

VBS 2024 GRADES 1–4 BASE CONFERENCE PLAN (90 minutes)

Purpose Statement

This 90-minute plan is designed to train and equip VBS leaders to teach kids using the Grades 1–2, Grades 3–4, and Multi-age Kids curriculum for Lifeway's Breaker Rock Beach.

Needed Resources

- *VBS 2024 Cups Pkg 5*
- *VBS 2024 Floor Prints*
- *VBS 2024 Giant Inflatable Orca*
- *VBS 2024 Gospel Guide*
- *VBS 2024 Gospel Wristbands*
- *VBS 2024 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide*
- *VBS 2024 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Pack*
- *VBS 2024 Grades 3–4 Bible Study Leader Guide*
- *VBS 2024 Grades 3–4 Bible Study Leader Pack*
- *VBS 2024 Inflatable Sea Lion*
- *VBS 2024 Kids Activity Book*
- *VBS 2024 Kite*
- *VBS 2024 Logo Stickers*
- *VBS 2024 Memory Maker*
- *VBS 2024 Multi-age Kids Bible Study Leader Guide*
- *VBS 2024 Multi-age Kids Bible Study Leader Pack*
- *VBS 2024 Sandcastle Molds*
- *VBS 2024 String Flags (4)*
- *VBS 2024 Super Duper Sized Backdrop*
- *VBS 2024 Supersized Backdrop*
- *VBS 2024 Tablecloths*
- *VBS 2024 Visual Pack*
- *VBS 2024 Wall Art*
- *VBS 2024 Whirleys*

VBS 2024 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Pack Items

- Item 1. Day 1 Bible Story Picture
- Item 2. Day 2 Bible Story Picture
- Item 3. Day 3 Bible Story Picture
- Item 4. Day 4 Bible Story Picture
- Item 5. Day 5 Bible Story Picture
- Item 6. Breaker Rock Beach Banner
- Item 7. Breaker Rock Beach Banner Add-ons
- Item 8. Ocean Shells
- Item 9. Some People Say
- Item 10. God Says
- Item 18. Gospel Presentation Flags
- Item 19. Whale Watching

VBS 2024 Grades 3–4 Bible Study Leader Pack Items

Item 5. Day 5 Bible Story Picture

Item 8. Theme Verse Poster

Item 15. Firewood

Item 24. Breaker Rock Gospel

Items for Session

- Colored paper
- VBS themed sticker sheets
- Tub of sand
- Empty clear water bottle
- Funnel
- Cup to pour sand
- Real seashells, one per conferee
- Additional real seashells or extra copies of “Ocean Shells” (Grades 1–2 item 8) for half the group. On some of the shells, write one word of Romans 12:2 per shell.
- Cardboard tubes or copies of “Firewood” (Grades 3–4 item 15) enough for half of the group to each have one piece.
- Towel
- Tape
- Gift bag

Room Setup

- Arrange chairs into five groupings.
- Cover the focal wall with a *VBS 2024 Supersized Backdrop*.
- Cover a table with a *VBS 2024 Tablecloth* and display the curriculum on the tabletop.
- Cover a table with a towel. Place small tub of sand, a funnel, and an empty water bottle on the towel.
- Secure 3 sheets of themed stickers on table ready to give to winners.
- Hang items 1–6 from the Grades 1–2 Leader Pack in the focal area.
- Decorate the remainder of the room using the resources listed above as appropriate.
- Tape one set of “Ocean Shells” (Grades 1–2 item 8) around the room.
- Cut apart the “Whale Watching” cards (Grades 1–2 item 19). Place in a gift bag.
- Place extra “Ocean Shells” (Grades 1–2 item 8) or a piece of “Firewood” (Grades 3–4 item 15) in each chair. Or use real seashells and cardboard tubes as firewood.
- Prepare other pack items as directed in the leader guide.
- Make kites from colored paper. Write “Plan,” “Prepare,” and “Plenty to Do,” each phrase on a different kite. Tape each kite under a random chair.

