

3.4 What are the four essential parts of a Bible lesson?

Every Bible lesson should be taught in four main parts (I am discussing the Bible lesson, not the whole Sunday school program). The lesson aim is not included as one of these parts, although it is essential to the lesson, because the lesson aim is the main point of the teaching that will guide and fill every part of the lesson. The lesson aim is like the base or foundation on which the four parts of the Bible lesson will be built or based.

These four essential parts to the Bible lesson are:

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Bible Story or Bible Teaching, sometimes called Lesson Development**
- 3. Practical Application for the saved child**
- 4. Invitation calling the unsaved child to Christ**

The Introduction is simply an effective way to begin, a way of gaining the attention of the children and drawing their thoughts and interest toward the lesson so that they will listen more attentively to the Bible teaching.

The Bible Story or Bible Teaching is the Bible story that serves as a lesson for the day, or an explanation of some principle or teaching from the Bible. It is comparable to what public school teachers often call the Lesson Development, that is, the logical or chronological development of the main ideas of the lesson. It need not, indeed it should not consist of only lecture. The Bible Story can utilize many different teaching methods and should include various learning activities related to the lesson.

The Practical Application is the suggestion or assignment of one or more specific, practical activities the Christian child can do during the coming week to begin to put into practice the teaching of the Bible lesson. It should be followed up in some way the next week.

The Invitation is a way to draw the unsaved child into awareness of his need for salvation and give him an opportunity to receive help in receiving Christ as Savior. In the invitation, the teacher tells the unsaved child where he can go or what he can do to receive help.

In what order should these parts of the lesson be taught?

In what order should the teacher present these four lesson parts? Must they be in the order we have given here? No! It does seem logical, however, that the Introduction would ordinarily be the first part of the lesson, because it is what we hope will draw interest into the remainder of the lesson. It also seems logical that at least part of the Bible story come next, since the Application for the saved child will be based on it. The last two parts—the Application and the Invitation could be reversed. On occasion, we could even have the application or invitation break into the Bible story at some key point, and then go on and finish the Bible lesson. However, many teachers find that the order given above is a good one for many lessons.

3.4 What are the four essential parts of a Bible lesson?

Examples of possible changes in order:

**PLAN FOR LESSON A
C**

1. Introduction
2. Bible Lesson
3. Application
lesson
4. Invitation

PLAN FOR LESSON B

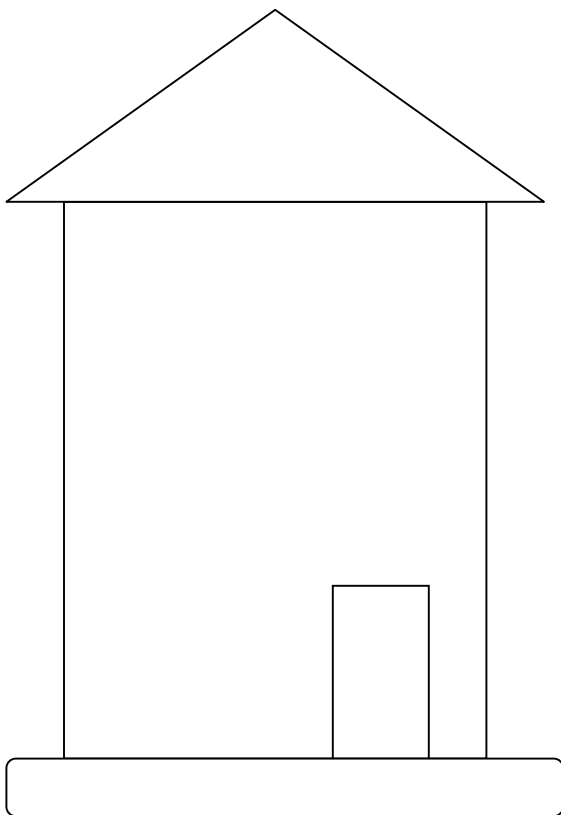
1. Introduction
2. Bible Lesson
3. Invitation
4. Application

PLAN FOR LESSON C

1. Introduction
2. First Part of Bible Lesson
3. Application at a key point in the
lesson
4. Second Part of Bible Lesson
5. Invitation

Any one of these plans could be effective, depending on the lesson being taught.

We can compare these parts of the lesson to a house. The foundation of the house must be strong. We compare the foundation to the lesson aim. The lesson can hardly be effective unless the teacher has a clear and well-chosen lesson aim in mind. The teacher will not tell the children, “The lesson aim for today is....”thus and so. However, the lesson aim will be evident to them through the teaching that is given. The foundation is underneath the ground. It is not seen, but it is important to holding up the house. The lesson aim is not stated to the children in so many words, but it is important to holding the whole lesson together.



The introduction may be compared to the door or entry to the house. As a door is a way of getting into the house, an introduction is a way of getting into the lesson.

The Bible story or lesson may be compared to the walls of a house. As the walls form the main substance of the house, so the Bible story is the main substance of the lesson.

The Application and the Invitation are like the roof of the house. Even though a house may have beautiful walls, if it had no roof, rain could come pouring in. Even so, even though the Bible story may be excellent, if the teacher gives no application or invitation, it will be difficult for the children to utilize the principles of the lesson as fully as they might have.

Many roofs are made in two parts so that rain runs off them to the right and to the left. Both parts are important. The lesson also needs two parts to conclude it adequately. It needs to offer guidance to both the saved and the unsaved child. When both an application and an invitation are offered, the lesson has the potential to touch the life of every child, whether saved or unsaved.

LET’S REVIEW

- Can you name the four parts of every lesson? 1. _____
 2. _____ 3. _____
 4. _____

Now try explaining to someone what the purpose of each part is.

