

The Uniform Series:
Product Development and Style Guide¹

3.01 PRODUCTS (see 2013 Handbook, 3.01 Name)

The CUS develops two products that are companion pieces in extending the curricular value of the ISSL Lesson Outlines. The name of the first product is *Guide for Lesson Development*, which provides a quarterly Lesson Outline (scope and sequence) and a tool kit for curriculum writers. The tool kit includes biblical background and analysis of each lesson's Print Passage as well as pedagogical elements to support curriculum development: Unifying Principle, Lesson Objectives, and Instructional Strategies. The second piece, titled *Home Daily Bible Readings (HDBR)*, is a companion to the *Guide* which suggests daily Scripture readings in support of each Sunday's lesson. See also Section 1.01 of the Handbook Name and Products. ~~The *Guide* and *HDBR* are a collaborative effort by CUS participants. Once copyrighted they become property of the NCC. Every CUS communion/publishing partner who holds License Agreements may draw from the *Guide* and *HDBR* to publish their own unique set of products to meet the needs of their respective audiences. Each communion/publishing partner agrees to imprint all products based on the *Guide* and/or *HDBR* with the copyrighted title, "International Sunday School Lessons (ISSL)" or "International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching." (On legal matters and responsibilities of partners, see Section 1. Also see "Name" in Handbook Section 1.01.)~~

3.02 CYCLE PLANNING

(All paragraphs proposed in this section 3.02 were adapted from paragraphs previously presented in Section 1 of the 2013 Handbook.)

3.02.01 HOW ORGANIZED (see 2013 Handbook section 1.04.01)

The **Guide** equips curriculum writers in their development of curriculum resources to support the study of scripture. The scope of the lesson outline is the whole Bible; however, some portions of the Bible are recognized as affording more teaching value than others. For example, the sacred texts associated with the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ, will more often repeat in the cycle of lessons than those biblical passages less explicitly linked to Christ. This emphasis is most visible during the holy seasons of Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter.

Typically, the lesson outlines are organized biblically rather than topically, though it is the prerogative of each Scope and Sequence committee to propose topical or thematic approaches to a defined cycle. The systematic approach to Bible study should promote opportunity for lesson writers to develop congregational resources that address a variety of educational and age-appropriate topics that arise organically out of a study of Scripture. (See also Section 1.05.02- The Place of the Bible, and Section 1.05.03- Field of Inquiry.)

3.02.02 THE CYCLE (see 2013 Handbook section 1.06 and 3.02.01.)

The Uniform Series is developed in **two** three-year cycles that define the scope and sequence to be studied each quarter and identify the central unifying principles of the studies within the cycle. Each three-year block of lessons is developed in the context of the preceding three-year block of lessons. Each

¹ Former sections of the 2013 Handbook including: 1.03-Scope, 1.04 – Sequence, 1.5-Principle of Uniformity, 1.06-The Cycle, 1.07-Annual Study Plan, and 1.08-The Annual *Guide*, 1.09-Home Daily Bible Readings, are included here in Section 3.

three-year and six-year block of lessons is evaluated to ensure balance in terms of Old Testament and New Testament studies, comprehensiveness in terms of biblical content and themes, and appropriate sequence in terms of historical, educational, and developmental concerns. A Cycle Overview describes the organizing principle for the quarterly themes within the three-year cycle. Each quarter will also include a unit overview detailing a lesson-by-lesson approach to lessons. The introduction to each unit shall be adequately definitive – though not exhaustive – to point out, by way of overview, the unity and significance of the course’s study and the relevance of the biblical content to the age groups. This will obviate the need for repetition of this in lesson-by-lesson description. The introduction should be less than 500 words in length. The quarterly overview and unit descriptions should provide enough detail so that member communions can evaluate and interact with the lesson development before it is finalized. (See former 2.09 and 3.02.01)

3.02.03 PEDAGOGICAL ELEMENTS OF EACH LESSON PLAN

(See 2013 Handbook former section 1.08)

