

Amazing Acts

Theme: Western Fun

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Join us on our Facebook group. Interact with editors and Sunday school teachers. Post pictures of your class. Brag on what God is doing in your class. You teach with us; now interact with us. Check out our group, "Word Aflame Toddler Teachers Curriculum."



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God's Amazing Acts

Don't you just love seeing expressions of awe and wonder on the faces of your toddlers? At this early stage of development, life is full of new and amazing things for them. A candy bar wrapped as a present. A new toy (even if it's used). A crown to wear for the day. It takes so little to impress them and put joy on their faces.

As adults, we've become a little hardened and desensitized. What once was amazing is not so much anymore. Perhaps we have heard and read the amazing acts of Jesus so many times that we aren't quite as excited as we used to be. It may seem a little more difficult to be enthusiastic, and a little easier to simply share the facts and move on. After all, your students are only two and three years old; how much of this are they really getting?

Take notice: they are getting it! No, they're not getting all the doctrine or the eschatology (many adults don't get that). They are getting your enthusiasm. They are learning to repeat key phrases such as God is amazing! Praise Jesus! Jesus gives us joy! Your facial expressions, hand and body movements, enthusiastic words, and overall animation are planting more than you know into these little minds and hearts.

As you study each of these lessons, go beyond memorizing. Read it as though it is the first time you have heard this story. Why did Jesus use clay to heal the blind man's eyes? How did Peter manage to catch the exact fish that had the exact amount of tribute needed? How did the lame man at the gate Beautiful jump and leap after never, ever having done it before? Do you feel it? Is the awe and wonder setting in?

Let the amazing acts of Jesus amaze you!

Teacher Manual Downloadable Resources

1. Visit www.pentecostalpublishing.com to access the download site.
2. If you are an existing customer, click *sign in* to log in to your account. If you are a new user, click *create an account* to open an account for the site.
3. Hover over the *view cart* menu link and click the *view cart* button.
4. Enter in the Coupon Code box on the screen and click *update cart*. (The file should display on the screen and reflect that the download comes at no charge.)
5. Click *continue* and then *submit order*. You will see a button with the name of the zip file. Click on this button to download the resource.
6. This coupon code will be valid for one year from the date of the first lesson.

Teacher's Resource Packet Downloadable Resources

To access the reproducible items from the resource packet (TRP), see the resource packet instruction sheet. If you have not purchased a packet, you can do so by going to www.pentecostalpublishing.com or calling 866-819-7667.

A Look at the Curriculum

Theme: Western Fun

An all-time favorite room theme is western: horses, cowboys, cacti, western towns, and ranches. It's an exciting and easy decor that always succeeds with the children.

There is certainly no shortage of western décor. Party supply stores carry scene setters that instantly transform a room. (Warning: many packages include saloon doors, and while they are very western in appearance, they are not exactly what one expects to find on a church wall!) Tablecloths, posters, plastic shapes (such as wagon wheels, longhorn skulls, and cacti), banners, and paper cutouts will help in your decorating process. And of course, neckerchiefs, cowboy/girl hats, and stick ponies are a must. Do not forget websites like Pinterest, where you can search for “western classroom” and find so many great ideas.

In the teacher's resource packet, find downloadable and reproducible theme resources of western décor pieces, including a western font 📄 so you can make your own lettering. The unit memory work posters (TRP) have a western theme as well.

Note: if your children's church group has used the *Camp Harmony* series from *kids POWER hour*, check to see if they kept any of their western décor.

Let's get this thing rolling! Yee-haw!

Although you are decorating entire walls, keep most items at children's level. A two-year-old will not get excited over something that is seven feet above him. Remember they like to explore and touch, so make sure all your décor items meet toddler safety guidelines: no staples, wires, or small items that fit in the mouth. Do not mount valued items you do not want them to touch or accidentally destroy.

Western Basics

One wall is the teaching wall where the students gather for worship and the Bible lesson. Mount the memory work posters (TRP) and students' attendance and memory charts at children's eye level on this wall.

