

TEACHER PREPARATION

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As this is the first study in the series, it's going to be a bit different from those in following weeks. Do your best to treat this opening study as the beginning of a wonderful adventure--which it is! Encourage your students to be open to learning and experiencing new things.

During the introduction, students will be asked to share in pairs about an event in their lives that was difficult, but later served a better purpose...maybe it protected them from more pain, or it taught them something they wouldn't have learned otherwise. It may be helpful to give your own personal example to help students understand what they should be sharing about.

This first story has a lot of detail right from the beginning, and is broken up into three major 'events,' each of which has its own unique themes and message. They are stories that you and your students are probably familiar with, but this time will be most meaningful if you encourage everyone involved to treat the stories as if they are being told for the first time.

DON'T KILL THE CONVERSATION!

Youth ministry expert Grahame Knox suggests five sure-fire ways to avoid an embarrassing silence:

1. Don't ask questions that can be answered with one word (e.g., Do you agree that God loves you?)
 2. Don't ask loaded questions that suggest the answer (e.g., Our bodies are God's temple, so should we smoke?)
 3. Don't ask intimidating questions (e.g., If you really loved God, what you would do?)
 4. Don't ask embarrassing questions (e.g., What's your most frequent temptation?)
 5. Don't try to make people guess the answers you want (e.g., What are the three great truths from this passage?)
- I'll add one more:
6. Don't use "Why?" or "Why not?" in your follow-up questions (because they make people feel as though they're defending their answers).

[From *Creative Bible Study Methods for Youth Leaders*, an ebook by Grahame Knox, 2007, pp. 10-11]

The purpose of this study is to help students engage in these stories and to help them discuss the events within the boundaries of that narrative. Gently encourage them that discussion outside of these parameters is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will gain further insight.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 1 Handout: Creation** (on curriculum DVD).
- 5 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Chapter 1: Creation** video from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** big sheets of paper: one per 3 or 4 people. An assortment of different colored markers. OPTIONAL: Old magazines, scissors, glue and/or tape.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

STORYREADERS ASSIGNMENT:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

(The major parts in this week's story are the Narrator and God. Make sure to pick students or leaders who won't mind reading large portions of the story.)

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: THE UPPER AND LOWER STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	2 minutes
Opening Activity	3 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>Chapter 1: Creation Video</i>	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	5 minutes
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: THE UPPER AND LOWER STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP) 5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome! I am so excited to be together and to begin our discovery in God's Story. Let's take a moment and pray before we begin:

God, as we begin this amazing journey through your Story, we pray that you will open our eyes to see ourselves within it. We pray that as we learn about ancient times, places, and people, we may discover new things about our own lives and about your dreams for the world that we live in today. Amen.

I hope that this adventure through God's story is going to teach us a lot and allow us to have some fun while we experience it together. Before we begin, let me share a little bit more about how we can be thinking about these stories as we move through them.

In every Bible story that we go through together, there will actually be TWO story lines going on: we'll call them an **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. Every story in the Bible is a part of one, bigger story...the Upper Story.

The Lower Story are the smaller stories we will look at each week that tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives. What will be eye opening is when we are learning about a (lower) story and we begin to see how it is connected to all the other stories.

When we look at each story with the Upper Story and Lower Story in mind, it helps up:

- 1) see that God and God's plans for the world are the central character in the story.
- 2) It's helps us put our own lives into the "bigger picture", and see how God's story continues with us.

Sometimes events like a break-up or failure at school leave us feeling like there is no hope. But when we see that God has a long-range plan and better story for our lives, we begin to see life with a bigger perspective. We might even see difficult circumstances as an opportunity for God to show us something better.

DISCUSS: Take the next few minutes, turn to the person next to you, and **share about an event in your life that was difficult for you**, but later you realized it had served a better purpose...maybe it protected from more pain, or it taught you something you wouldn't have learned otherwise.

(Teacher, it may be necessary to give your own personal example to help students understand what they should be sharing about.)

(Give students 1-2 minutes to discuss. As time permits, allow a few to share.)

As we can see, there seems to be an Upper Story and a Lower Story going on right here in our own lives. Let's keep those times and events in our mind as we move throughout each story.

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

Hopefully, you are ready to dive into the first chapter of this amazing story. I have a video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *Creation*. Just to warn you, it is packed with action, so you have to pay careful attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play Chapter 1: Creation video from the curriculum DVD (2:44 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the Chapter 1: Creation handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an **image or symbol** for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As you have noticed, this is a really interesting story--there is a LOT going on here! We want to spend some time diving deeper into this story, and I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the StoryReaders script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes)]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups**. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY

35 MINUTES

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout.

Would anyone like to share what you came up with?

In what ways was life different in the creation story from life today?

Why do you think God rested after he had finished creating? What could this mean for your life?

Why do you think God created humans in his own image? What does this mean for you?

What do you think motivated Adam and Eve to sin against God?

Why do you think God put the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in the garden?

Why did God flood the earth?

What does this act of judgment tell you about God?

In what ways do we see corruption and violence in our world today? How do we see it in our own lives?

CREATIVE OPTION:

Have your teens get into groups of 3 or 4. Give each group a large sheet of paper. Say something like, "You are now going to draw a map of the world that you would create. Feel free to draw and name animals, people, and landscapes--anything you would like. Think about what you would put into it to make this world a place that is 'good.' Also think about what things would not exist in the world that you have created."

Take the next 10 minutes to create your new creation. Don't forget to create new names for the things and places that you have created.

(If students are struggling to come up with ideas for this, have them start by drawing their neighborhood or town, and ask them how they would change it to make it a better place.)

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character are you most like in this story? How?*
- *In your own words, what does it look like for human beings to take care of God's creation like Adam and Eve were instructed to do?"*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

This is a very mature and creative group. The words and images in your mind are meaningful, so create or write something that honestly represents your thoughts. We can really learn from each other. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

I am impressed and encouraged by your insight and your willingness to share. The more we dive into these stories, the more we'll see that these stories have a way of connecting with us like nothing else can. I hope we'll begin to see this story can change all of our lives. Thank you for engaging in this and being so thoughtful in your responses. I wish we have more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next story!

Let's pray as we end our time together:

God, thank you for this time together, and for allowing us to begin this incredible journey through this story. Help us to reflect on what we've experienced today in the week ahead. And may we look forward to learning about more about you and your wonderful, mysterious plan for the world in the weeks to come. Thank you for being a God who is creative, powerful, and true to Your promises. Amen.

TEACHER PREPARATION

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

Since this is just the second week of the series, there may be students for whom this is still a very new and challenging experience. Continue to encourage your students to be open to learning and experiencing new things.

This lesson is somewhat unique, in that there are several major themes in this chapter that have the potential to intersect with your students' lives. For example, some may resonate more with God's calling for Abraham to step out in faith and leave home, while other students may resonate more with the way the God blesses Jacob, in spite of his questionable character. As you lead, remember that you are not trying to just arrive at "correct" answers, but to allow your students to interact with and respond to the story in very different ways.

Also note that there is a lot that happens between these stories in the traditional Biblical narrative. In discussion, encourage your students who are familiar with the Bible to stick to the larger themes that are highlighted in the selected stories, and to try to see the stories with "new eyes."

Remember that the purpose of this study is to help students engage in these stories and to help them discuss the events within the boundaries of that narrative. Gently encourage them that

RESPECT THE SILENCE!

Youth ministry expert Amelia Richardson Dress suggests that pauses in discussion aren't always bad.

"Sometimes it takes people awhile to warm up or gather their thoughts. Let them think. Yes, 10 seconds of silence will feel like an eternity to you, but the more you do it the more comfortable you, and the group, will feel. A caveat: you have to be calm and inviting when you do this. Relax, smile at everyone, let them know that you're ok with the quiet and soon they'll appreciate it for the invitation it is."

[From "5 Tips for Leading Great Discussions." (Web Resource) www.youthministry.com]

discussion outside of these parameters is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will gain further insight.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 2 Handout: God Builds a Nation** (on curriculum DVD).
- 8-10 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Creation Recap video** and the **Chapter 2: God Builds a Nation video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** Pens, colored pencils, paper, envelopes OR post cards.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

STORYREADERS ASSIGNMENT:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

The StoryReader scripts are segments of scripture taken directly from Zondervan's THE STORY BIBLE FOR TEENS (TNIV). Each script takes about 10 minutes 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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

(The major parts in this week's story are read by the Narrators. Make sure to pick students or leaders who won't mind reading large portions of the story.)

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
Creation Recap Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>Chapter 2: God Builds a Nation</i> Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome! I am so excited to be back together and to continue our journey through God's Story. Let's take a moment and pray before we begin:

God, as we return to this amazing Story, we pray that you will continue to open our eyes to see ourselves within it. We pray that as we learn about different people in very different times and places, we may discover new things about our own lives and about how you want us to live in relationship with You and with each other. Amen.

I'm really excited to continue to chapter two of our journey through God's Story. But before we do, I thought it would be good for us to take a look back at what we experienced last week. This video will give us a quick summary of the stories from chapter 1. It will go by fast, so watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *Creation Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

Just as a reminder, in every Bible story that we go through together, we are looking for TWO story lines going on: an **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. The Lower Story are the smaller stories we will look at each week that tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives.

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, you are ready to dive into the next chapter of this amazing story. I have a video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *God Builds a Nation*. Just to warn you, it is packed with action, so you have to pay careful attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *Chapter 2: God Builds a Nation* video from the curriculum DVD (about 3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 2: God Builds a Nation* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an **image or symbol** for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – *After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.*]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

As you have noticed, this is a really interesting story--there is a LOT going on here! We want to spend some time diving deeper into this story, and I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes)]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** –*After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:*]

- What were the key events from the story?
- What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups**. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?

Abraham left his homeland and a wealthy family business that was passed down from generations to follow God. How do think this would have been difficult? What did God give him in return?

What might God be asking you to give up to follow him?

The story said that Abraham was "righteous" in God's sight? What do you think this means? Was Abraham perfect? How did he express doubt in God in this story? Can teenagers be righteous? How or why not?

Why do you think God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac? What do you think Abraham—and Isaac—learned from this experience?

Because Jacob had shrewdly acquired Esau's birthright and stolen their father's blessing, Jacob feared his brother's revenge. How did Jacob prepare for his meeting with Esau?

What attitude did Jacob have when he wrestled with the "man" who Jacob eventually realized was actually God?

Jacob's name was changed to Israel...meaning "to struggle with God." How do we "struggle" with God? How might it be good to "struggle" in our faith?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- Which character are you most like in this story? How?
- If you had to "wrestle" with God over something, what would it be? (Maybe it's a fear of something? A frustration in your life? An injustice in the world?)

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Pass out pencils and/or pencils and paper OR postcards to the student. Say something like "In today's story, we see God's faithfulness to His people, and we see that carried through even to restoring a relationship between Jacob and his brother, Esau. We're going to take the next 10 minutes to write a short letter. You may write it to someone that you have hurt or wronged, or someone who has hurt you. I will not make you deliver this letter, that is totally up to you."

Take the next 10 minutes to create your letter.

(Tell students that do not necessarily need to show their letters to anyone or ever deliver them, but they may if it is appropriate.)

The words and images in your mind are meaningful, so create or write something that honestly represents your thoughts. We can really learn from each other. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you for your willingness to share. Some of these are very personal things, and I am impressed at your courage to trust us with these things. I hope we'll continue to see how engaging in this story can impact us and change us in very significant ways. I wish we have more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next story!

Let's pray as we end our time together:

God, thank you for all of the things that this story, Your Story, has shown us about ourselves and each other. Help us to reflect on what we've experienced today in the days ahead, and to remember that You are with us always, no matter where we've been or what we've done. And may we look forward to growing and learning from new stories in the weeks to come. Thank you for being a God we can trust. Amen.

TEACHER PREPARATION

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

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Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

Since this is only the third lesson, there may be students for whom this is still a very new and challenging experience. Continue to encourage your students to be open to learning and experiencing new things.

This lesson moves fairly quickly through several episodes in Joseph's life. While you could spend time during your discussion unpacking each trial he faced (i.e. temptation from Potiphar's wife) and what each means of our lives, it might be more advantageous to encourage your students to see the whole narrative of Joseph's life and struggle in light of God's attitude toward those are afflicted--the "underdogs," in a sense. The element of forgiveness will also play a large role in rounding out this narrative.

Continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is

ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS!

Sometimes using the right probing questions can unlock great discussion.

Until a group gets to know each other and becomes familiar with a new style of interaction, you won't simply be able to rely on canned questions to get your discussion started. (The questions will help, but you will need a little more.) First, remember to keep your questions open-ended. When appropriate, ask "What do you think" questions, rather than questions that seek a concrete answer. These will, by nature, foster more discussion amongst your group. Similarly, stay away from questions that could have a "yes" or "no" answer, and opt for "Why..." questions. (For example, instead of "Did you like the story?" use "What did you think about the story? Why?"

As your students begin to respond to questions, don't be afraid to use probing questions to dig a bit deeper. When you sense that there could be more to a student's answer that is beneficial to the rest of the group, ask them to elaborate or to explain their response further. (Of course, be careful not to pry into something that is too personal.)

for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 3 Handout: Joseph** (on curriculum DVD).
- 11-13 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along. (Don't be afraid to save paper by letting students share scripts, also.)
- Copies of the *Join the Story* section of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **God Builds a Nation Recap video** and the **Chapter 3: Joseph video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** Sheets of paper, pens and pencils. Optional: Tape/Voice Recorders, Musical Instruments (tambourines, drums, keyboard, etc.)
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

STORYREADERS ASSIGNMENT:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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(The major parts in this week's story are read by the Narrators. Make sure to pick students or leaders who won't mind reading large portions of the story.)

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

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

Introduction and prayer 1 minutes

God Builds a Nation Recap Video 2 minute

Brief responses to video 2 minutes

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

Explanation and handouts 1 minute

Joseph: Video 3 minutes

Creating symbols for the story 2 minutes

Sharing about our symbols 4 minutes

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

Explanation 1 minute

StoryReaders scripture telling 10 minutes

Response to scripture 9 minutes

BREAK: teens move to small groups 5 minutes

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

Discussion 15 minutes

Create responses to the story 10 minutes

Sharing responses to the story 5 minutes

Closing prayer 1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome back! I am so excited to be back together as we continue to move through God's Story. Let's take a moment and pray before we begin:

God, we thank you for the opportunity to dive into this amazing story together once again. We ask you to inspire us, to move us, and to allow us to find our own story within this one. Please show us and teach us how this story can intersect with our own stories. Amen.

This week we are in the THIRD chapter our story. I hope you're excited to see what's coming up next. ! I thought it would be good for us to take a look back at what happened in the story and see what we remember from last week. It will go by fast, so watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *God Builds a Nation Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? Is there anything that stood out to you differently from last time we heard it? What stood out to you most from this part of the story?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

Just as a reminder, in every Bible story that we go through together, we are looking for TWO story lines going on: an **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. The Lower Story are the smaller stories we will look at each week that tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives.

[It may be helpful to call on students to briefly define what the Upper Story is, and what the Lower Story is, to ensure that students are starting to remember these from week to week.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, that video helped to refresh your memory of where we've been in the last week. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us today. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *Joseph: From Slave to Deputy Pharaoh*. Remember to pay careful attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *Joseph: From Slave to Deputy Pharaoh* Video from the curriculum DVD (3:00)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 3: Joseph* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In an a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

As you have noticed, this is a really interesting story--almost seems like it could be a movie, doesn't it? Once again, we want to spend some hearing this story in a different way, and I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While to story is being read, draw or write down key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes)]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

- What were some of the most memorable moments from the story?
- Overall, how did this story make you feel? Why?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups**. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Why do you think Joseph's brothers wanted to get rid of him?
- Have you ever been betrayed by family member or close friend? How did you (or do you) feel toward that person?
- In the story, Joseph was accused of something he didn't do. Have you ever been treated unfairly for doing the right thing? What did you learn from it?
- At one point in the story, Joseph says, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good" What does this tell you about God?
- Has there ever been a difficult time in your life when you felt that God was with you? How did you know?
- What are some ways that you sense that God is with you?

Teacher Script:

Pick one of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or characters in the story are you most like? How?*
- *What events or memories in your own life did the story remind you of?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I love seeing how you are all continuing to interact more and more with these stories, and I love seeing the words and images that you come up with, so create or write something that honestly represents what you're wrestling with or wondering about in this story. I know that we can really learn from each other. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Have your teens gather into groups of anywhere from 2 - 4 people. Tell them that since Joseph's story is a classic underdog story about rising from the bottom to the top, it needs a proper soundtrack to go along with it, just like a great underdog movie.

Give them two options to create in the next 10-15 minutes: a) Make a list of 10-12 popular songs that help to tell different parts of Joseph's story (i.e. "Stayin' Alive" by the Bee Gees). Have each group share their playlist with the rest of the students, explaining why they picked each song; OR b) Write and perform (if they are comfortable) their own rap song or pop song about the themes from Joseph's story. Tell them they may re-write new lyrics to the tune of a popular song, if that helps to get them started.

