

Teaching Plan for Children's Leaders



Great Expectations: Planting Seeds for Sunday School Growth

Plant a Seed and Watch It Grow: A Children's Sunday School Training Experience

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Purpose: The purpose of this conference is to lead children's Sunday School teachers to see the importance of expecting great things to happen in their Sunday School classes and to be effective in the weekly teaching of children.

How to use this plan

- For the local church: Use to train Children's Sunday School leaders during a local church training or kick-off event.
- For regional and state training: Use to train Children's Sunday School leaders in state or associational training events.

Preparation

1. Introduction: Seed Starters

- Nametag or 3x5 blank index card for each participant. (A nametag template is provided on the CD-Rom in the Great Expectations Sunday School Launch Kit.)
- Provide one copy of *Great Expectations: Planting Seeds for Sunday School Growth* by David Francis for each participant. The book is available three ways: 1) Print copies from the file provided on this CD-Rom. 2) Download the file from www.LifeWay.com/SundaySchool and make copies. 3) Order copies for \$1 each at www.LifeWay.com/SundaySchool.
- One seed for every participant expected. All seeds should be the same.
- Thin lined colored markers, placed on a table or work station
- Write these directions on a sheet of paper: "The seed in your hand could grow to be a beautiful flower, tasty fruit, or gigantic tree. On the nametag provided draw what you think this seed could grow to become."

2. Expect This, Get That

- Tape
- 8 rolls of crepe paper (streamers)
- On strips of paper, write the following word segments on the front and the corresponding statements on the back. Hang these strips on one side of the room in random order with word segments facing out.

Front	Back
Ane	I expect to find the supplies I need at church,
Ama	I expect to have co-teachers who are as committed as I am,
Daffo	I expect kids to respect and listen to me,
Gar	I expect to be appreciated for my service,
Fre	I expect my kids to arrive to class on time,
Ir	I expect kids to be excited about coming to church,
Snap	I expect parents to continue the kids' Christian education in the home,
Tu	I expect the curriculum to be all that I need,

- On strips of paper, write the following word segments on the front and the corresponding statements on the back. Hang these strips on the other side of the room in random order with word segments facing out.

Front	Back
mone	but I find an unorganized supply closet and my own supplies missing!
ryllis	but I don't feel like he or she even prepares.
dil	but I often spend more time "guiding behavior" than teaching.
denia	but sometimes I feel like I am being taken advantage of.
esia	but I'm lucky if I have half my class for 45 minutes.
is	but when I am competing with cell phones, DS's, and other electronics, this can be a challenge.
dragon	but I think parents rely on me to be the only Christian leader their children know.
lip	but I sometimes have to go to Wal-Mart® to pick up supplies!

3. Sunday School Soil Balance

- Gardening gloves
- Flowerpot filled with potting soil (option: shredded brown paper)
- Copies of Handout 1
- Write the following statements on strips of paper and laminate or cover with clear contact paper. Mix the strips in the flowerpot with the soil.
 - Children need to be discipled, but the discipleship hour doesn't seem to exist anymore. I must teach not only biblical truths in Sunday School but biblical living as well.
 - Children need to know about our rich Southern Baptist heritage, but with all of the curriculum choices out there, they sometimes miss it! I must use curriculum that will teach children about our faith as Southern Baptists.

- Children need to know about missions and missionaries, but missions education classes are scarce. I must teach children about missions while they are in Sunday School.
- Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong were great women of the faith, but does this generation know who they were? I must teach children about the International Mission Board and North American Mission Board in Sunday School.
- I grew up going to Sunday School on Sunday mornings, but our church only has worship services on Sunday morning. I might need to learn how to teach Sunday School on Tuesday nights!
- Kids today are so busy. I must find a balance of fellowship and Bible study in Sunday School.
- Because 87.5% of the most vibrant Southern Baptist churches still have Sunday School, I must understand that Sunday School has a huge impact.
- People are most open to accepting Christ as their personal Savior before age 12. I must offer opportunities for children to accept Christ while in Sunday School.

