

VBS 2021 STUDENT VBS BASE CONFERENCE PLAN (1½ HOURS)

Purpose Statement

This 90-minute conference is designed to train and equip leaders to conduct LifeWay's Destination Dig™ Student VBS for middle and high school students.

Needed Resources

- *VBS 2021 Student Starter Kit*
- Student Leader Guide (from CD-ROM) — Print the following items to use as described during teaching steps:
 - Print one copy each of each session (Session 1, Session 2, etc.) for groups to use in lieu of multiple leader guides.
- Student Leader Kit — Display the following items on focal wall:
 - Kit Item 2: VBS Scripture Poster
 - Kit Item 3: Session 1 Poster
 - Kit Item 4: “Map of Modern-day Israel”
 - Kit Item 7: Session 2 Poster
 - Kit Item 9: Session 3 Poster
 - Kit Item 13: Session 4 Poster
 - Kit Item 14: “My Personal Story” — Print 1 per conferee.
 - Kit Item 15: Session 5 Poster
 - Kit Item 17: “Conversation Cards” — Print, cut, and fold.
- CD-ROM items — Print all CD-ROM items. Place in a binder and put on the display table. Prepare the following for use during the conference:
 - “Daily Overview Chart” — Make 5 copies.
 - Missions Rotation Plans — Print one copy of each session's plans (separate by day).
 - “Approaches to Sharing the Gospel” — Print one copy.
- Item 1: “Accept/Reject” — Cut apart and tape to the wall on opposite sides of the room.
- *VBS 2021 Snack Rotation Recipe Cards*
- *VBS 2021 Tablecloths*
- *VBS 2021 Supersized Backdrop*
- OPTIONAL: *VBS 2021 Dig Site Organizer*
- OPTIONAL: *VBS 2021 Dig Site Tool Kit*
- OPTIONAL: *VBS 2021 Decorating Made Easy*
- OPTIONAL: *VBS 2021 Visual Pack*
- OPTIONAL: *VBS 2021 Whirleys*
- OPTIONAL: Brown tablecloth
- OPTIONAL: Shovels, brushes, hand broom, and the other archaeology tools
- Projector or TV (to use with laptop)
- Bluetooth speaker

Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semi-circle, with a large open area in the middle for activities. Cover a table with a *VBS 2021 Tablecloth* and display the curriculum alongside the *VBS 2021 Dig Site Tool Set* and other tabletop decorations. Cut Item 1 and tape each sign to the wall at eye-level on opposite ends of the room. Hang the *VBS 2021 Super Sized Backdrop* on the focal wall. (Optional: Hang a brown tablecloth on the focal wall and attach the scripture poster as well as each session's poster to it.)

Teaching Steps

1. Welcome (5 minutes)

- Play music from the suggested songs on the Destination Dig playlist (CD-ROM).
- Greet conferees as they enter the room.
- Lead conferees to pair up and get to know each other. Instruct them to ask questions of each other such as: “What’s your favorite ice cream? What’s your favorite Bible verse? Do you have any pets? Did you have a favorite band when you were in your teens?” Ask pairs to really dig with their questions.
- After about 3 minutes, ask each person to share something about their partner that they found out during their dig. Mention that there are things we will never know about people unless we dig a little. In the same way, there are many things about God we will never know unless we dig into His Word.