OPTIONAL: Allow volunteers to perform and/or record their songs. Be sure not to force anyone who is shy about sharing.

(To save time, you could have groups who chose to make soundtrack lists share their "Top 3" songs.)

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you for using your imaginations and being able to share some very important and personal parts of your own stories. I wish we have more time to continue our sharing, but I encourage you to continue to reflect on these questions until the next time we meet. You can journal about your thoughts, create more art, or share them with friends or family.

Let's pray as we end our time together:

God, we are so amazed and grateful and you stand by us no matter what, even when people betray us, and when it seems like things can't get any worse. We know that you are a good God who cares about us and wants the absolute best for us. Thank you for showing us your love in our lives and through this story. Amen.

TEACHER PREPARATION

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies centers on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading This Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, go through it with from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

While many are familiar with this story, it is always good to encourage your students (and yourself!) to view the story from a new perspective. Some of the traditional elements have been omitted from this telling of the story, such as Moses' birth and his escape from Egypt after the murder he committed. The focus of this telling is on God's deliverance, or rescue, of His people. While the conversation might have a tendency to stray to other parts of the Story not told in this lesson, try to keep your students and leaders focused on the story presented here.

Also, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

OPERATE IN JOY!

Leadership expert Michael Zigarelli says that your attitude has great power to influence the attitudes of those around you:

"The disposition of the leader powerfully drives the disposition of the whole group. When you adopt a joyful and celebratory disposition throughout the study, others will follow. When you smile, when you're upbeat, when you're genuinely excited to be leading, when you celebrate successes, it will infect the group—and that will significantly improve the experience for everyone involved. As you know, though, joy doesn't just happen. It's not something you can engineer on demand, nor is it something you can fake for very long. Rather, real joy starts with seeing clearly the opportunity with which God has blessed you...This sort of perspective leads to gratitude for the opportunity, and out of gratitude flows joy, both in your preparation and in your leadership of the discussion."

[From *Freedom from Busyness Leader's Guide* by Michael Zigarelli, pp. 74-82]

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 4 Handout: Deliverance** (on curriculum DVD).
- 4 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **StoryRewind 1 video** and the **Chapter 4: Deliverance video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** poster-sized sheets of paper: one per 3 or 4 people. An assortment of different colored markers.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

STORYREADERS ASSIGNMENT:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
StoryRewind 1 Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
Deliverance Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	10 minutes
Response to scripture	9 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome back! I am so excited to be back together as we continue to move through God's Story. Let's take a moment and pray before we begin:

God, we thank you for the opportunity to dive into this amazing story together once again. We ask you to inspire us, to move us, and to allow us to find our own story within this one. Please show us and teach us how this story can intersect with our own stories. Amen.

This week we are in the THIRD chapter our story. I hope you're excited to see what's coming up next. ! I thought it would be good for us to take a look back at what happened in the story and see what we remember from last week. It will go by fast, so watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *God Builds a Nation Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

Just as a reminder, in every Bible story that we go through together, we are looking for TWO story lines going on: an **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. The Lower Story are the smaller stories we will look at each week that tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives.

[It may be helpful to call on students to briefly define what the Upper Story is, and what the Lower Story is, to ensure that students are starting to remember these from week to week.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of where we've been, or catch you up if you're just joining us. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *Deliverance*. Like the video we just watched, it is packed with action, so you have to pay careful attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *Deliverance* Video from the curriculum DVD (2:44 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 4: Deliverance* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In an a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

As you have noticed, there is a lot going on in this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While to story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes)]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

- What were the key events from the story?
- What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups**. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- How did God show concern for the Israelites after hearing their cries for help?
- Do you think was Moses qualified to lead the people? In what ways did he feel he was not qualified?
- Have you ever felt unqualified or unable to do something, as Moses did? How did you handle it?
- The Story notes several amazing miracles in the deliverance of the people from Egypt. Do you believe God performs miracles today? Why or why not?
- Why do you think God "hardens Pharaoh's heart"? What might this mean?
- What does this story say about the character of God?
- What does the idea of "deliverance" mean in our world today? Where is God's rescue needed?

Teacher Script:

Pick one of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *Have you ever been or are you "captive" or "enslaved" to something?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I think you all have something very important to add to this time, so create or write something that honestly represents how you're feeling and what you're wrestling with. I think you'll find that we all can learn a lot if we're real with each other. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Have your teens get into groups of 3 or 4. Give each group a large sheet of paper and markers.

Say something like, "In your groups, you are now going to create a campaign poster for the ideal candidate to lead a nation of people out of a tough time. Give your candidate a name, and make a list of all the qualities that he or she must have to be a good leader. You may also create a campaign slogan and draw a picture of your leader."

After 10 minutes, ask each group to present their leader and his/her qualities. (OPTIONAL: Take a quick hand-count election of which candidate would be the best leader.)

If time allows, briefly discuss the difference between the characteristics we look for in our leaders and the characteristics God looks for in His.

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

I am proud of all of you for engaging with these questions, even when it may be a bit uncomfortable at times. I believe that these stories have a way of connecting with us like nothing else does, and I am seeing great things come from our time together. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next story!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, we are so grateful for this amazing story of your plan to rescue Your people from bondage and slavery. We pray that in the coming days, you would show us the areas of our lives in which you want to set us free. We also ask that you would continue to remind us that, no matter who we are or what we think of ourselves, you believe in us to do great things in Your name. Amen.

TEACHER PREPARATION

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it with from a teachers perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to omit.

This story has a lot of detail. Moses is traveling up and down the mountain several times. It may be hard to for students to keep track of the action, so it is important that you encouragement to really pay attention.

The purpose of this study is to help students engage in this story and help them discuss the events within the boundaries of that narrative. Gently encourage them that discussion outside of these parameters are for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will gain further insight.

Kinds of Questions Provided in this Study:

Imagination Questions: (See, Hear and Explore the Story Sections) These questions help participants think deeply and share what they are noticing about the story. Imagination question are not searching for a correct answer, but rather for observation and participation in the story.

Example: How do you think you would have felt if you were standing at the base of the mountain wen it started to shake?

DON'T KILL THE CONVERSATION!

Youth ministry expert Grahame Knox suggests five sure-fire ways to avoid an embarrassing silence:

1. Don't ask questions that can be answered with one word (e.g., *Do you agree that God loves you?*)
2. Don't ask loaded questions that suggest the answer (e.g., *Our bodies are God's temple, so should we smoke?*)
3. Don't ask intimidating questions (e.g., *If you really loved God, what you would do?*)
4. Don't ask embarrassing questions (e.g., *What's your most frequent temptation?*)
5. Don't try to make people guess the answers you want (e.g., *What are the three great truths from this passage?*)
I'll add one more:
6. Don't use "Why?" or "Why not?" in your follow-up questions (because they make people feel as though they're defending their answers).

[from *Creative Bible Study Methods for Youth Leaders*, an ebook by Grahame Knox, 2007, pp. 10-11]

Integration Questions: (Hear and Explore the Story Sections)

These questions help us explore meaning in the story. They challenge us to make connections and communicate what we understand about the story.

Example: What do you think these commands and Laws show us about God?

Implementation Questions: (Join the Story Section) These questions stir us to think about how the story connects with our own lives, and how we might begin to apply it in real-world situations.

Example: In your own words, what could it mean for you to live as a “modern-day priest”?

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the Chapter 5 Handout: New Commands
- 4 Copies of the StoryReaders Script for your storytellers (make extras for students that would like to read along)
- Copies of the *Explore the Story* and *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** big sheets of paper: one per 3 or 4 people. An assortment of different colored markers.
- Optional: THE STORY—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. *Never force a student to read!* Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

The StoryReader scripts are segments of scripture taken directly from Zondervan’s THE STORY Bible (TNIV). Each script takes approximately 10 minutes 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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a 75-to 90-minute session:

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

Introduction and prayer	2 minutes
<i>The Story So Far: Part 1</i> Video	1 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes

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

Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>New Commands Story</i> Video (2:44 minutes)	3 minutes
Response to video	6 minutes

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

Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture in groups	12 minutes

PART FOUR: EXPLORE THE STORY **20 minutes**

Discussion: imagination questions	5 minutes
Discussion: integration questions	10 minutes
Discussion: implementation questions	5 minutes

PART FIVE: JOIN THE STORY **20 minutes**

Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	9 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

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

5 minutes

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome back! I am so excited to be back together and to continue our discovery in God's Story. Let's take a moment and pray before we begin:

*God, we are challenged and encouraged by the things you are showing us in your story.
I've been blown away by the things these students are seeing.
May you continue to bring your story alive to us and help us to know you more.
Amen.*

I hope that this adventure through God's story is really connecting with you. So much has happened in this story in just five chapters! I thought it would be good for us to take a look back in *The Story So Far*. In just 31 seconds this video will give us a quick summary of all the stories we have looked. It will go by fast, so watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play The Story So Far: Part 1 Video from the curriculum DVD (31 seconds)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE the STORY (large or small group)**10 minutes**

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has put you in “story-mode”, ready to dive into another chapter of this amazing story. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

[CUE: Give each student the New Commands handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

The area in the upper left corner with the eye on it is where you can draw and write a response to this video. Now, let’s watch this week’s video, *New Commands*. Like the first video we watched, it is packed with action, so you have to pay careful attention so you don’t miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play New Commands Story Video from the curriculum DVD (2:44 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Take the next two or three minutes and respond to questions next to the SEE the Story section on your handout. Draw or write a thoughtful response, and then we will discuss them soon.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After three minutes, ask a few students to share a brief response to the questions on their handouts. After about 3 minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

–How do you think you would have felt if you were in this story? Why?

–What scene from the video stood out to you the most? Why?

PART THREE: HEAR the STORY

(large or small group)

25 minutes**Teacher Script** (please personalize this):

As you have noticed, this is a really interesting story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into this story, and I have asked a few of you to help us as StoryReaders.

Instead of watching the story visually unfold, we are going to use our image-making abilities—our imaginations—to enter the story as it is being read. This takes some real concentration. If it helps you, close your eyes, write or draw key details as you hear them.

After the story has been told, we are going to create responses on our handouts and then discuss our observations further in small groups. Are you ready?

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the StoryReaders script all the way through without stopping. (10-12 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. Take the next 5 minutes to draw or write what you think about the story in the HEAR the Story section on your handout. Use the questions provided as a guide.

This is a very mature and creative group. The words and images in your mind are meaningful, so create or write something that honestly represents your thoughts. We can really learn from each other. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses.
I am really excited to see what you come up with.

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: DISCUSS –After [five minutes, ask a few students and an adult to share what they created with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:

–What was the most meaningful scene from the story? Why?
Describe it with words or draw it here:]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

PART FOUR: EXPLORE the STORY**20 minutes**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

IMAGINATION QUESTIONS: (5 minutes)

- Not all of you got to share your responses you just created for the HEAR the Story part. Would anyone like to share what your group came up with?
- How do you think you would have felt if you were standing at the base of the mountain when it started to shake?
- What does this story make you wonder about? Did anything surprise you?
- How do you think Moses felt in this story? Where in the story did you notice that?
- What do you remember about the Tabernacle—the tent the Israelites built at the end of the story? Why do you think God wanted to live with the Israelites if they would not listen?

INTEGRATION QUESTIONS: (10-12 minutes)

- If you had to use one word to describe this story, what would it be? Why?
- Why do you think God gave the Israelites commands? Why were they needed? Why do you think God is so specific about these things? Do you think they were difficult to follow?
- Why do you think the people did not want to live within God's commands?
- What do you think these commands and Laws show us about God?
- Why do you think the Israelites created a "god they could see"? Where do we see a people put the highest value on material objects? Why do you think we tend to do this as humans?

IMPLEMENTATION QUESTIONS: (3-5 minutes)

- God said the to Israelites, "you will be a kingdom of priests"? What do you think of when you hear the word priest? If God is saying, "All of you are now priests", what do you think that meant for the Israelites? What could that mean for us?
- What do you think it means to live in God's ways? What are some of the characteristics of someone who is doing this?

CREATIVE OPTION:

Have your teens get into groups of 3 or 4. Give each group a large sheet of paper. Say something like, "You are now going to create a current version of the 10 commandments. You can look them up in Exodus 20. Your version needs to use language that teens relate to and understand. Tell us what you think each of these commands mean."

Take the next 10 minutes to create your new commands. Don't forget to write them on a current communication device. God wouldn't give them to us on tablets...what would God use today?"

(If students are struggling to come up with ideas for this, have them think about what God might put on a billboard, in an email or tweet to communicate these commands.)

PART FIVE: JOIN THE STORY**20 minutes****Teacher Script:**

Pick one of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- > Which character are you most like in this story? How?
- > In your own words, what could it mean for you to live as a “modern-day priest”?
- > How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

I am encouraged and amazed by your creativity and depth. Stories have a way of connecting with us like nothing else does, and I am seeing this story begin to change all of our lives. Thank you for engaging in this and being so thoughtful in your responses. I wish we have more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to next week.

Let's pray as we end our time together:

God, we are so grateful for the time we have had together, and for your meeting us through your story. We are learning so much about you, and it is changing our own stories. May we continue to seek you as our source of life and strength this week. Amen.

TEACHER PREPARATION

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it with from a teachers perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

This story emphasizes some major themes in the Israelites' relationship to God. Some very "human" moments occur as the Israelites continue to complain to God, and Moses even shows frustration at the burden of leading his people.

In responding to this story, there could be some opportunity for students to reveal some very personal examples of ways they have "given up on God" or questioned his blessing in their lives--or even his presence. Do your best not to steer students toward specific answers and responses; rather, encourage them to draw from their own experiences and feelings about their relationship with God.

START AN ARGUMENT!

Small group leader Carter Moss says that the goal is to get at the core of what people are really trying to say.

"I like to tell my groups that if we always agree with each other, and with every word that every author we read says, then it makes for a pretty boring group and a somewhat pointless discussion. The point of actually discussing things is to get different perspectives and wrestle with the issues!

Here are some examples of questions that can help create discussion by playing a little 'devil's advocate':

- Do you really agree with what the author is saying in that chapter? Why or why not?
- Why did God design it to work that way? Why not just do (whatever else) instead?
- What would you say to someone who disagrees with that?
- Why do we really have to do it like that? Why can't we just go (some other route) instead?"

[From "Tips for Facilitating a Group Discussion" by Carter Moss.
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TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 6 Hand-out: Wandering** (on curriculum DVD).
- 6-8 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Commands Recap video** and the **Wandering video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** A sheet of paper for each student. Assortment of different colored markers and/or colored pencils.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>Commandments Recap</i> Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>Wandering</i> Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	10 minutes
Response to scripture	9 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Welcome! I'm excited for another amazing week of journeying through God's Story, and I hope you are, too. Let's pray together before we begin:

God, we come here together today, each of us with our own worries, fears, and doubts. We thank you for being a God who meets us wherever we are, no matter what. We recognize that you are here with us now, and we ask that, as we dive into today's story, you would continue to show us more about who you are and how we can interact with you through your incredible story. Amen.

We are in our sixth "chapter" of the story this week, and I hope that you are as excited as I am to see what's coming next. But before we move on, I thought it would be good for us to take a look back at what we covered last week. It will go by fast, so watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *StoryRewind: Part 2* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

Just as a reminder, in every Bible story that we go through together, we are looking for TWO story lines going on: an **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. The Lower Story are the smaller stories we will look at each week that tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives.

[It may be helpful to call on students to briefly define what the Upper Story is, and what the Lower Story is, to ensure that students are starting to remember these from week to week.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of where we've been, or catch you up if you were not with us last week. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *Wandering*. Like the video we just watched, it is packed with action, so you have to pay careful attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *Wandering* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 6: Wandering* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as StoryReaders.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the StoryReaders script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under TEACHER PLANNING.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** —After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

- What were the key events from the story?
- What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups**. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- What do you think was the main cause of most of the Israelites' problems? Why?
- How did God respond to the people's lack of faith?
- What do you learn about Moses' leadership throughout this difficult period? How did he display both frustration and faith?
- Why don't you think the Israelites trusted God to bring them safely into Canaan?
- Have you ever been afraid to do something, even though you knew it was what God wanted for you? Explain.
- Have you ever felt as if you were "wandering in a desert" — spiritually or emotionally? Explain.
- How do you think trusting God's promises can help you in difficult times?

Teacher Script:

Pick one of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *What are you thankful for? Have you ever been ungrateful for something given to you?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I know that you all have something very important to add to this story, so create or write something that honestly represents how you're feeling and what you're wrestling with. I think you'll find that we'll continue to see this story in new ways if we challenge ourselves to look deeper into our own lives through these questions. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Pass out a sheet of paper and markers or colored pencils to each person.

