

VBS 2019 PRESCHOOL BASE CONFERENCE

Purpose Statement

This two-hour plan is designed to prepare preschool (babies through completed kindergarten) leaders for teaching preschoolers and rising first graders using LifeWay's In the Wild™ curriculum.

Needed Resources

- *VBS 2019 Preschool Starter Kit*
- *VBS 2019 Babies–2s Leader Guide* (available in Starter Kit)
- *VBS 2019 Babies–2s Leader Pack* (available in Starter Kit)
- *VBS 2019 Keepsake Book* (available in Starter Kit)
- *VBS 2019 3s–Pre-K Leader Guide* (available in Starter Kit)
- *VBS 2019 3s–Pre-K Leader Pack* (available in Starter Kit)
- *VBS 2019 Kindergarten Leader Guide* (available in Starter Kit)
- *VBS 2019 Kindergarten Leader Pack* (available in Starter Kit)
- *2 VBS 2019 Field Guide: 3s–K* (available in Starter Kit)
- *VBS 2019 Music for Preschoolers CD* (available in Starter Kit)
- *VBS 2019 3s–Kindergarten Rotation Pack* (available in Starter Kit)
- *VBS 2019 Parent Guides*
- *VBS 2019 Tablecloth* (or green tablecloth)
- *VBS 2019 Logo Stickers*
- Item 1: “Group Up” – Print and copy 1 for each conferee.
- Item 2: “Preschool Snapshots” – Print and cut apart. Place them inside the homemade camera.
- Item 3: “Animal Cards” – Print and cut apart. Tape one of each of the larger pictures to a gift bag. Hide the smaller cards around the room (where they can easily be located).
- Item 4: “Points” – Print and cut apart.
- Item 5: “Jeeps” – Print and cut apart.
- Item 6: “Preparation Steps” – Print and cut apart. Locate 8 different “tools” that could be used on a wilderness trek, such as binoculars, toy camera, baby-size boots, flashlight, bandana, compass, field manual. Tape one of the preparation steps to each tool; add a *VBS 2019 Logo Sticker* to each tool, too. Place the tools around the room and among the other display items.
- Item 7: “Making Tracks” – Print and copy 1 for each conferee.
- Homemade Camera – Cover the bottom and all sides of a rectangular tissue box with brown paper or solid color of contact plastic. Make sure the opening of the box remains open. Cut a colored plastic cup in half; glue the bottom half to the bottom of the box to make a camera lens. (The bottom is now the front of the camera and the opening is the back.) Glue a plastic drink lid to the “top” of the camera as a button or dial. Cut a square of silver paper and glue to the “front” of the camera, at the upper left corner. Add other stickers or decorations to your camera as you choose. Place the “Preschool Snapshots” in the back of the camera and display your camera with the curriculum materials.
- Large piece of paper – Print *Bible Study Watering Hole* on the paper for your focal wall.
- Blue paper and green paper – to make the watering hole on the focal wall.
- CD Player
- Pencils
- Index cards – 1 per conferee

- Bible – Mark John 20:31 with a paper strip or other marker.
- Backpack

Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semicircle facing the focal wall. Place a copy of “Group Up” on each chair. On the focal wall, place a large piece of blue paper as the watering hole. Use green paper to create grass around the sides of the watering hole. Display a sign that reads *Bible Study Watering Hole* in the grass. Place a long table near the focal wall; cover with a *VBS 2019 Tablecloth* or a green tablecloth. Display the curriculum resources on the table. Add plastic or stuffed wild animals, toy cameras, and small toy jeeps among the curriculum items.

Optional: Hang the *VBS 2019 Supersized Backdrop* on the focal wall and the *VBS 2019 Visual Pack* posters around the room. Make a jeep or ATV from a cardboard box and display near the focal wall. (See the 3–Pre-K or Kindergarten leader guides for instructions on making a jeep or ATV.)

Teaching Steps

1. Welcome (5 minutes)

- Play the *VBS 2019 Music for Preschoolers CD* as conferees arrive. Give each conferee a copy of “Group Up.” They can work together or alone to match the animal group names with the animals.
- After a few minutes, stop the music and call the group together. Review quickly the animal names (*a parliament of owls; a romp of otters; a zeal of zebras; a prickle of porcupines; a congregation of alligators; a leap of leopards; a colony of bats; a troop of monkeys; a tower of giraffes; an ambush of tigers*).
- Ask: “What group name would you give to a group of preschoolers?” Call on a few conferees to suggest names for a group of preschoolers.

