

LESSON AIM: Your primary goal on the first day is to clearly communicate to your students what Released Time is all about (*knowing God, Understanding His Word, the Bible*) **and** establishing the rules that will enable the class to be fun and exciting.

KEY SCRIPTURE: **Psalm 119:105 and Ephesians 4:32** (*write them on the blackboard if you have one*).

INTRODUCTION: Well, this is it, your first day of **Released Time** -- make sure you have your registration cards, name tags (if you plan to use them) and a roll sheet. After you have gathered your students and taken roll, explain how you are getting to the teaching site (*walking, riding the bus, or car, etc.*), and a few rules concerning the trip over. (Tips to cover: use bathrooms at school, water at school, rainy day - we will notify the school if we will be having class, need written permission if you would prefer walking home from facility.)

LESSON: During the first class you want to accomplish the following:

1. **Bring the class to order.** (Be sure and introduce yourself and any helpers with you if you haven't already done so at the school.) Have the students go around and say their name out loud and introduce themselves. (Explain that even if they already know each other, you don't know them yet!) Ask them some questions for instance if any of you go to church; have a Bible or if their family has a Bible in the home. Sometimes I like to ask the students what they know about God, or what do you think God is like. If they don't really have much to say on the matter, have them tell you something about themselves.

2. **Opening prayer** -- briefly explain that prayer is talking with God and that we will talk to God during every class. When we are talking with God there should be no disruptions of any kind. Explain that we can talk to God at any time, but in class we are going to close our eyes and bow our heads to give God our respect. Wait until every head is bowed and eye closed and it is quiet, and then open in prayer. Try to establish this early on so that the students get accustomed to how we pray in class.

3. **Share one praise song and show them a few simple motions.** Have former students help lead. You may want to give a small introduction about what the song is about and why we sing. (This can be done at the beginning or end of the class) Some of the songs go with the memory verse.

4. **Show the students the Bible they will be using.** Explain that by the end of the year they will be skillful in using the Bible. Turn to **Psalm 119:105** and read it to them. (*If it written on the board, have them read it with you.*) If time allows, show them more verses in Psalms about them: **Psalm 139:1-3**, about being safe: **Psalm 91:1-2** and of course the middle verse of the Bible **Psalm 118:8**.

A. Share facts about the Bible: the Bible was written so that we might know Him; to protect us from sin; to correct us and instruct us to do things right; how the world began; how we got here; how we can know God and the only way to get to heaven. (See Bible Fact sheet)

B. The Bible is a very unique book! It has 66 books, written by 40 different people from all different times and cultures. It has been proven historically, scientifically, prophetically, and archaeologically.

C. The Bible is like an instruction manual. It has answers to all the questions and issues that will arise in our lives. It contains many exciting stories about people just like that God used for big things! These stories can give us wisdom and advice for the many different things, both good and bad, that will happen in our own lives.

D. The Bible contains hundreds of promises to each one of us from God Himself! The Bible declares that God has always loved us and wants to be active in our lives.

5. Show students **awards** and explain that they will be given one after they learn five verses. **(Awards for each five verses – and anyone who can memorize them all by May 1st will receive a trophy with their name engraved on it.)** (Awards vary from year to year and you can establish your own for each verse if desired, keep in mind though, that students like rewards and will usually work harder if they know there is something for them.)

6. Explain classroom rules and rules for the walk from the school to the teaching site. (Each location is different, so explain to the students in detail what the weekly procedure will be for your site.)

7. Read **Ephesians 4:32**. Ask them what they think this verse means. Spend about five minutes discussing and teaching the verse to your students. Explain that this is the standard of how we treat each other in this class, and also how you treat people outside of Released Time. With the help of the students, establish five solid rules. You may get suggestions from them and try to include some of the following:

- 1) Be prompt- use the restrooms and water fountains at school.
- 2) No running or pushing - never run ahead of the teacher.
- 3) Quiet voices - no yelling or blurting out.
- 4) Raise hand - when wanting to ask or share something.
- 5) Be kind and compassionate to one another in words and actions.

8. Hand out Bible Verse Bookmark and go over memory verse and explain this is their homework. (Break up the verse and have them, repeat after you: Be kind (*be kind*), and compassionate (*and compassionate*), to one another (*to one another*), Forgiving each other (*Forgiving each other*), just as in Christ (*just as in Christ*), God forgave you (*God forgave you*). Ephesians 4 (*Ephesians 4*), 32 (32). Repeat again and then see if they can say it without repeating.

9. Just as you opened in prayer, close in prayer as well, with the same format of eyes closed and heads bowed. After the prayer, have them pick up their belongings and straighten up room as they go.

MEMORY VERSE:

**“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other,
just as in Christ God forgave you.”**

Ephesians 4:32