2. Why Student VBS? (5 minutes)

- Share with the conferees about the value of the 3 Ps—Passion, Preparation, and Presentation.
 - Passion: You should be passionate about whatever you do but especially student VBS. Teaching without passion leads to disinterested students.
 - Preparation: Preparation is the key to any good thing. Students know when you have not properly prepared. While some VBS stuff might seem second nature to you as a VBS pro, it still takes preparation. In fact, many people say that the longer they serve, the greater amount of preparation is needed.
 - Presentation: When you have the right passion and preparation you will be able to relax and present each session clearly, confidently, and calmly.
- Lead a brief discussion about the value of student VBS. Ask: “What should student VBS look like?” Allow responses. Share the following suggestions if not mentioned by the conferees:
 - Traditional: Week-long VBS during the same week as your traditional VBS for kids.
 - DNOW: Use the curriculum as the theme and small group study for a Discipleship Now weekend.
 - Mid-week Bible study: Teach the lessons during the regular midweek Bible study in the weeks leading up to your church’s VBS.
- Ask: “Why should we have student VBS?” Allow responses. Share the following suggestions if not mentioned by the conferees:
 - Discipleship of students already attending church.
 - Additional opportunity for students to dig into the Bible.
 - Evangelism and outreach opportunity for the unsaved in your church and community.
- Mention that most churches are not able to have traditional VBS without teenagers serving as helpers. Using the student VBS materials in alternative ways will train and prepare your students to serve during VBS while allowing them to also study and grow spiritually at their own developmental level.
- Comment: “Students are uniquely positioned to be excellent role models for younger children. Putting students in a leadership role during VBS will greatly impact your children. Don’t just have them ‘help,’ have them LEAD! But to do that they need to be properly trained and prepared.”

3. Prepare for the Dig (5 minutes)

- Offer the following suggestions to help leaders personally prepare for Student VBS:
 - Survey the Site. Read the daily scripture and let God speak to you through it (see leader guide, p. 4).

- Learn how to understand your students (see leader guide, p. 5 and “Student Characteristics” on CD-ROM).
- Pray for yourself, your students, and other VBS leaders. Prayer is the most important step of all things we do!
- Ask for additional ideas for prayer support for VBS. Suggest ideas such as prayer partners, prayer walks, senior adult prayer warriors praying over rooms each day, praying for a different student each day, keeping a list of names in the car and praying for students while driving or waiting in a drive-thru line, enlisting parents or other church members to pray for students by name.
- Pause and pray for students who will be impacted by Student VBS during 2021. Pray for the Student VBS leaders in the room and the volunteers they will recruit.

4. Use the Right Tools (5 minutes)

- Mention it is critically important to have the right tools for Student VBS. Briefly talk through each tool and offer commentary as needed.
 - Bible — The Bible is the number one tool needed for Student VBS. While most students use Bible apps on their devices instead of traditional Bibles, it is important for them to see the leader using an actual Bible. It drives home the fact that God’s Word is our authority, not Google.
 - *VBS 2021 Student Leader Guide* — One is included in the Student Starter Kit. Others may be printed from the CD-ROM included in the Starter Kit.
 - Note the helpful information for planning each session included in the margins.
 - Preparation, planning, scheduling, promotion and decoration tips are located at the beginning of the book.
 - Student VBS Learner Guide — Keeps students engaged in each session.
 - Purchase one per student. (One is included in the Student Starter Kit.)
 - Pack — Items in the kit are referenced by number in the leader guide. See margin notes for details.
 - CD-ROM — A full list of printable content is listed on page 47 of leader guide.
 - Clip Art
 - Daily Overview Chart
 - Evaluation Form
 - Missions Rotation Plans
 - Playlist
 - Promotional Flyer
 - Registration Cards
 - Sharing the Gospel with Students
 - Student Characteristics
 - Student Leader Guide
 - Items to print for daily sessions
 - Digital Resources — Everything on the CD-ROM can also be downloaded from www.my.lifeway.com/redeem. There is a unique code at the front of each leader guide that can be used to download the content on three devices.

5. Lay Out the Grid (5 minutes)

- Mention that leaders must decide what to include in each session of Student VBS.
- First, find out the time frame, then decide which elements to include.
 - 1½-hour schedule:
 - Worship (30 minutes)

- Motivate (15 minutes)
- Examine (30 minutes)
- Apply (15 minutes)
- 2-hour schedule:
 - Add recreation (15 minutes) and snack (15 minutes).
- 3-hour schedule:
 - Add missions (30 minutes) and crafts (30 minutes).
- Know approximately how many students to prepare for.
- Enlist enough help for all small groups and rotations.
- Use the “Daily Overview Chart” (CD-ROM) to get an overall understanding of the week.
- Study each daily session in depth. Comment: “This is where planning is key. It’s one thing if you forget to have the craft assembled until the last; but if you don’t KNOW the biblical content each day and how it applies to the lives of your students, then you will not be successful.”
- Sort and assemble all leader kit items ahead of time. Comment: “Don’t wait until the night before each day to do that. You will be exhausted!”
- Gather all needed supplies. Sort supplies along with leader kit items by day.
- Mention that the person who is properly prepared can relax and enjoy the opportunity to build relationships and impact the lives of students.

