





# Leading A Small Group | HOW TO USE “THE COMMUNITY”

## What Do I Need to Know?

3. Don't be afraid to teach by making statements. “Self-discovered learning” should not be a euphemism for the pooling of ignorance. We want the students to learn; it's your job to guide them. As such, there will be times every week, where you will need to tell them what they won't otherwise know. In every study, there is information in the “What Do I Need to Know about the Passage?” section that is not included in the questions. Those represent your chance to be the expert, to teach. In between questions, give some background data, share an illustration, or point them to a parallel text that can give clarity. Some kernels of truth along the way, can form the foundations from which the group can make discoveries.

4. Don't pass out the student notes, at least not exactly as they are printed. Heresy, I know, but in my experience, students don't respond well to studies that are over-produced. To that end, the students' notes have a very simple look and feel. But even those, can stifle freedom, and feel too programmatic, so I prefer not to use them. I'd recommend two options. It's very easy to copy the content out of the student notes with the text select tool in Acrobat Reader. Then, you can paste the questions into a word processor, cut the ones you don't like, add a few of your own, and personalize it. That way, the notes you pass out are truly your own.

Better still, though, is not to pass out any notes at all. When I lead these studies, I copy the questions I want to use, and comments I wish to make, onto a post-it note or two, that I stick in my Bible. That gives me a structure to follow, but allows greater freedom to follow worthwhile tangents, and enables me to edit on the fly. It makes the studies, in fact, and in appearance, more personal and interactive. By the way, tangents are your friends. They represent the topics about which your students are most interested, engaged, and therefore, best able to learn. If you can engage them with interesting content, they will learn a ton.

The final element of a healthy small group is progressive life-change. In fact, that is the ultimate goal. Our job is not to produce smarter sinners, but to help people be more like Jesus. To that end, make sure you are suggesting a small, practical way, that your students can begin to apply the lesson of the week. Each study guide includes application points in the section, “What's Our Response?” But also be sure to consider how your life has changed

## NOTES:

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