



Sunday School Curriculum Guide

Choosing a Sunday School curriculum can be tricky business. With so many choices, all offering something slightly different, it can be hard to figure out what's right for your context. This brief guide has been put together with the hope that it will make the process a little bit easier.

What you'll find here is a one page chart with some of the basic information about various programs. This will, at a quick glance, help you determine which programs might work for your Sunday School, but won't give you specific information. There's more information about all of the listed resources on the following pages, but you can use this first chart to narrow down your options so that the expanded chart doesn't feel so overwhelming.

Before you dive in, here are some things to think about:

1. What is your vision for your Sunday School?
 - Start by thinking and praying about what your Sunday School is called to be. Then think about how you can make that happen. This is about the approach that you will take, rather than the specific program you will use. Once you have a vision for what Sunday School will be, not only will that inform the type of curriculum that you choose, it will also be easier to call people to join you. People will feel more invested in helping to realize a vision than in teaching a class for 6 to 8 year olds, even if the work looks exactly the same.

2. How many students do you expect to attend and what is the age distribution?
 1. This will help you determine what kind of program might work for you. Some curriculums are designed for one specific age range, some are designed for all ages to be together, and some have different classes for different ages. Also, take time to think about the students you will have and what might engage them specifically.
3. What resources do you have?
 1. Sunday School teachers?
 - There are (at least) three important reasons to think about this one. The first is how many teachers you have will determine how many classes you can have at the same time. The second is that all of the teachers have different gifts and skills to offer, and it's helpful if the curriculum you use utilizes those, rather than relying heavily on things that will be challenging for them. A little bit of challenge can be good, but too much can easily lead to burned-out teachers. The third thing is how much time the teachers have. If they don't have much time outside of Sunday morning, then it's important for the curriculum to be something that they can jump right into without much preparation. If they have time to offer, then that is less important.
 2. Budget?
 - This will be a huge factor in what curriculum will work for your Sunday School. There is a huge range in cost of curriculums and required materials, and there is something that will work with every budget (or no budget), but it's important to know going in what you have to work with before getting excited about a curriculum only to realize it's not feasible.
 3. Space?
 - There are lots of ways to be creative with whatever space you have, but it will help to have a sense of your space ahead of time. Will you be able to leave things up from week to week? Are there rooms for different age groups to break off? Does the space meet SafeR Church requirements?
 4. How will Sunday School fit into the larger community of your church?
 - Having connections between the Sunday School and the rest of the church can be mutually beneficial, especially if it is done intentionally. Think about when Sunday School will happen. Before or after church, at the same time but separately, or at the same time with the Sunday School present for some parts of the service are all possibilities, and will impact those connections. Make sure to take your vision into consideration with this decision.

Curriculum	Age Range	Lectionary Based?	One Classroom for All Ages?	Multiple Classes Based on Age?	Online?	Print?	Dated?	Free?
252	5-10							
Best of the Whole People of God	All ages							
Bible-in-Life: The Anglican Edition	4-18							
Children of the Dancing Sun	All ages							
Compendium of the Church Mice	4-12							
Connect	10-12							
Dwell	5-14							
Echo the Story	12+							
Episcopal Church Curriculum	3-12							
Feast on the Word	5-13							
First Look	0-5							
Holy Moly	5-10							
re:form	10-13							
Roots on the Web	All ages							
Ryan the Rhino	5-12							
Scripture Press	2-18							
Seasons of the Spirit	All ages							
Spark	2-6							
Super Friends	5-10							
Virtual Church School	All ages							
Whirl	4-12							
XP3 High School	14-18							
XP3 Middle School	11-13							

	Yes

Curriculum	Publisher/Website	The Basics	How it Works	Ages	Cost
252 http://thinkorange.com/252basics	The rethink Group	Part of the Orange Strategy (based on church and home in cooperation for faith formation). Based on three basic truths: I need to make the wise choice, I can trust God no matter what, and I should treat others the way I want to be treated. Focuses on key Bible stories to teach faith skills and talk about life applications.	Has small and large group components, devotions, discussions, games, and crafts. Includes resources for parents and for families to connect to each other. All online, with tons of leader content and supporting materials.	5-10	Based on weekly attendance. \$610-2440 yearly
Best of the Whole People of God http://www.wholepeopleofgod.com/	Wood Lake Publishing	Lectionary-based. Links worship and education, allowing children and adults to experience the same story in a way that works for them.	Simple, easy to use online curriculum. Includes weekly age-level (nursery, beginner, primary, junior, youth) lessons and worship resources for leaders.	All ages	Based on average Sunday attendance Annual license: \$142-1416
Bible-in-Life: The Anglican Edition http://www.davidccook.com/curriculum/episcopal/	David C. Cook	Focus on having a personal relationship with Christ and a desire to witness, minister, and serve. Designed to help impart key Anglican themes and heritage to toddlers through high school.	7 age groups (18-36 months, 3-5, primary-gr. 1, gr. 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-12), with 2-3 year cycles for each group.	4-18	Teacher: \$29 Learner: varies by age \$5-15
Children of the Dancing Sun	United Church of Canada	Designed to support cross-cultural understanding between settlers and First Nations. Connects biblical stories with traditional First Nations cultural understanding.	Weekly pattern of gathering, storytelling, connecting stories, and celebrating and living out the story. Program includes resources from worship before Sunday School leaves. Can be broken into age groups or done as one class.	All ages	Ranges from \$15-25 for story cards and lessons

