



the Parent LINK

Children's Ministry Edition



September 2012

Woodland Baptist Church

POWERSOURCE

ASK GOD:

1. To bless and protect your children as they begin a new school year.
2. To help your kids grow in their understanding of God, faith, and salvation.
3. To grant your children the ability to think critically about their faith and make wise, God-honoring decisions.

Boost Kids' Critical Thinking Skills

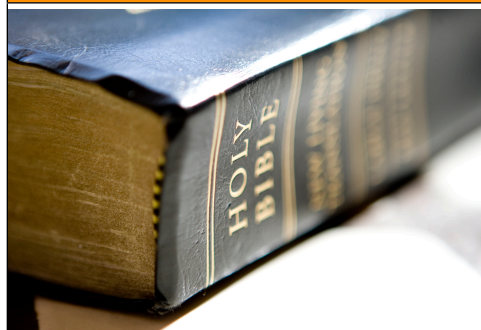
Good grades don't matter much if kids aren't developing higher-level thinking—whether the subject is homework or their faith. Educational psychologist Benjamin Bloom developed this hierarchy of critical thinking skills; use the concepts to help your kids boost their higher-level thinking.

- **Knowledge** is recalling facts or memorizing. Ask basic recall questions to check kids' understanding of simple concepts and ideas.
- **Comprehension** is summarizing and interpreting. Follow-up questions ("Why?"; "What does this mean?") increase understanding.
- **Application** is putting knowledge to use in new situations. Ask kids how they'll utilize what they know in daily life.
- **Analysis** is breaking information and concepts into parts, boosting problem-solving. Help kids evaluate situations using what they know.
- **Synthesis** is generalizing, relating, and comparing ideas to form new viewpoints. Ask kids how what they know changes how they think.
- **Evaluation** is judging the *value* of ideas, procedures, and methods. Ask kids to assess the worth of ideas and concepts they've learned.

INSIGHTS

Children's ministry director Jill Williams created the *Christian Truths Survey* to discover how kids learn biblical concepts. She found a big difference in how kids age 10 and up understand the more abstract details of faith:

- **83%** of kids age 10 and 11 understand faith concepts, while only **70%** of kids age 8 and 9 have the same understanding.
 - **74%** of 12-year-olds understand the Trinity, while only 64% of younger children do. Even so, most kids accurately use terminology, even if they don't quite grasp meanings.
- (Children's Ministry Magazine)*



“I pray that...you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ’s return.”
(Philippians 1:9-10)

TEACHABLE MOMENTS

1. Real-World Application—When you read the Bible together, ask questions with specific applications. For example, “How can we serve our neighbors today?” and “What’s one thing you can do this week to love someone more?”

2. Twenty Questions—When sharing biblical concepts with your kids, encourage their interruptions and pause often. Let children share their thoughts and pose questions. You’ll discover whether they have adequate “mental hooks” (or previous knowledge) on which to hang new information.

3. Get Moving!—Who says you need to be sitting down to learn? Cognitive researchers agree that some of the most productive mental processing takes place when children are active and involved. So get up and talk about God and faith while doing other activities.

Begin a discussion about learning and wisdom by asking children these questions:

1. What excites you the most about the new school year, and why? What areas do you want to improve in, and how can we help you do that?
2. How can we get to know God better and make him happy?
3. What ideas do you have for putting our knowledge of God into action?

FAMILY EXPERIENCE

Explore knowledge with these fun activities:

• **Wise Guys (and Gals)**—Ask: “If you were granted one wish, what would it be?” After everyone answers, read aloud 1 Kings 3:5. Say: “God told Solomon he could ask for anything he wanted. Sweet, huh?” Read aloud Solomon’s answer in verses 6-9. Make booklets out of folded paper. Put a construction paper cover on each book, and staple the folded edge. Come up with wise titles and cover designs. Say: “Let’s write or draw our own wise sayings in these books. Think of funny and serious things we can teach one another, from ‘Don’t shake a bottle of soda before opening it’ to ‘Treat others the way you want to be treated.’” For ideas, browse through the book of Proverbs. Write and draw in one another’s books, and add pages throughout the school year as you learn and grow.

• **Time Capsule**—Gather an aluminum or tin container for each family member. Then gather mementos that describe who each of you is at this moment. Examples include favorite candy, a recording of a favorite song, an ad for a favorite movie, something that represents a special accomplishment, an influential person, what they want to be when they grow up, etc. Complete Personal Stats sheets, including the following information: Likes and Dislikes, Favorites, Stats (height, shoe size, etc.), God’s Impact in My Life, Note to My Future Self. Help younger children fill out the information. Have family members place their mementos, stats, and current photos inside their tins. Seal the tins and tape a label to the top with the person’s name and a note that says, “Open at the end of the school year.” Remember to open the time capsules when school ends to discover how you’ve all changed and grown.

MEDIA MADNESS

MOVIES

Title: *Finding Nemo 3D*

Genre: Family/Animated

Rating: G

Cast: Albert Brooks, Alexander Gould, Ellen DeGeneres

Synopsis: After being separated from his young son, Marlin leaves the safety of his coral reef home and braves the open ocean to search for his boy.

Our Take: Families can discuss how God works through tragedy and challenges to strengthen us and to bring us closer to him and other people. Caution: Some intense scenes might be frightening for young children.

MUSIC

Artist: Matthew West

Album: *Into the Light* (Sept. 25)

Artist Info: Coming from Nashville, this popular musician has a passion for God and music. His first hit single was "More."

Summary: *Into the Light* is built from the stories of fans willing to get honest about life and faith. The song "Forgiveness" is about a woman who lost her daughter to a drunk driver.

Our Take: West has a talent for infusing his songs with grace and truth. Expect this album to be relevant, impacting, and filled with great discussion topics.



GAMES, SITES & APPS

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>Funschool.com</i>	With educational and fun games, this site teaches while entertaining. (Preview games to be sure they're suitable.)	Great for preschool through elementary.
<i>Jumpstart Phonics: Read and Rhyme</i>	Fun activities and songs help children begin to recognize words and learn to read in a step-by-step progression.	PC software (requires Windows 7 or newer); best for ages 4 to 7.
<i>Cut the Rope</i>	A challenging game of puzzle and strategy! Players build contraptions of various tools to score candy points.	For iPad and iPhone; 99 cents at iTunes.com; ages 4+.

This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't intended to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our prayer is that you'll make informed decisions about what your children watch, listen to, and play.

CULTURE & TRENDS

- Technology definitely has its benefits; many families are using iPad tablets as augmentative communication tools for kids with special needs. (*cbsnews.com*)

- Out of the classroom and onto the field! Lacrosse, now the fastest-growing sport in America, is losing its preppy reputation and gaining more urban and minority players. The number of American kids playing lacrosse before they enter high school has increased 64% in the past six years. (*2011 U.S. Lacrosse Participation Survey*)

QUICK STATS

- Last year, only one in three fourth-graders could read at grade level. (*The National Report Card for Reading*)
- 2012's top-ranked city for education is Burlington, Vermont. A small community allows for smaller classroom sizes and lower student-to-teacher ratios. The city also offers a large number of highly accredited day care centers. (*Parenting.com*)



September

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 Children's Church @ 11am	3 Labor Day	4	5 AWANA Begins 6:30-8:00pm	6	7	8
9 Children's Church @ 11am	10	11	AWANA 6:30-8:00pm	13	14	15
16 Children's Church @ 11am	17	18	AWANA 6:30-8:00pm	20	21	22
23/30 Children's Church @ 11am	24	25	AWANA 6:30-8:00pm	27	28	29