

# TEACHING A MEMORY VERSE OR SONG

(\*Material from *Child Evangelism Fellowship*® and Hanna Sims)

## INTRODUCTION

VERSE - Introduce with something that relates to the children, the verse, and character quality.

- Use an object.
- Ask a question.
- Show a picture.
- Tell a story.

Due to your short time at VBS, the introduction should only take about 1 minute. If you cannot think of a short introduction, you may skip it and just review the character definition in a fun voice.

SONG - Due to your short time during VBS, the SONG does not need an introduction besides repeating the definition with the kids in a fun voice.

## PRESENTATION

### VERSE

- Mark the verse in your Bible ahead of time. Read the verse directly from the Bible, not just from the visual. Make sure that the verse that you are reading from your Bible is the same as your visual.
- **\*You will need to create a visual with the verse. You could use poster board or type it on a Power Point slide. If you handwrite the verse or do a PPT, do not use cursive or fancy writing and make sure that your words are big enough for all the kids to see.\***
- Establish the Bible verse as the Word of God.
- Repeat the reference at the beginning and at the end.

### SONG

- **\*Watch the video online and listen to the CD beforehand so that you can get familiar with the material. Know the song and actions well enough to also be able to lead the song without the help of the video. Look at the lyrics page.\***
- Play the video for the children to learn the song with the actions; guide the children in following along with the video, repeating the words and actions with the video, and singing along at the appropriate places. View the videos at [www.networkerstec.com/ecbc.html](http://www.networkerstec.com/ecbc.html)
- For the generosity song, play the CD and have the children listen to the song and watch you do the actions. You will need to create and know the actions ahead of time because there is no online video for this song.
- This would NOT be a good time to have the children help you as they need to learn the song first.

## **EXPLANATION**

### **VERSE**

- Teach the meaning of unfamiliar words or concepts.
- You may need to look up the meanings of the words and concepts in a Bible dictionary, concordance, or commentary. ([www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org))
- Sometimes the verse is pretty easy to understand and does not require extra explanation. In that case you can spend more time apply the verse.

### **SONG**

- Video will explain the words to the song but think through how you would explain the song if the video would stop working. Look at the lyrics and jot down a few notes to keep with you.
  - For the Generosity, you will need to explain any unfamiliar words or concepts.

## **APPLICATION**

- VERSE - Apply the verse using the I will... Explain how the “I will...” relates to the verse and give an example(s) that the child and parent can relate to.
- SONG - Video will apply the song to the children but think through how you would apply the song if the video should stop working. Look at the lyrics and jot down a few notes to keep with you.
  - For the Generosity song, you will need to apply the song to the kid’s lives based on the “I will...”.

## **REPETITION**

### **VERSE**

- Repeat the verse 2-3 times (or in whatever time you have left) with a fun game (See Memory Verse Games List)
- If you think you only have 1 minute to review the verse, have the kids say the verse in a fun voice or do an action (hopping, clapping, jumping, etc.) while saying the verse with you. You can let them pick how the verse is said.
- Some people find it helpful to write a simplified outline of what they are doing to put in their Bible for their IPEAR to help them remember instead of using their script.
- Total time is 5 minutes.

### **SONG**

- The song is repeated in pieces during the video.
- You will probably not have time to repeat the song, outside of playing the video.
- If you do, it might be easier to use the CD instead of the online video.
- Total time is 10 minutes.

## **MEMORY VERSE GAMES**

### **Bounce the Ball**

Have one student bounce a ball while saying the memory verse. If the ball rolls away, have the student pick up where he or she left off. Students can also compete against each other to see who can say the verse the fastest, without letting the ball roll away or messing up. If a student cannot remember the next part of the verse, the ball is passed to the next person. Instead of bouncing the ball on the floor, it can also be bounced between one's hands, tossed between two students, or within a group. If you choose to toss the ball between the group, you can either have the whole group say the verse while passing the ball to the next person or throwing it to a random person, or each time the ball comes to a person, he or she says the next word in the verse. If the ball is thrown or rolls outside the group, you could have the students restart the verse to avoid them wildly throwing the ball around.

### **Word Scramble**

Write the different parts of the verse on slips of paper or print it off the computer and cut into pieces. Then have the students arrange the verse in the correct order. You can have multiple teams doing this at once to see who can do it the fastest. Or you can have different verses available so that when one group gets done, they can move on to a new verse. If you have multi-ages working together it is best to pair older kids with younger ones to help them read. If you would like for the children to work as one team, write or print the words/phrase on large pieces of paper with big lettering so that the whole group can see the words/phrase clearly and participate. You could piece these words together on a white board or on the wall with sticky-tack or tape. This could also serve as a decoration in the classroom to remind the students of the verse.

