

THE
DISCIPLESHIP
PLACE

Developing Children's Ministry



SESSION 18

Leading Children in Worship

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Leading Children in Worship

SESSION OVERVIEW

Children and Worship

Approaches to Child-Centered Children's Worship

Worship Leadership Including Music and Other Elements

Application

Exam

Discussion Guide for Mentor and Participant

LEARNER OBJECTIVES

At the end of this session, you should:

- describe the purposes of worship.
- list several approaches to designing and leading children's worship.
- identify the various strategies and skills employed in children's worship.

Leading Children in Worship

INTRODUCTION



Worship and education overlap, but there remains a subtle difference based on purpose. Education involves appropriating God's message and desire for our lives, all the while discerning how to live God's commands. Worship describes primarily an act of our offering ourselves to God in praise and adoration, through expressions of thankfulness and appreciation, all the while disciplining ourselves for God's disclosure in the preaching and worship practices. We set aside our agendas to focus on God's majesty. Ultimately, worship proves formative through our appreciation of God's grace; however, this shaping comes only as we offer ourselves to God's agenda, not to our own. Children need to understand the power of worship, and adults need to understand the role of children in and through worship. This lesson addresses both issues.

CHILDREN AND WORSHIP



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Both education and worship change us, but in different ways. We learn in a worship setting, and we worship in a learning setting. However, we need balance in our ministry. Being aware of the different purposes of worship and education will help to ensure that we don't neglect either area.

A primary goal of worship is to bring who we are (the child of 2, 6, or 11 years or the adult of 30, 50 or 75 years) to who God is—the limitless Creator of the universe and Sustainer of God's people. All people come to God bringing different gifts and experiences. People come together in corporate worship; they celebrate as one body but also as individuals, seeing God as the Lord of all of life.

Important Elements to Keep in Mind for Children's Worship

It is wise for the leaders of worship of all ages to talk about the purposes of worship. There is considerable difference of opinion in what we popularly call worship. Many churches misunderstand and think worship describes only the singing part of a church service. But biblical worship describes far more. Worship describes our coming into God's presence with a sense of awe that leads us to bow down, draw close, and offer our gifts.

Ultimately worship includes several basic elements designed to bring us into the presence of God. Usually, worship begins with a sense of praise and thanksgiving to God and God's mighty acts of salvation in creation and in salvation through Jesus and the presence of the Holy Spirit. Once the church enters into the presence of God through this worship of praise, often the church pauses to offer a time for prayer, bringing both petitions of intercession as well as personal struggles before God, and asking God to mercifully intercede for others and ourselves. The third major movement of worship revolves around the disciplined listening to God's Word (Scripture) through preaching or teaching, providing exhortation and instruction into the way we should live before God. Finally, worship closes with a time of response to God based on God's word for us. At times that response may be a commitment or an altar call. At other times the response can include the celebration of communion as the whole church. Following this response, the church is then "sent" from worship to live worship-centered lives throughout the rest of the week. So worship intentionally brings the gathered people of God, the church, together through praise, invites prayers of need, commands a disciplined hearing of God's Word, responds to the hearing, and then receives a benediction of both blessing and sending into the broader world. The five movements (gathering, interceding, listening, responding, and sending) constitute the basic movements of worship throughout the centuries.

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Children, both in general church worship and through specific times of child-centered worship, need to be shaped by these basic movements. Each movement shapes children into the role of worship as a place where God remains at the center of the community, bringing people together out of praise, reminding them who is truly the center of creation and redemption for their lives, and sending them back to be agents of God in the world. However, each of these “movements” or elements of worship need to incorporate the gifts and developmental barriers of young children. Children often need a delicate balance of variety and repetition, so children’s leaders may be creative, but every week include basic elements or activities that follow the basic form of worship, including:

- Music.
- Prayer.
- Offering.
- Bible focus on God’s awesomeness.
- Traditions that remain important to the church, such as greetings, responsive readings, brief silence, benediction, special music, Lord’s Prayer.