Teaching Steps

WELCOME / MOTTO / PARTNER (10 mins)

- Play Breaker Rock Beach music as conferees arrive.
- Greet each guest as they arrive, welcoming them to Sandcastle Cove!

- Once it is time to start, welcome conferees to Sandcastle Cove where kids will dig deep into the Bible to learn God's truth each day.
- Meet Partners: Say "You will need a partner throughout the session. Find someone you do not know around you to be your partner. Take 1 minute to introduce yourselves, share where you are from and what your role will be in VBS this year."
- Say the Motto: Say, "This year's motto is, 'God's truth never changes.' Let's start by making sure you know the motto!"
 - Lead conferees that have a seashell in their chair to say, "God's truth.
 - Direct attendees with a piece of firewood in their chairs to say, "Never changes!"
 - Hold up firewood or a shell to indicate who should speak as groups say the motto.
 - Challenge each group to be the loudest.
 - Say the motto in fun ways—while swimming, with the beach wind blowing in your hair, and while climbing Breaker Rock.
- Tell conferees: "You have a very important role at Vacation Bible School. You are the Bible study leaders. You are teaching kids the truth that will change their lives forever. Your impact will make an eternal difference!
You are the vessel God uses to share the gospel, to save lives, to get His truth into children's hearts. It's like putting sand in a water bottle." As you talk, try to pour some of the sand into the water bottle without using the funnel. Say, "If I just start pouring sand, how much will go in the bottle? If I use a funnel that fits on top of the bottle, each little grain of sand will enter the bottle." Add the funnel to the bottle and add the rest of the sand. Say, "You are that funnel! When you allow God to prepare your heart and mind for what He's called you to do, He will use you as the funnel to make sure all of His truth is placed in each heart."
- Say, "Our goal is to get you prepared to make this happen. Are you ready?" Encourage conferees to get excited.
- Introduce yourself & pray for the conference.
- Describe the curriculum pieces you have for Breaker Rock Beach. Show conferees the three leader guides and leader packs you have and explain that they will be used to prepare an age-appropriate session. Point out that while Grades 1–2 and 3–4 are self-explanatory, Multi-age is designed to be used in settings where you may have a variety of age groups in your VBS classroom together. It gives suggestions for how to age activities up or down depending on the kids who are present.

KITE INTRO (5 mins)

Explain that you will share some basic tips for those who serve in Kids Ministry, whether at VBS, on Sundays or Wednesdays, or at an event. Say, "Look under your chair and see if you can find a kite." Invite conferees to bring the kites to the front of the room. Take turns reading the words on the kites and invite guests to tape their kites to the wall. Give each helper a VBS themed sticker sheet for helping.

Read the headings on the kites: "Prepare, Plan, Plenty to Do!"

Transition Phrase: Say, "During our time together we will see how each part plays a vital in VBS. How are we going to prepare for the GREATEST week of our lives? "

PREPARE (41 minutes)

Explain that all leaders have a vital role in teaching. They are the people God led to be involved. And they will use their gifts and talents to connect with boys and girls! Because of this, their preparedness will make a difference in how much of God's truth kids grasp during VBS. Here are some ways important ways for leaders to prepare themselves.

1. Prepare your Heart

Guide conferees to say, "Prepare my heart!" together. Ask, "How do we prepare our hearts?"

Instruct conferees to point to each part as you talk through them.

- Eyes—Explain the importance of noticing kids. Suggest that conferees open their eyes to see and be aware of each child's needs.
- Ears— Encourage leaders to be good listeners, sensitive to the questions kids ask.
- Mouth—Leaders should speak life, love, and truth.
- Heart—A joyful heart is good medicine. Encourage leaders to have fun, to smile, laugh, and enjoy teaching!
- Head—Remind leaders that it's important to study and have knowledge about what to say.
- Hands—Say, "Do the things God has called you to do"
- Guide leaders to take a moment and pray for their partners.

