

# Leading a Child to Christ



## One of the greatest privileges of serving in VBS is helping children become members of God's family.

Pray for the children you teach and ask God to prepare them to understand and receive the good news about Jesus. Ask God to give you the sensitivity and wisdom you need to communicate effectively and to be aware of opportunities that occur naturally.

Because children are easily influenced to follow the group, be cautious about asking for group decisions. Offer opportunities to talk and pray individually with any child who expresses interest in becoming a member of God's family—but without pressure. A good way to guard against coercing a child to respond is simply to ask, "Would you like to hear more about this now or at another time?"

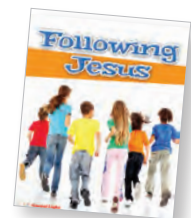
When talking about salvation with children, use words and phrases they understand; never assume they understand a concept just because they can repeat certain words. Avoid symbolic terms ("born again," "ask Jesus to come into your heart," "open your heart," etc.) that will confuse these literal-minded thinkers. (You may also use the evangelism booklet *God Loves You!*, which is available from Gospel Light.)



- 1. God wants you to become His child. Why do you think He wants you in His family?** (See 1 John 3:1.)
- 2. You and I and every person in the world have done wrong things. The Bible word for doing wrong is "sin." What do you think should happen to us when we sin?** (See Romans 6:23.)

- 3. God loves you so much that He sent His Son to die on the cross to take the punishment for your sin. Because Jesus never sinned, He is the only One who can take the punishment for your sin. On the third day after Jesus died, God brought Him back to life.** (See 1 Corinthians 15:3–4; 1 John 4:14.)
- 4. Are you sorry for your sin? Tell God that you are. Do you believe Jesus died for your sin and then rose again? Tell Him that, too. If you tell God you are sorry for your sin and believe that Jesus died to take your sin away, God forgives you.** (See 1 John 1:9.)
- 5. The Bible says that when you believe that Jesus is God's Son and that He is alive today, you receive God's gift of eternal life. This gift makes you a child of God. This means God is with you now and forever.** (See John 1:12; 3:16.)

There is great value in encouraging a child to think and pray about what you have said before responding. Encourage children who decide to become Christians to tell their parents. Give your pastor and the children's Sunday School teacher(s) their names. A child's initial response to Jesus is just the beginning of a lifelong process of growing in the faith, so children who make decisions need to be followed up to help them grow. The discipling booklet *Following Jesus* (available from Gospel Light) is an effective tool to use.



# Contents

## Leader's Info

Leading a Child to Christ.....	1
Course Overview .....	3
Course Description.....	4
Effective Teaching Tips .....	5
Decorating Your Center.....	6
Game Center Basics .....	8
Age-Level Characteristics .....	11

## Sessions

<b>Session 1 • God's Plan: 2 MAKE Us!</b> .....	14
<b>Session 2 • God's Plan: 2 BE WITH Us!</b> .....	20
<b>Session 3 • God's Plan: 4 Us 2 KNOW Him!</b> .....	26
<b>Session 4 • God's Plan: 2 SAVE Us!</b> .....	32
<b>Session 5 • God's Plan: 2 LOVE Us 4-Ever!</b> .....	38

## Reproducible Pages

<b>Session 1</b> .....	44
<b>Session 2</b> .....	46
<b>Session 3</b> .....	48
<b>Session 4</b> .....	52
<b>Session 5</b> .....	56



**Want to make a copy?  
Send pages via email?  
Go ahead! But please follow  
the guidelines below.**

## Copyright Guidelines

Permission to make photocopies of or to reproduce by any other mechanical or electronic means in whole or in part any designated\* page, illustration or activity in this product is granted only to the original purchaser and is intended for noncommercial use within a church or other Christian organization. None of the material in this product, not even those pages with permission to photocopy, may be reproduced for any commercial promotion, advertising or sale of a product or service. Sharing of the material in this product with any other persons, churches or organizations not owned or controlled by the original purchaser is also prohibited. All rights reserved.

\*Do not make any copies from this product unless you adhere strictly to the guidelines found on this page. Pages with the following notation can be legally reproduced:

© 2015 Gospel Light. Permission to photocopy granted to original purchaser only. *Momentum Games*

## Gospel Light Vacation Bible School

**Publishing Director**, Donna Lucas  
**Associate Managing Editor**, Karen McGraw  
**Editorial Team**, Mary Gross Davis, Courtney Hlebo  
**Production Manager**, Peter Germann  
**Art Director**, Lori Hamilton Redding  
**Senior Designer**, Carolyn Thomas  
**Founder**, Dr. Henrietta Mears  
**Publisher**, William T. Greig  
**Senior Consulting Publisher**, Dr. Elmer L. Towns  
**Editorial Director, Biblical and Theological Content**, Dr. Gary S. Greig

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible, New International Reader's Version*®. Copyright © 1995, 1996, 1998 by Biblica. www.biblica.com. All rights reserved throughout the world.








