

VBS 2020 VBX PRETEEN CURRICULUM BASE CONFERENCE PLAN

Purpose Statement

This two-hour plan is designed to train and equip VBX leaders to conduct LifeWay's *Concrete & Cranes* VBS.

Needed Resources

- *VBS 2020 VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*
- *VBS 2020 VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Pack*
- *VBS 2020 VBX Preteen Activity Book*
- *VBS 2020 Kids Memory Maker*
- *VBS 2020 Devotional Bible for Kids*
- *VBS 2020 Kids Gospel Guide*
- *VBS 2020 Picture Frames*
- *VBS 2020 Parent Guide*
- *VBS 2020 Postcards*
- *VBS 2020 Supersized Backdrop*
- *VBS 2020 String Flags*
- *VBS 2020 Tablecloth*
- Leader Pack Items — 1 & 2 (display), 8 (6 copies), 9 (cut each blueprint into 5 puzzle shaped pieces with a verse reference in each piece, mark the back of one puzzle with the corresponding day, leave the other blank), 19 (cut apart and place in envelopes for teaching step 8), 25 (copy and cut enough for 1 per conferee). **Optional:** Display items 3–7 around the room.
- Item 1: “VBX Elevation View” — Copy on colored paper, 1 per conferee. Place in chairs prior to conferee arrival. Encourage conferees to take notes as desired.
- Item 2: “VBX Daily Blueprints” — Copy on colored paper, 1 per conferee. Place in chairs prior to conferee arrival. Encourage conferees to take notes.
- Blueprint Thumbprints — Set up a small table or extra chair near the entry of the room. Cut 3-inch squares of blue paper (1 per conferee). Place the squares on a table with a white ink pad, several pens, and a small box of tissues or wipes. Use a clipboard under the paper if a solid surface is needed.
- Toolbox, Tool bag, or Tool bucket — Fill with items in teaching step 2. Place on focal table. (Alternate idea: large gift bag.)
- Work in Progress — Cut 4 large squares from orange or yellow cardstock. Label squares on a diamond orientation (like a caution sign) as follows: *Physical, Mental, Social/Emotional, Spiritual*. Place signs, two on each side, around the theme verse poster (Pack item 1). Give each conferee three sticky notes when you begin teaching step 3.
- Hammer It — 1 pool noodle cut in half. Prepare 3x5 cards with one word of Philippians 1:6 on each card. For groups larger than 28 make an additional set of cards.
- Building the Schedule—Cover 6 cereal boxes (boxes should be the same size) in brown craft paper. Write the following words on one side of the boxes: *Worship Rally, Excite, Snack Break, Explore, Missions Break, and Excel*. Place the boxes in a pile near the focal table.
- Elevation View — 1 set of “Blueprint Puzzle” pieces (pack item 9), 5 copies of “Small Group Discussion Questions” (pack item 8).
- Daily Blueprints — 1 set of “Blueprint Puzzle” pieces (pack item 9) with numbered backs, 5 copies of the *VBS 2020 VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*.

- Grab Your Hard Hat — 5 hard hats labeled #1–5, 5 note cards with the following printed on them: #1: *God Rules*. #2: *We Sinned*. #3: *God Provides*. #4: *Jesus Gives*. #5: *We Respond—Admit. Believe. Confess*, Gospel Plan Poster (Pack Item 2). **Optional:** *The Gospel God’s Plan for Me* and *VBS 2020 Kids Gospel Guide* (1 per conferee).
- Unfinished — Write *UNFINISHED* on 4 large envelopes and place one “Unfinished Poster” (pack item 19) in each envelope along with one of the following items: Poster 1 and *VBS 2020 Postcards*; Poster 2 and *VBS 2020 Picture Frames*; Poster 3 and *VBS 2020 Parent Guide*; and Poster 4 and *VBS 2020 Devotional Bible for Kids*. Place envelopes under four chairs in the conference room during set-up.
- CD player

Room Setup

Arrange chairs in a semi-circle. Cover the focal with a *VBS 2020 Supersized Backdrop*. Cover a table with a *VBS 2020 Tablecloth*. Leave room to display the curriculum (after it is unpacked from the toolbox in teaching step 2) alongside small hand tools and other tabletop decorations. Drape *VBS 2020 String Flags* across the doorway. Display the “VBS Scripture Poster” (pack item 1) and the “Gospel Plan Poster” (pack item 2) where conferees can interact with them during the conference.

