

Get REAL: Move Kids from Information to Transformation

Relational: **Learner-to-learner interaction enhances learning, builds friendships and community, and helps grow in their relationship with Jesus.**

Relational Ideas:

1. **Love God with All My Heart:** Give each pair two long strips of paper, tape, and markers. Tell partners to each write the words "I will love God with all my heart" on their paper strip. Then have partners help each other put on their paper strips as headbands. Encourage partners to talk with one another about what they think it means to love God with all their heart.
2. **God's Love Pennants:** Read aloud Deuteronomy 6:8-9. Give each pair two construction paper pennants and crayons or markers. Have pairs make a pennant to hang on their door. It should say something they believe about God's love. Once the pennants are finished, have partners trade pennants. Have each person complete this statement: "One way I will love God this week is by..." Close in prayer, thanking God for new friends made today.
3. **Building One Another Up in Love:** Have a pile of DUPLO™ construction toys and permanent markers on the floor. Kids write an encouraging word or a compliment to someone on one side of the brick. As they hold their bricks, they pray for the person listed. Then have kids stack the bricks to create a wall of love.

Experiential: **Students learn by doing and using multiple senses. What learners experience through discussion and action sticks with them up to nine times longer than what they simply hear or read.**

Experiential Ideas:

1. **God's Power Overcomes All Our Fears:** Set out a handful of modeling dough for each child. Tell each child to shape the dough into something he/she is afraid of, such as a big dog, a lightning bolt in a storm, or a bully. One at a time, have kids share their fears and then roll the dough into a ball as they say, "Nothing matches God's power."
2. **Dancing Raisins:** *Remind kids how fun it is to praise God.*

Fill a cup with carbonated water and drop in several raisins. Ask kids to hypothesize about what'll happen. Watch for a few minutes to see what the raisins do. Then enjoy a raisin snack. (*Scientific Facts: Carbonated beverages are pressurized by carbon dioxide gas. Carbon dioxide bubbles attach to the wrinkled raisins and cause them to float and bounce. They'll continue to "dance" up and down until they get soggy or the carbonated water goes flat.*) Ask: Was your guess correct? Why did the raisins dance? Read the Scripture. Are the bubbles like or unlike how God wants us to praise him? How can we praise God with enthusiasm every day? (Psalm 149:3-4)

3. **Can Do Stations:** Set out material for the CAN DO stations such as completing a simple puzzle, transferring popcorn with tweezers from one bowl to the next, or building a tower out of paper cups. Make sure the tasks are simple enough for them to complete successfully. Ask: How did you feel after each task? What jobs can you do at home for God? Say: Your whole life will be filled with little and big jobs to learn. When God gives you the strength, you can do anything! God can use us!

Applicable: **The aim of Christian Education is to equip learners to be both hearers and doers of God's Word. James 1:22 reads "But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves."**

Applicable Ideas:

1. **I Can't Jar:** When kids say they can't do something, we write down the problem and pray about it together. When the problem or obstacle is overcome, we put the slip of paper in the jar as a visual reminder of what God helped them accomplish. The jar reminds kids that God helps us overcome our problems and fears.
2. **Who Is Your Guide?** Set up an obstacle course with chairs, tables, and wastebaskets. Explain what kids must do to go through the obstacle course, such as going over chairs or under tables. Form pairs, and give each pair one blindfold. Have partners take turns going through the obstacle course, with the sighted partner helping the blindfolded partner. Ask: How did you feel during this activity? How did it feel to have someone help you? How does Jesus guide you through life?
3. **College Care Packages:** Creating care packages for college students who've gone away to school. Have the children bring in hot chocolate packets, candy, tissues, instant soup packets, note cards, and any other treats or common necessities. They then put together packages from the items and cards they've made. Decorate the boxes and mail them to the students. The students love this! And an added benefit is that many happy students want to volunteer in children's ministry when they come home for the summer.

Learner-Based: Students learn more and retain it longer when the **LEARNING process is designed according to how they learn best.**

Learner-based Ideas:

- 1. Commercial for God:** Use this activity to raise preteens' awareness of what the media values in advertising. Before this activity, record various prime time TV commercials. (Hint: Super Bowl Sunday is a great time to get the newest commercials.) Before class, write each of these words on a separate sheet of paper: beauty, health, money, popularity, and God. Tape the sheets to the walls throughout the room. Show the commercials one at a time. After each video clip, have kids determine what the message of the advertisement is and go stand under that word. Have kids explain why they felt the ad communicated the message they chose. Afterward, discuss with kids whether God was left out of the commercials they watched. Have kids form groups to develop a commercial for God.
- 2. Pulling for Jesus:** Tie a handkerchief in the middle of a Tug-of-War rope. Form evenly matched teams for pulling. Mark off two lines about 3 feet apart in the middle of your playing area. Say, "Pretend this handkerchief is someone who doesn't know Jesus. He feels like his life is pulled in many directions." Have kids try to pull the handkerchief over to their team's side. When one team has accomplished the goal, have them huddle to consider what they might say to the "handkerchief person" to share their faith in Jesus. Play the game several times, making sure both teams have an opportunity to share.
- 3. Visitor Welcome Song:** To welcome visitors to your room, lead preschoolers in singing this song to the tune of "Happy Birthday" ...
*Happy welcome to you.
Happy welcome to you.
Happy welcome;
God bless you.
Happy welcome to you.*

Resources for Further Learning:

- *Children's Ministry in the 21st Century*, Group Publishing
- *Take 10 DVD*, Group Publishing
- *Humongous Book of Preschool Ideas*, Group Publishing
- *Large as Life Bible Adventures: Wild But Real*, Group Publishing
- *it: Innovative Tools for Children's Ministry CDs*, Group Publishing
- *Hope Lives: Children's Ministry Kit*, Group Publishing
- *BUZZ Curriculum*, Group Publishing
- *Living Inside Out Curriculum*, Group Publishing