

Introduction to Foundations of Preschool

We have three goals in providing lesson plans for children who are aged 5 and younger:

1. **To train them in orderliness, respect for others, self-control, and biblical character** – These character qualities form the foundation of everything else in life. The books of Deuteronomy and Proverbs are emphasized, and plenty of advice and help for parents is included in the lesson plans.
2. **To give them special time with Mom** – Little ones can get left out when life gets busy. Our plans will remind you of priorities of motherhood. You'll enjoy spending time doing activities with your children, and you'll cultivate special memories while feeling good that you remembered to teach them important skills and life lessons from Scripture.
3. **To help mothers feel less overwhelmed** – You don't have to do everything we recommend, but you'll probably enjoy having "check boxes" of the common-sense things you want to remember with your preschoolers. We even remind you of character qualities you can develop in your own life, such as joy, peace, and contentment.

Our lesson plans are based on 5 activities we recommend for preschoolers each day. Please note that we believe in short, easy lessons.

- Learning Time** – We'll give you short and pleasurable ideas for basic life skills that all preschoolers should learn, from Scripture memory work, ABCs, 123s, telling time, manners, and more.
- Creative Time** – We'll recommend fun table-time activities your preschoolers can work on by themselves, with you or an older sibling in the room.
- Building Time** – We'll suggest hands-on playtime activities that will help your preschoolers develop self-control, imagination, and attention-building skills.
- Outside Time** – We'll recommend ways to encourage your preschoolers to play outside, weather permitting, or at least to get up and moving inside.
- Rest Time** – We'll give gentle ideas for ways your youngest children can rest, relax, and get away from the over-stimulation that often occurs in a busy, homeschooling household.

Skills We Cover

- Five Senses
- Language Development
- Pre-reading
- Relationships (longer/shorter, on top of, etc.)
- Sorting and Classifying
- Counting and Measuring
- Problem Solving
- Exploring
- Creativity
- Family Identity
- Physical Growth

A Note about Schedules and Obedience

“Schedule” is often a bad word among parents of preschoolers. Maybe “flexible routine” would be a more realistic way to say it, but we have found that having a daily schedule is a foundation to a peaceful and joyful home.

You can read more about why we believe this way in our book, *The Four Foundations of Lifelong Learning*, available free with your membership, at: <https://homeschoolingtorah.com/the-four-foundations-of-lifelong-learning/>

We strongly advise that you set up a schedule for your preschooler’s day. Here are some tips to help you get started:

- Get out a **blank piece of paper** and divide it into half-hour time slots.
- Pencil in 3 consistent **meal times**, plus maybe some snack times. For the sake of your child’s metabolism and circadian rhythms, try to feed him at close to the same times each day.
- Plan for a **nap** after lunch.
- What time does your child normally **wake up** in the morning? What time would you like to have him **in bed** at night? (Preschool children need at least 10 hours of sleep each night.)
- What are some **other activities** that happen each day? Baths, bedtime routines, and events outside the home?
- Don’t forget to start training your child to do simple household **chores**. After breakfast, before supper, and before bed are three good times for picking up toys, taking care of his room and play areas, and helping with small kitchen jobs.
- What **“together” times** does your family have? Do you read the Torah portion together as a family each day? Do you have a family read-aloud time?

Now you can start to see how much time is left over in your child’s day. If you also have school-aged children that you’re teaching, you probably face some frustration of finding things for your preschool child to do during that time. Here are some suggestions:

- Can your preschooler **play alone** while you teach phonics or other, more intensive subjects to your older children? Plan 20-30 minutes a day for your child to play in a safe place, supervised but not needing to be entertained by anyone else. (By the way, this is good for him! It teaches him many helpful skills, increases his attention span, and boosts his creativity.)
- Our curriculum provides suggestions for five time periods. Depending on the age of your child and your family’s circumstances, **put these time periods into your schedule**, giving each one 30-60 minutes.
 1. **Learning Time** — This is with Mom.
 2. **Creative Time** — This one is near Mom and needing Mom’s help at the beginning and maybe at the end to clean up.

3. **Building Time** — This one is in the same room as Mom or a responsible sibling. This could also be done during his independent, alone time (see above).
4. **Outside Time** — Depending on your circumstances, this one is with a responsible sibling or with Mom nearby. (“Outside time” means “active movement time,” so when weather outside is bad, just move the activity to a safe place indoors.)
5. **Rest Time** — This one is maybe in the living room, or in a quiet corner of the house, with Mom’s oversight but not necessarily anyone else’s presence. (Use your good judgment....)