© 2015 Gospel Light, Ventura, CA 93006.  
All rights reserved.  
Printed in the U.S.A.

 **Gospel Light VBS**  
**Jesus Every Day!**™

# Course Overview

Purpose: Discovering **God's Plan 4 U = Jesus!**  
 Theme Verse: John 14:6–7

Session	1	2	3	4	5
					
	<b>God's Plan: 2 MAKE Us!</b>	<b>God's Plan: 2 BE WITH Us!</b>	<b>God's Plan: 4 Us 2 KNOW Him!</b>	<b>God's Plan: 2 SAVE Us!</b>	<b>God's Plan: 2 LOVE Us 4-Ever!</b>
<b>Bible Story</b>	<b>The Creation Formulation</b> Genesis 1:1—2:2	<b>The Sin Separation</b> Genesis 2:8–9, 15–17; 3:1–24	<b>The Personification Revelation</b> John 1:1–2,14; 5:1–9; 6:16–21; 11:57; 14:1–7	<b>The Salvation Solution</b> Luke 22—24:35	<b>The Infinite Implementation</b> Mark 16:15; Acts 1:1–11; 2:4, 41–47; 4:32–35
<b>Q&amp;A</b>	<b>Who made the world and who made me?</b> God, who created the universe, made you and loves you.	<b>What happens when I do wrong things?</b> Sin separates you from God.	<b>What is God like?</b> When you read about Jesus in the Bible, you know more about God.	<b>Why did Jesus have to die?</b> Jesus died and rose again so that you can become a member of God's family.	<b>So . . . now what do I do?</b> You can live as God's child and show His love to others.
<b>Spark Principle</b>	<b>Gravity</b> When He made the world, God created all the scientific laws that govern it—laws like gravity.	<b>Cause &amp; Effect</b> Whatever we do (a cause) has a result (an effect). Whenever we sin, the effect is separation from God.	<b>Motion</b> Objects at rest stay at rest until a force puts them in motion. People were stuck in sin until Jesus came and put God's plan in motion.	<b>Transformation</b> Transformations occur when something new is introduced to an existing object and changes the object. Jesus changes us.	<b>Chain Reaction</b> A series of events caused by the one before. Sharing God's love with others can start a chain reaction and go on and on and on!
<b>Bible Verse</b>	"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. So God created man in his own likeness. He created him in the likeness of God. He created them as male and female." Genesis 1:1,27	"Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory." Romans 3:23	"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father also.'" John 14:6–7	"Christ died for sins once and for all time. The One who did what is right died for those who don't do right. He died to bring you to God." 1 Peter 3:18	"Lead a life of love, just as Christ did. He loved us. He gave himself up for us." Ephesians 5:2

# Course Description

## Lasers! Gyroscopes! Telescopes! Fusion, fission and chemical reactions!

At SonSpark Labs, explorers of all ages will find their imaginations spark to life as they research answers to universal questions by delving into the shadows of the ancient past, exploring scientific wonders of the present and even searching beyond—to an infinite future! The fun begins as you step into this astonishing world of God's plan for the people of His planet!

Each session focuses on one aspect of God's Plan for You = Jesus!, or GP4U = J!, as revealed through God's Word. Young scientists will participate in experiments and hands-on activities that help them get to know Jesus and God's plan of salvation. Kids will explore the answers to universal questions such as the following:



**Who made the world and who made me?** Session 1 will take kids on a whirlwind trip through Genesis to observe God's incredible creation. Kids will discover **God's Plan: 2 MAKE Us!**



**What happens when I do wrong things?** In Session 2, kids will find out how the sins committed by Adam and Eve affected all of history—including each of us today. Kids will be encouraged to know **God's Plan: 2 BE WITH Us!**



**What is God like?** In Session 3, kids will hear about the life of Jesus, the One God sent to bridge the separation created by our sin. Kids will learn that because of Jesus, they can experience **God's Plan: 4 Us 2 KNOW Him!**



**Why did Jesus have to die?** In Session 4, kids will learn that Jesus loves each one of them so much that He died and rose again so that they can become members of God's family. They'll be excited to discover the next part of **God's Plan: 2 SAVE Us!**



**So . . . now what do I do?** In Session 5, kids will learn what it means to live as a member of God's family—the expansion phase in **God's Plan: 2 LOVE Us 4-Ever!**

This summer, children will excitedly explore the amazing SonSpark Labs. They will trace God's life-changing plan as it's revealed from Creation to the present and on into the future. They'll find answers to life's most important questions. They will discover that God loves them and that through Jesus they can

be members of God's family and personally experience God's plan for each of us—God's Plan for You is Jesus!