In addition children’s leaders need to pay close attention to making worship different from instructional classes. Consider the worship environment carefully. Plan the setting so it helps create an attitude that communicates and inspires anticipation of God’s presence. Children’s leaders need to demonstrate worship in their own lives. Leaders may need to encourage adults to be models of worship regardless of seeing. All adults should be participating even during child-centered worship, not just watching the children worship or preparing for another activity.

Leaders should be intentional about encouraging children to take part in whatever approach to worship (discussed in the next section) they choose. Offer children opportunities to pray aloud. Let kids read Scripture. Let the children lead in singing or playing instruments of all kinds. Even in all-church worship, children should not be passive or participate only as an afterthought! Plan for the children to participate. Provide children the Bible verses ahead of time so they can practice. Give children time to practice the music, as well.

Finally, though worship remains primarily focused on God, don’t miss teachable moments. Pay attention to what is happening in children’s lives, in our congregation, and the world. Pay attention to what children are interested in today. God is a part of it all, so help children realize the spiritual connections by asking, “What’s God got to do with that?” Such teachable moments help children discover where God is leading or sending them beyond the worship event.

APPROACHES TO CHILD-CENTERED CHILDREN'S WORSHIP



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In many congregations globally, children remain a part of congregational worship. Whether in smaller churches or large congregations, children often attend and participate in worship with adults based on their developmental abilities and inclinations. This approach may or may not intentionally incorporate children as full participants. Some congregations remain sensitive to children in worship; other churches focus primarily on adult-oriented worship, even when children remain present in the congregation. The role of children's leaders in these settings may well be to insure that worship leaders take children seriously by incorporating worship elements that directly address children in a meaningful manner and also utilize children as part of the worshipping congregation so adults can benefit from their presence.

However, some churches now seek to also incorporate worship experiences that are specifically child-centered children's worship. This approach does not mean that children, and not God, are the center of the worship experience. It does assume that many times, children need a developmentally-appropriate worship experience to both understand and experience God at the center of worship. While such an approach may not always work all the time, children's leaders often find themselves negotiating between child-centered worship experiences and incorporating children in congregational settings.

Just as there are many different styles and forms for adult worship, different approaches exist for conducting children's worship. Child-centered children's church need not mimic adult worship, but the two services should not contradict each other. Before making decisions about what approach to use for children's worship, ask: "How will this approach help us accomplish the goal of worship?" That question will be answered differently for different age-levels.

Intergenerational

One approach is to have one Sunday a month or quarter that is a family Sunday. This allows children to see adults (in addition to their parents) in the practice of worship. It helps children see themselves as a welcome part of the church community. The intergenerational approach to worship requires openness to the needs of all ages. Some churches offer both a children's sermon and an adult sermon. Some churches attempt to make the sermons child-friendly and offer both adult and child-related illustrations. Meeting the needs of all generations in one service remains difficult but rewarding. It is a challenge that can be chosen intentionally and purposefully—not because no one wanted to lead children's worship.

 **NOTES***The Split Service*

A variation of the intergenerational approach retains many of the benefits through the split service. In this approach, children are welcomed into the musical portion of congregational worship. They participate until a designated part of the service—usually the offering or just before the sermon. This participation allows the children to observe people of all ages in worship. Children are usually engaged in music more easily than in long periods of listening, particularly to sermons oriented to adult listening patterns. Children can go to a different area to engage in the same or similar content to the adult sermon, but at an age-appropriate level.

Some disadvantages occur with this approach. The process of moving the children can disrupt the flow of worship for both children and adults. Children's worship leaders may lose a lot of time trying to re-engage the children and may not have adequate time for the message content. This plan may unwittingly exclude children from what is perceived as the "important part" of the service, or cause them to feel that there is something they are being excluded from. This approach could stress some parents so that they are unprepared for hearing the sermon.

The Extended Service

If the split-service model lacks continuity for children, the extended service is probably the most effective model for keeping children focused. It may be particularly good for preschool-aged children and below because they have more trouble with transitions. Without extended service, young children attach to their Sunday school class, then attach back to their parents, only to return back to a different setting. This may cause unsettled feelings—the last thing we want young children to associate with church! An extended session allows children to engage one Bible story with depth, explore both educational and worship characteristics of a single story, and take the morning's activities at a more leisurely pace.

