



VBS Crafts and Decorating Workshop

Decorating Techniques: Demonstrate (such as the brown paper sacks or tell about)

- **Drop Cloths** – for painted backdrops
- **Brown Paper Sack Blocks** – to create building walls – can be made in different sizes depending on size of brown paper sacks. Demonstrate making a block.
- **Projector drawings** – if you have access to a projector, you can project images from your computer onto the drop cloths or any medium for easy outline and drawings. Over head projectors work well also.
- **Plastic Tablecloths** – they come in so many colors now, they make great skies, rivers, mountains, clouds, grassy areas, etc. They are so versatile you are only limited by your imagination. Demonstrate making a waterfall – have boxes stacked with the blue coming down like a river with white at the bottom to represent the bottom of the waterfall...with the river continuing on. Have attendees participate in the activity of creating the scene.
- **Kraft Paper decorations** – can be used to create trees, clouds, leaves, etc. Demonstrate a short tree against a wall to create a 3-D effect. Trees can be as big or as little as you want. You can also use Kraft Paper to decorate around doorways to create a dramatic entrance.
- **Styrofoam or "Pink" foam decorations** – Styrofoam is thicker and harder to handle. The Pink Insulating Foam board is thinner and sturdier although, it may be a little more expensive. Demonstrate – if you are able – cutting the foam with a hot knife. Show cutting through as well as making designs in the foam board to signify for example a brick wall.
- **Carpet Tubes** – If you have one or access to one – have one available for attendees to see at the workshop. I have found that cutting them with either an electric knife or a hand saw works best. (We have about 50 of them here at Hope and if anyone is in the area before their training date, you are welcome to come and get one.)
- **Using foam to create effects and reusable items** – either demonstrate or talk about creating items from spray foam that is used for insulation. Best idea – rocks. They can be painted afterwards and you can create different sizes and shapes.
- **Creating Fire** – and not with matches! Talk or demonstrate using a Lantern with colored cellophane and tissue paper in red, yellow, and orange. Surround with real firewood and turn on lantern. Looks like a real fire. For added effect – surround with either homemade rocks or real ones.

VBS Crafts:

When gathering items for the crafts in your VBS program, it's not necessary to buy everything stated in the craft manual. You can save money several ways –

ALWAYS KEEP A LIST OF ITEMS NEEDED AND CHECK IT OFF AS YOU RECEIVE IT.

Saving money ideas:

- **Shop your church** – Do you have organized resource areas? Then you probably know what you have available. If unorganized – take a day and organize real soon – you might be amazed at what hidden treasures you have. Don't be afraid to use items from other areas of the church. When you remove an item, label the bottom so when you are cleaning up, others know where it needs to be returned to.
- **List items needed and advertise** – extra decorating items may be as close as the adult SS classes. If tools, trees, stuffed animals, plastic animals, fishing nets, etc. are needed – you would be surprised at who has it. Label all items for return to its owner. If person donates the item and it's not something you would use again – don't keep it. This creates clutter you can do without. Say thank you very much and if it's something they don't want back, ask if you can donate it to another church or discard it.

- **Furniture stores** – ask them ahead of time to save any cardboard furniture boxes they have and make arrangements to have the cardboard picked up on a regular basis depending on how much you need to create your design.
- **VBS Tree/Wall/Post in SS/Etc.** – Make a list of all items needed for VBS – paint, paintbrushes, glue, paint shirts (old adult t-shirts work well – just make sure any advertising on the shirts is appropriate), crayons, markers, hats, tissue paper, marbles – you name it – put it on a cute “decoration” such as cut-out Panda’s for Pandamania – one “Panda” for each item. Let people take a Panda off the wall and return it by a specified date. At the end of the collection time, now you can purchase what you still need.
- **Dollar Tree** – shop at local dollar stores first for those items you still need. Don’t be afraid to purchase something cheap. Chances are, you are only going to use it this one time and discard it.

Preparation:

- **Set 2 decorating days.**
 1. – First decorating day is for preparing any items that need to be done. Foam rocks, spray painting backdrops, cutting out Styrofoam, anything that can be prepared ahead of time.
 2. – Second decorating day is for setting up the church for VBS time. Set up will go quicker if you have anything that needed to be prepared ahead of time is all done.
- **Craft preparation** – Have a meeting with your volunteers who will be assisting in the craft area during VBS. Organize your crafts by day and by age if you have different crafts for different ages. Prepare one craft from each area with your volunteers so they know how to make and have it available on the craft table to show children the finished product.

Set-up Tips:

- Know what you are securing to. I.E. – concrete walls, paneling, or sheetrock. It can make a difference with what you use to secure to the wall.
 - Sticky Putty** – Works well on all types of walls including concrete. Removes easily. There may be some resetting of designs each day due to falling, but usually adheres pretty well.
 - Hot Glue** – Works well on all types of walls. Does not remove easily and may remove paint, paper, etc. and may leave sheetrock walls pitted.
 - Double-sided tape** – Works well on all types of walls, but, items may fall off easily. There are different grades of double sided tape. Carpeting double sided tape is thicker and more durable. Removes easily from concrete and paneling, may remove paint from sheetrock walls.
 - Duct & Clear shipping tape** – Works well on all types of walls. Removes easily from all walls and may or may not remove paint when removed.
 - Nails** – You need to check with your church’s policy regarding placing nails in any walls.

LASTLY – I would recommend that all workshops have about 10 minutes at the end of the session for questions and sharing of other tricks that others have as well as suggesting that presenters highlight their own “tricks” for decorating from their own experience.