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Compendium of the Church Mice http://ww2.anglican.ca/churchmice/	Anglican Church of Canada	Designed to help students practice being integrated into a church service. Based on the Five Marks of Mission.	Each week has a welcome, bible reading, time for contemplation, sharing thoughts, an activity, and then a closing. Works with multiple age groups together. All online.	4-12	FREE
Connect http://wearesparkhouse.org/kids/connect/	Sparkhouse (Augsburg Fortress)	Connects themes from the Bible to their lives through project style activities and discussion. (See, Explore, Make)	Starts with a video to introduce the theme, then exploring the Bible, then making something. Lessons are available in print as a set or by subscription online. There are 10 units, with 6 lessons each.	10-12	Per unit Leader: \$14 Learner: \$7 DVD \$28 Bible: \$28
Dwell http://dwell.faithaliveresources.org/home	Reformed Presbyterian Faith Alive	Connecting everyday experiences to God's story. Frames all biblical stories as one big story and encourages living into and out of that story.	Different age groups (primary-gr.1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8) with materials designed to engage multiple intelligences. Includes lots of extra materials to make it easy to tailor sessions to your group. 2 years of material, with lots of online leader support.	5-14	Per 6 week unit: Leaders: \$8 Learners: \$6 Story Cards: \$13
Echo the Story http://wearesparkhouse.org/teens/echothestory/	Sparkhouse (Augsburg Fortress)	Uses storytelling, creative reflection, and discussion. The program is set up so that it doesn't rely on students having church experience, but invites those who so to explore the stories that they already know in a different way. The goal is to connect their story to God's story, and to the people in God's story.	Starts with a video, then a story, followed by creative reflection and discussion. Print resources in 2 sets, one with 12 lessons, one with 36.	12+	Echo 12 Leader: 21 Learner: \$10 DVD: \$32 Echo 36 Leader: \$35 Learner: \$14 DVD: \$56

Curriculum	Publisher/Website	The Basics	How it Works	Ages	Cost
Episcopal Church Curriculum http://www.vts.edu/cmt/published/ecc	Virginia Theological Seminary	Biblically based and liturgically oriented, with a focus on faith and practice. Uses components of the Book of Common Prayer.	3 age groups (4-gr. Primary, gr.1-3, gr.4-6) and 3 years of material for each. Each year has 4 units: Oold Testament, New Testament, Sacraments, the Church. All resources are downloadable and include comprehensive lesson plans with teacher background, prayers, story, and activities.	3-12	FREE
Feast on the Word http://www.feastingontheword.net/Curriculum	Westminster John Knox Press / Congregational Ministries Publishing	A lectionary based resource with a simple design that can be adapted to various settings and learning styles.	Age group programs or multi-age program available, both with new content each year. Uses readings, discussions, and various activities such as songs, crafts, and skits to explore the readings. Available in print or download.	5-13	Various prices : \$80-900
First Look http://thinkorange.com/firstlook	The rethink Group	Part of the Orange Strategy (based on church and home in cooperation for faith formation).Based on solidifying three truths: God made me, God loves me, and Jesus wants to be my friend forever.	Splits into 3 age groups: babies, 2 year olds, and 3-5. Uses lots of supplies to engage kids in lots of different ways. Lots of bible stories, songs, crafts and games. Good tool for turning the church nursery into a place of faith formation instead of just where kids play. All resources online, including lots of teacher training and resources for parents.	0-5	Based on weekly attendance. \$575-2250 yearly