6. Dig In (30 minutes)

- Form five groups and assign them one of the days of VBS (1–5). Give each group a copy of the “Overview Chart” and the printout of their day’s session from the digital leader guide.
- Explain that groups will have 5 minutes to dig into the session and be ready to report on the following to the larger group:
 - Session 1: Leader Devotion
 - Session 2: Motivate
 - Session 3: Worship
 - Session 4: Examine
 - Session 5: Apply
- Allow groups to share their observations with the larger group. Point out that each session has a Truth, Bible Story, Today’s Point, Today’s Purpose, Bonus Verse, and Artifact.
- Invite the Session 1 group to discuss the Leader Devotion (leader guide, p. 7) section.
- Encourage leaders to study the Leader Devotion each day as part of their preparation to teach. Mention that the author of the leader devotions talks about having a “this is real” moment when she visited Israel during college and saw the places of the Bible come to life. If you have been to the Holy Land, share a personal story about a moment when something from the Bible became real to you as you visited the spot it occurred.
- Remind conferees that each day of VBS, students will hear an Old Testament promise and see its fulfillment in the New Testament. Day 1 is not just “The Christmas Story.” It is the moment when Jesus came down from heaven, entered the world as a human baby, and began His mission of being “God with us”— our Savior.
- Invite the Session 2 group to discuss the Motivate (leader guide, p. 17) section.
- Ask the following questions:
 - Who or what do you think is the most powerful thing in the world (other than God)?
 - What makes this person or thing so powerful?
 - Who is the most powerful person here?
 - How does your power compare to God’s power?
 - What word would you use to describe God’s power?
 - On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the evidence of God’s power in your life?

- Show the “Map of Modern-Day Israel” (kit item 4) and point out the Pool of Siloam. Share the following fun facts:
 - The Pool of Siloam was discovered in 2004.
 - It was initially discovered by plumbers working on a sewer line. When they dug down, they discovered what appeared to be steps and called in the archeologists.
 - They were only able to uncover a portion of it because the land owners will not allow them to excavate the site.
- In this session, students will discover that Jesus has the power God promised. Nothing and no one can compare to this power!
- Invite the Session 3 group to discuss the Worship (leader guide, p. 24) section.
- Call attention to the two signs on either end of the room—ACCEPT and REJECT. Explain that you will read a list of items, one at a time, and conferees should either reject or accept the items by moving to the appropriate poster.
- Call out items such as, “dill pickles, the ocean, snakes, strawberry ice cream, math class, country music, baseball, snow, getting up early, doing chores” and allow the group to move to the sign of their choice.
- Lead conferees to return to their seats. Comment: “These were just some silly things, but we all have big things in our lives that we must accept or reject. Sometimes we even face betrayal and rejection based on things that are beyond our control. This is what happened to Jesus.”
- Explain that worship during Student VBS is a great time to involve your student praise team or play some music listed on the playlist included on the CD-ROM.
- Invite the Session 4 group to discuss the Examine (leader guide, pp. 34–35) section.
- Read John 19:28-30 from the Bible. Comment that last words often have power and deep significance. This was the case as Jesus declared these words for all to hear. He wanted the world to know that His work on the cross was complete. He had become the sacrifice for the sins of all mankind. Jesus won the ultimate victory when He overcame the grave and defeated death. We no longer have to fight because He has already won the battle for us. This is the gospel!
- Comment: “We’ll be looking at the Apply section of Session 5 with the next group, but I don’t want us to move on from Session 4 without looking at its application.”
- Distribute a copy of “My Personal Story” (kit item 14) to each conferee. Allow five minutes for them to write down details about their life before Christ, their encounter with Christ, and their life after Christ became their Savior and Lord. Mention that this is an exercise students will engage in on Day 4. Comment: “It’s important for you to share that before you ask them to.”
- Remind conferees that every session of Destination Dig points students to Christ, but this day is the most obvious time to present the gospel and allow students to respond. Don’t assume that all of your students are saved.
- Invite the Session 5 group to discuss the Apply (leader guide, pp. 44) section.
- Display the Conversation Cards (kit item 17). Explain that Philip was able to share the gospel with the Ethiopian official by striking up a conversation with him. Here are conversation starters that help students bridge a gospel conversation with someone.
- Briefly overview the Three Cs of the conversation starters:
 - Find Commonalities — Ask about family, hobbies, and interests.
 - Talk about Church — Ask if person goes to church, tell about your church, and share your story.
 - Share Christ — Use the guide on the back of the card to walk through the gospel.
- Reference “Approaches to Sharing the Gospel” from the CD-ROM as a helpful tool.

