

SWORDGRAP

Teacher's Guide

Memorization tips, review games,
meeting ideas, and more!



Teacher's Guide

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Welcome to SwordGrip!

Congratulations, you have embarked on a journey of amazing importance and value! Here's the simple equation you can bank on:

God's word + human heart + faith =
eternal life and Christlikeness. (2 Tim. 3:15)

Let nothing deter you. The world, flesh, and devil will fight back, but "those who sow in tears shall reap in joy" (Psa. 126:5).

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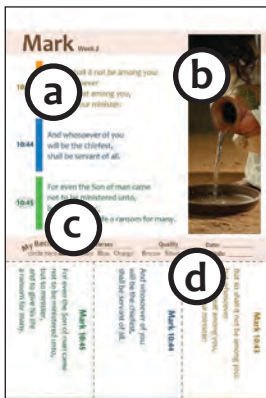
Before Your First Meeting

Planning makes goals a reality. Use this checklist to prepare for the great goal of hiding God's Word in hearts!

- ☐ Read the QuickStart Guide at the front of the flipbook
- ☐ Review this Teacher's Guide
- ☐ Plan your weekly meeting (see pages 5-6 for ideas)
- ☐ Calendar your start date, end date, and holidays/breaks
- ☐ Recruit memorizers
- ☐ Recruit helpers as appropriate for your group size
- ☐ Meet with your helpers to pray and prepare

Flipbook Features

The SwordGrip New Testament flipbook is available in ESV, KJV, and NKJV. Each flipbook week includes the following:

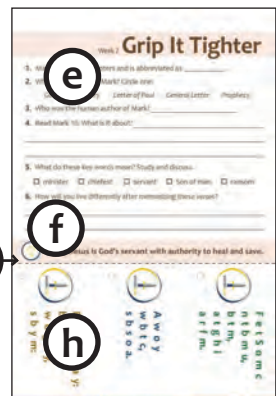


- a** Three key verses for the Bible book. For one verse weekly, memorize the green verse. For two weekly, add blue. For three, add orange.
- b** Matching image as a memory aid.
- c** Place to score the recitation (page 3).
- d** Verse cards.

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Back Side >

- e** Context, discussion, and application questions (see page 4).
- f** Book's key theme summarized.
- g** Hole-punch guide for cards (if using a metal ring).
- h** Initials/prompterization. The first letter of each word of the verse for practice and review. Try it!



How to Memorize a Bible Verse

See the *Hints & Hindrances* bookmark with Week 28 in the SwordGrip New Testament flipbook.

Read It

Read your memory verse in context thoughtfully and slowly. Read it aloud 5 times, emphasizing different words each time.

Write It

Write out the memory verse on a dry erase board with a new line for each phrase. Then, erase one word (or line) at a time and fill in the blanks.

Record It

Using a voice recorder, record yourself saying the verse. Play back the recording and check for errors.

Repeat It

Every day, review old verses before learning new ones.

More Methods

Singing

Set verses to a familiar tune and sing them throughout the day.

Imagining

If memorizing a narrative, close your eyes and picture the scene unfolding. Let the story come to life!

Drawing

Sketch a picture to jog your memory when quoting the verse.

Moving

Act out the verse with hand motions and gestures.

Emphasizing

Say aloud each line of the verse multiple times, emphasizing a different word each time.

Find more help at scripturememory.com/how.

Scoring the Recitation

Memorizers get a Bronze, Silver, or Gold recitation score depending on the number of helps needed, regardless of whether they recite one, two, or three verses that week.

Gold: zero helps

Silver: one help

Bronze: two helps

If three or more helps are needed, study more and recite again.

Helps = missing words supplied or wrong words corrected
It is not a help if the reciter catches and fixes his own errors.

In general, **maintain high standards with lots of grace!**

Cumulative Recitation

*“The lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting,
but diligence is man’s precious possession.” Proverbs 12:27*

Hunters rise early, freeze in tree stands for hours, and then finally bring down the quarry. Do they leave their harvest in the field? No. But if we’re not careful, verses memorized through painstaking effort may slip for lack of repetition. Review is tough and even tedious, but it yields a feast for future years!

On a regular basis have students recite all the SwordGrip verses they’ve learned. While group time for cumulative recitation is limited, ask them to say all their SwordGrip verses at least two or three times a week on their own time. If they form this habit early on, the return on investment is amazing! They can do it. Better to remember 27 verses for life than to forget all 82. *“More to be desired are they than gold... sweeter also than honey...” Psalm 19:10.* If you use rewards, announce your best one as a prize for those who recite all their verses in one sitting at the end of the year.

