

VBS 2018 PASTORS AND DIRECTOR'S BASE CONFERENCE PLAN

Purpose Statement

This two-hour teaching plan is designed to train and equip pastors and VBS directors to conduct Lifeway's 2018 VBS *Game On!* VBS.

Needed Resources and Preparation of Resources:

- *VBS 2018 Administrative Guide* (5 copies)
- *VBS 2018 Jump Start Kit*
- *VBS 2018 Preschool Starter Kit*
- *VBS 2018 Kids Starter Kit*
- *VBS 2018 Music Rotation Guide*
- *Leading a Child to Christ*
- *VBS 2018 Kids Gospel Guide* (1 per conferee)
- *The Gospel Plan for Me* (1 per conferee)
- *VBS 2018 Parent Guide*
- *VBS 2018 Jersey Backpack* or colored drawstring backpacks (5 - 1 for each team)
- *VBS 2018 Pom-Poms* (minimum of 1 for each team)
- *VBS 2018 Visual Pack*
- *VBS 2018 String Flags* – 2-3 sets
- *VBS 2018 Felt Pennant*
- *VBS 2018 Tablecloth*
- Megaphones (5 different colors - 1 for each team) - Prepare labels for megaphones. Gear Up! (2) Get Ready! (2) Game On! (1). Attach one label to each of the 5 megaphones. (Used in Teaching Step 3: Play Two: Develop Your Game Plan, Step One)
- 3 inflatable Footballs – Print one sentence of the VBS purpose
 - (1) Vacation Bible School is a ministry designed to reach people of all ages, leading them to know and respond to Jesus Christ as led by the Holy Spirit.
 - (2) VBS is a fun-filled, spiritual adventure that provides concentrated Bible study and encourages real-life application.
 - (3) The purpose of VBS is accomplished based on time-tested and church-proven principles. (Page 5 of Administrative Guide)Attach one sentence on each football. (Used in Teaching Step 3: Play Two: Develop Your Game Plan, Step Two)
- 10 VBS 2018 Pom-Poms - Write one of the following points of information on each handle of a pom-pom (Used in Teaching Step 4: Play Three: Develop Your Game Plan – Plan to Share the Ultimate Game Plan)
 - Deal with each child individually
 - Use language a child can understand
 - Ask open-ended questions
 - Listen
 - Be careful about becoming emotional
 - Use the Bible
 - Don't jump to conclusions
 - Pray before, during, and after your conversation with a child
 - Leave the door open for future conversation
 - As often as possible, involve parents

- Item 1 “Game On! Pennant” – Photocopy onto colored paper, one for each Athletic Director, and cut apart. Use 5 different colors to divide Athletic Directors into groups. Write warm up assignment on each pennant - “Write your name and the date of your VBS on the back of this pennant.” (Used in Teaching Step 1: Welcome)
- Item 2 “Baseball” – Photocopy 5 copies. On one baseball print or write the following points of information: (Used in Teaching Step 3: Play Two: Develop Your Game Plan, Step Three)
 - The Pastor sets the pace and level of enthusiasm
 - The Pastor is the team coach
 - The Pastor is the head cheerleader
 - The Pastor inspires by his presence
 - The Pastor leads the charge to continue connections with unchurched families
- Item 3. “Baseball Trading Cards” Photocopy 15 copies. Write each of the following points of information on a separate trading card. (Used in Teaching Step 4: Play Three: Start Planning – Plan for Safety and Security)
 - Maintain teacher-child ratios
 - Enlist a minimum of 2 teachers over 18 years old for each room.
 - Use a security system
 - Complete background check
 - Train all teachers on your policies and procedures
 - Post allergy signs
 - Create a system for knowing kids’ allergies
 - Gather all pertinent information and keep good records
 - Keep classroom doors closed
 - Doors should have window to allow visibility into the room
 - Hand Washing = Clean Environment.
 - Age Appropriate materials
 - Fully stocked first aid kit
 - Post Emergency Exit Route
 - Fire Alarm

