 12 disciples would have been in age, family, region, profession, and temperament.

Preparation for video content or lead your volunteers in reviewing classroom management principles

Classroom Management as Discipleship

1. Jesus set clear, firm expectations

John 13:34

Matthew 7:12

What are clear expectations that you have for the children in your ministry?

How do you communicate those expectations to children?

2. Jesus modeled his faith by his actions

Luke 6:40

Galatians 5:22-23

How do you model your faith to children? How might you improve upon this?

3. Jesus loved people and inspired them to greatness

Mark 10:45

How can you reinforce positive behavior?

How can you eliminate negative behavior?

4. Jesus knew his sheep

John 10:27

Luke 15:4

What step can you take to get to know your students?

5. Jesus lovingly corrected and rebuked

Example of Peter

What action steps can you take when a student is misbehaving?

6. Jesus prayed for his disciples

How can you add praying for the children in your ministry/small group/classroom to your regular rhythm of prayer?

Practice together:

- If your church has clearly established behavioral expectation statements, share those with your volunteers. Discuss how volunteers can help reinforce these expectations and review them with kids on a regular basis.
- If your church does not yet have expectation statements, work together to create a short list of three to five statements that could be used with all children.

Discussion:

- Use the discussion questions above to guide a conversation with your volunteers about classroom management and expectations.
- If your children's ministry has a child with a specific behavioral issue, set a time to meet with the volunteers who work with that child to discuss a proactive plan. Be sure to meet with the child's parents ahead of time to include them in the process and to ensure you have all of the appropriate information to meet the needs of that particular child.

Concluding Activity:

- Provide a list of the children for the various age groups of your ministry.
- Divide your volunteers into small groups based on the age level with which they serve. Have each group pray over each name on the list.

Session 5: Classroom Management Like Jesus (Handout)

Introduction:

Classroom Management as Discipleship

1. Jesus set clear, firm expectations
John 13:34
Matthew 7:12

What are clear expectations that you have for the children in your ministry?

How do you communicate those expectations to children?

2. Jesus modeled his faith by his actions
Luke 6:40
Galatians 5:22-23

How do you model your faith to children? How might you improve upon this?

3. Jesus loved people and inspired them to greatness
Mark 10:45

How can you reinforce positive behavior?

How can you eliminate negative behavior?

4. Jesus knew his sheep
John 10:27
Luke 15:4

What step can you take to get to know your students?

5. Jesus lovingly corrected and rebuked
Example of Peter

What action steps can you take when a student is misbehaving?

6. Jesus prayed for his disciples

How can you add praying for the children in your ministry/small group/classroom to your regular rhythm of prayer?

Session 6: Spiritual Conversation with Children

Opening Activity:

- Have two leaders share their faith journey stories, following the B,C, A approach as an example

Preparation for video content or lead your volunteers in reviewing spiritual conversations with children

Telling a child your faith story using B, C, A

Before Christ:

How did you come to know Christ?

Who taught you about Jesus

Christ:

How did you come to meet and believe in Jesus?

After Christ:

How does Christ make a difference in your life today?

How are you continuing to grow in Christ?

Take Captive Teachable Moments

Deuteronomy 6:4-10

Create Intentional Moments

Example of Timothy: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Ask Questions to Start Conversations

Respond to their Questions

Maturing of a child's faith: John Westerhoff III

Experienced faith (infancy)

Affiliated faith (preschool years)

Searching/struggling faith (begins in elementary years)

Owned faith (adolescence)

Practice together:

- Ask each parent and/or volunteer to write down their faith journey story using the B,C, A method described. Have them share their faith journey story in small groups of 2-3.

Discussion:

- As a large group create a list of open-ended questions that parents and volunteers can ask children to help understand what they believe and their current stage of faith development.

Concluding activity:

- Divide into small groups. Have each group member pray for the group member to their left. Pray specifically for the member to be able to disciple the children in their lives, whether they are volunteers, have children of their own, or both.

Session 6: Spiritual Conversations with Children (Handout)

Introduction

Share your own faith story

Before Christ:

How did you come to know Christ?

Who taught you about Jesus?

Christ:

How did you come to meet and believe in Jesus?

After Christ:

How does Christ make a difference in your life today?

How are you continuing to grow in Christ?

Take Captive Teachable Moments

Deuteronomy 6:4-10

- Every moment is a discipleship moment

Create Intentional Moments

Example of Timothy: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Ask Questions to Start Conversations

Respond to their Questions

Maturing of a Child's Faith: John Westerhoff III

Experienced faith (infancy)

Affiliated faith (preschool years)

Searching/struggling faith (begins in elementary years)

Owned faith

Blessings on your faith journey as you raise children in the knowledge of the Lord!

This video was made possible with support from:

