

Tutoring Children & Youth Ministry

A Comprehensive Resource Guide

Prepared for Southern Baptist Congregations
National Literacy Missions Partnership

“These words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”

— Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (ESV)

How to Use This Resource Guide

This guide is organized into nine sections to help you quickly find what you need. Each section is color-coded and labeled clearly. You may use it from start to finish or jump directly to the topic most relevant to your tutoring session.

Sections at a Glance

- Section 1 – Understanding Child & Youth Development (from a Christian worldview)
- Section 2 – Reading: Phonics & Word Recognition
- Section 3 – Reading: Comprehension
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- Section 5 – Writing: Handwriting & Composition
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- Section 7 – Reproducible Resources & Free Printables
- Section 8 – Music, Games & Engaging Activities
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Each section lists: print books and curriculum, websites, reproducible/free materials, games, and practical tips for volunteers. Items marked ★ are especially recommended for volunteers new to tutoring.

Section 1 — Understanding Child & Youth Development

Grounded in a Biblical & Evangelical Christian Worldview

A solid understanding of how children grow — spiritually, cognitively, emotionally, and physically — is essential to effective tutoring. The resources below reflect an evangelical Christian perspective on child development and salvation.

Essential Reading (Print)

- **Children and Salvation: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Considerations** — Kennemur, King, Melia & Peavey (B&H Academic). ★ The foundational text for understanding salvation and spiritual development in children from a Southern Baptist perspective.
- **The Connected Child** — Karyn Purvis, David Cross & Wendy Sunshine. Trauma-informed care principles consistent with Christian compassion.
- **Shepherding a Child's Heart** — Tedd Tripp. A gospel-centered approach to understanding children's motivations and hearts.
- **Teaching to Change Lives** — Howard Hendricks. Christian educator's classic on developmental learning principles.
- **Stages of Faith** — James Fowler. Developmental faith stages; supplement with a biblical filter.
- **Child Development: An Active Learning Approach** — Thayne & Pedersen. Solid overview of developmental stages for the layperson.

Websites & Online Resources

- <https://www.lifeway.com> — Lesson plans, discipleship resources, children's ministry tools
- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org> — Articles on children's faith, education, and development
- <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting> — Age-by-age development guides with Christian perspective
- <https://www.d6family.com> — Resources connecting faith development at church and home
- <https://www.erlc.com> — Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission resources on children and family

Key Developmental Concepts to Know

- Children's brains are most plastic (adaptable) in the early years — early intervention matters greatly.
- Cognitive development (Piaget): Pre-operational (ages 2–7), Concrete operational (7–11), Formal operational (12+). Tailor your teaching approach accordingly.
- Language-rich environments accelerate literacy. Talking, reading aloud, and discussing ideas build vocabulary and comprehension.
- Trust and relationship are prerequisite to learning — especially for at-risk youth. Invest in rapport before curriculum.
- Children who have experienced trauma may struggle with attention, memory, and regulation. Patience and consistency are powerful tools.

- From a biblical lens: every child bears the image of God (Imago Dei) and has intrinsic worth. Approach each student with dignity and hope.

Section 2 — Reading: Phonics & Word Recognition

Phonics is the foundation of reading. These resources help volunteers teach letter-sound relationships, blending, decoding, and fluent word recognition using research-based, structured literacy approaches.

Print Curriculum & Books

- **The Logic of English (Essentials)** — Denise Eide. Comprehensive phonics and spelling rules; works for all ages including struggling readers.
- **All About Reading** — Marie Rippel. Scripted, Orton-Gillingham-based curriculum; excellent for struggling and dyslexic readers. Multiple levels.
- **Phonics from A to Z** — Wiley Blevins. Practical teacher reference; clear scope and sequence.
- **Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons** — Siegfried Engelmann. Step-by-step lessons; volunteer-friendly scripted format.
- **Words Their Way** — Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton & Johnston. Word study approach for decoding and spelling. Multiple levels.
- **Explode the Code** — Nancy Hall. Reproducible workbooks; grade-level phonics practice. ★

Websites & Free Online Tools

- <https://www.readingrockets.org> — ★ Research-based strategies, free printables, video tutorials
- <https://fcrr.org/student-center-activities> — ★ Free student center activities for Pre-K through 5th grade; non-profit educational use permitted
- <https://www.starfall.com> — Interactive phonics games; emphasis on phonemic awareness, sequential phonics, and sight words; research-based and standards-aligned
- <https://www.abcmouse.com> — Subscription-based; phonics songs and activities
- <https://www.khanacademy.org/kids> — Free; strong phonics, reading, and early literacy content up to 2nd grade
- <https://www.phonicshero.com> — Structured phonics games; aligns to major phonics programs
- <https://www.95percentgroup.com> — Phonics screeners, intervention tools, professional resources
- <https://www.reallygreatreading.com> — Free decodable books and phonics tutorials
- <https://numberdyslexia.com/online-phonics-games-for-older-students/> — Phonics games specifically designed for older/struggling students
- <http://www.carlscorner.us.com> — Language arts resources for teachers, reading specialists, parents, and students; free downloads. Primary site now at newcarlscorner.com
- <http://www.mrsperkins.com/> — Dolch sight word resources and activities
- <https://www.kidzone.ws/dolch/index.htm> — Dolch word Bingo games and printables
- <http://www.mes-english.com/> — Free flashcards, phonics worksheets, and printable ESL games for young learners; Pre-K through K-6