Room Setup Description

Arrange chairs in semi-circles to establish 5 distinct groups. Place megaphone in the center of the semi-circles. Place focal table with *Game On! tablecloth* at the front of the room. Display the *VBS 2018 Jump Start Kit*, *Preschool Starter Kit*, and *Kids Starter Kit* on focal table. Drape *VBS 2018 String Flags* from the ceiling across the doorway. Hang *VBS 2018 Felt Pennants* around the room. Be creative! Use items like Pennants, Pom-poms, and Megaphones to create the atmosphere of being part of a *Game On! Pep Rally*. Incorporate ideas from *Decorating Made Easy*

Teaching Steps

1. Welcome (5 minutes)
 - Greet each Athletic Director/Pastor as they enter the door and welcome them to *Game On!* Give each one a pennant as they enter and tell them they are being drafted for a particular team. Instruct Athletic Directors /Pastors to find the megaphone whose color matches the pennant and take a seat with that team.

- Ask Athletic Directors/Pastors to complete the warm up assignment on their pennant.
- Play the theme song “Game On!” from the 2018 Music Rotation DVD as Athletic Directors arrive.
- Introduce yourself by saying: “Welcome to *Game On! Gearing Up for Life’s Big Game*. I am your Team Captain (name). Thank you for joining us for today’s intense and in-depth training session.”
- Say: You have been drafted to an All-Star Team of Athletic Directors and Pastors. If you haven’t introduced yourself to the members of your team, please take a minute and do so right now.
- Allow 60 seconds for team members to introduce themselves.
- Say: Your church has drafted you as their VBS Athletic Director. An Athletic Director is the person who oversees all aspects of the program. You, along with the help of your pastor, will be creating The Game Plan for your team’s VBS. Today we are going to focus on six vital plays to help you become a successful Athletic Director.

2. PLAY ONE: Create Your Playbook (10 minutes)

- Share with the conferees: “As you begin to create your Game Plan, the first resource you must have is the 2018 Administrative Guide. This resource provides you with step by step instructions for planning your GAME ON!”
- Show Resource, bring attention to CD-ROM inside cover.
- SAY: “Inside the Administrative Guide you will find a CD-ROM. There are valuable resources on this CD-ROM. As you study your Administrative Guide, you will find a disc icon identifying items on the CD-ROM for that particular instruction.”
- Encourage conferees to develop a Game Plan notebook, and print all items on the CD-ROM to be sure they are familiar with the documents already prepared for them. No reason for them to spend time creating something that has been created for them.

3. PLAY TWO: Develop Your Game Plan (20 minutes)

COMMENT: The second play for becoming a successful Athletic Director is to develop your game plan. You have the responsibility of overseeing the planning and development of a major church event. So, where do you begin? There are *three steps* to developing your game plan that will help you hit it out of the park at this year’s Game On!

- **STEP ONE: Know Your Theme, Motto and Verse**
 - EXPLAIN: “The theme for VBS is a fun and often inviting part of your event. This year your playbook will be entitled *Game On! Gearing Up for Life’s Big Game*. Through *GAME ON! Gearing Up for Life’s Big Game*, players will realize God has given them His ultimate playbook. He wants them to join His team, train hard, celebrate salvations, and encourage one another.”
 - SAY: “It is time for your team to sharpen their skills. Let’s start with our VBS Motto. Each team will find a pompom and a megaphone with a portion of the VBS motto on it in your game bag. Select a cheerleader to help you shout your portion of the VBS Motto!”

Have team cheerleaders stand before their teams to lead them in shouting their portion of the Motto: Gear Up! (Teams 1 & 2) Get Ready! (Teams 3 & 4) Game On! (Team 5) Repeat several times. Have all teams “cheer” complete motto together.