A new **Guide** is published annually. We recognize that some publishing houses distinguish between “lesson” and “session.” In the **Guide for Lesson Development**, the word “lesson” is used generically. It refers to a defined learning structure in which a variety of learning activities, directed toward the achievement of stated goals, lead the development of a teaching plan. The **Guide** includes introductions to the Cycle and to each quarter and unit, each emphasizing the unifying principles that coordinate the studies for all age levels. Each lesson provides a general Lesson Title, a Background Scripture, Print Scripture, Unifying Principle, and Scripture Background and Analysis. Additional pedagogical elements guide the writer’s development of the lesson according to age-level including: Topic Titles, Learning Objectives (Knowing, Loving, Serving), and Instructional Strategies that identify activities for teaching, spiritual growth, and life application. The **Guide** provides commentary on the literary, historical, sociological, cultural, theological, and ethical features of the suggested Print Passage for each lesson. The **Guide** also suggests pedagogical strategies for moving learners toward targeted learning goals. The breadth of the **Guide** equips the curriculum writer in constructing a biblically based lesson that intersects across topics that are personal, social, theological, cultural, and global.

3.03 SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Plan of Study (See 2013 Handbook Section 1.07 THE ANNUAL STUDY PLAN)

A specific plan of study, or “scope and sequence,” is developed for each year in the Cycle. (See also Section 2.xx, Scope and Sequence Committee.) The Scope and Sequence Committee is responsible for developing each three-year cycle, inclusive of quarterly overviews and unit descriptions (see The Cycle in Section 3.02.02, above). The Scope and Sequence Committee also accepts responsibility for drafting a plan of study for each week during the curriculum year, including dates, lesson titles, designated background Scriptures and corresponding print passages. The Scope and Sequence Committee provides a draft of each year in a newly proposed cycle with enough detail so that member communions can evaluate and interact with the lesson development before it is finalized. The draft of a new curriculum year shall be sent out prior to the March annual meeting for review. Comments and suggested revisions must be submitted to the Scope and Sequence Committee prior to the vote to approve the lesson outlines. Once the Background Scripture and Print Passage for each lesson are approved, these cannot be changed without a vote of the Committee of the Whole. No changes can be made once the **Guide** is completed and has been copyrighted.

3.03.01 Quarter and Unit Titles

All titles proposed by the Scope and Sequence Committee are subject to review by the Committee of the Whole. This includes quarter, unit, and lesson titles in the **Guide** as well as weekly titles in the *HDBR*. Once the Committee of the Whole has reviewed and approved the Scope and Sequence, a title can be changed only by request of a member of an Age-level Team. The proposed change must be presented to the Scope and Sequence Committee during an interim review or during an annual meeting. If the Scope and Sequence committee approves the proposed change it shall come before the Committee of the Whole for a final vote. No title changes may be considered after the **Guide to Lessons** and/or *Home Daily Bible Readings* is officially copyrighted.

3.03.02 Format of Quarters and Units

Quarter titles can be changed from those in the cycle description only by action of the CUS on request of a Age-level Team. Each course longer than five lessons ordinarily should be divided into units, with an introduction for each that sets forth the purpose of the unit and its relationship to the other units of the course.

3.03.03 Lesson Titles and Topics

(Formerly 3.02.02) Lesson Titles and Age-level Topics. The general title for each lesson shall normally be related to the biblical content of the lesson. Age-level topics shall normally be related to a life-centered approach. The age-group topic ordinarily should be different from the general title. In both cases, account shall be taken of the interest value and popular appeal of the Title/Topic. Consideration should be given to ease of translation into Spanish, Korean, and other languages.

Topics: insert a tag using non-religious/non-biblical language that summarizes the gist of the lesson. The topic is different than "Title" which does use biblical/faith language.

3.03.04 Background Scriptures

Former 3.02.04 Background Scripture. For each age group, general or Background Scripture references shall be chosen. An effort shall be made to suggest only those passages that are essential to an understanding of the Print Scripture.

Former 3.02.041 Background Scripture shall not ordinarily be used more than once in any twelve-month period. Age Level Teams shall be responsible to check the outlines of the previous year to avoid repetition.

3.03.05 Print Passages

Former 3.02.051 Print Scripture shall not be repeated within a twelve-month period.

A continuous print passage is almost always preferable to a series of shorter Scripture selections. While use of the latter is permissible, if necessary, a better alternative is to print one passage of normal length and to include additional passages relevant to the topic in the Background Scripture.

3.02.052 New print passage protocol as of 2022 at introduction of the NRSVue (updated edition). The print passage will normally range between ten and fifteen verses per lesson. Exception can be made by the CUS upon recommendation by one of the Quarterly Teams.