# GP4U = J!



# Effective Teaching Tips

## Preparation Is the Key

- Pray for God to prepare the hearts of your children—and yours, as well! Read the Heart Prep to prepare your heart and mind for the important work you will be doing.
- After each session, use the questions provided in the Daily Recap to carefully consider everything that took place during each session of VBS so that you will be better prepared for the next!
- Be prepared before each day begins. Have all materials ready for use so that you can focus your attention on the children, not on what you may have forgotten!
- Read through the entire session several times so that you know it well.
- Read the Bible Story Recap as written, and also in your own Bible.
- Memorize the Bible verse. When kids see that YOU know the verse by heart, it makes verse memorization seem doable and valuable.
- Know the Daily Plan and the Q&A for each session, and use them to connect each activity to the session's Bible story and verse.



## Conversation Is an Art

- Be prepared to make good use of informal conversation before and after the story. Suggestions are provided for each session to help you focus these moments toward the Session Goals.
- Review the conversation suggestions provided. Think of ways you might tailor or build on these ideas to meet the needs of the children in your class. Write down any other ideas or questions you might ask, and keep them with you during the session. Listening to children's responses to your open-ended questions will help you discover what they know (or don't know) about a particular topic.
- Plan to listen as much as you talk. Look directly at the child who is talking. Demonstrate your interest by responding to the specific ideas the child expressed.
- Know each child's name and use it in positive, loving, affirming ways throughout the session. Look for times to express praise and encouragement to each child.
- Be sensitive to the different family situations in which children may live or with which they may be acquainted, and plan your conversation to be inclusive of all family situations.
- Stay with your children as they complete activities. Whenever possible, sit at children's eye level. They need to know that you are there, ready to help and ready to listen.
- Most importantly, pray for God to guide all your discussions with the children placed in your care.
- If you have a child acting disruptively, move near the child as you speak. Asking the child to answer a question can also help get the child back on track.

# Decorating Your Center

A few simple decorations can transform an ordinary room into part of SonSpark Labs! Complete decorating instructions and patterns are available in the *Lab Décor & More Theme Guide* and on Decorating & Crafts Resources in the Reproducible Power Pack.

## Decorating Overview

First, review the decorating options available to you. The illustrations on the next page show you the different room décors for which we have provided instructions and patterns. But don't stop there. If you have a great decorating idea of your own, go for it!

Next, consider the physical space where you will be leading activities, and then choose the room décor that best suits your space, the activities you will be leading and the room you like the best!

Use a variety of real items, painted items or both! Along with backdrops, these items will create the atmosphere of your chosen room. For examples of colors to use for painting patterns, refer to the photos. For additional information, see the decorating clips found at [gospellightvbs.com](http://gospellightvbs.com) and [MyVBSParty.com](http://MyVBSParty.com).

Use a variety of real items, painted items or both! Along with backdrops, these items will create the atmosphere of your chosen room. For examples of colors to use for painting patterns, refer to the photos. For additional information, see the decorating clips found at [gospellightvbs.com](http://gospellightvbs.com) and [MyVBSParty.com](http://MyVBSParty.com).

## Decorating Tip

The *Lab Décor & More Theme Guide* contains many more ideas and patterns than most churches will need. Evaluate and choose the ideas that are most appealing and workable for your situation.

## Decorating 1-2-3s

To make decorating for VBS even easier, we've organized all of our ideas according to ease of use. If you're short on time, the Level 1 and 2 ideas pack maximum fun into minimum effort. But if you're dreaming of transforming your room into a whole new world, Level 3 ideas will show you the way!

- 🕒 **Level 1** ideas include easy decorating options available from Gospel Light. They're ready-made decorations that we've prepared especially for SonSpark Labs VBS, as well as a couple of easy prop additions.
- 🕒 **Level 2** ideas include anything that you can gather or borrow. Whether you "shop" in your own garage, borrow from a friend or put a notice in your church bulletin, these items are sure to give your rooms added pizzazz.
- 🕒 **Level 3** ideas include ways to take decorating to the max! These include colorful backdrops, fun three-dimensional props and terrific patterns. If you've got the paint and the passion, these ideas are sure to take your VBS to the next level.