2. Panoramic Picture of VBS 2019 (15 minutes)

- Say: “Let’s get a panoramic view of this year’s VBS. This summer we are going to head out on a wilderness adventure to encounter all kinds of animals in their natural habitats, and snap a few pictures, too. Kids will also learn about amazing encounters people had with Jesus. These Scripture snapshots will lead kids to learn that Jesus is God’s Son and that knowing Jesus can change lives.”
- Pray, asking God to help guide your time of learning.
- Tell conferees to stand. Play “In the Wild” (CD) and lead conferees through the simplified motions for the theme song. (See suggestions in leader guide.)
- Show the *Preschool Starter Kit* and review the curriculum items for preschoolers and kindergartners.
 - Babies–2s:
 - ☛ One Babies–2s Leader Guide
 - ☛ One Babies–2s Leader Pack
 - ☛ One Keepsake Book
 - 3s–Pre-K
 - ☛ One 3s–Pre-K Leader Guide
 - ☛ One 3s–Pre-K Leader Pack
 - ☛ One Field Guide: 3s–K
 - Kindergarten
 - ☛ One Kindergarten Leader Guide
 - ☛ One Kindergarten Leader Pack

- One Field Guide: 3s–K
 - Rotations
 - 3s–Kindergarten Rotation Pack
 - Craft Pack Samples
 - Gifts and Souvenirs
- Remind conferees that the *Music for Preschoolers* CD is included in the leader pack. Note that the CDs have only music and do not contain printables this year. Some printables are included in the leader guide and others will be available online for easier printing. (Since more computers do not have built-in CD slots, the VBS team sought other ways to provide these resources. No content has been lost; it has just been relocated.)

3. Snapshots of Teaching Preschoolers (10 minutes)

- Ask for 4–8 volunteers. Pass the homemade camera and ask each volunteer to take out a snapshot. Ask each volunteer to read his snapshot. Talk about that aspect of teaching preschoolers. (For less than 8 volunteers, ask each person to take additional snapshots or read the additional snapshots yourself.)
- Encourage leaders to talk about other things to keep in mind about teaching preschoolers. Refer to the information in the leader guides about age group characteristics.

4. Encounters with Bible Content (20 minutes)

- Create 5 groups. Give each group one of the animal bags. Tell the groups to search for 3 cards with their matching animal. Play “Go Wild” (CD) while the groups search.
- Call the groups back together and tell them to talk in their groups about the Bible content for their session of VBS.
- Sing (to tune “Did You Ever See a Lassie?”):

*“Did you ever see an elephant, an elephant, an elephant,
Did you ever see an elephant, out in the wild?”*
- Ask the elephant group to report on the Day 1 content. Show the teaching picture (from the leader pack) as you talk about the Bible story. Post the Day 1 Life Point on the focal wall.
- Sing the other animals (in turn) and report on each of the other days. Add each Point to the focal wall.
 - Bat – Day 2
 - Penguin – Day 3
 - Turtle – Day 4
 - Hedgehog – Day 5
 - Tell groups to drop their cards in their bags; collect the bags.
- Play and sing “Jesus Is the Son of God” (CD).

5. Itinerary (20 minutes)

- Briefly talk through the schedules for each age group.
 - Babies–2s:
 - Activities
 - Recreation
 - Snack
 - Rest Time
 - Repeated Activities and Departure

