

VBS 2025 GRADES 1–2 BASE CONFERENCE PLAN (1½ HOURS)

Purpose Statement

This 90-minute plan is designed to train and equip VBS leaders to teach kids using the Grades 1–2 curriculum for Lifeway’s Magnified!™ VBS.

Needed Resources

- (6) *VBS 2025 Grades 1–2 Leader Guides*—One leader guide for the conference leader and the other 5 leader guides will each be placed in a VBS Day 1–5 flowerpot (see below).
- *VBS 2025 Grades 1-2 Leader Pack* — Prepare the following pack items:
 - Pack Items 1–6, 8 — Gather items 1–6 and 8 to hang on a focal wall in the room.
 - Pack Item 7 — Cut out each banner add-on.
 - Pack Item 13 — Cut out five butterfly circles. On the back, write one of the following on each butterfly: *Lifeway Curriculum; Know the Kids; Room Setup & Decorations; The Schedule; Prepare your Heart & Mind.*
 - Pack Item 14 — Cut out and fold the two fly game pieces.
 - Pack Item 18 — Display.
- (3) *VBS 2025 Kids Activity Books*
- *VBS 2025 Memory Makers*
- *VBS 2025 Bible Study Location Sign*
- *VBS 2025 Wall Art*
- *VBS 2025 Floor Prints*
- *VBS 2025 Visual Pack*
- *VBS 2025 String Flags*
- (3) *VBS 2025 Inflatable Acorns*
- *VBS 2025 Inflatable Waterdrop*
- *VBS 2025 Cups*
- *VBS 2025 Sticker Nametags*
- *VBS 2025 Supersized Backdrop*
- (2) *VBS 2025 Tablecloths*
- (5) *VBS 2025 Flower Pens*
- *VBS 2025 Notepad*
- *VBS 2025 Postcards*
- *VBS 2025 Gospel Wristbands*
- *VBS 2025 Gospel Guides*
- *Sharing the Gospel with Kids* (on the inside front cover of the Grades 1–2 Leader Guide)
- *Magnified Devotions: Exploring God’s Greatness in the Smallest of Things*
- *Outreach Bible for Kids CSB*
- Item 1: “Assignment Cards” — Print onto cardstock. Cut apart the cards and tape each to a dowel rod.
- Green ink pad (different shades of green optional)
- 8½-by-11” or 11-by-14” matboard (depending on class size) — Paint or draw a tree trunk in the middle of the board, leaving room for those attending your training to place a green thumbprint to create the leaves. Title the board “Magnify” with the verse or verse reference (Psalm 34:3).
- 5 dowel rods
- 5 flower pinwheels
- Green tissue paper

- Round floral foam — Place in the bottom of each flowerpot (see below). Cover with green tissue paper (optional).
- 5 plastic flowerpots (9-by-7” works well, but use whatever is available) — Prepare by placing floral foam in the bottom of each pot and then pressing a flower pinwheel and assignment card (Item 1, one card per day per pot) on a dowel rod into the foam so that they stand up in the pot. Cover the foam with green tissue paper (optional). Place one leader guide (marked with the appropriate day, 1-5), one *VBS 2025 Flower Pen*, one *VBS 2025 Notepad Paper* (1–2 sheets), and one Banner Add-on (Pack Item 7) inside each flowerpot. Add the following items that are unique to each day to the appropriate pot:
 - Day 1 Flowerpot: *VBS 2025 Sticker Nametags*, black marker
 - Day 2 Flowerpot: Day 2 Bible Story Picture/Review Questions (pack item 2), Pack Item 14
 - Day 3 Flowerpot: Day 3 Bible Story Picture (pack item 3), Gospel Motions (pack item 18), white paper (to make paper megaphones)
 - Day 4 Flowerpot: 2 *VBS 2025 Kids Activity Books*, *VBS 2025 Memory Makers*
 - Day 5 Flowerpot: Day 5 Bible Story Picture (pack item 5), play dough (enough for each person to have a golf ball-size portion), ziplock bags (optional)
- Various shades of green fabric or tablecloths
- Black permanent marker
- 6-inch clear, disposable dessert plate
- 12-by-3-inch sheets of cardboard — Create an oversized, pretend magnifying glass by taping one edge of the dessert plate to the end of a cardboard rectangle.
- Cleansing wipes
- 1 sheet of red poster board — With a black marker, draw a planet on the red poster board.
- 1 sheet of green poster board — With a black marker, draw a fish on the green poster board.
- Black marker
- Tape
- Scissors
- 1–2 butterfly nets or aquarium nets (or large plastic scoop or cup)
- White paper — Roll and tape into paper megaphones.
- Play dough
- Optional: Sandwich-size ziplock bags (to take home play dough)
- *VBS 2025 Music for Kids* and CD player

Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semi-circle. Cover the focal wall with a *VBS 2025 Supersized Backdrop*. Cover a table with a *VBS 2025 Tablecloth* and display the curriculum alongside other tabletop supplies/decorations. Drape *VBS 2025 String Flags* across the doorway and hang up the *Tremendous Bible Study Location Sign*. Lay out various green fabrics and tablecloths on the ground in front of the backdrop. Arrange the five flowerpots and extra inflatables in front of the backdrop.

Teaching Steps

1. **Welcome** (3 mins)
 - Play VBS music as conferees arrive.
 - Direct attendees as they enter the room to participate in the “Tremendous” art set up by the door.

- Using the green ink pad, have those attending your training place a green thumbprint making the leaves on the tree.
- With a black pen or fine sharpie, each person will write their name and the date of their VBS by their thumbprint. (You will use this at the end as you talk about prayer.)
- Greet each guest as they arrive, welcoming them to “Treemendous Bible Study.”

2. Theme Overview (12 minutes)

- Once everyone is settled, introduce yourself and thank attendees for investing their time in such an important week—VBS!
- Tell them this year’s VBS theme is MAGNIFIED!
- Ask: “What makes you stand in awe of just how big God is?” (*look for answers like the night sky, a field of flowers, the sunset, etc...*)
- Say: “All of these things remind us of the greatness of God. But flip your perspective upside down and zoom in on the tiniest details of creation. Our amazing God is not only the Creator of all things, but He also cares about His creation, right down to the tiniest detail. This year VBS will encourage kids to look closely at the details of God’s amazing world and magnify or proclaim the greatness of God. God made us, cares about us, loves us, forgives us, and is faithful to keep all His promises to us!” (pg. 3 leader guide)
- Play “Green or Red” found in the “Start It” activity in the leader guide (pg. 19).
 - Attendees will move to a “Green Fish” sign if they believe the statement is true or to a “Red Planet” sign if they believe the statement is not true. Read a statement and wait as they move to either a green or a red sign. Announce whether the statement is true or not true before reading another statement and allowing attendees to move to new signs.
 - Use statements such as these:
 - Jupiter has 5 moons. (*F—Jupiter has 95 known moons.*)
 - Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system. (*T*)
 - An octopus has 1 heart. (*F—An octopus has 3 hearts.*)
 - Some planets have no moons. (*T*)
 - More than half of your bones are in your head. (*F—More than half of your bones are in your hands & feet.*)
 - A person blinks about 20 times a minute. (*T*)
 - The sun is very cold. (*F—The sun is very hot.*)
 - Fish live in water. (*T*)
 - Say: “It is our job as leaders this year to help our kids grasp the greatness of God...from the biggest of things (like the solar system) all the way to the tiniest (like a tadpole). He cares for us, loves us, forgives us, and is always faithful. We are made to magnify God!
- Say: “That brings us to this year’s VBS verse, Psalm 34:3.”
 - Read aloud the “Theme Verse Poster” (item 8) in the translation of your choice as you point to each word.
 - Place the magnifier you made over either *proclaim* or *magnify* (depending on your translation) and then over *exalt*. Using phrases similar to these, explain the words to attendees in kid friendly terms:
CSB: Proclaim—to tell about something important
KJV: Magnify—to treat someone or something as very important
Exalt—to honor someone very highly
 - Remark that often, when someone wants to proclaim, magnify, or exalt someone, they want to do so loudly.

- Say: “Let’s pretend we have megaphones and ‘proclaim’ the verse all together.”
- Say: “It can’t be VBS without a VBS Motto.”
 - Draw attention to the motto poster (*VBS Visual Pack*) on the wall and ask attendees to read it aloud together. “*Made to Magnify God!*”
- Say: “Let’s pray.” (Ask God to guide this time together.)