Want more? Then move on to **Level 4!** The forums at [gospellightvbs.com](http://gospellightvbs.com), [MyVBSParty.com](http://MyVBSParty.com) and the Gospel Light VBS Facebook page are filled with posts from enthusiastic VBS directors and leaders just like you. They're always excited to share great decorating ideas they've come up with and eager to hear any ideas you'd like to contribute. And don't forget the decorating board for SonSpark Labs on Pinterest.



## Dress the Part!

Make life in the lab come alive for your VBS kids! As leaders of the Games Center, take on new lab names: Beaker Ben, Laser Liz, Microscope Mindy, etc. Dress in brightly colored T-shirts with graphic designs or lab coats you decorated yourself, decorate your room and play songs from the *Music & More CD*. You'll have as much fun as the kids—maybe more!





### Kaboom! Chem Lab

A colorful chemistry lab is where kids can learn that God's Plan 4 U = Jesus creates the perfect solution for a great life!

### Bio-Life Lab

Create a lab where God's living creations are investigated, examined and celebrated.



### Phenomenal Physics Lab

What goes up must come down! The physics lab is where kids can learn about cause and effect in our world and how God turned our upside-down world right side up by sending Jesus!



### Inventor's Lab

In this crazy inventor's lab, kids can show off their creativity with ingenious activities!



# Games Center Basics

## Play and Learn!

The Games Center is often kids' favorite VBS center. Rarely are children aware of the direct learning value of a game, but they participate enthusiastically because they enjoy the game. The following games provide plenty of teamwork and fun while helping children memorize and review the session's Bible verse or review the Bible story and apply Bible truths to everyday life.

Remember, the goal is for everyone to have fun while learning, not to produce winners and losers. Before beginning each game, briefly discuss with your group the purpose of the game and the attitudes that help everyone have fun.

## Note

The games in this book are written for children in grades 3 and 4. Adaptation ideas for children in grades 1 and 2 and grades 5 and 6 are also included. Look for age-appropriate sets of Bible story review questions that have been provided as needed. Please use the suggested adaptations and questions (or use your own) to keep games, questions and conversations age appropriate.



## Games Center Basics

Either by yourself or with another leader or helper, complete the following steps:

1. Together with your VBS Director, determine whether you will use this center for Bible Story Review Games, Bible Verse Games, Recreation Games or a combination of games.
2. If your VBS combines games and snack, coordinate with the Snack Leader to determine how time will be shared and how kids will move from one area to another.
3. Familiarize yourself with each day's lesson overview. Read the Bible story references, Bible Story Recap and Bible Verse so that you can easily talk about them with the children. Memorize the Q&A and the Daily Plan so that you can guide conversation with your children toward these learning objectives.
4. For each session, review the Session Goals. These aims are primarily met in the Bible Story Center. One or more of these learning objectives will be met by each Bible game. (Note: Grades 3 and 4 goals have been included in this guide. Grades 1 and 2 and grades 5 and 6 goals differ slightly and can be found in *TruthLab Bible Stories* for those age levels.)
5. Read the game chosen for each session, and decide how to adapt it for each age level you will lead. These games are appropriate for third- and fourth-grade skill levels. However, adaptations are provided to simplify games as needed for use with first and second graders or to make them more challenging for fifth and sixth graders. Use the adaptations appropriate to the skill level of each group.
6. Collect supplies or submit a list to your VBS Director or Supply Coordinator. Group general supplies together and supplies specific to each day in a labeled box or bag. Prepare items as needed.
7. Shortly before VBS, decorate your assigned classroom or outdoor play area (see p. 6).
8. Lead children in the game as directed. Use the conversation suggestions provided with each



game. These questions are designed to help children understand the Bible truths and discover how those truths apply to their everyday lives. In the game discussion, be alert for natural openings to talk with children about the wonderful opportunity they have to receive God's love and forgiveness and to become members of His family. See "Leading a Child to Christ" (p.1).

