

VBS 2026 PRESCHOOL ROTATIONS CONFERENCE PLAN (45 Minutes)

Purpose Statement

This 45-minute plan is designed to train and equip teachers to lead preschool rotation activities using Lifeway's *VBS 2026 3s–Kindergarten Rotation Pack*. These resources are for preschool ages 3s through completed kindergarten.

Needed Resources

- *VBS 2026 3s–Kindergarten Rotation Pack* (005853485) — Prepare the following items from each of the rotation guides:
 - Mirror Ball Music — Print the “Preschool Worship Rally Outlines” and “Teacher Helps” from the redemption files.
 - Crafts — Make a sample of each completed craft from the leader guide for display.
 - Missions — Print the “Missions Project Letter” from the redemption files. Display suggested items for the mission project.
- *VBS 2026 String Flags* (005853579)
- *VBS 2026 Supersized Backdrop* (005853613)
- *VBS 2026 Tablecloths* (005853575)
- (2) *VBS 2026 Glitter Beach Balls (3 pack)* (005853774) — Print one of the following sentences on each beach ball: *Prepare well in advance. Keep decorations to a minimum. Set up safe boundaries. Explain an activity before handing out resources. Plan for extra time. Keep the focus on the Bible truth, Bible verse, and Today's Point.*
- Item 1: “Lightbulb Handout” — Print on cardstock and cut apart. Attach to the backs of randomly selected chairs in the conferee seating area.
- Item 2: “Before/During Signs” — Hang on opposite sides of the room.
- Permanent marker
- (2) Identical small objects such as glow sticks or small flashlights (must fit inside paper bag)
- (2) Lunch-size paper bags — Place one of the two identical objects in each paper bag. Fold down the tops of the bags so the objects inside cannot be seen. Tape the bags shut.
- 30–50 items such as car wash sponges, plastic ball pit balls, or similar
- Large grocery bags or baskets (1 per every 2 players)
- Timer
- Mavalus® tape or other paint and surface-safe tape
- CD player, laptop or cell phone and Bluetooth® speaker to play Music for Preschoolers CD
- TV/DVD player to play the “Shine the Light” video

Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semicircle. Cover the focal wall with a *VBS 2026 Supersized Backdrop*. Cover two tables with a *VBS 2026 Tablecloth* and display the curriculum alongside completed craft samples, missions project items, and other tabletop decorations. Drape *VBS 2026 String Flags* across the doorway.

Teaching Steps

1. **Welcome and Theme Overview** (2 minutes)
 - Play music from the Music for Preschoolers CD as conferees arrive.
 - Greet all guests as they arrive and welcome them to Preschool Rotations.
 - Briefly introduce the theme.

2. Why Rotations (10 minutes)

- Show conferees the 3s–Kindergarten Rotation Pack.
- Explain that the rotation pack includes age-appropriate teaching plans for:
 - Mirror Ball Music
 - Kaleidoscope Crafts
 - Suncatcher Recreation
 - Glow-in-the-dark Missions
- Explain that Snack Rotation Recipe Cards can be purchased separately (or come inside the Kids Starter Kit). Snacks that are appropriate for preschoolers are marked with a purple light burst on the top right of the recipe card that reads “preschool friendly.”
- Review the three rotation options conferees can choose from as they begin to plan their brightest week of the year at Illumination Station.
 - Preschoolers Move: Leaders move kids to each rotation site, stay with them during the activities, and lead them back to the main classroom for closing group time.
 - Leaders Move: Leaders are enlisted to come to the room to teach the rotation activities.
 - Self-contained Classroom: Children and leaders remain in the room for all activities, and the teacher incorporates the rotations into the class schedule.
- Ask: “Why offer preschool rotations?” Allow responses. Remind conferees that kids learn in different ways and have different learning styles including:
 - Visual
 - Verbal
 - Physical
 - Relational
 - Reflective
 - Natural
 - Musical
 - Logical
- Play the Music for Preschoolers CD. Toss the six *Glitter Beach Balls* into the crowd and lead conferees to bat them around to keep them up in the air.
- Stop the music at random and direct the people closest to each ball to hold them still. Lead conferees who are holding the balls to share the tips written on them. (Say: “Feel free to toss the ball to someone else if you’d rather not share the tip yourself.”)
Elaborate on each tip after it is read:
 - Prepare well in advance—Try to teach from memory so you can connect better with your preschoolers.
 - Keep decorations to a minimum—Remind conferees that too many decorations can be overwhelming to preschoolers.
 - Set up safe boundaries—Explain that preschoolers thrive when they have clear boundaries and know your expectations. Suggest using *VBS 2026 Floor Prints*, Velcro® dots, or even tape marks on the floor to give each child his own defined space and plenty of room to move.