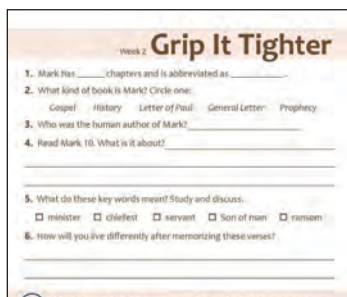
Using the Grip-It-Tighter Questions

Every SwordGrip lesson has a Grip-It-Tighter section. Use this material to:

1. Give students overall familiarity with this Bible book.
2. Remind them of divine and human authorship (2 Pet. 1:21).
3. Explore the context of the passage in the:
 - chapter
 - book
 - whole Bible
 - plan of God

4. Explain key words/phrases.

You may also wish to focus on other words besides those listed.



The image shows a worksheet titled "week 2 Grip It Tighter". It contains a series of questions and checkboxes for students to complete. The questions are:

1. Mark has _____ chapters and is abbreviated as _____.
2. What kind of book is Mark? Circle one:
Gospel History Letter of Paul General Letter Prophecy
3. Who was the human author of Mark? _____
4. Read Mark 10. What is it about? _____
5. What do these key words mean? Study and discuss:
☐ minister ☐ childless ☐ servant ☐ son of man ☐ ransom
6. How will you live differently after memorizing these verses? _____

5. Apply God's truth. Guard against allowing the Scripture to become Bible trivia. Drill down to tough questions of how our lives should change in response to God's word (James 1:22-25).



6. Give a message statement for the whole book. Use the suggested message statement and/or supplement with your own resources. For more advanced students, you may wish to give a basic outline for the book.

Additional Learning Options

1. Ask the students to explain how the verses relate to the picture in the flipbook.
2. Can you sing the verses? Act them out with stage movement? Invent motions that help fix the words in memory? Students learn best with multiple senses and learning styles involved. Have fun with this.
3. Read related key passages in class or assign as homework. For short Bible books, ask students to read the entire book.

Suggested Weekly Meeting

Make memorization fun with a weekly, one-hour group meeting of teaching, reciting, and reviewing the verses with games, visuals, and music.

Weekly Structure After Introduction Week

Consider the following outline and customize for your group, remembering that some students will get a lot done at home with much parental support, while others won't or can't.

Opening: Recite or sing the New Testament book names. Pray.

Reciting: Listen to verses as memorizers take turns quoting the previous week's verse(s). See page 3.

Learning: Introduce the next Bible book. Give an outline and overview of that book. Guide the group in finding the memory verses in their Bibles. Explain the verses in context. Talk through and complete the Grip-It-Tighter questions.

Memorizing: Work on learning the key verse together. See page 2 for ideas.

Practicing: Memorizers take turns practicing the new verse with an adult helper. While waiting to quote, memorizers should study or help others practice.

Review Games: Give instructions, oversee the games, and announce the winning team. See pages 8-12.

Closing: Announcements and prayer. Challenge memorizers to come back next week ready to recite.

Suggested Weekly Meeting (continued)

Schedule

Intro. Week: Hand out SwordGrip flipbooks. Instead of reciting, teach on why and how we memorize. Introduce Matthew. Instead of review games, play a get-to-know-you game.

Week 1: Recite Matthew verses and introduce Mark.

Week 2: Recite Mark verses and introduce Luke.

—continue through Week 26—

Week 27: Recite Revelation verses and explain Week 28.

Week 28: Recite the New Testament book names in order. Instead of learning/memorizing/practicing, summarize the year and/or allow time for cumulative recitations.

Celebration Week: Invite parents and friends to a recitation of the verses, year-end prize presentation, video, snacks, etc.

Questions & Answers

What if I'm short on adult helpers? Recruiting can be tough. Try to help others see the long-term value of children memorizing Scripture. You might also consider splitting the group in half for reciting. Reserve most of your helpers to listen to verses, but let the others run review games. The group can switch places.

Where do I find additional teaching resources? Consult a study Bible for book outlines and overviews. For verse commentary, consult your pastor, church library, reputable online sources, and/or the study notes in the VerseLocker app.

What about rewards? You may also want to keep three bins of small prizes corresponding to bronze, silver, and gold. For a group reward, consider tracking points for attendance (20 points per student), verse recitations (20 bronze, 30 silver, 80 gold), and review games. Set a group goal (e.g. 1000) for pizza party or donuts. Be sure to announce each week's progress toward the group goal.

Make Memorizing Fun!

Everything you do happens for three reasons:

- you have to
- you ought to
- you want to

Required things, like paying taxes, may be a burden. We do these things only because there will be harmful consequences if we don't.

Things we ought to do, such as mowing the lawn, give us a sense of accomplishment when finished, even if the job itself is unpleasant.