Teaching Steps

1. Welcome (5 minutes)

- As conferees arrive, welcome them at the door and direct them to complete the opening activity as they find a seat. Have music playing as conferees enter.
- Blueprint Thumbprint
 - Direct conferees to write their name on one side of the blue paper. On the other side conferees should place their thumbprint by using the white ink pad. Instruct conferees to take their card with them to their seat and carefully study their thumbprint.
 - As you begin, collect all the thumbprints and ask conferees to stand so that you can randomly place the thumbprints on their seats. Invite conferees to search for their thumbprint (without turning over the card) and stand in front of that chair. Once everyone has chosen a thumbprint, direct them to turn over the paper to reveal if they are correct. Congratulate those who guessed correctly!
 - Remind conferees that God knows every detail of their thumbprints, just as He knows every detail of their lives. Invite conferees to consider their worth to the Lord and how He will use them in leading preteens to understand how Jesus transforms people through His love during VBS 2020. (*Blueprint Thumbprint is a Day 3 Excel activity.*)
 - Open in prayer.

2. Unpacking Your Toolbox (20 minutes)

- Explain that the purpose of this conference is to train and equip VBX leaders to conduct LifeWay’s *Concrete & Cranes* VBS.
- Overview the following materials used in VBX as you pull them from your toolbox:
 - *VBS 2020 VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide*—prepare to teach Bible study to preteens. Each leader needs a leader guide.
 - *VBS 2020 VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Pack*—this is the second year for no enhanced CD because everything is included in the leader pack, instead a music CD is provided for use in class activities. Each class needs a leader pack.

- *VBS 2020 VBX Preteen Activity Book*—new this year, a preteen specific activity guide. This new guide includes activities for preteens to do in class and challenges them to continue learning after VBS. One book per preteen.
- *VBS 2020 Kids Memory Maker*—new this year, a carabiner with 5 daily tags, a logo tag, and a gospel icon tag. Helps cement foundational truths learned in VBX. Preteens can add the daily tags to the carabiner to remind them of simple, essential truths from the daily Bible stories. Additional add-ons are suggested to help preteens remember fun experiences from VBX. One per preteen.
- *VBS 2020 Devotional Bible for Kids*—each day preteens will open the Bible to learn more about how Jesus is their firm foundation. This full-text Bible contains 30 days of devotions for kids, fun facts, and margin notes that share the gospel.
- Make suggestions for organizing and preparing for each session. Discuss how to be a craftsman builder with the ideas on page 1 of the *VBX Leader Guide*. Suggest conferees gather pack items and supplies and place them in a bag or bucket labeled for each day. Point out the supply lists on pages 43–44 in the leader guide.
- Discuss decorating for VBX. Point out ideas found on pages 6–7 in the leader guide. Preteens can be distracted by too much in their view. Remind conferees to keep the focal wall simple and include teaching items for each day. Add some fun construction theme items around the room to create a fun and engaging environment for preteens to study the Bible and build relationships.
- Suggest conferees also take a look at lifeway.com/vbs and ministrygrid.com for additional training.
- Ask conferees for any additional suggestions that will make preparation or enlistment easier.

3. Work in Progress (10 minutes)

- Who are preteens? What makes them unique? How do they think? How do we reach them with the gospel? Preteens grow and develop physically, mentally, socially/emotionally, and spiritually.
- Allow conferees 2 minutes to write answers to these questions on sticky notes and place them on the appropriate growth area sign around the “VBS Scripture Poster” (pack item 1) located on the focal wall. Refer to page 5 of the leader guide.
- Discuss group responses. Remind conferees that preteens are a work in progress and it is important for VBX leaders to plan with characteristics of preteens in mind.
- Hammer It
 - Gather conferees in a standing circle and give each one a prepared index card. Explain to conferees that you will move around the circle with a hammer (pool noodle) and tap each conferee on the head. When tapped with the hammer they must say the word on their card. Explain that you will start slowly and then get faster. After a couple of rounds, challenge conferees not to look at their cards. Continue for several rounds. For groups smaller than 28, conferees will have more than one card.
 - Debrief: Ask conferees to consider what characteristics of preteens were met through this activity—physical, social, mental, and spiritual. (*This is a Day 4 recreation activity, found on page 35 of the leader guide.*)
 - **Social/Emotional:** Experience emotional roller coasters. May exhibit oppositional behavior at times. Critical of themselves and others. Self-centered. Can accept rules and responsibilities. Like to win and improve. Aware of sex roles. Love to socialize and have good sense of humors.