- Call attention to the Children’s Daily Bible Verse (Poster) SAY: Your athletes will have one focus passage to memorize for the week. This passage is found in 2 Peter 1:3. Let’s read that verse together:
“His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 2 Peter 1:3”

- **STEP TWO: Know Your Purpose**

- SAY: “The second step to developing your game plan is to know your purpose. It is difficult to create a Game Plan if we do not know the purpose and principles of the game.
- Toss an inflated football to three volunteers and ask them to share the Purpose of VBS: (1) Vacation Bible School is a ministry designed to reach people of all ages, leading them to know and respond to Jesus Christ as led by the Holy Spirit. (2) VBS is a fun-filled, spiritual adventure that provides concentrated Bible study and encourages real-life application. (3) The purpose of VBS is accomplished based on time-tested and church-proven principles.
- Say: We know VBS works because we see the “stats”. Athletic Director keeps his eye on the teams “stats” because this helps him to know how his team is performing. The VBS Statistics found on page 5 of the Administrative Guide show us what God did through VBS in 2016.
 - 2.5 million – average number of people enrolled in VBS
 - 70,000 – number of decisions made to accept Christ as Savior
 - 1,300 – number of people who committed their lives to church-related vocations during VBS
 - *19,000 – number of people enrolled in Sunday School as a result of attending VBS*
- Say: We know statistics show us that VBS works. But, why do you do VBS?
- Allow time for conferees to answer.
- SAY: Knowing why you do VBS is the beginning of developing your vision. Vision is sharing your heart – your passion for VBS. It is not our team members’ responsibility to develop a passion for VBS – it is our responsibility as Athletic Directors and Pastors to cast the vision.
- Be prepared to share your own vision for VBS.

- **STEP THREE: INVOLVE YOUR PASTOR**

- Say: Pastors play a vital role in assuring a successful VBS. Ask a volunteer from each team to come select a baseball from the infield and be ready to share it with the entire group.
 - **The Pastor sets the pace and level of enthusiasm**
A congregation typically mirrors the attitude and priorities of the pastor. When the pastor exhibits personal support for VBS and makes it a priority the congregation will typically do the same.

- **The Pastor is the team coach**
While the VBS Athletic Director may be tasked with leading the logistical aspects of VBS, the pastor is the coach. He challenges, inspires, and leads by example.
- **The Pastor is the head cheerleader**
VBS requires a team, and like all teams they perform best when encouraged, appreciated and celebrated. Pastors have the best platform of all (the pulpit) to cheer on the team.
- **The Pastor inspires by his presence**
VBS is not the week for the pastor to hole up in his office or take vacation. Pastors, you need to be in the parking lot, in the registration area, involved in the Worship Rally, wandering the halls, and in the classrooms. Workers need to see the pastor as a committed member of the team. Kids need to see the pastor as caring and approachable. Parents need to see the pastor as someone who is personally interested in them and their children.
- **The Pastor leads the charge to continue connections with unchurched families**
While the pastor should not be expected to be solely responsible for continuing connections, he should lead the way.

4. **PLAY THREE: START PLANNING (30 minutes)**

- **SAY:** The third step for becoming a successful Athletic Director is to plan. You have the responsibility of overseeing the planning and development of a major church event. Pages 12-25 of the Administrative Guide give you step by step instructions for planning things like your calendar, your budget, your format, your schedule. Please use this information as you plan. Today, we are going to discuss some additional tips to help you become a Hall of Fame Athletic Director:
 - **Take Care of Yourself:** Physically and Spiritually. Get enough sleep and exercise. Pray. Study God's Word. You *will* be busy, so keep in mind that the busier you get, the more time you need to spend in prayer and in God's Word. Directing your VBS should be a joy for you. At the same time, though, remember you are in a spiritual battle, with an enemy who will try to throw darts your way.
 - **Enlist an All-Star Team:** Many hands make a lighter load. Be careful not to overextend yourself. Delegate areas of responsibility to people and allow them the joy of serving, even if it is not quite how you would do it. Be the *director*. Don't commit to teaching or any other VBS leadership role during VBS week. Stay as free as possible to greet, encourage and troubleshoot.
 - Ask: Who do you need to enlist?
Start with an Administrative – Support Team
 - Prayer Captain
 - Registration Captain
 - Decorations Captain
 - Setup/Tear Down Captain
 - Publicity Captain
 - Connection Captain (kick off, parking lot attendants, follow up)
- Class Teams – review your records from past couple of years to see trend for number of classes. Know your teacher to child ratio and class size maximums

Review this information (found on page 30 of the Administrative Guide)

- Babies-2's: ratio 1:3, maximum 9
- 3's-PreK: ratio 1:4, maximum 16
- Kindergarten: ratio 1:5, maximum 20
- 1st-6th: minimum 3 teachers (Head coach & 2 assistant coaches) maximum 25
- Rotation Coaches (one for every 4 Bible study rooms)

Remind conferees that every class must have a minimum of 2 unrelated adults over the age of eighteen.

