

## Methods and Class Management: Suggested Methods and Strategies for Grades K–3

### Introduction

In order to be successful as a religion teacher, it is important to respect the cognitive, physical, and spiritual capacities of different age levels. In this segment, you will find some helpful suggestions for students in Grades K–3. You may also want to view the video *Age Appropriate Catechesis Grades K–3*. Take a moment to reflect on the first question. Then read the article and answer the reflection questions.

### First Question

What kinds of methods or strategies do you feel help students in your class to understand God and faith?

### Article

The *National Directory for Catechesis* says, “The Church’s catechesis—and even more so, the catechist—must take into consideration all the human factors of a particular age level in order to present the Gospel message in a vital and compelling way” (48). More specifically, “School-age children should receive formal and systematic catechesis in a parish-based catechetical program, a Catholic school, or a program of home-based catechesis in which the content of the faith and the experience of Christian life is presented authentically and completely” (48.E.2).

To effectively help students understand the mysteries of faith, apply teaching strategies and methods based on the student's stage of development.

## Characteristics

- visual; encounters God through images
- vivid imagination
- literal thinkers
- physically active; needs to move
- enjoys sharing feelings
- loves to celebrate
- involves all senses
- experiential learners (hands-on, likes to “do” it to learn about it)
- likes to belong to a group; by Grades 2 and 3 begins cooperating and working together in groups to meet a goal

## Strategies

- Be very careful with the visual and verbal images given to represent God and faith; they can last a lifetime. Use a variety of images.
- Use guided reflections with visualizations that build a relationship with Jesus.
- Allow opportunities to move, count, pantomime, and create sound effects.

- Provide felt or magnetic boards, pictures, videos, and manipulatives to awaken all senses.
- Provide concrete, engaging tasks to build, create, evaluate, and examine.
- Group-work expectations should be based on their abilities.

### Reflection Questions

- What are some images of God that will help students in your class grow in faith?
- Why are activities especially important to students in Grades K–3?