Worship: Listen To Breaker Rock Beach Music in your car each day!

2. Prepare your Mind

Examine the leader guide. Show conferees the table of contents in the one of your leader guides.

Say, "Get a copy of your leader guide. Your goal is to get your leader guide and read through the book. Take the time to do it. It may be tempting to rush to get into the stories but don't! Read the whole leader guide and memorize Romans 12:2. Meditate on it. Think about it. This year's theme is what our kids need. They are hearing what the world says and we have to make sure they know exactly what God says so they can stand firm on it!"

3. Prepare for Kids – WHO are you teaching?

Ask conferees about characteristics of the kids they lead.

- Leader Guide Characteristics Tips
 - Explain that each leader guide: 1–2, 3–4, and Multi-age has a section that teaches about the characteristics of the age groups covered in that leader guide.
 - Kids Unfamiliar with Church: Show conferees the section each leader guide has with tips for kids who are unfamiliar with church. Like staying away from churchy words they may not understand or doing a good job explaining the such words when they need to be used.

- Special Needs Adaptions: Explain that a new feature throughout the leader guides is Special Needs Adaptations. These will help leaders notice when children may need chairs instead of the floor, for example. It is important to make kids with special needs feel comfortable in the church.
- Point out that the multi-age curriculum has an article in the beginning explaining how to make a multi-age classroom work such as letting older kids be assistants / helpers or leaders in small groups so that they don't feel bored or talked down to.
- Characteristics Game
Say, "Let's see how well you know your kids already! "

Say the following characteristics of kids. Guide conferees to hold up the number of fingers to represent the age group it applies to. For example, 1st and 2nd grade—hold up 1 finger on left hand and 2 fingers on right hand. If the characteristic applies to all ages stand up and pretend to jump the Breaker Rock Beach waves!

1. Like to work in groups and focus on fairness. (3–4) This is why you hear, "That's not fair!"
2. Are limited in their ability to think abstractly. (1–2)

Say, "1st and 2nd graders are moving from concrete to abstract thinking. Concrete means if you say I have a frog in my throat, they think there is a literal frog in your throat. Or if you say, 'Sally is a bear,' they think Sally has fur and claws. The gospel is a very abstract concept. A God who you can't see sent His Son to die for my sins so I can be in a relationship with God and it requires my faith and trust in Jesus to have this relationship. For this reason, the 1st–2nd grade leader guide provides language to help talk to kids about the gospel in ways they will understand."

3. Are beginning to take more responsibility for their actions (3–4)
Say, "You can explain to kids the consequences of their actions."
4. Love discovering things and being creative. (1–2) Say, "That's why it's important that we offer different opportunities to be creative during VBS."
5. Are active, energetic, and learn by DOING! (ALL)

A child's attention span is one minute for every year they are old. This means we have to plan something to keep them focused every 7-9 minutes.

Children learn by doing. Remember this, "The more you talk, the less they learn!" Let them participate and ask questions.

Transition Phrase: Say, "Now that you know your kids, let's prepare your room."

4. Prepare Your Teaching Space - WHERE?

Say, "Before we prepare our rooms, everyone stand up. Give your partner a Breaker Rock Beach high five and say, 'We got this!'"

Lead conferees in a couple of stretches and to say, "Be flexible! Be flexible! Be flexible!" This is the best way to prepare yourself for getting your room ready! We have to be flexible with our classroom space."

Remark that now they are flexible to sit and listen to questions to consider about their VBS teaching space. Suggest they check with their VBS director to learn the answers.