Games & Hands-On Activities

- **Blink** — Fast card game; builds visual recognition and processing speed.
- **Bob Books Sight Words Games** — Board games aligned to phonics progression.
- **Zingo Sight Words** — Bingo-style game for sight word recognition. ★
- **Dolch Word Bingo** — Free printable from kidzone.ws/dolch; covers all Dolch word lists.
- **Sound Boxes (Elkonin Boxes)** — Free printable. Students push a token for each sound. Builds phonemic awareness.
- **Letter Tiles / Magnetic Letters** — Hands-on blending and word building; inexpensive to purchase in bulk.
- **Phonics Dice Games** — Printable dice with blends/digraphs; roll and blend.
- **Go Fish with Word Families** — Make your own or purchase; match -at, -an, -in word family cards.
- **Bible File Folder Games** — Free printable Bible-themed file folder games from christianpreschoolprintables.com; reinforce learning while integrating faith.

Volunteer Tips

- Always begin by assessing where the student is — don't assume grade level = reading level.
- Follow a consistent scope and sequence rather than jumping around.
- Keep phonics sessions short and active (10–15 minutes of focused phonics, then move to reading practice).
- Celebrate every success, however small. Struggling readers often carry shame — your encouragement is ministry.

Section 3 — Reading: Comprehension

Comprehension is the goal of all reading. These resources help volunteers build vocabulary, background knowledge, inferencing, and critical thinking — skills that transfer across subjects.

Print Books & Curriculum

- **Comprehension Connections** — Tanny McGregor. Bridges abstract strategies to concrete, student-friendly lessons.
- **The Reading Strategies Book** — Jennifer Serravallo. A toolkit of 300 strategies organized by reading goal.
- **Notice and Note: Strategies for Close Reading** — Beers & Probst. Six signposts to help students dig deeper into texts.
- **Nonfiction Reading Power** — Adrienne Gear. Strategies specifically for informational text.
- **The Well-Trained Mind** — Susan Wise Bauer. Classical education perspective; strong on building background knowledge.

Websites & Digital Tools

- <https://www.commonlit.org> — ★ Free! Fiction and nonfiction texts with built-in comprehension questions
- <https://www.readworks.org> — ★ Free! Thousands of passages with comprehension questions; leveled
- <https://www.newsela.com> — Current events articles at adjustable Lexile levels
- <https://www.readwritethink.org> — Free story maps, graphic organizers, and comprehension activities
- <https://www.storybird.com> — Read and create illustrated stories; free access now very limited (2023+); paid subscription required for most features
- <https://www.getepic.com> — Digital library; teachers/tutors get free access
- <https://www.faithbot.tools> — Faithbot.tools — ★ AI tool that generates Bible-based reading content. Can rewrite Bible stories for different grade levels (Pre-K through high school), and produce comprehension activities and coloring pages. Ideal for tutors who want leveled, faith-integrated reading passages without spending hours creating them. Free to use.
- <https://thisreadingmama.com/> — ★ Hands-on literacy learning for home or school; free printable downloads; useful for TCY, ARW, and ESL students
- <http://www.softschools.com/> — Free grammar quizzes, phonics worksheets, and online reading games; organized by grade and topic; Pre-K through high school
- <http://www.rhlschool.com/> — Free reading and math worksheets

Bible-Integrated Comprehension Practice

- **International Children's Bible (ICB) or New Living Translation (NLT)** — Use age-appropriate Bible passages as reading texts. Model comprehension strategies on Scripture.

- **Bible story comprehension questions** — After reading a Bible narrative, ask: Who? What? Where? When? Why? So what? (application).
- **God's Story Leveled Bible Readers** — godshand.clclutheran.org — Bible stories leveled from preschool through 8th grade; excellent for matching text to reading level.
- **ESL Bible Stories** — Printable Bible stories formatted for ESL students; clear language; useful for struggling readers of any background.
- **Lifeway VBS Curriculum** — Strong narrative structure; can be used as leveled reading passages.

Comprehension Strategies to Practice

- Before reading: Preview the text, activate background knowledge, predict.
- During reading: Ask questions, make connections (text-to-self, text-to-world), visualize.
- After reading: Summarize in own words, identify main idea, discuss what was learned.
- Vocabulary: Teach 3–5 key words before reading. Use them in sentences. Review next session.
- Read-aloud with discussion: Even older students benefit from hearing fluent reading. Pause and think aloud.

