FOUNDATIONS & Techniques

YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Leader's Guide

YOUTHSABBATHSCHOOLIDEAS.ORG

YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL IDEAS

FOUNDATIONS & Techniques

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Leader's Guide

Your name

YOUTHSABBATHSCHOOLIDEAS.ORG

YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL IDEAS

Prepared by the North American Division Department of Youth & Young Adult Ministries

Additional copies of this resource are available from:
Advent*Source*
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Lincoln, Nebraska 68506
AdventSource.org
402.486.8800

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INTRODUCTION

Prerequisites

Commit to the Youth/Children's Ministry Volunteer Code of Conduct. (See page 64.)

Overview of Workshops

WORKSHOP 1 - THE CURRENT STATE OF SABBATH SCHOOL

This workshop will focus on the most common youth ministry in our churches—Youth Sabbath School. While some may claim that "Youth Sabbath School is dead" or suggest renaming it or trying alternative approaches, the reality is that Youth Sabbath School remains the most frequent (52 times a year) youth ministry activity in Adventist churches.

HANDOUTS

1. Handout – A Brief History of Sabbath School
2. Worksheet – Evaluating My Sabbath School

WORKSHOP 2 - INITIATE

This workshop is designed to help you tackle essential questions: What steps can you take to launch or rejuvenate your Youth Sabbath School? Which approach or model fits your group best? What is your primary goal, and how can you turn that vision into action? Throughout this session, you'll gain practical insights, fresh ideas, and valuable resources to support you in making these important choices.

HANDOUTS

1. Worksheet, Reasons to Have a Youth Sabbath School
2. Worksheet, Purposes
3. Worksheet, Let's Talk About Time & Numbers
4. Worksheet, Sabbath School - Model A
5. Worksheet, Sabbath School - Model B
6. Worksheet, Sabbath School – Model C
7. Worksheet, Sabbath School – Model D

WORKSHOP 3 - GIVE & TAKE

This workshop will focus on equipping you with the ability to give and take ideas, helping you shape a Youth Sabbath School that reflects your group's unique character. As a Sabbath School leader, you are encouraged to use the established curriculum as both the structure and foundation for your class, while also exploring a wealth of additional resources to further enrich the learning experience and support your curriculum.

HANDOUTS

1. Worksheet, Ideas & Resources for Youth Sabbath School
2. Worksheet, Start with a Spark

3. Worksheet, Cornerstone Connections Material
4. Worksheet, Youth Sabbath School Ideas
5. Worksheet, My Sabbath School plan for next week

WORKSHOP 4 - NEED

This workshop will address the most common—and least effective—method used in Youth Sabbath School: a single "talking head" delivering a lecture to the class. What percentage of your Youth Sabbath School time is spent with just one person speaking to the group?

There are many ways to move the youth from being spectators to being participants. In this workshop, you will find ten ways or methods you can use to increase participation in your Youth Sabbath School. Tip: vary these from week to week.

HANDOUTS

1. Worksheet, Make It a Game – Examples
2. Worksheet, Challenge Participants
3. Worksheet, Individual Write-Ups
4. Worksheet, Ask Questions
5. Worksheet, Small Group Dialogue
6. Worksheet, Reward Participation
7. Worksheet, Create Something
8. Worksheet, Provide Options
9. Worksheet, Interact with Others
10. Worksheet, Empower to Teach

WORKSHOP 5 - INVOLVE

This workshop is designed to uncover two fundamental principles for sparking meaningful discussions, followed by practical strategies you can use to initiate conversation. You'll discover how open-ended questions and a proactive approach—such as having someone ready to participate from the outset—can help break the initial silence and encourage others to join in. By the end, you'll be equipped with confidence and tools to start engaging discussions on your own.

HANDOUTS

1. Worksheet, Voting
2. Worksheet, Continuum
3. Worksheet, Ranking
4. Worksheet, Goal Setting
5. Worksheet, Listening
6. Worksheet, Watching
7. Worksheet, Interview
8. Worksheet, Dilemma
9. Worksheet, Either/Or
10. Worksheet, Multiple Options
11. Handout, Ways to End a Good Discussion
12. Handout, Resources for Starting Good Discussions

WORKSHOP 6 - THRIVE

This workshop is designed to help you understand what it truly means to be a mentor and how you can guide young people toward leadership. Moving beyond the popular use of the term, you'll learn about the real responsibilities of mentorship and discover practical ways to support future leaders. Through clear insights and useful strategies, this workshop gives you the foundation to make a difference as a mentor.

HANDOUTS

1. Worksheet, Questions
2. Worksheet, 5 Steps Process
3. Worksheet, Mentoring Markers
4. Handout, NAD Code of Conduct

WORKSHOP 7 - EXPRESS

This workshop helps participants review what they have learned in the IGNITE course They will make four important commitments: to God, to youth, to the church, and to the community. The participants will also explore the meaning of consecration as it appears in both the Old and New Testaments.

HANDOUTS

1. Worksheet, Summary
2. Worksheet, 4 Commitments
3. Worksheet, Old Testament - Example 2
4. Worksheet, New Testament Worksheet - Example 1
5. Worksheet, New Testament Worksheet - Example 2

WORKSHOP 1
THE CURRENT STATE OF SABBATH SCHOOL

Description

This workshop will focus on the most common youth ministry in our churches—Youth Sabbath School. While some may claim that "Youth Sabbath School is dead" or suggest renaming it or trying alternative approaches, the reality is that Youth Sabbath School remains the most frequent (52 times a year) youth ministry activity in Adventist churches.

Audience / Participants

All Youth Sabbath School Leaders and their teams will find great value in participating in this workshop.

RESOURCE MATERIALS

1. Foundations and Techniques – Leader's Guide. Advent*Source*
2. Foundations and Techniques – Participant's Guide. Advent*Source*

HANDOUTS

1. Handout, A Brief History of Sabbath School
2. Worksheet, Evaluating My Sabbath School

What Your Participants Will Learn

Participants will learn about the history of Youth Sabbath School, explore statistical data on youth ministry programs most commonly offered in churches, and assess what is and isn't working for youth Sabbath School across the North American Division.

A Brief History of Sabbath School

It is interesting to note that the very first resource created for Sabbath School was by James White, entitled *The Youth's Instructor*.

LEARNING ACTIVITY, 1.1A – A BRIEF HISTORY OF SABBATH SCHOOL

1852 James White published four lessons for Youth Sabbath School for the purpose of Bible Study, calling the new publication "The Youth's Instructor."

1863 The Seventh-day Adventist Church is officially organized as a denomination.

1877 The Sabbath School Department becomes an official department of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

1885 A second purpose, world mission, was added to the original purpose of Sabbath School for Bible Study.

1889 Elle White wrote, "The Sabbath School, when rightly managed, possesses marvelous power, and is adapted to doing a great work, but it is not now what it may and should be. The influence growing out of Sabbath School work should improve and enlarge the church" (Testimonies on Sabbath School Work, p.29.)

1926 There are more Sabbath School members than church members in the SDA Church.

1944 A third purpose, soul-winning, was added to the purposes for Sabbath School.

1978 A fourth purpose, fellowship, was added to the purposes for Sabbath School.

1983 Cornerstone Connections becomes the all-inclusive resource for youth leaders with materials for Youth Sabbath School (sections for leaders, teachers, and youth) plus outreach, small groups, socials, AY/MV programs, and leadership training.

2006 The General Conference Sabbath School Department abandons a set format for Sabbath School and suggests that leaders create their own Sabbath School with the following four purposes: Fellowship, Outreach, Bible Study, and Mission.

2014 Laurentiu Serban's dissertation (Andrews University) estimates that only 25% of the Adventists in North America attend Sabbath School on any given Sabbath.

2017 The only resource for Youth Sabbath School is the Cornerstone Connections teacher's quarterly. Only 28% of the conferences and unios in NAD have a director for Sabbath School (most refer to it as Adult Sabbath School.) Only 7% of youth directors mention "Sabbath School" as part of their ministry.

2018 The NAD Youth Department officially adopts the orphan called "Youth Sabbath School" and begins to develop resource materials and provide training for leaders. Several unions and conferences have already participated in this adoption.

2019 The NAD Youth Department begins free online Youth Sabbath School ideas each week at Youth Sabbath School Ideas: website and a Facebook page called "Youth Sabbath School Ideas" for connection and interaction.

2021-25 The NAD launched the virtual "Do It Together" Sabbath School Training. It is a collaborative training between Adult Sabbath School, Children's Ministries and Youth & Young Adult Ministries. It is held 2-3 times a year.

2024 The NAD Youth Ministries Department launched an additional Sabbath School resource called In Truth.

2028 The General Conference plans to launch the new "Alive in Jesus" curriculum for Youth Sabbath School.

For the "Halves" and the "Have Nots"

In 2014-2015, the NAD Youth Ministries team reached out by phone to pastors from churches across all nine unions in the North American Division. The aim was to support congregations lacking youth involvement and learn what, if anything, was being offered for youth ministry.

This process introduced us to the terms "Halves" and "Have Nots." Over two years, we attempted to call about half of the Adventist churches throughout North America—2,015 pastors in total, some of whom led multiple churches. We made up to four attempts to contact each pastor. In the end, we successfully connected with about half of them—these are our "Halves."

From the "Halves," we found that the most prevalent youth ministry program in Adventist churches is Youth Sabbath School. Interestingly, only about half of the churches we reached currently offer this program. Here's a further breakdown of the youth ministry activities provided by the "Halves":

54% Youth Sabbath School

35% Nothing

22% AY/MV or Vespers

20% Socials

20% Other

16% Teen Pathfinders

13% Youth Service Activities

11% Small Group Bible Studies

9% Annual Youth Day at Church

6% Youth Evangelism

LEARNING ACTIVITY – PRAYING FOR YOUTH REVIVAL

Let's not rush to bury our primary youth ministry activity in SDA churches—let's pray for and expect resurrection instead. The story of the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37 and the resurrection of Lazarus in John 11 remind us that God specializes in resurrection, bringing new life where there was once only dryness or death. We depend on God to resurrect our Youth Sabbath Schools, believing that what may seem ready to be buried can be made vibrant again. We provide ideas and training for youth Sabbath school leaders, but only God can perform the true resurrection. Join us in praying that God will resurrect passion and vitality in our young people and their Sabbath Schools.

1. Pray for your Youth Sabbath School.
2. Read Ezekiel 37 and John 11.

What is Working, What is Not Working What is Missing, & What's Confusing?

What is working with Sabbath School?

- Music and Singing
- Answering Life's Questions
- Fellowship – How was your week?
- Connecting God and Life
- Felt-need Curricula
- Relationships Beyond Class
- Active Participation Model
- Consistency of the Leadership and Program
- Reading Scripture Together
- Student Leadership
- Food
- Prepared Teachers

What is not working with Sabbath School?

- 9:30 is Too Early
- Music and Singing
- Irrelevant Song Selection
- Curriculum Reading During the Week
- Bad Space
- Bad Questions by Facilitators (rhetorical, inflexible answers)
- Burned Out Teachers
- Equipping, Training, and Resourcing System for Leaders
- Undefined Boundaries
- Insensitivity to students backgrounds

What is Missing?

- Conference Exposure
- Budget
- Music Done Right
- Shared Teaching Responsibilities
- Empathy
- Training to Connect Content to Life
- Excitement/Motivation to Attend
- Connecting to Parents
- Functional Bible Study
- Worship
- Leadership Development
- Mindset of Evangelism
- Better Branding
- Better Integration to the Larger Church

What is Confusing?

- Teaching Material
- Risk Management
- Sharing about Sabbath
- Balancing Shallowness and Depth
- Moving from a Sabbath School to a Full Youth Ministry Program
- How to be Supportive Various Backgrounds
- How to Equip Leaders for Youth Culture

LEARNING ACTIVITY – EVALUATING MY SABBATH SCHOOL

At your next Sabbath School session, invite the youth to assess and discuss the current state of Sabbath School using the lists below. Encourage open conversation about what's working well and what could be improved, then work together to create a practical plan for making those improvements.

What is Working with Sabbath School?

Music and Singing
Answering Life's Questions
Fellowship – How was your week?
Connecting God and Life
Felt-need Curricula
Relationships Beyond Class
Active Participation Model
Consistency of the Leadership and Program
Reading Scripture Together
Student Leadership
Food
Prepared Teachers

What is Not Working with Sabbath School?

9:30 is Too Early
Music and Singing
Irrelevant Song Selection
Curriculum Reading During the Week
Bad Space
Bad Questions by Facilitators (rhetorical, inflexible answers)
Burned Out Teachers
Equipping, Training, and Resourcing System for Leaders
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What is Missing?

Conference Exposure
Budget
Music Done Right
Shared Teaching Responsibilities
Empathy
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Excitement/Motivation to Attend
Connecting to Parents
Functional Bible Study
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Leadership Development
Mindset of Evangelism
Better Branding
Better Integration to the Larger Church

What is Confusing?

