

## WOO HOO - Teaching Techniques for Exploring the Bible

**1.** Children's ministry is about kids encountering the God of the universe.  
... about the God who created everything from nothing.  
... about the God who can split mighty rivers so millions of people can cross.  
... the God who brings down buildings when his people blow trumpets - in obedience to him.  
... the God who came to earth as a baby.  
... the God who in Jesus, brought freedom, gave sight, calmed storms, fed thousands on a few fish, walked on water.  
... the God who let himself be nailed to a cross because of love.  
... and the God who came back from the dead.  
... the God who in the Holy Spirit empowered a worldwide movement of churches, people who believe and follow, grow and love.  
What a story we have to share.

**Think spot:** What are some of the most **exciting** or **dramatic** or **GORY** or **scary** or **amazing** stories that you can think of from the Bible?

**Teaching technique 1:** *Remember, we have the greatest stories in the world to teach and then teach with that feeling.*

You may have heard the story more times than you can remember but these kids may never have heard it. Remind yourself of how you felt when you first heard that Jesus could heal people, walk on water and that he wants to be your friend.

Bible stories are about changed lives. The Israelites went from being slaves in Egypt to being their own nation, in their own land, eventually with their own kings... I know things didn't go too well – but consider the number of changed lives. And then the lives changed by Jesus - people seeing, walking, being freed from demons, people coming back to life. Followed by fisherman Peter becoming a preacher and staunch opponent Paul becoming a church planter. These stories of encountering God change people's lives, yours and mine.

That's because what we teach isn't a theory but a practical relationship. We teach about the God of love and God's relationships with people throughout history, including how we can have a relationship with God today and how our lives can be changed.

**Think spot:** How has God changed your life?

**2.** When was the last time you shared with your kids about how God is at work in your life? When did you last share with your teaching team about what God is doing in you? When did you last provide an opportunity for kids to tell their stories about God at work in their lives, either in the kid's program or in church?

**Teaching technique 2:** *Share a balance of **Bible** stories, **your** stories and the **children's** stories.*

Personal stories of lives being changed, of God making a difference, are rarely boring.

**3.** Sharing stories or 'story time' is usually thought of as a passive, quiet, sit still and listen time. But in today's digital, post-modern world we need to, and we can, open the Bible creatively and share stories using a variety of methods.

**Teaching technique 3:** *Explore the Bible and tell stories using a variety of creative activities such as puppets, drama, music, dance, STORYTELLING, video, games, food, poetry, crafts and computers.*

We capture children's imaginations when we creatively tell and explore stories.

**Think spot:** Brainstorm how you might creatively tell kids the story of Jesus' calling his first disciples (Luke 5:1-11).

**4. Teaching technique 4:** *Engage children's senses –hear, see, say, do (and taste, touch and smell!)*

Children learn in different ways. Teaching techniques are about teaching in different ways so that children can learn. Children learn through what they hear, see, say and do.

**Think spot:** What are some activities to engage children with the Bible that allow them to:

- hear
- see
- say
- do

**5. Teaching technique 5:** *Use a balance of activities.*

This includes:

- fine motor (hands and fingers) and gross motor skills (more of whole body)
- indoor and outdoor spaces
- large and small group activities
- range of energy levels, balance between active and quiet time

A good rule of thumb is that a child's age is the length of time in minutes for that child to spend on a particular activity, especially sitting still. So for an average five year old, keep sitting still time to under five minutes and for ten year olds keep it to ten minutes and realistically with any age group try not to go beyond ten minutes of passive time in one stretch.

**6. Teaching technique 6:** *Use age-appropriate teaching techniques.*

As children grow older, they benefit from different approaches to learning, so provide different types of activities, such as hands-on experiences, research and discovery tasks, group work and discussion.

**Think spot:** Take a moment to think about the following questions and maybe write down your answers:

What is something from these notes that you would like to implement or have-a-go at in the next week or month?

How are you going to make this happen?

Talk to God about your answers. If you can, share this with someone on your team or at your church.

## **Woo hoo!**

Let's create moments in our children's ministry that engage children with the Bible in a 'Woo hoo!' way. For example the story of Jesus' calming the storm in Mark 4:35 – 41 can be explored with children filling a room with storm sound effects and actions, with sea-sick improvisations and lots of emotions – fear, peace, surprise, terror, questioning.

The story finishes with the disciples asking each other, 'Who is this?'

That is the question that our kids are asking, 'Who is Jesus?'

Let's get creative and make some 'Woo hoo!' moments for our kids so they can explore for themselves who Jesus is and meet with him.