

FOCUS OF THE STORY DVD TEEN CURRICULUM

Why use this curriculum? What is different about it?

We are so glad that you are taking your group on a journey into *The Story*! We hope this curriculum provides an engaging and effective framework for your journey. Our hope is that this in-depth study will guide your teens to discover their role in God's redemptive plan.

The Story DVD Teen Curriculum has been designed with the hope that your students will...

- See the big picture of God's great story
- Listen for God's direction through the scriptures and insights from their leaders and peers
- Learn deep truths about the character and nature of God
- Express their learnings and thoughts through discussion and creative mediums
- Discover new insights and directions for their lives in light of God's story
- See how their story is a part of God's bigger story

DISCOVERING OUR STORY IN GOD'S STORY

When we step back and look at the entirety of the Bible, we see that it is interconnected...it is truly *one big story*. This grand narrative is the true account of God's pursuit to redeem and restore God's beloved creation. Looking at the big-picture view of the Bible is what we will call the **Upper Story**.*

Within this Upper Story are many smaller stories which we call the **Lower Story**. The Lower Story contains the details of particular people and the episodes we've become familiar with: *Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, the flood, etc.* When we look at each story with the Upper Story and Lower Story in mind, it helps us to:

- See that God and God's dreams for the world are central in the story.
- See how all of the events, places and people of the Bible (the lower story) are connected to each other and to a greater purpose.
- See how our own lives fit into the "bigger picture," and to realize how God's story continues with us as active participants.

Most of the Bible—as much as 75%—was written in narrative form. Even parts that are more didactic, like the epistles, contain strong narrative elements and are part of the context of the bigger story.

By putting all that we read and hear from the scriptures into a larger picture, we can make application from the Bible that takes into account the grand, mysterious ways of God, and guards us from misapplications that can result from an isolated "what this verse says to me" approach. In other words, **the Upper Story creates the context for the Lower Story**.

As we journey through *The Story* together, the Bible's events and characters found in the Lower Story will point us to the larger purpose of the Upper Story: *God's desire to restore and build a relationship with creation.*

*Adapted from the *Upper Story Explanation* © Zondervan 2009.

LEARNING APPROACHES

FACILITATE DISCOVERY

Central to this curriculum is the belief that the scriptures are living and active, and that God illuminates them for us, in order to move us toward transformation and Christ-likeness. The hope is then for the teacher to become a facilitator of discovery, a co-learner guiding students to explore the Bible in deeper ways. This requires the teacher to trust that God's Spirit is at work, and to encourage participants to listen and look for God to bring illumination. It also requires the teacher to believe that, given a safe environment, each person will provide meaningful insights into the Biblical story.

REPETITION AND RHYTHM

One of the first things you may notice about this curriculum is that it uses a lot of the same elements from lesson to lesson. This was not done for the sake of simplicity or ease. This was done because research continues to reinforce the importance of repetition in learning.* We are creatures that need to experience things over and over before they really stick. So the structure of the curriculum repeats different activities each week—drawing, reading, discussing—in the same order. This allows participants to move beyond the anxiety of trying to figure out a new activity every week and focus their imagination and reason on the Biblical story. When encouragement is provided toward this end, most participants will thrive in an environment where there is a consistent rhythm of activities.

*<http://txtwriter.com/Onscience/Articles/repetitionlearn.html>

MULTIPLE MODES, METHODS, MEDIUMS

While this curriculum does use a lot of repetition, the methods and learning modes used are diverse. Participants are encouraged to see and hear the story, and then to respond using varied mediums at different points. This approach is used to connect with participants of all different learning styles. Groups are given the opportunity to engage with the scriptures using both sides of their brain, as activities move them through analysis, reason, reflection, imagination, emotion and creativity.

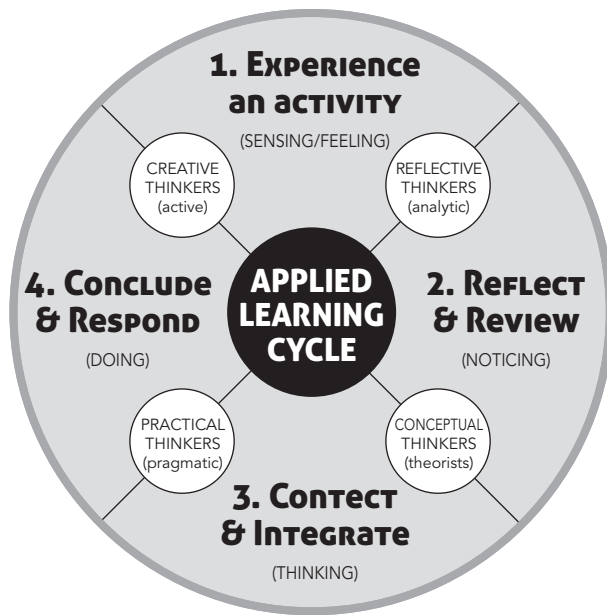
EXPERIENTIAL PROCESS*

*adapted from *Enter the Story* © 2010, Michael Novelli, published by Zondervan.

Learning that transforms does not happen simply by gaining knowledge; it is in experiencing and integrating that knowledge into our own identities (our own story). Experiential Learning is the process of making meaning from direct experience—*learning by doing*.