4. Parts of a Sunday School Plant

- Create a focal wall-sized depiction of the parts of a plant: roots, stem & leaf, and flower. Write the following statements on the corresponding flower parts.
 - Roots: Expect New People Every Week
 - Stem & Leaf: Expect Kids and Teachers to Say "Yes!"
 - Flower: Expect New Growth

5. Seedology of Invitation

- Create 7 kidney-bean-shaped invitations by folding dark red sheets of construction paper (making the folded paper 6x9") and cutting a kidney shape. Be careful to leave the fold of the invitation in tack.
- Write the following statements on the outside and inside of the "seeds" as noted below:

Outside	Inside
Psychology of Invitation	The act of being driven by the idea that you consistently believe that you can have new people in your class every Sunday.
Theology of Invitation	The act of believing that the Bible exhorts us to compel others to come and to treat them with honor when they do.
Sociology of Invitation	The act of avoiding the natural inertia for making your group a "closed group" as opposed to maintaining an "open group" where children are always welcome.
Pharmacology of Invitation	The process by which some people get very nervous or anxious about asking someone to come to church with them.
Technology of Invitation	The use of Facebook, Twitter, blogs, e-mail, text messages, and so forth to invite people to come to church.
Terminology of Invitation	The act of avoiding "church speak" when inviting friends, neighbors, and even family members to come to church.
Meteorology of Invitation	The "perfect weather" for inviting someone to church. When it comes to inviting someone to church, it's always sunny outside!

6. Types of Teacher Plants

- Write the following words on individual sheets of colored paper: Annual, Perennial, and Dormant. Tape the sheets to the focal wall.
- Sticky notes
- Copies of Handout 2

7. Write Out of a Flowerpot

- Flowerpot
- Silk flowers, markers—tape silk flowers to the markers, making the markers the “stem” of the flower. Place flowers in the flowerpot.
- Cover the door with a large sheet of paper. Draw a horizontal line through the middle of the paper. On the top half write: before they get to the door. On the bottom half write: after they get to the door. (Option: secure the paper next to the door.)
- Copies of Handout 3

8. Seed Packet Sound Off

- Copies of Handout 4
- 3 empty flower seed packets
- Write the following “Reaching” statements on strips of paper and place in one of the seed packets:

- ☐ Send postcards to new prospects and guests. Follow-up on all VBS kids in your age group.
- ☐ Send copies of More, Adventure, or Bible Express to kids who are absent.
- ☐ Let kids create cards to mail to prospects and absentees.
- ☐ Host a pizza fellowship and invite prospects, absentees, and regular attenders.
- ☐ Contact the church or Sunday School office for a list of prospects for your class.

Write the following “Service” statements on strips of paper and place in one of the seed packets:

- ☐ Contact the International Mission Board to find out the names of missionaries on stateside assignment and collect items they need.
- ☐ Host a “can-drive” party. Take kids to a neighborhood and let them collect canned food for a local food bank.
- ☐ Take kids to a nursing home and let them visit the residents.
- ☐ Collect pennies for a mission trip your church is sponsoring.
- ☐ Take kids to rake the leaves of a homebound church member.

Write the following “Training” statements on strips of paper and place in one of the seed packets:

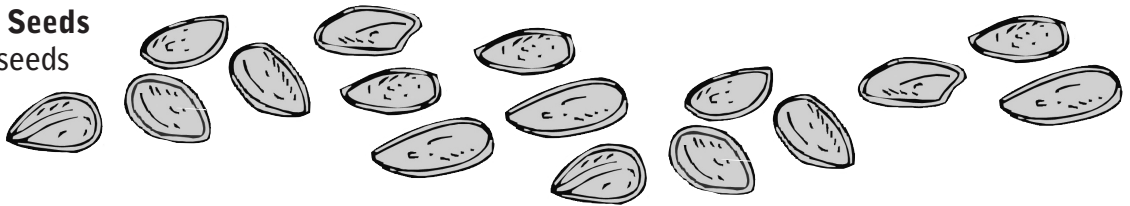
- ☐ Plan monthly or bi-weekly training sessions using “Kids Ministry 101” as your text.
- ☐ Contact your state Baptist convention to find dates and times for teacher training.
- ☐ Contact your local Baptist association to find dates and times for teacher training.
- ☐ Send regular e-mail updates with teacher training tips. Consider providing links to articles found at www.LifeWay.com/kids.
- ☐ Provide a training resource library.