Section 4 — Basic Math Skills

Many struggling students have gaps in foundational math — number sense, basic operations, fractions, and problem-solving. These resources help volunteers address those gaps systematically and engagingly.

Print Curriculum & Books

- **Math U See** — Steven Demme. Manipulative-based, mastery approach. Strong for remediation. Christian-friendly.
- **RightStart Mathematics** — Joan Cotter. Visual and hands-on; uses an abacus. Excellent for number sense.
- **Singapore Math** — Bar model approach; builds strong problem-solving and conceptual understanding.
- **Mastering Math Facts** — Sherrill Flora. Structured practice for automaticity.
- **Jump Math** — Mighton. Research-based; small incremental steps that build confidence.

Websites & Free Tools

- <https://www.khanacademy.org/> — ★ Free! Complete Pre-K through college math curriculum with instructional videos and practice activities
- <https://www.ixl.com/math> — Adaptive practice; limited free use; inexpensive subscription
- <https://www.prodigygame.com> — ★ Free! RPG-style game covering K–8 math standards
- <https://www.mathplayground.com> — Free games and word problems
- <https://www.coolmathgames.com> — Logic and math games; good for reluctant learners
- <https://illuminations.nctm.org> — Free lesson plans, activities, and virtual manipulatives
- <https://nlvm.usu.edu> — Free online manipulatives (base ten blocks, fraction bars, etc.) — requires Java; may not function in modern browsers; use PhET or Toy Theater as alternatives
- <http://www.math-aids.com> — ★ Free, unlimited dynamically generated math worksheets; customize by skill and grade
- <http://www.learn-with-math-games.com/printable-math-games.html> — Printable math games and resources
- <https://numberdyslexia.com/tag/free-resources/> — Resources for students who struggle with math (dyscalculia-friendly); includes explanations and worksheets
- <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/FreeDownload/Telling-Time-Task-Cards-with-QR-Codes-1055869> — Free telling time task cards with QR codes

Games & Hands-On Activities

- **Sum Swamp** — Addition and subtraction board game; grades 1–3.
- **Zeus on the Loose** — Mental addition card game; flexible for multiple skill levels.
- **Fraction Formula** — Hands-on fraction comparison game.
- **Prime Climb** — Color-coded multiplication/division board game.

- **Yahtzee** — Builds addition and strategic thinking.
- **Dominoes** — Matching, addition, multiplication practice in disguise.
- **Math War (card game)** — Use a standard deck; flip two cards and multiply or add. Winner keeps the cards.
- **Base Ten Blocks / Cuisenaire Rods** — Inexpensive physical manipulatives for number sense and operations.

Volunteer Tips

- Identify the specific gap — don't re-teach what the student already knows.
- Use concrete manipulatives before moving to pictures, then abstract symbols (CPA approach).
- Math anxiety is real — begin each session with something the student can do successfully.
- Connect math to real life: cooking measurements, money, time, sports statistics.

Section 5 — Writing: Handwriting & Composition

Writing encompasses fine motor skills (handwriting), spelling, sentence construction, and the ability to organize and express ideas. Address each area according to the student's needs.

Handwriting — Print & Curriculum

- **Handwriting Without Tears** — Jan Olsen. ★ Most widely used handwriting program; multisensory, developmentally sequenced.
- **A Reason for Handwriting** — Each lesson uses a Bible verse as copywork.
- **Getty-Dubay Italic Handwriting** — Practical italic style; bridges print and cursive.
- **Cursive First** — Research supports cursive as easier for some learners, especially those who struggle with print.

Composition — Print & Curriculum

- **Institute for Excellence in Writing (IEW)** — Andrew Pudewa. ★ Structured, incremental approach to written composition. Popular in Christian homeschool and tutorial settings.
- **Writing with Ease / Writing with Skill** — Susan Wise Bauer. Narration-based composition program.
- **Six Traits of Writing** — Ruth Culham. Framework for assessing and improving ideas, organization, voice, word choice, fluency, conventions.
- **The Writing Revolution** — Hochman & Wexler. Sentence-level approach; powerful for struggling writers.

Websites & Digital Tools

- <https://www.iew.com> — Curriculum, free videos, and writing tips
- <https://www.noredink.com> — Grammar and mechanics practice; student interests drive the sentences
- <https://www.grammarly.com> — Writing feedback tool; free version is adequate for older students
- <https://www.storybird.com> — Illustrated story creation; motivates reluctant writers — note: free access very limited; paid subscription required for most features
- <https://www.readwritethink.org> — Free writing organizers, story maps, letter generators
- <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/story-starters> — Random creative writing prompts; motivating for reluctant writers
- <http://www.kizclub.com/index.html> — Printable hands-on resources including story props, worksheets, and flashcards for grades K–3
- <http://www.teachertube.com/> — Instructional videos for teachers and students on writing skills and more
- <https://www.namb.net/resource/gospel-coach/> — Gospel Coach (NAMB) — AI-powered web app from the North American Mission Board that helps volunteers practice gospel conversations. Simulates dialogue with people of different belief systems, including those from Muslim

backgrounds. Free. Excellent preparation for tutoring volunteers sharing their faith across cultures.

