

11 Growth Ideas for Our Sunday School

1. **Sit in a close circle and remove extra chairs.** This helps people hear, talk and see one another. It builds community. It helps people to engage and feel included. Don't use desks that separate you.
2. Make sure and **ask for contact information** from every guest. Invite them to your next fellowship. Introduce them to the class. Add them to your email or text list and communicate every week.
3. **Give everyone a chance to share a prayer request** and have someone pray for them. If the class is larger than 6, you might want to split into more than one group to share prayer requests and pray.
4. Ask members to **read a scripture passage during the week** (the chapter that contains your SS lesson) before they come and give them a chance to talk about what they learned when they come to class.
 - The percentage of people who read the passage or the lesson goes way up if you ask them to do it and ask them to be ready to talk about it with the group.
 - You may want to ask one or more people to read aloud until all the verses have been read.
 - *"We all read John Chapter 1 this week. Please share one of the verses that stood out to you and why you liked it."*
 - If you go around the circle, then everyone will get a turn to talk, not just the extroverts.
5. **Use standard discussion questions** (plus any of your own) when you discuss the scripture passage.
 - Discussion builds understanding, inspiration, community, conviction and engagement.
 - Either go around the circle or give everyone a chance to say something by asking them.
 - People remember and learn best when they are engaged and involved.
 - *"What can we learn about God in this passage?"*
 - *"What can we learn about people in this passage?"*
 - *"Is there anyone in this passage that you can identify with? Why?"*
 - *"What is something you want God to do in your life, to help you get better at, after reading these verses?"*
6. The teacher or someone will **summarize the main points from your Quarterly lesson** book. (5 min)
7. **Do a class service project every other month** for one or two hours. Plan it together with your class.
 - Help a single mother, a widow, or retired couple. Homeless shelter. Food bank. A neighbor.
 - Invite family and friends to come help you with the project.
8. **Have a monthly social activity.** (Half of these could be your service project if desired.)
 - This helps build deeper friendships. This helps you to invite new guests.
 - A lunch or supper. A fun activity. The Superbowl. Christmas. July 4 cookout. A picnic. Game night.
 - As you build a list of class members and guests, make sure everyone is invited to the social.
9. **Share four to six leadership tasks** every week when you meet. Rotate the tasks the next week.
 - Person 1 – welcome and announcements and introduce a new guest. Talk about the next social.
 - Person 2 – ask "What was stressful this week?" and "What were you thankful for this week?"
"What can we pray for this week?"
 - Person 3 – "What was one verse that stood out to you in the Bible verses we read this week?"
 - Person 4 – Ask the discussion questions and give everyone a chance to answer.
 - Person 5 – "Here are three main points to remember this week from our lesson." (5 minutes)
 - Person 6 – Discuss the plans for the next service project coming up in ____ weeks.
10. **Sit with a guest or your class when you go to the worship service.** Get to know them better.
11. **Your goal and desire is to start a new class every year.** You have prepared new leaders all year long.
 - There are three basic ways to do this. You can choose the best way for your church or your class.

Today's Sunday School Lesson (an example of the 11 Growth Ideas we just discussed)

Person 1 – (5 minutes)

Welcome and announcements. Introduce any new guests.
Talk about the next social fellowship coming up for our class.

Person 2 – (10 minutes)

“What was stressful this week?”
“What were you thankful for this week?”
“What can we pray for this week?”

Person 3 – (10 minutes) Read the scripture verses out loud. (Everyone already read these at home)
Read John 1:35-42 Another person read John 1:43-51
Ask the class: “What was one verse that stood out to you in the Bible verses we just read?”

Person 4 – (15 minutes)

Ask the four standard discussion questions (plus others) and let everyone get a chance to answer.

- “What can we learn about God in this passage?”
- “What can we learn about people in this passage?”
- “Is there anyone in this passage that you can identify with? Why?”
- “What is something you want God to do in your life, to help you get better at, after reading these verses?”
- Give an example of a time someone invited you or you invited someone else and what happened.

Person 5 – (5 minutes) From the passage John 1:35-51

“Here are three points to remember this week.” – from the Quarterly or other book you are using.

#1. Most people come to know Christ because a person invited them and individually helped them – not radio, tv, books, movies, tracts, Gideon Bibles, Facebook or something else. Who is your one?

#2. Jesus made it personal – “come and you will see” and “follow me”. Beginning a relationship with Christ is always a personal decision. It can't be made by your parents. It wasn't done by a church vote. It didn't happen by being baptized. There was a moment when you said “Yes, I will believe and follow you.”

#3. Just like it takes a person to invite someone to learn more about Christ, it is the same with discipleship. People are not disciplined by a building or a book. They are disciplined by a person who cares a lot about them.

Person 6 – (5 minutes)

Discuss the plans for the next service project coming up in ____ weeks we will do as a class.

Who?

Where?

What day and time?

What do we need to bring?

How long will it take?

Result: Stronger Personal Discipleship

- we read the Bible at home & pick our verses
- we grow our leadership ability every week
- we pray for one another every week
- talking increases engagement/learning
- sitting together & talking increases fellowship
- we get to share what God is teaching us
- we get better reaching out to guests
- we grow in maturity by serving others

Result: Stronger Outreach To New People

- we invite friends and family to the monthly party
- we serve others outside our class
- we give greater attention to new guests, sit w/ them
- we multiply disciples and start new classes
- we get better at communication, reaching out to our email or text list every week of prospects