

# Summer Sunday School Activities

*"Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce,  
but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow...."*  
(Exodus 23:10-11)

Rest plays an important role in structured routines. Through rest the Lord can renew and refocus our energy. Summer can be a good time to take a rest from intensive Sunday School routines. Here are some suggestions for the summer months.

## Family Grouping

Adjust Sunday School age groupings. Children of all ages can complete activities together. Teens can enjoy leadership opportunities and younger children can have fun in a relaxed atmosphere.

## Leadership

Leadership of summer programs may appeal to adults who are unable to contribute at other times. Encourage adults to sign up for duties in late spring or early summer so that good planning results in shared responsibility and a light burden for all.

## Bible Games

A wide variety of Bible games are available. Look for games that:

- **Suit the ages of children in your care.** Some games have versions for older younger children. Use them simultaneously for children of various ages as you play.
- **Work for the size of your group(s).** Games that require too much waiting for a large group will lead to boredom. Find games that will keep everyone involved and having fun
- **Emphasize cooperation** *e.g.* games whose focus is to have everyone succeed, rather than one child win.

Try the games ahead of time to be sure the level of knowledge and experience needed are a good fit for your group.

## Group Games

Take a well-known children's game and adapt it to review stories children have learned in Sunday School. For example:

- **Charades.** Use stories, places or people from the Bible for children to guess.
- **Guess who (Come si Come)** The leader (teacher or student) says "Come si come," signaling that they have thought of a person, preferably a person from the Word. The rest of the class says, "Who do you come by?" The class then has to guess who the leader has in mind. The leader can only answer "yes" or "no." Questions will need to be phrased so that this answers the question, *i.e.* "Is this person a woman?" rather than "Is this a woman or a man?"

- Use names of people in the Word to play “**hangman.**” The leader puts dashes on a piece of paper or the board—each dash representing the letter of a name. If children guess correctly, the letters are put on the dashes. If the children guess incorrectly, one piece of a hangman’s noose and person are drawn on the board.
- **Pictionary** or **Play It with Clay.** Make up your own clues to review people or events from the Bible.

## Summer-Long Projects

Once a project is planned and the supplies are gathered, this can continue weekly with little thought or preparation each week.

- **Banners**—Choose a theme and include children of all ages in the process (*e.g.* parables, miracles (prophets, Jesus), disciples, 12 tribes of Israel, the patriarchs, days of creation, Daniel, Moses, *etc.*) Your choice of materials will be determined by whether this is something you wish to mount permanently or to display for several months.

Possible materials:

1. cardboard and paper, markers, pencils, paints
2. felt, colored felt scraps, other fabrics, yarns, buttons
3. a combination of felt, paper and markers
4. velvet or corduroy, wool, gold lame and other special materials

- **Mosaics**—These work well when there is lots of project time. You may want to tackle a large picture, (*e.g.* the woman clothed with the sun from Revelation) or a series of smaller ones (*e.g.* illustrate each of the 10 Commandments or each phrase of the Lord’s Prayer. )

Possible materials:

1. generous supply of old magazines with pictures to cut up (a paper cutter will shorten preparation time)
2. colored paper (construction paper fades quickly)
3. occasional pieces of shiny paper for special effects (*e.g.* moon, sun)
4. commercial mosaic making products

- **Decorate a tablecloth** for a worship area—Choose a simple border design (*e.g.* a grapevine) and decorate a tablecloth to cover an altar for children. All can help trace, cut out felt pieces and glue as a lovely border on a commercial tablecloth. If you feel artistically challenged, find a picture and use that as a design guide. (Young children’s coloring books can be a good source for simple designs.)

## Show a Movie

Choose a movie about the life of a person from the Bible. Preview movies making sure that their contents are suitable for all of your viewers. Movies using Biblical texts as scripts may provide the most accurate depictions of Bible stories. Movies sharing moral dilemmas and virtues work well too.