

---

# TEACHER

— *creating conversational communities* —



## Student Conference Plans

**Purpose:** This conference plan details a two-hour conference experience for Student Sunday School and small-group leaders. The goal is to provide an overview of the book and to apply its content to the Bible study setting of conference participants.

### Where to use this plan:

- **Local church – Sunday School:** use this conference plan to train student Bible study leaders prior to the start of a new Sunday School year. Many churches use this conference plan on a Saturday morning or Sunday evening in mid-August.
- **Local church – small groups:** use this conference plan to train
- student small-group leaders throughout the year prior to the start of new semesters of study.
- **Regional and state training** – use this conference plan to train Sunday School and small-group student leaders at regional or state-wide events.

### With Whom?

- **With student group leaders:** use this conference with student leaders.

## PREPARE

- ☐ Read *Teacher: Creating Conversational Community* by David Francis, Ken Braddy, and Michael Kelley.

### Collect the following resources for use during the training event:

- ☐ One copy of *Teacher: Creating Conversational Community* by David Francis, Ken Braddy, and Michael Kelley for each participant. The book can be ordered at *LifeWay.com*.
- ☐ Nametags for each participant (two each)
- ☐ Post-It<sup>®</sup> notepad (wall size) and appropriate markers
- ☐ Marker board and dry-erase markers plus an eraser
- ☐ Audio-visual equipment such as tv/scan converter or data projector and a screen

### Create the following visuals:

- ☐ Large chart of the Four Voices (see page 10 of *T:CCC*).
- ☐ Placards of the Eight Learning Approaches (see page 16 of *T:CCC*).

### Enlist the following volunteers:

- ☐ Volunteer to read “Teacher” on page 4 of *T:CCC*
- ☐ Volunteer to present mini-lecture defining a Conversational Community

### Download the following:

- ☐ PowerPoint presentation, available from *LifeWay.com/DavidFrancis*.

### Prepare a display of the following resources:

- ☐ Samples of ongoing Bible study resources from LifeWay including leader guides, personal study guides, commentaries, and other resources specific to each product family
  - Bible Studies For Life
  - Explore The Bible
  - The Gospel Project
- ☐ Samples of short-term Bible study resources
  - My 8
  - True Love Project
  - Jesus > Religion

### Prepare the room for the conference:

- ☐ Arrange chairs so they form a semi-circle facing a focal wall
- ☐ Place a nametag and copy of *T:CCC* on each chair

- Set up and test any electronic equipment you plan to use, such as a tv/scan converter or data projector and laptop

# PRESENT

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- As participants arrive, direct them to create a nametag. Encourage them to write their first name and favorite nickname/moniker they have been or are called.
- After all participants have arrived, share with them your favorite nickname or moniker (Bubba, Papa, the Babe, etc). Explain why that is your favorite nickname or moniker.
- Invite volunteers to briefly introduce themselves to the group using their favorite nickname or moniker. Encourage them to explain the significance of their nickname or moniker.
- Call on a preenlisted volunteer to read “Teacher” on page 4 of *Teacher: Creating Conversational Communities (T:CCC)*.
- Explain that Jesus was known by many names, but “Teacher” or “Rabbi” would have been one of the more common names used by His disciples and others.
- Present a summary of the first section of Chapter 1 of *T:CCC*. Emphasize the high privilege of being called “teacher.”
- Pray, asking God to bless your time together in the conference as He speaks to each person’s heart about what it takes to be a teacher.

## 2. Defining Success as a Teacher

- Ask: *What is your goal as a teacher? What are you trying to accomplish?*
- Direct the group to share with a partner their responses. Invite a few volunteers to share what their partner said. Affirm responses that relate to obedience or taking action on God’s truth.
- Highlight the statement on the top of page 52 of *T:CCC* (*The real test of a conversational community is not the pursuit of lofty thoughts or intimate fellowship, but the pursuit of obedience.*). Lead participants to record in the margin next to this statement their level of agreement with the statement (10 being completely agree and 1 being completely disagree). Assure them that you will be explaining more about a conversational community later.
- Present a brief lecture, summarizing the information found on pages 50-55. Emphasize that teaching should lead to action (transformACTION).
- Direct participants to locate page 56 and to mentally identify the average person in their group. Call for them to review the acts of obedience listed. Ask: *Do these actions define the average person in your group? What is missing? Does this define every person in your group?*
- Remind them that as the teacher, our goal is to help everyone on our ministry list (“class roll”) to become obedient followers of Christ and to continue to grow in obedience to Him.

- Explain that we began this conference with the end in mind so we could understand where we are trying to lead our group. The rest of this conference will focus on how we move students from where they are to where they ought to be.

### 3. Definitions

#### Teacher

- Call for volunteers to share images that come to their mind when they hear the word “teacher.” Record the images on a markerboard or large sheet of paper. Call attention to the second sentence in the bottom paragraph on page 5 (begins: We don’t mean a Bible expert...). Lead the group to identify the images listed that illustrate the description given on page 5 (“What is not meant...”).
- Write “Lead Learner” on a markerboard or large sheet of paper. Lead the group to discuss how viewing one’s self as the lead learner would impact how a person teaches a group. If the group is large, direct them to discuss in groups of 2 to 4.