There are some disadvantages. Teachers who are not clear about the differences between worship and education might be inclined to make the whole experience educational. Teachers may not prepare enough activities. Teachers need a variety of activities, or the children might become bored. This approach does not connect children with the greater church or the practices of worship at an early age.

The Celebration Focus

This low-key approach recognizes that children often find themselves tired after Sunday school. They need an opportunity for refreshment and perhaps rest. This approach believes children should associate both fun and fellowship with their

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church experience. The philosophy behind this approach is that more is caught than taught. Worship focuses on positive social experiences in a Christ-centered environment, so kids will come to view church as a place they want to be. It is usually characterized by snacks, games, crafts, and perhaps character-building videos or computer games.

Critics of this approach argue that there is no content, while proponents propose that the content has already been given in Sunday school. Proponents say the children can celebrate the lesson in real-life activity (especially when the games and activities reinforce the content of the lesson). The goal is for children to WANT to come to church.

This approach can be used well or poorly. Well-trained facilitators can help children draw connections between the Sunday school lesson and what they are enjoying in children's worship. They can choose activities that encourage children to respond to what they learned with a focus on offering themselves to God through play. Poorly-prepared facilitators seldom make these connections and the experience is lost. Transition to the practices of the greater church can be lost in an attitude of self-indulgence or "fun-addiction" that does not always translate to the real life of discipleship.

The Mini-Church

Another approach involves creating a church service that in every way mimics the characteristics of the adult worship service, but at age-appropriate levels for children. In some churches, this approach leads to the careful crafting of child-size pews, hymnals (or overheads or media projection), and the setup of a miniature sanctuary with instruments (or a worship band) and pulpit on the platform. Worship follows the basic plan of adult worship. Leaders intentionally teach children the elements of worship and create an environment that prepares them for the worship services of the church. It helps them learn the disciplines and behavior associated with adult worship settings, including listening skills.

This approach seems less popular as churches begin to vary their adult worship models. The goals of this approach appear admirable. If this approach fails to recognize the unique needs of children and adults, it is no more effective than having children sit in the adult service. Sitting in a children's pew in children's worship proves no easier than a 20-minute sermon anywhere else. Using this approach effectively requires integrating the shorter attention span of kids. Children need self-expression in order to discover their place in the church. Their maturity levels are developing at different rates.

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The best examples of this approach allow children to participate in planning, preparing, and carrying out worship. It lets them discuss the purposes of each part of the service. It integrates discussion along with information. It follows an abbreviated format.

The least effective use of this approach usually involves bribing or threatening children to keep them quiet and in their seats. Leadership sets up an environment where the setting is totally mismatched to the program. For instance, children sit in pews, but adults throw out candy and have a high-energy program on the platform that discourages reflective participation.

The Spectator Focus

Children have become major consumers of high-dollar entertainment in many cultures. Splashy shows draw children by the hundreds in North American metropolitan areas. The church is aware of this phenomenon, and local congregations recognize the power of production to get kids excited and keep them engaged. Many adult churches design their adult worship services to fit the spectator model. Only a few members of the congregation actively participate in the Sunday morning service, and the rest of the congregation participates in ministry in other areas. This is sometimes the profile of what has become known as a seeker-friendly service where high-quality, low-commitment worship purposefully provides an entrance point for unchurched people.

Some children's worship services are designed so an adult or group of adults engage children's attention through drama, performance, illusion, object lessons, clowning, puppets, media, and other entertainment resources. The children participate through group energy and group response. Some churches have created ongoing storylines, characters, and environments that stimulate kids' imaginations as they watch the fun unfold.

There are advantages to this program-centered approach. Children often enjoy this kind of involvement and can draw deep connections from the stories to their lives. It demonstrates a high commitment to children's ministry, which becomes more fully developed in other programs. This model generates excitement and a shared reference point for children who attend. It can be used as a foundation for age-appropriate response activities. This model involves children emotionally.