The underlying structure of this curriculum is rooted in the work of educator David Kolb, and the process he identified as *The Experiential Learning Cycle* (sometimes called the Applied Learning Cycle).* This approach effectively helps learners to integrate information and experiences—in other words, *to be transformed by them*.

* Chart adapted from David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1984), 41.



The heart of Kolb's model proposes four stages that move us toward applied learning: *Experience, Reflection, Integration and Conclusion*. We've adapted the wording and descriptions of these stages to offer some additional clarity and usefulness.

Though it may not be immediately evident, we cycle through this process more than once in each lesson of the curriculum. We've found that giving participants space and intentional activities that help them to process and assimilate what they are learning fosters the most effective environments for learning and transformation.

IMPLEMENTING THE STORY DVD TEEN CURRICULUM

What is the structure of this curriculum? How do I use it effectively?

USES OF THE CURRICULUM

Our hope is that you find this curriculum flexible enough to use with any size group, in varied contexts—sunday school, youth group meetings, bible studies, etc. Many of the segments of the curriculum depend on use of the accompanying DVD. So you'll definitely need a TV or video projector and a DVD player!

This material was designed with a large group / small group format. This means that some segments of it will work in either a large group or small group, and other segments will work best only in a small group setting. Indication of which segments will work with small or large group is provided in the lesson outline.

BASIC LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes. These segments may vary from lesson to lesson.

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY (5 minutes — large or small group)

Introduction and prayer

Watch StoryRecap Video (StoryRewind Video every 4th lesson)

Brief responses to video

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY (10 minutes — large or small group)

Watch StoryView Video

Creating symbols on handout

Sharing symbols and observations

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY (25 minutes —large or small group)

Tell the story from scripture using StoryReaders Script (additional options provided)

StoryReaders scripture telling

Give responses to scripture on handout and briefly discuss

BREAK: teens move to small groups

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY (35 minutes — small group)

Engage in discussion about story using provided questions

Create responses around application of the story

Sharing responses

Prayer time

CURRICULUM COMPONENTS

PRINT (PDFS):

Teachers Guide: This group leaders script covers all areas of the curriculum lesson for the week, including:

Teacher Insight: tips on how to best prepare for the study, and alerts to potential issues that may surface from the story.

Teacher Planning: a list of supplies needed for the lesson and things to remember while preparing. This section gives ideas for different options for telling and exploring the Bible story.

Lesson Outline: This gives a suggested time allotment for each element in a 75 minute lesson.

Teacher Lesson Script: This gives a complete walkthrough of the lesson, including scripted transitions, instructions and prayers. It also gives cues as to when you are to use the videos, handouts and other materials.

Creative Option: A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise is provided with each lesson in the *Join the Story* section. These activities involve students in a hands-on activity, like drawing or acting, designed to help them use a different (and often fun!) mode to engage the story.

StoryReader's Script: The StoryReader scripts are segments of scripture taken directly from Zondervan's THE STORY BIBLE FOR TEENS (TNIV). Each script takes 10 minutes or less to be read aloud. These segments have been formatted into a *Readers' Theater*. A Readers' Theater is an activity in which a few participants are asked to read directly from a script, with the intent of telling a story in a lively manner.

Student Handout: each week a one page pdf is provided for students to help them interact with the story in different ways. The areas of this handout include:

- *SEE the Story:* an area to create an image or symbol for the story.
- *HEAR the Story:* an area to write or draw key events and areas that stand out.
- *JOIN the Story:* an area to give a response to some application questions. Students will have options to create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, etc.

VIDEO:

StoryRecap Videos: 1-2 minute look back at the previous week's story using stop-motion animation or time-lapse photography. These videos are used in every lesson, except every fourth week when they are replaced by a *StoryRewind* video.

StoryRewind Videos: 2-5 minute fast paced 2D animation giving a quick overview of ALL of the stories you've covered so far. These videos are used every fourth lesson, replacing the StoryRecap video.

StoryView Videos: A creative telling of each week's story, told in 2-3 minutes. These videos incorporate stop-motion animation or time-lapse photography (depending on the week), and are used in every lesson.

TIPS FOR LEADING THIS CURRICULUM*

**Adapted from Grace Church's vision for using The Story Curriculum © Zondervan 2009.*

- 1. It's the inside that counts.** Sincerity, honesty and authenticity are key qualities for any group leader. Your openness will set the tone and direction. Remember, trust is the foundation for building significant relationships in your group.
- 2. Ask good questions.** The key to leading a good discussion is asking good questions. A key step in asking a good question is to patiently wait for someone to answer. Good questions produce an interchange of ideas and insights so we can learn from each other and deepen relationships. Be sure to focus on the questions that encourage personal reflection and application to daily life.
- 3. Work at listening and being present.** Listen with your heart, your eyes and your ears. Good listeners draw information from the group. Rephrase what's said to make sure you heard correctly. Ask them to expand on their comments to clarify what was said. Understand what people are feeling as well as what they are saying.
- 4. Transformation not just information.** The goal is not just to learn the facts and details about the stories in the Bible but to be transformed by them. Share with your group how *The Story* is reshaping your own life.
- 5. Make prayer a priority.** Praying for your group members and your study time is the best way to prepare. Make prayer a part of your study time. Also, be careful about asking others to pray before they are ready for such a step.