

Wondering about Rio?

Rio is a dynamic new way to engage the kids in your ministry—and their parents too—through printed materials and online resources. Using the popular classroom model, Rio provides the best in spiritual formation for your leaders and kids.

Rio is being created in partnership with churches across the country. Real people doing real ministry work speak into each lesson's creation and review it after it's written, making sure it addresses the actual needs you face in your church.



Rio encourages you to lead your kids from the overflow of your own spiritual growth. It's so much more natural to speak from a overflowing life rather than a simple script, so we're intentional in ministering to the leader as much as to the children. Each week we help the leader fill up for the lesson through Heart Prep, a thought-provoking devotional that gets the leader into the Word and in touch with God, helping the leader encounter God and His Word in a fresh way in order to prepare for the week.

Rio also helps kids see that the Bible isn't just a collection of cool stories—it's a cohesive story of God's plan for them. The Big Bible Panorama, a 136-inch timeline, is an interactive resource that lets kids see how everything ties in to the bigger story of His purpose. The leaders can also go deeper into Bible background with More to the Story, which gives them extra historical and biblical context.

Most importantly, Rio is about helping kids, leaders, and parents form deeper relationships with God and each other. Kids aren't simply entertained for an hour or so—they're led into life-changing encounters with God that will reach into the rest of their lives.

What Makes Rio Different?

Rio is intentional about facilitating relationships on all levels—child to child, child to leader, leader to parent, parent to child—all in the context of our relationship to God.

Rio has been developed in partnership with real people doing real ministry in churches across the country.

Rio isn't a static curriculum. Rio stays current through the Rio Essentials online resources that enhance the Rio experience. We also take your feedback to heart and work continually to provide you with the tools, training, and experiences you need to be successful.

Rio is **Relational**—Today's kids are "connected" like never before, but they're also very isolated. Many of their relationships are completely digital and filtered through the anonymity that electronic devices provide. Rio was developed to eliminate relational barriers and to foster the authentic and relevant

relationships kids hunger for.

RIO is **Intentional**—Information is cheap to today's kids. They can get more information than they'll ever need quickly and easily. They can know a lot *about* God without ever really *knowing* God. Rio stresses spiritual formation. Every lesson is God-focused, builds Bible study skills, and helps kids understand each Bible story in the context of God's grand redemptive plan throughout history.

RIO is **Overflow**—Discipling leaders to share from the overflow of their own hearts is what Rio is all about. Rio is designed to feed and challenge everyone involved in the experience. Part of the goal of every Rio lesson is to provide a path that takes leaders and children on a journey through discovering God's Word and hearing His voice. It's a journey they can share.

What's Rio's Philosophy?

Rio believes that our faith is a relational one, and that the best way to grow people in the faith is to help them deepen their relationship with God and others. We strive to engage relationships at all levels—leader to child, child to child, child to parent, parent to leader—all within the context of a relationship with God.

This focus on knowing God will produce in children a desire to obey God—not obedience through their own power, but obedience through the power provided by the Holy Spirit. By keeping the focus on God and responding to Him, Rio strives to produce a transformational faith that will reproduce itself for generations to come.

Guiding Scriptures: Ephesians 3:16–19 (NIV)

"I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."

What Are Rio Partners?

One of the things that makes Rio great is the partnership the David C Cook team has with ministry practitioners like you. The curriculum was developed with extensive input from a variety of children's ministry workers, and now, in its first year, we're getting valuable feedback from churches across the continent using Rio.

Here's how it works: We're partnering with a group of 15 churches, in both the U.S. and Canada, that vary in size, denomination, and geographical location. Representatives from each church attended training this fall here in Colorado Springs to learn about all the different aspects of Rio.

Each week, these churches supply lesson feedback, telling us what activities worked well, which ones need some adjustments, and generally how the lessons went. They also provide feedback on printed items from the Rio Basics kit, Internet-based tools, the DVD-ROM, and more. We're using this input to help us shape the curriculum for the future to make it even better for you.

So when you use a Rio resource, you can be assured that we're working in collaboration with real, in-the-trenches practitioners from across North America.

What Impact do the Partners Have?

Our Partners have been hard at work leading Rio and sending in their feedback. Some changes you'll see in effect as early as Quarter 3 (Spring), and others you'll see as a work in progress.

We've **darkened the type in the Early Elementary Leader's Guides** so it's easier to read.

We're working to **provide more visual aids** for all three age levels.

We're **tweaking or replacing activities** that didn't work well (or at all) according to our Partner feedback.

We're writing even more blogs and working to develop other resources to help train your leaders.

We've heard that the lessons are too full of good stuff. So starting in the Spring quarter, the lessons will be somewhat shorter—but still full of great stuff!

We're **adding more opportunities for the review of previous lessons**, particularly through the use of the Big Bible Panorama. Look for more on in this!

There are even more changes coming, so keep looking for more updates!