9. Hybrid Growth Sunday School Classes

- Cut a circle (12-inch diameter) from a piece of black construction paper. Attach to the focal wall.
- On 8 colorful “petal shapes” write the following statements and attach them beneath the conferees’ seats:
 - Variety is not an option. It is mandatory! Just because you don’t like games doesn’t mean the kids will not enjoy them. Use a balanced variety of activities each week.
 - It’s a Guy Thing! Strive to have at least one male TEACHER in every classroom.
 - Diversify! Don’t teach the same parts of the lesson each week. Switch it up with your co-teacher. The kids like the change.
 - Get an Update! Pay attention to the news, watch what kids are watching, listen to the radio. Find practical applications to the week’s lessons to let the kids see biblical truths in action.
 - Rearrange! Does your room always look the same? Change things up. Move the chairs around or hang colorful posters. Update the look of your room.
 - Supplement. It’s inevitable that every suggested activity might not work in your setting. Consider using the new *Super Duper Fun & Exciting Absolutely Thought Igniting Bible Learning Activities for Kids (1st-6th Grade Edition)* released from LifeWay|Kids in June 2010.
 - Plug In! You need to be a part of Bible study! Become involved in an adult small group Bible study. You need the interaction, fellowship, and encouragement.
 - Shake It Up! Think outside the box. Don’t be afraid to try new teaching methods with your kids.

10. Sunflower Seeds

- Sunflower seeds



Procedures:

1. Introduction: Seed Starters (5-10 minutes)

- Distribute a seed and nametag to each conferee as she enters the room. (Slide 1)
- Direct conferees to the prepared workstation and instructions you have placed in the station.
- Encourage conferees to share their drawings with other conferees as they introduce themselves to the group. (Slide 2)
- Reveal a picture of the actual plant that might have grown from the seed.
- Share that today conferees will learn “just as we have great expectations of what will grow from a seed, we should have great expectations for what God will grow from our Sunday School classes.”

2. Expect This, Get That (10 minutes)

- Explain that sometimes Sunday School teachers have a tendency to expect class to go one way, but they get a completely different reaction from the kids.
- Direct attention to the two side walls of the room where you have attached the flower word segments.
- Explain that conferees should work together to connect the words by taping one piece of crepe paper to the first part of the word and connecting the second part of the word to the other end of the crepe paper.
- Allow time for conferees to complete this task.
- When each word has been connected, direct conferees to flip the word strips over to reveal the “I expect this ... but get this” statements. (Slides 3-10)
- Take time to read through each statement and allow for discussion.

3. Sunday School Soil Balance (15 minutes)

- Share that plants need certain types of soil for optimal growth. Likewise, kids also need good Sunday

School soil to grow. Because kids today don't come to church "every time the door is open," it is important that our Sunday School classes provide a rich, balanced soil.

- Display the prepared flowerpot and gardening gloves.
- Ask for volunteers to put on gloves and dig through the soil to find some ideas for balancing their Sunday School "soil."
- Provide copies of Handout 1. Ask each volunteer to read his strip and briefly discuss its implications. (Slides 11-18)

4. Parts of a Sunday School Plant (5 minutes)

- Tell conferees that there are three main parts of a plant. The three parts could be compared to the three great expectations for Sunday School. (Slide 19)
- Put the plant parts together on the focal wall to create a complete plant. Share brief information about each part, but explain that the rest of the conference will go into greater detail about each part.

5. Seedology of Invitation (15 minutes)

- State that there are several schools of thought surrounding inviting people to church. An invitation is the key way to expect new people every week.
- Explain that you have "planted" several seeds around the room.
- Invite conferees to search for the seeds then return to their seats.
- When each seed has been located, ask volunteers to read their "seedology statements."
- Offer additional information for clarification or discussion. (Slides 20-23)

