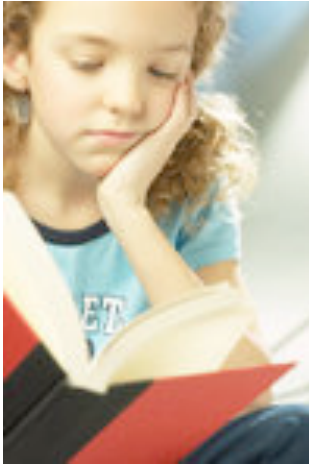


Teaching Kids to Be Thinkers

Psalm 119:59 - When I think on my ways, I turn my feet to Your testimonies.



PURPOSE: Two requisites to thinking biblically:

- 1). Knowing how to think.
- 2). Knowing the Bible.

Our goal is to teach kids to think for themselves, but adults don't think for themselves, even Christian adults.

Why do we need to teach kids to think?

Obstacles to Thinking Kids

As adults, we often set up obstacles to our kids' thinking process.

1. **Adults/teachers have lack of consistency in their teaching.**
 - a. Lack of chronological order in our lessons
 - b. Lack of commitment on part of teachers
2. **Adults have lack of focus.**
 - a. Lack of effort in what we teach (follow the curriculum plan, but don't think about it)
 - b. Lack of meaningful activities
 - c. Lack of purpose in our lessons
3. **Adults aren't challenged, so why do we expect the kids to be challenged?**
4. **Kids assume that popularity establishes truth.**
 - a. Not understanding that if everyone agreed about something, there wouldn't be an argument. (We don't argue about the sky being blue or whether or not it is raining.)
 - b. Not being courageous enough to go against "everyone else" because they want to fit in.
 - c. Not understanding that lack of proof doesn't make something wrong.
5. **Kids look to the wrong authority.**



(Just because someone is a teacher - or even a pastor, doesn't make them be an authority.) At the same time, we *do* need to teach kids to respect authority.

Additional obstacles

Ways We Can Develop Their Thinking

During Christ's ministry on earth, He often began His teaching by encouraging His listeners to think.

Let's just take a few verses from Matthew.

From Matthew 17:25: What do you think, Simon?

From Matthew 18:12: What do you think? (Start of the parable of the lost sheep.)

From Matthew 21:28: What do you think? (Start of the parable of the prodigal son.)

From Matthew 26:53: Do you think I cannot call on My Father? (Jesus to Judas)

1. **Teach them that they have a foundation** - 1 Corinthians 3:11 - *For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*
2. **Ask questions** -
3. **Listen to their answers - don't just listen for the "right" answer,** but listen to the wrong answers. *Why* are they thinking what they're thinking?
4. **Challenge them to figure out what's right and wrong.**
5. **Be an example**
6. **Choose your issues.**
7. **Get them to respond so you know what they're thinking**

Some points to remember -

1. **Create opportunities to learn what they're thinking.** (Biggest question survey)
2. **Don't label.** Don't assume that a child without parental guidance can't learn.
3. **Creative teachers inspire learning.**



Philippians 4:8-9 - *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me – practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.*

Linda Weddle
Senior Instructional Designer
Awana Leadership Development Team
LindaW@awana.org
Twitter ppw940