Print passages are limited in length to 350 words of prose or 230 words of poetry in the NRSV.

Print passages that mix prose and poetry are limited to 350 words, with words in poetry counted as if they were 1.5 words of prose.

Background: The above closely matches the previous limit of 51 lines of text in the particular edition of the NRSV that was specified in the CUS handbook. This line-count limit became unsustainable because of unavailability of the particular edition of the NRSV (out of print).

3.03.06 Key Verse(s) See former handbook section 3.02.60 (3.02.061 through 3.02.065)

The title “Key Verse” (or, when appropriate, “Key Verses”) shall be used in all age-group outlines. The purpose of the Key Verse shall be (1) to summarize or highlight the central truth of the lesson or (2) to relate the truth to everyday living. The passage may also be suitable for memorization in the age group for whom it is selected.

In the printed outlines, Key Verses shall be taken from the NRSVue. However, in producing materials based on the Uniform Outlines, all denominations and publishers are free to use any version of the Bible desired, without violation of the CUS copyright.

If the print passage or the Background Scripture for a given lesson contains an appropriate Key Verse that verse is to be preferred. Otherwise, an appropriate passage should be found elsewhere.

So far as possible, effort shall be made to provide a common Key Verse for all age groups.

The Key Verse shall not be used for the same age group more than twice in one year, and the two uses shall be at least six months apart. This rule does not hold in the case of children, with whom repetition is often desirable. Responsibility for checking on this frequency shall be assumed by each Quarterly Team. The length of Key Verse shall be determined with awareness that some may wish to memorize it.

3.04 UNIFYING PRINCIPLE

1.04.02 The Principle of Uniformity (see 2013 Handbook section 1.05)

3.04.01 Each unit and lesson has a unifying principle that serves as a basis for synergy across all age levels (children, youth, and adults). Direct connection with the unifying principle is required in each age level’s lesson development. With the unifying principle as a base, each age level is encouraged to develop studies that are appropriate for that age level. Whenever appropriate, correlation beyond the unifying principle should include: (a) use of the lesson’s biblical background material, (b) use of different Bible passages related to the same Bible character, or (c) use of different Bible material related to the same lesson theme.

(See former 3.02.07 The Unifying Principle)

3.04.02 The Annual Study Plan (ASP) Committee shall provide a Unifying Principle (UP) for each lesson to highlight a key insight or a prominent theme in the Print Passage. In determining the lesson's focus, the ASP should consider the pedagogical context of the lesson's placement in the Scope and Sequence of the quarter. For example, in Luke 24, Jesus talks with the two Emmaus Road travelers following his resurrection. The UP might be stated differently in a series of lessons on Luke's gospel, than in a series of lessons from the Synoptic Gospels to nuance the contribution of a single lesson regarding its placement within a particular unit or quarter. Consider, for example, the placement of Luke 24 in the Spring 2028 quarter where a unit on Jesus and Moses is placed in a larger study of Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. The UP in this context highlights Jesus' interpretation of the Law of Moses and its value for understanding his suffering, death, and resurrection. The UP for Luke 24 in any quarter would focus on the identity of the newly risen Christ but will also consider how the Print Passage contributes to the pedagogical arc of the unit in which the lesson appears.

3.04.03 The Unifying Principle has three components:

Part 1. A Life Statement

The first sentence of the UP makes a statement about how the key theme from the passage relates to an experience of everyday life. The issue is stated in the form of a problem, without direct reference to scripture. It is stated in universal terms, not exclusive to persons of faith.

Part 2. A Life Question

The second sentence presents a question connected to the Life Statement. Like the Life Statement, the Life Question is presented in universal terms, not exclusive to believers. It sets up a question for which the Print Passage might offer an answer.

Part 3. A Response to the Life Question

The final sentence of the UP offers a response to the Life Question that is rooted in the scripture passage for the lesson. The biblical response informs the Lesson Objectives and aid curriculum writers in shaping the central focus of the lesson. (See Section 3.06.)

