VBS 2021 VBS DIRECTORS OVERVIEW BASE CONFERENCE PLAN (1½ HOURS)

Purpose Statement

This 90-minute plan is designed to train and equip VBS directors and pastors to conduct LifeWay's Destination DigTM VBS.

Needed Resources

- VBS 2021 Administrative Guide (optional: several copies to use during the conference)
- VBS 2021 Directors Kit (Formerly the Jump Start Kit)
- VBS 2021 Preschool Starter Kit: Babies-Kindergarten
- VBS 2021 Kids Starter Kit: Grades1–6
- VBS 2021 Multi-age Starter Kit
- VBS 2021 Music for Kids CD (included in the Director's Kit and Starter Kits)
- VBS 2021 String Flags
- VBS 2021 Super Duper Sized Backdrop
- 8.75" x 4.75" x 2.75" tissue boxes (1 per conferee) Cover the box with wood-grain contact plastic. These will become the "Artifact Crates."
- Wood-grain contact plastic
- Item 1: "Map" Print enough for each conferee to have one map (4 per page). Cut along the dotted lines and tape one map to the bottom of each Artifact Crate (tissue box).
- Item 2: "Distinctives" Print enough for each conferee to have one square (10 per page). Cut out and tape one to the short side of each Artifact Crate.
- Item 3: "Steps" Print each page on a different color of paper (in this order: white, light gray, dark gray, tan, gold, brown). Cut along the dotted lines and tape underneath random chairs. When added to the focal wall, these pieces will fit together to create a staircase.
- Item 4: "Content Strips" Print one per conferee (plus one for you) on tan paper. Cut into strips along the solid lines. Place a complete set in each conferee's Artifact Crate.
- Item 5: "Planning Stones" Print one copy onto gray paper. Cut out each phrase and then cut into halves or thirds (for larger groups) using diagonals or easy-to-match angles to make simple puzzles. Place each piece in a random Artifact Crate (one piece per crate).
- Item 6: "Golden Tickets" Print one copy onto gold paper. Cut out each phrase and place in randomly chosen Artifact Crates.
- Item 7: "Family" Photocopy enough onto brown paper for each conferee to have one family (4 per page).
- Small hand tools and brushes
- Tape
- CD player

Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semi-circle facing the focal wall. Cover display tables with a VBS 2021 Tablecloth and arrange items from the VBS 2021 Directors Kit, Preschool Starter Kit, Kids Starter Kit, and Multiage Starter Kit alongside small hand tools and brushes. Drape VBS 2021 String Flags from the ceiling across the doorway. Hang the VBS 2021 Super Duper Sized Backdrop on the focal wall.

Teaching Steps

1. Welcome and Intro (5 minutes)

- Play the VBS 2021 Music for Kids CD as conferees enter.
- Welcome conferees. Introduce yourself and briefly explain your experience as a VBS Director.
- Ask conferees: "What is the farthest place you've ever traveled for a trip?" Encourage responses. Continue until you have found the one person who has traveled the farthest.
- Comment: "We've probably all taken some fun and exciting trips. Destination Dig is taking us on a trip to modern-day Israel, where we will explore artifacts from long ago."

2. Take Steps to the Best VBS (2 minutes)

- Explain to conferees that having a successful VBS doesn't just happen—it takes lots of planning and intentionality. Say: "The amount of work ahead of you can feel intimidating, but it's really just putting one foot in front of the other, taking one step at a time. The Administrative Guide will help you every step of the way to know exactly what to do."
- Lead volunteers to look under their chairs for the various colored papers that resemble steps. Comment: "Throughout our time together, I'll ask for a specific color paper. The first color I'm looking for is WHITE." Lead the conferee with the white paper taped to her chair to read it aloud, then hand it to you.
- Tape the white "step" to the focal wall, leaving enough room above and to the right to add all six "steps."