One tends to connect the desert with a western theme. However, depending on location, spring in the west is not much different



from other areas of the country. If you have a classroom tree, do not hesitate to decorate it with the lighter spring green construction paper leaves. Add tissue paper flowers to colorful pots around the base of the tree. If space is a problem, make a garden plot on the wall near the tree, using tissue-paper flowers for a colorful 3-D effect.

The desert has flowering cacti, wild flowers, and trees that appear stunted with much less foliage. Use the downloadable theme art 📄 to create some paper cacti to put in large colorful pots, adding tissue paper flowers for a bright spring look. Place these in different areas of the room. (While real flowers are a wonderful addition to a toddler room, real cacti are not!)

Since toddlers are inquisitive and love to touch things, be sure to use western items safe for your classroom. A wooden wagon wheel would be an awesome touch, but it must be splinter free. On the other hand, the flimsier plastic pieces available at party stores may not last long around rough-playing toddlers. These could be mounted to walls, where students are less likely to run over them. Barrels and buckets likewise are wonderful western pieces, but must be safe for the toddler environment.

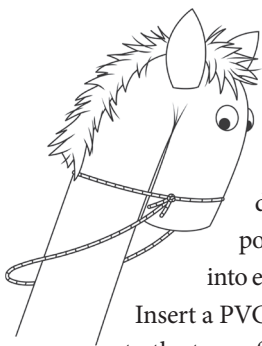
Western Walls

Keeping in mind that decorations need to be at the toddlers' eye level, decorate three walls with typical western themes: mountains, desert, and town. If you are using scene setters or background paper, cover the walls for sky and ground. If you cannot locate patterned paper, use solids or plastic tablecloths to cover the walls.

Mountains: Add a blue sky, green grass, and a series of mountains: low green hills in the front, with a few taller brown and then even taller dark green mountains rising behind them. Add snow to the tall green mountains peaks, which should tower above the students. Add cacti to the brown hills, and some flowers on the green rolling hills.

Desert: This wall could be similar to Monument Valley in Colorado or the Painted Desert of Arizona. Add a blue sky and brown ground. Using a different shade of brown or even a dark brick red, add some towering plateaus and buttes (see theme art 📄). Use theme art 📄 to create cacti (greens and browns), with some flowering cacti as well. Create some Joshua trees to scatter among the cacti, and some smaller scraggly bushes. Mount a broken wagon wheel (the inexpensive plastic kind from a party store, cut in half or third) so that it appears buried in the sand. Add a similar longhorn steer skull. Use the theme art 📄 to create a covered wagon or two.

Town: Use the theme art 📄 to create a row of western buildings. Again, keep in mind these need to be toddler sized, not teacher size. Do not worry about so much sky rising up from their eye level. That's exactly what they see every day. Paint the buildings a variety of colors (even though not realistic). Use the western font from the theme letters 📄 to add words. Create some wooden post signs to mount to the wall or place in buckets near the wall for a 3-D effect.



The Hitching Post

Each child needs a stick pony. Follow the stick pony instruction sheet 📄 to create your own stick ponies from pool noodles (much safer than dowel rods). To create a hitching post to secure the ponies, cut a pool noodle in half and insert PVC pipe into each half. Mount these in buckets filled with rocks.

Insert a PVC pipe in a full noodle and use twine to secure it to the tops of the two upright halves. Place the hitching post in front of the town wall.

For more ideas on room décor, network with toddler teachers from around the world through our Facebook group: *Word Aflame Toddler Curriculum Teachers*. Once your theme is in place, take pictures and share with our Facebook group to inspire others.

Before posting children's pictures on Facebook or other social media, be sure to have signed parental permission. (See Model Release Form 📄).

If possible, once your room is completely decorated, test your décor by allowing one or two toddlers to freely explore (before submitting it to an entire class), to see if any safety precautions (like choking hazards or dangerous areas) have been overlooked. As a general rule, if something fits in the hole of a paper-towel tube, it is a choking hazard. Avoid using tacks, pushpins, and straight pins because they are easily swallowed by curious two- and three-year-olds.