- Siblings** can be a big help. Can they take turns playing with each other, as partners, for a short time each day? You’ll have to decide how well this could work in your own particular family.

The number one skill your child will need, in order for a schedule to work, is obedience. But isn’t this one of the most important things your child needs to learn anyway?

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that YHWH your God is giving you” (Exodus 20:12, ESV).

“Children, obey your parents in YHWH, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’ (this is the first commandment with a promise), ‘that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land’” (Ephesians 6:1-3, ESV).

If I ask my children to do something, I expect them to obey. In our home, **obedience is defined as obeying immediately and completely, with a happy spirit.**

So I ask myself:

- Did the child obey immediately?
- Did the child obey completely?
- Did the child have a happy spirit?

If I had to answer “No” to any of these questions, then the child did not obey.

“The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother” (Proverbs 29:15, ESV).”

Supplies Needed

- Lessons Plans for Mom to use each week.
- Basic craft supplies (crayons, markers, scissors, tape, construction paper, poster board, etc.)
- Household supplies such as boxes and totes, toys and bubbles 😊

Available Online:

- Let’s Learn Our Bible! curriculum
- ABC Bible Memory Verse Songs
 - o <http://homeschoolingtorah.com/bonus-sonbeams/>

Preschool – Week 1

Learning Time

- Learn the letter Aa this week, using *Let's Learn Our Bible!* from Sonbeams, pp. 1–13.
- Sing “All Have Sinned” (track 1) of *ABC Bible Memory Verse Songs*
<http://homeschoolingtorah.com/bonus-sonbeams>

Notes:

- The Sonbeams curriculum does not use sacred names, such as Yeshua. It isn't hard to adapt, however, and her emphasis on both our redemption through the Messiah as well as obedience to our Father is very nice.
- You might want to adapt phrases such as “live as a Christian” to “live as disciples of Yeshua” (p. 6). These mean the same thing, but this might be closer to what your children are used to.

Supplies Needed This Week:

- Poster board – to make a Bible verse chart (p. ii)

Creative Time

This week we're going to make a “Touch and Tell” box that your child can use to guess what's inside.

- Prepare a box.

1. Get a large cardboard box, scissors, and heavy tape (such as duct or packing tape).
2. Tape the top of the box closed.
3. Cut 3-inch holes on the two opposite sides of the box.

Note: Let your child help you while you prepare the box! Talk with him while you work, using words such as up, inside, opposite, under.

During the child's “Creative Time,” let your child decorate the box however he wishes, using markers and paint, or cutting out shapes from construction paper and gluing them on the box. He could even decorate a little bit each day.

How to Play:

Fill the box with fun objects – a spoon, plastic cup, stone, sponge, straw, mitten, crayon, scarf, small toy, sock.

See if your child can identify the objects by feeling them.

Let your child try filling the box for other family members to feel inside and guess. He'll probably giggle a lot!

Note: See "Rest Time" below for a second activity that could be completed when the "Touch and Tell" box has been fully decorated.

Build Time

Idea #1 – Follow the Leader (with trucks or dolls)

You select one truck (or doll), and your child selects another. Take the two on a trip around the room, talking about where you are as you move about.

"... under the chair, around the table, over Grandma, over the plant, to the left of the lamp, backwards, after the cat, faster!"

Now let your child use both toys, making one toy be the leader and the other the follower. Encourage him to play this by himself for awhile.

Idea #2 – Blocks

Do you have wooden blocks in your home? We like to keep our blocks in one big container and to pull it out during this scheduled play time. Children love to stack blocks *up*, and knock them *down*. The ability to stack a certain number of blocks is actually used to test cognitive ability!

But making houses, castles, horse barns, and roads is also fun with blocks. You could even combine blocks with Idea #1 above. (Or put a block in your child's "Touch and Tell" box when he isn't looking.)

Outside Time

The theme for this week is "Water, Water, Everywhere." Water play is one of a preschooler's favorite activities. All you need to do is supply some water, a place to play, a few rules, and some materials to supplement.

Places to Play:

- Bathtub
- Outside with a big tub filled halfway to the top.
- A smaller container on a table or floor.
- In the kitchen sink.
- With a cleaning bucket and soap suds in the driveway.

Note: Be sure your child is supervised at all times when water is involved.

