

MAKE Learning FUN!

Eight innovative teaching techniques

BY LISA BAIRD

Gadgets make life easier. And a lot more fun.

Junior highers know this. That's why they're into Walkmen, Discmen and Nintendo. It's no wonder they despise sitting on hard chairs watching a youth leader write on a chalkboard.

Junior high ministry doesn't have to be boring. These eight ideas will help make your teaching more creative. And each idea involves one of three common gadgets that junior highers enjoy: a tape recorder, camera or video camera.

1. At the beginning of a meeting, ask a question about the meeting's topic.

With a tape recorder, record each student's answer. Then after the group studies the topic, play back everyone's answers. Ask how kids would answer the question now.

2. Make a tape recording of a Bible story and have kids add sound effects. For example, for the story about Joshua's raid on Jericho (Joshua 6), kids could mimic the sounds of trumpets and falling walls. Or, for the story of Paul and Silas (Acts 16), kids could mimic Paul and Silas singing in prison, the rumble of an earthquake and the jangle of their chains falling off.

3. For a fall kickoff, record kids each saying their favorite Bible verse and what they believe the Lord wants them to accomplish during the year. Also record the group praying for God's help to reach the goals. At the

end of May, play the tape back and see how many kids met their goals.

4. Everyone likes to look at photos of people who weighed 300 pounds before a diet and 150 pounds after. Use the same idea to photograph kids acting out what Christians should "put off" followed by what Christians should "put on." For example, have kids pose for a "before" picture "putting off anger," and for an "after" picture "putting on kindness" (Colossians 3:12).

5. Have junior highers photograph their friends at school. Then hang the photos on one section of a bulletin board. Throughout the year, have group members pray for the kids in the photos. When a prayer is answered, transfer that photo to a different section of the bulletin board.

6. Take close-up photos of one junior higher's feet, another junior higher's ears, someone else's hands, someone's legs, another's head and so on. Of all the parts, make a composite "body" on a meeting-room wall. Then talk about the body of Christ.

7. Set up video equipment in a separate room. Send kids each into the room to act out a Bible character. After kids have each recorded their character, show the video to the group. Have junior highers guess who each character is.

8. Videotape a talk show that follows a theme such as "How We Got Our Bible." Have one junior higher play host and interview guests. For example, the host could ask one junior higher portraying Luke, the gospel writer, how he gathered all the information about Jesus' life.

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