**GCCHM Leadership Certification**

**Level VIII, Course #1**

**19 INEXPENSIVE DECORATING IDEAS FOR SABBATH SCHOOLS**

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**(Presenter’s Notes)**

**INTRODUCTION**

Decorating your Sabbath School classroom to be an exciting learning environment for kids can be tough on a limited budget. Here are 19 ideas that’ll cost you next to nothing…

Ugh… the bleak walls. The boring layout. The stale carpet. The blank bulletin boards. You have a job ahead of you – transforming your Sabbath school classroom into an exciting learning environment that kids will flock to. But just as you let your imagination roll, reality reminds you that (of course) there’s always The Budget to consider.

You can transform your room on a tight budget – here are 19 ideas that’ll cost you next to nothing and make your students say, “Wow!”.

1. **Dynamic Door**

* Color the door of the room with paint, or with crepe paper to make it attractive.
* Hang child-friendly pictures to make it attractive.

**Doors**

* Don’t just decorate your door, make it part of the big picture! Use butcher paper for a temporary scene or latex paint for a permanent scene.

For example, re-create John 20:1-9 by making your plans door the tomb entrance.

* Make your door the opening to the tomb and create the scene outside the tomb on the walls. Then write the verse above your door.

**Doors**

* Choose an event from the Bible and illustrate it on your classroom door – storyboard-style.
* For example, depict four scenes from Noah’s Ark.
* Leave the conclusion a mystery, and tease visitors with a sign that says, “What happened next? Come in to find out!”

1. **Back Pockets**

* Storage is often an issue in classrooms, especially those prone to clutter. So, purchase (www.spacesavers.com) or sew a hanging over-the-door pocket bag.
* To sew the pocket bag, you’ll need a 7x2 foot piece of durable fabric.
* Cut out pockets of different fabrics in varying shapes and sizes and sew them on the larger piece.

1. **Creative Ceilings**

* Have kids lend a hand – and character – to this fun ceiling decoration.
* Create a handprint border around the top of the wall or the ceiling using several different

colors of tempera paint.

1. **Mobiles**

* Mobiles are an easy way to liven up a drab room, and they make a creative class project.
* Have children help to make some mobiles to hang up in the room.

**Wall Colors Galore**

* Trade the institutional white on your walls for something more contemporary.
* A trip to a home improvement store will give you an idea of the vast range of cheery color combinations available.
* Recruit parents or preteens to help as you give your room a face-lift.

**6. Go Dark**

* Dramatic colors can add depth and interest to your room, and they make the perfect background to display kids’ art projects.
* You don’t want to paint every wall and the ceiling magenta, but a single dark wall with a display at the back of the room is inviting and will draw people into your room.

**7. All Aglow**

* Glow in the dark paint and stickers are less obvious way to spice up your room, but kids love them.
* You can design a biblical skyline or scene, then decorate the walls and ceiling with stars.
* Kids will be captivated as you dim the lights to read passages from the Bible.

**8. Sticky Stuff**

* What will they think of next? Magnetic paint is a unique addition to the painting palette – and you can cover it with your color of choice.
* Consider “striping” your room with the paint.
* You can easily attach pictures, art projects, and decorations with magnetic sheets.

**9. Murals**

* Murals never go out of style, and they’re always a fun, cooperative effort.
* You’ll need an artistic person to create the outlines of the mural, but just about anyone with a paintbrush can fill in the rest.
* Or bring your classroom to life with a custom-painted mural from www.wackyworld.tv or www.painteroffun.com.

1. **Winning Windows**

* Dress up your window with real potted plants or artificial ones.
* Colorful curtains can be eye-catching and appealing.

**11. PVC Surprise**

* PVC piping (available at home improvement stores) is cheap, light, and versatile.
* To make curtain rods, cut sections just longer than the width of your windows.
* Drape each section with fabric or cover the pipe itself with glue and fabric.

**12. Glass Stain**

* Windows are wonderful, but sometimes what’s going on outside them distracts kids.
* If you want to keep the light but lose the distraction, “stain” your glass. For stained glass kits, go to www.dickblick.com.

**13. Fantastic Floors**

* Use colorful throw cushions or bean bags to brighten the floors.
* Place colorful tiles that appeal to children.

**14. Remnants and Rugs**

* Cover worn-out carpet or soften tile with carpet remnants or inexpensive rugs.
* Breaking up a basic floor with rugs also breaks up the room.
* You can create a cozy story time area or designate an activity area with varied carpets.

1. **Paint Me a Path**

* If your floor is forgettable, make it memorable with a new paint job (uncarpeted floors only).
* You can go wild with wacky designs and tons of color, or you can stay sane with a single sublime shade.

**Crates**

* Crates can do double duty as storage and bench seating. You can spray paint older crates to spruce up their appearance or cover them with fabric.
* To make benches, simply cut a piece of plywood to cover the crates.
* Glue foam to one side of the plywood and finish the bench top by covering it with fabric. Staple the fabric to the bottom of the bench top with a staple gun.

**Mini Beanbags**

* Beanbags don’t have to cost a lot. Visit a thrift store and stock up on pillowcases.
* Stock up plastic foam packing peanuts.
* Stuff each pillowcase full of plastic foam peanuts, then sew shut the open end of the pillowcase to make a mini beanbag. These are great for kids ages 3 and up to lie or sit on during story time or activities.
* Easy for games and cleanup.

**17. Tables and Chairs**

* Erase the bland look of classroom furniture with brightly colored fabric, e.g. cut tablecloths from remnants of fabric, new shower curtains, and oversize table cloths.
* If your chairs could use improvement, go to the thrift store and buy more pillowcases. Have kids decorate the pillowcases with fun designs and pictures. Slide the pillowcases over the backs of the chairs and tie large ribbons around the bases of the chair backs.

**18. Puppet Alley**

* PVC works wonders for puppet stages. Stock up on sections of PVC pipe and several corner connectors.
* You can interchange the sections to fit your stage needs, then drape fabric over the piping for curtains.

**19. Focal Teaching Point**

* Every classroom comes with a place to write, such as a chalkboard, dry erase board, or flip board. But if you’d like to expand your wall-writing options, apply chalkboard paint to an entire wall.