How the Truth Taught is Caught:  
Small Group Application Time  
Linda McIntire

Common Passions of Good Teachers:  (Jim Wilhoit and Leland Ryken, professors at Wheaton College, Effective Teaching, (pp. 69-71)

A Passion for God-
A Passion for People-
A Passion for the Truth-
A Passion for Studying and Learning-
A Passion to Share What You Have Learned-
A Passion for Practical Application of What is Taught-

WHAT A CHILD OF FOUR AND FIVE CAN LEARN

Age-Appropriate Biblical Concepts:

ABOUT GOD  
God loves him and others.  
God cares for all who love Him.  
God cares for and loves families.  
God made all things.  
God is to be trusted and depended on.  
God is everywhere.  
God will hear prayer any time.  
God sent Jesus to die for sin.  
God wants him to be thankful for all He has made.  
God wants him to obey Him by obeying his parents.  
God loves him.

ABOUT JESUS  
Jesus loves him and is his best friend.  
Jesus came to be the Saviour.  
Jesus is now living in heaven.  
Jesus will help him obey and share.  
Jesus wants all children to love him.  
Jesus is always with him.  
Jesus died for him.  
Jesus can help him do hard things.

ABOUT THE BIBLE  
The Bible tells about God.  
The Bible is God’s Word.  
God tells us what He wants us to do in the Bible.  
The Bible helps him know what to do.  
The Bible is a Book of true stories.

ABOUT HOME AND PARENTS  
God gave parents to care for him and teach him.  
God gave parents to pray for him.  
He should obey his parents.  
He should want to love and please his parents.

ABOUT CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL  
Church is a place to learn, sing, and worship God.  
Church is a place to meet with others who love the Lord.  
Church is a special place.  
Church is a place where we learn about God.
ABOUT OTHERS

God made all people.
God loves everyone and wants all to love Him.
God wants him to tell others of Jesus.
Others may not share as he does.
Others may be loving and kind to him.
He is to be kind, share, and pray for others.
God wants him to share his money.
God wants people to help others.

ABOUT ANGELS

Some angels are good and some are bad.

AND LAST THINGS

Satan (the devil) is a bad angel who did not want to please God.
Satan and his angels want us to do bad things.

WHAT A CHILD OF SIX AND SEVEN CAN LEARN

ABOUT GOD

God loves him and his family and his friends.
God loves all the people of the world.
God wants people to love Him too.
God wants people to give their lives to Him.
God provides food for men by letting plants grow.
God takes care of the world He made.
God is good, but He is also against evil.
God wants us to pray and read our Bibles.
God is holy and cannot fail.
God has all power to help him.

ABOUT JESUS

Jesus is the Son of God.
Jesus came to earth to die for sin.
Jesus wants people to accept Him as their personal Saviour.
Jesus wants to help people go to God.
Jesus wants to take sin from our lives.
Jesus never did anything wrong.
Jesus rose from the dead and lives in heaven.
Jesus loves us and wants to be our friend.
Jesus did many wonderful miracles while on earth.
Jesus can help him choose to do the right things.

ABOUT THE BIBLE

The Bible is God’s Book, for it tells about Him
The Bible tells us what God wants.
The Bible tells how God worked with others.
The Bible tells much about us.
The Bible is a good Book to study, for it helps us.
The Bible should be read and memorized.
The Bible contains sixty-six books.
The Bible has two major parts, called the Old and the New Testaments.

ABOUT HOME

Parents are God’s leaders for us on earth.
Parents want to help us, so we should obey them.
Parents love us, so we should love them too.
Parents provide food and clothing and home for us.
God is an important guest in our home at all times.

ABOUT CHURCH

Church is God’s house.
Church is a place where God’s people go.
Church is a happy place.
Church is a place for songs and prayer and Bible study.
Church needs our help to keep it clean and quiet.
Church is not just a building, but also the people in it.
He can give to the Lord’s work through the church.

ABOUT OTHERS

Others may want the same thing he does; he must share.
Others may not want to do the same thing he does; he must learn to give in halfway.
Others may be in trouble; he must learn to pray.
Others may be unkind; he must learn to forgive.
Others may not know Jesus; he must learn to tell them about Him.