- **Mental:** Imaginative, creative, and curious. Discerns time and space relationships. Can cope with success and failure. Think quickly and memorize easily. Try to avoid tasks that appear difficult to learn. Imaginative and curious. Can solve problems easily.
- **Physical:** Like to use abundant energy. Appear to be constantly on the go. Have good coordination and muscle skills. Are experiencing growth spurts. Approaching puberty. Girls usually taller than boys. Enjoy sports, competitions, and games.
- **Spiritual:** Developing a value system. Ready for spiritual answers and directions. Adopting a religious belief system. Developing concepts of love and trust.

4. Building the Schedule (10 minutes)

- Building projects need a schedule to coordinate contractors and meet deadlines. VBX needs a schedule too. Whatever time of day your VBS meets you can create a schedule that keeps Bible study and fun the focus of VBX.
- Hand cereal box bricks to six conferees. Invite them to come up and hold their bricks, label side out. Arrange conferees in order of a traditional 3-hour VBS schedule. Refer to page 4 in the leader guide as you discuss the details of Excite, Explore, and Excel.
 - Worship Rally—Songs, application video and introductory time for the day.
 - Excite—Introduces the theme and Bible content with two icebreaker activities (choose one if time is limited).
 - Snack Break—Time for preteens to get a yummy bite to eat.
 - Explore—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. Different crafts from crafts rotation. Included as part of Excite.
 - Missions Break—Time for preteens to learn about what God is doing around the world. **Note:** missions is not taught in the VBX class, preteens will go to the actual rotation (VBX could have their own missions rotation area).
 - Excel—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. **Note:** point out that there are two options, one related to the Bible content and one theme-related.
- Suggest different ways to structure the session for churches using an abbreviated or extended schedule. Invite conferees to briefly share alternate ideas for non-traditional VBS schedules (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 Elevation View (15 minutes)

- Builders often provide an elevation view of their projects to help people understand what the finished project will look like. Refer conferees to the VBX Elevation View (Handout 2) to make notes and to page 3 in the leader guide to get an elevation view of the VBX Scripture, motto, Bible study, Level of Biblical Learning, and Christ Connection.
- Form five groups. Give each group a "Blueprint Puzzle" piece (pack item 9) and a copy of the "Small Group Discussion Questions" (pack item 8). Instruct each group to focus on the elevation view of the day of VBS related to the verse found on their puzzle piece.

- Direct conferees to look at the Bible Study Exploration time for their day and be ready to report back to the group on how preteens will engage with the Bible content that day, including small group discussion.
- Allow 5 minutes for conferees to find their VBS day and make notes on the VBX Elevation View handout. Play music as conferees work.
- At the end of 5 minutes call on one conferee per group to give an overview of each day's Bible story and small group discussion.
- Encourage conferees to make notes on their VBX Elevation View handout. Add to the discussion as needed. (*Blueprint Puzzles are from a Day 1 Excite activity.*)