- 3s-Pre-K:
 - ☛ Intro Activities
 - ☛ Group Time
 - ☛ Bible-Learning Activities
 - ☛ Rotation Activities
 - ☛ Closing Group Time
- Kindergarten:
 - ☛ Worship Rally (or Intro Activities)
 - ☛ Group Time
 - ☛ Bible-Learning Activities
 - ☛ Rotation Activities
 - ☛ Closing Group Time
- Point out the Preschool Music Rotation DVD includes an outline for a Preschool Worship Rally. This outline uses songs from the Music for Preschoolers CD, a brief introduction of the day's Bible story, and Bible verse memory. Mention that this is a good alternative to sending preschoolers to the kids' Worship Rally, which can be overwhelming to preschoolers.
- Create a group for each age level (or create 3 groups). Lead each group to review the leader guide and find the resources for each part of the Bible study time.
 - Babies–2s:
 - ☛ Spiral bound book of Bible and theme-related activities. Teachers can choose a few activities to do each day or repeat activities throughout the week.
 - ☛ Two age groups: Babies and Younger 1s; Older 1s and 2s
 - ☛ Music, snack, and recreation ideas included
 - 3s–Pre-K and Kindergarten: (one group for each)
 - ☛ Get Started
 - ☛ Overview
 - ☛ Schedule and Rotation Options
 - ☛ Child Characteristics
 - ☛ Teacher Tips
 - ☛ Continue the Encounter
 - ☛ Days 1–5 Teaching Plans
 - Teacher Devotion
 - Intro Activities
 - Group Time
 - Bible Learning Activities
 - Closing Group Time
 - ☛ DIY Decoration Information
 - ☛ Music Motions
- Talk about options for scheduling.
 - Shorter VBS time – Shorten or omit a rotation activity, intro activity, or closing group time.
 - Longer VBS time – Use all four Bible-learning activities plus the bonus activity and increase allotted time for activities
 - Preschoolers rotate out – Preschoolers move to other locations for rotation activities. Rotation teachers lead the activities and Bible study teachers stay and participate in rotation activities.
 - Teachers rotate in – Rotation teachers move to the Bible study classrooms to lead rotation activities.

- Self contained classroom – Children and teachers remain in the Bible study classroom for all activities, including rotation activities. Bible study teachers lead most or all of these activities.
- Note that ideas for rotation activities (Music, Missions, Crafts, Recreation) for 3–K are in the Rotation Pack. If teachers are including these activities in their classroom, they will need to get leader guides from the Pack.
 - Briefly show and mention each rotation leader guide.
 - Find the rotation site names in the Bible study leader guides.
- Also note that preschool-friendly snacks are included in the Snack Cards for Grades 1–6.

6. Focus on the Leader Pack (5 minutes)

- Lead the same 3 groups to review the preschool and kindergarten leader packs for a few minutes. Ask them to find and show these items:
 - A teacher tip or teacher instructions
 - Something reproducible
 - Something that helps teach the Bible verse
 - Something that will help preschoolers encounter the Bible content
 - A book to use with preschoolers
 - Music for Preschoolers CD
- Point out any other leader pack items as you choose.
- Say: “Some pack items are front and back. Make sure to examine each pack item and read all the instructions before cutting any item.”

7. Zoom in on the Bible Verse (10 minutes)

- Open the Bible to John 20:31 and read the Bible verse. Say the paraphrase. (Note that Babies–2s have a shorter paraphrase.)
- Say: “The purpose of VBS is to help preschoolers (and parents) encounter Jesus. The Bible was written so that we can know that Jesus is God’s Son, the Messiah, the Savior.”
- Display the jeep cards with the verse. Put the verse in order and say it together.
- Play and sing “These Words Are Written” (CD). Teach motions if you choose.

8. Load Up (15 minutes)

- Choose 8 volunteers. Ask them to walk around the room and each find one piece of equipment with a logo sticker on it.
- Lead the volunteers, one at a time, to read the info on that piece of equipment. Talk about the preparation step and pack the equipment into a backpack.
 - Review curriculum materials. Familiarize yourself with the contents of the leader guide, leader pack, CD, and Field Guide.
 - Prepare all leader pack items. Find instructions on the bottom of each item. Read all instructions before cutting or preparing items. Check the backs of items before cutting.
 - Meet with the other teachers and divide responsibilities. Share the work and planning so everyone will have an enjoyable experience in VBS.
 - Spiritually prepare by reading the leader devotions. Look for how you can encounter Jesus before leading preschoolers to encounter Him through your teaching.
 - Choose a “lead teacher.” This teacher can greet children, lead (or assign) group time, oversee attendance, and manage the work of the classroom.

- Gather supplies for each day. You may want to set up a system for keeping track of each day's resources. (For example, use a bin or bag labeled with each day and place needed supplies in it.)
- Understand your church's safety and security procedures. Follow all procedures for signing in, dismissing children, and maintaining teacher/child ratios.
- Set up activities around the Bible study room. Allow children to move among activities or create a plan for active preschoolers to have successful learning times.