ABOUT ANGELS
AND LAST THINGS
Satan tempts us to sin and disobey God.
Good angels worship and praise God.
Good angels are God’s servants.
Jesus has gone to heaven to prepare a place there for all who love Him.
Jesus is coming to take us to live with Him forever.

WHAT A CHILD OF EIGHT AND NINE CAN LEARN

ABOUT GOD
God is all powerful, all wise, and everywhere.
God is present with him at all times.
God wants to help him as he grows.
God loves him and wants him to love God.
God made the universe and all in it.
God wants him to pray each day.
God always answers prayers with “Yes,” “No,” or “Wait.”
God loves people all over the world.
God the Holy Spirit is a person who is spirit.
When he accepts Jesus as his Saviour, the Holy Spirit comes into his life.

ABOUT JESUS
Jesus is the Son of God, the Saviour.
Jesus died on the cross for sin.
Jesus can give salvation to those who ask.
Jesus can forgive sin.
Jesus loves him even when he sins.
Jesus wants him to be a disciple and follow Him.

ABOUT THE
BIBLE
The Bible is an exciting Book to read.
The Bible is a true Book, not fiction.
The Bible is God’s Word.
The Bible should be read each day.
The Bible has many important verses to be memorized.
The Bible is God’s truth.
The Bible tells what God wants us to know.

ABOUT HOME
AND PARENTS
Parents have rules for him to follow, but they also have God’s rules to follow.
Parents are to the child what God is to the parents.
Parents want him to be a part of the family group.
Home is a secure place where he can find his strength.
Home is a happy place.
Home is a place where he can talk over his problems with his parents.
Home is a place where he can learn to follow rules.

ABOUT CHURCH
AND SUNDAY SCHOOL
Church is like a school, except that he learns about God and the Bible.
Church is a place where he can worship God.
Church is a place to sing about God.
Church is a place for families.
Church is a happy place where he wants to go.
Church needs his help to be all that it should.

ABOUT OTHERS
Others include a wider world, far beyond the community.
Others include foreign boys and girls across the sea.
Others need help, which he can give.
Others need the gospel, which he can share.
Others need his prayers.
Others need his money, which he can give.
ABOUT ANGELS
Satan is a beautiful angel who sinned against God.
Satan is the most wicked of all created beings.
Satan tempts Christians and leads them astray.
Good angels protect God’s people.
Good angels are God’s messengers to men and carry out God’s judgments.
Heaven is for those who have accepted Christ as their personal Saviour.
People who do not accept Christ as their Saviour will be separated from God forever.

ABOUT JESUS
Jesus took on Himself the body of a man so He could do what God had planned.
Jesus fulfilled part of God’s great plan for the child, to bring him to God; the child must fulfill the other, to accept what Jesus did on the cross.
Jesus shows him how to live for God, for His perfect life is a pattern for all.
Jesus took the punishment for the sins of all people on Himself at Calvary.
Jesus became alive again and lives in heaven.
Jesus Christ was born of a virgin.

ABOUT THE BIBLE
The Bible has the answer to all his everyday problems.
The Bible can help him live a happy life.
The Bible tells the history of God’s work among men.
The Bible is God’s Word, the authority for life.
The Bible is set in the culture of another kind of people. He needs to understand that culture to understand the Bible.
The Bible is without error.
The Holy Spirit guided the writers of the Bible books.
The Bible is a Book to honor and to memorize. It is God’s truth to put into everyday practice.
The Bible is God’s truth for all men. He needs to share it with others.
The Bible, which is God’s Word, is to be obeyed.

ABOUT OTHERS
Others need his respect for their thoughts, their possessions, their rights.
Others need his understanding.
Others need his help.
He must show others honesty, loyalty, and fair play.
Others need his forgiveness.
Others need his prayers. Others fit into God’s plans, just as he does.

ABOUT ANGELS
Satan is the ruler of spiritual wickedness.

AND LAST
Satan wants to keep people from coming to God.

THINGS
God has a plan for the future, which will come to pass. People who have trusted Christ as their Saviour and have died will be raised from the dead when Christ returns. Satan and his angels will be cast into the lake of fire for eternal punishment. People who have not trusted Christ as their Saviour will spend eternity in hell.

(“What a Child Can Learn” notes by Dr. Milton Uecker—given at a teacher training seminar in Virginia Beach, VA. 1988)

**LEARNING LEVELS:**

- **ROTE**
  - ability to repeat without thought of meaning
- **RECOGNITION**
  - ability to recognize Biblical concepts
- **RESTATEMENT**
  - ability to express or relate concepts to Biblical system of thought
- **MEANING**—in terms of Biblical world view
- **RELATION**
  - ability to relate Bible truths to life and see appropriate response
- **REALIZATION**
  - Actualizing response: to apply Biblical truths to daily life

**Teacher Role:**
- Active as teller
- as guide of participating, involved students

“Levels of Learning Chart” modified from Creative Bible Teaching, Richards/Brenfeldt, Moody Press © 1998

**Types of Questions:** (Based on B. Bloom’s Taxonomy)
Using Mark 4:35 – Jesus Stills the Storm

**KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS:** (RECALL/MEMORIZATION) Simply require students to remember facts and recite them without necessarily understanding the concept: Where does this story take place? Who was in the boat with the disciples? What made the disciples afraid? (Use these questions with Young children, new believers, lower ability students and when you want to be sure the students have the facts.) (Relate this to the ROTE LEVEL)

**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:** (UNDERSTANDING) Here students demonstrate that they understand what was taught without necessarily relating it to anything: What was this story about? Can you retell this story in your own words? Why did the wind get calm? (RECOGNITION LEVEL)
APPLICATION QUESTIONS: (TRANSFERRING) The students transfer or apply the learned material to their own life or to a new situation (apply an abstract idea to a concrete situation): Why were the disciples afraid in the storm when Jesus was with them? Can you draw a picture of this story? Can you show through actions how the boat might have looked in the storm? (RELATION LEVEL)

ANALYSIS QUESTIONS: The students can compare and contrast the parts of the content, can identify reasons, causes, or motives and can reach conclusions: Can you compare how the disciples in the boat reacted with how Jesus reacted? How are the disciples like or different from you? What are some of the things that caused the disciples to be afraid?

SYNTHESIS: The students can organize thoughts, ideas and information from the content to come to a new understanding: Can you list the events in the story in the order they happened? Do you know any other Bible stories where people could have been afraid?

EVALUATION: The students can judge and evaluate actions, characters, outcomes, develop opinions, make decisions based on the content: What do you think the disciples learned that day? What does it tell you about the disciples when they said: “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!” Why is this a good story to tell to young children?

TIPS TO ENCOURAGE DEEPER THINKING:
1. Prepare Questions Ahead of Time
2. Ask Open-ended Questions
3. Use Follow Up or Probing Questions
4. Lengthen Your Wait Time
5. Rephrase Unanswered Questions
6. Vary the Way in Which You Ask Questions

Key Components of an Effective Small Group Discussion:
1. Types of questions we can ask
2. Kind of responses we should give
3. Goals and rules for a good discussion
4. Application responses

What is Application?
1. Application helps the children see how the Bible truth taught in the lesson is relevant to their lives.
2. Shows them what to do about what is taught; what response God is calling them to make.
3. And then motivates them to respond in obedience to what the Holy Spirit is teaching them.

In a Nutshell

Teachers: Have the responsibility of pointing out, or expounding truths to be applied, as well as areas in their learners’ lives where the truth should be applied.

Learners: Apply truth in the sense that they see the need for the truth to be related to their lives, yield to the work of the Spirit, and receive the Spirit’s ministry.

The Holy Spirit: Is the only One who can apply truth in the sense of personalizing it to the individual or injecting it into the reality of others’ experiences.

So: Teachers present the Word, students receive and appropriate it, the Spirit relates it to the students and transforms lives by it.
(Roy Zuck, Teaching with Spiritual Power: p. 101)

APPLICATION DISCUSSION EXAMPLE:
I tried to reconstruct a discussion we had in my S.S. class as an example of how to lead to response.

On Wednesdays last year they had studied the Ten Commandments and had memorized a portion of Colossians 3, and this year we have all been memorizing James 4. In S.S. last month, we had studied the temptation of Eve in Genesis 3:4-5 and had talked about how sly Satan was and how Eve knowingly disobeyed.