3. Know Your Purpose, Theme, and Biblical Content (15 minutes)

- Say: "As we head out on our VBS 2021 excavation trip, we would be wise to plan for the road ahead of us. First, let's review why we do VBS."
- Lead each conferee to get the "Artifact Crate" from underneath his or her chair. Guide conferees to locate the side of the crate with the seven distinctives of LifeWay VBS.
- Overview each of the seven distinctives. Call on volunteers to read each one aloud, one at a time. Talk about why each distinctive is important and helps your church to have a successful VBS. (Refer to page 5 of the Administrative Guide as needed.)
 - 7 Distinctives of LifeWay VBS:
 - 1. Gospel Centered
 - 2. Trustworthy Content
 - 3. In-depth Bible Study
 - 4. For All Ages
 - 5. Flexible & Customizable
 - 6. Equips Parents
 - 7. Custom Music & Media
- Lead the group to turn over the Artifact Crate to the bottom and notice the map. Explain that this
 map has a decoding key. Next, instruct conferees to reach inside their Artifact Crates and pull
 out all the TAN strips. (Only the tan strips are needed at this point. Any other colors pulled out
 should be returned to the box.) Explain that each of these will help us take our first steps toward
 a successful VBS.
- Say: "Using the map on the bottom of your Artifact Crate, put the strips in order." (Hint: Look for the underlined letters in each strip. Then put them in alphabetical using the code. Answers: A=Theme verse, E=Day 1, G=Day 2, M=Day 3, R=Day 4, S=Day 5.)
 - Call on someone to read which one comes first (theme verse). Say: "That's right! This is our VBS 2021 theme verse. Let's all read it aloud together."

- Lead the group to read Jeremiah 29:13 together. Remind conferees that they can choose to conduct their VBS using CSB or KJV.
- Call on a volunteer to read the second strip (Day 1: Jesus Came as God Promised). Continue in like fashion with Days 2–5. Add each strip to the focal wall underneath the "stair step." Point out that each day of VBS will feature an Old Testament prophecy and its New Testament fulfillment. Each day of VBS will also feature a real-life archaeological discovery (artifact) that factors into the Bible story in some way. These artifacts help kids see that the people and places in the Bible stories are real and that the Bible is true.

4. Start Planning (20 minutes)

- Lead conferees to again look under their chairs to find the LIGHT GRAY step.
- Ask the conferee with this "step" to read it to the group. Tape the step to the right of the first, continuing the ascending staircase.
- Invite conferees to find five key stones to help in the planning step. Instruct them to reach inside their Artifact Crates and pull out the LIGHT GRAY slips of paper. Note that not everyone will have a light gray strip and those that do will only have a half (or third) of a strip.
- Explain that they will need to work together to find the person with the other matching half (or two-thirds). Allow a couple of minutes to find the matches.
- OPTIONAL: Provide tape for conferees to tape the matching pieces together before handing them to you.
- Lead the group to read the completed strips one at a time, beginning with number 1. Tape each one under the planning "step" on the staircase as it is discussed.
- #1 Develop a plan (calendar).
 - Mention that this step begins on page 11 of the Administrative Guide.
 - Point out that the first box on the planning calendar (p. 12) is to set up a prayer team.
 Prayer is critically important to the whole VBS planning process. Nothing will have greater impact on your VBS than committed, consistent, and collective prayers of your church.
 - Show page 54 in the Administrative Guide. Highlight the following:
 - Page 54: National Day of Prayer for VBS is May 16, 2021.
 - Page 55: Prayer Strategies (before, during, after VBS)
 - Enlist a prayer team.
 - Have a dedicated prayer space.
 - Designated prayer days. (Promote through social and communication channels.)
 - Page 56: Prayer Calendar
 - Distribute these to your church early and encourage them to pray with you for VBS.
- #2 Set a budget.
 - Turn to pages 14–15 of the Administrative Guide. Highlight the following:
 - Sample budget forms If you are new to your church/role, ask to look at last year's expenses.
 - Start planning 6–9 months out.
- #3 Choose a format.
 - Turn to page 16 of the Administrative Guide. Highlight the following:
 - Age groupings
 - Variety of formats

- Start asking "Which schedule fits my format best?"
- Start planning 6–9 months out.
- Remind conferees that with everything that happened in 2020, it is wise to have a solid "plan B" in place in case you need to change your plans.
- #4 Set your schedule.
 - Turn to page 17–23 of the Administrative Guide. Highlight the following:
 - Sample Preschool and Kids schedules
 - Start planning 6–9 months out.
- #5 Order curriculum.
 - Turn to page 24–30 of the Administrative Guide. Highlight the following:
 - VBS is available for anyone and everyone.
 - Choose the resources that best fit your needs.
 - Start purchasing curriculum 4–6 months out.
 - Final curriculum orders should be placed 2–3 months out.

