

Substitute Instructions

Thank you for accepting the opportunity to substitute in Relief Society! Here are some brief instructions from the Relief Society manual that will help you prepare your lesson:

Focus on the Manual or General Conference Talk and the Scriptures

You may at times be tempted to set this manual or General Conference talk aside and prepare lessons from other materials, but your assignment is to help others learn the gospel through a specific leader's words and the scriptures. Dedicate a significant portion of the lesson to reading and discussing the words of the prophet or church leader whose words you were assigned.

Remember that the same lesson materials are being used in Priesthood so that families may go home and share insights they received. When you use other materials, you can prevent that sharing from taking place.

Seek the Guidance of the Holy Ghost

As you pray for help and prepare diligently, the Holy Ghost will guide your efforts. Through a still, small voice to your mind and heart, He will help you select the quotations from the book that will encourage others to learn and live the gospel. When you teach, pray that the power of the Spirit will accompany your words and the class discussions.

Prepare a Lesson Outline

As the Spirit prompts you with ideas for teaching, write those ideas down so you will be able to remember them. Before you teach, prepare a written outline to organize the ideas into a lesson plan. Consider using this simple four-step approach:

1. *Study the chapter.*
2. *Prayerfully select the statements that will be most helpful for those you teach.* Because each lesson contains more information than you can cover in one class period, you should not feel obligated to teach all the principles or use all the statements.
3. *Decide how to teach the material.*
4. *Write an outline to organize your ideas.*

Conduct Edifying Discussions

- Seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost. He may prompt you to ask certain questions or to include certain people in the discussion
- Politely redirect discussions that begin to stray from the topic.
- Testify frequently of the truths that are discussed.
- As appropriate, share experiences that relate to the principles in the chapter.
- Do not talk too much. Encourage others to share their thoughts, ask questions, and teach one another.
- Do not be afraid of silence after you ask a question. Participants often need time to think or to look in their books before they share ideas, testimonies, and experiences.
- Acknowledge all contributions to the discussion. Listen sincerely, and seek to understand participants' comments. Express gratitude for their efforts.
- When participants share several ideas, consider asking someone to list the ideas on the chalkboard.
- Do not cut a good discussion short in an attempt to cover all the material you have prepared.

“What matters most is that participants feel the influence of the Spirit, increase their understanding of the gospel, learn to apply gospel principles in their lives, and strengthen their commitment to live the gospel.” – Teaching Guidebook [2001], 12