- <https://www.faithbot.tools> — Faithbot.tools — AI tool that generates Bible-based content including stories rewritten for different grade levels, comprehension activities, and coloring pages. Particularly useful for ESL tutoring: generate simplified Bible stories in plain English matched to the student's reading level, then use the built-in activities to reinforce comprehension and vocabulary.

Games & Activities

- **Sentence Building Tiles** — Literacy manipulatives for constructing grammatically correct sentences.
- **Rory's Story Cubes** — Dice with images; roll and create a story. Builds narrative skills.
- **Mad Libs** — Parts of speech practice disguised as humor; highly motivating.
- **Copywork from Scripture** — Daily Bible verse copying builds handwriting AND hides God's Word in the heart.
- **Journaling** — Provide a simple notebook. Low-stakes daily writing builds fluency.
- **Tools for Educators Word Puzzles** — toolsforeducators.com — Free online tool to create custom crossword puzzles, word searches, Bingo games, and board games using your own word lists.

Volunteer Tips

- Separate handwriting practice from composition — don't make a student correct both at once.
- For students who hate writing, start with dictation (you say, they write) before asking for original ideas.
- Praise content and effort before correcting mechanics. Ideas matter most.
- Writing is thinking made visible — ask students to talk through their ideas before writing them.

Section 6 — Organization, Study Habits & Graphic Organizers

Many struggling students lack executive function skills — planning, prioritizing, managing time, and self-monitoring. These resources help volunteers teach practical strategies that serve students across all subjects and throughout life.

Print Books & Curriculum

- **The Organized Student** — Dina Madfes & Richard Gallagher. Practical system for binders, backpacks, and homework.
- **Smart but Stuck** — Thomas Brown. For older students with attention and executive function challenges.
- **How to Study (series)** — Ron Fry. Practical study skills for middle and high school students.
- **Learning to Learn** — Gloria Frender. Reproducible study skills workbook.
- **Executive Skills in Children and Adolescents** — Dawson & Guare. Research-based guide to executive function.

Graphic Organizers — Websites & Free Resources

- <https://www.hmhco.com/blog/free-graphic-organizer-templates> — ★ Free graphic organizer templates from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; variety of types and purposes
- <https://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer> — Large free collection of downloadable organizers for every subject
- https://www.math-aids.com/Venn_Diagram/ — Free printable Venn diagram worksheets in multiple configurations
- <https://www.worksheetlibrary.com/subjects/graphicorganizers/> — Free graphic organizer collection; variety of formats
- <https://www.freeology.com> — Large collection of free, printable graphic organizers
- <https://www.teachervision.com> — Graphic organizers, study skills worksheets; some free
- <https://www.canva.com/education> — Create beautiful customized graphic organizers
- <https://www.readwritethink.org> — Interactive online organizers; printable outputs
- <https://mind42.com> — Free online mind-mapping tool
- <http://www.internet4classrooms.com/index.htm> — Resources for common core including worksheets, PowerPoints, and graphic organizers
- <https://www.commoncoresheets.com> — Free worksheets organized by skill and standard
- <https://www.commoncoresheets.com/cheat-sheets> — Printable reference sheets explaining step-by-step problem-solving processes

Key Graphic Organizer Types to Use

- KWL Chart — What I Know / Want to Know / Learned.
- Story Map — Characters, setting, problem, events, solution.

- Venn Diagram — Compare and contrast two things.
- Semantic Map / Web — Central concept with connected ideas radiating outward.
- Cause and Effect Chart — Identify causes and their results.
- Timeline — Sequence events in chronological order.
- Main Idea + Details — Center box (main idea) with surrounding detail boxes.
- T-Chart — Two-column format for pros/cons, fact/opinion, similarities/differences.

Study Habits & Organization Strategies

- **Cornell Notes** — Split-page note format: questions on left, notes on right, summary at bottom.
- **Homework Tracker/Planner** — Help students write down assignments together each session.
- **Color Coding** — Assign a color to each subject.
- **Chunking Tasks** — Break large assignments into smaller steps.
- **Pomodoro Technique** — 25 minutes focused work + 5-minute break. Use a timer.
- **Self-Quizzing** — Much more effective than rereading. Use flashcards, apps, or partner quizzing.

Apps & Digital Tools for Organization

- <https://www.quizlet.com> — Digital flashcards; students and tutors can create card sets
- <https://keep.google.com> — Free note-taking and checklist app; works on any device
- <https://www.trello.com> — Visual task boards; helpful for older students with projects
- <https://www.forestapp.cc> — Focus timer app; trees grow when student stays on task

Section 7 — Reproducible Resources & Free Printables

The following resources are free or low-cost and may be reproduced for tutoring use. Always verify current terms of use on each website.