- **Plan for Safety and Risk Management**

VBS is a great outreach tool for the church. It is important that your church take precautions with safety and security. We, as a church, must do everything we can to keep our team players (kids) safe. Parents need to know that their player is safe while he is in our care.

ASK: Why is a safe and secure environment important for your VBS ministry?

What are some safety and security issues that churches face during VBS?

(Allow time for a few responses)

Our job is to assure parents that our church is a safe place to be.

Have teams select three team members. Instruct the volunteers that their task is to each find one baseball playing card located somewhere around the room. When the music begins, the first team member runs to locate a card, when they find a card they grab it and return to their team. The second member of the team runs to find his card, he grabs and returns to the team. Then, the third member of the teams goes to find the final card for their team. Encourage the remaining team members to cheer on their team members. Hints to your team members are acceptable.

Once all volunteers return to their teams, review the planning cards.

- **Maintain teacher-child ratios**

Remind conferees that this information is found on Page 30 of the Administrative Guide

- **Enlist a minimum of 2 teachers over 18 years old for each room.**

Review recommendation: 2 unrelated adults; if teenagers are present – enlist 2 adults with teens.

- **Use a security system**

Use a system to insure children are released to authorized adults. Systems can be simple or complex – permanent cards; temporary cards/tags; computerized system. Churches of all sizes should use some type of security system.

- **Complete background check**

Screening forms; application and background checks should be mandatory for everyone – all leaders that work with children

- **Train all teachers on your policies and procedures**

Policies and procedures give back-up to the leader or teacher; enforcement is the key (for everybody).

- **Post allergy signs**

Inform parents what kids will be tasting, touching or smelling.

- **Create a system for knowing kids' allergies**
Be sure to have a system for teachers are aware which children have allergies and what to do if an allergic reaction occurs.
- **Gather all pertinent information and keep good records**
Be sure to include allergy information, contact information, medical releases, and any custodial issues
- **Keep classroom doors closed**
Closed doors keep kids from leaving or others from entering (or at least slowdown that process), minimizes distractions for both kids and teachers.
- **Doors should have window to allow visibility into the room**
Window should be small but allow clear and easy visibility into the room. This is for the protection of the kids, leaders, and the church.
- **Hand Washing = Clean Environment.**
The best way to maintain a clean environment is handwashing. Regular handwashing helps prevent the spreading of illness.
- **Age Appropriate materials**
All materials and activities should be age appropriate, suitable to the age and developmental level of the kids in the room. Many safety related issues can be avoided if we make sure what we are using or doing with the kids is right for their age/development.
- **Fully stocked first aid kit**
A fully stocked first aid kit should be easily assessable for teachers. Leaders should know the locations. Be sure to keep them maintained on a regular basis. Also, post a list of leaders who are certified in first aid and CPR. Determine a system to notify of a medical emergency.
- **Post Emergency Exit Route**
Be sure map of exit routes for fire and other emergencies is posted in every classroom. Remember during VBS we often use rooms that are not regularly used for kids. Be sure the exit plan is age appropriate. Include emergency exits in your training plans.
- **Fire Alarm**
Make sure teachers are aware of what the fire alarm sounds like in their classroom. Be sure teachers know where to take children when evacuating. Prepare an emergency bag for teachers to grab on the way out the door – include a flashlight, children's information forms, exit route, etc.

- **Plan to Share the Ultimate Game Plan:**

Be Prepared to Share God's Ultimate Game Plan: The Gospel.

