Introducing Scripture Verses

The activities suggested below can be used to introduce students to scripture mastery passages:

Encourage students to mark the scripture mastery passages. They can circle, underline, shade, or draw a box around words, phrases, and verses. Marking the verses will help students readily identify the verses on the scripture page.

Read the verses out loud so students can hear how to pronounce difficult words and phrases.

Help students understand words, phrases, doctrines, and principles contained in the passage.

Explain how the passage could be used to teach the gospel, answer a question, or solve a problem in their lives.

As a class, decide on a key word or words that represent the main idea of the scripture passage. Write the idea on the board next to the reference. You may want to standardize key words with other teachers in your building or area.
Linking References and Main Ideas

**Introduction**

Before students can find a scripture passage they needs to link the reference (book, chapter, and verse numbers) and the main idea of the passage. The main idea is sometimes referred to as the key word or key words. For example, if students hear “1 Nephi 3:7” they should be able to give key words such as “Go and do.” If they hear “Go and do” they should be able to give the reference “1 Nephi 3:7.”

If students have the verses marked in their scriptures, they may not need to remember the verse numbers. The following are some ways to help students link the references and the main ideas of scripture passages:

- **Flash Cards**
  Write the references and main ideas on flash cards that can be seen by students in the back of the classroom. Show a card with a reference and ask students to give the main idea or show the main idea and ask students to give the reference.

- **Drill**
  Give students a piece of paper with the references and main ideas. Put students in pairs and have them drill each other until both individuals can give the references and main ideas without hesitation.

- **Erase**
  Write the references and main ideas on the board. Recite the references and ideas as a class. Erase a reference or idea and recite all the references and ideas again, even those that have been erased. Erase another reference or idea and recite what is on the board and what has been erased. Continue erasing and reciting until the references and ideas are gone.

- **Cover**
  Write the main ideas on the chalkboard next to the references (book and chapter). Give students a few minutes to silently memorize the references and the ideas, then cover the references. Ask students to verbally give the references or write them down on a piece of paper. Now uncover the references and cover the main ideas. Ask students to give the main ideas. Repeat the activity again.

- **Grid**
  List on the board the main ideas of several scripture passages. Ask students to randomly write the references in the squares of a 4 by 4 grid. If there are more squares than ideas, students can use the references more than once. Give the students a key word that represents the main idea and ask them to write the key word in the squares that have the matching reference. The activity continues until a student has references written in a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal line. Ask the student to read off the ideas and the matching references.

- **One Word**
  Give students a one word clue to a scripture passage. Students say out loud the reference that matches the clue. This activity could be done with five to ten scripture passages. You could ask students to respond as a class or call on individual students.

- **Greeting**
  Give students a key word or words as they enter the classroom. They can verbally give you the reference or find it in their scriptures.

- **IDK**
  Read a key word to a scripture passage and count out loud to ten. Students write down what they think is the reference. If they cannot write down the reference before you finish counting to ten, they write IDK for “I don’t know.” After you have given all the references, ask students which ones they did not know. Review these passages. Ask students to write down the references to the same set of scriptures as you give them in a different order. The students correct their papers and report their improvement.

- **Pairs**
  Use the above activity to determine the students that know the references and main ideas. Pair these students with those who do not know the references. The pairs work together until both students can link the references and main ideas.

- **Quiz**
  Write the references and main ideas on the board. Give students a few minutes to silently memorize them. Erase the references and ideas. Give students the references and have them write the ideas on a piece of paper or give students the main ideas and have them write the references on the paper.
Finding Scripture Verses

Introduction
If students can link the reference and main idea of a scripture passage, then they are ready to practice finding or turning to the passages in their scriptures. There are many activities a teacher can use that will help students practice finding the passages. Some of these activities are called scripture chasing. Some chasing activities require students to compete against each other, i.e., the first individual or group of individuals to find a passage is the winner.

Teachers should be sensitive to the feelings of students who are not competitive or who are not as quick in recalling or finding the passages. The objective of chasing should not be to see who is the fastest or who is the winner but to help all students turn to the passage in a reasonable amount of time. The activities suggested below encourage improvement by allowing students to assist one another or by letting them compete against themselves and not against each other.