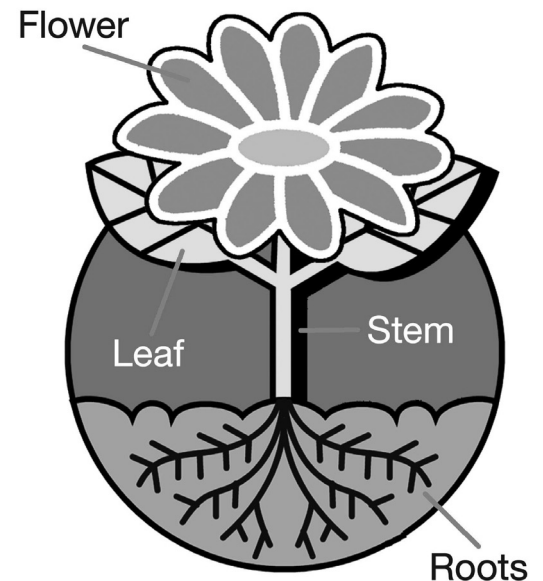
6. Types of Teacher Plants (15 minutes)

- Display the prepared Annual, Perennial, and Dormant headers on the focal wall.
- Explain the different types of plants and teachers. (Slide 24)
 - Annual plants are ones that must be replanted every year. An annual teacher might be described as one who never seems to be happy where he is teaching.
 - Perennial plants come back every year and offer new growth and beauty. A perennial teacher might be described as one who has taught for many years and the kids still love coming each week to learn under her.
 - Dormant plants are experiencing a period when growth and development have stopped. A dormant teacher might be one who is counting the days until she can get out of teaching or one who doesn't really care about growing in her teaching abilities.
- Provide each conferee with three sticky notes. Ask him to write one characteristic that might describe each type of teacher on each note and place it under the corresponding header.
- Debrief how each teacher has been described. Provide a copy of Handout 2.

7. Write Out of a Flowerpot (15 minutes)

- Show the prepared flower markers that you have "planted" in the flowerpot and the door covered with paper.
- Explain that if you want kids and parents to say "yes" we must provide a welcoming teaching environment. Share that feeling welcomed occurs on both sides of the Sunday School door.

Parts of a Plant



- Invite conferees to take a flower marker and list on the top half ways kids and parents can feel welcomed at church before they make it to the classroom door. On the bottom half, list ways kids and parents will feel welcomed after they arrive at the classroom door.
- Debrief by discussing each idea as well as adding a few of your own ideas to the list. Provide Handout 3.



8. Seed Packet Sound Off (10 minutes)

- Sunday School teachers must be willing to say “yes” to a variety of things, such as reaching kids, planning service projects for kids, and training.
- Form three groups giving each a prepared seed packet. Direct groups to take the contents of their seed packets and decide whether the ideas shared are outreach, service projects, or training. Guide the groups to briefly discuss the statements and prepare to share with the remaining groups. (Slides 25-27)
- Provide Handout 4 for note taking and allow the groups time to present their information.



9. Hybrid Growth Sunday School Classes (15 minutes)

- The final aspect of the Great Expectations Sunday School plan is to expect new growth.
- A hybrid plant is the combination of two different plant species that produce a healthier, faster growing, more colorful, heartier, or different flavored plant. Hybrid Sunday School classes combine ideas from curriculum, experience, other teachers, and so forth to produce a healthy, faster growing Sunday School.
- Call attention to the large black dot you have taped to the focal wall. Share that “hybrid” petals have been attached under some of the conferees’ seats.
- Allow conferees to discover petals, read the statements aloud, and tape them to the circle to forming a colorful hybrid Sunday School flower. (Slide 28) Lead discussion of each point.

10. Sunflower Seeds (5 minutes)

- Conclude the conference by giving each conferee a sunflower seed. Remind conferees that a single sunflower seed can grow to become a beautiful plant.
- Share the following facts about sunflowers:
 - Sunflowers are one of the fastest growing plants, reaching heights of 8-12 feet tall.
 - Sunflower seeds are tasty and healthy snacks for both people and animals.
 - Sunflowers produce oil that can be used for cooking.
 - A single sunflower can produce more than 2,000 new seeds.
 - Only one flower grows from a single seed. (Slide 29)
- Ask conferees to let that sunflower remind them that from the seed of their lives can come great things: thousands of people can come to know Christ as the result of one Sunday School teacher seed. (Slide 30) Now that is one GREAT EXPECTATION!