- Questions to ask your leader.
 1. How many kids should I expect?
 2. Where is my teaching space?
 3. What are our safety and security procedures?
 4. Will I share space with another class that week?
 5. May I move furniture?
 6. What are our safety and security procedures?
 7. How would you like me to hang things on the walls?
 8. Is there anything I should not take off the walls?
 9. How may I play music in the room?
 10. Are there markers, crayons, and other basic supplies in the room that I could use? Where else can I find supplies?
 11. How many Bibles will be available for children to use?
 12. What information do I need to know about gospel conversations with kids?
- Questions to ask yourself.
 1. Do you prefer floor seating or table seating?
 - a. Say, "This depends on the church's supplies, your teaching style, the size of your room, and how long you will be in the classroom."
 - b. Suggest that if leaders use the floor, they may consider using a large blue tarp/tablecloth and brown burlap to look like the ocean or sand. Children can sit around this. It defines the perimeter for sitting and gives leaders space to walk around. Kids also have space to place their Bibles in front of them.
 2. Which wall will be my focal wall? Guide kids to sit with their backs to the door to avoid distractions.
 3. What will fit in my room? Avoid decorating the room so heavily that it is distracting for kids.
- A teaching focal wall with the following is BEST!
 - Breaker Rock Beach Banner
 - Breaker Rock Beach Add-ons
 - Teaching pictures and Bible verse.

- Motto
- Explain that the focal wall needs to be simple so kids can focus.
- Other possible room decorations:
 - Breaker Rock Beach Wall Mural
 - A sand tub on a tarp with toys and a lid, as well as a small vacuum for cleanup.
 - Blue tablecloth for water or burlap for sand
 - A *VBS 2024 Giant Inflatable Orca* hanging from the ceiling.
 - Sand buckets to store markers or pens.
 - String flags hanging from ceiling.
 - Beach balls
 - Explain that the leader guides and the *VBS 2024 Decorating Made Easy* book have plenty of ideas.
 - Say, “Pray in your room while you decorate, and each day before the kids arrive! You want your room to be pleasing to the Lord and a place where kids are loved and learn about Jesus. “

Transition: Say, “Now that you’ve prepared your heart, your mind is prepared for the kids, and your room is ready, it’s time to prepare for teaching! What are you going to teach?”

5. Prepare for Teaching - WHAT? Study the Scripture

Say, “Our Bible stories are amazing! For the next month, make it a goal to read one Bible story each week. In some cases you may want to take even more time to focus on and prepare for each Bible story.”

Go over the biblical content briefly with conferees.

Week 1 | Day 1

Session Title: Truth Comes from God.

Bible Story: Satan Tricked Adam and Eve (Gen 2–3)

Some People Say: Truth can be different for different people.

God Says: Truth comes from Me.

Today’s Point: Truth comes from God.

Week 2 | Day 2

Session Title: God’s Plan Is Best

Bible Story: Daniel Chose God’s Way (Daniel 1)

Some People Say: Do what makes you happy.

God Says: My plan for you is even better.

Today’s Point: God’s plan is best.

Week 3 | Day 3

Session Title: Everyone Needs Jesus

Bible Story: The Rich Young Ruler (Mark 10:17-27)

Some People Say: Being a good person gets you into heaven.

God Says: Everyone sins and needs a Savior.

Today’s Point: Everyone needs Jesus.

Week 4 | Day 4

Session Title: Jesus Is the Only Way

Bible Story: John Wrote about Jesus (John 14:1-6, 18-20, Acts 1:9-12)

Some People Say: There are many ways to get to heaven.

God Says: Jesus is the only way to get to heaven.

Today's Point: Jesus is the only way.

Week 5 | Day 5

Session Title: Speak the Truth in Love

Bible Story: Paul Encouraged the Ephesians (Acts 9:1-6, 19:1-10, 21-31, 20:1, Ephesians 3:14-4:16)

Some People Say: If you don't agree with me, you don't love me.

God Says: Speak the truth in love.

Today's Point: Speak the truth in love.

- Suggest that before reading and studying the Scriptures, conferees should review the day's point, what some people say, and what God says, then spend time in prayer over these ideas.

Emphasize that it's important for leaders to prepare themselves. That part needs to begin early. Comment that once leaders have prepared themselves, they can begin to plan their VBS sessions.