*Count 1-10
Read the first part of a scripture passage or give students a key word or words, then count slowly from one to ten. Students begin looking for the scripture passage as soon as you start speaking. Students receive a point for each scripture they find before you have counted to ten. Each student keeps track of his own score. Review the passages students missed then repeat the activity using the same scripture passages in a different order. Students try to improve their score the second time.

*Put a Number
A variation of the previous activity is to give students a piece of paper and have them keep track of when they find the passage. If they find the scripture before you begin counting then they put a “0” down, if they find the passage when you are counting seven then they put a “7” down. A student who does not find the passage puts down a ten. After all the scriptures are given, students add up their points for each of the scriptures. The lower the score the better. Students now turn their papers over and try to lower their score by finding the same set of scriptures. On the second round you present the scriptures in a different order.

*Chase Books
Chase the books of scripture passages so students can learn where they are. Ask students to note the location of a book in relation to other books and in relation to the entire book of scripture. For example, the book of Alma is in the middle of the Book of Mormon, after the book of Mosiah, and before the book of Helaman. Say the book and have students turn to any page in that book.

*Chase Verses
Read the first part of a scripture passage or the key word or words of a main idea. Students begin looking for the scripture passage as soon as you start speaking. When students have found the passage, they put one hand on the scripture page and raise the other hand. If students do not find the passage, tell them where it is or ask other students to show them so they can find it the next time. If a majority of the students cannot find the passage, it may mean that they have not linked the reference and main idea or they are having difficulty finding the book.

*High Jump
Draw a high jump bar on the chalkboard. Tell students that they are going to chase to see how high they can high jump. Each student’s bar starts at six feet and can be moved up at three inch intervals. Read part of a scripture passage or key word and then begin counting up to ten. Students begin chasing as soon as you begin speaking. If a student finds the passage before you stop counting, they can move their high jump bar up three inches. Allow up to three misses per height. Students keep track of their height.
Understanding Scripture Verses

Introduction
Teachers should avoid the tendency to spend so much time helping students link and find scripture passages that they fail to help them with the higher level activities of understanding and applying. The following are some activities that can help students understand scripture passages:

*Summarize
Ask students to summarize the scripture passages.

*Chain References
Ask students to read several references that are related to a scripture passage. Discuss how the references help students understand the passage.

*Setting
Explain to students the historical and doctrinal settings of the passages. Refer to the scripture study aids, previously studied scripture blocks, and the CES resource materials for information.

*Synonyms
Ask students to give synonyms for words in the passage. Read the verses using the new words.

*Restate
Ask students to restate the scripture passage in their own words.

*Student Questions
Encourage students to ask or write questions about the principles, doctrines, or events they do not understand in the passages.

*Essential Words
Discuss which words would be most essential if the verse were limited to eight words or less. Ask students to look for words or phrases which if left out could change the meaning.

*Underline
Have students circle or underline what they believe to be the most important words in the scripture. Discuss the meaning of the words.

Definitions
Ask students to define difficult words or phrases or look them up in a dictionary.

Study Aids
Teach students to use footnotes, index, topical guide, and cross-references to help them understand the passages. Ask students to share how the scripture aids help them understand the passages.

Ask Questions
Ask students questions to help them understand. For example, “What does this mean?” “Why did this happen?” or “What do you think?”
Applying Scripture Verses

Introduction
The goal of scripture mastery is to help students use the scripture passages outside of class. Adequate time should be spent helping students apply the scripture passages. The following activities can help students apply scripture passages:

*Newspaper
Divide the class into groups of 3 to 5 students. Give each group a newspaper. Allow them five minutes to find as many articles, stories, or advertisements as possible that pertain to any of the scripture passages. At the end of the five minutes give each group time to share their information.

*Outside Class
Ask students to share scripture passages they have used outside of class or passages they have heard others use in home evenings, conferences, or church meetings.

*Devotional
Ask students to use the passages in the devotionals. Refer to the mastery scriptures during lessons. Ask students to think of mastery passages that relate to the lesson or summarize its content.