Western Photo Shoot

Near the tree or cactus, create two western backdrops for photos, one for a cowboy and one for a cowgirl. Use the downloadable Photo Shoot Images 📄 to create the children shapes, painting them with typical western blues and reds. These could be stand-alone heavy cardboard or foamboard pieces, or they could be sides of a large appliance box. Open one side of the box for children to enter. Angle the box so the two sides project into the room, hiding the opening and fourth blank side.

Storage Ideas

Provide a place for children to store their personal items as well as any class items they will be taking home. Be sure each child's bin is clearly identified, preferably with his photo since toddlers cannot read. Following the western theme, use wicker baskets, small wooden crates, or fruit baskets. Shoeboxes could be decorated with western paper or neckerchiefs. Students could decorate their storage bins with purchased western stickers.

Extras

Keeping in mind the safety of your toddlers, provide various western toys such as clip-on sheriff's badges, cowboy hats, neckerchiefs, Playmobile and Lego western sets, horses, plastic cowboy and Indian figures, and so on. Avoid guns.

Use colorful neckerchiefs wherever possible. Fold them over twine strung between walls, high enough children cannot touch them, but low enough to be in their range of vision. Tie them to children's chairs, place them under containers (such as the offering container, crayon cases, etc.), or use them as borders around bulletin boards.

At the end of the day, collect and sanitize toys, hats, and neckerchiefs with Lysol or lice control spray.

Building a Sensory Table

By definition, a sensory table is a table that uses a bin or bins that can be filled with “sensory” materials such as water, sand, rice, bubbles, and so forth to enhance a toddler’s learning experience.

While sensory tables can be purchased in most teaching stores, a good handyman can build a budget-conscious sensory table keeping these things in mind:

- **The table top must be at a toddler’s height.** A toddler should not need to stand on anything to interact with a sensory table.
- **The table must be extremely sturdy.** A group of toddlers should be able to put their full weight on the table without risking injury.
- **The sensory tub should be easily removable.** At the completion of a sensory activity, the teacher must be able to empty and sanitize the bins with minimal effort.
- **The tub should be coverable.** Most bins come with a lid. By keeping the area closed when not in use, the mystique of the activity center is increased.



Door Poster

Mount the door poster (TRP) at children’s eye level. If you have a bulletin board outside your classroom, consider mounting pictures of the toddlers wearing cowboy hats. Passersby will enjoy these pictures.

Offering

Toddlers enjoy putting their offering in fun containers. Instead of just using a bowl, consider using these ideas. You might want to change containers each unit. **Always take the offering as the students enter so they do not lose it or play with it.**

Borrow or purchase an animated bank. (Check second-hand stores or garage sales.) Toddlers love coin sorters that make whirring noises. The important thing is for them to see and hear something happening when they give. This will encourage them to give.

Ideas for offering containers include a small silver or wooden bucket, a vintage metal milk can, a plastic Mason jar (decorate with western ribbon, twine, or a neckerchief), a small wooden barrel, a blue tin camping cup, or a cowboy boot. Many of these can be purchased at resale shops or craft stores.

Attendance and Memory Charts

The last two pages of each activity paper provides an attendance and memory chart. Mount the charts at children’s eye level on the teaching wall. Each week a child attends, he adds a western item (TRP) to his attendance chart. Each week after the memory work, whether you teach the Bible Words or the Bible Passage, the child adds a purchased star sticker to a circle next to the appropriate chart.

For your convenience, the attendance and memory charts are available as individual pages on our website to download and print for visitors. Please order one set of activity papers for each student and a few extras to cover visitors and class growth.

Do the Word Learning Activities

Because every class is different regarding room space, number and age of students, and length of class time, teachers may select when and how to best utilize the learning activity options designed to teach the lesson objective. Pick and choose what works best for you and your students. Use your imagination and enhance each with the following learning center possibilities.

Role-Play

Encourage children to recreate what they heard during Bible time. Keep a tub handy with biblical clothing as students frequently role-play the Bible lesson. **Always keep story props from week to week for review and role-play.**

Book Nook

Each lesson offers book ideas to help reinforce the learning objectives. Some are directly related to the Bible Lesson and some may be toddler learning books, such as counting or listening. Make the book center a peaceful place for when your students need to slow down and experience some quiet time.

