

## Bible Integration: Building Leaders for Eternity

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Adventist Schools-that means daily worships, Bible class, and classroom prayers. Aren't those good things? Absolutely! But should that be all? No! In my first year teaching my own class, I have been seeking for ways to make the Bible and Christ real and important to the students. They need to know how to use it for themselves. We need young leaders who know why we believe what we believe, and where to find answers for themselves. These are some methods I have found useful and simple-a winning combination for any committed, but busy, teacher.

- **Meaningful Worships**

Try to create meaningful and enjoyable worship times-variety seems to stimulate their young minds. On Monday I read a story from a junior devotional, and on subsequent days we read together from the Bible (elaborated on later); play a Bible game; the pastor tells them a story with a lesson; and finally they choose songs from "Praise Time" to sing. We fill up the board with numbers and titles (they are disappointed when they can't choose anymore), then each child takes his/her turn at leading a portion of the songs.

- **Bible Reading**

As mentioned above, I have designated one worship a week for reading a portion of the Bible, each child reading a verse, as we proceed through a section of the story of Jesus. (The Gospel of John is excellent.) By reading from modern translations they understand the texts rather well but, of course, we stop to discuss and explain difficult areas. At first I was not sure how this activity would be received by the students, but they report that they enjoy it.

- **Memorization**

All Bible class memory verses can be memorized for test/grade purposes, and should be reviewed at the end of each unit. Anything committed to memory is there, we hope, forever- a simple way of "hiding Thy word in my heart..."

- **Bible Class-Discussions**

Allow openness and flexibility in Bible class when discussing the Bible lesson. There are well-written discussion questions that accompany each lesson in the teacher's book (Grade 1-4 series). Since the majority of my students are non-Adventist these questions adequately open up the opportunity to share what the Bible teaches. Very often, discussion of the lesson and the accompanying questions will inspire the students to present questions of their own relating to their own lives and experiences.

- **Student Prayers**

For *morning prayer*, you can do a variety of things. I often ask if anyone has a special praise or request for which they would like us to pray, then I make sure to mention each request in my prayer. Sometimes, I leave a "silent prayer time" before I pray aloud, and occasionally we form a circle, each person saying a sentence or two in prayer. Specifically for my class this year, I do not believe it would have been beneficial to *require* the students to cite prayers throughout the day or week. Having free opportunity makes it much more sincere.

- **Written Prayers**

Have students take writing notebooks or journals to a private spot (outdoors if possible-we are situated in a rural area) and write a prayer to God. Check only to see that it is done, not to grade the prayer. If a child does not feel capable (or comfortable) of writing a prayer, he/she may spend the time writing about why he/she cannot. The admission may help to determine what is blocking him/her from communicating with God.

Obviously, every class has different circumstances that dictate what methods will or will not work. Whether you find these ideas helpful, practical, or totally useless, challenge yourself. Find ways of teaching your young scholars to know Christ *for themselves* in a very real and hands-on way-getting to know their Bible better than they know their reading books, and feeling like they can talk with God as easily as they can talk to their friend across the room. Those are high goals, and my students definitely have not achieved them, but it's something worth thinking about. This is the next group of leaders we are training-WHAT and WHO do we want them to know?