

VBS 2021 VBX PRETEEN CURRICULUM BASE CONFERENCE PLAN (1½ HOURS)

Purpose Statement

This 90-minute plan is designed to train and equip VBX leaders to conduct LifeWay's Destination Dig™ VBS.

Needed Resources

- *VBS 2021 VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*
- *VBS 2021 VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Pack*
- *VBS 2021 VBX Preteen Activity Book*
- *VBS 2021 Kids Memory Maker*
- *VBS 2021 Kids Gospel Guide*
- *VBS 2021 Picture Frames*
- *VBS 2021 Parent Guide*
- *VBS 2021 Super Duper Sized Backdrop*
- *VBS 2021 String Flags*
- *VBS 2021 Tablecloth*
- Leader Pack Items — 1 and 12 (display), 12 and 23 (copy and cut enough for 1 per conferee), 30 (photocopy 1 per conferee plus one extra set).
OPTIONAL: Display items 5, 9, 16, 20, and 27 around the room.
- *VBS 2021 Collapsible Crate* or canvas laundry bag — Fill with the VBX Leader Guide, VBX Leader Pack, Preteen Activity Book, and Kids Memory Maker. Place on focal table.
- "Lay Out the Grid" (pack item 30) — Cut out seven tool cards. On the back of each tool card, write each part of the daily schedule (*Worship Rally, Excite, Snack Break, Explore, Recreation, Missions Break, and Excel.*)
- Item. 1: "Handout" — Copy one per conferee and place on or under chairs.
- 7 cereal boxes (boxes should be the same size) — Cover in stone bulletin board paper. Write the following words on one side of the boxes: *Worship Rally, Excite, Snack Break, Explore, Missions Break, and Excel.* Stand or stack the boxes near the focal table.
- Painter's tape
- 5 sheets of 8 ½" x 11" paper — Print the five daily truths, one on each sheet of paper (listed on p. 3 of leader guide). Place each truth on the focal table or focal wall.
- Jute twine
- Brown paper — Roll into a scroll and tied closed with 10-inches of jute twine.
- Pencils or pens
- Index cards — Print the Scripture references for each day's Bible story on a separate index card (listed on p. 3 of leader guide).
- Brown sandwich bags (1 per conferee for small groups; 1 for every 2 conferees if group is larger than 10) — Fill each bag with 1 pencil or pen, 1 scroll, 1 index card
- Rec cones or masking tape — Designate a game area with cones or tape on the floor.
- *OPTIONAL: The Gospel God's Plan for Me* and *VBS 2021 Kids Gospel Guide* (1 per conferee)
- CD player

Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semi-circle. Cover the focal wall with a *VBS 2021 Super Duper Sized Backdrop*. Cover a display table with a *VBS 2021 Tablecloth*. Leave room to display the curriculum

(after it is unpacked from the crate or canvas bag in teaching step 2) alongside small hand tools and other tabletop decorations. Drape *VBS 2021 String Flags* across the doorway. Display the "VBS Scripture Poster" (pack item 1) and the "Gospel Plan Poster" (pack item 12) where conferees can interact with them during the conference.

Teaching Steps

1. Welcome (5 minutes)

- Play music from the Music for Kids CD (included in the VBX Leader Pack) as conferees arrive.
- Welcome conferees at the door and direct them to complete the opening activity as they find a seat. Have music playing as conferees enter.
- Tool Analysis Activity:
 - Provide each conferee with a "Tool Card" (pack item 30). Direct conferees to attach the card to another conferee's forehead with painter's tape to keep them from seeing the tool on their card.
 - Instruct conferees to ask Yes or No questions in order to determine what tool they have. (For example, "Is my tool used to measure something?")
 - Tell conferees they may remove the card once they have correctly guessed which tool is on it.
 - Once all tools have been guessed, say: "You did not know what tool you had until someone started giving you information about the tool. In a similar way, we need to share the good news of the gospel with others so they can know and understand why Jesus is so important."
 - Remind conferees that VBS 2021 will remind us that we need to help others understand who Jesus is by sharing truth from God's Word. ("*Tool Analysis*" is a Day 5 Excel activity in the VBX leader guide.)
 - Pray.