Teaching Material
Risk Management
Sharing about Sabbath
Balancing Shallowness and Depth
Moving from a Sabbath School to a Full Youth Ministry Program
How to be Supportive Various Backgrounds
How to Equip Leaders for Youth Culture

SUMMARY

In conclusion, reviving our Youth Sabbath Schools requires commitment, honest reflection, and above all, prayerful dependence on God. By working together, sharing ideas, and seeking God's guidance, we can foster renewed energy and passion in our youth ministries. Let us move forward with hope, trusting that God will breathe new life into our efforts.

WORKSHOP 2
INITIATE

Description

This workshop is designed to help you tackle essential questions: What steps can you take to launch or rejuvenate your Youth Sabbath School? Which approach or model fits your group best? What is your primary goal, and how can you turn that vision into action? Throughout this session, you'll gain practical insights, fresh ideas, and valuable resources to support you in making these important choices.

Audience / Participants

All Youth Sabbath School Leaders and their teams will find great value in participating in this workshop.

RESOURCE MATERIALS

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2. Foundations and Techniques – Leader's Guide. Advent*Source*
3. Foundations and Techniques – Participant's Guide. Advent*Source*

HANDOUTS

1. Worksheet, Reasons to Have a Youth Sabbath School
2. Worksheet, Purposes
3. Worksheet, Let's Talk About Time & Numbers
4. Worksheet, Sabbath School - Model A
5. Worksheet, Sabbath School - Model B
6. Worksheet, Sabbath School – Model C
7. Worksheet, Sabbath School – Model D

What Your Participants Will Learn

In this workshop, participants will learn how to start or revitalize a Youth Sabbath School, understand its core purposes, assess the time and preparation needed, and become familiar with four different models for organizing it.

How to Start or Revive Your Youth Sabbath School

To initiate a successful Sabbath School, it's essential to start with a clear purpose. This purpose may look different for teachers, participants, and parents, and understanding each perspective will help guide your approach.

Most youth are drawn to Sabbath School for friends, food, and fun. Underneath these reasons, though seldom voiced, is a hope for meaningful connections to faith.

While nurturing faith may be your main objective in initiating a Youth Sabbath School, it's important to address youths' felt needs first—building friendships and enjoyment—so faith can grow naturally within the group.

Why Have a Youth Sabbath School?

Once you've determined a clear objective, you can thoughtfully select activities and elements that directly support that goal. Without this sense of purpose, Youth Sabbath School can easily become a random assortment of activities—either attempting to entertain or simply telling young people what to believe or do—without truly engaging them or nurturing meaningful growth.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – REASONS TO HAVE A YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL

Mark and write your answers to the questions below.

1. Using the list below, check each reason that **sounds good** to you for having a Youth Sabbath School:

_____Give religious instructions	_____ Fellowship
_____Study the Bible	_____ Leadership Training
_____Evangelization	_____ Promote Missions
_____It's better than doing nothing	_____ We've always done this
_____Provide social interaction	_____ Teach young people the SDA doctrines
_____The pastor wants us to do this	_____ Give immature adults a place to be
_____Prompt outreach	_____ Prepare young people for baptism
_____Teach spiritual disciplines	_____ Connect young people to God
_____Equip youth to share their faith	_____ Provide supervision for youth
_____Challenge church beliefs	_____ Discover ways to live one's faith
Other: _____	Other: _____

2. From the same list above, choose and circle 3-4 reasons **you believe** are most important for having a Youth Sabbath School. Clearly mark your selections.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – PURPOSES

Read and answer the following questions.

1. What are the most important purposes that you have for Youth Sabbath School?

_____

_____

_____

2. What do you think are the top reasons your youth have for Youth Sabbath School?

_____

_____

_____

3. How are these similar?

_____

_____

_____

4. How are they different?

_____

_____

_____

The "WHAT" is important; but the "HOW" is also important!

Your Purpose tells you WHAT to do.

Your Method tells you HOW to do it.

Your Model gives you STRUCTURE.

Your **PURPOSE** tells you **WHAT** to do. But you also need to choose methods for **HOW** to do that.You cannot simply say, "My purpose for Youth Sabbath School is Bible study," and then the young people will study the Bible. The method you choose for your purpose of Bible study will determine whether you accomplish your purpose.

Let's Talk About Time & Numbers

In this section we will talk about the time for your Youth Sabbath School, from start, arrival, critical mass, end. Also, we will look at the time you spend preparing, the number of people attending, and the money spent and received. Let's explore the practical aspects that shape the experience of Youth Sabbath School:

a. **Time is a crucial factor,** beginning with when your session starts. Consider how early youth typically arrive —some may trickle in slowly, while others might get there before you do. Think about when you reach a "critical mass"— the moment when enough people have arrived for the group to feel energized and connected.
   The planned end time is also significant. Does your session wrap up as scheduled, or do conversations linger afterward, extending the fellowship?
b. **Preparation time** matters just as much as the session itself. Reflect on how much effort goes into planning each meeting—choosing topics, preparing materials, coordinating activities, and reaching out to members. This behind-the-scenes work is often invisible, yet it is essential for a meaningful Sabbath School experience.
c. **Attendance numbers give you a snapshot of your group's health and reach.** How many youths do you expect each week? Are numbers growing, staying steady, or declining? It can be helpful to track attendance overtime to spot patterns and evaluate the impact of your methods.
d. **Finances play a supporting but important role.** Consider both the resources spent—such as purchasing supplies, snacks, or materials—and any offerings or support you receive. Financial stewardship ensures your Sabbath School can continue to provide quality experiences and adapt as needs change.

By thoughtfully considering these elements:
timing, preparation, attendance, and finances,
you set a strong foundation for a vibrant, responsive,
and engaging Youth Sabbath School.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – LET'S TALK ABOUT TIME & NUMBERS

Write your answer to each statement below:

_____ Time your Youth Sabbath School begins

_____ Time you arrive

_____ Time you are set up and ready to go with Youth Sabbath School

_____ Time the youth arrive

_____ Time when you have enough people to start Sabbath School

_____ Time the last youth arrive

_____ Time Youth Sabbath School ends

_____ Amount of time you spend preparing for Youth Sabbath School

_____ Day of the week you start preparing for Youth Sabbath School

_____ When you contact someone to help you with the program

_____ Number of youths at your typical Youth Sabbath School

_____ Highest number in attendance

_____ Lowest number in attendance

_____ Number of people on your Youth Sabbath School leadership team

_____ Amount of money spent on Youth Sabbath School most weeks

_____ Amount of money collected in Youth Sabbath School most weeks

4 MODELS FOR YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL

In this lesson we will explore and choose from 4 models of Sabbath School. After reviewing each model, ask yourself the following three questions:

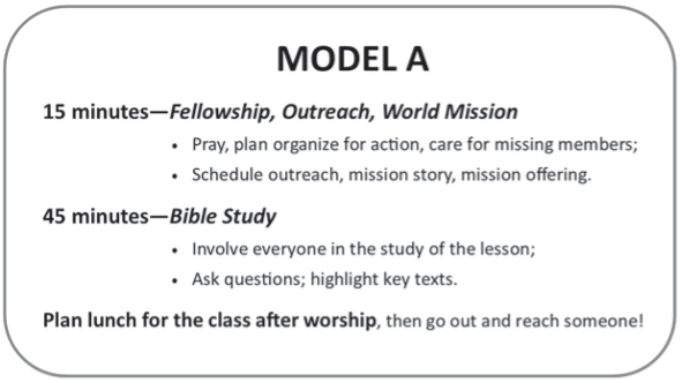
1. What do I like about this model?
2. What do I not like about this model?
3. How will this model work for me?
4. The current General Conference Sabbath School suggested plan for 60 minutes of Sabbath School.

Model A for Sabbath School

The suggested plan from the General Conference outlines four main objectives for Sabbath School:

1. Bible Study
2. Fellowship
3. Outreach
4. World Mission

The Adventist Mission Quarterly for adults and youth has mission stories for youth and adults that can be accessed at: AdventistMission.org and search for "Quarterly."



LEARNING ACTIVITY – SABBATH SCHOOL - MODEL A

WRITE YOUR DETAILED ANSWER TO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What do you like about this model?

_____

_____

_____

2. What do you not like about this model?

_____

_____

_____

3. How will this model work for you?

_____

_____

_____

Your Notes:

_____

_____

Model B for Sabbath School

Model B is the same as Model A
But you can determine the times.

How would you allocate time to each of the four purposes for Sabbath School—Bible Study, Fellowship, Outreach, and World Mission? Please describe what specific activities you would include for each purpose and explain how these choices align with your goals for Youth Sabbath School.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – SABBATH SCHOOL - MODEL B WORKSHEET

Write your detailed answer to each of the following questions:

HOW MUCH TIME WOULD YOU SPEND ON EACH OF THE 4 PURPOSES PROVIDED FOR SABBATH SCHOOL? WHAT WOULD YOU DO FOR EACH PURPOSE? HOW WILL THIS FIT INTO YOUR PURPOSE(S) FOR YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL?

_____ Minutes **Fellowship**

What we will do: _____

_____

_____

_____ Minutes **Bible Study**

What we will do: _____

_____

_____

_____ Minutes **Outreach**

What we will do: _____

_____

_____

_____ Minutes **World Mission**

What we will do: _____

_____

_____

AFTER REVIEWING THIS MODEL, ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING THREE QUESTIONS:

What do I like about this model? _____

_____

_____

What do I not like about this model? _____

_____

_____

How will this model work for me? _____

_____

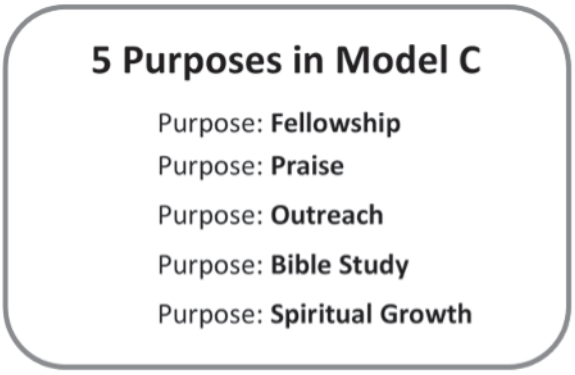
_____

Your Notes: _____

_____

_____

Model C for Sabbath School



LEARNING ACTIVITY – SABBATH SCHOOL – MODEL C

This is a 5-purpose model with examples for a week of Youth Sabbath School:

10 Minutes ***Purpose: Fellowship***

What we will do: Group – Growing Activity such as a mural or a short scavenger hunt in groups or an ice breaker activity.

15 Minutes ***Purpose: Praise***

What we will do: Group – singing (3–4 songs)

- Post-It Notes of "Praise this week" and put them on the wall

10 Minutes ***Purpose: Outreach***

What we will do: Update local service project involvement

- Update on global mission focus for this quarter
- Take offering for local service and world mission

20 Minutes ***Purpose: Bible Study***

What we will do: Read the passage in Scripture

- Spend some time on individual Bible guides
- Discussions in groups of 3–4 based on Bible guides
- Share with the larger group (if there is one) and enough time to do it

5 Minutes ***Purpose: Spiritual Growth***

What we will do: Prayer experience to apply the Bible study

AFTER REVIEWING THIS MODEL, ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING THREE QUESTIONS:

1. What do I like about this model? _____

   _____

   _____

2. What do I not like about this model? _____

   _____

   _____

3. How will this model work for me? _____

   _____

   _____

Model D for Sabbath School

Model D is for you to design your own model for Sabbath School.

Consider carefully how you would allocate your time to each of your goals for Youth Sabbath School. Reflect on which activities would best support each purpose—perhaps starting with a brief opening to build community, followed by an engaging lesson, interactive discussions, or small group work. Think about the resources and preparation needed for each segment, and how you might adapt your approach to fit the needs and interests of your group. By aligning your time and activities with your objectives, you can create a more meaningful and impactful Sabbath School experience for everyone involved.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – SABBATH SCHOOL – MODEL D

Remember, Model D is for you to design your own model for Sabbath School. How much time would you spend on your purpose(s) for Sabbath School? What would you do for each purpose?

_____ Minutes **Purpose**

What we will do: _____

_____

_____

_____ Minutes **Purpose**

What we will do: _____

_____

_____

_____ Minutes **Purpose**

What we will do: _____

_____

_____

_____ Minutes **Purpose**

What we will do: _____

_____

_____

AFTER REVIEWING THIS MODEL, ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING THREE QUESTIONS:

1. What do I like about this model? _____

_____

_____

_____

2. What do I not like about this model? _____

_____

_____

_____

3. How will this model work for me? _____

_____

_____

_____

Your Notes: _____

_____

_____

_____

SUMMARY

In summary, the workshop emphasized the value of reflection and planning when choosing a Youth Sabbath School model. By evaluating different approaches and setting clear goals, participants are now equipped with practical tools to create a meaningful and impactful program.