PLAN (24 mins)

Explain to conferees that there are five key elements to a kids Bible study plan: Start it, Learn it, Know it, Live it, Finish it

Say, "The book has your plan laid out for you! Let's take a look!"

1. Start It

Explain that on each day of VBS, "Start It" is a welcome activity to help kids feel comfortable, welcome, and introduced to what they will learn that day.

Lead conferees in the Start It activity from Day 1 in the *VBS 2024 Grades 3-4 Bible Study Leader Guide* (page 10).

Explain that every day, leaders and kids will place a new add-on on the Breaker Rock Beach Banner.

2. Learn It

Explain that this is the portion of the session where a leader will tell the Bible story to kids. Share these helpful hints with leaders to help kids learn the Bible story.

- Make sure your Bible is open and in your hand!!
- Hold the Bible story picture or attach it to the wall at the children's eye level. (The story is on the back of your Bible story picture but you won't need it because you've prepared so well.)
- Refer to the leader guide for suggestions on how to engage children with the story.

- Provide Bibles for each child. Let them follow along as you are reading or invite older kids to read certain passages!
- Vary your storytelling method to accommodate different learning styles in the room. Some kids will need extra action and movement. Others have a more reflective style.
- Lead conferees in the Learn It activity, including telling the Bible story, from the *VBS 2024 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide* (pages 10–11).

Show conferees the cross symbol on page 11. Explain that each day of VBS has these symbols to help leaders identify an opportune time to share the gospel as led by the Holy Spirit. Days 3 and 4 focus more directly on the gospel story but leaders should be sensitive to share the gospel every day of VBS.

Show conferees the pack items that will be used to share the gospel more directly later in VBS (Grades 1–2 item 18, and Grades 3–4 item 24)

3. Know It (

- Request that those who have a shell with a word written on it bring that shell to your tub of sand and bury it in the sand for an activity you will do together later.
- Explain that Know It is a time to learn the VBS Theme verse each day. For Breaker Rock Beach, the theme verse is Romans 12:2. Lead conferees in the Day 5 Know It activity from the *VBS 2024 Grades 3–4 Bible Study Leader Guide* (page 40).

4. Live It

- Point out that Live It is the application portion of the session. Leader guides will often provide an activity and also connect with the *VBS 2024 Kids Activity Book*.
- Lead conferees in the Day 3 Live It activity from the *VBS 2024 Grades 1–2 Bible Study Leader Guide* (page 26).

5. Finish It

Say, “This time wraps up the entire session. Your leader guide will show you how to use the Memory Maker and give you some words to remind kids of what they have learned that day.”

Draw attention to the Memory Maker and show conferees each token, asking them if they can guess how each icon connects to the day’s Bible content.

Transition: Say, “We have prepared and planned, what is on our last kite?”

Ask a volunteer to read the final kite, “Plenty to Do.”

Plenty to Do (6 mins)

Explain that leader guides provide additional activities that can be used every day. Encourage conferees to prepare at least one activity for early arrivers, in case another activity finishes more quickly than expected, or if there is a change to the VBS schedule. Point out that the activities have different purposes. Each day there are options for application, learning the bonus verse,

and learning a Bible Skill. In Multi-age, activities focus on application and the bonus verse, but two activities are more suited for younger kids and two for older.

Consider walking conferees through the following activities from the leader guides or select and highlight a few of your own favorites.

Additional Activity Options

- Grades 1–2, page 20—Salmon Swimming
- Grades 1–2, page 21—Land Ho!
- Grades 3–4, page 27—Building Sandcastles
- Multi-age, page 13—Jellyfish Volleyball
- Multi-age, page 14—Lighthouse Stacking

CLOSING (4 mins)

Ask conferees to share one they learned and one thing they plan to do as a result of this conference.

Conclude the session in prayer. Ask God to go with conferees as they prepare to lead at VBS. Ask Him to guide their preparation and give them the words they need to teach kids the wonderful truth of the gospel.