3.05 BIBLICAL STUDY TOOLS TO SUPPORT CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

3.05.01 Biblical Background and Analysis (formerly "Scripture Matrix")

In xxxx, the Guide introduced the "Scripture Matrix" element to provide the curriculum writer with some bible study tools and exegetical commentary of the Print Passage. Beginning in 2023 with the development of a new cycle (Cycle 25, 2026-2032), the "Scripture Matrix" title was changed to "Biblical Background and Analysis." This element of the **Guide** is changed in name only. When CUS made the decision to drop use of "matrix" as a way of naming the lesson objectives and teaching strategies, it made sense to give the Scripture Matrix a new header as well. In a survey of the **Guide** users, the Scripture Matrix was consistently given the highest ranking for its value to curriculum writers and developers. Though the title is new, the "Biblical Background and Analysis" continues to offer historical, cultural, ethical, exegetical, and theological perspectives unique to each lesson's Print Passage. The Biblical Background and Analysis section is shaped with attention to the following:

1. Historical: at least one of the statements will suggest how the text has been significant at various points throughout the history of the Church.

2. Cultural: where relevant, one of the statements will comment about the community from which the text emerged; also, where appropriate, it may offer a present-day cultural lens through which the text is understood.
3. Ethical: when appropriate, the background will include a statement regarding the actions or behaviors the text commends without simply re-stating the text.
4. Exegetical: at least one of the background statements should highlight interpretive and translation issues as rooted in a study of biblical languages, text criticism, textual variants, and the like. Appropriate citations are required to support the writer's exegesis.
5. Theological: at least one of the background statements should articulate how the text shapes contemporary beliefs and doctrine in the Church.

3.05.02 Quarterly commentary

Cycle 25 (2026-2032) introduces a new element to the **Guide** that offers writers more in-depth biblical commentary in support of their own curriculum development. While the Scripture Background and Analysis is offered within each lesson, the opening essay provides an overview of the entire quarter. The essay, titled "A Biblical, Theological, and Pastoral Introduction," is written by a biblical scholar with an affiliation to a CUS/NCC denominational seminary or college. The introductory essay highlights biblical themes and applications across an entire quarter giving writers a comprehensive commentary from which to develop their own lesson plans.

3.06 LESSON OBJECTIVES TO GUIDE THE WRITER

In the first year of Cycle 25 (2026-2027) the Guide for Lesson Development introduces a new template for presenting the Learning Objectives and Instructional Strategies to guide curriculum writers across all three age levels (children, youth, adult). Following the CUS annual meeting in 2023 the age-level conveners who oversee the work of the age-level teams, in cooperation with the CUS Executive Committee, agreed to transition away from the use of Matrix Statements (reference to the 2013 Handbook for history and background of Matrix Statements). The shift in approach is a response to user feedback which prioritized the usefulness of the lesson development prompts. While the matrix approach served the curriculum writer well in previous decades, CUS saw a need to refresh its approach to better reflect the committee's commitment to the comprehensive growth of the whole person: heart, mind, and body. As *disciples* we approach our study of the Bible with a larger purpose than the accumulation of *information* there is also a desire for *transformation*. To reflect this holistic approach to learning, we've made modifications in how we present the learning objectives and instructional strategies.

Three Learning Objectives to Guide the Curriculum Writer: Knowing, Loving, Serving

In earlier cycles the learning objectives were stated in terms of cognitive, affective, and action goals. In Cycle 24 (Fall 2022 through Summer 2026), we shifted to naming these as knowing, being, and doing goals. Then in 2023, as we introduced Cycle 25 (Fall 2026 through Summer 2032), we introduced a more substantive change to the learning objective template for the purpose of strengthening the pedagogical link between objectives and the instructional strategies for moving learners toward the stated objectives. The new template proposes three universal objectives on the basis of Jesus' own teaching about God's commandments. When the rich young ruler asks Jesus what commandment is the greatest (Matthew 22:36-40), Jesus says,

'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

In every lesson, at every age, our three-fold objective as followers of Christ is to:

1. To grow in knowledge of God, self, and neighbor
2. To grow in love for God, self, and neighbor
3. To grow in service to God, self, and neighbor

In our role as Christian educators, CUS partners value biblical literacy and knowledge of God. Noun are also concerned for the learner's spiritual formation, equipping for every good work in Christ. The three objectives for learners is to grow deeper in their knowledge of God, self, and others while also growing in their love and service to God, self, and others. Setting these three as learning priorities in the **Guide** lends support to the writer in developing curriculum with explicit connections between the desired outcomes (or objectives) of the lesson and a strategic lesson plan to move disciples toward these objectives (see below, "Instructional Strategies to Guide the Writer").