WORKSHOP 3
GIVE AND TAKE

Description

This workshop will focus on equipping you with the ability to give and take ideas, helping you shape a Youth Sabbath School that reflects your group's unique character. As a Sabbath School leader, you are encouraged to use the established curriculum as both the structure and foundation for your class, while also exploring a wealth of additional resources to further enrich the learning experience and support your curriculum.

Audience / Participants

All Youth Sabbath School Leaders and their teams will find great value in participating in this workshop.

RESOURCE MATERIALS

1. Foundations and Techniques – Leader's Guide. Advent*Source*
2. Foundations and Techniques – Participant's Guide. Advent*Source*
3. *Come Together*, 2016, Steve Case. Advent*Source*
4. www.YouthSabbathSchoolIdeas.org
5. Youth Sabbath School Ideas | Facebook

HANDOUTS

1. Worksheet, Ideas & Resources for Youth Sabbath School
2. Worksheet, Start with a Spark
3. Worksheet, Cornerstone Connections Material
4. Worksheet, Youth Sabbath School Ideas
5. Worksheet, My Sabbath School plan for next week

What Your Participants Will Learn

Participants will explore fresh ideas and practical tools for Youth Sabbath School. They will learn effective strategies for making the most of available resources and deepen their understanding of both giving and receiving within the Youth Sabbath School community. Additionally, they will create a customized plan for their next Youth Sabbath School session.

IDEAS & RESOURCES FOR YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL

A successful Youth Sabbath School thrives on the sharing and exchange of ideas, as each new contribution helps to shape a dynamic and engaging classroom experience. As a leader, it's important to rely on the Sabbath School curriculum for structure and foundational guidance, using it as your blueprint for planning lessons. However, you can greatly enrich your sessions by incorporating a variety of additional resources—such as interactive activities, worksheets, activity guides, or creative teaching tools—that complement the curriculum. These extra materials can bring fresh perspectives, stimulate discussion, and better meet the unique interests and needs of your group, leading to a more meaningful and impactful Sabbath School experience for everyone involved.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – IDEAS & RESOURCES FOR YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What resource(s) do you currently use for Youth Sabbath School?

_____

_____

_____

2. What do you like about it/them?

_____

_____

_____

3. What do you not like about it/them?

_____

_____

_____

4. How much does it cost you?

Money: _____

Time: _____

5. What are resources others use for Youth Sabbath School?

_____

_____

_____

LEARNING ACTIVITY – START WITH A SPARK

Here are some engaging group activities designed to help young people connect and get to know one another better.

NOTE: *Come Together* is a book of group-building activities that promote closeness and community. (*Come Together*, 2016, Steve Case. Advent*Source*)

2 GAMES

1. **Instant Replay or Name Toss** –*Come Together*, pg. 15

Goal: to learn names of the people in the group.

Group Size: 10-20 people.

No materials needed / Time needed: 8–15 minutes, depending on the group size.

Here's how to play the Instant Replay or Name Toss, step by step:

- Form a standing circle with just a little space between people.
- Each person, in turn, steps into the center of the circle, says their name clearly, and demonstrates a unique motion—like a bow, a flex, or a hop on one foot—before returning to their spot.
- Everyone in the group then moves to the center of the circle and performs an "instant replay" of that person's name and action.
- Then the next person in the circle goes to the middle, announces their name, and does their own motion, followed by the group reenacting it.
- This process continues until everyone in the circle has had a turn.

2. **Letter Count or Name Alliteration** – *Come Together*, pg. 25

Goal: discover names of the people in the group.

Group Size: 8-20 people.

No materials needed / Time needed: 5-20 minutes.

Here's how to play the Letter Count or Name Alliteration, step by step:

- Sit or stand in a circle and ask each person to share the number of letters in their name, followed by their name.
- You can add more variety by having the person state the number of letters and only give the first letter prompting the rest of the group to guess the name. Another option is to have the person spell out their name, letter by letter. This helps clarify any confusion, such as distinguishing between "Ken" or "Kent," "Larry" or "Gary," "Terry" or "Cary," or "Harry."
- The full statement could be: number, spell it, name. For example, "Five, S-H-A-W-N, Shawn." The rest of the group would then repeat in unison, "Five, S-H-A-W-N, Shawn."
- While this activity may take more time, you can help people remember names better by having the second person repeat what the first person said before adding their own information. The third person continues by repeating the first two people's information and then their own. Group members can help as needed, since learning the names is more important than perfect recall.

2 ICE BREAKERS

1. **Snap, Crackle, Pop** – *Come Together*, pg. 38

Goal: Start the group on a simple task and gradually add components to make it more difficult.

Group Size: 10-20 people.

No materials needed / Time needed: 8-20 minutes.

HERE'S HOW TO PLAY THE SNAP, CRACKLE, POP ICEBREAKER, STEP BY STEP:

First, everyone stands in a circle. The leader explains that they will start with a simple action and then make the game a bit harder as you go along. The goal is for everyone to pay attention and have fun as things get trickier!

- The leader begins by putting their hand under their chin and says, "Snap." The person next to the leader does the same action and says, "Snap," passing it along all the way around the circle, one person at a time.
- Next, add "Crackle." This is a new action. To do "Crackle," you put your hand over your head and say, "Crackle." This also changes the direction—so instead of following the usual path around the circle, "Crackle" sends it back the other way. Try this out so everyone understands.
- If the "Crackle" keeps bouncing back and forth between two people, the leader can start another "Snap" somewhere else in the circle to keep more people involved.

- Once everyone is comfortable, add "Pop." With "Pop," you point straight across the circle (and make sure the other person sees you!) and say, "Pop." That person is now in charge and can start with "Snap" in either direction or point and say "Pop" to someone else. You cannot "Crackle" after a "Pop," since "Crackle" is just for reversing the circle path.
- If you want to make things even more challenging, the leader can start more than one "Snap" at a time, so different actions are happening at once.

Let the game go until people are still having fun but stop before interest starts to fade.

This game is a fun way to help everyone get involved and pay attention, while learning to react quickly!

2. **Toe Tapping (only 1 or 2 rounds)** – *Come Together*, pg. 57

Goal: Combine teamwork and competition as pairs try to keep on their toes.

Group Size: 8-20 people.

No materials needed / Time needed: 5-15 minutes.

HERE'S HOW TO PLAY TOE TAPPING, STEP BY STEP:

- Dive into groups of two. Face your partner, hold up both hands, clasp each other's hands and interlock fingers.
- Now the fun begins! Try to lightly tap the top of your partner's toes on one foot. This may seem easy enough, except your partner is trying to do the same thing – tapping your toes!
- Some people add to their strategy by pushing and pulling with their hands as well.
- The first person to tap their partner's toes three times is declared the winner.
- But wait, there's more. All those who win in their face-off must now find a new partner and start over. Those who lose can step to the side.
- Each time a person wins, that person moves to the next round, until only two people are left, toe tapping for the championship.

2 LOW – RISK INTERACTIONS

1. **Human Top** – *Come Together*, pg. 72

Goal: Build trust gradually.

Group Size: 5-10 people.

No materials needed / Time needed: 5-10 minutes.

Here's how to play Human Top, step by step:

- Get 5 to 10 people to form a circle. Choose one person to stand in the middle.
- If your group is bigger, split into smaller circles.
- The person in the middle stands up straight, puts their feet together, crosses their arms, and places their hands on their shoulders.

- Everyone in the circle stands with one foot back, arms out, ready to catch. Their hands should be close enough to touch the middle person but not actually touching yet.
- The person in the middle closes their eyes and stays stiff. People around gently push or guide the person, so they lean in different directions, then carefully catch them, and push them gently the other way.
- Keep everyone close enough so nobody falls. Let the middle person lean a bit more as trust grows but always catch them safely.
- When the person in the middle is ready to stop, they open their eyes and leave the middle. Someone else takes a turn in the middle.

TIME TO TALK:

Was it easier to be the one in the middle or one of the people in the circle?

Can you remember a time when you had to support someone who was struggling?

Have you ever depended on others to support you when you needed help?

2. **Ready-2- Roll** – *Come Together*, pg. 94

Goal: Start a conversation by using low risk prompts from rolling the dice.

Group Size: 10-20 people.

Material: "Ready-2-Roll," three cubes for low risk. These are on the topics of Food, Facts, and Fun. If you don't have this game, you can make it for yourself with the questions/statements at the end of the activity described and simply roll one die.

Time Needed: 10-15 minutes.

HERE'S HOW TO PLAY READY-2-ROLL, STEP BY STEP:

- Team up with one other person and sit knee-to-knee or sit in a circle with 4-6 people. One person rolls one of the dice and answers out loud to the group. Another person can then roll the die or choose from one of the three dice.
- Use "Ready-2-Roll" from Advent*Source*.org or create your own by using these three options for three low risk interactions of *Food, Facts, and Fun*:

FOOD

1. The three top "junk food" items on my list are…
2. The ethnic food (Mexican, Chinese, Italian, etc.) I prefer is…
3. I'm most apt to "pig out" when…
4. Five foods I can't stand are…
5. My idea of "the perfect meal" includes…
6. My biggest meal of the week is usually…

FACTS

1. In 30 seconds, share everything you've done in the past 24 hours.
2. When is your birthday? And how did you celebrate it last time?
3. Share five interesting facts about your school or workplace.
4. Two facts most people don't know about me are…
5. Three things I know "for sure" about God are…
6. It's a fact that _____ is better than _____.

FUN

1. I seem to have the most fun when…
2. When I go to the mall, it's to …
3. Three things I do for fun that don't cost anything are…
4. I'd rather…
5. Go to the movies.
6. Watch a DVD.
7. Go on the internet.
8. Play video games.
9. One time I had some fun but got into trouble was…
10. What makes me laugh is…

TIME TO TALK

Use these low-risk items to start a conversation.

Write a few introductory activities below that you can use in your Youth Sabbath School to help everyone get to know each other:

Activity Name _____

Description _____

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Activity Name _____

Description _____

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Activity Name _____

Description _____

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Cornerstone Connections

Cornerstone Connections is a comprehensive Sabbath School resource designed specifically for youth. It offers both teacher's guides and student lessons that engage young people in meaningful Bible study and spiritual growth. Each lesson connects biblical principles to real-life challenges, encouraging youth to explore their faith, apply scriptural insights, and actively participate in their spiritual journey.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS MATERIAL

Please visit the link provided below and respond to the two questions that follow.

Cornerstone Connections has a teacher's guide and a student lesson for Youth Sabbath School. It's available currently as hard copy and online: https://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/ ; https://www.youthsabbathschoolideas.org/weekly-lessons/cornerstone-connections

1. What can you take from this resource?

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2. Is there anything else you need for your Youth Sabbath School?

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Youth Sabbath School Ideas

In addition to the primary resources, there is a wealth of online materials specifically designed to enhance the Youth Sabbath School experience. These digital resources often include interactive components, multimedia content, and supplementary study guides that align with the week's topic and Scripture focus. By exploring sites like www.YouthSabbathSchoolIdeas.org, leaders

and students alike can access fresh activities, creative lesson plans, and practical tools to deepen engagement and make Sabbath School sessions more dynamic and relevant. Engaging with these materials enables participants to broaden their understanding and discover new ways to connect faith with everyday life.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL IDEAS

Please visit the link provided below and respond to the two questions that follow.

1. What could you use from this resource?

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2. What, if anything, do you still need for your Youth Sabbath School?

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Connecting With Others

Connecting with others who are enthusiastic about Youth Sabbath School can be incredibly valuable. The Facebook group "Youth Sabbath School Ideas" is a vibrant online community where leaders and participants regularly exchange insights, creative strategies, and real-life experiences. By joining this group, you not only gain access to a wide variety of innovative suggestions and resources but also have the chance to ask questions, share your own ideas, and receive feedback from others who understand the unique challenges and opportunities of leading a Youth Sabbath School. This ongoing dialogue helps spark fresh inspiration and fosters a supportive network for continuous growth and improvement.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – WRITE YOUR IDEAS

Write 10 new ideas to change Sabbath School and then share those ideas on Youth Sabbath School Idea's Facebook page.

Also ask your Sabbath School attendees for ideas and implement the best 5 ideas in the classroom.

My Sabbath School Plan For Next Week

As you think about what you've learned today, consider how you can use these new ideas for your next Sabbath. Set a few clear goals—maybe try a new activity, invite a guest, or use a different way to start discussions. Make a simple plan, get any materials you need, and think

about how to get everyone involved. By planning ahead and building on what you learned, you'll help make your next Sabbath School session more interesting and meaningful.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – MY SABBATH SCHOOL PLAN FOR NEXT WEEK

Go to www.YouthSabbathSchoolIdeas.org and write your plan for next week's Sabbath School.