Blocks/Sensory

This is a double-duty area. Fill it with assorted building blocks, such as mega Legos (never the small Legos), wooden and plastic building blocks, cardboard bricks (teacher supply stores), and cardboard boxes.

Several activities this quarter suggest using a sensory table. If one is not available, makeshift methods can be devised, but a sensory table is a recommended piece of furniture for the toddler classroom. When used effectively, it aids in the cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical, and creative development of a child. If a table is not an option, plastic tubs will work.

Art/Writing

This area is the craft area, filled with activity papers, markers, crayons, toddler-safe scissors, and assorted craft supplies. Keep supplies in sealed containers and out of the children's reach until ready to be monitored and used. Lapboards are a nice addition to this area.

Activity Paper

During this section, students complete the second activity of their activity papers.

Music/Movement

Music is an important part of a toddler's life. Provide a supply of musical instruments. These can be found at dollar, discount, and teacher supply stores, as well as online. Homemade instruments can be as simple as boxes or plastic bowls and wooden spoons for drums, metal spoons to clang, metal pot lids as cymbals, Christmas bells, baby rattlers, and cardboard tube trumpets.

The teacher's manual is available as a downloadable resource in the form of PDF and Word documents. Open the PDF using a reader like Acrobat to study your lesson on the go using your favorite handheld device (like an iPad). The DOC files open using a word processor (like Microsoft Word), allowing you to add to or delete from a lesson and to craft the material to suit your particular interests and needs. Reproduction of these resources is permissible for local church use only, and is intended to help the individual teacher, not to make our curriculum available to multiple classrooms for the price of one manual. Please purchase one manual per teacher.

This curriculum, *Amazing Acts*, is Bible-based and written on a developmentally appropriate level for children ages two and three. The basic lesson structure is as follows:

Welcome to the Word: Welcome students to the classroom. As students get settled in, take attendance and collect offering. A fun introductory activity engages the children while everyone arrives. Then a hands-on activity utilizing the activity paper introduces the lesson topic. This focuses students on the lesson objective (see "children will" on the lesson title page), while giving potentially messy activities time to dry before being sent home.

Open the Word: Prayer and worship transition students to one of two memory work options. The *Bible Passage* quotes the verse directly from the KJV; the *Bible Words* simplify the passage into an age-appropriate phrase. Because toddlers learn best through repetition, each unit utilizes a set of memory work to be learned over a four- to five-week period. Determine which memorization option works best with your teaching method and students' maturity. The *Bible Words* are also a simple take-away thought; repeat it frequently, letting children echo you, so by the end of the session they will take it home and share it with family.

Reveal the Word: Use Snack Break to sit down toddlers and help them focus as you tell the Bible lesson. As they wrap up their eating, continue with the lesson.

Do the Word: This life-application section offers many lesson-related activity options to further apply the lesson through playtime. By design, students will think they are playing while they are really learning. Select the activities best fitting your group and setting to drive home the lesson objective. Since toddlers rarely focus on a task for more than five minutes, prepare several options and expect to move through them quickly. If your classroom space allows, consider offering multiple activities at a time, with a teacher assigned to each activity, and let children rotate after several minutes.

Praise and Worship Songs for Toddlers

Be Careful Little Eyes What You See	God Made Me	If You're Happy and You Know It	Rise and Shine
Climb up Sunshine Mountain	He's Got the Whole World	I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy down	The B-I-B-L-E
Deep and Wide	Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes	in My Heart	The Birdie with a Yellow Bill
Everybody Ought to Go to Sunday School	His Banner over Me Is Love	Jesus Loves Me	The Wise Man Built His House upon a Rock
Father Abraham	If We All Will Pull together	Jesus Loves the Little Children	This Little Light of Mine
Fishers of Men	I'm in the Lord's Army	My God Is So Big	Whisper a Prayer
From the Rising of the Sun	I'm So Happy	O How I Love Jesus	Zacchaeus

In unit 1, Amazing Acts of Jesus, children will tell about miracles Jesus performed.

