

10 Questions to Ask Every Time You Teach (These Aren't Just for Kids)

By Dale Hudson

Yesterday I had the joy of teaching both elementary services at our new Port St. Lucie campus. Teaching kids is one of my first loves in children's ministry and I cherish it every time the opportunity arises.

Kids are so open and receptive to God's Word. I truly believe the heart of a child is the most fertile soil you can invest in. Given the choice between teaching kids and adults, I'd choose teaching kids every time.

After teaching kids for the past 32 years, I still have much room for improvement and growth. Today's kids are not the kids of the 1980s or even the early 2000s. I must constantly be evaluating how I am teaching and looking for ways to more effectively connect with kids.

One way you can do this is to ask yourself some key questions after each lesson you teach. Here are 10 questions to ponder after teaching.

1. Was my lesson grounded in God's Word? Scripture must be the original source and inspiration for our lesson...it should emanate from God's Word. Cultural relevance is not the starting point. Lessons should not be inspired by a movie, trend or the latest fad. These things should simply be tools to illustrate the truth of God's Word and not vice-versa.
2. Are the kids able to clearly state one key truth they learned? Can the kids walk out and repeat from memory one simple key truth that has been embedded in their long term memory.
3. Did I help the kids apply the truth to their everyday life? Information without application = stagnation. Did I take time to show the kids how they can live out the truth this week?
4. How many stories did I tell? Kids (actually, all of us) are captivated by stories. Jesus knew this and much of His teaching was done through stories.

5. How many times did the kids look away? When kids disengage, they look away and it means you lost their attention. How many times did this happen? Why did it happen? How can I tweak those parts of my teaching to keep it from happening?
6. Did I allow the kids to talk and interact? How much did I lecture? This is the least effective way to teach. Did I give the kids spans of time to talk and interact during the lesson?
7. Did I communicate visually? Today's kids hear with their eyes. How many opportunities did I give them to hear the lesson by using visual images?
8. Did I honor the kids' attention span? I had about one minute to talk for every year of their age (maxing out at five minutes) before doing something different. Did I talk longer than that?
9. Did I use simple words that were easy for them to understand? Did I go over their heads with words like justification, redemption and other complicated Christian terms?
10. Did I give the kids any next steps coming out of the lesson? Did they walk out knowing what to do next with what I taught them? Will I be able to track what they did with it? Follow up with them?