Based on what you've found out in Cornerstone Connections and www.YouthSabbathSchoolIdeas.org, what plan would you recommend for next Sabbath?

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SUMMARY

In this workshop, participants explored innovative ways to enhance Youth Sabbath School, discovered valuable resources, and engaged with a supportive community of fellow leaders. By sharing ideas, setting clear goals, and planning creative activities, everyone is better equipped to make Sabbath School sessions more engaging and meaningful. Staying connected through online platforms and implementing fresh strategies will continue to foster growth, inspiration, and a vibrant Sabbath School experience for all.

WORKSHOP 4
NEED

Description

This workshop will address the most common—and least effective—method used in Youth Sabbath School: a single "talking head" delivering a lecture to the class. What percentage of your Youth Sabbath School time is spent with just one person speaking to the group? There are many ways to move the youth from being spectators to being participants. In this workshop, you will find ten ways or methods you can use to increase participation in your Youth Sabbath School. Tip: vary these from week to week.

Audience / Participants

All Youth Sabbath School Leaders and their teams will find great value in participating in this workshop.

RESOURCE MATERIALS

1. *Foundations and Techniques* – Leader's Guide. Advent*Source*
2. *Foundations and Techniques* – Participant's Guide. Advent*Source*
3. *Tips for Youth Leaders*, 2010, Steve Case – Advent*Source*
4. *More Tips for Youth Leaders*, 2020, Steve Case – Advent*Source*
5. *Tips for Involving Youth in Community Service*, 2011, Steve Case – Advent*Source*
6. *Come Together*, 2016, Steve Case - Advent*Source*
7. Get to Know You Cards - Advent*Source*
8. *Program Ideas* - Advent*Source*
9. www.youthsabbathschoolideas.org

HANDOUTS

1. Worksheet, Make It a Game – Examples
2. Worksheet, Challenge Participants
3. Worksheet, Individual Write-Ups
4. Worksheet, Ask Questions
5. Worksheet, Small Group Dialogue
6. Worksheet, Reward Participation
7. Worksheet, Create Something
8. Worksheet, Provide Options
9. Worksheet, Interact with Others
10. Worksheet, Empower to Teach

What Your Participants Will Learn

By engaging with a variety of interactive worksheets and group activities, participants will discover practical strategies to enhance participation in Youth Sabbath School. They will learn the value of debriefing after activities, explore creative methods to foster engagement, and develop skills for applying biblical principles in real-life contexts.

11 WAYS TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL

To truly engage your youth and sustain their interest in Sabbath School, it's essential to introduce variety into your teaching approach each week. By regularly changing your methods—whether through different activities, discussion styles, or creative exercises—you spark curiosity and enthusiasm among participants. This dynamic environment not only captures their attention but also encourages broader involvement, as each individual finds opportunities to participate in ways that resonate with their unique strengths and preferences. Ultimately, introducing fresh methods fosters a sense of excitement and community, making each Sabbath School gathering something to look forward to.

1. Make It a Game

Rather than starting from scratch, consider adapting a familiar game and tailoring its rules or objectives to support your Sabbath School lesson. For example, you might turn a classic trivia game into a Bible knowledge challenge or use charades to act out stories or concepts from the lesson. Alternatively, invent a new game that relates to your topic, encouraging participants to think creatively and engage more deeply with the material.

Games can spark healthy competition, motivate reluctant participants, and provide memorable ways to reinforce key points. When choosing or designing a game, ensure the instructions are clear and the activity is accessible to everyone, promoting both fun and meaningful learning.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – MAKE IT A GAME – EXAMPLES

Below are several ways you can adapt well-known games to reinforce your lesson goals. After reading the following examples, challenge yourself to invent two original game ideas that could enhance your session.

EXAMPLE A

Use the Rock, Paper, Scissors game as a quick and fun way to choose who goes first in an activity or to help select which activities or topics the group will discuss.

EXAMPLE B

Form pairs within your group. One person will be blindfolded or with their eyes closed, while their partner chooses two different flavors of jellybeans for them to taste. The blindfolded person must guess the flavors based only on what they taste. Afterward, switch roles so both partners have a turn experiencing the activity.

Use this playful exercise as a springboard for sharing testimonies of "tasting and seeing that God is good" or exploring "how God can communicate with us through our senses and through others."

EXAMPLE C

Who? Where? What?

This interactive game from Advent*Source*.org encourages pairs to role-play different scenarios using dice and prompt cards. Here's how it works:

- First, two dice are rolled to identify "Who?" – the roles each person will play in the role-play will be (unpopular teen, best friend, teacher, or boss, etc.).
- Next, two dice are rolled again, and the total decides "Where?" the scene will take place (for example: by a lakeside, while serving the homeless, in a church lobby, at a concert, and so on.)
- Finally, a card is drawn that provides a discussion topic and presents two sides of that topic. The two role-players each take a side and have two minutes to act out a discussion based on their assigned roles, location, and topic.

This engaging activity allows participants to explore perspectives, practice empathy, and discuss faith-related topics in a lively, memorable way.

EXAMPLE D (YOUR IDEA)

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EXAMPLE E (YOUR IDEA)

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2. Challenge Participants

Challenge participants with an activity that is achievable but requires a genuine effort and a willingness to step out of their comfort zones.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – CHALLENGE PARTICIPANTS

Take a look at these game examples to discover how you can adapt activities to suit your goals.

EXAMPLE A

Set up a bull's-eye target somewhere in the room and provide a foam rocket for participants to launch at the target. Each week, add $5 to a prize pool until someone successfully hits the bull's-eye. Each week, randomly draw a participant's name from a hat to see who gets a chance to shoot the rocket. The first person to arrive at Sabbath School each week automatically earns a turn. If a participant brings a visitor, both the participant and their guest get a shot that week. Additionally, anyone who donates $10 or more to the outreach offering that week also earns a turn to try. Continue this routine until someone finally hits the bull's eye and wins the prize pool.

EXAMPLE B

To make your activity more engaging and manageable, set a specific time limit based on the size of each group. For instance, if you're doing the human knot game, a group of 6–7 people can usually solve it in 1–5 minutes. For larger groups of 8–9, allow 5–10 minutes, and for groups of 10–12, give 10–20 minutes. If a group finishes faster than their allotted time, challenge them further by having them try again—this time with their eyes closed, adding an extra layer of difficulty and fun.

EXAMPLE C

Present participants with a thought-provoking question, along with related Scripture passages for guidance. Divide everyone into teams and ask each group to discuss the question and come up with a collective response. Afterward, each team shares their answer with the larger group. To add an extra element of excitement and fairness, invite a guest—someone not regularly involved with the Youth Sabbath School—to listen to the presentations and choose the team with the most thoughtful answer.

EXAMPLE D (YOUR IDEA)

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EXAMPLE E (YOUR IDEA)

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3. Individual Write-Ups

Introducing opportunities for individuals to contribute in writing can enhance group engagement and encourage deeper connections. One simple yet impactful approach is to invite participants to write down their thoughts or responses. These can be submitted anonymously, allowing everyone to express themselves freely and honestly. This activity often serves as a valuable steppingstone, giving people time to reflect before sharing their ideas aloud. By incorporating this kind of game, you'll foster active participation and help group members open up, making the experience both meaningful and enjoyable.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – INDIVIDUAL WRITE-UPS

Use these examples to help you create group games that are fun and meaningful. By looking at different ideas, you can find new ways to get everyone involved and make activities fit your group's needs. The goal is to plan games that help people join in, think, and enjoy themselves, while also supporting your group's purpose.

EXAMPLE A

Present a thought-provoking question and give everyone time to write down their responses before inviting anyone to share aloud. This approach helps those who prefer to reflect before speaking and ensures that everyone's ideas are considered. Participants can then read their answers, reducing the pressure to come up with something on the spot and making the discussion more inclusive and thoughtful.

EXAMPLE B

Try the game "I'll Bet You Didn't Know." Have each person anonymously write something about themselves on an index card—something that most people wouldn't know. Collect the cards and shuffle them, then hand one to each group. Participants read the card they've received aloud, pretending the fact is their own. The group guesses who the real author is, but no one reveals themselves until all the cards have been shared and guesses made.

EXAMPLE C

Gather responses from individuals outside your Youth Sabbath School on an intriguing topic—this could be something fun like "My favorite ice cream flavor," or more reflective, such as "The most important reason Jesus came to our earth was _____." Collect answers from adults, children, or members of the broader community. Distribute these anonymous responses to your youth, giving each person time to consider their assigned answer. Invite them to share the answer as if it were their own, encouraging them to really engage with the perspective they're presenting. After everyone has shared, lead a group discussion reflecting on the different viewpoints and experiences revealed through the activity.

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EXAMPLE E (YOUR IDEA)

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4. Ask Questions

Instead of asking questions that have quick or obvious answers, try using prompts that make people stop and think. For example, ask, "What is a belief you used to have but changed your mind about—and why?" or "Share a time when you felt truly understood."

When you ask these questions, give everyone plenty of time to think before they answer. You might ask them to write down their thoughts or discuss them with a partner before sharing with the group. This helps everyone—including those who need more time to process—get involved.

As the leader, be open to where the conversation goes, even if it's not what you expected. Meaningful discussions often come from unexpected ideas. By listening patiently and encouraging everyone to contribute, you create a safe space for people to share their thoughts and learn from each other.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – ASK QUESTIONS

Explore the following examples of activities to see how you can adapt games to suit your goals.

EXAMPLE A

Try the game "What Did You Say?" with two participants facing each other. Instead of answering each other's questions, each person must respond with a new question—no repeats allowed. If someone answers instead of asking a question, repeats a question, or takes too long to respond, they're out. With more than two people, form teams so the next teammate steps in after each round. If someone wins three rounds in a row, they must return to the end of the line. This activity is engaging and fast-paced, but keep in mind it focuses on quick thinking rather than listening skills.

EXAMPLE B

Divide the group into teams of 3 or 6 participants and assign each person a number from 1 to 6. If your group has only 3 people, give each person two numbers (for example: 1 and 4, 2 and 5, 3 and 6). Ask a question to the group, then roll a six-sided die. The person whose number is rolled answers the question first.

EXAMPLE C

Want to break the ice or start a discussion? Out of the Hat – Advent*Source* offers three levels of questions: Low Risk, Medium Risk, and High Risk. Choose the types of questions you want to use and place them in a hat or container. Participants take turns drawing a question "out of the hat" and answering it. You can also do this in pairs to increase participation.

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EXAMPLE E (YOUR IDEA)

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5. Small Group Dialogue

Divide everyone into small groups of 2, 3, or 4 people. Assign each group a question to discuss together, encouraging dialogue and shared reflection. After everyone has had time to talk, each group shares what they discussed with the whole room. Keeping groups small means everyone has a chance to talk, since in larger groups some people might not speak up.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – SMALL GROUP DIALOGUE

Explore the following examples of activities to see how you can adapt games to suit your goals.

EXAMPLE A

Give each group a thought-provoking question and divide participants into groups of 2, 3, or 4. Encourage everyone in the group to share their ideas and work together to create a group answer. Afterward, have the groups present and compare their answers with the rest of the participants.

EXAMPLE B

Assign each group a different question or challenge related to the week's theme, so that every group explores a different aspect. After discussing, each group shares their insights with everyone.

EXAMPLE C

Instead of answering a question, have each small group create their own questions about a specific topic, like "Salvation," "Jesus Today," or "How to Be a Good Friend." Once the groups have written their questions, they can swap them with another group or use them in next week's Youth Sabbath School lesson.

EXAMPLE D (YOUR IDEA)

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EXAMPLE E (YOUR IDEA)

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6. Reward Participation

Rewards can take many forms, from tangible items like food, gift cards, or money, to intangible incentives such as praise, recognition, greater responsibility, or leadership opportunities. They don't have to be costly—simple things like earning points can also effectively motivate and affirm participation.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – REWARD PARTICIPATION

After reviewing the following examples, try coming up with your own creative ideas below:

EXAMPLE A

Something as simple as the order in which youth receive snacks at the end of Youth Sabbath School can be determined by the points they've earned for attending that day. Alternatively, you can let them accumulate points over several weeks, then reward top participants with a larger prize, such as a gift card to a favorite local restaurant.

EXAMPLE B

Organize the youth into teams and challenge them to raise funds over the course of a month, with each team selecting a charity they want to support—either locally or globally. Throughout the month, prompt friendly competition and teamwork as they plan creative fundraising activities, such as bake sales, car washes, or online campaigns.

At the end of the month, invite each team to present their chosen charity and the impact their donation will make.

The team that raises the highest amount is recognized during Youth Sabbath School and perhaps given a special privilege, such as choosing a group outing or leading a future service project. This approach not only rewards participation but also fosters a spirit of generosity, collaboration, and leadership among the youth.

