



## FOR YOUR IN-SERVICE TRAINING

### For Teachers of Pre-Primaries



## 5 Essentials for the Pre-Primary Classroom

Have you ever heard the expression “the tyranny of the urgent”? That phrase describes what happens when immediate needs scream for attention. In managing the crisis of the moment, important areas may be overlooked. “The tyranny of the urgent” often takes place when working with young children. It’s easy to overlook the essentials that provide a positive learning environment. Take some time to reflect on the following essentials. Are they part of your classroom?

### ESSENTIAL #1 A Spirit-filled teacher

What motivates you to teach? Do you teach to get recognition, to fulfill a duty, or to get “warm fuzzies” from the children? Hopefully you teach because you love children. That love comes from God (1 John 4:7). How is your love relationship with God? Are you reading His Word, talking to Him during the day, and obeying His teachings? If so, your patience, kindness, and understanding will show through as you work with the children.

Another factor to consider is your need for rest. Are you pacing your schedule on Saturday so you will wake up refreshed on Sunday?

### ESSENTIAL #2 A child-centered approach

A gap exists between an adult’s perception of the world and a young child’s outlook. Put yourself in the children’s shoes and plan your Sunday School time accordingly.

- **Attention span.** As you know, the children’s attention span is short! Plan accordingly.
- **Visual field.** Place your wall hangings and bulletin board displays on the children’s eye level. For your displays, choose bright colors and objects that children enjoy; e.g., animals, people, food, toys, etc.
- **Eye-hand coordination.** Pre-primaries’ small motor coordination is still developing. Rejoice in your students’ participation rather than the appearance of their final products.
- **Activity level.** Plan activities that allow your students to move; e.g., sing action songs; march around the room; do stretching exercises; use action rhymes; act out the story.

### ESSENTIAL #3 A routine

Children thrive when the classroom has order. Establish the basic layout of events during your Sunday School time

and stick to that sequence. Once you discover the best way to distribute craft materials or to clean up, repeat those procedures from week to week. Children will soon learn to anticipate what they should do next.

#### **ESSENTIAL #4** **The right supplies**

Adequate and appropriate supplies can make the difference between having an organized classroom or sheer chaos! The social skills of waiting for turns, sharing materials, and allowing others to have first choice are difficult for young children. Think through your Sunday School session. Does each student have a chair and table space? Do you have extra handwork pages for visitors? Is the supply of crayons, modeling clay, and glue sticks adequate for your class? Can you locate supplies quickly and conveniently? Many behavior problems disappear when children have the supplies they need in hand.

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#### **ESSENTIAL #5** **A well-prepared plan**

This essential seems to be given, but it may be shortchanged in the busyness of our personal life. Do you have a plan for when the children first walk through the door until they leave the room hand-in-hand with their parents? Your RBP teacher's guide walks you step-by-step through the Sunday School session. Are you familiar enough with the plan so you do not have to refer to it often? You may want to change the plan to fit your particular group of students. If so, make sure you know what you are doing and when you are doing it. Jot down your basic sequence on a note card and keep it with you.

Go back to the basics—and enjoy a well-managed classroom! ■