There are some disadvantages to this approach. Worship as programming requires a highly-talented staff and a great deal of preparation to do this kind of service consistently and effectively. It requires more people to be effective (some who will be involved in crowd management and/or relationship-building activities

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that build off the event). This approach may keep children from learning how to be participants in worship and generate a demand to “top last week.” It may focus more on methods than the message of the gospel. This approach may not give children enough help in making connections from the program to their lives. If we choose a spectator form of worship, it is wise to counter the limitations with other programs or activities that are “fun” but also help children become actively involved in discipleship.

The Participation Focus

Like the mini-church approach, the long-term goal of participation worship focuses on building a bridge for children to be incorporated into the main body of the congregation. Many of the elements of this worship experience remain the same as the adult service: music, prayer, offerings, biblical focus, and response. However, there is a strong focus on the age-appropriateness of each element. Music allows for a great deal of movement. Prayer activities are planned. Offerings often involve more than money. Bible teaching is presented not through sermon, but through interactive methods. Responses are not just altar calls (though age-appropriate altar calls may certainly be offered). Instead of having a sequence to these elements, they may be interwoven throughout the worship time to help keep children's attention.

The approach that you follow for children's worship may be a variation of several of the descriptions above. We must keep in mind the key elements that need to be incorporated into worship. In addition, other basic strategies may be employed as long as worship remains the central focus.

WORSHIP LEADERSHIP INCLUDING MUSIC AND OTHER ELEMENTS



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Music in Worship

Music is an art form that binds families, groups, and cultures together. It is an important part of our lives. A list of ways music enhances the worship setting include the following:

- Music is a wonderful teaching tool. Children quickly learn Bible verses and Bible truths set to music.
- Music is also effective for setting the pace for a gathering. Music can create mood and a climate. Soft music quiets a group. Peppy music creates attention and enthusiasm.
- Music can “speak for us” when children have become accustomed to ordering themselves by a particular tune used for a particular purpose. Designate a song to represent the different segments of your service: a gathering song, a clean-up song, a goodbye song.
- Music is a gift that children give to adults. Through their active participation in programs and special events, children come to understand what it means to lead in a service. They learn to see themselves as valuable contributors to the Body of Christ.
- Music conveys our doctrines from generation to generation. Great truths are contained in hymns and spiritual songs. Learning these shared songs helps children begin to understand theological principles.
- Music can erase the generation gap when used appropriately. Music should never be a weapon used to force a particular kind of experience. However, it records the experiences we share in Christ and helps to communicate our common history. Our songs tell the story we share, and they tell how God is at work from generation to generation. The message stays the same as we rearrange it, stylize it, modernize it, and make it “our own.”
- Music moves us. It expresses our deepest feelings in a way that words alone cannot do.
- Music provides for active participation, even when we are just listening. As we tap our feet, clap our hands, bob our heads, or hum under our breath, we are demonstrating that we are “with” the one who is providing the music.

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- Music is often closely associated with prayer. It is a way of expressing ourselves to God as well as to each other.
- Music allows us to express our unity in a way that few other activities do. When we sing or play together, we can't take off on our own. What makes music successful is the art of merging ourselves in unison or harmony—listening and responding to each other's voices or instruments.

In many ways, music serves as a magical gift of God. However, using music in worship represents an art and a skill that should be applied purposefully toward the goal of helping children direct their full attention to the majesty of God and the wonder of what God accomplishes in human lives.

Like everything else in worship, music should be used in developmentally-appropriate ways. It should help children experience God. Children always have a higher level of listening capacity than they have production capacity. We should never be afraid to expose young children to complicated music. In fact, as we expose them to complex harmonies, we help to develop their ear for appreciation of music and recognition of sound patterns. They can make use of these throughout their lives as they combine those sounds in whatever musical styles their generation comes to value.

When singing with young children, however, the rules change. We should use simple melodies with a narrow range of tones. Think of the simple nursery rhyme tunes. They use only a few notes and a lot of repetition. These tunes can be used over and over again with different words. Young children usually sing higher notes more easily than adults do. Young children can express their love for God to many different tunes. Great creativity is not a requirement! Instead, great enthusiasm for the great messages of faith does quite well for our youngest children. Experiment with different volumes, different rhythm instruments to play along, even different accents, styles, and time signatures. The main thing to remember with the youngest children is to keep it simple.