Other materials that are fun:

- Old raincoat
- Sieve
- Pitcher
- Plastic bottle tops
- Balls
- Sponges
- Medicine dropper
- Empty dish detergent or shampoo bottles
- Turkey baster
- Plastic sandwich bag
- Funnel
- Egg beater
- Blocks
- Plastic sippy cup
- Straws

For variety, try adding salt to the water. What will float and what will sink in salt water? Test in plain water, too.

Rest Time

Note: This idea could be continued in Creative Time, when the "Touch and Tell" box has been fully decorated.

Begin to make a "Quiet Book" that your child can look at during rest time each day. Prepare by first getting a 3-ring binder for your child and filling it with 20-30 sheets of blank, white paper. (If you have older children doing school work each day, your child will probably be thrilled to have his own notebook!)

We're going to add pages to this book throughout the year, but let's begin by having your child make a diary. Each day this week, allow him to draw a picture of what he did today. Even a very small child who is still making scribbles will know exactly what his scribbles are supposed to be.

Have discussions with your child about these pictures. Always try to turn the conversation around to your Heavenly Father. (You may even wish to call Him *Abba*, the Hebrew word for *Father*.)

"What did you do today, Honey?"

"Isn't it a good thing that Abba was watching over us and keeping us safe?"

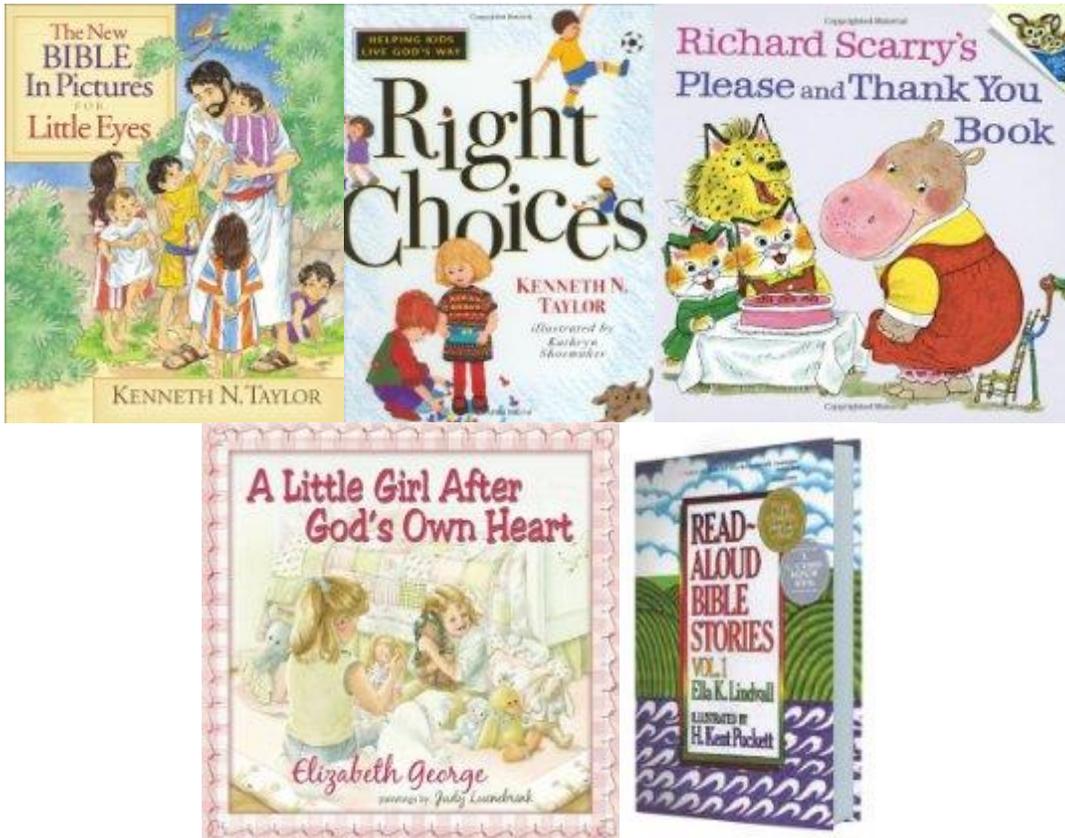
"Did you play with the dog? Aren't we so glad that Yeshua made dogs for us to enjoy? We should thank Him!"

"Did you see the new moon today? Abba placed the moon in the sky so we would know what day it is. He is so smart. Could you make the moon, Honey? Me, neither."