2. Dig with the Right Tools (20 minutes)

- Open the collapsible crate or canvas bag and remove the items one at a time.
- Overview each of the following materials used in VBX as they are removed:
 - *VBS 2021 VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide* — Used to prepare to teach Bible study to preteens. Every leader needs a leader guide.
 - *VBS 2021 VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Pack* — This is the third year that *no enhanced CD* is included in the leader pack. Everything needed is included in the leader pack (which is great because you can just make copies, rather than having to print things off a disc first). A Music for Kids CD is provided in the leader pack for use in class activities. (Song downloads are also available from lifeway.com.) Each class needs a leader pack.
 - *VBS 2021 VBX Preteen Activity Book* — An activity book designed especially with preteens in mind. This new guide includes activities for preteens to do in class and challenges them to continue learning after VBS. You'll need one activity book for every preteen in the class.
 - *VBS 2021 Kids Memory Maker* — Provide a mnemonic device to help preteens remember the biblical truths learned in VBX. Each daily coin has an icon and The Point of the day to remind preteens of the essential truth from the day's Bible story. It comes with a canvas bag for keeping all the tags together.
- Explain that page 1 of the leader guide shows how to "Prepare for the Dig" for VBX. Here, you can organize, plan, and prepare for the week. Suggest that leaders gather pack items and supplies and place them in a crate, box, or bucket labeled for each day.

- Mention that page 4 provides a checklist to help leaders get started planning.
- Show the supply lists on pages 43 and 44 of the leader guide. Explain that these are master lists of everything needed. If you modify or omit any activities, you'll need to also modify the supply lists before purchasing.
- Open to pages 6–7 and show the suggestions for decoration ideas. Mention that preteens can be distracted and over stimulated by too much in their view. For preteens, less is more when it comes to decorations. Recommend that leaders keep the focal wall simple and include teaching items for each day. They can add some fun archaeological themed items around the room to create a fun and engaging environment in which to study the Bible and build relationships with preteens.
- Suggest that leaders visit lifeway.com/vbs for additional tips and training.
- Ask if conferees have suggestions or proven methods that make preparation or enlistment easier that they would like to share with the group.

3. Developing Diggers (10 minutes)

- Lead a discussion about the general characteristics of preteens. Say: "As you know, preteens, like any age group, are in a unique stage of development. It's important to understand how they think and learn so you can plan your teaching accordingly."
- Invite conferees to think back to what it was like to be a preteen. Ask: "How did you think, learn, act, and participate? Even better, how did you dress?"
 - "What did you worry about?" (*fitting in, being accepted, and rejection*)
 - "What did you care about the most?" (*sports, friends, school*)
 - "What did you want or need from adults?" (*to be heard, respected, attention, accepted, loved*)
- Say: "While there are some things that are different going on with preteens today than there were when we were preteens, their needs are the same. We didn't have Instagram and TikTok—we had Gameboys and Sega Genesis—but they care about the same things, worry about the same things, and they want the same things from adults."
- Share the following characteristics with conferees. Preteens are:
 - Developing at different rates.
 - Different skills and abilities.
 - Hitting growth spurts.
 - Creative, imaginative, and curious.
 - Questioning authority.
 - Developing a value system.
 - Need open and honest answers to their questions to their spiritual questions.
- More information about preteens can be found on page 5 of the leader guide.