EXAMPLE C

Give youth the opportunity to get involved on specific roles during Youth Sabbath School, such as helping with audio-visual equipment, setting up or cleaning up snacks, or choosing songs a couple of times each month. As they show responsibility in these tasks, you may offer them the opportunity to assist a youth leader. Over time, this can lead to them co-leading or eventually leading group activities themselves.

Over time, this can lead to them co-leading or eventually leading group activities themselves.

EXAMPLE D (YOUR IDEA)

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EXAMPLE E (YOUR IDEA)

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7. Create Something

You don't have to be an artist to join in—anyone can get creative! Try making things out of clay, decorating posters, writing your own Psalms, editing photos, or making simple videos. There are lots of ways to express ideas and talents.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – CREATE SOMETHING

After reviewing the following examples, try coming up with your own creative ideas below:

EXAMPLE A

Give each young person a small amount of Play-Doh or modeling clay. Ask them to use the clay to make different animals that might have been in Noah's Ark, or to create plants and animals that could have been in the Garden of Eden. Encourage everyone to use their imagination and add details—maybe some animals are eating, walking, or playing. Once everyone has finished, invite each person show their creation to the group, and ask them to explain what animal or plant they made and why they chose it.

This activity helps everyone think creatively about stories from the Bible and lets them share their ideas in a fun, hands-on way.

EXAMPLE B

Start a mural on one wall of the Youth Sabbath School room. Choose a topic such as "Names for God," "Benefits of Jesus," or "People I want to pray for. Use lots of colors and different materials. Talk together about what is on the mural. The mural can be used as a platform for individuals to share their responses on the topic.

EXAMPLE C

Invite each person to write a simple Psalm, two lines at a time. For the first line, have them start with a phrase such as "God is good to me" or "I cried out to the Lord." For the second line, they can choose one of three ways to continue:

1. Paraphrase the first line in your own words (e.g., "He cares and provides" or "My heart groaned with pain").
2. Contrast the first line (e.g., "Even when I turned away from Him" or "Others laughed when they heard").
3. Finish or expand on the first line (e.g., "So I can face anything" or "and He heard the pain in my soul").

Encourage everyone to follow this pattern for two more pairs of lines, resulting in a Psalm that is six lines long. Afterwards, invite participants to share their Psalms with the group. This activity helps everyone express their feelings, practice creative writing, and connect with spiritual themes in a personal way.

EXAMPLE D (YOUR IDEA)

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EXAMPLE E (YOUR IDEA)

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8. Provide Options

Offering choices in activities allows people to feel empowered and valued for their individuality. When participants have options instead of being told what to do, they are more likely to engage and express themselves. Including diverse perspectives can help generate creative ideas and provide opportunities that might not otherwise be considered.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – PROVIDE OPTIONS

Write your own ideas after reading the following examples:

EXAMPLE A

For the Sabbath School lesson, set up several different activity stations around the room, each offering a different experience. Stations could include one for music, another for Q&A, a spot for sand sculpting or drawing, and another for reading selected portions of Scripture. Divide the group so participants can move from station to station either together or at their own pace, ensuring everyone gets a chance to engage with a variety of learning styles and reflect in their own way.

EXAMPLE B

Obtain funds from a major donor for the youth to use. Present the youth with the ADRA Gift Catalog, allowing them to review the various charitable projects and vote on which ones they feel most passionate about supporting. Once the group selects their preferred projects, distribute the donor's funds accordingly. Next, encourage the youth to take ownership by launching their own fundraising campaign for an additional project of their choice—one they feel invested in and wish to make an impact on through their collective efforts.

EXAMPLE C

Try using Q4U Discussion Cards from Advent*Source*.org, which each have two questions. Let participants pick a card and choose which question they want to answer. This gives everyone a choice and helps start conversations.

You can pick 15–20 cards ahead of time for the group to use. Each participant reads both questions on their card and picks one to answer. This way, they feel more comfortable and in control. Give everyone a moment to think about their answer before they share.

After someone answers, open the question up to the group. You could also have their partner answer the other question on the card. If you want, have people paired up and each answer a question.

When the discussion slows down or you want to change topics, just pick a new card and start again.

EXAMPLE D (YOUR IDEA)

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EXAMPLE E (YOUR IDEA)

_____

_____

9. Interact with Others

This could be done verbally or with activity-based components. It could take place within your Youth Sabbath School or be extended to others in the church or at another church, in person or through technology connections. It could be live or online.

LEARNING ACTIVITY –INTERACT WITH OTHERS

Write your ideas after reviewing these examples:

EXAMPLE A

Form groups of 2 for the "Human Spring". Face each other about 1 step apart. Hold hands up and touch palms. Both partners take 1 step back. Hold your hands up and touch palms again, but this time you'll have to lean a little toward each other. Return to the upright position. Both partners take another step back, then hold your hands up and lean in to touch palms. With each step, it becomes a little more challenging to reach and touch palms—you'll need to lean in even more and trust your partner to support you as you balance. Continue taking steps back and touching palms until you can't reach any further.

After finishing, gather everyone and discuss what happened during the activity. Ask questions such as: What did you notice about working together? How did it feel to trust and rely on your partner? Were there times when you needed to communicate or adjust to stay connected?

Finally, connect the experience to real life. Talk about how, just like in the activity, relationships and teamwork sometimes require effort, trust, and trying new approaches to stay connected—even when distance or challenges arise.

EXAMPLE B

Arrange an interactive session where youth participants engage with members of an adult Sabbath School class or, alternatively, invite adults to visit the youth group for a structured conversation. Another option is to facilitate interviews between the youth and children from the children's Sabbath School class. Before the event, work together to develop thoughtful questions that will help guide and enrich the discussions. Ensure that every participant has opportunities both to share their own perspectives and to listen carefully to others. After the interviews, bring the youth group to reflect on what they discovered during these conversations.

Encourage them to discuss new insights, lessons learned, or interesting stories, and then share these collective reflections with the larger group. This activity fosters cross-generational understanding and helps build meaningful connections within the church community.

EXAMPLE C

Consider organizing a virtual exchange with another Youth Sabbath School group, either within your local community or in a different location, using video conferencing tools such as FaceTime, or Zoom. Before the meeting, collaborate to set a clear agenda or choose a specific topic to ensure everyone understands the purpose of the conversation. Establish a timeframe for the exchange to make the experience focused and meaningful. During the session, encourage

participants to share their perspectives, ask questions, and engage in open dialogue. This activity not only fosters connection across distances, but also helps youth develop communication skills, appreciate diverse viewpoints, and strengthen relationships within the wider faith community.

EXAMPLE D (YOUR IDEA)

_____

_____

_____

EXAMPLE E (YOUR IDEA)

_____

_____

_____

10. Empower to Teach

Instead of having just one person do all the teaching during Youth Sabbath School, try dividing the teaching tasks into smaller parts so everyone can be involved. For example, one youth might explain a Bible passage, another could lead a discussion or activity, and someone else might help by supporting the main teacher. Giving everyone a chance to participate not only keeps the lesson interesting but also helps each person learn more—because teaching others is one of the best ways to truly understand something yourself!

LEARNING ACTIVITY – EMPOWER TO TEACH

Read the examples below and write your own ideas.

EXAMPLE A

Assign each participant a thought-provoking question to guide the group's discussion.

Meet with each of them ahead of time so they feel confident and can explore possible answers together with you. When it's their turn to ask the group, encourage everyone to join in the conversation, making it a fun and interactive way to learn together.

EXAMPLE B

Assign Youth Sabbath School responsibilities one week in advance. Depending on the size of your group, assign either groups or individuals to different parts of the lesson. Choose your topic and break it down into segments of 2-4 minutes each, such as: leading a song, performing a short skit, reading and discussing a Bible passage, asking thoughtful questions, sharing answers, leading a group prayer, or suggesting practical ways to live out the lesson during the coming week. Follow up with each youth during the week to ensure they feel prepared for their part.

EXAMPLE C

Invite a youth to assist you or co-teach the lesson. Meet before class to review the lesson and decide who will handle each part. You can divide the lesson so that both of you lead different activities—such as reading, asking questions, or facilitating a discussion. This approach allows the youth to learn how to teach by working alongside you, and over time, they will gain the confidence to lead on their own.

EXAMPLE D (YOUR IDEA)

_____

_____

_____

_____

EXAMPLE E (YOUR IDEA)

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Debrief Activities

It's important to set aside time after each activity to debrief and reflect with your youth group. As a leader, ask questions that encourage everyone to think deeply about their experiences, explore their feelings, and identify key lessons learned. Use this opportunity to help young people see how these lessons apply to their own lives and support their personal growth. Real learning often happens during these debrief discussions!

Divide the youth into small groups for debriefing. During the debrief, there are three categories of questions to ask the group. This is the time to ask participants about their experiences:

1. **WHAT?**

   What did we just do? What happened to you during the activity? What did others do?

2. **SO WHAT?**

   What was going on under the surface? What is this about? What feelings did you experience? What principles came into play?

3. **NOW WHAT?**

   How can you live out this experience? What are other areas of your life where these principles apply? Who will be your accountability partner?

SUMMARY

To conclude, effective debriefing and varied teaching methods are essential for deep learning and engagement in youth activities. By encouraging reflection and adapting your approach, you equip youth with skills and insights that extend beyond the classroom.

WORKSHOP 5
INVOLVE

Description

This workshop is designed to uncover two fundamental principles for sparking meaningful discussions, followed by practical strategies you can use to initiate conversation. You'll discover how open-ended questions and a proactive approach—such as having someone ready to participate from the outset—can help break the initial silence and encourage others to join in. By the end, you'll be equipped with confidence and tools to start engaging discussions on your own.

Audience / Participants

All Youth Sabbath School Leaders and their teams will find great value in participating in this workshop.

RESOURCE MATERIALS

- Foundations and Techniques – Leader's Guide. Advent*Source*
- *Foundations and Techniques* – Participant's Guide. Advent*Source*
- *Let's Talk About Jesus*, 2016, Steve Case - Advent*Source*
- *Q4U* – Card Game - Advent*Source*
- *I Would Like to Get to Know You* – Cards - Advent*Source*
- *Let's Talk About Jesus* - PDF Download - Advent*Source*

HANDOUTS

1. Worksheet, Voting
2. Worksheet, Continuum
3. Worksheet, Ranking
4. Worksheet, Goal Setting
5. Worksheet, Listening
6. Worksheet, Watching
7. Worksheet, Interview
8. Worksheet, Dilemma
9. Worksheet, Either/Or
10. Worksheet, Multiple Options
11. Handout, Ways to End a Good Discussion
12. Handout, Resources for Starting Good Discussions

What Your Participants Will Learn

Participants will discover effective ways to open and conclude meaningful discussions. They will also learn strategies to enhance the quality of conversations within their Youth Sabbath School classroom.

2 KEY PRINCIPLES TO START A GOOD DISCUSSION

Have participants make a small commitment

One effective way to spark a meaningful discussion is to have participants make a small commitment at the beginning. This approach involves inviting everyone to respond to a simple, low-pressure question or prompt. Emphasize that this is not a big decision—it's nothing as significant as a marriage proposal, choosing a college, or making a life-and-death choice. Instead, you're just asking for a little engagement to get the conversation rolling.

You might say, "I'd like you to make a small commitment so we can get started in our conversation. I promise I won't hold you to your answer after we're done talking, but I would love for you to participate right now. Would you be willing to do that? If so, please give me a thumbs up or a smile to let me know you're on board."

By doing this, you create a welcoming and low-risk environment. Even participants who are shy or hesitant are more likely to join in when the stakes are low. Acknowledging their willingness with positive feedback—such as saying, "Thank you for your responses!"—reinforces a sense of safety and group connection, laying the groundwork for a richer, more open discussion as the session continues.

You need variance in the responses

A good discussion thrives on diverse perspectives. If everyone gives the same answer, there's little to discuss. For instance, asking, "Are you alive—yes or no?" won't spark much conversation. Instead, ask questions that invite a variety of responses. Try, "On a scale of 1 to 10, how alive do you feel right now?" or "What's something that makes you feel truly alive?" Adjust your question as needed for your group to help ensure you receive a range of meaningful answers.

10 METHODS TO START DISCUSSIONS

Before starting the activities, it's helpful to learn some easy ways to begin good classroom discussions. Here, you'll find simple techniques to get everyone talking and feeling comfortable sharing.

Now, let's go over a list of 10 ways you can start a discussion, each with an example to help you get started.

1. Voting

This voting activity invites participants to share their opinions on a statement by using simple hand signals, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." It's an interactive way to gauge diverse viewpoints and encourage everyone to get involved without needing to speak, making group discussions lively and inclusive.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – VOTING

Using the examples provided below, create a statement of your own that your youth group could respond to by voting.