Note about Rest Time:

We like having a special spot for Rest Time. It can have a special chair, pillow, or blanket. Have a basket filled with good books. It should be a treat and privilege to retreat to this place, not a punishment.

Books We Love in our Rest-Time Basket:



Preschool – Week 2

Learning Time

Learn the letter Bb this week, using *Let's Learn Our Bible!* from Sonbeams, pp. 14-26.

Sing "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" (track 2) of *ABC Bible*

Memory Verse Songs:

You can sing 🎵 🎵

*"Believe on Yeshua ha Ma-shiach,
and you shall be saved."*

The songs, "One Door and Only One" (Day 2) and "One Way God Said to Get to Heaven" (Day 3) can be viewed online at <https://homeschoolingtorah.com/preschool-2>

Creative Time

This week we're going to make a number strip.

You will need:

Plain, white paper. (Any paper will do, but card stock will last longer.)

Crayons

Ruler

Scissors

1. With a ruler and pencil, divide the paper horizontally into eight 1-inch wide strips.

2. With a ruler and pencil, divide each strip vertically into eleven 1-inch squares.

3. Using the scissors, cut the strips as follows, and have your child color them.

Cut 12 1-inch squares. Color them orange.

Cut 6 2-inch x 1-inch strips. Color them green.

Cut 4 3-inch x 1-inch strips. Color them blue.

Cut 3 4-inch x 1-inch strips. Color them yellow.

Cut 2 6-inch x 1-inch strips. Color them purple.

Cut 1 10-inch x 1-inch strip. Color it brown.

Cut 2 5-inch x 1-inch strips. Leave them white.

Any strips or scraps left? Color them red.

Note: Let your child help you while you prepare the paper. Talk about squares and rectangles, as well as colors.

Let your child just enjoy playing with the strips. He'll enjoy making patterns. Here are some patterns you could start him with:

- What can you find that's the same length as the brown strip?
- Two white strips?
- Ten orange strips?
- Put the brown strip alongside two yellow strips. What can you add to make the yellow as long as the brown?

Store in a zipper-close bag for the week.

Note: You can also have your child make a few new pages for his "Quiet Book." This week, add pictures of things we need to take care of in YHWH's world, such as animals, elderly people, other small children, the poor, water, our homes. You may want to print coloring pictures online to help you - or draw with silly stick figures. (Children love their mother's artwork, by the way.)

Build Time

This week we're going to make beautiful things out of junk.

Junk to collect:

- Disposable food containers (boxes, bags, plastic containers)
- Popsicle sticks, straws, chopsticks, toothpicks
- Clothespins
- Various boxes and cardboard rolls
- Styrofoam from boxes

Here are some things that can be made from junk:

- Tape and tie things together to make animal bodies with legs and tails.
- Make a miniature city or town. Populate with clothespin people.
- Make a mobile to hang from the ceiling or outside on a breezy day.
- Towers and skyscrapers.
- People (might need help from a tall person, and maybe some duct tape)

Note: Have your child help you collect "junk." Talk about ways that we can take care of YHWH's world by not throwing junk away if it can be reused. Also, we should never leave our "junk" outside where someone else would have to work hard to clean it up for us. We should always think of others!

Outside Time

Play "Red Light, Green Light."

A sibling stands at one end of the yard with his back to the other children, who are lined up at the opposite end. When the leader, still with his back to the other players, yells "green light," the players run toward him as fast as they can. When the leader yells, "red light," he quickly turns around to see if all the players have stopped. Any player caught running must go back to the beginning. The first player to reach the leader wins.

If only one child is around to play with a parent, try playing "Red Light, Green Light" hopscotch. Make a hopscotch course on the ground with chalk, or make one indoors with masking tape on the carpet. Child should hop when you say "green light" and stop when you say "red light."

Rest Time

Ask if Dad will allow child to play with the following for a Nuts-and-Bolts Sorting Game:*

- A large jar with a wide-mouth opening
- An egg carton
- 4-5 of each of 12 different things, such as:
 - 1/2-inch screws
 - 1-inch screws
 - 1 1/2-inch screws
 - small nuts
 - larger nuts
 - small bolts
 - larger bolts
 - small metal washers
 - medium metal washers
 - large metal washers
 - plastic washers
 - rubber washers,
- Variations could include bobby pins and hair supplies, toothpicks, paper clips, buttons, coins, safety pins, cut-up plastic straws, beads, dried beans.

Continue to discuss your child's "Quiet Book."

* Note: This could be a choking hazard. Use caution!