Say something like, "Now on your own, you are going to draw a map. But it's not going to be an ordinary map of actual locations. Instead, it's going to be a map of your life so far. Each area that you draw should represent an important time in your life. By the time you're done, we should be able to see where you have 'traveled' or 'wandered' up until this point. Pay close attention to those events and times that were both good and bad, successful and difficult. Think especially about how God showed that he was with you in those times."

After 10 minutes, ask if any students who would like to share their personal maps. If they are comfortable, ask them to share about any 'signs' along the way that remind them of God's presence in their lives.

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Once again, thank you for engaging with these questions, even though they can be really tough at times. These stories can really connect with us like nothing else does, and I am seeing great things come from our time together. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next story!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, we are so thankful for the things you teach us and show us about yourself and about ourselves through this ancient story. We ask you to continue to show us how this story is also our story, and that we all have a role to play. We also pray that you would continue to open our eyes to see the things that you do in our lives everyday. Remind us that you are with us, and that you are on our side always. Amen.

TEACHER PREPARATION

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with your group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In this story, there may be a few things that could be distracting for you and your students. First, the story of Rahab the prostitute might require you to encourage your students toward a mature approach to the

BRIDGE THE DISCUSSION!

You can use variations of the following encouragement phrases to help stimulate or encourage ongoing discussion:

- Can you elaborate on that....
- Tell me more....
- Someone take this in another direction...
- What do you mean by....
- Does anyone disagree with that....
- Does anyone have a different take on that....
- Can anyone give an example....
- Can you dig a little deeper....
- How did you come to this conclusion....
- Can you think of a situation where this would not be true....
- Have you had an experience that brought you to this conclusion....
- Does everyone know what he/she (the speaker) is talking about....
- Is there another way to see things...
- I'm not sure what you mean, are you saying....
- Can anyone say this in another way...
- How do you (the group) define
- When is this not true.... Or is this true in all cases....
- Have the rest of you thought about this in the same way....
- Who has had the same experience or situation...
- Say more about that...
- Go into more detail...

Source: © 2008 Workshopexercises.com

discussion, especially since there could be some great insights to come from that part of the story. Also, use discretion when selecting someone to read the part of Rahab in the Readers Theater.

Second, the topic of violence is prominent in this story, and it could spur some debate among your students. Do your best to moderate the discussion, and let students share their opinions in before trying to provide a definitive answer. (For example, when a student asks a question, allow the group to respond. Say something like: "Jason has asked a great question. What do you all think?")

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 7 Hand-out: The Battle Begins** (on curriculum DVD).
- 8 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Wandering Recap video** and **The Battle Begins video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** big sheets of paper: one per 3 or 4 people. An assortment of different colored markers. OPTIONAL: Old magazines, scissors, glue and/or tape.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

The StoryReader scripts are segments of scripture taken directly from Zondervan's THE STORY BIBLE FOR TEENS

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in

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(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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.

- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: THE UPPER AND LOWER STORY (*large or small group*) **5 minutes**

Introduction and prayer 1 minutes

Wandering Recap Video 2 minute

Brief responses to video 2 minutes

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

Explanation and handouts 1 minute

The Battle Begins Video 3 minutes

Creating symbols for the story 2 minutes

Sharing about our symbols 4 minutes

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

Explanation 1 minute

StoryReaders scripture telling 12 minutes

Response to scripture 7 minutes

BREAK: teens move to small groups 5 minutes

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

Discussion 15 minutes

Create responses to the story 10 minutes

Sharing responses to the story 5 minutes

Closing prayer 1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: THE UPPER AND LOWER STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP) 5 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Welcome! I'm excited for another great week of discovery through God's Story, and I hope you are, too. Let's pray together before we begin:

God, We thank you for such a captivating story that has so much power to teach us more about you and about ourselves. We ask that over the next couple hours, you would allow us to set aside anything that is distracting us or keeping us from hearing and experiencing the story in a new way. Amaze us, move us, and show us new things about our world that we never thought possible. Amen.

This week we are in the seventh "chapter" of our story, and I hope that you are as excited as I am to find out what comes next. But before we do, let's take a look back at our story from last week. As usual, it will go by fast, so watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *Wandering Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

Just as a reminder, in every Bible story that we go through together, we are looking for TWO story lines going on: an **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. The Lower Story are the smaller stories we will look at each week that tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives.

[It may be helpful to call on students to briefly define what the Upper Story is, and what the Lower Story is, to ensure that students are starting to remember these from week to week.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of where we've been, or catch you up if you were not with us last week. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *The Battle Begins*. As the title suggests, it is packed with action, so you have to pay careful attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *The Battle Begins* video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 7: The Battle Begins* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups**. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- How do you think Joshua was able to be “strong and courageous” in such intimidating situations?
- What do you learn about God from the story of Rahab?
- Why do you think God ordered the Israelites to go to war against others? Is this violence justified? Why or why not?
- What would you say is Joshua's legacy? How was his role important to God's plan, as we have seen it so far in the story?
- Why do you think God gave his blessing Joshua and the Israelites?
- What practical steps can you take to learn to trust God more?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *Have you ever felt like you were fighting against great odds?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I know many of us have some ideas already. But even if we are still unsure about what the story means for our lives, sometimes it is good to just begin writing or creating in response to the story. You may discover something in this exercise that you have never realized before about yourself or about God. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Divide students into groups of 2-3. Give each group a large piece of paper and markers OR colored pencils.

Say something like “In today's story, we see God's people come up against some pretty intimidating circumstances. We're going to take the the next 10 minutes and use our imaginations to draw a picture of the most intimidating situation that we could realistically face in our world today. Whether it's enduring an impossible science test or standing up to the biggest bully in school, we want to see what your imaginations can come up with.”

After the students have had 10 minutes to draw their scenario, ask each group to share. Then, as time allows, ask each group to think creatively about how God might want them to face that intimidating situation.

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you for wrestling with these questions, even though they can be really tough at times. We've seen that these stories can begin to connect with us in powerful ways, and I am seeing great things come from our time together. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next chapter of the story!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, we thank you for a history and a story that is full of adventure, mystery, and even confusion, at times, because it points us to our own stories. We pray that you would show us real, practical ways that we can continue to grow in trusting you every day, and that you would continue to open our eyes to see the ways that you step in to fight for us, even when things seem hopeless. Thank you for being strong, even when we are weak. Amen.

A FEW GOOD MEN AND WOMEN

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In the story for Chapter 8, the narrative is told through several "main" characters and several smaller stories of battles fought by the Israelites. Because of repetition, these stories have been abbreviated in the Video and the StoryReaders Script to two predominant stories and characters: the story of Gideon and the story of Samson.

While students should focus on themes from these two primary stories during your time together, make sure to emphasize the scale of the numerous and miraculous victories the Israelites achieved with God's help. Also, make sure to remind the students that the story goes much deeper, with detail and nuance, into the lives of the (very different) men and women that God chooses to lead Israel. Encourage them to take time on their own throughout the week to read more about these characters and their amazing stories.

AVOID CHRISTIAN JARGON

Keep the conversation as accessible to your students as possible!

While leading a discussion, it's important to use language that teens understand. Even though some students have a "churched" background and may understand some theological concepts and words, (words like "justification," "righteousness," "sovereignty," etc.) chances are there may be some students who are totally foreign to Christian words or concepts. Be aware of using more complex Christian ideas in answering questions, and make sure to give background or an explanation in everyday terms whenever possible.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 8 Hand-out: A Few Good Men...and Women** (on curriculum DVD).
- 8-10 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Story Rewind 2 video** and **A Few Good Men...and Women video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** A large sheet of paper for every 2-3 students. An assortment of markers for each group.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

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gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: THE UPPER AND LOWER STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>Story Rewind 2</i> Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>A Few Good Men...and Women</i> Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: THE UPPER AND LOWER STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP) 5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hello everyone! I'm so glad you're here of discovery through God's Story, and I hope you are, too. Let's pray together before we begin:

God, We are grateful for another chance to come together and learn more about you and your amazing story. We pray that you would help us to set aside anything that would keep us from hearing from you during our time today. Teach us something fresh and new about ourselves and about you, and show us how we can change ourselves and the world around us. Amen.

This week we are continuing our story, and I hope that you are as excited as I am to find out what comes next. But before we do, let's take a look back at what has happened in the story so far. As usual, it will go by fast, so watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *Story Rewind 2* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

Just as a reminder, in every Bible story that we go through together, we are looking for TWO story lines going on: an **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. The Lower Story are the smaller stories we will look at each week that tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives.

[It may be helpful to call on students to briefly define what the Upper Story is, and what the Lower Story is, to ensure that students are starting to remember these from week to week.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of where we've been, or catch you up if you have missed any of the past weeks. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, A Few Good Men...and Women. As the title suggests, it is packed with action, so you have to pay careful attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *A Few Good Men...and Women* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 8: A Few Good Men...and Women* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as StoryReaders.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups**. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- What encouragement does Gideon's story provide?
- Why do you think God uses people that are uncertain or weak like Gideon?
- Why do you think the Israelites kept repeating their downward cycle of sin and rebellion?
- What kinds of temptations do you think Samson faced as a warrior with superhuman strength?
- What are the strongest temptations that you face? How do you fight such temptations?
- What did Samson's decision to die at the end of the story accomplish for his purpose? What might this teach you about sacrifice?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *Have you ever felt like you were fighting against great odds?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Divide students into groups of 2-3, and give each group a large piece of paper and markers.

Tell them to divide the piece of paper into 8 boxes. (They can do this by folding the paper in half three times). Say something like, "In your groups, you are going to create a superhero, or a story about a human with super powers or abilities. In the boxes, you are going to create a comic strip about your superhero's life." Tell the students that there are three rules they must follow:

- The superhero must have a particular strength or ability that he or she uses for good.
- or She must exist in the world that you live in--your school, neighborhood, city, etc.
- The superhero must have a weakness.

After the students have had about 10 minutes to create their superhero and comic strip, allow each group to share. Make sure they tell the group their superhero's strength, weakness, and way that he or she does good in the world they know.

I know many of us have some ideas already. But even if we are still unsure about what the story means for our lives, sometimes it is good to just begin writing or creating in response to the story. You may discover something in this exercise that you have never realized before about yourself or about God. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you for wrestling with these questions. As we have seen, they can be pretty tough at times. We know that these stories can begin to connect with us in powerful ways, and I am seeing great things come from our time together. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next chapter of the story!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, we thank you for a story that continues to amaze us and teach us more about you and about ourselves. Thank you for being a God who gives us courage, strength, and confidence to face the toughest obstacles in our lives. We pray that you would remind us that we cannot do it on our own, and that we must look to one another--and most importantly, to you--for help. Thank you for being so faithful to your people. Amen.

THE FAITH OF A FOREIGN WOMAN

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In the story for Chapter 9, the narrative is focused on the story of Ruth and Naomi. As you will quickly see, this story has a few "difficult" spots, in that Ruth's actions may be perceived as strange or even scandalous by a modern-day readers. Students may wonder what really happened when Ruth "uncovers the feet" of Boaz. While the text isn't clear about what exactly took place, we know that her actions were seen as "kindness."

As students begin to work through the themes of the story, you and your group will hopefully see the the richness of God's provision, meeting us in our pain and leading us toward a better way.

The Faith of a Foreign Woman from Ruth 1-4

SPREAD OUT THE CONVERSATION!

Invite ALL of your students to participate in the discussion.

As you lead your discussion, there will likely be students who are more vocal than others. Sometimes, a highly participatory student can dominate the conversation and keep other students from sharing. When this happens, don't be afraid to take control to invite other students to share. You can say something like: "Thank you for your great input, Brian. Let's see if anyone else has something to share on this topic."

You can also call on specific students who may be more reluctant to share. Be careful not to pressure someone into sharing. (Also be mindful of new students--being singled out in front of a new group can be intimidating!) Remind students that you highly value their opinions and would love to hear what they have to say!

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 9 Hand-out: The Faith of a Foreign Woman** (on curriculum DVD).
- 7-10 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **A Few Good Men...and Women Recap video** and **The Faith of a Foreign Woman video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** A blank sheet of paper and a letter-sized envelope for each student, pens/pencils/markers.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise**

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: THE UPPER AND LOWER STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>A Few Good Men...and Women Recap Video</i>	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>The Faith of a Foreign Woman Video</i>	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: THE UPPER AND LOWER STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP) 5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hello! Welcome back as we continue through God's Story together. I'm really excited to continue discovering new things together, and I hope you are, too. Let's pray together before we begin:

God, As we come together today, I pray for our crazy and busy lives--from school work to time with our friends and family. Please show us that you are present even in those times. We ask for your help today, to help us to slow down, to rest, and to focus on you and your amazing story. Thank you for being with us here and now. Amen.

This week we are continuing our story, and I hope that you are as excited as I am to find out what comes next. But before we do, let's take a look back at what has happened in the story so far. As usual, it will go by fast, so watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *A Few Good Men...and Women Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of where we've been, or catch you up if you have missed any of the past weeks. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *The Faith of a Foreign Woman*. As with all of our videos, there is a lot going on here, so you have to pay careful attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *The Faith of a Foreign Woman Video* from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 9: The Faith of a Foreign Woman* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as StoryReaders.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the StoryReaders script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under TEACHER PLANNING.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into small groups. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Ruth left her home and her relatives to follow Naomi and to follow God. Why?
- What do you think Ruth's story show us about God's love?
- How does God use Ruth (a non-Jew) to bless and continue God's plan? What might this tell us about God?
- What could this mean...for how we treat people in our world? ...for how you treat people in your life?
- Both Ruth and Naomi suffered tremendous loss. Why do you think God allows tragedy to come upon those who love him?
- When difficult times come, what causes you to continue to hope in God?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *Have you ever been in a situation where you felt like an "outsider?"*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I know many of us have some ideas already. But even if we are still unsure about what the story means for our lives, sometimes it is good to just begin writing or creating in response to the story. You may discover something in this exercise that you have never realized before about yourself or about God. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

CREATIVE OPTION:

Give a sheet of paper and an envelope to each student. Say something like: "Now we are going to take some time on our own to reflect, and we are going to do this by writing a letter. I want you to take the next 10 minutes to write a letter to someone who society sees as an "outsider" or who may be experiencing a great deal of hurt and pain."

Tell your students that this could be a person that they know, or it could be someone that they have never met before (examples: a homeless person, an orphaned child, a person suffering from AIDS.) Encourage them to use this letter to give the person hope, to tell about God's love for him/her, and how he might want to use him/her to do great things in the world. The students don't necessarily need to deliver the letter, but encourage them to keep it as a reminder to pray for and reach out to the people who are left out, hurting, and forgotten.

OPTIONAL: Invite volunteers to read their letters aloud to the rest of the group. Tell them to be careful not to use names if they wrote to specific people that other students may know. (Example: Instead of saying "Dear Steve Smith," have them say, "Dear Boy in My Math Class.")

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you for wrestling with these questions. As we have seen, they can be pretty tough at times. We know that these stories can begin to connect with us in powerful ways, and I am seeing great things come from our time together. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next chapter of the story!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, Thank you for using your incredible creativity and imagination to write such an amazing story for us to follow. We know that you are writing a story just as amazing in our own lives, and we ask that you would help us to be creative, just like you are. Allow us to use our imaginations in how we respond to your love and learn to love other people. Thank you for showing us your love. Amen.

STANDING TALL, FALLING HARD

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 10, the story moves rather quickly, and covers a span of multiple generations. Several characters take the "main stage"--from Hannah to Eli to Samuel to Saul. Their lives are tied together by Israel's ongoing conflict with the Philistines. As a result of the great number of battles, the details have potential to become confusing. These details have been greatly abbreviated in the StoryReaders script for this lesson, so that the story may

Chapter 10: Standing Tall, Falling Hard can be found in 1 Samuel 1-4; 8-13; 15

MAKE IT SAFE TO SHARE

Creating a safe environment for teens to share is key to an open conversation.

When engaging with teens, it can be especially difficult to address more personal and vulnerable topics. As a leader, there are a few things you can do to help make your small group time more conducive to openness. For starters, be transparent with your students by sharing your own struggles. (Remember to keep in mind that you are the leader and not a peer. Use discretion with what things you share with your students.)

It's also important to be supportive of your students' comments as much as possible. Even when you don't completely agree with a comment or find it to be relevant, thank the student for sharing. Avoid disagreeing with your students, unless it is absolutely necessary to maintain the direction of the conversation or the truth of the Biblical narrative.

If the group conversation becomes too personal, it can also have adverse effects on the atmosphere of the discussion. If you feel that a student has deeper personal issues to discuss, politely thank them for sharing and ask if you and the student can talk about what he or she is dealing with at another time.

focus more on each of these characters and their relationship to God and to the nation of Israel.

