

JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH MINISTRY

Creative Programming Ideas

Uh oh! Your lesson plan ended early, and now it's just you and a room full of junior highers. And the natives are growing restless. But don't worry. Keep the following questions up your sleeve, and you'll always be ready to launch a Bible-centered discussion that gets kids talking, listening, and growing in their faith.

THE FUTURE

KEY VERSES: MATTHEW 6:25-34 and Philippians 2:14-16

- Describe the job you'd most like to have 25 years from now. What will you be doing? Why do you want that job?
- If you didn't have to worry about making money, what job would you like to have when you're 25? Why?
- What do you think you'll like about turning 40? Won't like?

SEX AND DATING

KEY VERSES: EPHESIANS 5:1-4; PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4; COLOSSIANS 3:1-10

- As closely as possible, describe the person you'll marry someday. What does that person look like? Describe that person's age, interests, habits, values, and friends.
- If God put you in charge of correcting the negative stereotypes shared by the opposite sex, what would you change? Why? What would you put in place of the stereotypes?
- When girls dress in a revealing way, is it their fault if guys "hit" on them? Why or why not? If guys dress in a revealing way, is it their fault if girls "hit" on them? Why or why not?
- Who is the sexiest guy on TV or in the movies? The sexiest female? Why did you choose these people?

PARENTS

KEY VERSES: EPHESIANS 6:1-13 and COLOSSIANS 3:20

- What are three things your parents say or do that you hope you never say or do when you have children? What three things that your parents say or do would you like to say or do to your kids?
- What do you think your mom saw in your dad when they were dating? What did your dad see in your mom?
- What's the hardest thing about "honoring" your parents? The easiest? Explain.

UNIQUENESS

KEY VERSES: PSALM 139:13-16 and 1 PETER 3:1-4

- What would it take for you to become the most popular person in your school? Explain. Is popularity worth that price? Why or why not?
- If you could change one thing about your appearance, what would it be? Why?
- What's one toy you really enjoyed as a child? What was special about it? Who gave it to you? What became of it?

THE SECRETS OF HIGH-POWERED QUESTIONS

All junior high students love having adults pay respectful attention to them. Ask open-ended, thoughtful questions and you'll get even shy kids talking - and gain a clear glimpse into what your kids think and feel. Here are four question-asking tips.

1. **Ask open-ended questions.** Avoid close-ended yes or no questions. Make questions sharp, specific, and without obvious "religious" answers. Junior high students know how to tell teachers what they want to hear - and those answers are seldom revealing or honest.
2. **Really listen.** Communicate warmth by making eye contact and smiling. Paraphrase answers to be sure you understand.
3. **Ask follow-up questions.** Don't nail junior high kids for gaps in logic or biblically incorrect thinking. Guide them in *discovering* truth with questions that help kids see consequences to their decisions and ideas.
4. **Keep confidences.** Institute a "What You Hear Here *Stays Here*" rule with your group. And unless you hear information you're legally compelled to pass along, such as sexual or physical abuse, respect the rule yourself.