

CONDUCTING A STUDENT MINISTRY CLASS

The following is a list of principles for conducting an effective Sunday school class for students. Class teachers must maintain a class format that welcomes visitors, captures attention, communicates pertinent ministry information and announcements, provides a practical lesson, and applies God's truth personally.

Before Class Starts

1. Prepare your lesson and creatively develop truth.

Whether you are prepared or not will become immediately obvious to your students the moment class begins.

2. Familiarize yourself with student ministry announcements.

Attend the Wednesday night meeting and get answers to key questions. Know where you are going during announcement time and what the top priorities are.

3. Plan how you will cover announcements.

Know what order, what priority, and what you will do to get attention. Be creative and energetic.

4. Familiarize yourself with handouts, signup sheets, and registration cards.

Know exactly what you have to hand out and collect. Use these materials effectively.

5. Check classroom set up and equipment.

Check temperature, chair set up, podium, dry-erase board, and materials. Make sure all the lights are on and that the room is conducive to welcoming people and teaching truth. Be comfortable as a teacher with the chair set up and the teaching area.

6. Pray for God's power.

God's anointing when you speak is more important than any other single thing you need while conducting your class. Ask God to fill you and to allow you to lose yourself.

7. Prepare an effective icebreaker, brief game, or object lesson.

Minimize this. Don't spend more than a few moments goofing off, but do be sure to think through some comical, lighthearted ways to establish interaction.

During Class

1. Break the ice at the beginning of class.

This can be done a multitude of ways and will vary widely in different age groups. Getting the group standing, shaking hands, playing a game, laughing, meeting new people, and generally interacting is a good thing.

2. Consider singing an optional part of class.

Students rarely sing in Sunday school. They sing wonderfully at camps, home fellowships, and often in church settings; but Sunday school doesn't seem to draw them to worship. You can beat a dead horse long and hard and still not get a response. Feel free to not include singing in your class cue card. The primary purpose of class is not worship, but rather instruction from God's Word.

3. Cover all pertinent student ministry announcements.

Read the youth communiqué before Sunday arrives. During class, go through the bulletin and cover all announcements about activities and upcoming events and opportunities. Please give your heart to being enthusiastic about upcoming events, encourage participation, and provoke excitement. Be sure to hand out any sign up sheets, registration cards, and additional flyers. Collect the needed materials and turn them in to the roll envelope.

4. Pray for the offering and receive it.

Consider having a student pray. Encourage the students in faithful giving. Collect the student life/teens in action forms at this time as well.

5. Review last week's lesson.

Whether you use discussion questions, a brief game, or simply point by point review, go over last week's lesson and remind the students where you've been and where you are heading. This shouldn't take more than a few moments.

6. Introduce your Scripture text and have the class read it.

It's great to get the entire class turning to and reading Scripture. This will give them a definitive point when they know the lesson is beginning and that they need to focus their attention.

7. Teach your lesson.

This should be the bulk of your class time. Make sure you are getting a 30-40 minute lesson every week. Make the lesson intensely practical. Stay on point. Be careful about repeating yourself or becoming redundant. Work diligently to keep their attention and if you see they are disconnecting do something to re-engage them. Don't be content to teach a monotone lesson to a class that is obviously disinterested.

Teach to the hungry! Don't let the few kids who are scornful draw your attention away from the majority of kids who are hungry to learn what you have to teach. This is a tactic that the Devil uses to get you off point. Stay the course that God has given you.

8. Deal kindly but decisively with discipline issues.

Don't let even one student distract others and disrespect the Word of God. Give a warning the first time. Kindly but firmly correct the behavior and explain what you expect. Give a stronger warning the second time and perhaps move the student to another location (closer to a worker). The third time, send the student out of class and have a worker escort that student to parents.

It is VITAL that you then follow up with the parents as soon as possible. Catch them at church, call them that afternoon, or see them that night. Don't put this off. This student will likely misrepresent you to the parents, and your kind explanation of the classroom confrontation will help to diffuse the situation.

9. Draw the lesson to a close with a definitive response.

What's the "take away"? What makes your lesson matter? How does this affect their lives this week and what should they do about it? Make sure you get to this during the last 5-10 minutes of your lesson. Give the students tangible ways to live out what you taught.

10. Greet students after class and look for soulwinning opportunities.

Make sure visitors are greeted and introduced to others. Look for every chance to personally share the Gospel.