Curriculum	Publisher/Website	The Basics	How it Works	Ages	Cost
Holy Moly http://wearesparkhouse.org/kids/holymoly/	Sparkhouse (Augsburg Fortress)	"You have to emotionally engage kids before you teach them." Fun videos telling stories from the Bible help students get excited about what they are learning.	2 years, each made up of 5 units. Uses videos (on DVD or download), discussion, storybooks/Bible, and paper-based crafts out of leaflets. Split into two groups: pre-reader and reader. Resources are available in print or download. This curriculum is designed so that teachers don't have to do any prep work. Undated.	5-10	Per unit: DVD \$42 Teacher: \$14 Learner: \$7 Storybook: \$10 Connect Bible: \$ 28
re:form http://wearesparkhouse.org/teens/reform/	Sparkhouse (Augsburg Fortress)	Program based on questions about the Bible, creed, disciples, Jesus and other beliefs. Allows students to engage in the stories of the bible and think about tough questions.	2 series, with 30-40 lessons each. Each session starts with a video, then reflection with resources from the anti-workbook, then discussion. Lessons are available in print or online. Undated.	10-13	Each series: DVD: \$84 Leader Guide: \$56 Anti-Workbook: \$28
Roots on the Web http://www.rootsontheweb.com/	ROOTS for Churches Ltd	Offers ways for students to explore and think about the readings (from the lectionary) and to explore how it relates to their everyday lives. Engaging storytelling, and various activities to explore and respond to the readings.	Offers flexible ideas to suit your group. Materials come via a magazine with online support. There's also an adult and all age subscription with resources for worship.	All ages	2 months: \$28 1 year: \$118
Ryan the Rhino http://www.greenanglicans.org/wpcontent/uploads/2013/08/CARING-FOR-CREATION-RYAN-THE-RHINO.pdf	Anglican Church of South Africa Environmental Network	All about caring for creation. Aimed to build healthy relationships with God, each other, and all creation.	10 sessions for one group together, with story, reflection, activities, prayer, and a challenge. Downloadable pdf.	5-12	FREE

Curriculum	Publisher/Website	The Basics	How it Works	Ages	Cost
Scripture Press http://www.davidccook.com/curriculum/scripturepress/	David C. Cook	Designed to help students understand and grow in knowledge of God's word. With conservative theology, it teaches Bible truths as foundations for character building and life choices.	2 or 3 year cycle with a weekly pattern of focussing (preparing to hear Biblical truth), exploring (reading the Bible), and responding (applying the reading to life). 7 separate age groups for classes. Undated	2-18	Leader: \$27 Learner: \$5-15
Seasons of the Spirit http://www.seasonsonline.ca/412/sunday_school_curriculum/	Wood Lake Publishing	Specifically designed to engage various age-levels as they use their imagination to explore the Bible, trading, science, theology, and the arts. Weekly pattern: focus, prepare, gather, engage, respond, bless, reflect.	Lectionary based curriculum with 5 age groups (3-5, 6-8, 9-11, 12-14, 15-18) or multi-age option. Complete lesson plans are available online or in print, with extensive web support for teachers. Dated.	All ages	\$179 per age level annually \$315 for multi-age
Spark http://wearesparkhouse.org/kids/spark/	Sparkhouse (Augsburg Fortress)	3 different options, 2 year cycle, lectionary-based, or rotation with workshops engaging different gifts. Different activities to reinforce the lesson each week.	Start with large group, all-ages opening, then split off into 5 age groups (2-3, 4-Primary, gr 1-2, gr. 3-4, gr. 5-6). There is a leader's guide as well as a prep video for leaders. Undated.	2-6	Seasonal: Leader: \$11 Prep videos: \$18 Learner: \$8 Bible \$28
Super Friends http://pwrdf.org/resources/educational	PWRDF	4 issues that explore different aspects of the work of PWRDF. Includes different activities and stories.	Could be spread over multiple Sundays or all in one go. Different ideas for how to use them are online.	5-10	FREE
Virtual Church School http://churchschool.info	Diocese of Keewatin	Lectionary based. Designed to be used by remote or small Christian Communities that don't have easy access to Christian education materials. Emphasis on easily accessible resources and hands on projects that can be done with limited resources.	3 years of content available, including different activities to choose from each week, allowing freedom to tailor it to different ages. Downloadable materials.	All ages	FREE

Curriculum	Publisher/Website	The Basics	How it Works	Ages	Cost
Whirl http://wearesparkhouse.org/kids/whirl/	Sparkhouse (Augsburg Fortress)	Lectionary centered curriculum that develops understanding of rhythms of the church year and connect students with the Bible, church life and worship.	Starts with the whole group together for a video, and then splits into age groups (age 4-primary, gr. 1-2, 3-4, 5-6).	4-12	Seasonal: Leader: \$14 DVD: \$28 Learner: \$9 Bible: \$28/35
XP3 High School http://thinkorange.com/xp3hs	The rethink Group	Part of the Orange Strategy (based on church and home in cooperation for faith formation). Designed to help students grow spiritually, connect relationally, serve actively, examine biblically, and decide personally.	Uses games, music, devotions, discussions, and videos to focus on wonder, discovery, and passion. Extensive resources available online, including numerous teacher resources, materials for parents, and content for social media.	14-18	Based on weekly attendance. Introductory partnership (15 weeks): \$250-950 Annual Partnership (51 weeks): \$600-2200
XP3 Middle School http://thinkorange.com/xp3ms	The rethink Group	Part of the Orange Strategy (based on church and home in cooperation for faith formation). Based on teaching three truths: I will love God because He will never stop loving me, I will follow Jesus because He knows me better than I know myself, and I will live out God's story so others can know who Jesus is.	Large and small group discussions, reflections on Bible stories, games, and worship. All materials are online. 3 year cycle, and includes social media materials, parent materials, and ready to send emails.	11-13	Season: \$150-200 Year: \$400 - 600