

# t<sub>he</sub> Chalkboard

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Zion Assembly Church of God



## Focused on Children's Ministry

Maintaining a child's attention is the only way to effectively teach him. However, keeping his mind focused and his body engaged in learning can become a juggling act. Of course, this becomes an even greater challenge with a very young child who can become easily distracted by his immediate surroundings. A good teacher must think creatively to redirect the child's thoughts back to the lesson. The teacher must have her topic outlined, Scriptures earmarked, and supplies gathered in order to successfully accomplish her lesson objectives. She must also be covered in prayer to remain patient and calm when her audience becomes restless. The teacher will receive a great reward for her efforts when the face of a child lights up as he has caught the main idea of an important truth.

Jesus was a creative teacher. He often used items from His surroundings to keep His audience focused. When Jesus taught the multitudes on the mountainside, He spoke about flowers of the field and birds of the air. Imagine Him reaching down to pull up a lily from the dirt or pointing to a bird as it flew overhead. These common objects became useful teaching tools. They were a tangible way to keep His learners alert and focused.

There are several methods a Children's Minister can use to keep her students absorbed in a lesson's objectives. One way is to use an object from the story itself. Many of the parables Jesus taught focused on a particular item such as a lost coin, a mustard seed, or a lost sheep. Have an item from the story on hand to show the students during a time of transition, such as: after reading the Scripture aloud, before discussing the main point, and anytime the children seem distracted or inattentive. For instance, if the lesson text is the parable of the lost sheep, have a stuffed lamb to display during a major point of the lesson. A small cotton ball could also

be given to each child to represent a sheep's soft wool.

Even the most alert student can allow his mind to wander. Another way of redirecting his attention is by using a key word. Each time this special word is spoken by the teacher in the context of the story, the children must respond with a movement, chant, or sound. For example, every time the students hear the word "sheep" they must "baa" like a sheep or place their hands on top of their heads to represent a sheep's ears.

Music is an additional creative teaching approach. Pause several times throughout a lesson to sing or hum a familiar tune. This will help to pull the children back into the story. If the Bible text is about the lost sheep, sing the song "Gentle Shepherd" or "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus."

Any of these inventive teaching techniques will motivate children to listen. By keeping them active and focused, they will catch the Truth of the lesson. Faith comes by hearing God's Word. What a great reward!



### Ideas to Illuminate

**Show and Tell:** Give each student a small lunch bag to take home. Instruct them to bring an item in the bag to share with the class during the next class session. The object should connect to the lesson or unit of study. Encourage the students to recite a Scripture verse which relates to the item. At the teacher's discretion, the students can open their bags and present the item to the class at intervals throughout the lesson.

### Chalk Talk:

Let's Talk! I want to hear of the great things that are happening in your Children's Ministry. E-mail me at [youngdisciples@att.net](mailto:youngdisciples@att.net). Cheryl McDonald

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