Physically, keep the youngest children moving. They love motions, signs, and large motor actions such as stomping, arm waving, or marching. Leaders don't have to be choreographers to accomplish their goals. If we can point to ourselves, point up for God, and cross our arms to represent love, we've covered 50% of the motions we'll ever need!

In the early elementary years, children tend to value motions they have created. As children progress into the later elementary years, they develop preferences for their physical expression. Some are comfortable with motions, and others consider such actions childish. Allow them the freedom to make choices about motions and whether to participate. Older elementary children may resist but


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not out of rebellion. Often, these children are just reacting to the changes in their bodies that make them uncomfortable, ranging from voice changes to rapid growth. Another way to keep older children physically engaged with music is to add performance props and more mature choreography. Instead of singing, some might prefer instruments.

Accomplishing Worship Goals in Leading Music

Leaders may choose to take specific actions, including leadership in music, to accomplish worship goals. First, the worship leader selects the songs to facilitate worship. The real purpose of worship songs is to tell God how much He means to us and tell each other what we think of God. We do this through:

- Action songs—high energy.
- Adoration songs—low energy but high intensity.
- Adult worship songs—teaching children the music of their larger faith community.
- Psalms—Scripture songs.
- Hymns—music that conveys important truth.
- Spiritual songs—usually original or contemporary songs.

Most of the time, the progression of the musical sequence begins with high action songs, moving to praise songs that are upbeat and fun, then to worshipful songs about God, and finally to adoration songs that are sung to God in an attitude of prayer. Leaders should be attentive to the progression of music and the content. Music should lead children toward the theme and content of the worship message.

Second, the worship leader models worship. This helps children move together in the same direction. We cannot lead children where we are not willing to go. Our enthusiasm inspires them. Directing our attention to God directs their attention to God. Our thoughtful reflective worship models our expectations for children. It is almost impossible to worship and discipline at the same time. The worship leader needs adult helpers, so he or she can maintain, with the children, a focus on God.

Third, the worship leader should help children understand the meaning behind the music. Music often uses vocabulary and imagery that are unfamiliar to children, but not beyond their understanding. Explain words and concepts to the children. Help children realize worship means drawing attention to God rather than to them.


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Finally the worship leader sets the environment and tone for experiencing God. The leader does not CREATE an experience with God. The worship leader helps children put themselves in the place where they can recognize God's presence, and the Holy Spirit does the rest.

Children are not too young to experience God. However, they may not have the prior experience to be able to identify God's presence. The worship leader helps children recognize how and where God is working and gives them an opportunity to acknowledge God's presence. It goes without saying that the worship leader must be able to recognize God at work.

Practical Guidelines

Children need both predictability and surprise. Keep the routine and your interaction style fairly regular, but make the content surprising. Be creative. Use games, unusual instruments, shared microphone time, occasional audience help or solo work from children, lots of visuals (not just words, but pictures that reinforce the song's message), and video backgrounds where appropriate.

Be clear. Give clear directions, loud enough to be heard. When projecting words, make them large enough to read. Have few enough words to a page that kids don't get lost trying to read them. Don't get carried away with fancy lettering.

Be sensitive. There should be less and less direction as the worship moves along. One leader summarized this idea: "Become invisible as God becomes visible." Encourage children to close their eyes and visualize God seated on His throne. Teach the value of prayer postures, such as folding the hands, bowing the head, turning palms up, and other quiet, calming positions. Stay aware of the time and children's attention spans. Leave them at an appropriate energy level for whatever worship activity is to come.

Integrate brief prayers with singing. Encourage silence (with guidelines of what to think about), sharing of testimony with a partner or to the whole group, and listening to music, as well as singing. Continually narrow the children's focus. By the end of music time, they should be focused on God. On the practical side, obtain appropriate permission and give credit for any music and lyrics you use that are not public domain. You are also modeling respect for copyright laws and practices.

Other Elements for Worship Including Our Message

Scripture should always form the basis for our content in worship, but we may also use themes and concepts during the message. There are many different ways to deliver a children's sermon. Listed below are some of the most common, along with common benefits and potential pitfalls of each.

 **NOTES***Puppets*

Hundreds of years ago, the first use of puppets in the church was not with children but with adults. These puppets, called “marionettes” (translated Little Marys) were used to tell stories to the illiterate masses in a way that would hold their attention. The use of marionettes in the church today is limited, but many different kinds of puppets are available for use with children. Some more elaborate set-ups require staging and two people per puppet—one to run the mouth and the other to operate hands and arms. Many prerecorded scripts are available to minimize the time necessary to create a well-timed, well-executed puppet performance. There's nothing worse than a puppet whose mouth doesn't move in time with the words! A tape allows the puppeteer to focus on the craft rather than the script.

A stage is not necessary for all puppets. There are hand puppets, ventriloquists' “dummies,” finger puppets, and puppets using all kinds of inanimate objects given human characteristics. These puppets can be used effectively in acting out real-life scenarios that illustrate Bible truths.

Young children often communicate with puppets spontaneously. For this reason, a theme is more important than a script. A puppet can be a great tool for continuity when the adults in charge vary from week to week. Good puppetry uses lots of voice characterization, humor, and mystery. Puppets should not be seen in public in their floppy state. Puppets should maintain their characters as they move from place to place. They should not be left where kids can become too familiar with them. It should be a privilege to touch the puppet, and the puppets should be treated with respect by children. Puppets are most effective when they keep their “personalities” intact. The same puppet should not be a hero one week and a villain the next (unless, of course, a different costume is assumed). Finger puppets, spoon puppets, and paper puppets mounted on Popsicle sticks are tools for children. These puppets give children a way to retell a story or interact with the storyteller as the drama unfolds. These are their puppets to use as they want to use them. Even young children can stage interactions between characters. You can draw faces on their little fingertips and encourage the young children to use their fingers as different characters.

Gospel Illusion

Gospel illusion serves as another worship tool in certain settings. Workers can take time to learn some simple sleight-of-hand movements or purchase a few good tricks. Remember, these tools must be used as illustrations of truths developmentally appropriate for the children being taught. No matter how interesting an illusion might be, the overall message behind the skill must prove meaningful in helping the child understand the educational goal.

 **NOTES***Clowning and Juggling*

Clowns often do balloon shaping, comedy acts, face painting, storytelling, pantomime, and other performance skills that most kids love. Clowns can interact with each other, interact with a regular partner, or never say a word! Clowns can get away with saying some of the things kids may be actually thinking, and then the misconception can be clarified by a designated wise advisor.

Drama

Like puppets, dramas are another unique way of telling stories, presenting concepts and influencing responses. Also, like puppets, drama sketches and extended dramatic presentations serve as a great way to draw children into a story. We can use drama effectively with children of all ages if we select the format carefully. In preschool, any acting out of drama scenes by this age must be very simple. There should be no speaking parts unless it is one word to be repeated over and over. Don't use complex motions. An example of how children of this age can participate would be the waving of palm branches during the story of the Triumphal Entry. Children can also pretend to be fishermen throwing nets out to catch fish. Any behavior that can be acted out is appropriate as long as it is clearly explained. If teachers would like to include preschoolers in play or drama that is being performed by older children, preschoolers can play the still parts, like the animals at the manger in the Christmas story.

For kindergarten to middle elementary children, acting out Bible stories serves as a wonderful project. We can also enhance the drama by adding simple props. For example, use a crown for the king or queen or a staff for a shepherd. It doesn't take too many props to make drama fun and add some visuals for the audience. Teachers can assign roles to students and briefly explain what their part is. Allow the children to use their creativity to act out the story. Even the children who are not acting love to see their peers using the props. Another fun way to use drama with this age group is to have a child interview a Bible character. You can help with the questions, but let the child be the news reporter. Teachers will have to work a little overtime in the beginning to assist children in not being intimidated and learning how to ad-lib.

Older elementary children can use all the different types of drama—full-scale plays and musicals, small plays, skits, and reader's theater. The older children seem to enjoy the reader's theater. The teacher provides a script ahead of time with a narrator and actors. The actors stand with their backs to the audience until they are brought into the story by the narrator. As the actors begin their reading part, they turn toward the audience. If they are no longer a part of the story, they

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again turn away from the audience. This way the story is shared and children can participate, but they only have to speak to act. They act by speaking faster, slower, louder, or softer.