Bible Passage: "Praise him for his mighty acts"

(Psalm 150:2).

Bible Words: Praise Jesus!

In unit 2, Jesus Did Amazing Acts through Peter, children will share how Peter worked for God.

Bible Passage: "The LORD hath done great things for us"

(Psalm 126:3).

Bible Words: God does great things for us.


In unit 3, Jesus Did Amazing Acts through Paul, children will identify how Paul worked for God.

Bible Passage: "Rejoice in the Lord always"

(Philippians 4:4).

Bible Words: Jesus gives us joy.

REACH

Does your church provide a nursery for children under age two? Download and print out the REACH pages  for those in your church who work with infants (pages 8 and 9).

Research features findings from studies done on infant and toddler development.

Environment features dos and don'ts on creating appropriate environments.

Attachment features the importance of providing proper nurturing behaviors.

Caregiving features the issues involved in actual care, such as diapering, feeding, and so forth.

Home Connection features ideas to build the relationship between the classroom and the home/family.


Perhaps schedule a quarterly meeting to discuss the material, to help ensure the infants in your care are being properly nurtured.

Activity Paper

The activity paper offers an attendance chart and a memory chart, as well as two activities per lesson to be used as an integral part of each week's lesson. Order one activity paper per student with a few extra for growth and potential visitors. At the beginning of the quarter, recruit teens to help tear off the pages and then gather by lesson, placing them in thirteen lesson folders for easier distribution each week. Mount the charts on the wall at toddler height for easy access each week.

On the front page, a fun, hands-on activity will be used at the beginning of each lesson to introduce the topic. The second-page activity usually consists of coloring and drawing and can be used as part of the Do the Word life application, unless otherwise noted.

Home Connection

On the bottom of the second page is a URL address for parents to take advantage of our Home Connection. Review questions, book suggestions, lesson objectives, and memory work are provided for at home discussion. This piece is also available in the resource packet (TRP)  for teachers to copy and send home with the students.

Note: Did you know, after accounting for all maintenance and supply expenses, it costs a church more to make boring gray-scale copies of the activity paper than it does to buy a full-color activity paper? Churches sometimes think they are saving money by buying one activity paper and making copies, but in reality it is costing them more! (Not to mention that copying the activity paper violates copyright laws.) One exception is permission is granted to make copies for visitors only. Plan ahead by ordering extras to allow for class growth and a few visitors, and avoid the need to copy.

Resource Packet (TRP)

The teacher's resource packet contains teaching tools, supplements, and visual aids to enhance every lesson. Use the western theme-related materials as a springboard to decorate your room. Mount the door poster (TRP) at a toddler's eye level to welcome students to the classroom. Use the Memory Work posters (TRP) to teach the *Bible Passage* and *Bible Words*. Purchase star stickers for the wrapper memory charts.

A Bible art (TRP) is available for each lesson. Show these pictures during the story and when asking the application questions.

Some lessons implement downloadable music and sound effects 📎 to enhance the learning environment. Using the access code on the instruction sheet, download songs onto your smart phone, burn these audio files to a CD, or download them to an iPod or other playback device. Determine your preferred playback method now and prepare the entire quarter's sound tracks for easy accessibility.

Several standard classroom helps are available through the packet's access code. Read *Characteristics of a Toddler* 📎 and *Room Environment Check* 📎 to help you better understand your students and their classroom needs.

Make copies of the *Child Information Form* 📎, asking parents to fill them out at a child's first drop off. Keep these forms on file. By asking for this information, parents see the teacher taking responsibility, which garners trust. Remember to keep the information pertinent by asking parents to review them at the start of every quarter. When a food allergy or other potentially harmful condition or situation (like a divorce) becomes known, communicate it to all helpers and make a special note. Disregard

of this information violates trust. In this litigation-happy world, maintenance of this file can decrease church liability should a situation arise.

