



Suggested Lesson Format

✠ Opening Prayers

- “O Heavenly King”
- Prayer before studies

✠ Review

- What we talked about last week

✠ This Week’s Lesson

- Read handout introductory message
- Brief discussion on the theme
- Work through the lesson activity
- Review / Recap results with discussion on application to the students’ lives

Optional:

- Discuss upcoming feasts, fasts, and saints

Use the Lesson Study Guide for details and time allotments for the lesson.

✠ Preview

- What’s coming up next week

✠ Closing Prayers

- Hymn to the Theotokos
- Prayer after studies

Thank you for purchasing church school resources from Orthodox Journeys!

We’ve put together this handy overview to walk through the steps of using our lessons effectively and efficiently whether you are an experienced educator, clergy, parent, or novice teacher.

Read Me First

- Lessons from **Orthodox Journeys** can be used “out of the box” by experienced educators, clergy, parents, and novice teachers alike. Content can be used as stand-alone or supplemental to existing lesson plans and programs.

Each lesson is designed for 45-60 minute class sessions and can be modified based on your parish needs or schedule.

- Share the **Parent Overview** in a timely manner (no later than Sunday afternoon), informing parents of lesson topics, which they can discuss and explore with children at their convenience during the coming week.

- **ALL STUDENTS** should receive an **age-level handout** to complete in class and bring home (to share, finish, review, etc).

- The **Study Guide** correspond with the Student Handouts, providing instructional notes, “prompting” and discussion questions for encouraging dialogue with youth in each grade-level class.

Study Guides are intended for teachers/church school directors (and/or parents if homeschooling) and can be flexed based on student needs and their comprehension level of the Orthodox Christian Faith.

- Encourage young people to keep the handouts, as certain features carry-over and will be referenced in future lessons.

- **Bibles** should be available for each class, enabling student use/read-a-long, and search for answers to class discussion topics and questions. (We don’t include the text of scripture in our lessons, so that young people can become familiar with using the bible itself.)

- **Pencils or pens** will be needed, encouraging active listening, note taking, answering trivia, or fill in the blank activities during the lesson.

- Some lessons include **art/creative activities**, requiring crayons, colored pencils, or markers.

- Some lessons include **web-based links or resources** including YouTube videos, having a computer or sharing the content via “Zoom” sessions is recommended, followed by discussion or Q&A about the content.

- Begin with prayer (either ‘O Heavenly King’ or the Paschal troparion) and conclude with prayer (the hymn to the Theotokos), singing or saying the prayers together as a class.

- Use as many or as few of the questions and discussion topics found in the study guides to help children learn about the lesson topics, discovering how the Orthodox Christian Faith can be a part of their daily life.

- Asking open-ended questions is better for engaging conversations, encouraging young people to think about their Faith, sharing their experiences or ideas, and strengthening their relationship with Jesus Christ and His holy Orthodox Christian Faith.

- Don’t be afraid of saying “I don’t know,” providing youth with an opportunity to see adults don’t know everything about the Faith, and our own willingness to learn. (*Remember to follow-up when you have the answer, confirming you heard their question, and are supporting their desire to learn!*)

- Engage with your parish priest, providing opportunities for him to interact with your class, encouraging youth to develop a healthy spiritual relationship, while nurturing a willingness to come frequently to divine services, receive the Eucharist, and receive Confession at least four times annually (once during each of the four major fasts.)

- Pray for your students by name at least weekly.

- Be a positive examples of Christian love and living the Faith. May God bless you in your efforts to educate our young people!

- As parents and educators, we may not readily have all the answers, but we have the ability to inspire a desire in children to love God, which can benefit them throughout their lives. We can also engage our priest to get answers we need.

- Questions, ideas, feedback, and suggestions can be directed to the publishers at orthodoxjourneys@gmail.com