- Explain an activity before handing out resources—Say: “Because preschoolers focus best on one thing at a time, explain an activity before handing out props.”
- Plan for extra time—Draw attention to the “More Mirror Ball Fun” sections found on page 16 of the *3s–K Music Rotation Leader Guide* and the Free Art ideas in the *3s–K Crafts Rotation Leader Guide*. Mention that both can be used as time fillers when needed.
- Keep the focus on the Bible truth, Bible verse, and Today’s Point—Rotation activities will help preschoolers learn that Jesus is God’s promised, perfect, and powerful Son.

3. Shining the Light on Rotations (30 minutes)

- Mirror Ball Music:
 - Show the *3s–K Music Rotation Leader Guide*.
 - Explain that included in the leader guide is a DVD with instructional and demonstration videos for each of the preschool songs. The DVD also includes digital files of the Bible story pictures, coloring sheets, preschool worship rally outlines and the teacher helps that are called for in the sessions.
 - Call attention to the unique code on page 2 of the leader guide that allows access to the videos and printable files online. This is helpful if you do not have access to a DVD player. (Stress to conferees that these videos are for individual church use only and may not be publicly posted online without violating federal copyright law.)
 - Say: “The lyrics and motions for this year’s theme song are the same for both preschoolers and school-aged kids. The motions are simple enough that, even though they might be a beat or two behind, your preschoolers will enjoy singing and moving right alongside the older kids.”
 - Explain that the “At a Glance” section at the beginning of the leader guide gives an overview of the week that includes the Bible story, Today’s Point, and the songs suggested for each day. Remind conferees that it is important that they study the Bible story, Bible verse, and the Point for each day so they are ready to use this information as they communicate Bible truths to their kids.
 - Draw attention to the motions and words for preschool songs at the back of the leader guide.
 - Teach the words and motions for the song, “Shine the Light.”
 - Play the “Shine the Light” demonstration video. Lead conferees to stand and sing along.
 - Show conferees the “Preschool Worship Rally” outline. Briefly explain that preschoolers can experience the excitement of Worship Rally and understand it so much more when it is presented at their level of understanding.
- Kaleidoscope Crafts:
 - Show the *3s–Kindergarten Crafts Rotation Leader Guide*.
 - Draw attention to the displayed sample crafts. Encourage conferees to look at crafts before they leave.

- Share that there are four options for each day. Each day also has a “free art” option, as well as three more “craft” style options. Some crafts will include a craft pack option.
- Guide conferees to look on the backs of their chairs and see if a lightbulb is attached. If so, ask conferees to read the tip to help make Kaleidoscope Crafts run smoothly. Talk about each tip, one at a time:
 - Ask adult and student groups to sponsor an art activity. The group could cut out the needed materials.
 - Ask adult and/or student groups to package supplies in ziplock bags, one for each child. As kids enter the room, give a bag to each child with the supplies to make her craft. She can place the completed craft back in the bag to take home.
 - Host a crafts prep party a few weeks before VBS begins. Invite church members to come and help with the advance preparation.
 - Use address labels to attach children’s names or the week’s Bible verse to their artwork.
 - Explain that the crafts in the leader guide are designed for ages 3–completed kindergarten. Some may be more appropriate for one age than another. Choose crafts based on the age and ability of your group.
 - Mention that every craft includes a “connect” paragraph to help tie it to the Bible truth. Say: “No matter which craft you choose, be sure to share the Bible story summary and ‘connect’ thoughts to reinforce the Bible truths being taught.”
 - Mention that a “free art” suggestion is provided each day and is designed to be relatively self-directed with minimal direction. Use these options for early finishers or as an easy additional activity as needed.
 - Stress that the process is more important than the finished product. The finished product is a preschooler’s craft and work of art, and it should leave looking like they intended, not like a perfectly executed craft that only an adult could do.
- Suncatcher Recreation:
 - Show conferees the *VBS 2026 3s–Kindergarten Recreation Rotation Leader Cards*.
 - Explain that the Rec Cards include a Bible story game for each day. These cards include a Story Connection. The Bible story game is designed to help preschoolers connect and understand the Bible story and the Point for that day.
 - Form two equal team and lead the group to play “Mystery Pass Relay” (Rec Card 3). If your group is large, create additional teams.
 - Guide each team to stand in a line, single file. Hand a paper bag to the first person in line for each team.
 - Direct conferees to over-under pass the bag through their lines as quickly as possible. (Example: The first person will pass the bag over her head to the person behind her. That person will pass the bag between his legs to the player behind him, and so forth.)