When using the voting method, participants respond to a statement by choosing from the following options: SA____ A____ U____ D____ SD____

These options mean:

SA = Strongly Agree (show with a double thumbs up)

A = Agree (thumbs up)

U = Uncertain or prefer to pass (arms crossed)

D = Disagree (thumbs down)

SD = Strongly Disagree (double thumbs down)

** You can also use these hand signals to make voting more interactive and engaging.

Here's a statement. Read it and then vote on it:

My desire for Jesus to return to earth is stronger right now than at any other time in my life.

SA____ A____ U____ D____ SD____

Here's another example:

My parents understand me very well.

SA____ A____ U____ D____ SD____

Now create your own statement that your youth could respond to by voting.

_____

SA____ A____ U____ D____ SD____

2. Continuum

A continuum is a method of gauging opinions or attitudes along a gradual scale, rather than a simple yes or no. Participants position themselves anywhere between two extremes, allowing for a nuanced understanding of beliefs, preferences, or experiences. This approach encourages reflection and discussion by highlighting the diversity of perspectives within a group.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – CONTINUUM

Participants respond to a statement or question by marking where they see themselves on a continuum with two opposites. You can try this activity on your own or with a group. Students can indicate their position by marking it on paper, or by physically moving along a line or across the room—one end representing one extreme of the continuum, and the other end representing the opposite. Here are two examples:

When it comes to being "talkative," I see myself as:

Quiet/Silent — Non-stop Chatty

How well do you know the Bible?

What's the Bible? — Bible Brain

Now create your own examples by writing a statement or question, then define the two opposite ends for your continuum.

1. _____

_____ _____

2. _____

_____ _____

3. Ranking

In this section, you'll have the opportunity to think critically about your preferences or opinions. You'll be presented with a statement or question followed by several options. Your task is to rank these options according to your own judgment, helping you reflect on your values and make thoughtful choices.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – RANKING

When given a statement or question with several options, participants will rank these choices in order of preference—starting with number 1 for their top choice, then 2, and so on—until each option is assigned a unique ranking.

You can use boxes for these options and move them to show your order. The choices should all be about the same level of good or bad, not mixed. Here is an example: first, a question with good choices to rank, then one with bad choices to rank.

I think the best age to be is:

Rank from 1 (best) to 6 (worst)

_____ Birth–12

_____ Teens

_____ 20s

_____ 30s

_____ 40s

_____ 50+

Who would you go to if you had a problem? Rank 1–4.

_____ Self-righteous Person

_____ Dishonest Politician

_____ Drug Dealer

_____ Gang Leader

Now create your own. Start with a statement or question, and then offer 3 or more equally positive or equally negative options to rank:

_____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

4. Goal Setting

Sometimes, people wait until after a group discussion to decide on a goal. However, you can encourage more productive conversation by suggesting a goal right at the beginning. Be open to changing or adjusting the goal as the discussion progresses.

Setting a high or ambitious goal at the beginning can actually help—participants are likely to adjust it to something more realistic. This process leads to valuable discussion about why the goal is important and what steps are needed to reach it.

The following activity includes two examples to illustrate how this approach works in practice:

LEARNING ACTIVITY – GOAL SETTING

Review the two examples below, then create your own scenario.

EXAMPLE 1

Our Youth Sabbath School will be raising money for textbooks for an orphanage in Kenya. We would like to have 100% participation every week for three months and raise at least $1,000. Are you willing to do this, or should we adjust our goal?

(Get input on 100% participation, every week, three months, $1,000, and even whether it should be an orphanage, textbooks, or Kenya.)

Example 2

We have been asked to lead the entire church service for one month from today. Let's have each person take on one part of the program, and some may have more than one role. Let's include the components our church usually features, such as announcements, invocation, songs, scripture reading, prayer, a children's story, taking up the offering, special music, sermon, and benediction. Are you willing to do this, or should we make some adjustments?

(Get input on how to organize the service, using the same components as usual, involving each person in the Youth Sabbath School, and determining who will take each role. It would be beneficial not just to discuss this in theory, but to actually have permission in advance to follow through and conduct the service.)

Your Example

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Listening

After listening to a passage or discussion on a particular topic, participants are encouraged to share their thoughts, drawing both from what they just heard and from their prior experiences. Whether based on real-life scenarios or hypothetical situations, these interactive listening activities prompt group members to reflect deeply, offer their perspectives, and engage more fully in discussion. To guide the conversation, it's helpful to prepare a few follow-up questions, ensuring everyone could participate and benefit from the shared exploration.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – LISTENING

Read the following story, respond to the questions provided, create your own story, and then write a set of questions for the story you've created.

Emily's parents died in a tragic car accident when she was just three years old. Her grandparents took her in, and they all attended your church. When Emily was ten, her grandmother passed away, and her grandfather was no longer able to care for her. She ended up in foster care and moved from home to home, not attending church for years. Now, at sixteen, she is in trouble with the law and spends time with friends who lead her into negative behaviors. Her grandfather has recently taken steps to get her back from the state care system. She now lives with him but doesn't like it. The grandfather has reached out to the Youth Sabbath School to ask for help.

- What kind of help do you think Emily's grandpa needs?
- What kind of help do you think Emily needs?
- What help could Emily accept?
- How might all of this affect you and those around you?
- What can or should the Youth Sabbath School do?
- What can or should the rest of the church do?
- What can or should Emily and her grandfather do?

Your Example

_____

_____

_____

_____

Questions

_____

_____

_____

6. Watching

This approach is similar to the previous "listening" method, but instead, it involves watching—either a video or a live demonstration. After viewing, you respond individually and then discuss your thoughts together as a group.

Invite a member of your Youth Sabbath School to create a video clip, along with follow-up questions for the group—or collaborate with the video creator to come up with thoughtful questions yourself. If this isn't possible, consider using an example video, such as the YouTube clip "DUST & STARS (Imago Dei)" (just under 3 minutes), which you can share with your Youth Sabbath School. DUST & STARS (Imago Dei) - [iBelieveBible] - YouTube

LEARNING ACTIVITY – WATCHING

Watch the video DUST & STARS DUST & STARS (Imago Dei) - [iBelieveBible] - YouTube

After watching the DUST & STARS video, read and answer the following questions:

BASED ON YOUR OWN LIFE EXPERIENCES, DO YOU SEE MORE EVIDENCE THAT GOD:

a. Exists
b. Doesn't exist.

LOOKING BEYOND YOUR OWN EXPERIENCES—TO WHAT YOU'VE OBSERVED IN OTHERS, IN HISTORY, SCIENCE, SCRIPTURE, RELATIONSHIPS, OR CIRCUMSTANCES—DO YOU FIND MORE EVIDENCE THAT GOD:

a. Exists
b. Doesn't exist

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE GOD? WHAT ARE THE REASONS OR SOURCES YOU BASE THIS DESCRIPTION?

_____

_____

_____

HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THE EXISTENCE OF BOTH GOOD AND EVIL ON EARTH? WHICH IS STRONGER? DOES IT EVER CHANGE?

_____

_____

_____

IS GOD VISIBLE OR INVISIBLE? HOW CAN A PERSON KNOW GOD? HOW DO YOU PERSONALLY EXPERIENCE OR KNOW GOD?

_____

7. Interview

You can start this activity by conducting a one-on-one interview in front of the Youth Sabbath School. However, if speaking in front of the group feels intimidating—because of group size or the interviewee's comfort—you can have the leader ask the same question to different people throughout the group instead. Encourage everyone to give their own answers; responses like "same as they said" or "I don't know" should be avoided.

It's usually a good idea to start with the easier questions and then move on to the deeper ones. Remember, the closer you are to the person being interviewed, the more nervous they may feel, so allow them some personal space if needed. In the next activity you will find suggested questions on the topic of "Needing or Wanting a Family and God."

LEARNING ACTIVITY – INTERVIEW

1. Take time to read through each question in the following activity focused on "Needing or Wanting a Family and God." Reflect carefully and answer each one thoughtfully.
2. Then, choose your own topic and create several related questions. It's a good idea to begin with easier questions and progress to deeper ones.
3. Remember: The closer you are to the interviewee, the more intimidated they may feel. If necessary, be sure to give them additional space.
    - When do you need your parent(s) or guardian?
    - When do you need an older sibling (or a big brother or sister figure)?
    - When do you need a younger sibling?
    - When might any of these people need you?
    - When does God need you?
    - Do you feel used by these people, or do you feel useful to them?
    - When do you just want to be around these people?
    - When do you want to be around God?

Select a topic that interests you. Come up with several related questions, starting with simpler ones and gradually moving on to more thought-provoking or complex questions.

TOPIC

_____

_____

_____

QUESTIONS

_____

_____

8. Dilemma

Describe a situation where there is no obvious right answer or easy solution. Begin by asking basic questions such as, "What would you do?" and "What do you think is the right thing to do?" (Noting that your answer to each might be different.) In addition to asking "WHAT" questions, be sure to include "WHY" questions to encourage deeper thinking about the choices involved. Try to find a relevant passage or teaching from the Bible that could help guide your response in this situation. The scenario can be based on real life or can be hypothetical.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – DILEMMA

1. Read the scenario below and respond to the discussion questions provided.
2. Create your own dilemma and develop a set of thoughtful questions to accompany your example.

Haley has been helping with the Youth Sabbath School. Several of the leaders asked her if she would be willing to work with them to organize a special program for teenagers on Friday evenings at various churches in the area. She agreed and helped them plan it well in advance.

The week of the Friday program, Haley was listening to the radio when her favorite musical artist came on. The radio station announced that the artist would be giving a concert in her town, and that the fifth caller would win two free tickets. Haley called in and was the fifth caller. Unbelievable! She had never won anything like this before in her entire life. Now she has two free tickets to see her favorite musical artist this Friday night—the same night as the local youth gathering.

- If you were in Haley's situation, what choice would you make, and why would you make it?
- What should you do and why?
- Whom would you ask for input on your decision? Who wouldn't you ask?
- Is there a particular Bible story or passage that could help guide Haley in making her decision and following through with it?

Your example

Questions

9. Either / Or

In this activity, participants are presented with a question or statement that has only two choices—an "either/or" situation. Unlike the "Continuum" where there are many options along a line, here you can only choose one of the two extremes.

To make this interactive, ask everyone to physically move to one side of the room or the other, depending on which option they choose. Give participants a few minutes to discuss with others (on their side) why they made that choice. Next, each side shares their top three reasons for their decision. The opposing group can respond or challenge these reasons, which encourages open discussion and deeper thinking. Examples of "Either/Or" activities can be found in the following activity.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – EITHER/OR

Read the Either/Or examples below, and after you have reviewed them, write your own examples.

Examples of Either/Or:

Who is smarter: Either…

Old people OR Young People

Which is more important: Either…

Christ's Second Coming OR The presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit right now

What matters more for you salvation: Either…

What you believe OR How you live

Write your own examples.

_____: Either…

_____ OR _____

_____: Either…

_____ OR _____

_____: Either…

_____ OR _____

10. Multiple Options

Present participants with a question that offers more than one possible answer, where each option could be considered correct. Use real-life scenarios or passages from the Bible to frame these questions. Allow everyone to select their answer privately first, then discuss their choices as a group. Encourage participants to share their reasoning for choosing a particular option. The following activity provides two sample questions to illustrate this approach.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – MULTIPLE OPTIONS

Now, review the two sample questions that offer multiple correct answers, and then try creating your own examples following that format.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE CURRENT POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE IN OUR COUNTRY?

1. Same as it's always been.
2. Better than what other countries have.
3. Will always be a mess until Jesus returns.
4. It's kind of like our church.
5. Something I could care less about.
6. t has nothing to do with my relationship with God.
7. Similar to how it was in Bible times.
8. Something God cares about.
9. Other

WHAT IS A GOOD WAY TO "LOVE YOUR ENEMY" AS ENCOURAGED IN MATTHEW 5:44?

1. Spend a lot of time with them.
2. Gladly serve those who wrong you, as suggested in Romans 12:20.
3. Recommend they serve on the church board.
4. Pray silently for your enemy.
5. Pray aloud for your enemy.
6. Pray for God to change your heart and then expect it to change.
7. Submit to God whatever made that person your enemy.
8. Other

WRITE YOUR OWN QUESTION AND MULTIPLE OPTIONS:

_____?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. _____

WAYS TO END A GOOD DISCUSSION

Bringing a discussion to a thoughtful close can be just as important as starting it well. A strong ending helps participants process what they've learned and ensures everyone leaves with a sense of completion. In the following activity, you'll explore several effective strategies for concluding a discussion, allowing you to choose the approach that best fits your group's needs.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – WAYS TO END A GOOD DISCUSSION

Starting a discussion can be difficult. Once things get going, everything flows smoothly. But what is a good way to bring a discussion to a close? In the following activity, you will discover several options from which you can choose:

SUMMARY

Summarize the key points discussed during your conversation. This can include important ideas that were planned ahead of time as well as helpful insights shared by group members. For example, you could say: "We've learned there are many ways to begin a discussion, but it helps to have a small commitment first and encourage a variety of responses."