Ask for two volunteers for each team to come pick up a pom-pom and be ready to read the point of information on the handle of the pom-pom. As volunteers read point of information, share information regarding each statement

- Deal with each child individually
- Use language a child can understand
- Ask open-ended questions
- Listen
- Be careful about becoming emotional

- Use the Bible
- Don't jump to conclusions
- Pray before, during, and after your conversation with a child
- Leave the door open for future conversation
- As often as possible, involve parents

SHARE resources that are available

1. The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

- Show conferees *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me* booklet
- Explain that the gospel centered presentation helps kids understand how to become a Christian
- Comment that each of the elementary Bible Study Leader Guides explain how to share the gospel with kids using the same presentation (show example of leader's guide)
- Teach conferees the hand motions for each of the five steps
 - **God Rules:** Encourage conferees to hold their hands in an "O" or crown shape and pretend to put it on their heads. Lead conferees to say "God Rules"
 - **We Sinned:** Encourage conferees to cross their arms in front of their chest to make an "X". Lead conferees to say: "We Sinned"
 - **God Provided:** Encourage conferees to stretch their arms outward to form the shape of a cross. Lead conferees to say: "God provided"
 - **Jesus Gives:** Encourage conferees to put their hands with palms facing each other and pretend to hand someone a large gift box. Lead conferees to say "Jesus gives"
 - **We Respond:** Encourage conferees to hold their palms up in front of their body as if they are receiving a gift. Lead conferees to say: "We respond"

2. ABCs of Becoming a Christian Tract

Draw attention to Gospel, ABC and Response sections.

SAY: Train your coaches that if they sense a child is under conviction from the Holy Spirit and would like to respond to the good news, to spend time counseling and praying with the child individually. If they sense that a child is not ready to pray and respond in faith and repentance, encourage them to continue to prayerfully teach him about Christ during the week.

5. PLAY FOUR: GET STARTED (20 minutes)

- **GRAB THEIR ATTENTION –**
create a buzz – People want to be a part of something that is fun and exciting!

Ask teams to stand and form a circle – combine teams if needed for space. Provide each team with a beach ball. Instruct team members to toss the ball around the circle as the music plays. When the music stops, the person holding the ball will be given the opportunity to share one way they like to grab people's attention for VBS.

Play two or three rounds as time allows.
Invite conferees to return to their seats.

SAY: Using the acrostic GAME ON! We are going to discuss ways to help your church feel the excitement that Game On is coming.
Ask pre-enlisted volunteers to share their letter:

- **G**ive invitations: Invite potential leaders to a Game On Pep Rally or Signing Day Event where you cast your vision and invite them to join your team. (informational meeting)
 - **A**dvertise: VBS Bulletin boards now, Save the Date cards
 - **M**edia: Social Media; Church Media: Video announcements – kids share what they love about VBS, a child who accepted Christ, a worker who lead a child to the Lord
 - **E**ach week for four weeks – give out a theme related treat in adult SS classes (bags of popcorn, water bottles with Game On labels, sports foil wrapped candies, Cutie basketball treats [marker drawing lines on cutie to represent basketball], soccer ball cupcakes, football shaped cookies) – pennant toothpicks – Game On! on one side, date on the other side
 - **O**rganize a visual representation: Jerseys for team members who are enlisted, hang pennants in hallway – one representing each kid attending your VBS, prayer silicone bands with a name of a child who attended VBS last year ask church members to “adopt” a child and wear his band to remind them to pray for that child.
 - **N**urture relationships – show support and appreciation to your volunteers.
- **RECRUIT**
Recruitment is fundamental to the success of any team. VSB recruitment starts 4 to 6 months before VBS. Here are a few times to help as you offer a personal invitation to join your Dream Team
 1. Recruitment Begins with Prayer
 - Express that VBS is God’s Ministry, it is too important for us to desperately place warm bodies in positions. God knows who we need. We need to ask him to direct us to the leaders he is preparing to serve on our team. As God reveals names, put together a list of individuals to recruit.
 - Encourage pastors to include a specific prayer for recruitment in their worship time beginning next Sunday. Remind them that as they bring this request to the throne, their church members will have an opportunity to open their hearts to the Spirit’s leading as to the role they are to play in VBS.
 - Ask your Pastor, church staff, and church leaders who in their ministry may be a fit for VBS and why.
 - Best volunteers will be those who serve in a capacity that uses their strengths.