*Name Substitution
Encourage students to personalize the scriptures by substituting their own names for the names of individuals in the mastery scripture.

*Missionary
Divide the class into groups of 3 to 5 students. Each group appoints a missionary. Those who are not missionaries are investigators. Each investigator is given a situation. The answer to the situation is a scripture mastery passage. When you say “go,” the missionaries approach anyone in the class and ask, “What do you know about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints? Would you like to know more?” The investigator reads his situation. If the missionary opens the investigator’s scriptures to the correct reference, the investigator is recorded as a convert. The missionary tries to “convert” as many classmates as he can in a designated time.

*Objects
Find an object or picture that represents each of the scriptures to be reviewed. Show the objects or pictures one at a time. Students give a scripture passage or find one in their scriptures that represents what they see. Give students time to explain how their passage relates to the object or picture.

*Charades
Divide the class into groups of 3 to 5 students. Assign each group a different mastery scripture. The groups think of a real life situation that pertains to their scriptures. Each group goes to the front of the class and does a charade about their situation. The other class members try to guess a mastery scripture that applies to the charade.

*Situations
Give students a question or problem. Ask them to write as many passages as they can think of that help solve the problem or answer the question. Ask students to share their passages.

*Think Up
Ask students to think of questions, challenges, or problems that relate to scripture mastery passages.

*Answers
Write “Scriptures have the Answer” on the board. During the week write several questions under this title. Ask students to share mastery scripture passages that help answer the questions.

*Share
Ask students to share scripture passages that have helped them solve problems or given them insights. Caution students not to share feelings or experiences that are sacred or very personal.

Chase
Present a question, problem, or story. Ask students to find a scripture passage that helps answer the questions or solve the problem. After students have found a passage, it is important to give them time to explain how the passage answers the questions or solves the problem. Students should feel comfortable presenting a number of different passages that may relate to the question or problem.

Come In
Give students a question, problem, or challenge as they come into class. Ask them to find an appropriate scripture before class starts.
Memorizing Scripture Verses

Introduction
Help students memorize scripture mastery passages. Memorization is a valuable tool for scripture study. Students should be encouraged to memorize a few important verses. This method also helps prepare them for missionary service. Students should not be required to memorize all of the scripture mastery passages (Teaching the Gospel p. 35). The activities below are some ways to help students memorize:

*Missing Words
On the chalkboard write out the scripture to be memorized. Have the class repeat it several times. Erase two or three words at a time while the class continues to repeat the scripture after each erasing session. Continue the process until all the words are erased from the board and the class has the verse memorized.

*Phrases
Break a scripture passage into phrases. Have the class repeat the first phrase until it is learned. Add the second phrase and practice it until both phrases are memorized, then add the third phrase, and so on. While students are learning later phrases, speed up the recitation of the earlier parts for variety and greater retention.

*10 Seconds
Write the scripture to be memorized on the board. Give students 10 seconds to memorize it. Cover the scripture with a piece of poster board. Ask students to recite the passage. Uncover the passage and give students another 10 seconds to memorize. Repeat this procedure until the students have memorized the passage.

*First Letter
Give students the first letter of each word in a scripture passage and have them state the words using the first letters as a guide.

*Pictures
Draw on the board simple illustrations that represent words and phrases from a scripture passage. Ask students to use the illustrations to help them memorize the scripture passage.

*On the Board
Give students a few seconds to memorize a scripture passage. Ask students to give each word of the passage as a student writes them on the board. A student can only give a second word after all the members of the class have given a word.

*Rotate
Give students a certain amount of time to memorize a mastery scripture. When the time is up, have the students close their books. Give each student a blank piece of paper. On your signal the students should begin to write out the scripture passage, including the reference. Every fifteen seconds have them rotate the papers in an organized manner around the class. Each student is responsible to correct the paper received, if necessary, and then to continue writing the verse. Continue the activity until all the papers are complete. After a predetermined amount of time, correct the papers. This could be a group or individual assignment.

Review
After students have had time to memorize a scripture passage, have them write it from memory on a blank piece of paper or ask them to recite it orally as a class or to another student.