5. Enlist and Train Leaders (10 minutes)

- Lead conferees to again look under their chairs to find the DARK GRAY step.
- Ask the conferee with this "step" to read it to the group. Tape the step to the right of the other steps, continuing the ascending staircase.
- Say: "Many VBS leaders feel like having a successful leadership team is like finding a rare golden ticket. So look in your Artifact Crates and see if you have one of the 3 "golden tickets" to success with VBS leaders."
- Collect the "golden tickets" and tape them to the wall under step 3 in the following order:
 - Know your needs.
 - Pray.
 - Plan.
 - Pages 31–32 of the Administrative Guide.
 - Start planning 4–6 months out.
 - · Select dates for VBS and a back-up plan.
 - Schedule dates for training. (Training date should be set 2–3 months before VBS.)
 - Comment: "Once you know your leadership needs, based on format and schedule, you can move on to the next important part."
 - Staff your team.
 - Keep in mind basic leader qualifications. (Must match your church policies.)
 - Page 32 of the Administrative Guide offers some starting points for teacher/child ratios.
 - Provide "job summaries" (printed and online) during recruitment and enlistment season.
 - Mention that it is OK to make mass appeals for volunteers during announcements and in the bulletin, but the biggest wins come from personally identifying specific people and asking them to join the team.
 - Train for success.
 - A sample training plan is included on pages 33–40 of the Administrative Guide.

- LifeWay is offering an opportunity to train your entire volunteer team this spring with the VBS Team Training on Ministry Grid. Visit https://kidsministry.lifeway.com/VBSteamtraining for more information.
- Be sure your training session includes training for gospel conversations, not just curriculum. Leaders are going to have opportunities to have gospel conversations in hallways, rotations, and many other times and places. Equip them to be ready.
- Highlight the leader devotions in the Bible study leader guides for each day of VBS. These are designed to help leaders prepare their own hearts and minds as they personally study the Scripture for each day.

6. Promote and Publicize (10 minutes)

- Lead conferees to again look under their chairs to find the TAN step.
- Ask the conferee with this "step" to read it to the group. Tape the step to the right of the other steps, continuing the ascending staircase.
- Open to pages 41–44 of the Administrative Guide. Comment: "Like most of the parts of VBS we have discussed up to this point, the biggest wins come from having a good plan in place—being proactive rather than reactive. The same is certainly true of VBS promotion."
- Explain that there are really two main tracks of a VBS promotion strategy and a good plan is needed for each. Point conferees to the ideas on page 42.
 - Within the Church Body:
 - Announcements
 - Printed
 - Video
 - Pastor
 - Skits
 - o Within the Community:
 - Postcards
 - Flyers
 - Empower/Equip kids to ask their friends Create and give invitations for each child in your ministry and encourage kids to invite a friend from school, neighborhood, or team/group to VBS.
- Comment: "Once you have a good plan in place, follow it! Work with other staff members and other leaders to get the word out about VBS."
- Encourage conferees to begin planning their promotion strategy roughly 6 months out.
- Point out the promotion ideas on page 44 of the Administrative Guide.

7. Participant Registration (10 minutes)

- Lead conferees to again look under their chairs to find the GOLD step.
- Ask the conferee with this "step" to read it to the group. Tape the step to the right of the other steps, continuing the ascending staircase.
- Comment: "Now that the plan is in motion, it's time to start bringing in the kids."
- Lead everyone to stand up and stretch their legs for a moment. Say: "Let's take a quick poll. I'm
 going to call our three components of planning for VBS. Sit down when you hear one you feel is
 most stressful."
- Call out the following:

- Praying for VBS (probably no one will sit)
- Training your team (maybe a few will sit)
- Registration (most of the group will sit)
- Mention that when it comes to registration, the big question to start with is: "How can I get all the info I need/want while minimizing stress on parents?"
- Explain that there is not a one-size-fits-all strategy due to so many contextual variables. Know your church and community and do what works best there.
- Explain that there are two main parts for registration: *Preregistration* and *Registration during VBS*. Show the tips provided on pages 45–48 of the Administrative Guide. Briefly overview the following tips:
 - o Preregistration:
 - Consider what critical info is needed for each child/family.
 - Consult your church safety and security policies.
 - Consider your registration system.
 - Make it as easy as possible for parents.
 - Useful for both preregistration and registration during VBS.
 - Paper and/or digital?
 - o Is online an option for preregistration and registration?
 - o KidEvent Pro is a ready-made online tool for VBS registration.
 - Set a goal for registration. When there is a goal to work towards, there is a deeper motivation to find creative solutions.
 - How do we get the word out?
 - Send home forms.
 - Set up a registration table in a high-traffic area in the church.
 - Conduct a VBS Kick-off event.
 - Create online registration with KidEvent Pro.
 - Registration During VBS:
 - Enlist a registration team and a team leader.
 - Say: "The last thing you as the VBS Director needs to be doing at the start of VBS is being tech support for a registration system or rustling through paper forms."
 - Empower the team to be successful through planning/training.
 - Have the registration system in place early to help minimize the "start of VBS" chaos and anxiety of parents.

