

“TeenText helps youth connect Scripture with their lives by helping them get out of their heads and into their hearts.”

What is TeenText?

[TeenText](#) is a Lectionary-based, digitally-stored Sunday school curriculum, with two age groups, 6th-8th grade and 9th-12th grade. TeenText helps youth connect Scripture with their lives by helping them get out of their heads and into their hearts. There are no “right interpretations” and the format encourages continued exploration and application throughout the week.

What Does a TeenText Lesson Look Like?

Each month’s lessons are emailed as a pdf. The individual lessons include a paragraph or so of background about the Scripture for the leader. Leaders should be prepared to spend half an hour or less in preparation.

Every lesson starts with a short ritual - lighting a candle, saying a prayer, welcoming all into the conversation. Then the week’s Lectionary-appointed scripture is read and a series of questions (and sometimes activities) are discussed. Questions are open-ended to encourage creativity, as well as to include current events. In addition, lessons all include supplemental materials: movie clips, YouTube videos, classical or contemporary art, music, or poetry which connect contemporary culture with Scripture and everyday lives. Every session ends with a blessing.

Each week’s lesson includes 3 sets of questions that follow a formula, which is the same for both age groups:

Go Deep: Questions to help understand the Bible text.

Be Real: Questions to connect the text to our current world.

Let Go: Questions to connect the conversation to the individual.

Lessons conclude with questions to carry everyone through the upcoming week.



TEENTEXT Grades 6-8
March 16, 2014
Second Sunday in Lent

I. WHAT YOU WILL NEED

Bible
Candle and matches
Paper
Pens, pencils, and/or markers
Computer + web access (for YouTube videos and to enlarge art/images)

II. TODAY'S TEXT: Genesis 12: 1-4a

The Lord said to Abram, "Leave your land, your family, and your father's household for the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation and will bless you. I will make your name respected, and you will be a blessing.

I will bless those who bless you,
those who curse you I will curse;
all the families of the earth
will be blessed because of you."

Abram left just as the Lord told him, and Lot went with him. Now Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran.

III. BACKGROUND

As the story of creation and the first humans develops, the scope of the story narrows from all of humanity to one family, from whom the people of Israel will emerge. God calls

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[TeenText Sample Lesson](#)

(This is a lesson plan for grades 6-8;
grades 9-12 have their own lesson plans, check out the [teentext website](#))

What's Great About This Curriculum?

As a ministry coordinator, TeenText's digital format means I can zip out the lesson to a substitute teacher very last minute and everything they need is in the pdf.

As a teacher, I love the "Beyond Sundays" questions, which bring students from Sunday through the week. Do they have to answer them? Of course not. But the folks writing TeenText have been working on the concept of being a Christian Monday-Saturday for a long time, even if we church folks are just getting used to the idea.

I also appreciate that the "Between Sundays" questions enable leaders to include youth who are not at class on a particular Sunday. Teens, like all Americans, are busy people, and not all of them will make it to Sunday school each week. The "Between Sundays" questions can be sent out to everyone and no one needs to feel as though they have missed a key piece if they miss a week.

Will the Leader Need to Do Extra Work?

It takes a few minutes to orient yourself on the Educational Center's webpage. Bookmark and download samples when appropriate.

The publishers assure you that all leaders need is to be good listeners and to open to their own spiritual journey! There is, however, a leader's guide so that adults have the tools necessary to guide teens through the Bible and connect it to their lives. The leader guide

walks you through the weekly set-up and offers helpful hints in working with teens.

When I last taught this curriculum, my teens only had one complaint: they wanted more crafts! There is not a lot of kinetic learner or visual creativity in the curriculum. Making room for different types of learners might be something to explore.

While the questions asked each week may be challenging, the theology is broad. Liturgically important events, such as 1Lent, are highlighted but not emphasized. You may choose to supplement with more denominationally specific lessons.

How do I access the curriculum?

You can download a sample on the Educational Center's webpage, under "Our Store" and "Teen Text." Once you have ordered the curriculum, the entire month of lessons will be sent to via email, every month. You can then forward it to the week's leader(s). Be sure to note which grade level you are ordering for and check out the samples of each.

Who Publishes TeenText?

[Educational Center: Resources for the Spiritual Journey](#) is a small non-profit, non-sectarian publishing company, based on the belief that the real issues in life are not about dogma or "right interpretation" of scripture. Since 1945, the Center has been teaching from a student-based perspective, influenced by the writings of Kierkegaard, Jung, Niebuhr, and Buber. All of the Educational Center's materials are question-based and aim to tell stories: our story and God's story, and how and where they connect in our current lives.

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