4. Lay Out the Grid (10 minutes)

- Mention that archaeological digs need a schedule to coordinate and meet deadlines. VBX needs a schedule too. Comment: "Whatever time of day your VBS meets, you can create a schedule that keeps Bible study and fun the focus of VBX."
- Hand seven archaeology tool cards (pack item 30) to the conferees.
- Invite them to look at the back of their cards and match their card to the corresponding day/schedule stone boxes on display.
- Share the order of a 3-hour VBX schedule. Refer to page 4 in the leader guide as you discuss the details of Excite, Explore, and Excel.
- Comment: "You may not have a 3-hour VBS. You may have two hours or even four hours. This schedule is a recommendation and a good starting point, but feel free to adapt the schedule for your context."

- Overview the following schedule elements:
 - Worship Rally (30 minutes) — Songs, application video and introductory time for the day
 - Excite (20 minutes) — Introduces the theme and Bible content with two icebreaker activities. (Choose one if time is limited.)
 - Snack Break (15 minutes) — Time for preteens to get a yummy bite to eat.
 - Explore (55 minutes) — Engages preteens in the Bible story and connection to daily life, includes bonus verse activity and small group time.
 - Crafts — Time for preteens to make a themed item as a reminder of the day's point. VBX crafts are different from those in the crafts rotation. These crafts are designed specifically with preteens in mind. Craft time is included as part of Excite.
 - Missions Break (20 minutes) — Time for preteens to learn about what God is doing around the world. NOTE: Missions is not taught in the VBX class. Preteens will rotate to the actual rotation like the other age groups. (Or VBX could have their own missions rotation area.)
 - Excel (40 minutes) — Time to apply the Bible content to their lives and learn the bonus verse.
 - Recreation — Time for preteens to burn off some energy (included as part of Excel).

The two last pages of each session are specifically geared for crafts and recreation.
- Suggest different ways to structure the session for churches using an abbreviated or extended schedule. Ask if any conferees would be willing to briefly share alternate ideas for non-traditional VBS schedules (such as time or number of days).
- Remind conferees to consider the characteristics of preteens as they are planning their schedule. VBX activities have been designed to meet the needs of preteens and maximize their learning potential.

5. VBX Field Map (20 minutes)

- Explain that archaeologists often provide a field map of their projects to help their team understand what the process will look like.
- Turn to page 3 in the leader guide to get a Field Map view of the VBX Scripture, motto, and Bible study.
 - VBX MOTTO: Seek Truth! Find Jesus!
 - VBX SCRIPTURE: "You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart." *Jeremiah 29:13*
 - Invite conferees to play the Day 1 VBX recreation game, "Prep the Dig Site" (p. 14 of leader guide).
 - VBX BIBLE STUDY:
 - Day 1 — Truth: Jesus Came as God Promised (Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:18–2:6)
 - Day 2 — Truth: Jesus Demonstrated God's Power (Psalm 146:8; Isaiah 35:5–6a; John 9:1–41)
 - DAY 3 — Truth: Jesus Was Betrayed and Rejected (Psalm 41:9; Isaiah 53:3,7; John 13; 18:1–9:16)
 - DAY 4 — Truth: Jesus Died and Rose Again (Isaiah 53:5; 9-11; John 19:17–20:18)
 - DAY 5 — Truth: The Bible Is True (Isaiah 53:7-8; Acts 8:26-40)
- Say: "Now let's going to dig in for a few minutes on the Bible content."
- Explain that on the table are five truths, one for each day of VBS. Each conferee (or team of conferees) will receive a bag of unearthed truth clues. Inside the bag are clues to help you discover which daily truth matches your clues.

- Instruct conferees to remove the scroll from their bags. Say: “On this scroll, you’ll write a brief summary about the clues to help point you in the right direction. Then you’ll share with the group what clues you found and tell us which truth was yours.”
- Allow time to work. Then lead conferees to share their findings from their truth clues. Discuss the Bible content.
- Say: “Now that we’ve discovered the truths, it’s time to apply the truths.”