General Free Printable Libraries

- <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Free-Downloads> — Thousands of free educator-created printables
- <https://www.superteacherworksheets.com> — Worksheets in reading, math, writing — free samples; low-cost membership
- <https://www.k5learning.com/free-worksheets> — Free printable worksheets, reading and math; K–5 focus
- <https://www.education.com> — Worksheets and activities by grade and subject; some free
- <https://www.twinkl.com> — High-quality printables; limited free; affordable subscription
- <https://www.math-drills.com> — Hundreds of free, printable math practice sheets
- <https://www.vocabularyaz.com> — Formerly SpellingCity; rebranded to Vocabulary A-Z; subscription required (\$108–125/year)
- <http://www.worksheetlibrary.com> — 20,000+ free K–8 worksheets across all subjects
- <http://www.softschools.com/> — Free math worksheets, math games, grammar quizzes, and phonics worksheets; Pre-K through high school
- <http://www.rhlschool.com/> — Free reading and math worksheets; right-click to print
- <https://thisreadingmama.com/> — Free literacy printables for home or school; especially useful for TCY, ARW, and ESL students
- <https://www.toolsforeducators.com/> — Create and print customized crossword puzzles, word searches, board games, Bingo cards, and more — free

Emergent & Decodable Readers (Free & Low-Cost)

- <https://fcrr.org/student-center-activities> — ★ Free downloadable student reading activities by phonics skill; Pre-K through 5th grade
- <https://www.flyleafpublishing.com> — Decodable readers; preview sets available free
- <https://www.starfall.com> — Free decodable e-books aligned to phonics patterns
- <https://www.bobbooks.com> — Inexpensive leveled decodable readers; widely available
- http://www.hubbardscupboard.org/printable_booklets.html — Variety of free printable booklets for emergent readers

Christian & Ministry-Focused Printables

- <https://www.lifeway.com/freebies> — Free curriculum samples, Bible lesson plans, activity sheets
- <https://ministry-to-children.com> — Free Sunday school lessons, activity sheets, games
- <https://www.sermons4kids.com> — Free Bible lessons with activity pages, coloring sheets, and puzzles

- <https://www.biblepathwayadventures.com> — Free printable Bible activities and books for children
- <http://www.christianpreschoolprintables.com/> — Free Bible printables and games for preschool and early elementary
- <https://christianpreschoolprintables.com/bible-file-folder-games/> — Free printable Bible file folder games
- <https://godshand.clclutheran.org/> — Bible stories leveled from preschool through 8th grade; ideal for matching text difficulty to reader level

Miscellaneous Classroom & Volunteer Resources

- <http://www.kizclub.com/index.html> — Printable hands-on resources: worksheets, flashcards, story props for grades K–3
- <http://www.teachertube.com/> — Instructional videos for teachers and students
- <http://www.mes-english.com/> — Free flashcards, printable worksheets, ESL games, certificates, and activities for young learners; Pre-K through K-6

Section 8 — Music, Games & Engaging Activities

Engagement is the gateway to learning. Music, games, and movement embed academic skills in memorable, joyful experiences. Many of these also provide natural opportunities to connect learning to faith.

Music Resources for Learning

- **Schoolhouse Rock!** — Classic educational songs for grammar, math, science, and history. Available on YouTube and streaming services.
- **They Might Be Giants (Here Come the ABCs / 123s)** — Catchy educational songs for early literacy and math.
- **Jack Hartmann Kids Music Channel (YouTube)** — Free! Songs for phonics, counting, sight words, and movement. Excellent for K–3.
- **The Singing Walrus (YouTube)** — Songs for phonics and basic math; animated and engaging.
- **Flocabulary** — flocabulary.com — Hip-hop songs for vocabulary, reading, and content areas. Free limited use; subscription for full access.
- **Seeds Family Worship** — Scripture set to music. Excellent tool for Bible memory and building a biblical worldview.
- **The Donut Man (Rob Evans)** — Classic children’s ministry music; biblically grounded and memorably melodic.
- **Steve Green / Veggie Tales Music** — Faith-based songs that reinforce biblical values while using rhyme and rhythm that support memory.

Board & Card Games (Literacy Focus)

- **Bananagrams** — ★ Fast word-building tile game; builds spelling, vocabulary, and phonics.
- **Scrabble Junior / Scrabble** — Classic word game; differentiate by allowing dictionaries.

- **Boggle** — Find words in a letter grid; builds spelling and pattern recognition.
- **Sight Word Bingo** — Make your own or purchase; covers all Dolch/Fry word lists.
- **Apples to Apples Junior** — Vocabulary and descriptive language; great for comprehension and word association.
- **Blurt!** — Define a word; first to call out the answer wins. Builds vocabulary.
- **Taboo** — Describe a word without using key terms; builds synonyms and expressive language.

