

VBS 2024 VBX EXTRAS CONFERENCE PLAN (45 MINUTES)

Purpose Statement

This 45-minute conference plan is designed to encourage and equip church leaders to minister to preteens through rotation activities using Lifeway's *Breaker Rock Beach* VBX curriculum.

Needed Resources

- *VBS 2024 VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide* (005846915)
- *VBS 2024 VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Pack* (005846916)
 - Pack item 6: "Theme Verse Poster" — Hang on focal wall.
 - Pack item 7: "True/False Signs"
 - Pack item 8: "Is That True Statements?"
 - Pack item 11: "Day 2 Bonus Verse Poster" — Hang on focal wall.
 - Pack item 12: "This or That Cards"
 - Pack item 17: "Gospel Poster"
 - Pack item 18: "Day 3 Icon"
 - Pack item 19: "How Much? Cards"
 - Pack item 20: "Possible or Impossible?"
 - Pack item 26: "Go This Way Cards"
- *VBS 2024 Music for Kids CD* (included in VBX leader pack)
- *VBS 2024 Administrative Guide* (005846937)
- *VBS 2024 Crafts Rotation Leader Guide* (005846903)
- *VBS 2024 Recreation Rotation Leader Cards* (005846913)
- *VBS 2024 Wall Art* (005846918)
- *VBS 2024 String Flags* (005846824)
- *VBS 2024 Tablecloths* (005846832)
- *Giant Inflatable Game Cube* (005841133)
- Item 1: "Handout" — Photocopy one per conferee.
- Item 2: "Gospel Icons" — Print and insert one icon into each pocket of the Giant Inflatable Game Cube.
- Painter's tape
- VBS 2024 music & CD player or bluetooth speaker

Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semi-circle facing the front of the room. Cover a table with a *VBS 2024 Tablecloth* and display all needed resources to be referenced throughout the session. Decorate the focal area with the *VBS 2024 Wall Art* and *VBS 2024 String Flags*, placing pack items 6 ("Theme Verse Poster") and 11 ("Day 2 Bonus Verse Poster") on the focal wall.

Teaching Steps

1. **Welcome** (5 minutes)
 - Play the *VBS 2024 Music for Kids CD* as conferees enter.
 - Greet conferees at the door and provide a copy of the handout (Item 1) as they enter.
 - Introduce yourself when it's time to start and explain that you will begin with a game adapted from the VBX recreation ideas.
 - Lead everyone to stand to their feet and explain that they will need enough space to stretch out their arms without hitting anyone. This activity will involve the leader reading out a statement and those playing deciding whether the statement is true or false.

- Model the letter *T* by standing with your arms stretched wide and instruct conferees to adopt this stance if they believe the answer is true. Similarly, show conferees a letter *F* by stretching both arms parallel to your left (this will appear backwards to you, but not to them). This is how they will respond if they believe the answer is false.
- Locate pack item 8 and begin reading the statements, giving the participants time to respond. Celebrate correct answers. Be selective in which statements you read as there is no need to do all 16 for this activity.
- Lead conferees to sit down. Share that this activity can be found on page 14 of the *VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*. Explain that this game was modified to involve less physical activity and to be used in a smaller space. VBX recreation activities can be used regardless of the facility or the athletic prowess (or eagerness) of the group. Mention that additional modifications could have been made the game competitive.
- Lead in prayer thanking God for everyone who has sacrificed their time to be here today and for the work they will do with VBX. Thank God for being kind to us and using us to point preteens to His love for them. Ask God to guide the time today and to help everyone to leave feeling encouraged and equipped.

2. Preparation for VBX Rotations (5 minutes)

- Grab the prepared Giant Inflatable Game Cube and explain that you are going to toss the cube to someone. When a conferee catches it, he/she must share:
 - How many days his/her VBS lasts.
 - How many hours on each of those days his/her VBS runs.
- Toss the cube to as many conferees as time allows. When everyone has answered, share that there are many ways to make VBX work for your church and community. The curriculum is written for a five-day, three-hour VBX, which would take place concurrently with VBS but look different in some areas.
- Mention that some of the terms in the leader guide will be unfamiliar to those who have previously worked with other grades at VBS. Briefly review the session debrief (p.4):
 - Excite—Introduces the theme and Bible content with an icebreaker and introductory activity. Pick one or both activities based on your time.
 - Explore—Engages preteens in the Bible story and makes the Bible connection to daily life. This is the core content. Use these plans if your church is using the traditional VBS schedule.
 - Excel—Reviews the Bible story and life application for the day. Pick one or both activities based on your time.
 - Small Group Time—Time to discuss Bible content. One leader will stay with the group all week to develop relationships. This happens during Explore.
- Use the *VBX 2024 Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide* to review the suggested schedule for VBX (p.4). Emphasize that the timings and order provided in the leader guide correspond to this 3-hour schedule.