## Tips for Leading Games

- ⦿ **Explain the rules clearly and simply**, in step-by-step order.
  - ⦿ **Offer a practice round.** When playing a game for the first time with a group, play it a few times just for practice. Players will learn the rules best when they actually play the game.
  - ⦿ **Keep players hydrated.** Have plenty of water, paper cups and trash cans at hand.
  - ⦿ **Consider playing any or all of these games outdoors!** Use rope instead of masking tape to make starting and boundary lines, etc.
  - ⦿ **Vary the process** by which teams are formed.
- ⦿ **Randomly divide children into teams.** Play the game once. Then announce that the person on each team who is wearing the most red (or blue, or is the tallest or has the longest hair, etc.) should rotate to the team to the right. Then play the game again. As you repeat this rotation process, vary the method of rotation so that children play with several different teammates each time.
  - ⦿ **Look for reasons to thank players** for effort, teamwork, attitude and enthusiasm!
  - ⦿ **Give positive instructions:** "Hit the ball with your hands and head only" instead of "Don't use your feet." This gives kids a clearer picture of what to do.
  - ⦿ **Preview the Bible story.** If children are rotating through various activity centers, remember that some classes may not have heard the Bible story before coming to your center. If this is the case, there are several options: play the Bible Verse Game instead of the Bible Story Review Game, play the previous day's game as a review or briefly tell or read the session's Bible story to kids before they play the game.



If the children attend an opening assembly, they may get the chance to see the Dr. Cool Bible story preview videos on the *ShowTime! Assemblies DVD*. Ask your VBS Director or Assembly Leader if children will see this preview of the session's Bible story before rotations begin, or if this is something you could do at the beginning of your center time!

## Tips for Using Teen Helpers

- Coordinate with the Youth Coordinator (see description under Job Descriptions in Folder C on the *Director's Planning Guide* CD-ROM). This person will help you choose the best teens to help in your center.
- Define requirements. Within the framework of your church's youth programs and child-safety policies, set standards to follow. You may want to create a contract that outlines time commitments and responsibilities for teens and their parents to sign.
- Provide training. Describe the details of what you expect them to do. Provide each one with a copy of the *Volunteer Pocket Guide*, and help them become familiar with it. Give teens a vision for ministry; challenge them to go beyond playing with kids to talking with and praying with them.

## Memory Verse Contests

As a feature of their VBS programs, many churches hold memory verse contests. But because individual memorization contests often discourage children for whom memorization is difficult, we recommend instead having contests in which each group works together to earn points all week long! For each session of VBS, create a new point goal with prizes for each team. Members of each team earn points toward their team's point goal through Bible verse memorization, attendance, bringing a Bible or friend, etc. Make each point goal achievable by the next session. For example, if by the second session 25 points have been earned, a prize will be given to the team members. At each closing assembly, announce which teams achieved—or surpassed—their point goal.





# Age-Level Characteristics

## Primary (Grades 1 and 2)

### Physical

The term “perpetual motion” may be used to describe children this age. Small-muscle coordination is still developing and improving. Girls are often ahead of boys at this stage of development.

**Teaching Tip:** Adjust the skills needed for playing games to accommodate children’s different physical abilities. For example, allow younger children to stand closer to a throwing target.

### Social

Children are concerned with pleasing their leaders. Each child is also struggling to become socially acceptable to peers. The Golden Rule is a tough concept at this age. Being first and winning are very important. Taking turns is hard, but this skill improves by the end of the second grade. A child’s social process moves gradually from I to you and we.

**Teaching Tips:** Playing games provides good opportunities for children to practice taking turns. Help children accept the opinions and wishes of others and consider the welfare of the group as well as their own welfare. Call attention to times when the group members cooperated successfully and thank them.

### Spiritual

Children can sense the greatness, wonder and love of God when they are helped with visual and specific examples. The nonphysical nature of God is baffling, but God’s presence in every area of life is generally accepted when parents and other adults communicate this belief by their attitudes and actions. Children can think of Jesus as a friend, but they need specific examples of how Jesus expresses love and care. This understanding leads many children to belief and acceptance of Jesus as their personal Savior. Children can comprehend talking to God anywhere, anytime and in their own words, and they need regular opportunities to pray.

**Teaching Tip:** The gospel becomes real as children feel love from those who talk about God. Show your

faith in a consistent, loving way to model the loving nature of God to children. As you play games with children, look for natural opportunities to talk with them about God’s love for them and His desire for them to become members of His family.

### Emotional

Children are experiencing new and frequently intense feelings as they grow in independence. Sometimes children find it hard to control their behavior. There is still a deep need for approval from adults and a growing need for approval by peers.

**Teaching Tips:** Seek opportunities to help all children in your group KNOW that you love them. Show genuine interest in each child and the child’s activities and accomplishments. Learn children’s names and use them often, especially when you have something positive to say!