Things we want to do...well, they're just flat-out fun! Going skiing, sewing a quilt, playing a song—we do these just for the joy of it.

It's true that memorizing Scripture is something we ought to do. And teachers may make it a requirement. In fact, we hope they do! But students who memorize primarily because they "have to" or "should" are less likely to revisit their verses or continue memorizing into adulthood.

In any subject—math, history, science, etc.—the best teachers are those who actively engage their students. If teachers bring energy, excitement, and joy to the material, students will look forward to class time and learn much more efficiently and lastingly.

As a SwordGrip teacher, make memorizing Scripture more than an obligation for your students. Make it a delight! By harnessing children's natural desires to play, sing, and compete, you can make memorizing Scripture the most exciting part of their day!

In the pages that follow, we offer some starting points for joy in memorizing. Feel free to bring your own resources.

Review Games

Explain the game, oversee it, name the winner(s), and record the scores as applicable. A dry erase board may be helpful. You will need your flipbook to check the verses, but memorizers must put their flipbooks away. Take turns with other adult helpers in leading the games. This will allow you to participate as well, and your example will show that loving God's word is for everyone.

The following notes apply to all the games:

- Assign memorizers into two teams for scoring purposes.
- These review games cover the previous weeks' verses, never future verses.
- If the group is struggling with a verse, stop between games and review.
- Cheating should result in lost points for the offender's team. A first grace warning may be appropriate.

#1 Rapid Reference

Set-Up: Mark a line on the floor with tape. Memorizers stand on one side of the line with a Bible each.

Instructions: Leader calls out a reference and starts a stopwatch. Memorizers flip to the reference in their Bibles, touch with finger, and step over the line. Repeat with new references.

Scoring: Everyone who steps over the line within 45 seconds with the correct Bible location earns 10 points for his team.

Variations: 1) Increase difficulty with each round by lessening the amount of time given. 2) If using a variety of Bibles, pass Bibles one person to the left to give different look-up experience. You could keep the same reference for multiple rounds with this variation.

Movement Option: Place Bibles on a table at the opposite end of the room from the line. When leader gives the reference, memorizers run to other side of room to look it up. When they have it, run back and cross the line.

Review Games (continued)

#2 Quote Bee

Set-Up: Memorizers stand in one line. If you have a large group (and thus additional leaders), create a second or third line as needed in different parts of the room.

Instructions: Leader gives a reference to the first memorizer. Memorizer repeats the reference and tries to quote the verse. If an error is made, the leader corrects it. If help is needed, leader supplies 1-2 words. Up to 3 errors/helps allowed. If more than 3 errors/helps, that memorizer sits out the remainder of the round. Those left standing after one round begin a new round with only 2 errors/helps allowed. Third round allows 1 error/ help. The fourth round (final round) allows no errors. Continue this final round as needed to determine a single winner.

Scoring: All memorizers who make it to the fourth round earn 10 points for their team. The overall winner earns 50 more points for his team.

Variations: 1) After giving a memorizer a reference, allow her to pick an eliminated team member to help think of the verse. You may want to set a timer for 30 seconds. 2) Instead of using the reference, use the first three words of the verse. If the memorizer can tell you the reference, award a 10 point bonus.

Movement Option: When an acceptable recitation is given, memorizer runs a “victory lap” around the room while the rest cheer. Memorizer returns to her place in line.

*“And let us not grow weary while doing good,
for in due season we shall reap
if we do not lose heart.”
Galatians 6:9*

Review Games (continued)

#3 Key Word Grab

Set-Up: Leader uses the lists of key words/phrases from all previous weeks' Grip-It-Tighter sections of flipbook. Mark a line on the floor with tape. Memorizers stand behind the line.

Instructions/Scoring: Leader says a key word. When a memorizer thinks she can quote at least seven words of the verse containing that key word, she steps over the line. Leader calls on the first one across to recite words from the verse. If memorizer quotes seven words or more correctly, 10 points for their team. If an error is made, deduct 5 points for the team and memorizer must step back behind the line. Leader then calls on the next one who stepped over the line.

Variations: 1) Give 15 points for entire verse containing key word.
2) Add 5 more points for the reference.

#4 Write-It

Set-Up: Place a double-sided dry erase board (or use two propped up against each other) in the center of the room. Each team gets one side of the board. Place a tape line on the floor on each side. Line up by teams behind the lines.

Instructions: Leader gives reference. First memorizer from each team goes to his board and writes the first word of the verse. The first memorizer runs to the back of the line; when he crosses the line, the second memorizer goes up to the board and writes the second word. Continue down the line of memorizers and repeat in order. Leader should monitor both boards; if writing is illegible, leader can erase and the next memorizer must fill it in as his one word. If team realizes they have written a mistake, they may erase and correct—but only one word may be erased and one word written per memorizer turn. Teams may confer amongst themselves, but only one at a time may go beyond the line.

Continued >

Review Games (continued)

#4 Write-It (continued)

Scoring: The first team to finish correctly gets 30 points. If the verse is incorrect, the other team may finish (according to the instructions above) to earn the 30 points instead. If both write it incorrectly, no points are awarded, and leader should stop and review the verse.

Movement Option: Put lines far from the boards. Use cones to create a zigzag running pattern between lines and boards.

#5 Decode

Set-Up: Each team forms a line. Both lines face one dry erase board. Everyone should be able to see the board. The leader stands at the dry erase board.

Instructions: Leader begins writing the verse as first letters only. Memorizers should shout the reference when they figure it out. No discussing as group. Leader stops when correct reference is heard. Memorizer who gave the correct reference is given the chance to quote the verse.

Scoring: If the verse is quoted with one error/help or less, 20 points are awarded to that memorizer's team. If more errors/helps occur, the opposite memorizer from other team (3rd in row to 3rd in row, etc.) tries to quote the verse. Continue down the line, back and forth, until quoted with only one error/help or less.

Variation: Play hangman with the verse.

**Get the latest version of the Teacher's Guide
plus additional tools here:**

scripturememory.com/swordgrip/resources

Review Games (continued)

#6 One-Word Circle

Set-Up: Each team stands in a circle. Teams must be the same size. If uneven, extra player may serve as advisor to one team.

Instructions: Leader gives Team A a reference. Each memorizer says one word of the verse, going around in a circle. If a word is said incorrectly, that memorizer sits down. The next memorizer must say the correct word. Continue until verse ends or whole team is seated. Leader gives a reference of a similar-length verse to Team B, and they recite it as above.

Scoring: The number of memorizers remaining in the circle is the number of points times 10 for the team. (3 memorizers left in Team A = 30 points.)

*“Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one!
You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, and with all your strength.
And these words which I command you today
shall be in your heart.
You shall teach them diligently to your children,
and shall talk of them when you sit in your house,
when you walk by the way,
when you lie down, and when you rise up.
You shall bind them as a sign on your hand,
and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.
You shall write them
on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”
Deuteronomy 6:4-9*

Why Memorize with SwordGrip?

To sharpen the sword of the Spirit!

In Deut. 6:7, the Hebrew word *shanan* means to teach diligently or literally “sharpen” the words of God in our children’s hearts.

How? “Talk of them” when you sit, walk, stand, lie down (Deut. 6:7-9). Imagine this conversation in your house:

“Andrew, what’s the book of Hebrews about?”

“It’s about how Jesus Christ is greater than the old covenant.”

“Really? How do you know?”

“Hebrews 1:1-3 ‘God, who...spoke... has in these last days spoken to us by His Son...’”

“Very good. Now Anna, what’s Philemon about?”

“About how someone goes from being a slave to a brother.”

“How do you know that?”

“Because Philemon 1:15-17 says, ‘Receive him... no longer as a slave, but... a beloved brother...’”

SwordGrip passages learned and loved give a child the sword of the Spirit, drawn, sharp, and ready for action in the spiritual battles of this present evil age.

SwordGrip verses give a bird’s-eye view of God’s word in the New Testament by:

- Focusing on a theme passage
- Providing a memorable image for that passage
- Learning that passage word-for-word
- Offering activities and games to cement the words in memory
- Opening the passage’s meaning with key word studies and background questions
- Moving those verses to long-term memory for lifetime access

The skillful chess player begins with the endgame in mind. He looks 27 moves ahead to make sure he begins well. Let’s look 27 moves ahead spiritually and dream of sons and daughters powerfully quoting from each New Testament book, “equipped

13 for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:17).

Additional Resources: Old Testament, Scripture Songs, VerseLocker App, and More!



This Teacher's Guide is geared toward using the SwordGrip New Testament flipbook, but there is more to the SwordGrip family! Check out **scripturememory.com/swordgrip** for:

- Old Testament Volume 1 Flipbook: Genesis to Psalms
- Old Testament Volume 2 Flipbook: Proverbs to Malachi
- SwordGrip Scripture Songs (in three formats: CD, mp3 download, or mp3 on usb)

Additional teacher resources are available at **scripturememory.com/swordgrip/resources**:

- Old Testament Grip-It-Tighter Answer Key (pdf download)
- VerseLocker App
- Progress/Attendance Chart
- SwordGrip Alexa Skill
- More Memorization Tips and Games

SMF is here to help! Reach out with any questions!

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