

# Friendship Companion Training

## Lesson Effectiveness

**A Friendship group is;**

- A Bible study for adults with intellectual disabilities.... and so much more!
- It is a place where our friends with intellectual disabilities, families, caregivers and friends from church can grow in Christ and minister together.
- The Friendship group will include time for worship, study of God's Word, prayer, ministry together and fellowship.

**“Ministry Together”:**

- We all bring spiritual gifts to the community
- God’s spirit dwells in all of us
- We all have lessons of faith and can learn from each other
- The Friendship group is an opportunity for everyone to share their giftedness
  - Service projects, praying, singing, leading motions, drama, setting up, cleaning up, taking attendance, and etc.

**Plan worship time:**

- When possible, choose songs that fit lesson
  - Pick songs the group has heard or know
  - Live music leadership is best, YouTube is good too
- Take an offering
  - Allow the group to choose beneficiary of their offering
  - Visually illustrate committing the offering to God
  - Give reports how the offering was used

## Preparing a Bible lesson:

- Using a curriculum
  - Curriculum provides simplified Bible text, visuals, application, and activities
  - Can save preparation time, but time is still required to prepare for the lesson
  - Do not use children or teen curriculum – our friends are adults
  - If cost is an issue, find willing donors in the church

**Be Well Prepared:**

- Spend time with God and the lesson material
  - What is God teaching you in the text?
  - What is the central truth in the text?
  - The best lesson is one that has influenced you personally

**Be Well Prepared:**

- What does the group need to learn from the text?
  - How do you want it to impact your Friendship group?
  - List the goals for the lesson
  - Find relevance and application for our lives
  - How will you convey the Gospel – The Love of Jesus?
  - Remember that we are ministering “with” not “to”

**Be Well Prepared:**

- Schedule lessons well in advance so small groups leaders can also prepare. Communicate the lesson with the small group leaders
- Prepare large group lesson;
  - Use an interest or object lesson to begin group meetings
  - Gather visual aids; i.e. PowerPoint images and posters
  - Objects and props, Biblical visitor, costumes
  - Prepare wrap up or review to end the meeting



**You are a facilitator:**

- Engage the group
- Ask simple open-ended questions
  - More than just yes or no, but not too complex
  - Ask questions like; Who, What, Where, Why, How
- Allow plenty of time for answers
- Don't be afraid of silence
- Find ways to engage quieter friends with disabilities

**You are a facilitator:**

- Use simplified terms, not complex theological terms or definitions
- If using the Bible;
  - Use large print
  - NIRV is an example of simpler text

**Drama:**

- Biblical visitor
  - Tell the story from his/her perspective
- Have friends with disabilities act out the story in costume.
  - Use a narrator for telling the story
  - Avoid asking the person in costume to repeat the story lines
  - The audience may be utilized too

## Simple Costumes:

- Open front
  - Eliminates the need to pull garment over the head
  - Speeds up changing in and out of costume
- Oversize costumes to fit all sizes
- Use wrinkle free fabrics, drapery or upholstery fabric work well
- Use long rectangle pieces of material for sashes
- Ropes for belts and to tie off sashes

## Small Group Leaders:

- Establishes close relationships
  - 2-3 companions with 3-5 friends with disabilities
  - A good time for lesson activity or craft
  - Discussion of lesson, prayer, activity or service project
- The large group Bible leader should communicate the Bible lesson to small group leaders in advance, so small group leaders have time to prepare

#### Small Group Leaders:

- Review main objective and Bible verses – repetition is important
- Ask simple questions that help the friends apply the lesson to their lives (*ex. the Samaritan woman ran to tell everyone about Jesus! What are some ways we can tell others about Jesus?*)
- Engage everyone in the group, including volunteers, friends with disabilities, and caregivers
- Wait patiently for the friends to respond to questions
- Pray together as a group (prayer requests)

## Object Lessons, activities and crafts:

- Follow the Connection Ministries Pinterest Board, “Connection Ministries Craft Ideas”
  - [https://www.pinterest.com/Connection\\_Ministries/](https://www.pinterest.com/Connection_Ministries/)
  - Share your ideas with photos and we will post them to the Pinterest board.
- Use object lessons to illustrate concepts as part of large lesson
- Activities and crafts can be part of small group time

## **Bible game night for review: Google!!**

- Memory verse puzzles; <https://fervr.net/youth-group/16-games-and-ideas-to-help-memorise-the-bible>
- Word search; <https://fervr.net/youth-group/16-games-and-ideas-to-help-memorise-the-bible/>
- Bible jeopardy online;  
<http://www.christianity.com/trivia/jeopardy/categories/>
- Bible trivia online; <http://quiz.christiansunite.com/>



**Other review activities:**

- Teams for quiz bowl
  - Use thumbs up and down for Yes and No
  - Use hand held flip signs for True and False
  - Hold your nose for False
- Progressively remove a word from the memory verse
- Questions or objects pulled out of a bag

**Fellowship time:**

- Leave time before group starts and at the end for fellowship
- Snacks allow for quality fellowship
  - Find members of the church to provide snacks and service so companions can fellowship with friends with disabilities

## Visual Aids and Audio/Visual Equipment:

- Projected images with PowerPoint/Keynote will provide large enhanced images for your group
  - Projector (under \$300), projection screen (under \$200), laptop or tablet (iPad under \$400) will be needed, but the cost has come down considerably over the years.
  - Free Bible Images, <http://www.freebibleimages.org/>

## Visual Aids and Audio/Visual Equipment:

- Microphone and sound equipment are important for soft spoken teachers.
- You can use LARGE posters
  - A Beka Book Flash-A-Card;  
<https://www.abeka.com/AbekaOnline/Search.aspx?for=Flash-ACard>

## **Visual Aids and Audio/Visual Equipment:**

- Illustrated Bible story books
  - The Story Bible; <https://www.cph.org/p-18257-the-story-bible.aspx>
  - The Easter Story; <https://www.cph.org/p-18520-the-easter-story-drawn-directly-from-the-bible.aspx>
  - The Christmas Story; <https://www.cph.org/p-18447-the-christmas-story-drawn-directly-from-the-bible.aspx>