2. Most Successful Recruitment is Face to Face
 - Ask potential volunteers individually - in person if at all possible
 - Give two weeks to think (pray) about it
 - Email once so they know you are praying for them
 - If they say no, thank them for considering
 - Looking someone in the eye is the best way to know if they really want to help. Opens opportunity for conversation if you sense any hesitation.
 - Use intentional enlistment wording: "Our goal is to reach 100 children with God's love at VBS. Right now, we have enough volunteers to reach 50 kids. How can you help?"
 - Keep careful notes of recruiting efforts, don't rely on your memory. Having this information will be valuable for next year's recruitment

- EQUIP AND TRAIN YOUR TEAM FOR SUCCESS.
 - Communicate clearly what's expected when they join the VBS team.
 - Provide materials volunteers need to accomplish the role.
 - Give volunteers their resources and supplies early so they can prepare.
 - Be sure to provide a training event for volunteers.
 - Enlist the support of your Pastor and staff.
 - Be training event is on the calendar and publicized well in advance
 - Respect volunteers
 - Provide a meal
 - Keep short
 - Make it worth their time
 - Make it fun
 - On-Line Training – make 10-15 minute segments of important information available for workers to watch

- PLAN FOR RETENTION
 - Daily Encouragement –
 - Pray together before kids arrive
 - Connect with every volunteer daily – ideas found in the Administrative Guide
 - Thank You
 - Verbally thank volunteers in large gatherings – daily closings, worship service immediately following VBS.
 - Communicate the impact of VBS and the service of volunteers in a follow-up thank you letter. Share statistics on enrollment, decisions, etc.
 - Host a Thank -You lunch to celebrate the efforts of all volunteers

6. PLAY FIVE: PROMOTE AND PUBLICIZE (10 minutes)

Comment: The Fifth Play in your VBS Playbook is to Promote and Publicize inside the church as well as outside the walls of the church. Draw attention to Pages 42-44 of the Administrative Guide: Church Promotion, Community Promotion, Promotion Calendar, Promotion Ideas.

Encourage Athletic Directors and Pastors to think outside the box. Allow teams to huddle up and discuss their favorite way to promote VBS. Ask a volunteer from each team to share one Promotion Idea that they consider “outside the box”

7. PLAY SIX: CONTINUE THE CONNECTION (15 minutes)

- Comment: The Sixth Play in your Athletic Director’s Playbook is CONTINUE THE CONNECTION. Before VBS even begins we should have a game plan for what will happen after *Game On!* Plan ahead and begin to think about how you can help kids and families connect and get plugged into your church every week of the year, not just the week of VBS. Remember Continuing the Connection begins at Registration.
- Here are a few ideas to insure your evangelistic efforts do not end on the last day of VBS.
 - Make follow up assignments by the last day of VBS and insist initial contacts be made immediately. Valuable opportunities are lost when contacts are delayed for days or weeks.
 - Plan for a series of contacts that follow the initial contact - possibly one per week for the next six to eight weeks. Include personal visits, phone calls, notes from teachers, small theme-related gifts that extend the VBS experience, mailed information about the church, and invitations to other events and ministry opportunities.
 - Create a reporting system that tracks follow-up contact assignments and results.
 - Plan post VBS events designed to continue the VBS experience. Create opportunities such as neighborhood Bible clubs, a back-to-school party, or a fall festival designed to bring unchurched families together with church members they met during VBS. (Tip - the more time you allow to pass between VBS and these events the less successful you will be in keeping unchurched families connected.)
 - Create a Connection Group (Sunday School class) specifically for the parents of unchurched kids discovered during VBS. Start the class the first Sunday after VBS be intentional during VBS to connect parents with the new connection group leader.

Remind conferees that making a lasting connection with your families is not about copying what another church does. It is about looking closely at where you are as a church and the people God has placed in your path. Pray and be open and sensitive to the Lord’s Leading.

8. CLOSING: (5 minutes)

SAY: At the beginning of our Training Session you wrote down the names of your team members, along with the dates of their VBS. Please commit to praying for your team members as they prepare for VBS, and pray for them during the week of their VBS.

SAY: “Grab your pom-poms, lace up your cleats, and tune up your horn. It is time to gear up for the big game! Whether you’re the type to root from the stands, march in the band, cheer on the field, or hustle to the line, the time is now – it’s Game On!”