There are very different things that your students may take from each of these characters and their stories. Because there is not one single “takeaway” lesson or theme from this story, really encourage your students to dig into the story and to find meaning for themselves. Stress that there are “no wrong answers,” and that the story might speak to each of us a little differently.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 10 Handout: Standing Tall, Falling Hard** (on curriculum DVD).
- 10-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **The Faith of a Foreign Woman Recap video** and **Standing Tall, Falling Hard video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** A piece of paper and pen/pencil for each student. (OPTIONAL: Provide each student with a small journal or memo notebook for prayer and/or journaling.)
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!**

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>Faith of a Foreign Women Recap</i> Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>Standing Tall, Falling Hard</i> Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	5 minutes
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY (<i>small group</i>)	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hello! Welcome back as we continue through God's Story together. I'm really excited to continue discovering new things together, and I hope you are, too. Let's pray together before we begin:

God, We pause and thank you for the gift of today. We recognize that every day is a new opportunity to contribute to your story of grace and redemption that you began living out through your people so long ago. We thank you for allowing us to be a part of it all, and we pray that you would continue to move us in ways that will change us forever. Amen.

This week we are continuing our story, and I hope that you are as excited as I am to find out what comes next. But before we do, let's take a look back at what has happened in the story so far. As usual, it will go by fast, so watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *Faith of a Foreign Woman Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of where we've been, or catch you up if you have missed any of the past weeks. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *Standing Tall, Falling Hard*. As with all of our videos, there is a lot going on here, so you have to pay careful attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *Standing Tall, Falling Hard* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 10: Standing Tall, Falling Hard* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as StoryReaders.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the StoryReaders script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under TEACHER PLANNING.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into small groups. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- What did we learn about Hannah from the story?
- Do you think it was wrong for the Israelites to ask for a king? Why or why not?
- How did God react to their desire to have a human king? Why do you think God allowed the Israelites to have a king?
- Can you think of a time when you tried to “take matters into your own hands” instead of obeying God?
- How would you describe God’s grace? Where do you see it in this story?
- Where do you see God’s grace in your own life?
- In what areas of your life is God calling you to obey him?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *If you could cry out to GOd and ask him for anything, what would it be?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I know many of us have some ideas already. But even if we are still unsure about what the story means for our lives, sometimes it is good to just begin writing or creating in response to the story. You may discover something in this exercise that you have never realized before about yourself or about God. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

CREATIVE OPTION:

Give each student a piece of paper (or journal/notebook, if available) and a pen/pencil.

Tell the students that they are going to take some time to write a prayer to God. Tell them that they have two options:

1. They can write a prayer from themselves to God, crying out to God or asking him for something in their lives.
2. They can write a prayer to God in the “voice” of one of the characters in the story (Hannah, Eli, Samuel, Saul). If students need further guidance, tell them that it can be a prayer asking God for something, a prayer of thanks, or even a prayer of confession--based on what that character might have been experiencing in the story.

After about 10 minutes, ask if anyone would like to share his or her prayer. Some of these might be very personal, so do not force anyone to share. Encourage students to keep their prayers and to continue praying them daily, trusting that God will answer them.

(For those who wrote from a character’s perspective, challenge students to keep them to think about what a similar prayer might look like for their own lives.)

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

I am really impressed with all of your responses. As we have seen, it can be tough to wrestle with these questions. Hopefully, you are seeing that these stories can begin to connect with us in powerful ways. I am seeing great things come from our time together, and I hope you are too! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next chapter of the story!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, We thank you for challenging us and teaching us about other people--your people--who have struggled with obeying you. Please remind us that even when we decide to go our own way and bypass your plan for us, that you are still there and your grace is still available to us. May we grow to be more honest in communicating with you through our struggles and doubts. We thank you for being there to hear us when we cry out for you. Amen.

FROM SHEPHERD TO KING

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 11, the story focuses on the rise and the beginning of the reign of David. Some parts of this story—especially David's battle with Goliath, should be very familiar to many of your students. In approaching this lesson, you will want to remind your students to try to hear the story with "new ears," even though it is a very well-known story.

Because the metaphor of David's battle with Goliath is such a strong and relevant one, you will want to spend some time exploring it to what it means for the students' lives. But also make sure to pay enough attention to the

From Shepherd to King can be found in 1 Samuel 16-18; 24; 31; 2 Samuel 6; 22; 1 Chronicles 17; Psalm 59

DON'T LOSE THE FOCUS!

Keep the dialogue on track by steering the direction of the conversation.

If you have worked with teens, you know that limiting tangential and unrelated conversation is one of the more difficult--and most important--challenges in having a group discussion. One side comment can give way to the next, and before you know it, a series of loosely related remarks has stolen your group's focus, derailed your thread of discussion, and probably wasted valuable time.

Avoid diversions by refocusing the group when you sense that a comment has gotten too far from the original point. One option is to reiterate the original question or pose a new question. You may pose the question again to the entire group, or directly to a specific student.

Another option is to give the comment a few seconds to die; if it does not, affirm the student, put the conversation "on hold" until later, and switch directions. You could say

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lesser-known “scenes” from the story, including David’s decision for peace with Saul, as they have the potential to have just as much an impact on the students and are just as relevant to the Upper Story of God’s grace and love.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 11 Handout: From Shepherd to King** (on curriculum DVD).
- 9-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Standing Tall, Falling Hard Recap video** and **From Shepherd to King video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** Printed copies of Psalm 59 (at least one copy for every 1-2 students). **OPTIONAL:** Musical instruments (drums, guitar, keyboard, tambourines, noisemakers, etc.)
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

The StoryReader scripts are segments of scripture taken

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

something like, “That sounds like a funny story, Jenny, and I’d love to hear more about it later. But for now I’d love to hear more about what you thought about today’s story...”

Focusing the conversation from the onset by involving all of your students and setting the expectation for relevant participation in the conversation can limit the opportunity for students to have unrelated side conversations.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group.

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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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.

- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- OPTIONAL: Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>Standing Tall, Falling Hard</i> Recap Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>From Shepherd to King</i> Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY (<i>small group</i>)	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Hello everyone! I'm so glad you're here as we continue to journey together through God's Story, and I hope you're all excited for what's in store today. Let's pray together before we begin:

God, We come to you today with open eyes and open hearts. We ask that you speak to us through your story, through its characters and its conflict, through its moments of tension and its moments of joy. Stir something within us, spark our imaginations, and help us to hear your voice clearer than ever before. Amen.

This week we are continuing our story, and I hope that you are as excited as I am to find out what comes next. But before we do, let's take a look back at what has happened in the story so far. As usual, it will go by fast, so watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *Standing Tall, Falling Hard Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of where we've been, or catch you up if you have missed any of the past weeks. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *From Shepherd to King*. As with all of our videos, there is a lot going on here, so you have to pay careful attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *From Shepherd to King* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 11: From Shepherd to King* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as StoryReaders.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the StoryReaders script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under TEACHER PLANNING.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into small groups. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- According to the story, why does God choose David to be the next king of Israel? What might this say about God's character?
- What obstacles does David face to become the king he was anointed to be?
- Why do you think David was able to face a giant warrior like Goliath when so many others gave way to fear?
- Why do you think David spares Saul when he has the chance to kill him and be free of Saul's attempts to kill him? What would you have done?
- What does the story show about David's heart for God?
- How do you cultivate a heart like David's?
- What does Nathan's prophecy say about the future of the kingdom of Israel? What do you think this means?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *Has there been a fear or challenge in your life that has seemed impossible to overcome?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I know many of us have some ideas already. But even if we are still unsure about what the story means for our lives, sometimes it is good to just begin writing or creating in response to the story. You may discover something in this exercise that you have never realized before about yourself or about God. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

CREATIVE OPTION:

Have students break into groups of 3-4. Give each group a copy of Psalm 59 (or another Psalm of David.)

Tell your students that many of David's prayers and poems found in the Psalms were written during the period of his life that this story takes place, and were originally written as passionate, heartfelt and celebratory songs. Each group is to perform their "cover" of the Psalm in their own style. They can rap it, put it to a melody and sing it, chant it, or perform it as a dramatic poetry reading. They can even put the words to the tune of a popular song or medley of songs.

Encourage students to break the Psalm up into parts, or to perform it all once, so that every student who wants to be involved can be. Give the students 8-10 minutes to plan their performance. Then have each group perform their rendition in front of the rest of the students.

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

These are great responses! I learn so much just from hearing from you all. As we have seen, it can be tough to wrestle with these questions. Hopefully, you are seeing that these stories can begin to connect us to each other and to God in powerful ways. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to Part 2 of David's story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, Thank you for being a God who is big and powerful, in spite of how small and weak we are. Help us to trust that you see the bigger story when we cannot, that you have a plan for us and that you give us the courage and power to live the way you want us to, loving others and loving you. We ask that you continue to grow our hearts to look more like yours. Amen.

THE TRIALS OF A KING

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 12, the story focuses on the struggles of King David. Obviously, there is some uncomfortable territory to navigate regarding his adultery with Bathsheba. As usual, encourage your students to address the story with maturity, and to remember that these are stories of real people with real brokenness and real struggles, just like us.

If you work hard to establish an open, trusting environment, this story has the potential to lead to some transformative discussion and next steps for your students. Use discretion when encouraging moments of "confession" with your students. Some students' struggles and secrets are more serious than others', and it may be best to encourage students who are struggling with certain issues to meet with a leader in a more discrete setting.

The Trials of a King can be found in
2 Samuel 11-12; 18-19;
1 Chronicles 22; 29; Psalms 23; 32; 51

CONNECT THE DOTS!

Small Groups expert Michael Zigarelli gives an example of how to keep your discussion moving by relating one student's comment to the next:

"So Sherry, you think that the verse calls us to action, but Fran, two minutes ago, you said you didn't understand it that way. Can somebody else help us out here?" This is good facilitation because it clarifies where we are with the discussion and where we want it to go."

From "Twenty Tips for Successful Small Group Leadership" by Michael Zigarelli
Excerpted from pages 74-82 of the Freedom from Busyness Leader's Guide.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 12 Handout: The Trials of a King** (on curriculum DVD).
- 9-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Story Rewind 3 video** and **The Trials of a King video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** A blank sheet of paper for each student. Pens, pencils, and/or markers.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>Story Rewind 3 Video</i>	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>The Trials of a King Video</i>	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome back, everyone! I'm very excited for our time together today. We have already come a long way through God's Story, and there is so much more to come! Let's pray together before we begin:

God, Thank you for giving us a story filled with so much drama and action. We have learned so much in the past weeks, and we pray that you would continue to show us more and more about who you are and what you have done for your people. Use today's story to stir our imaginations, and may its characters and their struggles remind us of how you're continually working in our own lives. Amen.

In today's story, we are continuing on to the next part of King David's life, and I hope you're ready to see what happens. But before we do, let's take a look back at what has happened in the story up until this point. We've come quite a long way so far, so this recap will move pretty fast. Be sure to watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *Story Rewind 3* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

Just as a reminder, in every Bible story that we go through together, we are looking for TWO story lines going on: an **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. The Lower Story are the smaller stories we will look at each week that tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives.

[It may be helpful to call on students to briefly define what the Upper Story is, and what the Lower Story is, to ensure that students are starting to remember these from week to week.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of where we've been, or catch you up if you have missed any of the past weeks. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *The Trials of a King*. There's a lot of drama coming our way, so pay close attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *The Trials of a King* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 12: The Trials of a King* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as StoryReaders.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups**. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- What do you think were some factors that led to David's sin with Bathsheba?
- Why did David try to get Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, to come back home? What was David's plan?
- How do you think David felt as he planned to have Uriah killed? Why do you think he continued to carry out the plan?
- How do you think Nathan felt when confronting David with his sin? How would you feel if you were in Nathan's position?
- Who was affected by David's sin?
- How did David respond to his sin and punishment? Does his response surprise you?
- David was allowed to plan the temple, but God told him that his son would be the one to actually build it. How do think David felt about this? Do you think this was fair?
- What do David's actions show about his heart for God?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *When have you been driven by impulse to do something wrong?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I know that you all can come up with some great responses to one of these questions. Also, I encourage you to branch out try to respond in a new way that you haven't tried yet. Sometimes, stepping out of our comfort zones can help us to relate to God in new ways and discover new things. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Hand each student a blank sheet of paper and a pen or pencil. Tell them that they are going to take some time to create their own Psalm, as a confession to God. (You can read parts of Psalm 23, 32, and/or 51 as examples for the students.)

Remind students that a Psalm, at its simplest, is a poem or song directed toward God. Tell them that it is not necessary for their Psalm to be long or complicated, but encourage them to be honest with God about their own struggles and need for his forgiveness.

When the students have had about 10 minutes to write their own Psalm, invite volunteers to share. Remind them that they aren't required to share, as their Psalm might be very personal. Issue a challenge to your students that, while it is okay for some things to remain between them and God, it is also good and healthy sometimes to share these words with trusted friends, as David did.

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you so much for being brave in answering these questions. Sometimes it is very intimidating to confront our shortcomings and sin as David did, but it can be very rewarding if we do. Hopefully we can understand God's love for us a little better as we think back on these questions throughout the week. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, We come to you as imperfect people who make mistakes--both big ones and little ones. We thank you for being a God who is willing to forgive so freely and to wipe away all of our sin. We ask that you would remind us of how our sin breaks your heart, and show us how we can be more open and honest with you when we stumble and fall, and in doing so, grow closer to you. Thank you for your unfailing love. Amen.

THE KING WHO HAD IT ALL

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 13, the story focuses on the life and reign of King Solomon. If time allows, take time to share with your students the significance of Solomon's contribution to scripture: most notably, his Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes.

This week's Creative Option includes an opportunity for students to interact with some Proverbs of Solomon. If you choose not to engage in this option, it may be a good idea to have copy of a chapter or two of the Proverbs, which the leaders may share with

The King Who Had It All can be found in 1 Kings 1-8; 10-11; 2 Chronicles 5-7

STAY WITH THE STORY!

Avoid the tendency to inject later parts of the story into the present narrative.

When moving through the story with your group, it's important to keep the focus on the present story (or "Lower Story") and how it relates to the stories that have come before it in preceding weeks. While much of scripture--and especially the Old Testament--can be explained more fully by what happens "later" in the story, it's important that each story is presented in the context of an ongoing narrative.

Encourage students to continue to think of the story as a part of a dramatic novel or movie--you don't skip to the end of a movie or a book when watching it for the first time! (And you never want someone to spoil it for you!)

Remind your leaders and your more bible-literate students that it is important to approach the Bible as if you are hearing the story for the first time. This will help students to gain fresh insights into the ongoing struggle of God's people and their need for redemption. It will also help students who are unfamiliar with scripture to feel like they can interact with the story and find meaning in the same way that everyone else can.

their students during their small group time. It might also be a good opportunity to encourage your students to get into the bible by reading through the Proverbs throughout the week.

(NOTE: A useful approach is to try to read one chapter of Proverbs for each day of the month, since there are thirty chapters. So for example, if a student decides to read on the 8th day of the month, have them read Chapter 8.)

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 13 Handout: The King Who Had It All** (on curriculum DVD).
- 9-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **The Trials of a King recap video** and **The Trials of a King video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** One large piece of paper for every 2-3 students; pens, markers, and/or colored pencils. OPTIONAL: Copies of passages from Proverbs for each group. (Recommended: Proverbs 1–3; 6; 20–21)
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

The StoryReader scripts are segments of scripture taken

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group.

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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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.

- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

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

Introduction and prayer 1 minutes

The Trials of a King Recap Video 2 minute

Brief responses to video 2 minutes

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

Explanation and handouts 1 minute

The King Who Had It All Video 3 minutes

Creating symbols for the story 2 minutes

Sharing about our symbols 4 minutes

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

Explanation 1 minute

StoryReaders scripture telling 12 minutes

Response to scripture 7 minutes

BREAK: teens move to small groups 5 minutes

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

Discussion 15 minutes

Create responses to the story 10 minutes

Sharing responses to the story 5 minutes

Closing prayer 1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome, everyone! I'm so excited that you made it back to join us for our time together today. If you're new with us, we're excited to welcome you as we journey through God's Story. If you've been with us, you'll know that we've been learning some incredible things together through the process! We have more to discover today, but let's pray together before we begin:

God, Thank you for another week full of your work in our lives and in the world. We never cease to be amazed to see your story playing out all around us. As we enter the story once again, I pray that you would allow us to see ourselves in it, to get to know you a little better through it, and to be moved to live differently because of it. Thank you for being a creative God. Amen.

In today's story, we are continuing on to life of the next King of Israel, and I hope you're ready to see what happens. But before we do, let's take a look back at what has happened in the story last week. As always, this recap will move pretty fast, so be sure to watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *The Trials of a King Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of what last happened in the story, or to fill you in if you weren't with us. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *The King Who Had It All*. There's a lot of drama coming our way, so pay close attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *The King Who Had It All Video* from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 13: The King Who Had It All* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as StoryReaders.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the StoryReaders script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under TEACHER PLANNING.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into small groups. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Why did Solomon ask God for wisdom? What was God's response to Solomon's request for wisdom and discernment? What might this tell us about God?
- In your opinion, how is wisdom different from knowledge and intellect?
- Why is it important to gain wisdom?
- What do you think you can do to gain more wisdom?
- God asks Solomon to follow him "faithfully with integrity of heart." What do you think this means?
- According to the story, what sins contributed to Solomon's downfall?
- What distractions in your life pull you away from following God?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *What character attribute would you like God to increase in you? Why?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I know that you all can come up with some great responses to one of these questions. Also, I encourage you to branch out try to respond in a new way that you haven't tried yet. Sometimes, stepping out of our comfort zones can help us to relate to God in new ways and discover new things. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Divide students into groups of 2-3 students. Give each group a large piece of paper and pens, markers, and/or colored pencils. Also, give each group a Bible or a copy of a chapter of Proverbs (Recommended: Chapters 1-3; 6; 20-21) OR you may pre-select 1-2 proverbs for each group, and give each group their proverb(s) on an index card or piece of paper.