I introduced the idea of application of Bible truth by relating and acting out a recent visit I made to the doctor due to muscle pain which resulted in a prescription for some medicine.
Teacher: What would your response be if I get home, read the instructions on the bottle and put the bottle on the counter, go about my day in pain and then go back to the doctor and tell her, “It didn’t work, I still have pain.”
Student #1: Did you take any of the pills?
Teacher: No!
Student #2: You didn’t even open the bottle!
Teacher: Okay, let’s say I did open the bottle, looked inside, admired the pills, but was still in pain. Would you be surprised?
Student #3: No!
Teacher: Why do you say, “No”?
Student #3: Because you didn’t take the pills.
Teacher: So if knowing what to do is not enough, what should I do?
Student #1: You have to do something about what the doctor told you to do.
Student #2: Yeah, you have to take the pills or they won’t do you any good.
Teacher: You are right. I have to apply what I know in order to receive the benefit of the pills. You told me earlier that Satan was sneaky and tempted Eve to do something she know God had told her not to do. Is the idea of Satan tempting people just in Bible stories?
Student #3: (Laughs) Now way!
Student #1: Satan tempts us, too.
Teacher: Can you think of a time when Satan has been sneaky and tempted you?
Student #2: Yes, when my Mom made some cookies and said not to eat any and then went to work. I ate some.
Student #3: My Mom told me not to go past the corner on my bike. My friend said it would be okay, so I did.
Student #1: My Mom told me to clean my room and I wanted to keep on playing my game on the computer. So I didn’t clean my room.
Teacher: Did any of you have a choice when you were tempted, or were you forced to make that decision?
Student #2: Satan can’t make us do what he says. I chose to do it.
Teacher: Can you think of any “Bible pill” that you had but chose not to use when the temptation came to you?
Student #3: Ten Commandments. Children obey your parents.
Teacher: Great answer Cy, you remembered that from last year! Anyone else?
Student #1: How about from James? Resist the devil and he will flee from you.
Teacher: Wunderbar! You must be working on your silver medal! So, tell me what could you have done differently when you were tempted?
Student #2: Said, “No” to the devil.
Student #3: Prayed and asked God to help me obey my Mom.
Teacher: What benefit would you have gotten had you applied a “Bible pill” to your temptation?
Student #3: I wouldn’t have disobeyed.
Student #2: and gotten in trouble.
Student #1: Satan wouldn’t have won.
Student #2: God would have liked it.
Teacher: You are so right! God does like it when we obey Him rather than the devil.
Student #3: Maybe I could have gotten stronger in fighting off the devil.
Teacher: Wow! That is so true. Every time we resist we get stronger in our faith. So besides disobeying, in what other ways can Satan tempt you?
Student #2: To say mean things.
Student #1: To be mean to my brother when he bothers me.
Student #3: To think bad thoughts about someone.
Student #2: To call people names, especially when they do something mean to me.
Teacher: I know what you mean. I can be tempted to think something bad about someone who does something unkind to me, too.
Do you think Satan will try to tempt us this week?
Student #1: Yes, he does it every day.
Student #2: Sometimes more than once a day.
Teacher: That’s for sure! What could we do about the temptations that are going to happen this week?
Student #3: Pray that we will recognize when he is tempting us.
Student #1: Pray that we will say, “No.”
Student #2: Pray that we will ask God for help the next time.
Teacher: Asking God for help is a good idea, but why do we need to do that?
Student #1: Because He is stronger than Satan.
Student #2: And He knows everything, so He can tell us how to not give in.
Student #3: Yeah! Jesus was tempted, too, but He didn’t do it.
Teacher: Great example. God loves us and wants to help us resist the temptations of the devil. So how could we help each other?
Student #3: Pray now in class.
Teacher: Super! Let’s do it. (Prayer Time) Next week when we get together let’s see if we can share times this past week when Satan tempted us and we resisted him and said, “No.”
In this conversation I wanted:
1. The temptation of Eve to be more than a well know Bible story.
2. Them to be able to relate to her situation and see that she had a choice in that temptation, and so do they.
3. Them to be able to apply verses they knew to the situation.
4. And them to see their need of dependence on God to help in times of temptation.

The real application is done by the Holy Spirit during the week when temptations come. I have simply set up real life scenarios that children can relate to and see themselves.

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