3. **Gather the Essentials** (17 minutes)

- Say: “In order to have a successful classroom, there are FIVE things we need or need to know to lead the classroom well.”
- Play an adaptation of the “Butterfly Wings” activity on page 21.
- Invite someone to use the “butterfly net” to scoop up one butterfly (item 13) and read one thing we need or need to know to lead the class well. Continue until each of the five butterflies has been caught.
 - Lifeway Curriculum: Talk about these materials (show them if you have them) and share general information about them and the specific needs they will meet. Let conferees know you will focus in detail on the Bible Study Leader Guide and Leader Pack in a few minutes when you zoom in on each day.
 - Grades 1–2 Leader Guides
 - Grades 1–2 Leader Pack
 - Kids Activity Books
 - Memory Makers
 - Room Setup/ Decorations: Talk about the importance of setting up your classroom for success.
 - Have the conferees think about the following questions:
 - How big is the classroom? How many kids will you have?
 - What will the seating be like?
 - Which wall will be the focal wall?
 - How will you decorate the classroom?
 - Remind conferees that sometimes we do not set up our class for success. Ask: “Is it possible to set up the classroom like a racetrack?”
 - Think about how you set up your table and chairs. Placing tables and chairs in the middle could create a racetrack in the classroom for the kids, especially the boys.
 - Think through: Do you need tables and chairs? Only chairs? Or nothing at all?
 - Decorations will set the mood for the kids, but they can also be distracting if too much.
 - Remind leaders that it’s not about the decorations but about the Bible and gospel presented each day.
 - Remind leaders to take a good look through the Lifeway VBS catalog for decorations.
 - If the budget is tight, look around your house and yard. You may also partner with another church to share/borrow decorations.
 - The Schedule
 - Remind conferees that to get started planning, they need to know their VBS schedule. Explain that the VBS Director will plan which format their VBS will use.
 - Describe potential rotation styles, such as moving their Bible study group to different rotations or staying in a self-contained classroom where all rotations occur in one spot for one group of kids.

- Express the importance of knowing the length of time you have to teach the Bible story lesson.
 - Say: “*Teach the Bible Study* takes 30 minutes of core Bible-teaching time. Additional activity options exist if your Bible study time is longer than 30 minutes. If your teaching time is shorter than 30 mins, you can customize the lesson to fit your needs.”
- Know the Kids
 - Say: “1st and 2nd graders have unique characteristics. Knowing how they learn best will set you up for success.”
 - Show leaders page 4 in the VBS Leader Guide and review some characteristics.
 - Point out to conferees sections in the margins of the leader guide with *leader tips*, *helpful notes*, and *special needs adaptations*. Remind conferees that this will help them teach as they understand their kids better.
- Preparing your Heart and Mind (save this butterfly for last): Talk about the importance of Bible preparation and prayer leading up to VBS.
 - Say: “Pray for the kids in your class. There is a guide on page 4 in the VBS Leader Guide.”
 - Say: “Leader Devotions are found before each lesson in the leader guide. Reading these will help prepare your heart and mind for the day.”
 - Stress the importance of being prepared for the daily Bible lessons. Say: “This leads us to the next part of our training as we *Zoom in* on the Bible Content.”

4. **Zoom In on the Bible Content** (45 minutes)

- Say: “We will now form five groups as we *zoom in* on each day’s Bible content. The Bible teaching time is divided into five smaller portions with additional activity options listed at the end of each session.”
- Explain that each group will look at the Big Truth, Bible Story, and one activity from one of the divided-up portions of the lesson: Start It, Learn It, Know It, Live It, End It, or an Additional Activity. (pg. 6 of Leader Guide)
- Give each group a prepared flowerpot with an assignment card.
- After all groups have finished discussing in their small groups, call on each group to report to the big group. Start with day 1 and work through day 5.
- Remember to foster an environment that allows conferees to brainstorm and discuss the activities. Ask questions after each group report. For example, “Do you think this activity would work in your class?” or “Would you do anything differently?” Remember to discuss the importance of presenting the gospel every day as the Holy Spirit leads.
 - Day 1: Magnify God
 - God created everything there is, and yet He still wants to spend time with me.
 - Jesus and the Children
 - “Start It” Activity (pg. 12)
 - Day 2: Magnify God’s Care
 - God keeps the whole universe going, and yet He still cares about what’s happening to me.
 - Jesus Calmed the Storm
 - Additional Activity: Don’t Go Near the Spider (pg. 22)
 - Day 3: Magnify God’s Love