To further reduce church liability, a *Sign-in Sheet* 📎 should be maintained at the class entrance. Parents will sign this form every time a child is picked up or dropped off. Streamline this process by printing the names of regular attendees (and any special notes or concerns) prior to making copies. This form ensures that children are clearly signed in and out by a responsible, authorized adult. If a child is not to be released to a person identified on the *Child Information Form* 📎, communicate this with a special note.

For nursery workers, the TRP also includes a *Baby Observation* form 📎. Use this form to communicate to parents of infants diaper changes, meals, and any other significant interaction. By using these forms, parents will sense responsibility in the worker, ultimately resulting in greater trust.

A sheet of postcards (TRP) 📎 is also included for teachers to mail to students. Parents love it when their children receive mail showing how their child is appreciated. Additional postcards can be printed as a downloadable resource.

Each quarter also features a Teacher Training article (TRP) 📎. Compile the articles into a three-ring binder as a useful resource, especially to train new teachers. Download previous training articles at pentecostalpublishing.com/t-teacherstraining1.aspx. Please contact us if you would like to have a specific topic addressed in the future.

R

RESEARCH

E

ENVIRONMENT

A

ATTACHMENT

C

CAREGIVING

H

HOME CONNECTION

These pages contain insight for those who work with infants. Download and print these pages for those in your church who work with children under the age of two. Perhaps schedule a quarterly meeting to discuss the material, to help ensure the infants in your care are being properly nurtured.



Findings from studies done on infant and toddler development

This curriculum is based on the belief that children need to experience child-centered, teacher-directed activities each Sunday through the use of an integrated curriculum. Children learn best if they have the opportunity to know something in a variety of ways. Research has shown that most of a

Before an infant becomes verbal, the ability to decipher language is developing. When you hear a baby make different sounds as he jabbars, imitate the sounds by saying them back to the baby. You may also use hand gestures to accompany certain words such as waving “bye-bye” when you hear a similar sound to the words. It is good to turn their sounds into words. For example, if a baby makes a “bah bah” sound, you can hold up a ball and say, “ball.” This process helps a baby learn how we communicate through language (verbal and sign). Talking to the babies lets them see how you use your lips and tongue to form words and make different sounds. Read stories aloud using various voice inflections and tones to illustrate what is happening in the story. Infants enjoy hearing rhyming and rhythmic repetitive tones.

The worst thing that can happen is for an infant to be overlooked simply because he cannot verbally communicate. The infant teacher needs to hone the skill of reading the infant’s body language and facial expressions. Do not forget to talk with God on a regular basis about helping you be the best infant teacher in the world!

child’s potential for learning is established by age six, and the infant/toddler years are the most critical time for brain development. With the new technology of our day, which shows that the early years are the learning years, infants and toddlers need to be given the opportunity to develop relationships with godly, caring people. During such a valuable time to interact with each child, teachers of infants cannot afford to waste one minute. We know now how much of the child’s development depends on the right interactions of teachers!



Dos and don'ts on creating appropriate environments

You can help to develop your infants’ motor skills by setting up an environment that allows for a variety of activities. A three- to six-month-old learns to push up on his elbows in prone position and eventually is able to push up onto his hands. A young baby needs to spend play time in prone (lying on

You can help to develop infant visual skills by the colors you choose to display. Babies three to six months old begin to increasingly enjoy objects with color. Prior to three months, babies often like cool colors (lemon yellow and sky blue), while the six-month-olds are getting ready for brighter colors (hot pink and red). Each month or two, your room should be re-evaluated and set up to meet the current developmental ages of your infants.

Young children learn best in an environment that affords them the opportunity to explore, discover, and enjoy the learning process. During these early years, children need a stimulating environment that will enable them to build their own knowledge through many and varied opportunities to see, hear, smell, taste, and touch. They need opportunities to explore and experiment, to question and guess, to fail and try again. When a baby delights in continually dropping the toy down onto the floor, he is learning. Most importantly, children need a nurturing environment where they can feel secure and can trust that they are loved and cared for. These objectives require having a teacher who is competent in providing both education and loving care.

stomach) position. These activities are the beginnings of shoulder stability and arch development in the hands.