### **Picture This!**

Have the students write out the verse on the top of a piece of paper (or have it written out for them). Then have them draw a picture on the bottom of the paper to illustrate the meaning of the verse. Or have the students write the verse on their paper with enough space to add a small illustration above the words that helps them to remember key words that you are teaching in the verse. For example, in John 3:16 a student might draw a heart above the word LOVED and a lot of stick people to remind him or her of the word WORLD, since God loved the people of the world. The purpose of this project is not necessarily to be artistic. It is to create personal pictures that will help each child remember the verse.

### **Action!**

Create actions for key words that help the children remember the meaning of the verse. This can be done with the children as they often like participating in this activity and it will be more meaningful to them.

### **Alphabet Actions**

Have a child choose a word from the verse and make a note of the first letter of that word. Whenever that first letter appears at the beginning of any of the words in the verse, the children are to do a specific movement already chosen by a child. This movement could be clapping, stomping, jumping, hopping, spinning, etc. Then as the verse is repeated each time and new first letters are chosen, different actions will be added to the verse. By the end of the verse review you

may be spinning on F, jumping on G, and clapping on T. You could make it unique by letting a child whose first or last name begins with the special letter pick the movement for that letter.

### **Promptorizing**

Promptorizing describes the memory technique of taking the first letter from each word to learn the verse. For example, John 3:16, “For God so loved the world...” would look like this: F G S L T W. You can write this out for the children and then have them say the verse together while you point to each letter. It might be easier to memorize the verse if you write out all the words to begin with and then each time you say the verse you erase one of the words and replace it with its beginning letter until it is all promptorized. This is a link to promptorize a long verse or passage on the computer. <http://www.productivity501.com/how-to-memorize-verbatim-text/294/>

### **Erase a Word**

Write out the verse and then each time have a child come up and erase a word, or words, until the whole verse is gone and can be said from memory. Or you can cover up the word(s) with a sticky-note and the children can move it around to different places each time. To make it more challenging you can cut out a large circle out of black paper that would cover up quite a few words or lines of the verse. Then let the children put it on the verse with sticky-tack to see how many words they can cover up. Then you can teach the children that sin (the dark paper) tries to block out God’s Word from speaking to us. But when we hide God’s Word in our heart it helps us to keep from sinning (Psalm 119:11).

### **Thus Saith the Lord**

Each time the children say the verse have them shout, “Thus Saith the Lord!” to teach them that the Bible is God’s Word.

### **Quizzing**

Once the memory verse has been learned, ask question based on the memory verse. When a child gets the answer right they can get points for their team or they can participate in one of the review games on the REVIEW GAME handout that you have chosen. Here are some sample questions that you can pattern any memory verse question after. *According to John 3:16,*

*WHO so loved the world? God*

*WHAT did God so love? The world.*

*WHAT did God give so that we would not perish? His only son.*

*HOW do we have eternal life? If you believe in his only son.*

*WHO can have eternal life? Whoever believes in his only son.*

*If you believe in God’s only son, you will not? Perish*

All of the answers for these questions are straight out of the verse so if the children have memorized the verse they will be able to answer the questions.

### **Musical Verse**

Write (or print) out different section of the verse on different pieces of paper and hang them around the room. Then have the children march around the room while music plays in the background. If you have a musical version of the verse, that’s even better as the children can learn to sing the verse with actions that you/they create. When the music is paused, the children

stop at the paper closest to them. Then the children go around the room repeating their section of the verse that is at their station. To make it a challenge you can close your eyes when the music is playing and then when the music is stopped and the children are in their section, you can point to one of the sections and those children after saying their section of the verse will have to sit out for the rest of the game. The last child left or last few are the winners. Or you could have the children sit out for one round before jumping back into the game.

### **Volume Control**

Have someone come and choose whether to start saying the verse in a loud, medium, or soft voice. The volunteer will hold his or her hand high for loud, in the middle for medium, and low for soft. The other children will say the verse at different volumes as the volunteer slowly moves his or her hands to the different positions while the group is saying the verse.

### **Guess the Word**

Have one child stand with his or her back to the group so that he or she cannot see the verse. Have another volunteer come and point to a word. Tell the other children that the word that was chosen will not be said when the children repeat the verse together but will be clapped on. After the recitation, the child who is standing with his or her back to the group is shown the verse and will have to guess what word was clapped on. To increase the challenge, you can tell the person guessing that he or she cannot look at the verse to guess the word or you could have the children clap a few words. It is also fun to have the teacher participate at the very end. Pick a teacher that knows the whole verse to stand with his or her back to the group. Then instruct the children to clap the whole verse. The teacher then has to say the verse without looking at the verse.

### **Odds and Ends**

You could have the children say the verse while giving a partner high-fives or any other rhythm pattern.

When you point to a word on the verse you could have the children shout, whisper, make a certain face (happy, sad, etc), or do a certain action (stomp, clap, jump, etc).

Each time you say the verse have the child shout a word. Start with the first word and move through the verse in order. This will help the children think about each meaning of the word of the verse. For example:

*JOHN 3:16-For God so loved the world.*

*John 3:16- FOR God so loved the world.*

*John 3:16-For GOD so loved the world.*