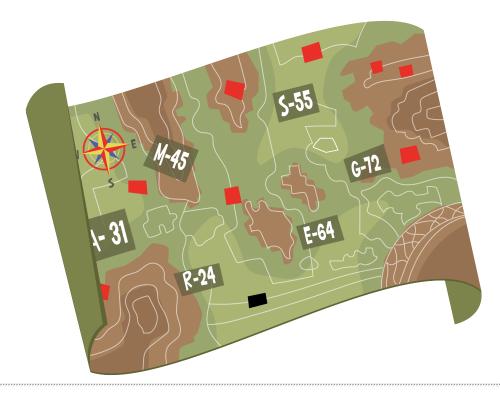
8. Continue the Connection (10 minutes)

- Lead conferees to again look under their chairs to find the BROWN step.
- Ask the conferee with this "step" to read it to the group. Tape the step to the right of the other steps, continuing the ascending staircase.
- Lead everyone to find the final piece of paper in their Artifact Crates. Comment: "Reach in and pull out the brown card. What do you see?" (a family)
- Comment that following through on follow up leads to the most missed opportunities of VBS leaders.
- Remind conferees that just like everything else, they need to have a good plan in place for follow up. Say: "We need to plan ahead to follow through."

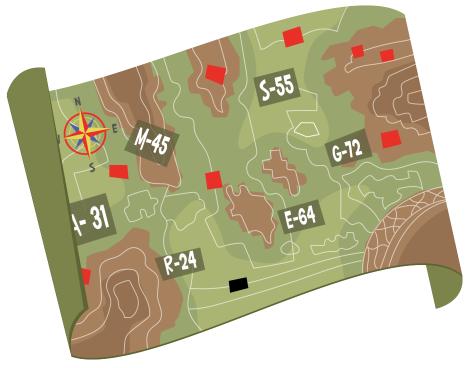
- Ask the group: "Do we want to reach the kids who attend our VBS? (Yes!) Would that connection be even stronger if we can reach the whole family too?" (Absolutely.)
- Explain that the goal of VBS cannot stop with the child. Yes, we want to reach the child, but we need to aim deeper to the family. The key is to link VBS to other existing ongoing programs like Sunday morning, midweek, parent classes, or small groups.
- Comment: "If we can make a true connection with the parents/guardians, we will greatly expand the gospel influence in that family."
- Discuss the following ideas for following up with families:
 - Enlist a follow-up team and team leader to help create and follow through on your followup strategy.
 - Host a quick parent connection gathering during the first session of VBS.
 - o Create a follow-up family event on the Sunday or during midweek following VBS.
 - o Create a special class for visitors to attend during the Sunday morning Bible study hour.
 - o Have clear communication beforehand and signage to help visitors find their way.
 - Set a calendar reminder for the week after VBS to check in with your follow-up team leader/team to ensure follow up doesn't fall through the proverbial cracks.

9. Closing (3 minutes)

- · Thank conferees for attending.
- Close in prayer. Ask God to give VBS Directors the wisdom to plan along with the sensitivity and flexibility to adjust the plan when needed. Pray that glory will be given to God as we seek to help kids discover the truth about Jesus.











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STEP 1: KNOW YOUR PURPOSE AND THEME

STEP 2: START PLANNING Item 3. Steps

STEP 3: ENLIST / TRAIN LEADERS

STEP 4: PROMOTE AND PUBLICIZE

STEP 5: REGISTER PARTICIPANTS

STEP 6: CONTINUE THE CONNECTION

"You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart."

Jeremiah 29:13 (CSB)

Truth: Jesus Came as God Promised

Jesus Was Born

(Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:18-2:6)

Truth: Jesus Demonstrated God's Power Jesus Healed a Blind Man

(Psalm 146:8; Isaiah 35:5-6a; John 9:1-41)

Truth: Jesus Was Betrayed and Rejected Jesus Experienced Betrayal and Rejection

(Psalm 41:9; Isaiah 53:3,7; John 13; 18:1-19:16)

Truth: Jesus Died and Rose Again

Jesus Is Alive

(Isaiah 53:5,9-11; John 19:17-20:18)

Truth: The Bible is True Philip Told the Good News

(Isaiah 53:7-8; Acts 8:26-40)

1.Develop a plan.

2.Set a budget.

3. Choose a format.

4. Set your schedule.

5. Order curriculum.

Know your needs.

Staff your team.

Train for success.