To differentiate knowing, loving, and serving as three distinct objectives is somewhat artificial. Teachers rarely isolate one learning objective from another, but rather, approach them as inter-dependent. Nevertheless, to stimulate the curriculum writer's holistic approach to the study of Scripture, this **Guide**

stresses objectives that encompass head, heart, and service. In the absence of drawing the distinction, the lesson often defaults to an emphasis of what can be “known” and takes the learner’s spiritual growth for granted. We draw distinctions in the **Guide** to give curriculum writers the best possible tool for instructional design. An integrated understanding of learners as disciples necessarily looks beyond what the student can “know” to consider what it means to “love” and “serve.”



To Know God, Self, and Neighbor:

In each lesson the general objective is that learners grow in their knowledge of God, self, and neighbor. This general objective is distilled to a key focus for teaching and learning consistent with the lesson’s Print Passage and Key Verse. This narrower objective is stated as a one-sentence statement to summarize what learners should come to know and understand because of the lesson.



To Love God, Self, and Neighbor:

The second objective of each lesson seeks to identify a particular Christian attitude, value, or faith conviction that the study of scripture might instill in the hearts of learners. The stated objective summarizes how the learner might internalize meaning and value in consideration of the scripture passage under investigation. Examples include: a deeper faith; accepting forgiveness; an increase in self-control. All of these are simply expression of the greater objective of growing in love for God, self, and neighbor.



To Serve God, Self, and Neighbor:

The serving objectives identifies skills, actions, behaviors, or practices that exemplify Christian living. It offers a general statement to summarize acts of “serving” that correspond to the “knowing” and “loving” objectives of the lesson. Each lesson looks at the scripture to discover examples of serving. The objective describes how learners might live as disciples of Christ, bringing the gospel to bear in their own lives as well as in their communities and throughout the world.

3.07 INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES TO GUIDE THE WRITER

In the same cycle (2026-2032) in which we introduce modification to the lesson objectives, the 2026-2027 Guide also introduces a new rubric for “instructional strategies.” The new rubric replaces the set of “matrix statements” offered in previous cycles (Learner Matrix, Teaching Matrix and Faith Interaction Matrix). There are some pedagogical elements of the former matrix statements that carry over into the three sets of instructional strategies, but those who are most familiar with the previous approach will observe some clear differences. Curriculum writers who depend on the Guide will be encouraged to find that the “instructional strategies” are designed to give prompts to support lesson development. The primary reason for the change from “matrix statements” to “instructional strategies” is to better model for curriculum writers the value of aligning the learning objectives with strategies that move learners toward the stated objectives. The Teaching Strategies are written to move learners toward the Knowing Objective. Spiritual Growth Strategies are written as prompts to guide learners toward the Loving Objectives. Life Applications strategies should move learners toward the Serving Objective.

What is true for the interdependency of the threefold approach to learning objectives is also true for the three sets of instructional strategies. There are instances where a particular instructional strategy homes

in on a particular objective, but it is more often the case that a well written instructional strategy often integrates the learner's movement toward all three objectives (knowing, loving, and serving). It is optimal when any of the strategies has potential to integrate the learner's skills such that there is measurable progress across all three objectives simultaneously. The purpose of isolating teaching, spiritual growth, or life application strategies from one another is simply to highlight the importance of the learner's growth across all aspects of the Christian life and to protect against "knowing" objectives being emphasized to the detriment of loving and serving outcomes.

As most users are developing curriculum for a 45–60-minute teaching block, the Guide offers a greater number of teaching strategies to support learning activities that can be executed in that time frame. Whereas there are 5-6 prompts offered for Teaching Strategies, there are fewer Spiritual Growth and Life Application Strategies because these learning activities take longer to set up and, in some cases, would be used during the week as a "homework" or possibly on a week-night church activity in addition to the Sunday School hour. It is highly recommended to build a lesson plan around objectives that integrate knowing, loving, and serving, with the understanding that loving and serving objectives are not as easily or immediately measurable as knowing objectives.

3.07.01 Teaching Strategies

Five to six prompts are suggested for the curriculum writer— who in turn directs the teacher—in how best to present learners with information about biblical background, historical context, or other important commentary on the Scripture. These strategies align with the Knowing Objective (and to the Unifying Principle) and should lead to measurable outcomes in the learners' growth in knowledge of what Scripture teaches about God, the self, and one's neighbors in the world. See Blooms taxonomy for a list of verbs that anchor a strong learning objective.

<https://tips.uark.edu/using-blooms-taxonomy/#:~:text=calculate%2C%20predict%2C%20apply%2C%20solve,%2C%20model%2C%20perform%2C%20present>

3.07.02 Spiritual Growth Strategies

Two to three prompts are written to align with the second objective, Growing in Love of God, Self, and Others. The suggested strategies invite curriculum writers to consider, "How might the Scripture lesson inspire/nurture discipleship and devotion in everyday life?" Three sets of strategies (children, youth, adult) aid the writer in identifying age-appropriate values, feelings, and convictions to support the learner's growth toward the core values of Christian faith. The spiritual growth strategies cultivate the inward nurture of love for God, self, and others.

3.07.03 Life Application Strategies

Two to three prompts guide the curriculum writer in considering how the lesson might move learners toward behaviors/actions that visibly demonstrate growth in faith. The suggested strategies align with the third objective, Growing in Service. These strategies move the learner toward practices to embody the new learning from the lesson. Learning outcomes are evident through the learner's actions, through obedience and service to God, self, and others. Practices of faith are lived out individually and in community. "Community" includes friends, family, work, home, school.

3.07.04 Special Concerns

(See former section 3.02.10) Special Concerns Matrix Teams. In this section age-level consultants or age-level reviewers are invited to suggest topical issues that arise from the Print passage. These might include special seasons of the church year or theological sensitivities that are unique to a particular faith tradition. This section might also flag for the curriculum writer any social, cultural, racial, or developmental concerns that are worthy of consideration in developing the lesson.

3.08 HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

The Home Daily Bible Readings (HDBR) are a companion piece to the Guide to Lesson Development. Each set of weekly readings is offered in support of the Sunday lesson and references the Sunday date, lesson title, background scripture, print passage and key verse. A devotional reading is also included for the purpose of a worship resource to complement the Sunday lesson.

3.08.01 Home Daily Bible Readings. The Home Daily Bible Readings are designed to be used by individuals or family groups to nurture personal worship, devotion, and home Christian nurture in preparation for the weekly Bible study. The Home Daily Bible Readings shall consist of a maximum of fifteen verses of Scripture, with the option of adding necessary verses to complete the narrative. Readings are suggested for each day of the year in support of the Uniform Lesson of the following Sunday, with proper attention to any special seasonal emphases, such as Christmas. The readings shall be listed for each week beginning with Monday and closing with Sunday, the day of the lesson to which the readings are related, in the form set forth in Appendix xx.

3.08.02 Background Scripture. There is an effort to create continuity across all the readings for the week. To this end the Background Scripture shall be a primary source for the selection of the readings. It is also appropriate to use the Unifying Principle as one of the criteria for the selection of the readings. The passage chosen for the devotional reading and/or a passage that contains the Key Verse may also be included as part of the weekly list of readings. A scripture passage selected for the HDBR shall not be used more than once in six months. The Print passage will always be used as the Sunday reading.

3.08.03 Titles. Each daily reading shall have a title. The title shall not exceed six words. The title should provide clarity for how the reading relates to the theme of the Sunday lesson, so that it can help give the readers clues as to what they should be looking for as they read. When Scripture is quoted in the title, the NRSVue shall be used.

3.08.04 Devotional Reading.

(see 2013 Handbooks, Section 3.02.21)

These readings shall be related to the lesson for the day, with proper attention given to special seasonal emphases. The devotional readings shall be suitable to be read in worship services or assembly programs. Preferably, the passage shall consist, of from five to fifteen verses, thus giving an average of about ten verses. The reading should normally consist of a single passage (consecutive verses). The same passage shall not be used for devotional reading more than once in a twelve-month period. The consultant responsible for choosing the devotional readings shall check the work of the preceding year to avoid such duplication. The devotional reading shall never consist of the print passage and may or may not come from the Background Scripture. If the Key Verse is from other than the print passage, it can be used in the devotional reading if the passage from which it comes is devotional in character.