6. Apply the Truth (10 minutes)

- Remind conferees that the whole point of VBS or VBX is to share the gospel with children and for them to have the opportunity to respond.
- Point out that even though Day 4 is traditionally the day churches share the plan of salvation; every single day of VBS affords opportunities to share the gospel. Encourage leaders to not wait until Day 4 to share the gospel. Say: “We don’t know if kids will be here all week. I want to encourage you to present the gospel every day of VBS!”
- Mention that the curriculum points out opportunities to share the gospel all week with a cross icon next to those activities that lift up the gospel or provide a natural opportunity to present the plan of salvation. (An example of this is on page 11 in the leader guide.) Suggest leaders watch for these icons and be extra sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit when leading these activities.
- Call attention to the inside cover of the leader guide and the “Gospel Plan Poster (pack item 12). Review the five points used when sharing the gospel with kids:
 1. God Rules.
 2. We Sinned.
 3. God Provides.
 4. Jesus Gives.
 5. We Respond—Admit. Believe. Confess.
- Point out that on Day 4 during small group time preteens will have the opportunity to communicate what they know or what questions they might have about becoming a Christian. Provide each conferee with a “Response Card” (pack item 23).
- Remind conferees that it is important to follow up with preteens who may have questions or are ready to follow Jesus. Every preteen deserves personal attention and leaders should use their Bibles and ask open-ended questions.
- Say: “Follow up is a crucial part of VBS success; yet it is often overlooked. At the end of a week of VBS, we’re tired, exhausted, and ready for a break. But follow up is vital to connecting with preteens and families once VBS is over.”
- Suggest the following ideas for follow up that can foster further opportunities for relationship and witnessing:
 - Family Night
 - Phone call
 - Postcard
 - Gift bag
- Challenge conferees that whenever possible, involve parents when counseling children about the decision to become a Christian. Invite preteens (and a parent) to a New Christian Class as a follow up to a salvation decision during VBS week (or anytime).
- For further training on sharing the gospel with kids check out *lifeway.com/vbs* or *ministrygrid.com*.

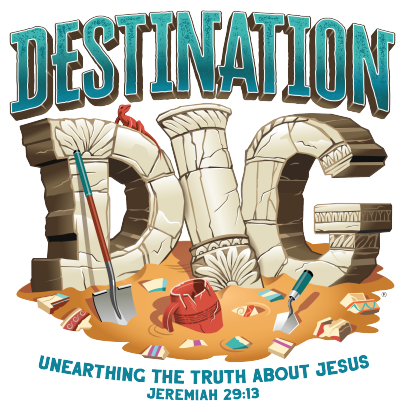
7. VBX Site Analysis (Review) (15 minutes)

- Review the things conferees have already learned in this conference. Invite them to repeat the motto, scripture, and Bible truths.

- VBX Motto: Seek truth! Find Jesus!
- VBX Scripture: "You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart." *Jeremiah 29:13*
- Daily Truths:
 1. Jesus Came as God Promised
 2. Jesus Demonstrated God's Power
 3. Jesus Was Betrayed and Rejected
 4. Jesus Died and Rose Again
 5. The Bible is True
- Lead conferees to play a round or two of "Good News Tag" according to the instructions on page 42 of the leader guide.
- Designate a playing area with cones or tape on the floor. Explain that everyone is trying to tag only one chosen person.
- Ask for a volunteer to be "It." Instruct the players to find "It" and tag "It." Whoever tags her will become the new "It."
- Play a few rounds then say: "In the Day 5 Bible story, Philip shared the good news with one person. Sharing the good news of Jesus starts with one person. That one person hears the gospel and then he tells another and that's how the gospel spreads."
- Continue: "This year at VBX, even if we only impact ONE preteen with the gospel, it's all WORTH IT!"

8. Closing (2 minutes)

- Thank conferees for coming to learn about Destination Dig VBS. Answer any questions conferees may have.
- Close in prayer.



VBX Dig Prep

Daily Bible Study

Truth 1

Truth 2

Truth 3

Truth 4

Truth 5

Scripture:

Motto:

Field Notes: