

DANGEROUS CAMPING



Leading a Pod Bible Time

Pod Bible time is 20 minutes together at the start of the day, just as breakfast is coming to an end. You can make this time your own, but here are a few practical tips to get you started.



GETTING STARTED

- Be confident. Expect the best. Smile. Be upbeat. Don't apologise. Act like this is what you do every morning! What could be more normal than opening up the Bible to start the day?
- Enjoy the experience. Keep it light and relaxed.
- Get dads to sit with their children, ready to talk in family groups when prompted.
- If your pod is large, or consists of distinct groups from different churches, consider splitting them into subgroups. If other potential leaders are nervous, they could watch you leading the first Bible time and then lead their subgroup alone on the second day.



LEADING THE DISCUSSION

- Keep the pace quick. If a question isn't working, move onto the next question. If it feels like everyone's interest is waning, stop there and pray. You've got about 10–15 minutes before you'll lose their attention.

- Ask every question to a person by name. If you ask a question to the group as a whole, you will either get awkward silences or the most confident children will answer all the questions.
- Ask every question to multiple people. You're looking for a buzz of many people talking, one after the other. Children don't generally listen to each other, so they don't worry that three children give identical right answers! If a child gets a question wrong, just ask the same question to three other children.
- If a question asks for a personal response or an opinion (eg "What was the best part of the story?" or "What do you find difficult?"), then say to the group, "Each of you think of an answer, and put up your thumb when you've got your answer!" Keep asking the question (or a variation of it) until they all put up their thumb. If one or two children are really stuck, tell them to listen to the other answers and then pick their favourite.
- For the one or two questions that require more thought, get everyone to gather in their family groups to chat through the answer before feeding back to the whole pod. We want to encourage dads that they can have spiritual conversations with their children.
- Involve the shy people early. Get them answering questions you know that they can answer. Ensure that every child speaks at some point.
- Involve the dads. Children are amazed to hear their dads answering questions, asking questions and praying. Brief a couple of the dads beforehand if you need to, in order to get them engaged, onside and involved.
- For every good answer, for every answer given by a nervous child, for every moment the fidgety child sits still, for every encouraging comment, for every act of kindness and for every moment of joy, tell the child what they have done right.
- If a child is not paying attention, firstly ask them a question to involve them in the group – they might be bored. If their behaviour still falls below the standard you expect, tell them and warn them of the consequence if the behaviour continues.



PRAYING AT THE END

- Ask a few questions to help everyone work out what to pray. Tell them to put up a thumb when they've got their prayer ready. Explain that they don't all have to pray their prayer out loud, but it would be great if they had something to say to God, even if they pray silently in their heads.
- When everyone has got a thumb up, then it's time for "popcorn prayers": short prayers (one sentence max), like corn popping. There's no set order – anyone can pray as long as no one else is speaking.
- If anyone wants to pray more than one prayer, they can – they just need to let someone else pray in between.