VBS 2025 Daily Activities

**Day 1 – Myanmar**

**Problem:** Extreme Hunger

**Activity:** Just One More

Materials Needed:

1. Printed loaf of bread

*\*Printable resources available on the Resource USB.*

Directions:

1. Split students into groups of four.
2. Give each group a printed loaf of bread and have them split the bread evenly amongst themselves.
3. Now take one (or two) of the groups and split them up, adding those members to the other groups so that each of the original groups has one more member (some groups may have two more members).
4. Give each group a new printed loaf of bread and have them split the bread evenly amongst themselves again.

**Talking Points**:

* What did you think about the original amount of bread that you had in the first group?
* If that represented all the food you had to eat all day, would that be enough for you?
* Now think about the second group. With more people in your group, everyone had a little bit less food to eat. How did it feel suddenly having to share the same amount of food with more people?
* For Aye Ko and his family, a baby sister was exciting news, but it also meant one more mouth to feed.
* One more child didn’t mean one more person to earn money. Aye Ko’s father was still the only one who was working, so the food he brought home was still the same as before, but now it would have to feed one more person.
* What do you think it meant to Aye Ko when someone from the church came with a box of food for his family?
* How can you help children like Aye Ko get the food they need?

**Day 2 – Zambia**

**Problem:** Refugee

**Activity:** Proper Papers

Materials Needed:

1. Colored paper (yellow, green, blue, pink), enough for each student to get one piece of paper

Directions:

1. Pass out the sheets of paper, so that every student gets one sheet.
2. Have the students line up on one side of the room. Make sure they have plenty of space to move forward across the room.
3. Announce that it’s time for kids to sign up for school, but only the children with green or yellow papers get to do that. They can take three steps forward.
4. Do the same thing for the following categories:
   1. Work: yellow – 4, green – 3, blue – 2, pink – 1
   2. Housing: yellow or green – 2, blue or pink – 1
   3. Healthcare: yellow – 3, green – 2, blue or pink – 1

**Talking Points:**

* In many countries around the world, proper paperwork or a birth certificate is required for many important things, such as public education and employment.
* Refugees who have fled their home country due to violence, war, natural disasters, or other causes may not have the proper documentation to receive these important services.
* In addition, they may also face additional struggles such as learning a new language, prejudice, and cultural barriers. Jasper, for example, needed to learn a new language when he moved to Zambia.
* Jasper’s mother and grandmother occasionally find temporary work washing clothes, but it often does not provide enough to meet their needs.
* Jasper and his brother want to go to school so they can get good jobs when they are older and are able to take care of their family, but they don’t have the right papers.
* Thankfully, the local church that delivered food to Jasper and his family also runs a school.
* How do you think Jasper felt when people showed up at his house offering him food for free?
* How do you think he felt when he found out that he would be able to attend school?

**Day 3 – Dominican Republic**

**Problem:** Generational Poverty

**Activity:** When I Grow Up

Materials Needed:

1. Printout of adult and baby animals and occupations
2. Tape
3. White board or wall to tape up images

*\*Printable resources available on the Resource USB.*

Directions:

1. Ask the students if they think they know the correct names for baby animals.
2. Post the adult name of an animal (start with an easier one like bear or pig) and see if the kids can guess the correct name of the baby.
3. If they guess correctly, post the image of the baby next to/beneath the adult name.
4. Work your way through the rest of the animals.

**Talking Points:**

* Is there any way that a fawn will grow up to be a platypus? Will a piglet ever grow up to become a kangaroo?
* For an animal, the future is pretty straightforward. A bear cub will live in the woods and grow into a large bear. A kid will grow into a goat.
* *Post the different occupations along the top of the board/wall.*
* Obviously, these are all humans, who were once infants.
* What is different about these people? (Type of occupation, amount of money they make, etc.)
* Do you think they all had the same type of childhood? Why or why not?
* Do you think they all had the same opportunities growing up?
* Luis grew up in a home where his father and grandfather did this (point to the field laborer).
* Who remembers what generational poverty means? (When two ore more generations in one family have experienced poverty.)
* Because of this generational poverty, Luis won’t have a lot of the same opportunities as a child whose parent did this (point to the businessperson) or this (point to the police officer).
* Yesterday, we talked about education. What would happen if Luis received an education?
* What if the pastor who visits Luis in the batey brought someone with him who knew how to fix machines? What if he could teach Luis how to fix cars? (point to the mechanic)
* This is just one way to break the cycle of generational poverty.
* What can you do to help break the cycle of poverty?

**Day 4 – Belarus**

**Problem:** Loss

**Activity:** Does it Stand?

Materials Needed:

1. 3 large tongue depressors for each group of 4-5 students
2. Play-Doh (small container for each group)
3. Handful of toothpicks for each group
4. Three cotton balls for each group
5. A ruler

Directions:

1. Each group will build a structure out of the materials provided. Using the three tongue depressors and some Play-Doh, form a tripod as a base. Use the remaining materials to build a structure that is at least twelve inches tall.
2. At the top of the structure, each group should create a somewhat flat surface for the cotton balls to rest. The cotton balls represent the people the structure is being built for, so they shouldn’t just be stabbed onto a toothpick.
3. Once everyone has built their structures, have each group remove one of the large tongue depressors at the base WITHOUT MAKING ANY ADJUSTMENTS. (Note: once one of the tongue depressors is removed, the structure should fall over.)

**Talking Points**:

* What happened when you removed one of the supports of your structure?
* When you were building, were you planning on how you would make adjustments if you only had two of the base pieces?
* If you knew in advance that this would happen, how would you have planned differently?
* For Misha and her family, her father’s death felt a lot like this. They relied on the income from his work. Without it, their whole world collapsed. They didn’t have a plan to fall back on.
* Single-parent families are much more likely to experience poverty than families with two parents.
* How do you think local churches can step in to help in a situation like Misha’s?
* Besides bringing food, how do you think the visits from the local church were a comfort to Misha and her family?

**Day 5 – United States**

**Problem:** Invisible Poor

**Activity:** What Do You Do?

Materials Needed:

1. White board
2. Dry erase markers

Directions:

1. Ask the students to list different jobs/careers that people can have where they work for themselves and write them on the board. As they list jobs, group them on the board by type:
   1. Opening a traditional small business storefront (small retail store or bakery)
   2. Jobs that provide a service (housecleaning, gardening, dog grooming, hairstylist, plumbing, etc.)
   3. Independent work for a larger organization (Uber, Etsy shop, Door dash, Amway, Herbalife, etc.)
   4. Consultant work (graphic design, photography, etc.)
2. What is needed to do each type of work?
   1. Do you need to rent a building space?
   2. Do you need a working car?
   3. Do you need equipment, supplies, internet, computer, etc.?

**Talking Points**:

* Imagine that one of these jobs is YOUR job. You’ve just made all the purchases and officially opened for business. You’ve got customers and everything is going great. Until you are in a car accident that ruins your car and severely injures you.
* Restricted to bed and with no transportation, which of the jobs listed could you NOT do?
  + Cross off the ones that require driving (Uber, housecleaning, plumbing, etc.).
  + Cross off the ones that require leaving your home or standing (running a retail store, hairstylist, photography, etc.)
* Maia’s father had just purchased the land to run his business before his accident. After he was hurt, he was unable to work, meaning there was no way to provide for his family.
* When Maia comes into town with her mother to pick up supplies, they look just like any other family.
* This is what invisible poor means. It can be hard to identify that they need help.
* What can you do to help children like Maia who need food right here in the US?