ACTION

Based on what has been discussed, what is a practical step we can take together in response to our discussion? For example: Tomorrow, let's gather to assemble hygiene kits that we can send to people affected by the hurricane.

INVITATION/CHALLENGE

I'm feeling a call right now. Sometimes the discussion has a suggested action, but it may need an actual invitation or challenge. For example: If what we've talked about is important to us, then I invite you to talk to three of your friends about Jesus next week, no matter what they might say to you!

COMMITMENT

A commitment can be a private or public, individual or group commitment based on what has been discussed. For example: If you're willing to make a commitment with another person to be a prayer partner for a whole month, go to that person now and kneel beside them.

QUESTION

To wrap up, try offering a brief recap or a practical takeaway for everyone to ponder, followed by a thought-provoking question. For instance: The wise men traveled from distant lands and noticed the star, while those living right beneath it remained unaware. What's close to you now, but it may take someone from afar to point it out to you?

PRAYER

Sometimes, a discussion naturally leads us into prayer. For example: We may not know exactly what changes God wants to make in our lives, but we are open to listening and responding. As we pray together, let's take this time to listen quietly for His guidance.

SYMBOL

A symbol can serve as a memorable reminder, keeping the discussion fresh in our minds and helping us refocus when we recall it later. For example: write your decision on a piece of paper and put it in your pocket. When you get home, tape it to your mirror as a daily reminder.

OPEN ENDING

Sometimes, it's more powerful to leave the ending open rather than trying to tie everything up neatly. For example: Yes, our youth budget has been cancelled for next year, and we feel let down by the rest of the church. Some young people might decide to leave. But maybe, instead of waiting for things to be given to us, this situation is the motivation we need to act ourselves. That's what we need to reflect on and wrestle with moving forward.

RESOURCES FOR STARTING GOOD DISCUSSIONS

Visit www.Advent*Source*.org to find ideas and games for starting a good discussion. The following games will be fun and easy to implement with your class.

- OUT OF THE HAT
- Q4U
- I'D LIKE TO GET TO KNOW YOU
- WHO? WHERE? WHAT?
- LET'S TALK ABOUT JESUS

SUMMARY

As we wrap up, remember that open-ended situations can spark meaningful change by motivating us to take action. Using simple discussion starters and engaging activities helps promote honest conversations and shared ownership within the group. Even when resources are lost or challenges arise, these moments invite us to innovate and grow together. Let's continue to embrace curiosity and resilience, using the tools from this workshop to build stronger, more connected communities.

WORKSHOP 6
THRIVE

Description

This workshop is designed to help you understand what it truly means to be a mentor and how you can guide young people toward leadership. Moving beyond the popular use of the term, you'll learn about the real responsibilities of mentorship and discover practical ways to support future leaders. Through clear insights and useful strategies, this workshop gives you the foundation to be effective as a mentor.

Audience / Participants

All Youth Sabbath School Leaders and their teams will find great value in participating in this workshop.

RESOURCE MATERIALS

1. Principles of Spiritual Growth – Leader's Guide. Advent*Source*
2. Principles of Spiritual Growth – Participant's Guide. Advent*Source*

HANDOUTS

1. Worksheet, Questions
2. Worksheet, 5 Steps Process
3. Worksheet, Mentoring Markers

What Your Participants Will Learn

Participants will learn effective ways to help young people become leaders in Sabbath School. They will gain tools and ideas to support their growth, both in faith and in life. Participants will discover what makes a good mentor and how to build strong, caring relationships with future leaders. They will also explore the challenges and rewards of helping others, preparing themselves to guide the next generation of role models.

Find a young person that you believe can run Sabbath School with you and you start the mentoring process.

MENTORING YOUNG PEOPLE TO LEAD

True leadership is not merely about holding authority, but about inspiring and helping others grow and reach their potential. Mentoring young people is a sacred trust—an invitation to invest in future leaders by sharing wisdom, encouragement, and guidance. By building strong relationships, you can help young people find their purpose, develop good character, and learn how to serve others. In this way, supporting new leaders helps not only shape their lives, but also the future of our church community.

Let's get ready to think about mentoring and leadership with a simple activity. Helping young people become leaders is more than just a task—it's about guiding, sharing, and shaping our church's future together.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – QUESTIONS

1. This activity will help you see what leadership looks like in our Sabbath School right now and how we can include and encourage young people to join in. As you answer the questions below, reflect on which leaders have influenced you, what leadership opportunities exist for teens right now, and how you can help more young people take on leadership roles..
2. Start by looking at who leads your group, who might be ready to take on new roles, and how you can support youth leadership.
3. Read and write your answers.

a. Who are the key leaders in your Sabbath School?

_____

_____

_____

b. Who are the leaders who are not "key leaders"?

_____

_____

_____

c. How many teens serve in leadership roles?

_____

_____

_____

d. What will it take for teens to become leaders in your Sabbath School?

_____

_____

_____

e. Who can you recruit?

_____

_____

_____

f. When will you do this?

_____

_____

_____

g. Who is in your Youth Sabbath School?

_____

_____

_____

YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONTINUUM A 5-STEP PROCESS

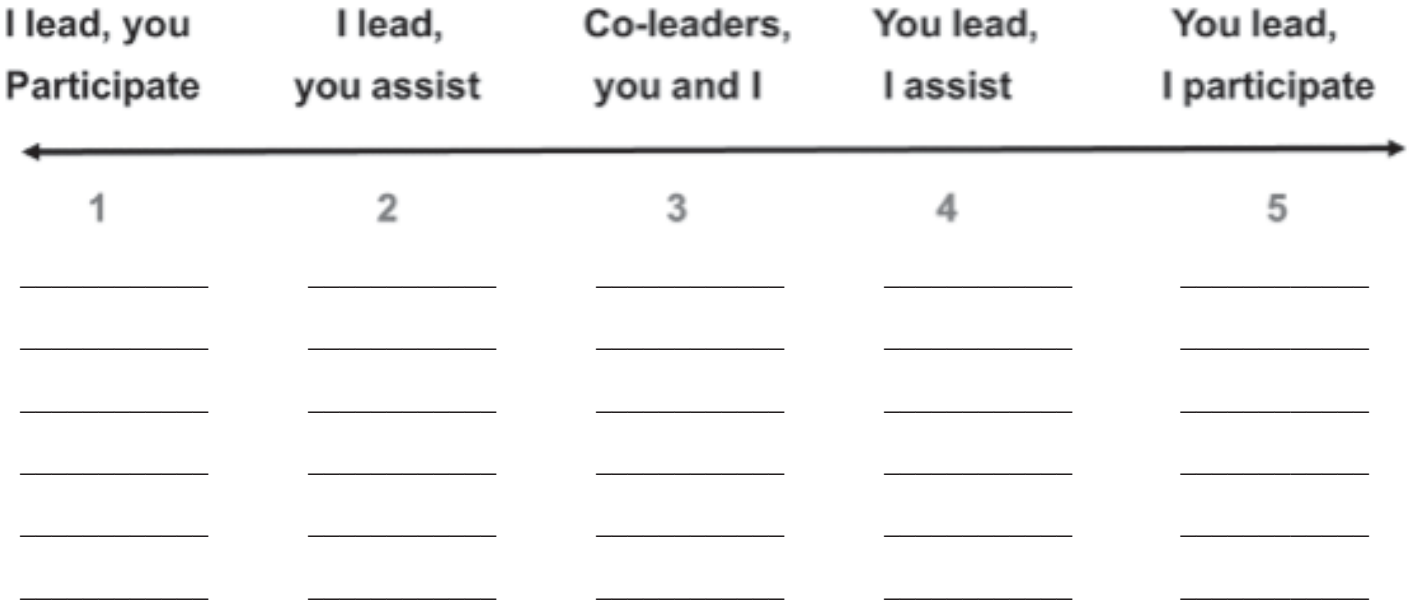
As a leader in Youth Sabbath School, you may already be guiding your teens toward leadership roles or perhaps introducing this concept for the first time. Supporting young people as they step into leadership is a journey—a process that unfolds over time through intentional mentoring and hands-on experiences. The continuum below outlines the fundamental steps required for both mentoring others and being mentored yourself. By fostering leadership in this way, you empower teens to take ownership of their faith community, develop important life skills, and build confidence as they learn to lead with compassion and purpose.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – 5 STEP PROCESS

Write the names of the youth in your Youth Sabbath School and where they currently fit on the Youth Leadership Continuum. If you prefer, you can use symbols instead of names. Think about

giving each person a simple role to help, like handling technology, music, greeting, decorating, bringing supplies, setting up or cleaning up, managing money, taking attendance, or sending birthday cards. Create new roles if needed to help everyone get involved in their own way.

WHO ARE THE KEY LEADERS IN YOUR SABBATH SCHOOL?



As you help youth move forward in leadership, remember that they will eventually move on, so it's important to keep training new young people to take their place. Your goal isn't to make yourself unnecessary, but to equip each new group of youth to become leaders—both in your church and wherever life takes them. By doing this, you'll always have new leaders ready, and your Youth Sabbath School will keep growing and thriving.

In the language of "Growing Young Adventists," this process is known as "Unlocking Keychain Leadership." It's a vital approach that allows churches to flourish and remain vibrant, rather than facing decline.

MENTORING MARKERS

The concept of "mentoring" has become increasingly valued in recent years, often connected to developing young leaders or nurturing their spiritual journey with the guidance of experienced Christians. In the best scenarios, a mentor supports both areas of growth.

You can encourage effective mentoring by using the "mentoring markers" outlined in the following activity.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – MENTORING MARKERS

Mentoring works best when you follow certain key practices, called "Mentoring Markers." These markers are actions and attitudes that help you build strong, supportive relationships with the young people you mentor. To help you grow as a mentor, review the list of markers below. Circle the ones you already do and underline the ones you want to focus on improving. This process will help you become a more effective mentor and better support the young people in your care.

1. Foster lasting connections with both your youth and their parents or guardians as time goes on.
2. Build genuine, caring connections that are mutually respectful, maintaining healthy boundaries between adults and minors as well as between genders.
3. Ensure accountability with your youth and their parents by avoiding situations where you are alone one-on-one with a minor.
4. Spend time with young people in different settings and situations outside of Youth Sabbath School, with permission from their parents or guardians.
5. Show consistency and transparency in your actions and values, being honest and authentic, especially during periods of change.
6. Take an active role in your faith community, not as a distant advisor, but by openly demonstrating your relationship with Jesus and with others through your daily actions and involvement.
7. Share not only what you believe and how you act, but also clearly explain the reasons behind your choices as you live them out—demonstrating both your values and your daily experience.

Make a list of the young people you are currently mentoring.

_____ _____

_____ _____

Do they know it? Which ones know?

_____ _____

_____ _____

Are they interested in having you as a mentor? Which ones are they?

_____ _____

_____ _____

Which other adults are mentoring the youth at your church?

_____ _____

_____ _____

What will it take to collaborate with other mentors
and church leaders as part of your mentoring team?

_____ _____

_____ _____

CHURCH SAFETY BETWEEN ADULTS & MINORS

Becoming a mentor to the teens in your Sabbath is a significant responsibility that requires integrity and careful attention. Therefore, it is essential to interact respectfully with both the young people and their parents or guardians.

As a Sabbath School leader, you must complete church safety training and pass an approved background check. You are also required to adhere to all aspects of the North American Division's Code of Conduct regarding interactions between adults and minors.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – NAD CODE OF CONDUCT

Please visit www.nadyouthsafety.org and follow the instructions provided below:

1. **NAD Code of Conduct**
   Print a copy and read it thoroughly. Once reviewed, sign the document and submit it to your church's Sabbath School superintendent or designated church safety officer.

2. **Obtain volunteer approval (background check)**
   The Adventist Screening Verification can be found at https://www.nadadventist.org/asv

3. **NAD Volunteers' Policies and Resources**
   Familiarize yourself with the NAD volunteers' policies and available resources.

SUMMARY

In summary, this workshop emphasized the vital importance of mentorship in nurturing future leaders within the Sabbath School community. By actively building meaningful relationships, offering hands-on leadership experiences, and upholding safe, supportive standards, mentors help guide and empower young people. Through this shared commitment, our church family will continue to flourish, ensuring its strength and vibrancy for generations to come.

WORKSHOP 7
EXPRESS

Description

This workshop helps participants review what they have learned in the IGNITE course They will make four important commitments: to God, to youth, to the church, and to the community. The participants will also explore the meaning of consecration as it appears in both the Old and New Testaments.

Audience / Participants

All Youth Sabbath School Leaders and their teams will find great value in participating in this workshop.