Board & Card Games (Math Focus)

- **Sum Swamp** — Addition and subtraction adventure board game; grades K–2.
- **Math War** — Standard deck of cards; flip two, add/multiply, highest wins.
- **Zeus on the Loose** — Mental math addition card game; adjustable difficulty.
- **Fraction Jugglers** — Fraction card game; builds conceptual and procedural understanding.
- **Prime Climb** — Color-coded multiplication and division board game.
- **Sequence Numbers** — Place chips on the corresponding math equation answer.

Movement & Kinesthetic Activities

- **GoNoodle ([gonoodle.com](https://www.gonoodle.com))** — Free videos combining movement with academic content; excellent brain breaks.
- **Sight Word Hopscotch** — Write words in chalk squares; students hop to the word you call.
- **Letter Stomp** — Place letter cards on the floor; call a sound, students stomp it.
- **Math Ball** — Toss a ball; call a number fact before catching it.
- **Four Corners (vocabulary version)** — Each corner has a vocabulary word; read the definition and students run to the correct corner.

Technology & App-Based Games

- <https://www.prodigygame.com> — ★ Free adaptive math RPG; students love it
- <https://www.duolingo.com/abc> — Free phonics app for early readers; game-based
- <https://www.starfall.com> — Free phonics and early reading games
- <https://www.splashlearn.com> — Math and ELA games; free limited access
- <https://www.kahoot.com> — Create quizzes turned into competitive games; free; any subject
- <https://www.blooket.com> — Quiz-based game variety; great for review sessions

Faith-Integrated Activities

- **Bible Memory Game** — Match verses to their references (like Concentration). Use index cards.
- **Scripture Story Retell** — Read a Bible passage together; student retells in own words. Builds comprehension and biblical literacy.
- **Proverbs Copywork** — Choose an age-appropriate Proverb as handwriting practice each session.

- **Ministry-themed Word Searches / Crosswords** — sermons4kids.com offers free Bible-themed word puzzles; toolsforeducators.com lets you create your own.
- **God's Creation Journal** — Students draw and write one thing from creation each week.

Section 9 — ESL Resources: Teaching English Language Learners

Reaching Children & Families from Other Nations

The goal of this ministry is to share Jesus Christ. Tutoring provides the relationship and the open door. English Language Learner (ELL) families — many of whom have had little or no exposure to the gospel in their home countries — represent one of the greatest mission opportunities in our own communities. Cultural sensitivity, appropriate materials, and patient consistency are tools in service of that larger purpose: introducing children and their families to the Savior.

Every child and family you serve is someone for whom Christ died. Tutoring is not the mission — it is the method. Keep the gospel central in your prayers, your relationships, and your conversations.

Understanding Other Cultures — Print Resources

Building cultural awareness helps volunteers avoid unintentional offense, build trust more quickly, and minister more effectively across cultural boundaries.

- **Reaching the World in Our Own Backyard** — Rajendra K. Pillai, WaterBrook Multnomah Publishing Group. ★ A wonderful introduction to cross-cultural ministry. Includes specific dos and don'ts for interacting sensitively with people from more than 50 countries. Written from a Christian perspective. Available in print and Kindle. ISBN: 978-1-578566-01-3 <https://www.amazon.com>
- **A Beginner's Guide to Crossing Cultures** — Patty Lane, InterVarsity Press. ★ Written from a Christian perspective. Helps readers understand different cultural perspectives with practical suggestions for building relationships across cultures and handling cultural conflict. Highly recommended for ESL volunteers and program leaders. ISBN: 978-0-830823-46-8 <https://www.ivpress.com>
- **Multicultural Manners: Essential Rules of Etiquette for the 21st Century (Revised Ed.)** — Norine Dresser, Wiley. Practical guidance for interacting respectfully with people from other cultures. The dos and don'ts approach makes this a handy reference for ESL volunteers. ISBN: 978-0-471684-28-2 <https://www.wiley.com>
- **Gestures: The Dos and Taboos of Body Language Around the World** — Roger E. Axtell, Wiley. Covers the world of gestures — what they mean, how to use them, and when to avoid them. Valuable for understanding miscommunication in multicultural settings. ISBN: 978-0-471183-42-6
- **Do's and Taboos Around the World, 3rd Edition** — Roger E. Axtell (ed.), Wiley. Information on protocol, customs, and etiquette around the world. Good quick-reference for tutors preparing to welcome students from a new culture. ISBN: 978-0-471595-28-1
- **CultureGrams** — ProQuest LLC. Individual four-page overviews of the culture of over 200 nations. A practical tool for briefing ESL volunteers about the backgrounds of their students. Available in print and online. <https://www.culturegrams.com>
- <https://www.namb.net/resource/gospel-coach/> — Gospel Coach (NAMB) — AI-powered web app from the North American Mission Board that helps volunteers practice gospel conversations. Simulates dialogue with people of different belief systems, including those from Muslim backgrounds. Free. Excellent preparation for tutoring volunteers sharing their faith across cultures.
- <https://www.faithbot.tools> — Faithbot.tools — AI tool that generates Bible-based content including stories rewritten for different grade levels, comprehension activities, and coloring pages.

Particularly useful for ESL tutoring: generate simplified Bible stories in plain English matched to the student's reading level, then use the built-in activities to reinforce comprehension and vocabulary.

Teaching About Culture — Print Resources

- **Culturally Speaking, Third Edition** — Rhona B. Genzel & Martha Graves Cumming, Heinle ELT. Builds useful, comfortable communication skills through exploration of common cultural experiences. Out of print; may be available used. ISBN: 978-1-424004-04-1
- **New Ways in Teaching Culture** — Alvino Fantini (ed.), TESOL Publications. Introduction to teaching culture with classroom activities. Out of print; may be available used. ISBN: 978-0-939791-70-5

Building Relationships with Muslim Families

Many ESL students and families come from Muslim-majority nations where the gospel has rarely — or never — been clearly heard. The resources below equip volunteers to share Christ with wisdom, love, and cultural sensitivity. Effective witness among Muslim families begins with genuine relationship; these tools help you build that relationship with the gospel as your goal.

- **The Crescent Project** — crescentproject.org — Offers stories, training, and culturally sensitive evangelistic tools for those building relationships with Muslims. A practical starting point for volunteers serving families from Muslim backgrounds.
- **Bridges: Christians Connecting with Muslims** — Crescent Project. A study resource for Christians wanting to build bridges with Muslims. Includes book, study guide, and two DVDs. Available at crescentproject.org. (Book ISBN: 978-0-9962396-9-1; Full Set ISBN: 978-0-9962396-8-4)
- **Reaching the Nations Among Us** — reachingthenationsamongus.org — Resources for reaching international peoples living in the United States. Helpful for churches wanting to develop a broader international outreach strategy alongside their tutoring ministry.

Practical tips for serving Muslim families with respect:

- Greet warmly by name. Many Muslim families place high value on honor and hospitality — reciprocate with genuine warmth.
- Be mindful of physical touch. In many Muslim cultures, men and women do not shake hands across genders. Follow the family's lead.
- Be aware of prayer times, fasting during Ramadan, and dietary restrictions (halal). Sensitivity here builds trust quickly.
- Avoid opening with religious debate. Focus first on the child's success. Trust opens the door to deeper conversation over time.
- Pray faithfully for every student and family by name. Ask God for open doors to present the gospel. You are not merely a tutor — you are a missionary in your community.

Selecting Children's Books for ESL Use

Not every children's book works well for ESL learners. When selecting general books for ESL tutoring sessions, look for these characteristics:

- Books that illustrate concepts — opposites, shapes, prepositions (on, under, around, through); limited text with clear illustrations.
- Books with illustrations that support and extend meaning — picture books with no words, or with bright, clear illustrations of story action.

- Books with predictable features — predictable language patterns and rhyming text.
- Books that support the academic curriculum — simplified, illustrated explanations of subject matter.
- Books linked to the child's culture — stories about people from the child's home country and folktales from their culture; demonstrates that you value their background.

Structured Children's ESL Curriculum

- **Let's Go, 4th Edition** — Nakata, Frazier, Hoskins, Wilkinson & Graham, Oxford University Press. ★ A popular structured children's ESL series. Includes student books, teacher guides, and additional resources. Excellent for tutoring settings. Order: (800) 542-2442. <https://elt.oup.com>
- **Jazz Chants for Children (Teacher's Edition and Student Edition)** — Carolyn Graham, Oxford University Press. Songs, chants, and poems to teach basic language structure. Teacher's edition includes reduced copies of student pages and teaching suggestions. Out of print from Oxford University Press, but used copies are available through Amazon, AbeBooks, and ThriftBooks. A newer companion volume — Children's Jazz Chants Old and New (ISBN: 978-0-194366-99-1) — is also available used. Search YouTube: 'Jazz Chants for Children Carolyn Graham' for free audio samples. ISBN: Teacher Ed: 978-0-195024-97-5 | Student Ed: 978-0-195024-96-8

Other Children's ESL Resources (Print)

- **Oxford Picture Dictionary for Kids (and Teacher's Book)** — Oxford University Press. 700+ words illustrated with 60 colorful pictures showing children and families in everyday situations. Teacher's Book provides techniques and strategies for each picture. Order: (800) 542-2442. ISBN: Student Book: 978-0-19-434996-3 | Teacher's Book: 978-0-19-434998-7 <https://elt.oup.com>
- **Creating Stories with Children** — Andrew Wright, Oxford University Press. A variety of ideas for using stories to teach English. Encourages creativity and language use simultaneously. ISBN: 978-0-19-437204-6 <https://elt.oup.com>
- **ESL Teacher's Activities Kit** — Elizabeth Claire. Practical activities kit for ESL teachers working with children. ISBN: 978-0-13080-478-5 <https://elizabethclaire.com/store/>
- **Games for Children** — Gordon Lewis & Gunther Bedson, Oxford University Press. Shows how to use games in the classroom to strengthen language learning. A go-to resource for fun, low-prep activities. ISBN: 978-0-19-437224-4 <https://elt.oup.com>