You can help to develop sensory skills through a “positional sense”; this helps us to define if our body is moving, and where we are in space (sitting up or lying down). This positional sense is why babies like to be rocked. Help babies to have an enriched environment by alternately rocking and swaying. Try different rocking chairs, and change the baby’s position—swaddled in a blanket, upright on your shoulder, or lying on his stomach across your lap.

REACH



The importance of providing proper nurturing behaviors

All children need to know that their teacher is there to keep them safe and to attend to their needs. Infants can often feel overwhelmed when they are adjusting to the new environment of a classroom. They are learning how to balance their desire to explore their new surroundings with their

desire to feel safe and secure. Teachers of infants have the specialized task of getting to know their students merely by observing their behaviors while in their care. Make notes to profile your babies, describing their likes and dislikes. The better you can know and understand the personalities of each child, the better equipped you are for bonding and forming secure attachment.

Every child, as you well know, displays his own temperament at an early age. Therefore, it is important for you to take time to learn the traits and characteristics of each child in your care. Some children expect you to greet them with exuberance and animated gestures. Other children who are shy or slow to warm up will need to be greeted in a low-key, calm, and cautious manner. God will help you learn to “read” your students so you can form the necessary bond of trust that is so critical to healthy development.

The little ones in your class require lots of one-on-one interaction that includes direct eye contact, talking, gentle handling, hugging, and cuddling. Be as sensitive as possible to a child’s mood and temperament. You can best know how to relate to an infant by close observation of the child’s body language and expressions. The Bible admonishes us to show respect to the littlest members of our church family.



The issues involved in actual care, such as diapering and feeding

An allergy is an exaggerated immune response or reaction to substances that are generally not fatal. Some babies that enter your classroom will already have identified allergies to various ingredients in food, lotions, etc. Any food can cause an allergic reaction, but in children, the most

common food allergies are to eggs, soy, milk, peanuts, dye in drinks or other foods, wheat, strawberries, and tree nuts (walnuts, pecans, etc.).

Fortunately, if they avoid the offending foods when they are young, many children outgrow their allergy to milk, egg, wheat, and soy by the time they are five years old. (Allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, and shellfish tend to be lifelong.) It is important to collect allergy information from parents, keeping it posted in the room so everyone working with the infants can be aware. (See

Child Information form in teacher’s resource packet.) Honey should never be given to infants because of possible infant botulism. While botulinum spores are also found in soil and dust (especially vacuum cleaner-bag dust), avoiding honey is the number one prevention. Adults who swallow botulinum spores are almost never affected, but when infants swallow the spores, the spores can germinate in their immature gastrointestinal tracts and begin producing botulinum toxin, which is the most poisonous natural substance known to man. Botulism has occurred even when only a small amount of honey was used to sweeten a pacifier (*European Journal of Epidemiology*, November 1993). Infant botulism can occur at any time in the first year of life, but is most common in the first six months. Thankfully, most instances of infant botulism produce such small amounts of toxin that the cases remain mild. Also as a precaution, vacuuming should only be done while infants are not in the room.



Ideas to build the relationship between the classroom and the home/family

Communication between your infants’ families and you should be a two-way street. Try to provide as many resources as possible to allow for good communication. If a family’s native language is different from yours, ask the family to share some key words (eat, thank you, I love you) in

their language for you to use with their baby. If the family is hearing impaired, learn to sign some basic words for communication. Anything you can do to make a better connection with the families will be a blessing to their infant and to everyone involved. Your role as an infant teacher is unique because you have to “speak” for the child who is still unable to speak for himself. By

using the “What I Did Today” form, you are telling the parents that you take an individual interest in each child. This is just another way for you to show God’s love.

Suggest to anxious parents to create a small 4" x 6" vinyl photo album of family members to leave with their child. Ask parents to label the names of the people in the pictures and use clear tape to seal the openings to prevent water damage to the pictures if they are placed in a baby’s mouth. Hearing and seeing familiar faces can be a source of comfort, depending on the developmental level of the child. This is also a great opportunity to use language that is unique to each child as you are able to say the names of his family members, and it helps you become a little more familiar with the extended families of your infants.

