



## Preparing a Bible Study

Remember what we're trying to do - teaching God's word and modelling Christ's character by the power of the Holy Spirit, enabling young people to put their faith in and obey Jesus Christ, growing towards maturity in Him. So, we're not just doing an English comprehension, nor are we just having a discussion, nor are we just building a community. We are growing our children towards maturity in Christ.

**So, pray!**

Before you start, think about:

- your group
  - their age
  - their maturity
- their abilities
- your time
- your passage

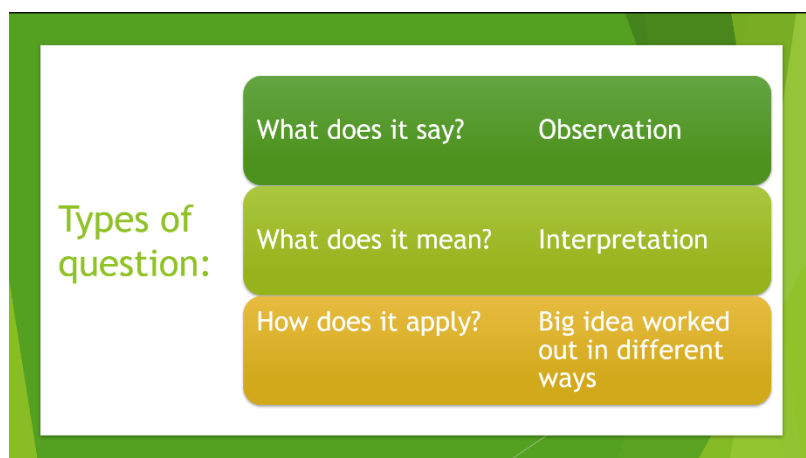
**Write down your big idea** (*check out my book Raising the Bar if you need help*)

Then your study is like a sprint relay - all legs heading towards the finish, not stopping to do the long jump on the way.

### Decide the study sections

You might want to get the group to read the passage in sections to keep them focussed, so try to divide the passages into sections and give a title to each: how do these build together to teach the Big Idea?

### Design group questions



'What do you think...?' might be a helpful interpretation question.

Try to avoid questions that are:



YES/NO



COMPLEX (E.G.  
THREE IN ONE)



ANTICIPATING THE  
ANSWERS

Work out the applications in different ways:

Applications can be:

What to think    What to do

Me as an individual

Our group/church

The world

⊙ ⊙ ⊙ ⊙ ⊙ ⊙ ⊙ ⊙

Check your Big Idea: are you still sure this is the big idea?

Think up an opener question (from the Big Idea/applications).

Opening question should be:



EASY



INTERESTING



OPEN

⊙ ⊙ ⊙ ⊙ ⊙ ⊙ ⊙ ⊙

Ensure your closing question points people back to the Big Idea.

Work out timings (anticipate difficult sections and red herrings)

**Final thought**

When you've written your questions, ask yourself, 'What am I hoping people will say?' then switch off your learning, pretend you're approaching the questions for the first time and say, 'What will they actually say?' If they'll head in the right direction, you've written good questions.

# Example Bible study on Ephesians 6.10-20

Note, this is not 'the right answer', it's an answer following a helpful structure, heading towards the main Big Idea.

Big Idea:

**In the battles we face, God calls on his people to put on his armour.**

*Notice, I haven't made my Big Idea: 'the armour of God'. I want people to remember the who and the why, as well as the what.*

## Opener

What are some of the battles you face? [maybe at school, or at home, or at church, on the football field, wherever]

## Read v.10-13

- O How does Paul describe difficult times here?
- I What do you think 'the devil's schemes' might look like today? [What might the Devil be trying to do? How might he be trying to make you feel?]
- O How does Paul say we should get ready for those schemes?
- O What does Paul say that victory looks like for a Christian? [What's our goal?]
- A How does these verse encourage you in the battles you talked about at the start?

## Read v.14-17

- O What are the different parts of the armour of God?
- I What do you think 'The belt of truth' might mean?
- I How do you think God might provide us with 'The breastplate of righteousness'?
- I/A What might someone look like who has their 'feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace'?
- I How do you think 'The shield of faith' might help 'extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one'?
- I Why do you think Paul describes protecting our head with salvation?
- O What is the only item of the armour that can be used for both defence and offence?

I Why do you think that might be?

A Which bit of the armour do you struggle most to put on?

A How could you make better use of a piece of the armour this week?



Read how David prepared for battle with Goliath in 1 Samuel 17.38-47. How does this link with Ephesians 6?

### Read v. 18-20

I How do you think these verses fit into a discussion on the armour of God?

O What are some of the things that Paul tells Timothy to pray for?

I What do you think it might mean to 'pray in the Spirit'?

A What are some of the 'all kinds of prayers and requests' we should be praying this week?

### Closing

A What encouragement will you take from these verses for the battles you might face this week?

I How might the armour of God encourage someone who is not yet a Christian?

Pray about what you have learnt.

### Note:

There are lots of questions here! You don't need all of them. They're a range. Older and more mature young people generally need fewer. Younger often need more. You might want to focus just on one section.

Half an hour might only need five questions, but don't avoid observation ones.