- God is not OK with sin, and yet He still loves sinners like me.
 - The Woman at the Well
 - “Live It” Activity (pg. 28)
 - Discuss the importance of knowing how to lead a child to Christ.
 - Show gospel resources: *VBS 2025 Gospel Wristbands*, *VBS 2025 Gospel Guide*, *Sharing the Gospel with Kids*, and *Lifeway Gospel Presentation Video*.
 - Say: “Practice makes perfect. Now, turn to your group and roleplay a child asking to be saved.”
 - Day 4: Magnify God’s Forgiveness
 - Jesus came to save the world, and that includes me.
 - Jesus and Nicodemus
 - “End It” Activity (pg. 35)
 - Day 5: Magnify God’s Faithfulness
 - God is faithful with the big things in my life, and He will be faithful with the small things too.
 - Jesus Taught about Worry
 - “Learn It” Activity (pg. 40)
5. **Continue the Buzz at Home** (5 mins)
- Say: “Research shows the important opportunities VBS gives adults to connect with and invest in kids and families.”
 - Show conferees page 9 in the leader guide. Share with them that they may consider writing a note to each kid in their class (*VBS Notecard* or *Postcard*) at the end of VBS. The book suggests telling the kids what you’re praying for them and calling out gifts you see that God has given them. Remind the kids that God has a special plan for their lives.
 - Show VBS resources: *Magnified Devotions: Exploring God’s Greatness in the Smallest of Things* and *Outreach Bible for Kids CSB*. Talk about how these are great resources to have on hand in case a child does not have a Bible at home or you feel they are hungry for more at home.
 - Ask: “What have you done for follow-up that has worked well?”
 - Mention ideas that have worked for you as a leader and share any success stories.
 - Ask: “As a VBS leader, do you send home anything each day with the kids? How could you continue the buzz of the Bible story in homes each day?”
6. **Closing and Questions** (5 mins)
- Allow time at the end to answer any questions.
 - If there are no questions, invite conferees to share one tip that has worked well for those who have taught VBS Bible Study.
7. **Prayer** (3 mins)
- Talk about the importance of prayer.
 - Get the Tremendous matboard from the classroom entrance. Talk about the importance of prayer. Not just praying for the kids but also for each other.

- Hold up the MAGNIFIED! tree art and explain that this matboard will be placed somewhere you will see it often as a reminder to pray for each of them and their VBS.
- End in prayer.

Assignment Card

Day 1: Magnify God

The Big Truth:

What is The Big Truth of the day?

The Bible Story:

Look over the Bible story as a group.

“Start It” Activity (pg. 12)

Using the materials in your flowerpot, complete the activity as a group.

Assignment Card

Day 2: Magnify God's Care

The Big Truth:

What is The Big Truth of the day?

The Bible Story:

Look over the Bible story as a group.

"Additional Activity:" Don't Go Near the Spider (pg. 22)

Using the materials in your flowerpot, complete the activity as a group.

Assignment Card

Day 3: Magnify God's Love

The Big Truth:

What is The Big Truth of the day?

The Bible Story:

Look over the Bible story as a group.

"Live It" Activity (pg. 28)

Using the materials in your flowerpot, complete the activity as a group.

Assignment Card

Day 4: Magnify God's Forgiveness

The Big Truth:

What is The Big Truth of the day?

The Bible Story:

Look over the Bible story as a group.

"End It" Activity (pg. 35)

Using the materials in your flowerpot, complete the activity as a group.

Assignment Card

Day 5: Magnify God's Faithfulness

The Big Truth:

What is The Big Truth of the day?

The Bible Story:

Look over the Bible story as a group.

"Learn It" Activity (pg. 40)

Using the materials in your flowerpot, complete the activity as a group.