

**LESSON AIM:** Your primary goal on the first day is to clearly communicate to your students what **RT** is all about (*knowing God, Understanding His Word, the Bible*) **and** establishing the rules that will enable the class to be fun and exciting.

**KEY SCRIPTURE:** **Psalm 119:105 and Ephesians 4:32** (*write them on the whiteboard if you have one*).

**INTRODUCTION:** This is it, your first day of **Released Time!** Make sure you have your registration cards, name tags (if you plan to use them) and a roll sheet. After you have gathered your students and taken roll, explain how you are getting to the teaching site (*walking, riding the bus, or car, etc.*), and a few rules concerning the trip over. (Tips to cover: use bathrooms at school, water at school, rainy day - we will notify the school if we will be having class, need written permission if you would prefer walking home from facility.)

**LESSON:** During the first class you want to accomplish the following:

**1) Bring the class to order.**

- Be sure and introduce yourself and any helpers with you if you haven't already done so at the school.
- Ask them some questions about themselves to get to know them. You can also ask if any of them go to church, have a Bible, or if their family has a Bible in the home.
- You can explain that this class is like going to church and we are going to begin each class with prayer. You can also get an idea of the students' background if you ask them what they know about God, or what do they think God is like, etc.

**2) Opening prayer.**

- Briefly explain that prayer is talking with God and that we will talk to God during every class.
- When we are talking with God there should be no disruptions of any kind. (Don't proceed until every head is bowed and eye closed and it is quiet to establish the environment for prayer).

**3) Share one praise song and show them a few simple motions. (*Optional, but recommended!*)**

- Give a small introduction about what the song is about and why we sing. (Some we sing to focus our attention on Jesus, to worship Him, or some of the songs go with the memory verse, etc).

**4) Show the students the Bible they will be using.**

- Explain that it looks big and confusing, but by the end of the year they will be very skillful in using the Bible!
- Briefly show them the Table of Contents and explain the 2 sections (Old and New Testament)
- Turn to **Psalm 119:105** and read it to them (or read all together). (*If it written on the board have them read it with you.*) Ask them what they think it means, discuss.
- If time allows, show them more verses in Psalms about them: Psalm 139:1-3, about being safe: Psalm 91:1-2 and of course the middle verse of the Bible Psalm 118:8.
- Share some facts about the Bible:
  - The Bible was written so that we might know Him; to protect us from sin; to correct us and instruct us to do things right; how the world began; how we got here; how we can know God and the only way to get to heaven.
  - The Bible is the most accurate book written: proven Historically, Scientifically,

Prophetically, and Archaeologically.

- The Bible contains hundreds of promises to each one of us from the Lord who loves us and cannot lie.
- The Bible declares that God always loved us and wants to be our Father.

**5) Show students awards for memorizing scripture verses:**

- Awards\* for each five verses:
  - 1-5 verses = Flashlight key chain
  - 1-11 verses = Ten Commandment Pen
  - 1-15 verses = CD of RT songs
  - 1-20 verses = Medallion
  - 25 verses = A Trophy!

*\*(Awards vary from year to year and you can establish your own for each verse if desired. Students LOVE rewards and will usually work harder if they know there is something for them!)*

**6) Explain classroom rules and rules for the walk from the school to the teaching site.**

- Read **Ephesians 4:32**. Spend about five minutes teaching the verse to your students.
- Establish five solid rules. You may get suggestions from the students so they have ownership in the class and keeping each other accountable, and then narrow it down to what is most appropriate for your class.
- We encourage you to include the following:
  - 1) Be prompt and use the restrooms and water fountains at school before class!
  - 2) No running or pushing - never run ahead of the teacher.
  - 3) Quiet / inside voices - no yelling or blurting out.
  - 4) Raise your hand when wanting to ask, answer, or share something.
  - 5) Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other. (*Ephesians 4:32!*)

*\*Remind the students that even though they are not in their usual classroom, they are still “in school” and the rules they follow at school still apply here in Released Time.*

**7) Hand out book mark, go over memory verse and explain this is their “homework”.**

- You can be creative with teaching the memory verse! Make up a song, write it on the white board and erase a few words each time you say it as a group, or break up the verse and have them repeat after you:

“Be kind (*be kind*) and compassionate (*and compassionate*) to one another (*to one another*)  
Forgiving each other (*forgiving each other*) just as in Christ (*just as in Christ*) God forgave you  
(*God forgave you*) Ephesians 4:32 (*Ephesians 4:32*).

- Repeat it a number of times until they can say it and encourage them to practice during the week so they don’t forget it!

**8) Close in prayer.**

- Have them pick up their belongings and straighten up the room just as it was when they got there before they leave.
- Remind the kids how excited you are to have them in class and to practice their verse!

**MEMORY VERSE: (every year) Ephesians 4:32**

*“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”*