

How to Prepare the Curriculum

Preparation

15-30 minutes: From my experience, preparation is the key to a successful class. The teaching material will of course have to be adjusted to your student's level. However the more creative you can be, the better. I find songs (actual *and* made up), simple motions, and educational games, the best way to keep my younger students engaged. With my older elementary students and upward, I find practicing common English phrases (such as "Would you like..." or "Can I have...") as the best way to keep the material in their minds for the longer term. I don't feel it's my job to make them fluent in English in my time here, but if I can have them remember a handful of useful phrases and increase their vocabulary a bit, I'm satisfied. Then again, I'm not gifted as a teacher. Skill will come with experience so don't stress if you're in the same boat as me. Remember you're there to love first, and then teach.

Class Time

5-10 minutes: Pick your child up from his or her room. As you walk to your assigned "classroom" and settle yourselves in by the work table, use this time to calm your child and settle his/her heart for a time of work. Ask them about what's going on in their lives (school, tests, who they gave a peppero stick to on Peppero Day... you get the point). Ask if they missed you (jokingly). ** Don't ask this question too often.*

30-45 minutes: Focus on class work (English, Korean, Art, Music, etc.). If you're dealing with younger children, or children who seem to have ADD, some volunteers have found it useful to take a short break after 20 minutes to share a little food and/or play a brief unrelated game. Children are just as human as you and I, so expect them to have good and bad days regarding their ability to focus. If you find yourself in the middle of a "bad" day, remember the first "P" – Patience.

Afterwards

5-10 minutes: Don't forget to walk your students back to their rooms and say a proper goodbye. If you have developed a comfortable relationship with your child's dorm mother (which you should try to establish from the very first day), feel free to hang around, meet your child's roommates, help them lay out their blankets and get ready for bed (depending on age). If you are in a position to help the dorm mother with one of her chores, don't hesitate to ask (or if you can't ask, just go ahead and start helping). I find the children I work with like it when I simply sit and joke with them as they brush their teeth. Whether your classes are in the evenings or during the day, use this time to get to know your student's friends and familiarize yourself with the orphanage family – it helps not to be in a rush to leave after your class.

At Home

5-10 minutes: I encourage you to keep a brief journal of your experiences at the orphanage. Jot down the things that seemed to be effective as well as the things that failed. If a particular need presented itself in your student, or you observed some behavior that triggered in your heart the need for prayer, make a note of these to refer back to during your prayer time.

** All in all the whole experience shouldn't last very much over an hour. Use these tips at your own discretion. There is no such thing as a cookie cutter classroom experience, so be sensitive to your child's own personality and needs. I encourage you to be creative with your classes, experiment with different teaching techniques, and (behind closed doors) to be as goofy as you are afraid to be anywhere else – the children love that. Remember Jerusalem Ministry has some funding set aside for teaching materials to help you with your creative ideas. The orphanages will have many of the typical supplies (glue, scissors, paper, etc.), but we are ready to cover any additional supplies you may need.*