9. Making Tracks (15 minutes)

- Make groups of 3-4. Give each group a "Making Tracks" sheet. Ask the groups to think about ways to continue encounters with Jesus after VBS. Tell them to think of a way to continue contacts with families for each set of tracks on the sheet. Play "Nobody But Jesus" (CD) as the groups work.
- Stop the music and call groups back together. Ask each group to tell one idea they listed. Include these ideas, too, if not mentioned by the groups.
 - Encourage parents to use the *VBS 2019 Field Guide: 3s-K* to continue spiritual conversations at home.
 - Use the *VBS 2019 Keepsake Book* during VBS and send home to parents.
 - Provide *VBS 2019 Parent Guides* for all parents.
 - Provide information about the VBS app for parents to download and use at home.
 - Send notes, call, or visit each child after VBS.
 - Take the *VBS 2019 Music for Preschoolers CD* or other small gift to children when you visit them.
 - Plan a "VBS Reunion" event in late summer or early fall. Invite all your VBS attenders to come to the event to reconnect with their VBS friends.

10. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

- Give each person an index card. Tell conferees to print their names on the cards. Say that prayer is a main way that VBS continues to impact the lives of families all across the country.
- Ask conferees to trade cards with someone else. Encourage them to place the name in their Bibles or a location to remind them to pray for that preschool teacher and that church's VBS.
- Pray for conferees, asking God to help them lead boys and girls to encounter Jesus this summer in VBS.
- Play "In the Wild" (CD) as conferees exit.

Group Up

Draw a line to match each animal with its group name.

A parliament of

alligators

A romp of

bats

A zeal of

giraffes

A prickle of

leopards

A congregation of

monkeys

A leap of

otters

A colony of

owls

A troop of

porcupines

A tower of

tigers

An ambush of

zebras

What would you call a group of preschoolers?

A _____ of preschoolers

RETAKES ARE GREAT

Preschoolers love repetition. Say the Bible verse often as preschoolers play and work in activities. Repeat activities throughout the week and bring back favorite games and songs.

TAKE QUICK SNAPSHOTS

Preschoolers have short attention spans—roughly one minute for every year of age. Kids may tire quickly and be ready to move on to something else. Stay flexible during group times and be ready to shorten, repeat, or even skip elements as needed.

FOCUS YOUR ACTIONS

Preschoolers are always watching and listening...even when you think they are not. Children learn more from your actions than your words. Be aware that everything you do (or don't do) and say (or don't say) is teaching something.

PREPARE FOR CLOSEUPS

Preschoolers are curious. Be ready for lots of questions, but understand it's okay to say, "I don't know." Encourage preschoolers to explore and discover answers on their own.

ZOOM IN ON THE BIBLE

Preschoolers can internalize and apply Bible truths. They can remember and retell Bible stories, can turn pages in the Bible, and can turn to marked Bible verses. Connect what kids are doing to the Bible content for each day.

SET UP THE SHOTS

Preschoolers need simple, clear limits. State what you want them to do (rather than what not to do). Redirect when possible. Be prepared so kids will be engaged from the moment they arrive.

TAKE A LONG EXPOSURE

Preschoolers are hands-on, experiential learners. They LEARN as they DO. Use a variety of active teaching methods, in both activities and group learning times. Keep them involved in the learning.

EACH IS UNIQUE

Each preschooler is an individual. Each one is proficient in a different group of skills. Provide for success in a variety of ways (such as precutting some items) and encourage individual interests.





**Encounter at
the Tomb**



John 20:1-18



**Jesus is
alive!**



**Encounter on
the Road**



Luke 24:13-35



**All of the
Bible tells
about Jesus**



**Encounter in
the Temple**



Luke 2:41-52



**Jesus talked
about God.**



**Encounter at
the River**



**Matthew
3:1-17**



**Jesus is
God's Son.**



**Matthew
14:22-33**



**Encounter on
the Water**



**Jesus can do
anything.**

**Day 1: Jesus talked about
God.**

Day 2: Jesus is God's Son.

**Day 3: Jesus can do
anything.**

Day 4: Jesus is alive!

**Day 5: All of the Bible tells
about Jesus.**



Review all curriculum materials.

Prepare all leader pack items.

Meet with the other teachers and divide responsibilities.

Spiritually prepare by reading the leader devotions.

Choose a “lead teacher.”

Understand your church’s safety and security procedures.

Gather supplies for each day.

Set up activities around the Bible study room.

Making Tracks

Along each set of tracks, list a way to continue reaching preschoolers and their families after VBS.

