

Engaging Students

Children – all unique and wonderfully made!

God has made each child unique, with different gifts, abilities and preferences. Some are quick to understand words, logic or spatial relations. For others, music, movement or stories are powerful learning tools. Or they may learn best from exploring relationships or connecting with nature.

Activity Choices

- Choose a variety of activities, not just what you are comfortable with.
- Make sure you choose activities from each section: Question, Explore, Discover
- Ask a colleague or check our website for tips and advice.



Classroom Management

A positive classroom environment supports learning outcomes for all children. Often we think about classroom management in the negative sense - how to avoid challenging behaviour and keep students on task. Classroom management is much more than this, notice when things are going smoothly and what you can learn from this too.

Top Tips for Classroom Management

- **Provide Clarity**
Provide clear instructions and expectations for students, especially when starting something new. Stick to your expectations.
- **Focus on the Positive**
Model and acknowledge positive behaviour. Students will follow your lead. Catch students who need more redirection when they are engaging well and praise them.
- **Know Your Students**
Learning student's names and something about them supports communication, empathy and engagement. Acknowledge feelings. Ask what the student's behaviour may be communicating (even if they're not saying it).
- **Be Present**
Use body language to encourage focus. Redirect students off-task with a look, by pointing or moving closer. Move around where appropriate and be available to assist students.
- **Choices**
Provide two options which are both acceptable to you. This encourages responsibility for behaviour.

See Also

- Practical Advice articles on our website.

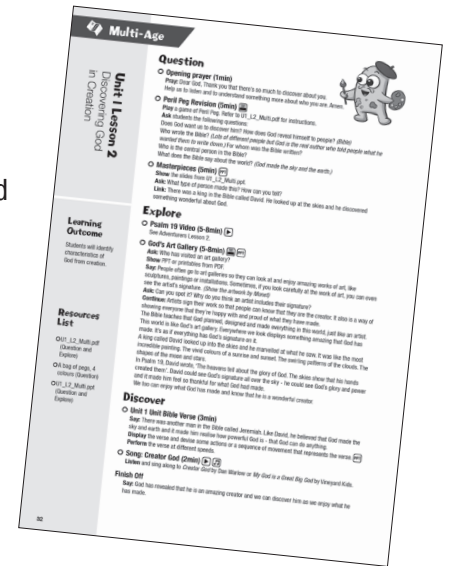
Multi-Age Groups

Each lesson in the GodSpace manual has a Multi-Age option, as well as lessons for each individual stage. These are designed for those who teach groups of students across the ages on a regular basis. The activities appeal to a broad range of ages and skill levels.

Planning Your Lesson

Consider how you can involve all students, at least in some aspects of the lesson. Encourage shorter students to sit at the front so that they can see. If your space is limited, adapt actions so that they can be done whilst seated.

Magazines can be very useful to reinforce the lesson concepts and to adapt it for each developmental level. However, we are aware that in some contexts pen and paper may be impractical so these lessons do not assume the students will each have a magazine.



Top Tips for Multi-Age Groups

- **Consider the youngest student and ensure that your selection of activities is age appropriate for them.**
- **Play to Your Group's Strengths**
Consider what works best for your group. If you have a large group, singing and drama may be popular. Smaller groups may allow for more in-depth discussion. Older students may be able to support younger ones to engage in an activity.
- **Gain - and hold - attention**
Have strategies in place to grab student's attention. This cues the students to behaviour expectations and allows you to provide instructions. Short games such as clapping patterns, copying actions, and call and response rhymes work well for most ages. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=78eiLQjms&t=2s>
- **Keep It Moving**
Consider the pacing for your lesson, and keep activities short, so that students stay focused. Do not leave the stage empty (if presenting lessons from one spot).
- **Media**
Make sure any media you plan to use is ready to go. If using the PPTs you can download your songs and videos and link them to the slides for smooth transitions. See page 11.



Special Event/End of Year Assemblies

Special Events such as Easter, Christmas, and Education Week, provide a wonderful opportunity to work together with other SRE/RI teachers as a powerful example of unity as you share the message of God's love and what the Bible says.

In a school setting the coordinator needs to negotiate with the school about the best time and place to run such an activity. You'll also need to get the agreement of all adults involved in your regular program.

Plan six–eight weeks ahead so all participants have time to practise items such as dramas and readings. See website for speaker suggestions and more tips.