(NOTE: You may either select a proverb that is straightforward and directly applicable, OR one that has more complex/humorous imagery. Or you may select one of each for each group.)

Explain to the students that in the wisdom that God gave him, Solomon wrote many of the proverbs and wisdom sayings found in scripture. Some are very straightforward, while others can be somewhat complex or confusing. Their task is to take 1 or 2 proverbs (1-2 sentences) and draw a picture or collection of images that helps to represent the saying and explain what the saying(s) mean(s). Encourage them to, if possible, refrain from using words in their picture(s). Also encourage them to have fun with it, and to think outside the box when creating their drawings.

After students have had 8-10 minutes to create their drawings, invite each group to show their proverb(s) to the group. Allow other students to guess what each proverb means or says before revealing the actual saying.

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you so much for your creativity in responding to these questions. I learn so much and inspired by your thoughts every week. Keep it up! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, Thank you for being willing to bless us with the things that we ask you for. We know that we don't always get it right, but we ask that you continue to show us how to protect ourselves from the temptations that lead to slippery slopes. Show us the things that you care about, and teach us to follow you with the integrity and wisdom that comes from you. Amen.

A KINGDOM TORN IN TWO

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

Continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 14, there is a lot that happens in the story, but not as much dialogue as the stories in previous lessons. There also may not be as many "teachable" themes found in this story. Help your students to use their imaginations, to wrestle with what it might be like to be a character in the story, witnessing the struggle and complexity of Israel's civil war. Also encourage them to consider how this story especially lends to the pattern(s) of the Upper Story.

"A Kingdom Torn in Two" can be found in: 1 Kings 12-16

KEEP GOOD CONVERSATION GOING!

Tailor your discussion to the questions that students want to talk about.

While following the teacher's script and being time-conscious, it's easy to want to get through all of the discussion questions and activities. Remember that the goal is not necessarily getting through all of the questions. Your focus should be on the engagement of your students. Most often, students will want to talk about the things that are most important to them. When a question arises and encourages more discussion than usual, give students enough time to process their reactions and responses before moving on.

Remember that the scripted questions are simply there to guide you--feel free to use discretion about which questions deserve more time and focus.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 14 Handout: A Kingdom Torn in Two** (on curriculum DVD).
- 9-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **The King Who Had It All Recap video** and **A Kingdom Torn in Two video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** For every 2-3 students: a large piece of paper OR poster board, 2-3 old magazines, scissors, tape OR glue, and pens, markers, and/or colored pencils.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.

- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>The King Who Had It All</i> Recap Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>A Kingdom Torn in Two</i> Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	5 minutes
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY (<i>small group</i>)	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome, everyone! I'm glad that you're all here for our time together this week. Whether this is your first time or you have been here throughout this journey through The Story, I hope that we can all come away from today's time having learned some incredible things together! We have a lot more to discover today, but let's take a second to pray before we begin:

God, We acknowledge that you are with us wherever we go--even here, now, as we come together to enter into your story. We thank you for the ways that these stories have challenged us so far, and we pray that you would continue to stretch us and change us as we interact with the story and begin to see ourselves as characters in it. Amen.

In today's story, we are continuing on to see what happens to Israel after the reign of King Solomon. But before we do, let's take a look back at what happened in the story last week. As always, this recap will move pretty fast, so be sure to watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *The King Who Had It All Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of what last happened in the story, or to fill you in if you weren't with us. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *A Kingdom Torn in Two*. There's a lot of drama coming our way, so pay close attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *A Kingdom Torn in Two Video* from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 14: A Kingdom Torn in Two* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – *After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]*

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as StoryReaders.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the StoryReaders script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) *NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under TEACHER PLANNING.]*

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS – *After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]*

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into small groups. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- What do you think caused the Kingdom of Israel to divide?
- How did Rehoboam and Jeroboam both make mistakes?
- What does this story show you about God's character and what's important to God?
- Why do you think God removed his protection from the Jewish people after they continued to rebel?
- Can you think of a time when you strayed from God? How did you know you were going down the wrong path?
- In what ways has God been kind or gracious to you, even when you might not have deserved it?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *What does it look like for you to be faithful to God? For God to be faithful to you?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I know that you all can come up with some great responses to one of these questions. Also, I encourage you to branch out try to respond in a new way that you haven't tried yet. Sometimes, stepping out of our comfort zones can help us to relate to God in new ways and discover new things. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

CREATIVE OPTION:

Divide students into groups of 2-3 students. Give each group a large piece of paper OR poster board, 2-3 old magazines, scissors, tape OR glue, and pens, markers, and/or colored pencils.

Tell the students that they are going to have the opportunity to create their own campaign posters. But instead of creating them for one of the kings in the story or a political candidate, they are going to make one for GOD. Give students about 10 minutes to come up with a slogan and imagery to help persuade the Israelites to follow the one true God again, instead of wayward kings or false idols.

(Tell them they can either draw, write, or cut out words and pictures from the old magazines.) If students need help coming up with ideas, encourage them to think of political campaigns or other advertisements they have seen. (What "background" does God have in leading his people? Is he a proven leader?)

Once students have had time to create their posters, have each group show and explain their poster to the rest of the group.

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you so much for your creativity in responding to these questions. I learn so much and I am inspired by your thoughts every week. Keep it up! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, Thank you for never giving up on your people, even when we fail time and time again. Give us the power to be faithful in following you, even when it isn't easy. And please help us to remember that your grace is bigger than all the ways we fall short, and that your love is always available to us, no matter who we are or what we've done. Thank you for your faithfulness, God. Amen.

GOD'S MESSENGERS

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 15, the story moves quickly, and there are some important themes that you will want to make sure you touch on with your students. One of the central translatable events of this story is Elijah's hearing the "whisper" of God. Make sure you give enough time and attention to the questions that focus on challenging students to think about how they hear from God.

If time allows, you may especially want to try the Creative Option for this lesson with your students, as it further allows them to "enter" the story by giving them time and space--a mini-retreat--to intentionally listen to what God might have to say to them individually.

"God's Messengers" can be found in:
1 Kings 17-19; Kings 2; 4; 6; Hosea 4-5;
8-9; 14; Amos 1; 3-5; 9

ASK QUESTIONS USING "WHY" AND "HOW"

Keeping the discussion open-ended is key to keeping your students talking!

When you ask a question, remember to frame it using the words "why" or "how." In doing this, students will tend to give more elaborate answers than if you ask a yes-or-no question. Questions that begin with words like "who," "where," or "when" can be good for recapping events from the story, but they often, by nature, lead to short answers.

Also, when applicable, try framing questions using "Why do you think..." and "How do you think..." Students will be more willing to give answers and opinions if they are assured that there could be more than one possible response--and that their perspective matters more than the "correct" answer. (Note that some questions are more specific to events in the story and require a more concrete answer.)

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 15 Handout: God's Messengers** (on curriculum DVD).
- 6-8 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **A Kingdom Torn in Two Recap video** and **God's Messengers video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** An index card and a pen OR marker for each student.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.

- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

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Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
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<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome, everyone! I'm glad that you're all here for our time together this week. Whether this is your first time with us or you have been here throughout this journey through The Story, I hope that we all get something out of our time together. We have a lot more to get to today, but let's take a second to pray before we begin:

God, Thank you for bringing us back to a time and a space where we can focus on you. You know that there are so many other things on our minds, and I pray that you would help us to set those things aside for the next few hours. We ask that you would show us new things about ourselves and about you, and that we would hear the things that you have to say to us through your Story. Amen.

In today's story, we're picking up where we left off. But before we do, let's take a look back at what happened in the story last week. As always, this recap will move pretty fast, so be sure to watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *A Kingdom Torn in Two Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of what last happened in the story, or to fill you in if you weren't with us. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *God's Messengers*. There's a lot of drama coming our way, so pay close attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *God's Messengers Video* from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 15: God's Messengers* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as StoryReaders.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the StoryReaders script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under TEACHER PLANNING.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into small groups. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Why do you think God revealed himself to Elijah in a gentle whisper?
- What do you think we can learn about faith from Elijah's relationship with God?
- What does God's way of communicating with Elijah tell you about God's character?
- Do you think we can hear God's voice? How? What might we do to listen?
- What kinds of false gods are in our society today? How do they entice us to "worship" them?
- In what ways can you learn to trust God more and take risks in your faith?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *Which "noise" in your life is keeping you from hearing the voice of God?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I know that you all can come up with some great responses to one of these questions. Also, I encourage you to branch out try to respond in a new way that you haven't tried yet. Sometimes, stepping out of our comfort zones can help us to relate to God in new ways and discover new things. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

CREATIVE OPTION:

Give each student an index card and a pen OR marker. Tell the students that they are going to spend some time listening to God. Give the students 10-15 minutes to go off on their own. Encourage them to get away from their friends, to find a corner of the room or go for a walk outside, if appropriate. Once they have found a place, invite them to say a simple prayer, asking God to speak to them.

During their time of silence, have each student write down a word or a phrase that comes into their minds. Reassure them that it could be something simple about who God is or about their relationship with him--or it could be specific to something they're dealing with in their lives.

When the time is up, invite any students who would be willing to share what their time in silence revealed to them. Remind students that God speaks to all of us differently, and that it's okay if they didn't experience anything profound during their time.

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you so much for your creativity and your wonderful insight in responding to these questions. You all teach me so much every week. Keep it up! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, We thank you, once again, for showing how faithful you are to your people. We thank you that you are a God who comes to us in the quiet, peaceful places. We ask that you would continue to help us find time to listen for your voice, and please continue to make our hearts more faithful, like yours. Amen.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 16, the story touches on themes in the lives of King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah. Since Isaiah's prophecies are too numerous to be included into the StoryReaders script for this lesson, you may want to investigate additional writings of Isaiah with your students. One way of doing this would be to utilize the Creative Option for this lesson, which gives students an additional opportunity to engage with Isaiah's prophetic visions in ISAIAH 6.

"The Beginning of the End" can be found in: 2 Kings 17-19; Isaiah 3; 6; 13-14; 49; 53

BREAK INTO PAIRS!

Mix up your discussion's dynamic by encouraging partner interaction.

If you find that your students have a tendency to lose focus, or if your discussion tends to become dominated by a few students, mix it up by asking your students to discuss a specific question in pairs.

(You can say something as simple as: "For the next question, turn to the person next to you...")

This strategy can help to make everyone feel included in the discussion, especially in larger groups. Once the students have had a few minutes to discuss, ask each group to share what they came up with for a response.

For some added intrigue, have students discuss a more "controversial" question, with each person taking a different "side" to the argument. Then have them report back to the group with perspectives from each side.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 16 Handout: The Beginning of the End** (on curriculum DVD).
- 6-8 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Story Rewind 4 video** and **The Beginning of the End video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** One print-out of ISAIAH 6, one large sheet of paper, and pens/pencils/markers for every 2-3 students. (You may substitute OR add other passages from ISAIAH, if you wish. Recommended: ISAIAH 3; 6; 13-14; 49; 53.)
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>Story Rewind 4</i> Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>The Beginning of the End</i> Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Welcome, everyone! I'm glad that you're all here for another great week together. Whether this is your first time with us or you have been here throughout this journey through The Story, I hope that we all find this time exciting and important to our lives, no matter where we are in our relationship with God. We have another great part of the story to get to today, but first let's take a second to pray before we begin:

God, We thank you for all the ways that you show yourself to us throughout the week--from nature to our relationships with our friends and families. We ask that you would continue to move in our lives as we come together today. Show us new things about ourselves and about you as we enter into this story yet again. We pray that we'll leave here today different than we were when we came in. Amen.

In today's story, we're picking up where we left off last week, with the national of Israel in total chaos. But before we do, let's take a look back at what has happened so far from the very beginning of the story. We've come quite a long way so far, so this recap should move pretty quickly--be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play the *Story Rewind 4* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

Just as a reminder, in every Bible story that we go through together, we are looking for TWO story lines going on: an **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. The Lower Story are the smaller stories we will look at each week that tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives.

[It may be helpful to call on students to briefly define what the Upper Story is, and what the Lower Story is, to ensure that students are starting to remember these from week to week.]

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of what last happened in the story, or to fill you in if you weren't with us. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *The Beginning of the End*. And as always, there will be a lot to take in, so pay close attention. You don't want to miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *The Beginning of the End* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 16: The Beginning of the End* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under TEACHER PLANNING.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

- What were the key events from the story?
- What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups**. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Why do you think Hezekiah experienced so much opposition?
- Do you think obedience to God guarantees success or freedom from hardship? Why or why not?
- How is God calling you to “rebel” against the opposition in your life?
- How does God give his followers confidence in the face of adversity? How does he give you confidence?
- What were some of the main themes in Isaiah's prophecies? How would you have responded if you were an Israelite?
- How did God show mercy to his people in spite of their actions?
- How has God shown mercy to you?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *What current fears or worries can you lay before the Lord, as Hezekiah did?*

CREATIVE OPTION:

Divide students into groups of 2-3. Give each group a print-out of ISAIAH 6, a large sheet of paper, and pens/pencils/markers. Tell the students that they are going to take a look at one of the visions of the prophet Isaiah and create their own artistic interpretation of what Isaiah saw.

Explain to the students that ancient prophecies like Isaiah's were commonly full of strange imagery that represented important messages about God and his people.

Tell the students that their task is to take all or part of ISAIAH 6, and to create their own comic strip or artistic representation of what the passage says. Assure them that there is no “right” or “wrong” way to represent this part of scripture; encourage them to let their imaginations run with it.

When the students have had about 10 minutes to create their artistic

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- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

Don't be afraid to be honest with your responses--remember that this is a safe place to share, however you'd like to respond. Also, if there's something that you haven't tried yet as a way of responding, I encourage you to try it. It's always good to mix it up and relate to God in new ways! In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you so much for your willingness to share these things with the rest of us. Keep it up! Hopefully these are things that we can all continue to think about throughout this week. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, We recognize through your story that you are a God who is--and who always has been--in control of history. You are also in control of our lives, with all the happiness and heartbreak that we experience. Please remind us that we can always lay our worries, our fears, and our problems before you, and that all of our joy and success belongs to you, as well. Thank you for fighting for us and giving us hope. Amen.

CREATIVE OPTION CONTINUED

interpretation or comic strip, ask each group to share what they made. As each group shares, ask the students what they think this passage says about God, his people, or the situation in the world during Isaiah's time.

(NOTE: Other recommended passages to use: ISAIAH 3; 6; 13–14; 49; 53)

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

As in the last chapter of the story, much of the prophetic literature has been omitted for the sake of continuity of the narrative. If you would like, you may revisit some of these with your students for added context. (Recommended: JEREMIAH 1-2; 4-5; 13; 21; LAMENTATIONS 1-3; 5; EZEKIEL 1-2; 6-7; 36-37.)

NOTE: During the StoryReaders telling and following discussions, you may need to help your students with pronunciation of the name Nebuchadnezzar. (Pronounced neb'u'kud'nez'ur.)

"The Kingdom's Fall" can be found in: 2 Kings 21; 23-25; 2 Chronicles 33; 36; Jeremiah 1-2; 4-5; 13; 21; Lamentations 1-3; 5; Ezekiel 1-2; 6-7; 36-37

Investigating multiple perspectives can strengthen your students' understanding.

When facilitating discussion with your students, it can become easy for you and your group to seek the most obvious--or "correct"--answer and quickly move on to the next question. But sometimes it can be helpful to re-approach a question or topic as the "devil's advocate." By encouraging students to think of how they would defend or support their answer, they will be able to gain a fuller perspective and a better understanding of why they believe what they do.

As the leader, you can do this easily by addressing the question "What would you say to someone who said/thought differently about this..." or "How would you explain this to someone who had never heard this story before?"

