

Creative Ways to Tell (or review) a Bible Story

- Use sequence pictures use them during the story then use them for review.
- Listen for a specific word or phrase and do a quiet motion when they hear it.
- Draw the story as you tell it or have them draw their favorite part.
- Use a Rebus (pictures or drawing) and they say those words.
- Play a song that goes along with your story.
- Create a finger play or poem to make it easy to remember.
- Use movement when teaching.
- Use sound effects, or have the children help you create the sound.
- Read directly from scripture, then tell the story in their own words.
- Show a movie version that is appropriate, follow up with what is real or not.
- Create story box (diorama) to use during the story or as an activity afterwards.
- Put together a puzzle as you tell the story.
- Use finger puppets or standard size puppets, allow the children to help you.
- To make using felt boards more inviting, hand out key figures or items and have the children put them up as you tell the story.
- Use leaders and children to act out the story, use costumes to add to the excitement. Tell the story first, then have them act it out to see what they remember.
- Or the leaders be the characters after you share the store and then children tell you want to do as they share the story.
- Tell the story from the point of view of someone in the story, such as the little girl Jesus healed or the little boy who had the 5 loaves and fish.
- Tell the story using a puppet or animal from the story such as an owl from the story of Nicodemus at night or the donkey that Jesus rode on.
- After sharing the story, tell it again but this time making mistakes seeing if they can catch the mistakes. Give them a reward when they catch your mistake.
- Read the story from a children's book, always remind children the story is from the Bible.
- Use food: for example olive oil & mushy rice as manna or oyster & fish crackers.

Head, Heart and Hands Questions

Here is a good formula to use from "Tell A Story "Curriculum. (Listed in resources page)

- **Head:** These questions help kids understand the facts of the story, or **what** questions. These are probably the easiest for Preschoolers to answer.
- **Heart:** These questions help children interpret the meaning of the story. They will be the **why** and **so what** type of questions. These types of questions can be a bit harder for preschoolers to answer, so you will need to make them age appropriate for their understanding.
- **Hands:** These types of questions help preschoolers understand how to apply what they have learned and eventually be able to apply it to their daily lives. Questions that focus on **how** and **now what**. This is where you connect the story to their lives and connect the past with the present.

Helping Preschoolers Connect to God's Word

It is important to connect Preschoolers God's Word. But how do we do that? Using the example of Joseph and the coat of many colors we will help break down the different types of questions to ask children. Asking questions helps gauge what they are understanding, as well as help them process what they are learning.

This method applies to children of all ages, but we will focus on using in our example when you are teaching preschoolers.

The story of Joseph and his coat of many colors. Most often we teach this small portion of the story of Joseph because it's the easiest part for young children to understand.

Head/Facts/What Questions: *What* was Joseph's father's name? *What* did his father give to Joseph? *Facts Questions:* How many brothers did he have? Was Joseph the favorite? (Note: Can also be a who and when questions? *Who* is Joseph? *Who* sold Joseph? When questions are a little more advanced. *When* did Jacob give Joseph his coat? *When* did Joseph's dad learn about him?)

Heart/Why/So What Questions: *Why* did Joseph's brothers not like him? *Why* did Joseph's dad give him a special coat? *So what* did his brothers do to him? *Why* did they put him in a pit?

Hands/How/Now What Questions: These are going to be harder for young children to answer. Remember this is where we *connect them to the scripture*. *How did* God take care of Joseph? *How does* God take care of you? *Now what* we can we do to trust that God will care for us?

Connecting Past to Present

When telling stories to young children, helping them to understand the past - as before they were born, before their parents were born, etc. can be difficult. Preschoolers are very concrete thinkers and often only think in the here and now. How do we help them understand why the past of the Bible has anything to do with them? And how do we connect them to the word of God's word?

Using the story of Joseph as our example here are some ways to get you started in the connection process.

It's unlikely that young children will have family members that would be so jealous of them they would pretend to kill them and throw them in a pit, tearing up their clothes, killing a wild animal and returning bloodied a coat it to their father *and then* lie about his youngest son being killed. When in reality they left him in a pit and sold him into slavery. Give examples to young children about how they could be jealous that someone received something better than them (they received a tiny toy while the other person got an extravagant gift). Or perhaps a friend received a toy they wanted. How about a time they disobeyed, and their parents were unhappy with them. Maybe they were on the receiving end of the better gift of toy? How would God want them to behave? How can we be good friends or siblings?

We can also connect the Bible truth that God cares for us even in hard times. People can sometimes be cruel, and unkind but God is there for us. He can speak to us through his work, their parents and friends (how would you bring that concept down to their level?). He will take care of us even during the hard times. Clarify what are hard or tough times for them, give age-appropriate examples to help them understand. Use other scriptures to show them what is written in God's word that can help us better understand that God cares and loves us.