- When the bag reaches the end of the line, the last person will send the bag back up the line, continuing with the over-under handoff.
- When the first person in each line receives the bag again, he should gather his team and take turns feeling what is inside the bag and trying to guess (without peeking!) what the item is.
- Encourage each team to, one at a time, open its bag and reveal what is inside.
- Share the Bible story connection. Say: “You had to guess a mystery item in a bag. People in the Day 1 Bible story did not know who Jesus was. People had different ideas about who He was. Peter said Jesus is God’s Son. Peter was right! Jesus is God’s promised Son.”
- Enlist 10 volunteers to play “Gathering Fishes and Loaves” (Rec Card 5).
 - Pair up the conferees. Give each pair a basket or bag. Explain that the conferees will carry the basket or bag together as they gather the “loaves” (sponges) and “fish” (balls). Challenge them to each use one hand to carry the bag or basket and the other to pick up objects. Conferees must hold onto the bag or basket at all times!
 - Set the timer for one minute (add or subtract time as needed) and say, “Go!” Stop the game once time has passed.
 - Direct conferees to empty the bags or baskets and count the number of sponges and balls they picked up. The pair with the most wins!
 - Share the Story Connection: “In today’s Bible story, 4,000 men, plus women and children, came to see Jesus, including people who were sick. They were hungry and did not have any food. Jesus took seven small loaves of bread and a few small fish and made enough for everyone to eat. When they were finished, the disciples picked up seven baskets full of leftovers! Jesus can do things no one else can do because He is the powerful Son of God.”
- Show the Administrative Cards at the front of the pack. Explain these cards include teaching tips, kid characteristics, leader responsibilities, and decorating ideas.
- Point to the “Before/During Signs” (Item 2) on opposite walls. Explain you will read a statement and attendees must decide if it is a “Before VBS” or “During VBS” responsibility and move to the appropriate side of the room. Read each statement, allow time for conferees to make their choice and move to one side of the room or the other, then reveal the correct answer:
 - Test each game before using in a session. *(Before)*
 - Use the “Story Connection” on the Bible story game cards to reinforce Bible learning. *(During)*
 - Enlist other adults to help. Plan games based on group size and space. *(Before)*
 - Pray daily for leaders, kids, and safe play during games. *(Both)*
 - Plan for inclement weather. *(Before)*
 - Cover electrical outlets and remove any hazards in the area you have chosen for games. *(Before)*
 - Plan water breaks for kids. *(During)*

- Gather and inspect equipment. (*Before*)
- Choose a method of playing music. (*Before*)
- Monitor play and redirect as necessary. (*During*)
- Know your church's procedures for emergencies and accidents. Obtain a first aid kit. (*Before*)
- Set up games in a safe area. (*Both*)
- Be familiar with each day's Bible story and the week's verse. (*Before*)
- Explain and demonstrate each game to the kids. (*During*)
- Glow-in-the-dark Missions
 - Say: "Have you ever wondered why we teach missions in VBS? Preschoolers can learn about missions during VBS, but they can also get involved in missions, pray for missionaries and their work around the world, give to missions, and encourage people through missions."
 - Show conferees the *3s-Kindergarten Missions Rotation Leader Guide*.
 - Say: "The missions guide includes a DVD with a short video segment for each day. If you prefer, you can download all DVD items by going to my.lifeway.com/redeem and entering the unique code provided in your missions leader guide. A written synopsis of the video is also in the back of the leader guide if prefer to tell the story."
 - Say: "In the missions rotation, kids will learn about how missionaries, both in Kenya and Wyoming, are working to show people that Jesus is the Light of the world."
 - Explain that Days 1–3 highlight the Steelman family who serve as IMB missionaries in Kenya. Days 4–5 showcase NAMB missionary Tyler Martin, who serves in Bar Nunn, Wyoming.
 - Show the Day 3 IMB video, "The Goat Project."
 - Share that the VBS mission project encourages churches to support their local foster care system by contacting a local faith-based organization or child welfare agency to discover what specific items would best help them as they serve kids in foster care.
 - Explain that on any given day, there are 400,000 boys and girls in the foster care system. We can show the love of Jesus with items like new toys, books, socks, underwear, stuffed animals, toiletries, or small duffle bags. During VBS, kids will also be encouraged to decorate a booklet that explains the gospel, which will be given to kids and families in crisis, along with items collected throughout the week.

4. Closing (3 minutes)

- Allow time at the end to answer any questions or clarify content.
- Offer these final words of encouragement:
 - Be flexible—Adjust your plans to make VBS the best experience possible for you and your preschoolers.
 - Build relationships with kids.
 - Remember that the process is more important than the finished product.
 - Have fun!
- Close in prayer. Pray for the conferees and for the VBS of churches represented in the room, across the country, and around the world.



