



Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture



Use “The Scene” to introduce *Young Teen Bible school Lesson 11*

It is mid-August already! We all know that means that back-to-school time has either arrived or will be here shortly. But going back to school means something different to different people.

Many parents and teachers see the need to prepare students for the transition from vacation to the much more structured routine school requires. Angie Hubler, a 6th grade teacher from Indiana is trying to get her own children ready for school. “We’re trying to do the beach one day, then go to work in my classroom the next day,” she said. “We’re still on break; it’s too nice; they wanna play; they don’t wanna focus on school.” Hubler is trying to prepare her children by adding some academic discipline to the last days of vacation. “Bedtime is always a time when we do 30 minutes of story time. The morning is a good time to do a little journaling or work on some flash cards,” she said.

The business world, however, sees back-to-school time as an important selling season. Last month Wal-Mart prepared for shoppers by reducing prices on about 16,000 items. If other retailers are going to compete, they have to try to beat or match Wal-Mart’s prices. In White Plains, New York, a shopping cart full of back-to-school items cost \$71.68 at Wal-Mart on July 17. The same items cost \$77.71 at Target. A week later, Target charged \$73.56 for those same supplies, but Wal-Mart dropped their price to \$69.30. These price wars are necessary because the need for these purchases must be balanced with the typical family’s need to watch the budget. “Parents are trying to cut back spending wherever they can as the money pinch tightens this year,” said Britt Beemer, chairman of America’s Research Group. ”

Some students, especially fashion-conscious females, see back-to-school as a time to show off the latest fashions. “I want a tote bag by Jaye Hersh that the celebrities are wearing; they’re called *Market Bags*,” said Stern, 17, who lives in Bronxville, N.Y. “It’s more stylish than a backpack.” Actresses Reese Witherspoon and Jessica Alba have been photographed sporting these \$100+ monogrammed bags. Lydia Stover, 16, cites Nicole Richie as someone whose style she admires. “Sometimes I’ll look at what celebrities are wearing, and think ‘Oh, that’s a cute outfit’ and recreate it somehow,” she said. Jacqueline Nasser, *ELLEgirl* Fashion Market Editor, said teens take a cue from shows like *Laguna Beach*, *The O.C.*, *The Hills*, and *My Super Sweet 16* that portray a certain lifestyle. “They have been surrounded by celebrities and TV programs where fashion is the central point.” she said.

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above news story to read. After all teens have had the opportunity to read the article, discuss it in this way:

List some of the attitudes about the back-to-school season that you find in the preceding article. How does this season make you feel? How are you preparing for your return to school?

Now let’s consider attitudes toward school in general. What is your attitude toward school? Explain why you feel that way. To what extent do your friends share those feelings? Why do you think many students are negative toward school? What is the value of going to school, in your opinion?

Parents, teachers, student, and storeowners may all see going back to school in different ways. In thinking about school as a time to sell notebooks, a time to get the kids out of the house, or a time to impress one’s peers with designer accessories, a big question may be left unanswered—“Why bother with learning anyway?” Let’s see what the Bible has to say about that.