Faith-Based ESL Resource

- **The Story of Jesus for Children (Video)** — **The Jesus Film Project** — The Jesus Film edited specifically for children, with a gospel presentation at the end. Available in 182 languages. Free to watch online at
- **jesusfilm.org** — www.jesusfilm.org — Ideal for ESL families; the child's heart language version is especially powerful.
- <https://www.namb.net/resource/gospel-coach/> — Gospel Coach (NAMB) — AI-powered web app from the North American Mission Board that helps volunteers practice gospel conversations. Simulates dialogue with people of different belief systems, including those from Muslim backgrounds. Free. Excellent preparation for tutoring volunteers sharing their faith across cultures.

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ESL Websites & Free Online Tools

All websites listed below are free unless otherwise noted. Verify availability before recommending to students or volunteers.

General ESL Teaching Resources

- <http://www.busyteacher.org> — Thousands of articles and resources for ESL teachers covering all levels and skills
- <http://www.5minuteenglish.com> — Short lessons in grammar, reading, vocabulary, listening, pronunciation, and slang/idioms
- <http://www.esl-lounge.com> — Lesson plans and activities; premium membership available for additional content
- <http://www.englishmedialab.com> — Free English activities including games, puzzles, pronunciation, and grammar exercises
- <http://www.elcivics.com> — Culture, government, and history lessons for ESL students: US geography, holidays, life skills, and famous people. Excellent civics supplement
- <https://esldiscussions.com> — 14,000+ discussion and conversation questions and 700+ lesson plans; great for conversation corner facilitators
- <http://www.elizabethclaire.com> — Teaching resources including the 'ESL Teacher's Holiday Activity Kit'; subscriptions available for print or online versions of Easy English News
- <https://nextstepresources.com/product-category/church-ministry/esl-short-term-missions-church-ministry/> — NextStep Resources (EFCA) — Evangelical Free Church publications for ESL and EFL teaching. Includes 'Adventures in English: Reading and Conversation' which uses Bible stories; pronunciation and conversation supplements available

Already Listed Elsewhere in This Guide (Also Valuable for ESL)

- <http://www.mes-english.com/> — Free flashcards, worksheets, and ESL games for young learners (also in Section 2)
- <https://thisreadingmama.com/> — Free printable literacy resources useful for ESL students (also in Section 3)
- <https://www.readworks.org> — Leveled reading passages with comprehension questions; excellent for ELLs (also in Section 3)
- <https://www.starfall.com> — Phonics and early reading games; works well for ELL beginners (also in Section 2)
- <https://godshand.clclutheran.org/> — Bible stories leveled from preschool to 8th grade; ideal for ELL Bible reading (also in Section 3)

Volunteer Tips for ESL Tutoring

- Speak slowly and clearly — not louder. Rephrasing in simpler words is more helpful than raising your voice.
- Use visuals constantly. Point to objects, pictures, and gestures to support every new word.
- Allow wait time. Processing in a second language takes longer. Silence is not failure.
- Celebrate effort. ESL students often feel embarrassed about mistakes. Your warmth is as important as your curriculum.

- Learn a greeting in the student's home language. Even a single word in their language communicates enormous respect.
- Involve parents when possible. Send home simple activities in the family's language if available.
- Don't correct every error. Fluency comes before accuracy. Focus on communication first.
- Maintain consistency. ESL students thrive on routine — same time, same place, same caring face.

Quick Reference — Top 10 Starter Resources

If you are new to tutoring, begin here. These ten resources offer the highest value and are the most volunteer-friendly.

#	Resource	Website / Source	Best For
1 ★ Reading Rockets	readingrockets.org	All reading skills, volunteer training	
2 ★ Khan Academy	khanacademy.org	Math & reading (all levels), free	
3 ★ CommonLit	commonlit.org	Reading comprehension, free	
4 ★ ReadWorks	readworks.org	Leveled passages, free	
5 ★ FCRR Student Activities	fcrr.org	Phonics printables & activities, free	
6 ★ Prodigy Math	prodigygame.com	Math practice, free & fun	
7 ★ Children & Salvation (book)	B&H Academic / Kennemur et al.	Volunteer worldview foundation	
8 ★ Explode the Code (workbooks)	Educators / Amazon	Phonics practice, low cost	
9 ★ This Reading Mama	thisreadingmama.com	Literacy printables; TCY, ESL	
10 ★ Seeds Family Worship	seedsfamilyworship.com	Scripture memory through music	

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“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.” — Colossians 3:23 (ESV)