### Cognitive

There is an intense eagerness to learn, and children of this age ask lots of questions. They like to repeat stories and activities. The concept of time is limited. Thinking is here and now, rather than in the past or future. Listening and speaking skills are developing rapidly; girls are often ahead of boys. Each child thinks everyone shares the same view. Children see parts, rather than how the parts make up the whole, and think very literally.

**Teaching Tips:** Talk simply and clearly, avoiding words the child may not understand. Use teams of mixed genders so that neither gender dominates physically or academically.





## Middler (Grades 3 and 4)

### Physical

Children at this level have good large- and small-muscle coordination. The girls are generally ahead of the boys. Children can work diligently for longer periods but can become impatient with delays or their own imperfect abilities.

**Teaching Tip:** When playing games that involve taking turns, keep teams small so that kids don't have to wait long to have a turn.

### Social

Children's desire for status within the peer group becomes more intense. Most children remain shy with strangers and exhibit strong preferences for being with a few close friends. Some children still lack essential social skills needed to make and retain friendships.

**Teaching Tip:** Be aware of the child who needs a friend. Move near that child and offer to include the child in what you are doing. If the child needs a partner to play the game, be that partner!



### Spiritual

Children are open to sensing the need for God's continuous help and guidance. They can recognize the need for a personal Savior. There may be a desire to become a member of God's family. Children who indicate an awareness of sin and a concern about accepting Jesus as Savior need careful guidance without pressure.

**Teaching Tips:** Give children opportunities to pray. Talk about the forgiving nature of God. Talk personally with a child who shows interest in trusting the Lord Jesus. Use the *God Loves You!* booklet (available from Gospel Light) to explain how to join God's family.

### Emotional

This is the age of teasing, nicknames, criticism and using increased verbal skills to vent anger. By eight years of age, children have developed a sense of fair play and a value system of right and wrong. At nine years of age, children are searching for their identity beyond membership in the family unit.

**Teaching Tips:** You have a great opportunity to be a Christian example at a time when children are eagerly searching for models! Encourage children's creativity and boost their view of themselves. Let children know by your words and by your actions that "love is spoken here" and that you will not let others hurt them or let them hurt others.

### Cognitive

Children are beginning to realize there may be valid opinions besides their own. They are becoming able to evaluate alternatives and are less likely than before to fasten on to one viewpoint as the only one possible. Children are also beginning to think in terms of "the whole." Children think more conceptually and have a high level of creativity. By this stage, however, many children have become self-conscious as their understanding has grown to exceed their abilities in some areas.

**Teaching Tips:** As you play Bible Verse Games, ask questions to help children understand the meaning of the words. To check understanding, invite children to say the verse in their own words.

## Preteen (Grades 5 and 6)

### Physical

Children have mastered most basic physical skills, are active and curious and seek a variety of new experiences. Rapid growth can cause some preteens to tire easily.

**Teaching Tip:** Be sure to have both male and female teen helpers who participate enthusiastically in the games. Seeing older kids enjoying the games will encourage preteens who might otherwise worry about being “too cool” to play the games.

### Social

Friendships and activities with peers flourish. Children draw together and away from adults in the desire for independence. The child wants to be a part of a same-gender group and doesn't want to stand alone in competition.

**Teaching Tip:** When you play games that require scorekeeping, move on to the next round or activity without announcing the score or winner. If the activity is fun and compelling, most kids will never notice!

### Spiritual

Children can have deep feelings of love for God, can share the good news of Jesus with a friend and are capable of involvement in outreach and service projects. The child may seek guidance from God to make everyday and long-range decisions.

**Teaching Tips:** Provide opportunities for children to make choices and decisions based on biblical concepts. Encourage children to use these concepts as they play games together.

### Emotional

Children are usually cooperative, easygoing, content, friendly and agreeable. Be aware that some preteens

experience unsteady emotions and can quickly shift from one mood to another.

**Teaching Tips:** Be patient with changes of feelings. Give many opportunities to make choices with only a few necessary limits. Take time to listen as children share their experiences and problems with you.

### Cognitive

Children of this age are verbal! They are able to express ideas and feelings in a creative way. By 11 years of age, most children have begun to reason abstractly. Making ethical decisions becomes a challenging task. They begin to think of themselves as grown up and at the same time question adult concepts. Hero worship is strong.

**Teaching Tips:** Include lots of opportunities for talking, questioning and discussing in a safe, accepting environment. Ask children for their ideas of how the games could be played better.