○ Worship Rally	30 minutes
○ Excite	20 minutes
○ Snack	15 minutes
○ Explore	30 minutes
○ VBX Crafts	25 minutes
○ Missions	20 minutes
○ Excel	20 minutes
○ VBX Recreation	20 minutes
- Explain that the *VBS 2024 Administrative Guide* also provides some other schedule options. The 3-hour schedule suggested (p.20) is the same as the one in the VBX

leader guide, but VBX Crafts and VBX Recreation have been included in the Explore and Excel sections—they haven't been cut. A sample schedule for an abbreviated 2½-hour VBX is also shown (p.22) where time available for rotations has been shortened.

- Explain that VBX leaders will need to discuss with their VBS Director what their schedule will be, and plan around that. It is suggested that preteens have separate crafts and recreation activities from younger elementary grades, hosted in their Bible study space which forms the hub of VBX activity for them, yet participate alongside the other age groups in Worship Rally, snacks, and missions.
- Say: "There are benefits to the schedule as designed for VBX, but you need to determine what works best for your church."

3. VBX Crafts (15 minutes)

- Mention that just as a decision needed to be made around scheduling, there also needs to be a conversation about crafts. If the VBS Director wants preteens to do the same craft activities as other elementary grades, then the crafts rotation leader will need to use the *VBS 2024 Crafts Rotation Leader Guide*. But, if the VBS Director wants preteens to do their own preteen crafts at VBX, then the *VBX Bible Study Leader Guide* contains all needed instructions.
- Say: "Since preteens enjoy collaboration, you could consider how to incorporate a group dynamic in crafts. We also know that preteens enjoy having choices, so you may wish to provide multiple craft options. There are a lot of possibilities depending on what you and your VBS Director decide."
- Explain that each day of VBX contains one suggested craft. These are not purchasable in craft packs like some of the elementary options but are planned with preteens in mind. They're designed to be interesting for older children and more advanced (though not so difficult as to exclude anyone).
- Encourage conferees to prepare a sample craft each day so preteens can see what the end result will look like. They'll also need to determine if some steps need to be completed ahead of time. Comment: "For example, on Day 4, you may decide to cut the tape to desired lengths ahead of time, depending on your group and time constraints."
- Briefly summarize each craft for conferees.
 - Day 1 Craft—Garden Stepping Stone.
 - ♣ Show page 13 of the *VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*.
 - ♣ Explain that this craft reflects the story set in the garden of Eden.
 - ♣ Preteens can take ownership and exercise choice in what they place in their cement.
 - ♣ There are adaptations listed for special needs.
 - ♣ In addition to the suggested sea glass and small shells, glass pebbles could also be used.
 - ♣ If mixing cement sounds too difficult for your setting, preteens could decorate a small paving stone with paint instead.
 - Day 2 Craft—DIY Moldable Sand
 - ♣ Show page 20 of the *VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*.
 - ♣ This craft provides a great opportunity to highlight both the daily verse (Proverbs 3:5-6) and the theme verse (Romans 12:2). Point to those posters on the focal wall and read them.
 - ♣ Children can take ownership and exercise choice in the color of sand they choose.
 - ♣ Condiment containers work great for this activity.
 - Day 3 Craft—Everyone Needs Jesus Pillowcase

- ♣ Show page 27 of the *VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*. Hold up pack item 18, Day 3 Icon. Explain that this particular item needs to be copied to guide the children during the craft time.
 - ♣ This craft provides a great opportunity to cater to preteens' desire to belong by having friends and teachers sign their pillowcase.
 - ♣ Only adults should operate the iron.
- Day 4 Craft—Sand Art Cross Magnet
 - ♣ Show page 34 of the *VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*.
 - ♣ This craft uses colored sand just like Day 2. This may save you money by letting you buy in bulk.
 - ♣ The point for Day 4 is “Jesus is the only way.” This craft provides a great opportunity to continue exploring that as children work and may lead into gospel conversations. Ask the Holy Spirit for opportunities to share the gospel with kids.
 - ♣ Caution: Only adults should use the craft knife.
- Day 5 Craft—Beach Kite
 - ♣ Show page 41 of the *VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*.
 - ♣ This craft provides a great opportunity to challenge preteens to find the connection between building a kite and the Bible story. Encourage preteens to read Ephesians 4:14 before continuing into the bonus verse, verse 15.
 - ♣ This craft is affordable and uses a lot of supplies that are already on hand.
 - ♣ Say: “Depending on time, you could give children the opportunity to go outside and try out their kites!”
- Say: “These crafts were created to engage a preteens with a variety of talents and interests. Yet we cannot forget that everything in VBX is in place to point children to Jesus. Plan ahead to ensure that making connections to the gospel through crafts is not a missed opportunity.”