Because the point is not to encourage debate or to make a student's answer seem "wrong" or inferior, make sure to reaffirm the answers given by your students and to let them know that you're taking an opposing viewpoint for the sake of the discussion.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 17 Handout: The Kingdom's Fall** (on curriculum DVD).
- 6-8 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Story Rewind 4 video** and **The Beginning of the End video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** One piece of paper and envelope (OR postcard) for every participant; pens, pencils, markers.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

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

Introduction and prayer 1 minutes

The Beginning of the End Recap Video 2 minute

Brief responses to video 2 minutes

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

Explanation and handouts 1 minute

The Kingdom's Fall Video 3 minutes

Creating symbols for the story 2 minutes

Sharing about our symbols 4 minutes

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

Explanation 1 minute

StoryReaders scripture telling 12 minutes

Response to scripture 7 minutes

BREAK: teens move to small groups 5 minutes

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

Discussion 15 minutes

Create responses to the story 10 minutes

Sharing responses to the story 5 minutes

Closing prayer 1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome, everyone! I'm glad that you're all here for our time together this week. Whether this is your first time with us or you have been here throughout this journey through The Story, I hope that we all get a lot out of our time together. We have some great storytelling to get to today, but let's take a second to pray before we begin:

God, We come together today, and acknowledge that you are here with us. We thank you for being a God who is present--in the good times and the bad. For those of us whose lives are confusing and chaotic right now, I ask that you would give us peace and hope through your story and the time to interact with one another. Open our eyes, our ears, and our hearts, so that we may experience your story more fully. Amen.

In today's story, we're picking up where we left off last week. But before we do, let's take a look back at what happened last in the story. As always, this recap will move pretty fast, so be sure to watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *The Beginning of the End Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of what last happened in the story, or to fill you in if you weren't with us. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *The Kingdom's Fall*. As always, the video will move pretty quickly, so you'll have you pay attention--you won't want to miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *The Kingdom's Fall Video* from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 17: The Kingdom's Fall* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups.** Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Why do you think this destruction and disaster came upon the Israelites?
- How do you think that power can corrupt people?
- What negative effects of rebellion have you seen in your life? In the lives of those close to you?
- Can you ever relate to Jeremiah as the “weeping prophet” who felt deeply the burden of God’s people’s sin? What sin or struggles in the world do you feel burdened by?
- What do you think God’s prophets would say to his followers today?
- How can God’s promise of restoration for his people still give you hope today?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *Have you ever felt spiritually “dry” or hopeless? How did God help you in that time?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I know that you all can come up with some great responses to one of these questions. Also, if there’s something that you haven’t tried yet as a way of responding, I encourage you to try it. It’s always good to mix it up and relate to God in new ways! In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Give each student a piece of paper and envelope (or postcard). Tell the students that they are going to have an opportunity to write a message of life and hope to someone who needs to hear it. Tell them to think of people in their lives who may be hurting, lonely, or simply in need of encouragement in any way. Encourage the students to share with the person the reason for the hope that they have, and to tell the person that they are loved by God.

If students are having trouble thinking of someone to write their message to, tell them to think of someone younger than them--maybe a family member or someone in their neighborhood--who might be going through the same struggles that they did growing up.

When students have had about 10 minutes to write their message, invite those who are willing to share their message with the rest of the group. (Warn the students to be careful about revealing personal details or names of people that others may know.) Then encourage students to put their message in an envelope and deliver or send them to the people they wrote to, if they feel comfortable doing so. If they do not wish to deliver the message, encourage them to keep it and pray for that person daily.

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

It's amazing to see these responses you all keep coming up with. Thank you so much for your wonderful insight in responding to these questions. Keep it up! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, In times when we feel lost, abandoned, and spiritually "dead," we thank you for breathing life into us again. For those of us who are struggling in our relationship with you or with others, I pray that you would continue to show your life and love to us. And I ask that you would use all of us to speak words of hope and grace to our family, our friends, and those we come into contact with every day. Thank you for the fresh, life-changing ways that you should yourself to us through your story. Amen.

DANIEL IN EXILE

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 18, the story centers on two of the most well-known "scenes" in the Old Testament: the story of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego; and the story of Daniel and the lion's den. These should present some accessible themes for your students--encourage them, whenever possible, to find ways to connect the meaning of these stories to their own lives.

NOTE: During the StoryReaders telling and following discussions, you may need to help your students with pronunciation of the names Shadrach (Shad'rack), Meshach (Me'shack), Abednego (A'bed'ne'go), and Nebuchadnezzar. (Pronounced neb'u'kud'nez'ur.)

"Daniel in Exile" can be found in: Daniel 1-3; 6; Jeremiah 29-31

Encourage your students to think about practical application for their lives.

Through a study like this, it is necessary to be continually reminding your students--and yourself--to be thinking about what these stories mean for their everyday lives--for their relationships, their work, their school, for their church, and for their steps toward spiritual growth.

While several of the discussion questions are aimed at connecting these themes with students' lives, it can be easy, at times, for students to address these stories on more theological or theoretical levels than on a personal, practical one.

One way to ensure that students are continuing to connect their lives to the story is to follow up with them--either during the week or in the next discussion, as time allows. If it is helpful, try to write down notes for yourself soon after the discussion, in order to help you remember what each student is wrestling with in his or her life. (Try not to take notes during the discussion, as it may communicate that you are not fully engaged.)

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TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 18 Handout: Daniel in Exile** (on curriculum DVD).
- 9-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show **The Kingdom's Fall Recap video** and the **Daniel in Exile video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** Popular used magazines and newspapers (1-2 per participant), one large piece of paper or poster board for every 3-4 participants, scissors, glue OR tap.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

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You may also institute a "so what?" question at the end of each discussion time. This can be an intentional time for each student to share the part of the story that they will most be "taking away" from the time together. You could ask questions like "What will you be thinking about when your head hits the pillow tonight?" or "In response to the story, how will your life look different this week?"

If students know that they are expected to give an answer, they may be more likely to find direct takeaways from your time together.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*

- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*

- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- OPTIONAL: Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY (*large or small group*)

5 minutes

Introduction and prayer

1 minutes

The Kingdom's Fall Recap Video

2 minute

Brief responses to video

2 minutes

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY (*large or small group*)

10 minutes

Explanation and handouts

1 minute

Daniel in Exile Video

3 minutes

Creating symbols for the story

2 minutes

Sharing about our symbols

4 minutes

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY (*large or small group*)

25 minutes

Explanation

1 minute

StoryReaders scripture telling

12 minutes

Response to scripture

7 minutes

BREAK: teens move to small groups

5 minutes

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY (*small group*)

35 minutes

Discussion

15 minutes

Create responses to the story

10 minutes

Sharing responses to the story

5 minutes

Closing prayer

1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome, everyone! I'm glad that you're back this week for another great time of looking at God's story together. Whether this is your first time with us or you have been here throughout the story thus far, I hope that we will all get something exciting and new out of our time together. We have some great activities to get to today, but first let's pray before we begin:

God, Thank you for this amazing group of people that is with us today, each of us with our own unique story. As we come together, I ask that you would remove any distractions from our heads and our hearts, so that we may hear what you have to say to us through today's story. Help us to discover how each of our stories intersects with yours--and give us a better picture of how we can live the way you want us to. Amen.

In today's story, we're picking up where we left off last week. But before we do, let's take a look back at what happened last in the story. As always, this recap will move pretty fast, so be sure to watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *The Kingdom's Fall Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of what last happened in the story, or to fill you in if you weren't with us. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *Daniel in Exile*. As always, the video will move pretty quickly, so you'll have you pay attention--you won't want to miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play the *Daniel in Exile* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 18: Daniel in Exile* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups.** Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- What stood out to you from the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?
- Who do you think was with them in the furnace?
- What do you think it took for them to defy the king's orders?
- What might God's protection of them tell us about God?
- Why do you think Daniel continued to be open about his faith and prayers?
- How is God calling you to "defy" the expectations and norms of today's culture?
- What issues are difficult for you to take a stand on because everyone else seems to think differently than you do?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *Have you ever been picked on for doing the right thing and obeying God?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I hope one of these questions will give you something to think about and create. If you're having trouble coming up with something, try choosing a method of responding that you haven't tried before. Sometimes it helps to mix it up and respond to God in new ways! In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

CREATIVE OPTION:

Divide students into groups of 3-4. Give each group 4-6 magazines OR newspapers, a piece of paper OR poster board, scissors, glue OR tape, and markers. Tell the students that each group is going to create a collage based on the things that our culture calls us to worship.

Say something like: "Just as the main characters in today's story were faced with difficult decisions about who they should bow down and worship, so do we have that same difficult decision every day. There are many things in our culture that vie for our allegiance and--in essence--our worship. You are going to have the next 10 minutes as a group to look at these magazines and newspapers for examples of things that have the potential to come in the way of our worship of God. Cut them out and glue/tape them to your group's piece of paper/poster. Try to fill up your paper/poster with as many meaningful images as possible."

After students have had about 10 minutes to complete their collages, invite groups to briefly share some (or all) of the items on their collage. OPTIONAL: Once all the groups have finished, attach all the collages together, creating one large collage that may be displayed in the space where your group meets, as a reminder of the "idols" of our world.

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

You all continually amaze me with the way you think about and respond to these questions. Thank you so much for putting yourself out there and sharing your great insight with the rest of us. Keep it up! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, You are a God who is worthy of being worshiped. You give us everything we need--and more--and we cannot thank you enough. We are also thankful that you are faithful to remain with us as we try to choose you every day. Thank you for coming into the fire with us when things get really tough and for protecting us. Please help us to continue to trust you and to remain faithful to you and the plans you have for us. Amen.

THE RETURN HOME

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 19, the Israelites begin to return from captivity in Babylon to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. While there is not a lot of "drama" that happens in the story, there are several themes that should emerge for fruitful group discussion. Also, there are more characters than usual in this week's StoryReaders, and none of which should be very familiar. You may need to help your students by reviewing "who's who" and clarifying any other story details before beginning your group discussion.

"The Return Home" can be found in: Ezra 1-6; Haggai 1-2; Zechariah 1; 8

TELL A STORY AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE!

Address the material by using narrative examples from "real life."

Your students grasp and remember stories--stories from their own lives, stories they heard at school, stories from their favorite TV shows, movies, and websites. When your group discussion seems stagnant, or if you feel it beneficial to address a question from another angle, use a story. Share an episode or observation from your own life, or ask the students if they have an example from their own lives of a story that parallels a theme or event from the part of The Story that you're discussing.

Connecting your discussion to these narrative "images" will help your students embed the story of scripture within the stories that already make up their own lives, rather than just learning the "right answers" to seemingly unconnected concepts.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 19 Handout: The Return Home** (on curriculum DVD).
- 10-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Daniel in Exile Recap video** and **The Return Home video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** Popular used magazines and newspapers (1-2 per participant), one large piece of paper or poster board for every 3-4 participants, scissors, glue OR tap.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

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

Introduction and prayer 1 minutes

Daniel in Exile Recap Video 2 minute

Brief responses to video 2 minutes

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

Explanation and handouts 1 minute

The Return Home Video 3 minutes

Creating symbols for the story 2 minutes

Sharing about our symbols 4 minutes

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

Explanation 1 minute

StoryReaders scripture telling 12 minutes

Response to scripture 7 minutes

BREAK: teens move to small groups 5 minutes

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

Discussion 15 minutes

Create responses to the story 10 minutes

Sharing responses to the story 5 minutes

Closing prayer 1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hello, everyone! I'd like to welcome you back for what I hope is going to be another great week together. Whether this is your first time with us or you have been here throughout the story thus far, I hope that we will all get something new out of our time together. As usual, we have plenty to get to today, so let's pray before we begin:

God, We are so happy to be back together this week--thank you for allowing us this time and space to regularly talk about you and your incredible story. I pray that--no matter what is going on at home, at school, or in the rest of our relationships--you would calm our hearts and allow us to learn something new about you and your love for your own people. Amen.

In today's story, we're picking up where we left off last week. But before we do, let's take a look back at what happened last in the story. As always, this recap will move pretty fast, so be sure to watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play the *Daniel in Exile Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of what last happened in the story, or to fill you in if you weren't with us. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *The Return Home*. As always, the video will move pretty quickly, so you'll have you pay attention--you won't want to miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *The Return Home Video* from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 19: The Return Home* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups.** Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Why do you think God rescued the Israelites again from their enemies?
- In what ways have you seen or experienced the rescuing power of God?
- What did the Israelites do to deserve the mercy they received?
- Have you ever felt God's presence in a place or a situation? How did you know it was God?
- The Jews returned home to rebuild the temple, the dwelling place of God on earth. Why was it important for them to do this?
- Where does God dwell on earth today?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *When has God stirred your heart to accomplish something?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I hope one of these questions will give you something to think about and create. If you're having trouble coming up with something, try choosing a method of responding that you haven't tried before. Sometimes it helps to mix it up and respond to God in new ways! In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

CREATIVE OPTION:

Give each participant 2 index cards and a pen. Tell them that they are going to have an opportunity to do something a little different--and very meaningful. Say something like:

"In this story, God speaks through his prophets to encourage the Israelites in the face of fear and apathy. God reassures them by telling them, 'I am with you.' Today, we are going to have a chance to encourage one another here. With your two index cards, you will write two messages: one to the person sitting to your right, and one to the person on your left. For each message, write something thoughtful that compliments or encourages that person--(if you don't know their name, find out!) Somewhere in your note, include the words 'I am with you,' as a reminder of God's promise. Remember to make these thoughtful! You'll have about 10 minutes. Ready? Go!"

After about 10 minutes, have the students fold the index cards and deliver them. OPTIONAL: Have each student write his/her phone number or e-mail address on each card before exchanging. Once they have gotten their two messages of encouragement, invite the students to send each person who gave them a card a thoughtful text message or email sometime during the coming week.

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Great job, everyone! I'm always impressed by the things you come up with in response to these questions. Thank you so much for opening up and sharing your thoughts with the rest of us. Keep it up! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, We thank you for being faithful to stir our hearts when we are complacent, weary, or afraid. Please help us to recognize our gift of mercy in our lives every day, and remind us that it is available to us, no matter what we've done or how far from home we've gotten. As we go from here, help us to hear your voice each day, wherever we go, saying "I am with you." Thank you for never leaving us. Amen.

THE QUEEN OF BEAUTY AND COURAGE

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 20, we meet Esther and Mordecai, two great examples of people who trust in God's faithfulness and protection. Since this story is a bit isolated from previous chapters--and seemingly a departure from the larger narrative of the Israelites' return to Jerusalem--try your best to help your students attach the themes in this Lower Story to what has been going on in the Upper Story of God's faithfulness to his people in the midst of their rebellion.

As in past chapters, you may need to help your students with pronunciation of a few of the characters' names: Xerxes (Zerk'seez), Haman (Hay'muhn), and Mordecai (Mor'de'kye).

"The Queen of Beauty and Courage" can be found in: Esther 1-9

BE AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT!

Show your students that even leaders can engage, too.

For you and the other leaders, it may be necessary to walk around, facilitate, and monitor the things your students are making in their response and creative times. But once the students have become acquainted with the routine of activities, feel free to engage in the activities alongside them. Doing this will communicate to your students that you are not simply a "teacher" giving them "assignments," but that you are an active participant in the story, just as they are.

Whether you complete the activities and creative responses ahead of time or along with the group, it may be beneficial to share your responses and creations alongside those of the students. Showing your own honest responses can help you to gain the trust and respect of your students; it can also model for them new and thoughtful ways of engaging with the material.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 20 Handout: The Queen of Beauty and Courage** (on curriculum DVD).
- 10-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Story Rewing 5 video** and **The Queen of Beauty and Courage video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** A piece of paper and pen/pencil for each participant.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

STORYREADERS ASSIGNMENT:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>Story Rewind 5</i> Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>The Queen of Beauty and Courage</i> Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY (<i>small group</i>)	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Hello, everyone! I'd like to welcome you back for what I hope is going to be another great week together. Whether this is your first time with us or you have been here throughout the story thus far, I hope that we will all get something new out of our time together. As usual, we have plenty to get to today, so let's pray before we begin:

God, We come together today feeling so fortunate to be part of something so much bigger than ourselves. As we continue to see the ways that you work in our lives and our world every day, we recognize that it is all part of a story that has been going on for a long, long time. We pray that you would continue to speak to us through the characters of this amazing story, capture our hearts and our imaginations, and allow us to hear your words for us loud and clear. Amen.

In today's story, we're picking up where we left off last week. But before we do, let's take a look back at what has happened up until this point in the story. We've covered a lot so far, so this recap will move pretty quickly. Be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play the *Story Rewind 5* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

Just as a reminder, in every Bible story that we go through together, we are looking for TWO story lines going on: an **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. The Lower Story are the smaller stories we will look at each week that tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives.

[It may be helpful to call on students to briefly define what the Upper Story is, and what the Lower Story is, to ensure that students are starting to remember these from week to week.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Hopefully, this video has helped to remind you of what last happened in the story, or to fill you in if you weren't with us. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *The Queen of Beauty and Courage*. As always, the video will move pretty quickly, so you'll have to pay attention--you won't want to miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *The Queen of Beauty and Courage* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 20: The Queen of Beauty and Courage* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under TEACHER PLANNING.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups**. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY

35 MINUTES

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- What causes you fear? Why do you think that is?
- How did Mordecai respond when faced with the threat of disaster for his people?
- How would you describe Queen Esther's character? What did you learn from her actions?
- When was the last time you faced a threatening situation? What was your reaction?
- In what ways have you experienced God's faithfulness and protection in your life?
- What steps can you take to show that you trust in the faithfulness of God?
- What does this chapter of The Story teach about God's work behind the scenes of history?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *Have you ever hidden information about yourself, your identity, or your background from someone? Why did you hide it?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Give each participant a pen/pencil and a piece of paper. Tell them that they are going to have an opportunity to dive even deeper into the mindset of one of this story's main characters.