7. Dig Into Missions (15 minutes)

- Explain that this year's missions rotation focus on hands-on opportunities and practicing how to share the gospel. Sessions are designed with a basic teaching plan that can be completed in approximately 30 minutes. Throughout this rotation, students will be given many opportunities to share their story. At the end of the rotation there is a list of ideas for serving.
- Form five new groups (different than the groups in the previous section if possible). Give each group a copy of one Mission Rotation session.
- Instruct each group to dig into their session and be ready to give a summary to the larger group.
- Allow five minutes to work, then call on each group in order to summarize each session's missions rotation.
- Ask: "What are some creative ways we can help students share their story/testimony?" Allow responses.

8. Dig Into Rec (10 minutes)

- Explain that recreation includes fun and active games teens will enjoy playing. The games are relevant to the lesson and may also be familiar with a twist. During this rotation, students will play dig site hide and seek, excavation site wars (throwing foam balls at each other blindfolded), betrayal, dig on (human bingo), and hidden treasure (search for a treasure chest).
- Lead the group to play one of the games.
- Invite volunteers to stand in a circle. Give the following instructions:
 - Close your eyes. I will tap someone on the shoulder to be the "betrayer."
 - Open your eyes. Wander around the room without talking while making eye contact with the other players.
 - The betrayer will try to wink at people. If a person receives a wink, that person has been betrayed and must "die" by falling to the ground. He can wait a few seconds to die to help cover up who the betrayer is.
 - The "dead" person must leave the game. If a living person thinks he knows who the betrayer is, he should raise his hand and say, "I accuse ..." Another person must "second" the accusation. If there is a second, the accusers yell the name of the person they suspect is the betrayer. If they are wrong, then they are both out.
 - The accused must say, "Yes, I am the betrayer," or "No, I am innocent." If the accusation is correct, the betrayer has been successfully caught and the round is over.
- Begin the first round. Continue play until the betrayer is identified or there is only one person left to mingle.
- Remind conferees that Jesus told His disciples that one of them would betray Him. They did not know which one of them would be Jesus' "betrayer." Even though Jesus knew that His betrayal would end in His death, He followed God's plan.

9. Dig Into Crafts and Snacks (5 minutes)

- Briefly overview the crafts provided in the leader guide.
- Encourage conferees to remember how crafty teenagers can be. Crafts can be a great time for relationship-building as well as an opportunity to connect Bible learning and life application with creative expressions.
- Mention that snacks can be anything, but that LifeWay offers suggestion in the snack rotation recipe cards.

10. Continue the Dig (5 minutes)

- Remind conferees of the importance of building on relationships started during VBS. Stress the need for accurate registration and contact information to ensure your church can continue to build relationships even after VBS is over.
- Keep the connection alive by looking for ways to stay connected with the students you taught.
- Encourage students to stay connected with the church through their official social media accounts.
- Ask conferees what other methods they have used to “Continue the Connection” (follow up) following Student VBS.
- Thank conferees for attending, then close by praying for them and their VBSs.

ACCEPT

REJECT