6. Daily Blueprints (20 minutes)

- Blueprints give contractors an in-depth view of the building project, room-by-room. Provide an in-depth look at Day 1 of VBX by walking conferees through each step.
- Form five groups and provide each group with a *VBS 2020 VBX Preteen Bible Study Leader Guide* and one of the prepared puzzle pieces from pack item 9. Direct each group to find the number on the back of their puzzle pieces to assign their section of Day 1.
 - Group 1: Leader Devotion & Excite
 - Group 2: Explore
 - Group 3: Crafts
 - Group 4: Excel
 - Group 5: Recreation
- Provide a leader pack, and if possible, some of the supplies needed, for Day 1 so that groups can explore how these items are used with each activity.
- Allow 10 minutes for groups to read through and be ready to discuss with the larger group.
- Call on groups to briefly explain each activity from their assignments. Encourage conferees to make notes on the VBS Daily Blueprints handout.
- If time permits, discuss how to make a gospel emphasis each day. Point out the new gospel icon in the leader guide that indicates an opportune time to share the gospel.
- Explain that each day of VBX will need a blueprint inspection. Leaders could use the VBX Daily Blueprint handout to help in planning for a successful week with preteens in VBX. (*Blueprint Puzzles are from a Day 1 Excite activity.*)

7. Grab your Hard Hat (20 minutes)

- Remind conferees about the spiritual characteristics of preteens: Developing a value system. Developing concepts of love and trust. Adopting a religious belief system. Ready for spiritual answers and directions.
- Direct conferees to turn to page 11 in their leader guides and point out the cross icon on the page. Explain that each day the icon will appear at a place in the guide that can be used as a jumping off point to sharing the gospel with preteens.
- Call attention to the inside cover of the leader guide and the "Gospel Plan Poster" (pack item 2) displayed on the wall.
- Ask five volunteers to find one of the hard hats sitting around the room and take it to their seats. Starting with hat #1, ask the conferee to read the card found inside the hat. Use the information on the inside cover of the leader guide and the "Gospel Plan Poster" (pack item 2) displayed on the wall as teaching aids to explain how to share the gospel with preteens.
 - #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 25). Discuss how to follow up with preteens.
- Show a copy of *The Gospel God’s Plan for Me* and the *VBS 2020 Kids Gospel Guide*. Explain that these are additional tools available for sharing the gospel with preteens. Provide a copy for each conferee if possible.
- 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 Bible and ask open-ended questions. Whenever possible, involve parents. 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*.

8. Don’t Leave the Work Unfinished (15 minutes)

- Remind conferees that the work of a VBS leader is unfinished on the last day of VBS. Leaders and churches are responsible for continuing the connections with unchurched families made during the week of VBS and for following up with preteens who made a salvation decision or are asking questions.
- Direct conferees to look under their chairs for a large envelope. Ask conferees with an envelope to show the poster in the envelope and ask if anyone knows the name of the building or where it is located. Ask conferees to show the additional item in the envelope. Discuss ways to use these items as a follow up tool. Provide suggestions for connecting with preteens and their families following VBS.
 - Envelope 1: Ryugyong Hotel—North Korea and *VBS 2020 Postcards*: send a note of encouragement or invitation.
 - Envelope 2: La Sagrada Familia— Barcelona and *VBS 2020 Picture Frames*: print a photo from the week and deliver to the home or mail with follow up information.
 - Envelope 3: Cathedral of St. John the Divine—New York and *VBS 2020 Parent Guide*: deliver to the home with an invitation for a parent or family event.
 - Envelope 4: New Zealand Parliament Buildings—Wellington and *VBS 2020 Devotional Bible for Kids*: send home with preteens following use in the VBX room; encourage preteens to complete the 30 days of devotions and return for a prize.
- Encourage conferees to share follow up ideas that have been successful in their church.

9. Closing (5 minutes)

- Thank conferees for coming. Remind them that we are all a work in progress.
- Challenge conferees to begin praying and preparing for VBS 2020.
- Pray for conferees. Ask God to help conferees as they lead preteens to understand how Jesus can transform them through His love during VBS.

The following are suggestions for time adjustments for this training model:

- Less than 2 hours—eliminate Blueprint Thumbprints from the Welcome (teaching step 1), briefly overview the curriculum (teaching step 2), eliminate the detailed look at Day 1 (teaching step 6) and just focus on a daily overview (teaching step 5).
- More than 2 hours—expand the Daily Blueprint section (teaching step 6) to take a deeper look at each day’s content and activities, give more time to preteen characteristics (teaching step 3) and sharing the gospel with preteens (teaching step 7).

VBX Elevation View



Follow-Up Ideas



Daily Bible Study

1] Love

2] Forgiveness

3] Worth

4] Promise

5] Life

Scripture:

Motto:

