

## Leader Teaching Tips

### Learning Styles

#### *Multiple Intelligences*

It is important to understand that each of us has **different learning style preferences**. To more effectively connect with each candidate, intentionally choose a variety of styles to include in preparing sessions.

- *Interpersonal* – person-to-person relationships; communication – discussion, small group work, service projects
- *Intrapersonal* – inside the person; reflection – journal writing, guided imagery, silence.
- *Verbal/Linguistic* – written and spoken language – reading, writing, reporting, listening
- *Logical/Mathematical* – inductive and deductive reasoning – recognition of patterns. analyzing, identifying, planning, sequencing
- *Visual/Spatial* – real and mental images; relationships of objects – drawing, visualizing, imagining, see a picture or item, symbols, making a banner.
- *Body/Kinesthetic* – tapping into the body’s inherent ways of knowing – movement, touch, manipulating objects, dance
- *Musical/Rhythmic* – sensitivity to patterns and sounds, rhythms and beat – listening to music, singing, writing lyrics, creating music in its various styles

### Characteristics of Middle Schoolers<sup>1</sup>

*Who am I? I really don't know.*

If early adolescents (middle schoolers) could describe themselves, they might tell us:

- I'm trying to sort out my identity.
- I'm starting to separate from my parents and my family, turning to my peers for support.
- I may reject traditions and teachings I accepted as a child.
- Sometimes I'm painfully self-conscious. I lack self-confidence, can be awkward and self-critical.
- Emotionally, I can overreact, be moody, and unpredictable.
- Physically, I'm developing rapidly, leading to my incoordination and clumsiness.
- I make moral choices based on reciprocity.
- I've got loads of extra energy and physical activities help me burn it off.
- I need creative outlets to let me experiment – painting, writing, dance, music, service, cooking, sports . . .
- I need affirmation. I wasn't to belong.
- I like ritual.
- I want all this God-stuff to be relevant to the things I struggle with every day: loneliness, anger, sexuality, fear . . .
- I'm look for guidance, clear limits and guidelines.

- I want to contribute. Ask me!
- God is a spirit, mystery, and Savior.
- The Bible is a manual to live by.
- My question: Who am I?

## **Characteristics of High Schoolers<sup>2</sup>**

*Who am I? I'm working on it.*

If older adolescents (high schoolers) could describe themselves, they might tell us:

- I'm forging my own identity, struggling to "be real," to be myself, including my gender identity.
- I'm separating from my parents and family, finding support among my peers.
- I'm starting to accept some of the beliefs and traditions that I rejected only a few years ago.
- Asking tough spiritual questions helps my faith to grow.
- I ask lots of questions (in my head, if not aloud), and canned answers don't cut it.
- If you expect me to listen to you, be authentic and don't pretend to know what you don't know.
- Be willing to wrestle with me over what's really important in life and faith.
- I am stressed. I may be juggling a job along with a ton of schoolwork. I may be worried about college and my future. I need a safe place to decompress.
- As I finish high school, I'm starting to make moral decision based on what's best for everyone, not just my friends.
- Physically, I'm transitioning into full adulthood, but my emotions and experiences might not match my physical development and strength.
- Model for me what it means to be a growing Christian.
- God is in tension between "man," Jesus, and a universal God.
- The Bible is a summary of values and truths.
- My questions: Who am I? Where do I fit in the world?

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<sup>1</sup> Sharon Ely Pearson. *The Episcopal Christian Educator's Handbook* (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2013), 70.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.