

Reading the Bible with Children

There are so many Bible translations and stylized Bibles available; how do you know which one will be the best option to use in your ministry environment and to recommend to parents? Here are some suggestions for translations that are oriented towards children's reading ability or are visually compelling:

- [New International Reader's Version](#) (NIRV) adapted to a grade 3 reading level
- [Common English Bible](#) (CEB) is written at a comfortable level for half of English readers
- [The International Children's Bible](#) (ICB) is written at a grade 3 reading level
- [The Action Bible](#) is a visually engaging graphic novel that appeals to intermediate readers
- [The Jesus Storybook Bible](#) tells "the wonderful Story beneath all the stories in the Bible."
- [The Adventure Bible](#) comes in a variety of translations and has an early reader version

Which one is the best? It's hard to say! Check out this interview with Rachel Wilkowsky on [The Pitfalls of Children's Bibles](#).

Preschool (Pre-readers)

Use a beginner's Bible to find the story from that week's lesson. You can put a sticky note in the approximate location for the verse in the beginner's Bible if you are learning a verse together. Try singing or creating motions to reinforce the verse that you are teaching.

Kindergarten & Grade 1 Students (Early readers)

Guide children to open the Bibles to the marked page. Point to the title of the book and say it aloud. Then, guide children to find the big number for the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big number for the little verse number. Tell them to leave their finger on the verse as you read the verse aloud. Lead everyone to say the verse together.

Grade 2/3 Students (Primary readers)

Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. Lead them to find the book either in the list for the OT or NT. Help the kids find the page for the book. When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers.

Grade 4/5 Students (Intermediate readers)

Ask kids to tell you whether the book is in the OT or NT. Using that clue, they can try to find the book without using the table of contents. Explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers.

Always be sensitive to individual reading skills and the potential that a child may be uncomfortable reading in front of a group due to a learning difficulty. Only have willing students read aloud, but encourage all children to develop the skills necessary to locate verse references on their own.