Jesus Creates Eyes from Clay



Welcome to the Word

Welcome Write students' names on the attendance charts (AP) Ⓡ. Prepare the offering container.

Attendance art squares (TRP) Ⓡ, glue sticks, spare change (optional)

Activity Paper Print one set of face parts (TRP) Ⓡ per student; three sets are on the page. Cut these out before class.

Activity papers, glue sticks, crayons

Open the Word

Worship "All Things Bright and Beautiful"

Prayer Chair, Bible, soft instrumental music

Memory Work In your Bible, bookmark Psalm 150 and highlight verse 2. Purchase star stickers. These will be used throughout the quarter.

Unit 1 memory work poster (TRP), memory charts (AP) Ⓡ

Reveal the Word

Snack Break Prepare a fruit cup (oranges, purple grapes cut in half, melons, and peaches) for each child. Provide cups with lids for drinks.

Bible Lesson Obtain a male doll and close his eyes (or cover with black paper circles). Fill a shallow bowl with water.

Bible art: Jesus Heals a Blind Man (TRP), play dough

Do the Word

Role Play

Book Nook Books (see page 16)

Blocks/Sensory Put balls (or drinking straws) of varied colors in a paper sack. You need several more objects than you have students, so each child may eventually choose the color he wants.

Art/Writing Play dough or clay

Activity Paper Activity papers; crayons per child: red, green, purple, and brown

Music/Movement Various colors of ribbon

Items marked with (TRP) can be found in the teacher's resource packet. Items marked with Ⓡ can be downloaded by following the instructions on the cover sheet in the teacher's resource packet.

Unit 1

Amazing Acts of Jesus

Unit Bible Passage

"Praise him for his mighty acts"
(Psalm 150:2).

Unit Bible Words

Praise Jesus!

Scripture Text

John 9:1–12

Students will:

- » Tell about the miracles Jesus performed.
- » Recall how Jesus made the blind man see.

Bible Background

The pool of Siloam was fed by water from the Gihon Spring, flowing through a tunnel constructed in the days of King Hezekiah. The pool was about the size of two football fields and was an important source of fresh water for Jerusalem's inhabitants.

Siloam means "sent." It was to this pool that Jesus sent the blind man to the pool to wash. Why would He send a blind man staggering through the streets to the pool? Could it be because faith plus obedience equals a miracle?

Teacher Insight

This quarter focuses on the amazing acts of Jesus, Peter, and Paul. *Amazing* is a new word to toddlers, but one they will enjoy learning. Use it often with lots of body language and an awe-inspired tone of voice.

Since toddlers have limited vocabularies, the percentage of their communication via words is even lower than 7 percent. When communicating with words, watch your tone of voice. It says more than your words.

Your little ones read you more than they hear you. They understand your expressions even when your words go over their heads. A smile, open hands, and relaxed posture tell them they are safe with you. They sense when you are tense, so watch your body language; your students are.

WELCOME TO THE WORD

As students enter, help them place their offerings into the container. For students who did not bring offering, provide spare change so they can experience the fun of giving to Jesus. This might encourage them to bring an offering in the future.

Let students explore their new western decor. Ask if they have ever ridden a horse. Show them their attendance chart and let them add an attendance art square.

Hopefully you are using the Child Information Form, asking all parents/guardians to fill one out before they leave a child in your care. If you keep a file for returning students, the new quarter provides an excellent time to ask parents to review their forms and update the information. For legal reasons, even visitors should fill out this form, as it might reveal a food allergy or other potentially harmful condition or situation. Communicate any special concerns to all helpers.

Only a small percentage of communication involves actual words: 7%, to be exact. In fact, 55% of communication is visual (body language, eye contact) and 38% is vocal (pitch, speed, volume, tone of voice).

Source: Carmine Gallo, "Body Language: A Key to Success in the Workplace," February 14, 2007, finance.yahoo.com/news

Welcome Supplies:

- Attendance chart
- Attendance art squares
- Offering container
- Glue sticks

Six life-application activities are included in the Do the Word section at the end of each lesson (see page 15).