

How to Carry Out Opening Time Using the Songs as a Lesson

A. BEFORE THE CONFERENCE

1. Get together with your serving partners and take some time to pray over the verses and learn the songs for your serving session.
2. Learn the songs and practice singing along as many times as it takes until you are happily familiar with the song.
3. Create some hand motions ahead of time. During the conference let the kids come up with some motions, too.
4. When you serve, there should be two song leaders standing in front and on both sides of the room. Because the children like to watch the guitar players play, they should also plan to stand in front, bringing their guitar straps. Piano and player will be on the side.
5. Decide which points you could discuss from the song. For example, after singing the song, you could take a minute to ask if anyone knows what a portion might mean. Let them talk if they will. You could ask questions. Be brief in your talking and sing the song more once you have talked about it.
6. Find a capable pianist and a few guitar players have a thorough prayer and practice time(s) together. The ones leading the time ideally should not be playing the guitar or piano. He/She should be free to lead the hand motions and interact with the kids.

B. DURING THE SINGING TIME

1. Choose a child to be the computer slide switcher. Try to find someone who has not done it in an earlier meeting. Help them how to do their job.
2. When teaching a new song, just learn the first verse. Sing it several times. Have the boys try it, then the girls. Or let half of the room sing and the other half echo. Don't be afraid to take some time to learn the song. Once they know the tune go on to the next verses. It won't take as long to learn it if you break it up into bite sizes.
3. Practice! If the song is a round or two part song, practice where each group should come in. Know how to sing the songs in a round ahead of time. Challenge the kids to sing the harder songs, they will surprise you.
4. Refer to the "many ways to sing" list at the bottom of this document. Choose what techniques you will use on each song and try to mix it up a bit with each song. Be prepared, knowing how you are going to sing each song.
5. Let the kids participate in tasks. For example, if you are using a pointer, let a child do the pointing. Let them point to which side of the room should sing when the song is broken into parts.

6. Start and stop the singing and start over if they are not synchronized. Have a relaxed atmosphere. Make it fun. Have the teachers sing and then the kids. The boys and then the girls. Sing by classes or groups. *Having louder competitions will work if concluded with soft, whispering.*

7. Bring or make some props to go along with the songs. Sometimes we make a sign for something we want to emphasize (Names of books of the Bible). For example, in these songs you could ask someone to raise up a sign that says, "God" every time He is mentioned in a song. Take turns.

8. Use an easel to write down any key points found in the songs. This is a great way to emphasize these key points.

9. Watch the clock! Plan how long you will take for each song. Have someone in the audience watching for you and they can warn you when your time is almost up.

10. Let the children pick a song from a previous meeting, if you are finished singing the assigned songs.

11. Smile while you are singing. They will smile back! Have a good time, then they will have one too!

12. Discipline - *this is not your job!* You are leading the singing lesson. Discipline is the job of the serving saints on the various levels. If a cluster of kids is disruptive to the point of distraction, ask the serving ones to take care of it without embarrassing anyone. The responsible one for the meeting should be nearby to take a child out of the room if necessary.

13. Teach the entire lesson in bits, while singing the songs is much more effective than simply giving a lecture or a lesson. *The kids remember more what they sing!*

14. Write down and pass on to the next serving group what songs you actually sang and any great motions or singable moments you had.

C. MANY WAYS TO SING/ HAVE A GOOD TIME SINGING!

- Use Motions or Actions
- Use Hand Signing
- Sing in a Round
- Sing with Echos
- Sing in Parts: Boys sing/Girls sing/ Older sing/Younger sing/ Teachers sing /Kids sing
- Little Solos (certain phrases or echos)
- Let the Kids Be Helpers (overhead manager, pointer, demonstrations, etc.)
- Sing Staccato (short - like pizzicato)
- Sing Legato (long)
- Sing Grandioso (with gusto!)
- Sing Slow

- Sing Fast
- Sing Loud
- Sing Soft
- Sing with Syncopation
- Sing with a Calypso beat
- Sing with Harmony
- Sing a Counterpoint
- Sing a Chorus Backward
- Sing Faster and Faster
- Modulate Between Verses
- Have a Big Finish (Repeat and Slow Down)
- Use Rhythm Sticks, Instruments, or noise making items
- Body Percussion (Claps, Snaps, Stomp Feet, Mouth Pops, Clucks, Slapping Knees)
- Sing with Syncopated clapping (or patty cake in teams of two)
- Ostinato (Repeating Repeats)
- Leave Out Words
- Hum the tune
- Whistle the tune
- Try Some Musical Experiments!
- Crowd Reviving Tips:
- Pointing to the group to sing
- Holding Out the First Note until your Breath Runs Out!
- Singing Contests (speed, loudness, accuracy)
- Involve the Trouble Makers!
- Be a Three-fold Cord/Don't Lead the Singing Alone!
- Musicians Guitarists and Piano Players Should Practice (Plan Intro and the Key!)
- Praying, Planning and Leading the Singing Together