#### Conversational Community

- Call on a preenlisted volunteer to present a mini-lecture defining a conversational community using the information on pages 6-8.
- Ask: *How does a “lead learner” best define the person filling the teaching role in a conversational community? How does the definition of a conversational community apply to students?*
- Point out that the authors identify two obstacles that work against a conversational community. Direct the group to scan page 9 to discover those obstacles. Invite the group to share other obstacles they may have witnessed or experienced. Challenge the group to consider ways of removing and tearing down any obstacles that hinder a group from becoming a conversational community.

### 4. Voices

- Reveal a chart you have created of the “Four Voices” on page 10. Direct the participants to find the chart on page 10 in their copy of *T:CCC*. Identify the source and general concept behind the Four Voices (see pages 9 and 10).

#### The Bible

- Emphasize the importance of the Bible. Call attention to the doctrinal statement from *The Baptist Faith and Message* on page 11 of *T:CCC*. Direct participants to review the statement, looking for key words or phrases that impact a conversational community. Invite them to share their thoughts. Emphasize that the Bible is the central voice in a conversational community.
- Explain that the Bible speaks to all age-groups but does so in different ways. Use the chart on page 12 to illustrate.

## The Holy Spirit

- Call attention to the statement “You are not the only Teacher in the room.” on page 14.
- Give a brief demonstration of the “fall open” method as described on page 14. Use the content in the book to explain the shortcomings of that method and the need for preparation.
- Ask: *How does knowing that the Holy Spirit is with you every step of the teaching process give you confidence as a teacher?*

## The Learners

- Invite participants to call out characteristics of the group they teach or will be teaching. Highlight characteristics that are the same for different age groups. Explain that while age groups are different, they have the same learning styles.
- Display eight placards with the names of each learning approach (one name per placard). Point to the “Eight Learning Approaches” chart on page 16 of *T:CCC*. Lead the participants to review the chart and identify the approach that best suits them. Then direct them to identify different people in their group that prefer each approach. Use the content on pages 17-18 to challenge the group to find ways of incorporating each approach in their teaching plans. Explain that if a person teaches mostly using only one of these, they are leaving the majority of their class or group out of the teaching-learning process.
  - Option: call attention to the email on pages 18-19 of *T:CCC*. Lead the group to identify general principles they see followed by Shelley. Ask: *How can you take these actions and apply them to your age group?*

## The Teacher

- Remind participants of the definition of a teacher (lead learner). State: *The fourth voice present is ours.*
- Present a mini-lecture to introduce the Say/Ask/Do concept (see pages 21-23). Explain that the remainder of the conference will focus on this concept.

## 5. Say/Ask/Do

- Place participants into three teams (an individual can be a team). Assign each team Chapter 2, 3, and 4. Give the following instructions:
  - Review your assigned chapter. Identify key points and insights. Use the approach in the assigned chapter title to communicate the key points and insights to the rest of the conferees.
- Allow the groups to work, making yourself available to the groups to clarify as needed. You may want to provide some snacks while each team completes the assignment.
- After allowing time for the teams to work, reassemble the participants.

## **Say**

- Invite the Say team to lead the participants in gaining an understanding of Chapter 2.
- Affirm them for sharing
- Highlight any points in Chapter 2 that may have been overlooked by the team, but you believe to be significant.
- Allow the other participants to ask questions for clarification.
- Encourage the participants to share any insights, need for clarification, or disagreement they may have with the content in Chapter 2.

## **Ask**

- Invite the Ask team to lead the participants in gaining an understanding of Chapter 3.
- Affirm them for sharing
- Highlight any points in Chapter 3 that may have been overlooked by the team, but you believe to be significant.
- Allow the other participants to ask questions for clarification.
- Encourage the participants to share any insights, need for clarification, or disagreement they may have with the content in Chapter 3.

## **Do**

- Invite the Do team to lead the participants in gaining an understanding of Chapter 4.
- Affirm them for sharing
- Highlight any points in Chapter 4 that may have been overlooked by the team, but you believe to be significant.
- Allow the other participants to ask questions for clarification.
- Encourage the participants to share any insights, need for clarification, or disagreement they may have with the content in Chapter 4.

## **Say/Ask/Do or Do/Ask/Say?**

- Call attention to the next to the last paragraph on page 23 (They are right! Vicki and I...). Note that David calls for using these three elements in a different order when teaching 4-5 year olds.
- Lead participants to identify the different combinations possible using all three approaches. (Possible responses: Say/Ask/Do, Say/Do/Ask, Ask/Do/Say, Ask/Say/Do, Do/Say/Ask, Do/Ask/Say).
- Direct participants to discuss with another person the combination they believe works best with their Bible study group and why.
- Invite volunteers to share as time allows. Remind participants of the importance of utilizing all three approaches regardless of the order.

## 6. CONCLUSION

- Direct participants to skim *T:CCC* and mark pages they need to review and give further consideration. Invite volunteers to share one insight or tip they gained from the conference.
- Distribute another name tag to each participant. Lead them to write their first name and “Teacher” on the nametag.
- Present an overview of the “Teacher” on page 58. Emphasize the privilege and joy of being called “teacher.”
- Thank participants for their willingness to serve as a teacher.
- Close the conference by praying for the participants. Thank God for allowing teachers to be instruments used by Him to facilitate spiritual transformation.
- Dismiss