RESOURCE MATERIALS

1. Foundations and Techniques – Leader's Guide. Advent*Source*
2. *Foundations and Techniques* – Participant's Guide. Advent*Source*
3. *Impressions Journal – Momentum* - Advent*Source*

HANDOUTS

1. Worksheet, Summary
2. Worksheet, 4 Commitments
3. Worksheet, Old Testament - Example 2
4. Worksheet, New Testament Worksheet - Example 1
5. Worksheet, New Testament Worksheet - Example 2

What Your Participants Will Learn

By the end of this workshop, participants will have the opportunity to thoughtfully reflect on the material explored, articulating their personal insights and responses. Beyond simple comprehension, they will be invited to consecrate themselves anew to the mission of nurturing and leading within Youth Sabbath School, committing their talents and hearts to the service of young people and the greater vision of spiritual growth.

SUMMARY

This Youth Sabbath School workshop is designed to help participants learn the basics and key strategies for successful ministry. The sessions will take you step by step—from getting started or bringing new life to a Youth Sabbath School, to creating a space where young people can learn to lead. Along the way, you'll discover useful ideas and practical tools to help your youth group grow in faith and commitment.

Workshop 1	Initiate (How to Start or Revive your Youth Sabbath School)
Workshop 2	Give & Take (Ideas and Resources for Youth Sabbath School)
Workshop 3	Need (10 Ways to Increase Participation in Youth Sabbath School)
Workshop 4	Involve (How to Start Good Discussions)
Workshop 5	Thrive (Mentoring Young People to Lead)
Workshop 6	Express (Summary, Commitment, Consecration)

INTRO LEARNING ACTIVITY – SUMMARY

Pause, reflect, and write down the main lesson you learned from the workshops.

1. What is one "take away" you have from this training?

_____

_____

_____

2. For the overly ambitious, what is one "take-away" for each Module?

_____

_____

_____

COMMITMENTS

Before we move forward, let's pause and reflect on what really matters. This training invites you to make four heartfelt commitments that can shape your journey and the lives of those you lead.

A. **To God**

Each day, let us choose to surrender our lives to Jesus as our Lord and Savior. When we are filled with His presence, we naturally reflect Him to those around us.

B. **To the Youth in Your Life and Ministry**

1. **BE PRESENT** – Make it a priority to be fully present. Truly showing up and engaging with the youth is one of the most meaningful ways to connect with and support them.

2. **LEAD** them. Young people need leaders who will guide them spiritually, listen to them, connect with them, and above all, point them toward Jesus.
3. **EMPOWER** them – encourage them to actively participate and make a difference.
4. **SUPPORT** them – Stand by them, offering unwavering support and walking the journey with them wholeheartedly.

C. **To Your Congregation**

1. **Integrating:** Let's also be committed to making it a priority to help young people become an active part of the larger church community. Encourage them to participate fully in various church ministries and offer them opportunities to step into leadership and service roles across the congregation.
2. **Advocating:** As leaders for young people, it's important to stand up for their involvement in church ministries. Advocate for their voices to be heard and ensure they have meaningful opportunities to lead and contribute within the church community.

D. **To Your Community**

Let us commit ourselves to follow the example of Jesus—the one who went out to meet people where they were. As youth leaders and mentors, we must commit to going to the young people: visiting their schools, showing up at their events, and engaging with them in their everyday environments. By making this commitment, we build authentic relationships, not only with the youth but also with their friends, creating open doors for ministry. Through our commitment to presence and engagement, Sabbath School can become a truly evangelistic experience, inspiring teenagers to invite their friends and foster a vibrant, growing community.

LEARNING ACTIVITY – 4 COMMITMENTS

As we wrap up this Youth Sabbath School Leaders Training, we invite you to reflect on and write down your 4 commitments. Please express each one in your own words below:

1. My commitment to God (Savior and Lord).

_____

_____

_____

2. My commitment to my youth: Be present, Lead, Empower, Support.

_____

_____

_____

3. My commitment to my Congregation: Integrating and advocating for young people.

_____

_____

_____

4. My commitment to my community: Go to them; Bring them into the church.

_____

_____

_____

CONSECRATION FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Consecration means setting yourself apart for God and His purposes. Throughout the Bible, people dedicated themselves to God, allowing Him to guide their lives and actions. It's not just about rituals, but about deeply committing your heart, your actions, and your leadership to God. When we consecrate ourselves, we become better leaders—serving with honesty, kindness, and a strong sense of purpose, just as many people in the Bible did.

EXAMPLE 1 from the Old Testament

The Creation Story found in Genesis 1–2.

- During the first 3 days, God initiated creation by forming the foundational elements of the world.
- In biblical symbolism, the number 3 often represents God's presence and completeness.
- After establishing the foundation in the first three days, God then repeated the cycle of the 3 by filling each part of creation during the next three days, bringing the world to fullness and completion.
- God devoted six days to preparing the world before the arrival of Sabbath.
- How many days does it take you to prepare for Youth Sabbath School?
    - Begin on Sunday and get a rough idea of the lesson.
    - Start planning your lesson on Sunday by making a basic outline. As the week goes on, add ideas and get creative, so that by Sabbath, your Youth Sabbath School is ready and full of blessings and joy.

EXAMPLE 2 from the Old Testament

Ezekiel 37:1–14 describes a vision that uplifts and encourages those who guide young people.

LEARNING ACTIVITY

Please read Ezekiel 37:1–14 (Good News Translation), then respond thoughtfully to the three questions provided.

Ezekiel 37:1 – 14 (Good News Translation)

[1] I felt the powerful presence of the LORD (Yahweh), and His Spirit took me and set me down in a valley where the ground was covered with bones. [2] He led me all around the valley, and I could see that there were very many bones and that they were very dry. [3] He said to me, "Mortal man, can these bones come back to life?" I replied, "Sovereign LORD (Yahweh), only You can answer that!" [4] He said, "Prophesy to the bones. Tell these dry bones to listen to the Word of the Lord. [5] Tell them that I, the Sovereign LORD (Yahweh), Am saying to them: I Am going to put breath into you and bring you back to life. [6] I will give you sinews and muscles and cover you with skin. I will put breath into you and bring you back to life. Then you will know that I Am the LORD (Yahweh)." [7] So, I prophesied as I had been told. While I was speaking, I heard a rattling noise, and the bones began to join together. [8] While I watched, the bones were covered with sinews and muscles, and then with skin. But there was no breath in the bodies. [9] God said to me, "Mortal man, prophesy to the wind (breath, spirit). Tell the wind (breath, spirit) that the Sovereign LORD (Yahweh) commands it to come from every direction, to breathe into these dead bodies, and to bring them back to life." [10] So, I prophesied as I had been told. Breath entered the bodies, and they came to life and stood up. There were enough of them to form an army. [11] God said to me, "Mortal man, the people of Israel are like these bones. They say that they are dried up, without any hope and with no future. [12] So, prophesy to My people Israel and tell them that I, the Sovereign LORD (Yahweh), am going to open their graves. I am going to take them out and bring them back to the land of Israel. [13] When I open the graves where My people are buried and bring them out, they will know that I Am the LORD (Yahweh). [14] I will put My breath in them, bring them back to life, and let them live in their own land. Then they will know that I Am the LORD (Yahweh). I have promised that I would do this— and I will. I, the LORD (Yahweh), have spoken. "My commitment to God (Savior and Lord).

QUESTIONS:

What hopes do you have for your Youth Sabbath School experience?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What is your hope based on?

_____

_____

_____

What will you do about that now?

_____

_____

_____

LEARNING ACTIVITY

Take a moment to open a notebook or a document on your device and spend some time reflecting on Ezekiel 37:1-3. Write down your thoughts and insights about this passage.

"1 I felt the powerful presence of the Lord, and His spirit took me and set me down in a valley where the ground was covered with bones. 2 He led me all around the valley, and I could see that there were very many bones and that they were very dry. 3 He said to me, "Mortal man, can these bones come back to life?"

CONSECRATION FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

As we reflect on the message of Ezekiel 37, it is helpful to consider how the theme of new life and hope continues in the New Testament. In this section, we will look at two key examples from the life of Jesus and the early church that show how God brings restoration and power to those who trust in Him. Through these stories, we can discover what it means to live with faith and to experience the transforming presence of God.

EXAMPLE 1 from the New Testament

Jesus said, "I AM…"

Jesus makes 7 distinct "I AM" declarations in the Gospel of John, each revealing a unique aspect of His identity and mission.

I AM the bread of life (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51)
I AM the light of the world (John 8:12)
I AM the One who testifies about myself (John 8:18)
I AM the door of the sheep (John 10:7, 9)
I AM the good shepherd (John 10:11, 14)
I AM the resurrection and the life (John 11:25)
I AM the way and the truth and the life (John 14:6)
I AM the true vine (John 15:1, 5)

Let us now turn our attention to the story of Lazarus's resurrection in John 11. When Jesus learned that His friend Lazarus was ill, He chose to wait two days before visiting him, declaring that this delay would ultimately reveal God's glory.

Jesus' return to that region of Palestine meant going back to a place where He had recently faced threats to His life—the people there had tried to stone Him (see John 11:8; 10:33, 39). This context helps explain Thomas's words: "Let us also go, that we may die with Him" (John 11:16).

Both Martha and Mary believed that Jesus could have prevented Lazarus's death (John 11:21, 32), and Martha also affirmed her faith that he would rise again in the resurrection at the last day (John 11:24). In response, Jesus declared, "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25), revealing that new life and hope are found in Him.

LEARNING ACTIVITY

Take a moment to read John 11 carefully. As you reflect, write down your observations and personal insights. Consider these questions thoughtfully as you respond.

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS AND IDEAS:

How did this event affect Lazarus?

_____

_____

_____

How did this impact Martha and Mary?

_____

_____

_____

What did this mean for the disciples?

_____

_____

_____

What does this mean to you?

_____

_____

_____

What does this mean for your Youth Sabbath School?

_____

_____

_____

EXAMPLE 2 from the New Testament

Acts 1:8 (NIV):

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

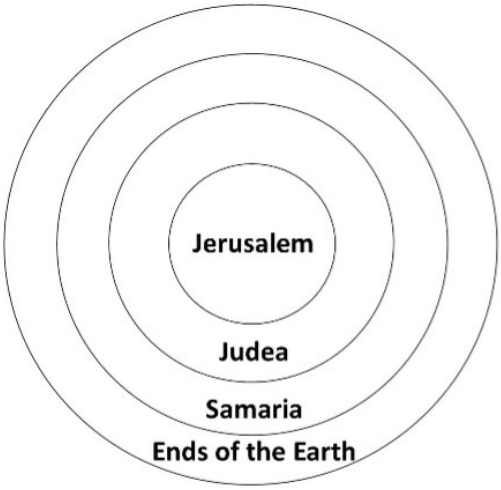
THE 2 "YOU's" of Acts 1:8

1. **You** will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you.
2. **You** will be My witnesses.

WHERE?

In practical terms:

1. Jerusalem (represents your Youth Sabbath School)
2. Judea (stands for your whole church)
3. Samaria (refers to your surrounding community)
4. To the ends of the earth (includes the entire world)



LEARNING ACTIVITY

1. **READ** Acts 1:1-8 in your favorite Bible translation.
2. **MEDITATE** on verse 8 and consider what it means for you and the teens in your Sabbath School in your class.
3. **PRAY** to receive the Holy Spirit. Ask for guidance to be effective witnesses.
4. **BRAINSTORM** on how you and your class can put this calling into action within each of the four (circles) areas mentioned above ("Where?" section).
5. **WRITE** down your thoughts and action ideas below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

SUMMARY

As we finish this workshop, it's clear we've had valuable discussions and shared helpful ideas. By working together, we explored new viewpoints and found practical steps to use in our daily work.

Everyone took part by sharing thoughts and listening to others, which helped create a positive and creative atmosphere.

Moving forward, the most important part will be using what we learned. The ideas and plans from today can make a real difference. Let's support each other by putting these ideas into action.

Thank you for your participation. We've started something meaningful, and now it's time to turn our workshop insights into real progress.

NOTES

A WEBSITE WITH YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL HELPS!

This website is created just for Youth Sabbath School leaders. It features opening activity ideas, video clips, music suggestions and Bible study options that go along with the weekly Cornerstone Connection lessons. You will also find ideas for mission, application and youth leader tips. Lesson ideas are added every week so check it out!

YOUTHSABBATHSCHOOLIDEAS.ORG

SABBATH SCHOOL LEADERS CONNECT ON FACEBOOK

Are you looking for more ideas for your Youth Sabbath School? Do you want to share what you are doing that is working really well?

We are building a Facebook community to share and connect with people who are passionate about Youth Sabbath School. Join today to post your pictures, ideas and questions.

Like us today.

YOUTH SABBATH SCHOOL IDEAS

Seventh-day Adventist® Church

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