Drama can also be used by adults who perform for children. Leaders can use monologues, dramatic dialogs, interpretive reading, role-playing, improvisation (if quick thinkers), as well as more formal skits and plays.

Object Lessons

Object lessons take items or objects that are familiar to children and use them to teach a truth or lesson. The best object lessons make a clear connection and involve the children in the process of discovering the connection on their own through effective questioning. Jesus used the strategy of object lessons. He used items that were common to the people He was teaching. One of the greatest mistakes in using object lessons is trying to introduce two new ideas at the same time. This may provide for an interesting lesson, but it defeats the purpose of using something known to teach an unknown (or only slightly understood). Because young children are very concrete, they are unlikely to have the cognitive skills to make the appropriate connections.

As noted, in certain parts of the world, children remain in worship with adults. In those settings, children's leaders often have a responsibility of providing resources or suggestions that help them worship alongside adults. Leaders may serve as an advocate for children, suggesting songs children relate with and activities that are child-friendly, and providing opportunities for service that aid the congregation in understanding how children assist adults in worship. In other settings, leaders may find themselves in congregations that separate children from the rest of the worshiping congregation either because congregants and leaders feel the children will receive more attention; or—unfortunately—because adults feel the need for a break to focus on their own worship participation. While leaders may feel strongly that adults should not segregate children for their own personal benefit, they must remember that children need worship that allows them to truly focus on God through the various movements that both define worship and empower children according to their developmental needs.

APPLICATION

**NOTES**

1. Talk with adults who lead worship with children to see what their definition of worship might be, and how they incorporate children into that definition.
2. Visit at least two different versions of children's worship. If possible, select one service where children worship with adults and one child-centered worship service. How are children included in each service? Where do children worship God?
3. Create at least one full-length worship service using the basic elements of worship listed early in the lesson. Attempt to use some of the variety of methods mentioned later in the lesson, and then judge whether the worship service might be used in one or more types of worship focus.

EXAM



NOTES

1. Worship and education are really the same thing.
 - A. True
 - B. False
2. The elements of worship include:
 - A. Petitions and intercessions to God through prayer.
 - B. Sending.
 - C. Responding.
 - D. A and C.
 - E. All of the above.
3. Children should experience worship in exactly the same structure and the same level as adults.
 - A. True
 - B. False
4. Educational space can be easily adapted to worship settings.
 - A. True
 - B. False
5. Children's leaders may find themselves:
 - A. Advocating for children's roles and participation in adult worship.
 - B. Providing resources to distract and occupy children in worship.
 - C. Consistently opposing the creation of child-oriented worship since it is not appropriate.
 - D. A and C.
 - E. All of the above.
6. Children's leaders may employ several approaches or models to lead children into worship.
 - A. True
 - B. False
7. Which of the following requires a highly-talented staff to work?
 - A. Participation focus.
 - B. Spectator focus.
 - C. Extended service.
 - D. Mini-Church.
 - E. Split service.

**NOTES**

8. Music often requires _____ for children's worship.
- A. Simplicity.
 - B. Great creativity.
 - C. Movement.
 - D. A and C.
 - E. All of the above.
9. Illusion (magic tricks) should never be used in worship.
- A. True
 - B. False

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR MENTOR AND PARTICIPANT



NOTES

Be prepared to discuss the following with your mentor.

1. How can we design worship to maximize children's experience during an intergenerational, all-church worship service?
2. Are there elements to worship missing in children's worship (either with or without adults)? Why?
3. Which of the approaches to designing and leading worship seem best suited for our church? Would there be a second option?
4. Reviewing the different elements for worship at the end of the lesson, which ones would best serve children's worship in our setting?

Review your answers with your mentor, then respond to the following:

How many responses focus on supporting children (particularly in areas where they are not yet fully self-reliant), and how many answers focus on empowering children?

Which of these answers support the goal of living Christlike relationships? Why?

What do we need to add to our list to make our approach more comprehensive, more faithful? Which do we need to incorporate into the role of the children's leader as one who both supports and empowers Christlike relationships with children?