Encourage students to pick one of the stories two main characters--Esther or Mordecai--to and spend some time creating a journal entry or a prayer to God from that character's perspective. Tell them that they can choose any moment from within the story to write about, or they can write it as if the character is looking back on the event or events from several months or years in the future.

Tell the students not to be afraid to use their imaginations to fill in the other details they don't necessarily know about the character from the details given in this version of the story.

After about 10 minutes, have students who feel comfortable share their piece of writing. (As always, don't force anyone to share.) Encourage students to return to the story throughout the week (found in Esther 1-9), and to pray through it from that character's perspective.

I hope one of these questions will give you something to think about and create. If you're having trouble coming up with something, try choosing a method of responding that you haven't tried before. Sometimes it helps to mix it up and respond to God in new ways. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with for these questions!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Great job, everyone! I'm always impressed by the things you come up with in response to these questions. Thank you so much for opening up and sharing your thoughts with the rest of us. Keep it up! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, Thank you for being so faithful to your people. We ask that, as we go from here, you will help us trust you more with the things that intimidate us and motivate us to hide from who we were created to be. Give us power to take a risk, to tell the truth, and to stand for what is right—especially when it's really hard to do it. Thank you for protecting us and leading us into the life that you want for us. Amen.

REBUILDING THE WALLS

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

The story for Chapter 21 is the last story from the Old Testament. It tells of the Israelites' task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem under heavy opposition from their enemies. While this story has some good, dramatic "plot points," it also addresses some significant spiritual themes through Ezra, Nehemiah and, later, Malachi.

If time allows, you may seek to read more of Malachi's words with your students and find connection to what is happening in the story. (Recommended: Malachi 1 - 4.)

NOTE: You may need to help your students with pronunciation of a few of the characters' names: Antaxerxes (An'te'zerk'seez); Malachi (Mal'e'kye)

"Rebuilding the Walls" can be found in: Ezra 7; Nehemiah 1-2; 4; 6-8; Malachi 1-4

PUSH PAUSE!

Stopping to refocus doesn't have to be a negative thing.

Chances are, your students will--at one time or another--be either distracted or disinterested from the discussion of the week's story. When this happens, it can't hurt to stop discussion and do one of a few things:

1. Have your group rapidly retell the story for the day. You can either do this collectively, or choose a student, and give him or her a time limit of 30 seconds or 1 minute. This will help your students to re-gain focus by giving them an objective.
2. Pause and re-imagine the story. Tell the students that you are all going to take one minute of silence to re-create the story in your minds, encouraging the students to see how much they can remember.
3. Pray. Either you can have your group pray to themselves silently, or you or a student volunteer can pray for the group, asking for focus and God's help to connect the story to the lives of the people in the group.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 21 Handout: Rebuilding the Walls** (on curriculum DVD).
- 8-10 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show **The Queen of Beauty and Courage video** and **Rebuilding the Walls video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** One half-sheet of colored construction paper for each participant. Markers. Tape or other wall-safe adhesive. (OPTIONAL: *Construction paper may be substituted for cardboard bricks OR building blocks that students can write on and take home with them as reminders or keepsakes. These may be found at most toy stores or online suppliers.*)
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.

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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. Readers

are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>The Queen of Beauty and Courage Recap Video</i>	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>Rebuilding the Walls Video</i>	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	5 minutes
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY (<i>small group</i>)	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hello, everyone! Welcome back for another great time together. I hope that, as we continue our storytelling, we will all get a lot out of this time. As usual, we have another great story to get to today, so let's pray before we begin:

God, We come to you with thankful hearts for all that you have done for us. And we thank you, too, for this incredible journey that we are on through your Story. I pray that you would continue to work in our minds and our hearts as we consider what it means to become part of this grand plan that is being unfolded in our lives and all around us. Amen.

In today's story, we're picking up where we left off last week. But before we do, let's take a look back at what happened last in the story. For those of us who need a refresher or who weren't with us last week, I hope this recap will help bring us up to speed. Be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play *The Queen of Beauty and Courage Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, that helped to remind you of what happened in the last chapter of our story. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *Rebuilding the Walls*. As always, it will move pretty quickly, so you'll have to pay attention--you won't want to miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play the *Rebuilding the Walls* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 21: Rebuilding the Walls* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups.** Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Who was Ezra? What was his role when he arrived in Jerusalem?
- In what ways do you see God's faithfulness in this story?
- Why do you think Nehemiah was so upset that Jerusalem's walls were never rebuilt?
- Why do you think Nehemiah was able to rebuild the city walls so quickly amidst such severe opposition?
- When God says, "Return to me, and I will return to you," what do you he means? What does this mean in your life?
- What can you do to grow a greater dependence on God in difficult circumstances?
- How do you feel when you hear God's words: "I, the Lord, do not change"?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *If you had to confess the sins of "your people" what would those sins be? And who would "your people" be?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I hope one of these questions will give you something to think about and create. If you're having trouble coming up with something, try choosing a method of responding that you haven't tried before. Sometimes it helps to mix it up and respond to God in new ways. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with for these questions!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Give one half-sheet of colored construction paper to each student, along with markers to share with the group.

Explain to the students that just as each worker was integral in rebuilding Jerusalem's walls, each of us has a part to play in the bigger picture of the church. Tell the the students that they are going to have an opportunity to pray for their church and/or youth ministry, and to lend their trust in God to the ministry's "wall."

Say something like "You are going to make your own "brick" for the wall that we are going to create. On your piece of construction paper, I want you to write, draw, or graffiti on it to show the things that you feel like you need to trust God with today. These can be fears, sins, shortcomings, doubts--anything you feel like God is asking you to depend on his power and strength for. So take about 10 minutes to decorate your brick. And, as always, be as creative as possible in decorating your brick--make it your own!"

After students have had about 8-10 minutes to create their bricks, ask students to share what they created. Once all the bricks are finished, give each student a piece of tape or adhesive, and have them hang their brick to create a "wall" somewhere in your meeting space. (If this is not available, you can use a large piece of butcher paper to attach all the bricks to temporarily--then you may move it after your gathering.)

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Great job, everyone! I'm always so impressed by the ways you respond to the things you're learning. Thank you so much for opening up and sharing your thoughts with the rest of us. Keep it up! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, We thank you for being a God who never changes. In the midst of our vulnerability, our weakness, and our inclination to mess up time and time again, we are grateful that you are there to help us, to guide, and--most importantly--to forgive us. I pray that as we all go from here, you will continue to help us learn to see our own dependence on you. And challenge us to find ways to trust you more. We love you. Amen.

THE BIRTH OF THE KING

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

The story for Chapter 22 brings us one of the most well-known stories of all time: the birth of Jesus. While you and your students will probably be familiar with most of the story, there could be small details and perspectives that could lead to some interesting discussion. As always, be encouraging your students (as well as yourself) to imagine that you are hearing this story for the very first time.

Depending on what time of year you cover this lesson, you could engage your students in some further questions about Christmas traditions and the ways in which we can celebrate to honor the true meaning of Jesus' birth. (See adventconspiracy.org for more ideas and information.)

"The Birth of the King" can be found in: Matthew 1-2; Luke 1-2; John 1

USE THE NAME GAME!

Learning & using students' names can break down barriers in discussion.

Depending on the size of your group, there could be students coming on a weekly basis that you have not gotten the chance to meet or get to know. In this case, it is always good to have some way of sharing each others names and some general information about each person. (You might go around the circle and have each person say her name and favorite hobby or favorite movie.)

Knowing (and remembering) students' names will help you as you facilitate discussion. While you always want to be careful about singling out students who may be new, it might be appropriate, at times, to ask questions to specific students during your group discussion. (For example: "Chris, what did you think about Mary's response?" If only on a subconscious level, using your students' names helps to communicate that you're invested and interested in them and what they have to say.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 22 Handout: The Birth of the King** (on curriculum DVD).
- 8-10 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show **The Queen of Beauty and Courage video** and **Rebuilding the Walls video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** One piece of paper & pen for each group of 2-3 participants.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>Rebuilding the Walls Recap Video</i>	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>The Birth of the King Video</i>	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hello, everyone! Welcome back for another great time together. I hope that, as we continue our storytelling, we will all get a lot out of this time. As usual, we have another great story to get to today, so let's pray before we begin:

God, Thank you for another week and another opportunity to come together. We realize that we all provide so many unique personalities and perspectives as we come here and share our stories, all while investigating your story. God, we ask that you would, once again, show yourself to us in brand new ways, so that we can re-imagine our lives to be more like yours. Amen.

In today's story, there's something new and exciting on the way. But before we get to today's story, let's take a look back at what happened last. For those of us who weren't here last week or who may need a reminder of where we were, this recap should help refresh us. Be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play the *Rebuilding the Walls Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, that helped to remind you of what happened in the last chapter of our story. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *The Birth of the King*. (Anybody have an idea of what this one is about?) There might be some things that you recognize in this story, but there might be some new perspectives, too. So pay close attention so that you don't miss anything! Ready?

[CUE: Play *The Birth of the King* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 22: Birth of the King* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups.** Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Are there any parts of this story that are “forgotten” about or overlooked?
- What can you learn from Mary’s reaction to her news?
- How do you think Joseph felt after he found out Mary was pregnant? Why?
- Why do you think Jesus was born into such humble circumstances?
- What role do the shepherds play in this story? Why is it significant?
- What does this chapter reveal about who Jesus is?
- What impact has Jesus’ birth had on your life?
- In what ways has the traditional Christmas celebration deviated from the point of Jesus’ birth?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *Have you ever been given a significant burden or responsibility? How did you respond?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I hope you can use one of these questions to generate a great response to today’s story. If you’re having trouble coming up with something, try choosing a method that you haven’t tried before. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with for these questions!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

CREATIVE OPTION:

Divide participants into groups of 2 or 3, and give each group a piece of paper and a pen.

Tell the students that they are going to have the chance to do some role-playing by interviewing the characters in the story. Say something like:

“In your groups, choose someone to be the interviewer, and the other person will select a character from the story to portray (Mary, Joseph, Shepherd, or Wise Man.) The interviewer must come up with and write down 3-5 questions for the interviewee. The person being interviewed must answer the questions from the perspective of the person they are portraying, perhaps months or years after baby Jesus is born. (Think of it as a celebrity being interviewed on a late-night talk show.) Then after about 5 minutes, I’ll say ‘switch,’ and the other person will get a chance to interview a new character.”

(If a group has an odd number of people, have them take turns playing each part. OR the interviewer can interview two people at once.)

Once students have had about 10 minutes to interview each other, take some volunteers for groups to “perform” their interview in front of the rest of the group. Encourage the students to have fun with this and use their imaginations!

OPTIONAL: Set up a video camera and film some of the interviews. You could even bring some old clothes that the students could use to dress up in.

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Great job, everyone! I'm so impressed with your responses. Thank you for being willing to open up and share about how you're processing this story. Keep it up! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, Thank you, finally, for a turn in the story! Just when we thought it was hopeless for your people, you came to earth as the hero. Thank you, too, for coming as a different kind of king and giving us hope through your less-than-glamorous human birth. We are so excited to dive headfirst into the life of Jesus, and we ask that you'll be faithful in the coming weeks to show us new and amazing things through the life of God in the flesh. Thank you for coming through on your promises! Amen.

JESUS' MINISTRY BEGINS

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

There is much that happens as Jesus begins his ministry, and the StoryReaders telling presents a selection of "highlights" from Jesus' first days teaching and healing. For the sake of time, not much is added to the narrative to provide cultural and historical background of these episodes (--for example, the significance of Jesus' discussion with the Samaritan woman and the recognition of her multiple divorces.) You may need to help your students unpack some of these episodes a bit further during your discussion, so that they may make deeper cultural observations.

"Jesus' Ministry Begins" can be found in: Matthew 3-4; 11; Mark 1-3; Luke 8; John 1-4

WELCOME UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

It's vital to let students share unresolved questions or doubts.

When you finish a discussion, chances are there are still unanswered, unresolved, or even unaddressed questions that your students have. Some students may need help understanding the story, while others might have more general questions about the story, scripture, or faith in general. It's very important to provide a safe way for students to share the things that are still on their minds at the end of a discussion.

A great way to do this is to create a regular "open comment" time at the end of each discussion. Give each student an index card and a pen, and encourage them to share any question, doubt, or comment that they may have with regard to the story or anything else. Tell them that they may leave their name on the card, so that you can follow up with them, or they may leave it anonymous.

Also remind students that any question or comment is okay--there are no

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TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 23 Handout: Jesus' Ministry Begins** (on curriculum DVD).
- 10-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show **The Queen of Beauty and Courage video** and **Rebuilding the Walls video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** One blank greeting/stationary card* and envelope for each student; pens, markers. (*One blank piece of 8.5"x11" paper may be substituted for a card.)
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise**

WELCOME UNANSWERED QUESTIONS CONTINUED

"bad" questions, no matter how trivial or "basic" they may think theirs are. Once students have had a few minutes to write down their questions or comments, collect the cards. During the next week, make a point to follow up with students who have significant questions or comments.

(OPTIONAL: Create a "question box" or other container to collect the questions each week. Give it a unique name or look to encourage students to openly engage in this time as a regular part of your gathering.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

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from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- OPTIONAL: Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>The Birth of the King Recap Video</i>	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>Jesus' Ministry Begins Video</i>	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hello, everyone! Welcome back for another great time together. I hope that, as we continue our storytelling, we will all get a lot out of this time. As usual, we have another great story to get to today, so let's pray before we begin:

God, We thank you for continuing to show us more and more about you through your amazing story. Please help us to see how our lives continue to merge into your greater plan of love and redemption for all people. We ask that you would open our eyes and our ears today to experience today's story more fully, and help us to grow in our love for you and the world. Amen.

In today's story, we have more to look at from the life of Jesus. But before we get to today's story, let's take a look back at what happened last week. For those of us who weren't with us or who may need a reminder of where we were, this recap should help refresh us. Be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play *The Birth of the King Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, that helped to refresh you on what happened in the last chapter of our story. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *Jesus' Ministry Begins*. Again, there might be some things in this story that are familiar to you, but there might be some new things, too. So pay close attention so that you don't miss anything! Ready?

[CUE: Play the *Jesus' Ministry Begins* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 23: Jesus' Ministry Begins* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]**

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Why do you think Jesus' disciples were so willing to leave everything and follow him?
- Why do you think it was significant that Jesus fasted and was tempted by the devil?
- How does Jesus respond to the friends who lower the paralytic man through the roof? What might his response teach us?
- What kinds of people did Jesus usually minister to and spend time with? What does this tell you about him?
- Who are the "tax collectors" and "sinners" of our society today?
- What do you learn from Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well? What surprises you?
- Jesus tells the woman at the well that "those who drink the water I give them will never thirst.." What do you think this statement means?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *Have you or someone you know ever been treated as an outcast? How did it make you feel?*
- *What is the most miraculous event you have ever seen?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I hope you can use one of these questions to generate a great response to today's story. If you're having trouble coming up with something, try choosing a method that you haven't tried before. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with for these questions!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Give each participant a blank greeting card*, envelope, and pen/markers.

Tell the students that they are going to spend some time making invitations to a very special party. Explain that just as Jesus hung out with sinners and tax collectors, they are going to have an opportunity think about what "hard to love" people in their world they could reach out to and spend time with. You can say something like this:

"For the next 10 minutes, we are each going to make a special invitation for ONE person. Think of someone in your life--your school, neighborhood, or even your extended family--who may be an "outsider" or someone who the world sees as difficult to love. Once you think of that person, write his or her name on the outside of the envelope. Then, once you have done that, you are going to create an invitation. With your invitation, you have TWO options:

Create an invitation to an imaginary dinner party in that person's honor. Write that person a special message of encouragement, and keep the invitation as a reminder to pray about ways to reach out to that person on a regular basis.

Create an invitation to actually spend time with that person. You can invite him/her to go see a movie, get coffee,

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[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Well done, everyone! As always, these are great responses. Thank you for giving some good thought and honest feeling as you process this story—I learn so much from you all! Keep it up! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, You continue to amaze us every single week as we come together and unpack this unpredictable, radical, world-changing story. We thank you for sending your son, Jesus, to show us the best ways to live in relationship to you and to one another. And we ask that you would give us the eyes to see the world the way that Jesus sees it, and the heart to love and serve others the way you want us to. Thank you for showing us your love and grace daily. Amen.

CREATIVE OPTION CONTINUED

have lunch, or spend meaningful time together in another way. Then, actually give that person the invite, praying that God will bless your time together."