Ask adult and student groups to sponsor an art activity.



Ask adult and/or student groups to package supplies in Ziplock bags, one for each child.



Host a Crafts Prep Party a few weeks before VBS begins.



Use address labels to attach children's names or the week's Bible verse to their artwork.



Explain that the crafts in the leader guide are designed for ages 3–completed kindergarten.



Mention that every craft includes a “connect” paragraph to help tie it to the Bible truth.



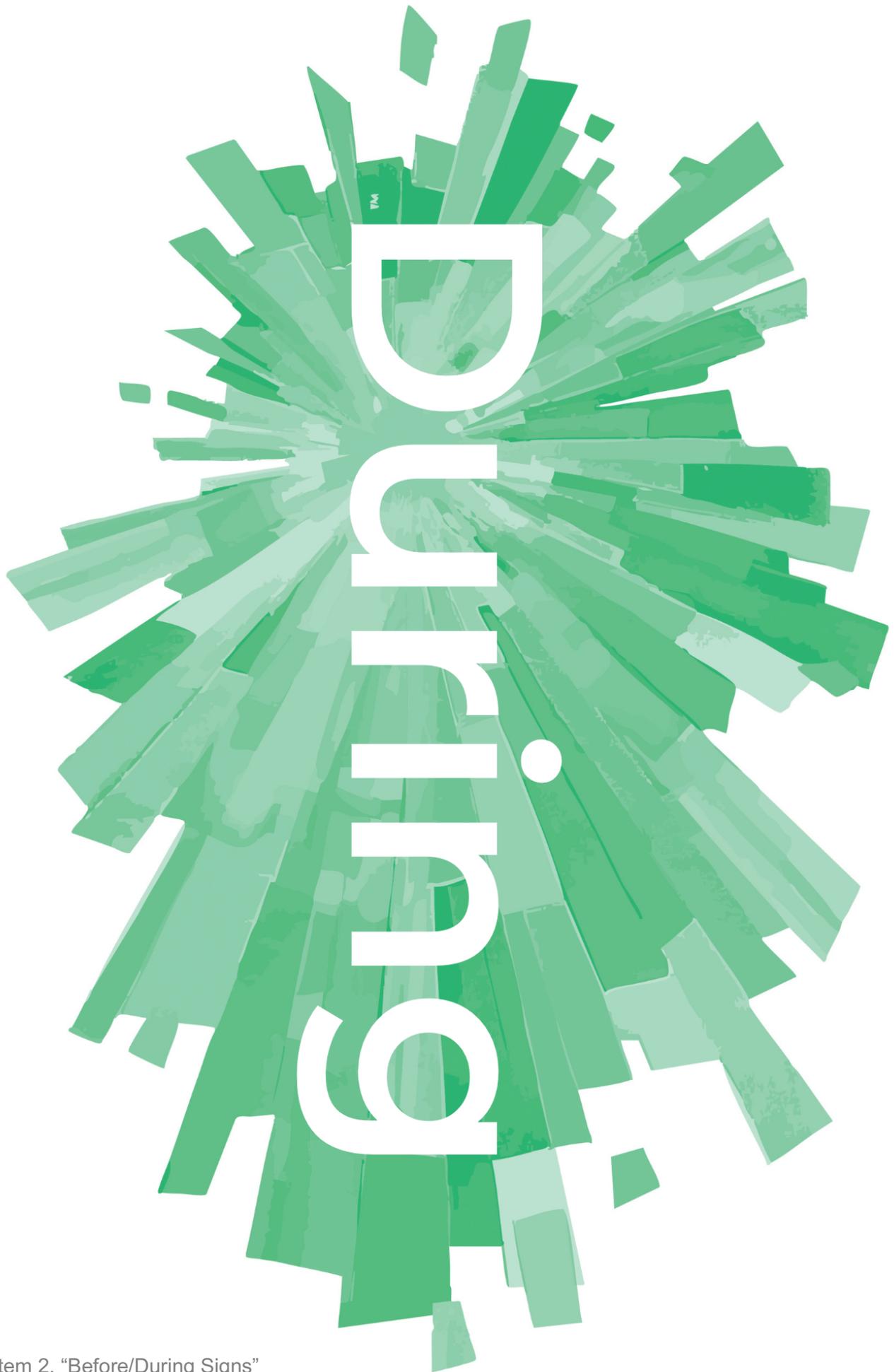
Mention that a “free art” suggestion is provided each day.



The process is more important than the finished product.



Item 2. "Before/During Signs"



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