Pray for your conferees thanking God that He has given us everything we need for life’s big game. Ask Him to pour wisdom upon the Athletic Directors and Pastors in your room as they gear up for Game On!



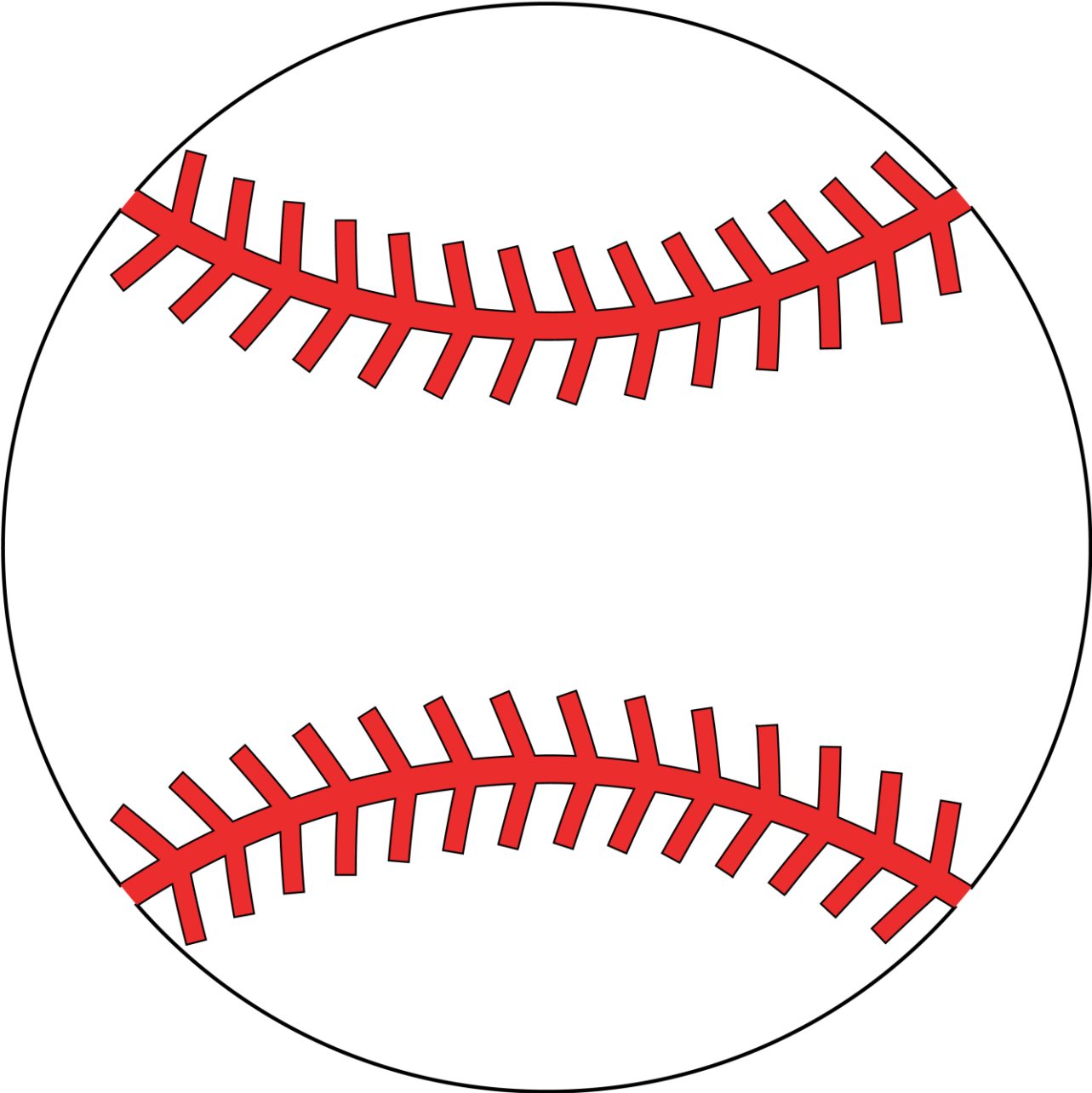
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Item 2