4. VBX Recreation (15 minutes)

- Comment: “Remember the discussion we had before viewing the VBX craft content. If your VBS Director wants preteens to go to the same recreation as other elementary aged kids, you may need to become familiar with the *VBS 2024 Recreation Rotation Leader Cards*. If your recreation will be self-contained, use the recreation games in your VBX leader guide.”
- Explain that each day of VBX contains two suggested games. A key consideration specific to recreation is whether the games will take place in the VBX classroom or another venue, possibly even outside. The location of this rotation will be a factor in choosing activities.
- Say: “Some of the recreation options will require less preparation, often relying on pack items and few other resources. Others will require you to pull together more supplies. Preparation is key. Organize supplies ahead of time whether you know what activity you plan to use ahead of time, or plan to determine in the moment which direction to go. In this case prepare both activities.”
 - Day 1 Recreation—“Sneaker Wave” and “Is That True?”
 - ♣ Show page 14 of the leader guide.
 - ♣ The first activity requires only a couple of supplies but does demand space.

- ♣ The second activity uses pack items 7 and 8. Show them to the group. This game could work well in a smaller space and contains a suggested adaptation for children who may have limited mobility.
- ♣ Say: “We utilized this activity earlier, and I modified it for our group, having us stand stationary while playing and use only our arms.”
- Day 2 Recreation—“This or That?” and “Categories Game”
 - ♣ Show page 21 of the *VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*.
 - ♣ The first activity uses leader pack item 12. Show the conferees. Say: “This could be modified to include options of things you know your preteens like (foods, activities, movies, games or even previous VBS themes and so forth.)”
 - ♣ Comment: “The second activity is a great way to help create belonging within your group—preteens are searching for a place to fit in and finding people they share interests with will help that.”
- Day 3 Recreation—“How Much?!” and “Possible or Impossible”
 - ♣ Show page 28 of the *VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*.
 - ♣ The first activity uses leader pack item 19. Show the conferees.
 - ♣ Say: “You could supplement this with your own items—or find exact values of items at a local store.”
 - ♣ The second activity uses leader pack item 20. Show the conferees. These challenges could be supplemented with your own that you write with your group in mind that cater to their interests and strengths (or weaknesses). This activity caters to preteens’ desire for competition.
- Day 4 Recreation—“Traveling!” and “Go This Way!”
 - ♣ Show page 35 of the leader guide.
 - ♣ The first activity requires a large space and caters to preteens’ desire to compete. Say: “You could adapt this for a smaller space, but it may be better to choose a different option if this would not work in your context.”
 - ♣ The second activity uses pack item 26. Show the conferees.
 - ♣ Say: “This activity provides a great way to review the gospel. (Direct attention to pack item 17, the “Gospel Poster.”) Utilizing or creating games and activities involving the 5 symbols and 10 words of the Gospel God’s Plan for Me is time well spent during VBX. We want to point to the gospel as often as possible.”
- Day 5 Recreation—“Bucket Ball” or “Group Bowling”
 - ♣ Show page 42 of the *VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*.
 - ♣ The first activity also requires a larger space but provides a great opportunity for preteens to work together.
 - ♣ Say: “The second activity would work in whatever facility you are using. It also provides an easy transition to the urgency with which we need to share the gospel.”
- Show pages 43-44 of the leader guide. Highlight the list of supplies organized by day, session section, and activity title. Advise conferees to organize supplies needed for each day ahead of time. One suggestion would be to create a large tote of supplies for each day.

5. Closing (5 minutes)

- Show conferees the Giant Inflatable Game Cube complete with gospel inserts (Item 2). Challenge the conferees to turn to a partner and spend two minutes coming up with ideas of how they could use this resource in VBX.

- Set a timer for two minutes, giving a warning halfway through and counting down with 10 seconds remaining. Share how providing adequate warnings before change is helpful.
- Invite responses from 2–3 attendees. Mention that it is useful to have activities ready to go at a moment's notice but sometimes leaders need to think on their feet! Encourage preteen leaders to utilize the curriculum as they see fit, moving activities around to suit their group.
- Close in prayer, asking for God's blessings over all the VBS' represented in the room. Ask for God's wisdom as conferees prepare and for preteens to experience transformation through Christ this summer.





Item 2. Gospel Icons



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