Once students have had about 10 minutes to finish creating their invitations, give them a couple minutes to pray for the people they wrote to. Then encourage them to continue praying throughout the week about creative ways to reach out.

*Instead of actual stationary or greeting cards, you can have your students make homemade cards out of an 8.5"x11" piece of paper.

NO ORDINARY MAN

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

As Jesus' ministry continues in Chapter 24, we find out more about who he is and the kinds of things he stands for. If time allows, engage your student in the Creative Option or find other ways of reading more of Jesus' teachings together. (Recommended: Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" can be found in Matthew 5-7.)

Many of the miracles described in this part of the story center on the themes of "trust" and "faith." There should be plenty of opportunity for practical ways for your students to respond--namely ways that they can learn to trust God more and take risks for him in their day-to-day lives.

"No Ordinary Man" can be found in: Matthew 5-7; 9; 14; Mark 4-6; Luke 10; 15; John 6

BRUSH UP ON THE BACKGROUND!

A little research can go a long way in helping your students unpack the story.

When discussing scripture, it is almost always essential to have some grasp of the cultural and historical implications of the text. Especially as you lead your students and seek to answer any questions that might arise during your time together, it can be beneficial to have a basic knowledge of the symbols and cultural themes that are present in the story for a given week.

As you prepare prior to leading your students, take a few extra moments to read the full passages indicated in the Teacher's Guide and StoryReader Script. This will give you a working understanding of where the selected narrative line fits into the complete story of scripture.

You may also find commentary very easily by picking up a Bible dictionary or commentary guide at your local bookstore. Another option is to simply type a given passage or biblical theme into your favorite online search

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TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 24 Handout: No Ordinary Man** (on curriculum DVD).
- 10-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Story Recap 6 video** and the **No Ordinary Man video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** For each group of 2-3 participants: One piece of poster paper, a copy of Matthew 5:1-16, and colored pencils/markers.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

BRUSH UP ON THE BACKGROUND! CONTINUED

engine. Of course, you should always confirm multiple sources on a topic instead believing everything on the first blog that you come to. It won't take long to find a wealth of information surrounding just about any name, symbol, or theme in scripture.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.

- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>Story Rewind 6</i> Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>No Ordinary Man</i> Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Hello, everyone! Welcome back for another great time together. I hope that, as we continue our storytelling, we will all get a lot out of this time. As usual, we have another great story to get to today, so let's pray before we begin:

God, As we come together today, we pause in our lives of busyness and stress and thank you for being so good to us. You never fail to show us grace, to pick us up when we fall, and to forgive us time and time again. We ask that you would again allow us to feel your presence with us as we gather together today. Speak to us through this story, through the words and actions of your son, Jesus. Empower us to care about the things that you care about, and remind us that you love us more than we will ever know. Amen.

In today's story, we have more to look at from the life of Jesus. But before we get to today's story, let's take a look back at where we have been up until this point in the story. Hopefully this will be a great reminder of where our story has taken us this far. We're getting pretty far along, so this recap will move pretty quickly. Be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play the *Story Rewind 6* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

Just as a reminder, in every Bible story that we go through together, we are looking for TWO story lines going on: an **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. The Lower Story are the smaller stories we will look at each week that tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives.

[It may be helpful to call on students to briefly define what the Upper Story is, and what the Lower Story is, to ensure that students are starting to remember these from week to week.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

Hopefully, that helped to refresh you on what happened in the last chapter of our story. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *No Ordinary Man*. Again, there might be some things in this story that are familiar to you, but there might be some new things, as well. So pay close attention so that you don't miss anything! Ready?

[CUE: Play the *No Ordinary Man* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 24: No Ordinary Man* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under TEACHER PLANNING.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

- What were the key events from the story?
- What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups**. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Why do you think Jesus used parables as a way to teach people?
- Why do you think Jesus' taught the parable of the Good Samaritan?
- How do you think religious leaders responded to it?
- What meaning does the Good Samaritan have for your own life? Who is YOUR neighbor?
- If you would have experienced Jesus' teaching first-hand, how do you think you would have reacted? Would you have followed him? Why or why not?
- If you were Peter, would you have gotten out of the boat to try to walk on the water? Why or why not?
- What do Jesus' miracles in this chapter teach you about having faith?
- What practical steps can you take to trust Jesus more every day?

Teacher SCRIPT:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?

CREATIVE OPTION:

Divide participants into groups of 2-3. Give each group a piece of poster paper, a copy of Matthew 5:1-16, and colored pencils/markers.

Explain to the students that, as well as using parables, Jesus used a variety of imagery and memorable sayings in his teaching. Tell them that they are going to have a chance to interact with some of Jesus' most famous teachings further by playing a drawing game of sorts. Using their copy of Matthew 5:1-16, each group is to select one of the verbal images or phrases that Jesus uses to describe life in the Kingdom of God.

Once each group has selected their words or image, their task is to draw a picture, scene, or diagram that illustrates their particular section of teaching. Tell them that they will have about 10 minutes to be as elaborate as possible, but that they CANNOT write any words on their picture.

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- Have you or someone you know ever been treated as an outcast? How did it make you feel?
- Have you ever had to rely solely on your faith in God? What were the circumstances?
- How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

I know that you all have the ability to create something wonderful in response to one of these questions. If you're stuck trying to think of a creative response, try choosing a medium or method that you haven't tried before--and most importantly, have fun with it! In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with for these questions!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you, everyone! I learn so much from these responses every week--thank you for your effort and honesty in responding. Keep it up! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, As we engage more and more with the story of Jesus, we grow in amazement at your plan to reveal yourself to the world in power, grace, and love. Remind us as we live out our own stories this week that, as we grow and learn to have faith in you, that it was you who first had faith in us. Thank you for never, ever giving up on your love for us and for this world. Amen.

CREATIVE OPTION CONTINUED

Then, once the groups have had about 8-10 minutes to complete their illustration, invite each group to show theirs to the rest of the students. While the other groups guess, group members may give "yes" or "no" answers until the correct statement is guessed. Once all groups have gone, commend all the participants for a job well done, and encourage them to read further into this passage of text in the coming week.

OPTIONAL: Instead of having groups choose their own phrase from the text, you may preselect pertinent pieces of the teaching, write them onto index cards OR cut them into strips, and have each group randomly select the one from which they will create their illustration.

JESUS, THE SON OF GOD

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 25, the followers of Jesus are confronted with the big questions about his true identity and purpose as he enters the last week of his life on earth. As in past chapters, this story consists of several prominent events that may be familiar to some of your students.

Each of the events has the potential for great discussion, and they all provide easy opportunities to talk about your students' beliefs about who Jesus is and what he means to them. Use this time to gauge where your students are spiritually. Don't be afraid to ask tough questions, and--as always--encourage your students to be honest in their answers!

"Jesus, the Son of God" can be found in: Matthew 17; 21; Mark 8–12; 14; Luke 9; 22; John 7–8; 11–12

PAY ATTENTION TO POSTURE

Mixing it up can improve your students' engagement.

During your group's interaction with the story, the way students are sitting can have a significant impact on focus and participation. For a more focused discussion, for example, it may be helpful to gather your students around a table or to have them lie in a circle on their stomachs and elbows, with everyone facing inward.

For a more creative, imaginative, and/or reflective exercise, it may be better to encourage students to spread out, to get comfortable, and maybe to even get up and walk around. Allowing freedom to move and think can be very important in allowing your students to be creative in their responses.

It is especially effective to make intentional shifts in posture with your group; invite them all to stand, to sit, to stretch, to kneel, etc. As you plan your lesson, the more you can think about what posture would be best accompany each exercise or activity, the less likely your students are to lose focus.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 25 Handout: Jesus, the Son of God** (on curriculum DVD).
- 12-15 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **No Ordinary Man Recap video** and the **Jesus, the Son of God video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** For each group of 2-3 participants: One large piece of paper or posterboard; Pens/Colored Pencils/ Markers.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

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gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY *(large or small group)*

5 minutes

Introduction and prayer

1 minutes

No Ordinary Man Recap Video

2 minute

Brief responses to video

2 minutes

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY *(large or small group)*

10 minutes

Explanation and handouts

1 minute

Jesus, the Son of God Video

3 minutes

Creating symbols for the story

2 minutes

Sharing about our symbols

4 minutes

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY *(large or small group)*

25 minutes

Explanation

1 minute

StoryReaders scripture telling

12 minutes

Response to scripture

7 minutes

BREAK: teens move to small groups

5 minutes

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY *(small group)*

35 minutes

Discussion

15 minutes

Create responses to the story

10 minutes

Sharing responses to the story

5 minutes

Closing prayer

1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hello, everyone! I hope you're ready for another exciting time together. I'm confident that there will be a lot of great things for us to experience together. Let's take a moment to pray before we begin:

God, We cannot thank you enough for the freedom and the ability to meet together like this. It's such a privilege to journey through your amazing story with these wonderful young people--my friends. We ask that you would continue to break the mold of the ways we think of you, so that we may see a fresh new picture of who you are and the life that you intend for us. May we hear your voice loud and clear today. Amen.

We have another great story to look at today. But before we do, let's take a look at where our story took us last week. Hopefully this will be a great reminder for any of us who weren't here or who may need to be refreshed on what happened. It'll move pretty quickly, so be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play the *No Ordinary Man Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, that helped to refresh you on what happened in the last chapter of our story. I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *Jesus, the Son of God*. As always, there's a lot of story packed into these next couple of minutes. So pay close attention so that you don't miss anything! Ready?

[CUE: Play the *Jesus, the Son of God Video* from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 25: Jesus, the Son of God* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups.** Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Why do you think Jesus told his disciples not to tell anyone about who he was?
- What would you say was Jesus' primary mission during his life?
- What words would you use to describe Jesus?
- What character qualities do you see in Jesus?
- In what ways did Jesus' words and actions reveal the reality that he is God?
- How would you respond to the question, "How do you know that Jesus is God?"

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *What amazes you about Jesus?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

Hopefully one of these questions will spark a something creative in your mind. If you're having trouble finding a way to respond, try to approach it from another angle by trying creating something that you never have before. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

CREATIVE OPTION:

Divide participants into groups of 2-3. Give each group a large piece of paper OR poster board; markers, pens, and/or colored pencils.

Tell students that they are going to have the opportunity to create a front-page news story based on one of the events from today's story. You could set up the activity by saying something like this:

"In your groups, you are going to do something fun: you are going to create the front page of a newspaper--but here's the catch: it's covering events in Jesus' day. Feel free to give your newspaper a name. (Maybe it's the Nazareth Sun, or the Galilee Gazette.) Then you and your group are going to select one event from today's story to 'report' on. You can make a front-page headline, a picture or two, picture captions, and--if you have time--the opening paragraph to a news story or opinion column about this Jesus who has everybody talking. You'll have about 10 minutes to create your front page story. Feel free to be as creative as you'd like with this. Ready? Go!"

Once students have had about 10 minutes to create their newspaper, invite groups to show and read their front pages to the rest of the group.

[CUE: **SHARE** – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you for these great responses. I am consistently more and more impressed with how you're wrestling with these questions! I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next part of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, We are in awe of this person of Jesus--the Son of the Living God. We are grateful for the ways in which his story--your story--unfolds to show your passion for leading and redeeming your people. We ask that you would continue to show us what it means to live out the Kingdom of God in our lives every day. Be with us as we wrestle through the big questions of who Jesus is and what he means for lives here and now. We ask this all in his name. Amen.

THE HOUR OF DARKNESS

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie or a novel, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

As you engage your students in this story, be aware that this part of the narrative is very intense. Your group time this week should be more reflective in order to allow your students to adequately interact with the reality of the final hours of Jesus' life.

"The Hour of Darkness" can be found in: Matthew 26–27; Mark 14–15; Luke 22–23; John 13–14; 16–19

CALL ON TWO AT A TIME

An effective alternative to singling out a student is to prompt students in pairs.

When your students are having a hard time responding during your group's discussion, it may be helpful to call on a student to ask for his or her opinion or answer. Whenever calling on students, you must use sensitivity. It may help to call on two students and have them work together.

You might say something like: "Jen and Stacy, could you two work together to unpack this a little more for us?" OR "Jason and Andy, what are a couple different perspectives that people could have on this issue?"

Framing a question this way can put a healthy pressure on students to respond in a way that is comfortable for them—and you might be surprised at what kind of responses can come from two students who are able to feed off of one another's ideas.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 26 Handout: The Hour of Darkness** (on curriculum DVD).
- 10-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Jesus, the Son of God Recap video** and **The Hour of Darkness video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** For every 3-4 students: 1 bucket or bowl of warm soapy water; clean wash cloths and/or towels for washing; clean towels or a roll of paper towels for drying; hand sanitizer.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise**

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

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from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>Jesus, the Son of God Recap</i> Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>The Hour of Darkness</i> Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	5 minutes
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY (<i>small group</i>)	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hello, everyone! Welcome back for what I hope is going to be another great time together. Before we dive into the storytelling for today, let's take a moment to pray before we begin:

God, Thank you for your grace to make it through another week. We realize that every day is a gift from you, and the opportunity to live out a great story is more than we could ask for. We pray that, as we engage with your story today, you would stir in our hearts. Move us, motivate us, and impact us so that we will leave here differently than when we came. Amen.

We have another very compelling story to look at today. But before we do, let's take a look at where our story took us last week. Hopefully this will be a great reminder for any of us who weren't here or who may need to be refreshed on what happened. It'll move pretty quickly, so be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play the *Jesus, the Son of God Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, that helped remind you of what happened last in the story. Now I have another video that will give us a quick look at where our story is headed this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *The Hour of Darkness*. This part of the story gets pretty intense, so you will want to pay close attention. Ready?

[CUE: Play *The Hour of Darkness Video* from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 26: The Hour of Darkness* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – *After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]*

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) *NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under TEACHER PLANNING.]*

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS – *After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]*

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]**

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- What do you think Jesus' act of feet-washing communicate to his disciples?
- What was Jesus' prayer in the garden after the Last Supper? How might you say this in your own words?
- Why do you think the crowds turned against Jesus so quickly, when only a few days before they were praising him as he entered Jerusalem?
- Why do you think Jesus had to die?
- How did Jesus' followers respond to the tragic events? How do you think you would've responded?
- What implications does Jesus' death on the cross have for your life?
- In what way has Jesus' life and death affected the way you live your life from day to day?
- What do you learn about God's love through these events?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *How is Jesus' sacrifice meaningful to you?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

Hopefully one of these questions will spark a something creative in your mind. If you're having trouble finding a way to respond, try to approach it from another angle by trying creating something that you never have before.

CREATIVE OPTION:

While Jesus' act of washing his disciples' feet is often talked about as an example of humility and sacrifice for one another, it is rarely practiced. Take time to engage in this activity with your students.

Divide your students into groups of 3-4. Tell them that they are going to have an opportunity to practice what Jesus told his disciples to do by washing each others' feet. Encourage them that while this can be an uncomfortable and uncommon thing to do for each other, it can also be a very intimate time that will give them a better understanding of the greater attitude of servanthood that Jesus modeled for his followers.

Give each group a bowl of warm, soapy water and clean towels or paper towels. Model this first by washing someone's feet as the leader of the group. Tell them to each take turns washing and drying another person's feet, so that each student has had a chance to both have his or her feet washed and to wash the feet of someone else.*

While students are doing this act of service for one another, encourage them to maintain a reflective attitude by praying for one another and by asking God to show them ways that they can be servants to others every day.

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In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you for these very mature and thoughtful responses. I am so impressed with how you have responded to this profound story. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to finding out what happens in our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, We are humbled at what you have done for the world--and for us. Having all the power in the universe, you limited yourself, took on all of our sin, and experienced a horrible death, all so that we can be made right with God. May we continue to remember what you have done for us, and to embrace your unending, sacrificial love in our lives as we go from here today. Amen.

CREATIVE OPTION CONTINUED

After about 10 minutes, ask a few students to share about their experience and what they learned to help them understand the story better.

***It is likely that some of your students may have a severe aversion to feet or other hesitance in doing this activity. Encourage students that, if desired, they may choose to wash someone's hands or have their hands washed instead.**

THE RESURRECTION

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie or a novel, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

In Chapter 27, we see the most exciting turn in the entire of the story. This should be a great time for you and your students to dream together about the implications of the hope that Jesus' resurrection brings. This part of the story also addresses heavily the theme of "doubting." Don't shy away from the opportunity to have some authentic conversation with your students about the times we doubt God or about the doubts they may have about their faith.

"The Resurrection" can be found in: Matthew 27 – 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 19 – 21

USE PRAYERS PURPOSEFULLY

Utilizing short prayers before or during discussion can help focus your group.

In addition to the prayers provided at the beginning and end of the script for each lesson, you may want to include short prayers to focus your group before or during your group discussion. Beginning your group's discussion in prayer helps to signal that it is time for focus and discussion, which may be necessary after your students transition from a large-group setting.

You might also add a short prayer in the middle of your discussion to pray for a particular issue that one or more of your students may be struggling with. You may also pray to regain focus if your group's discussion has gone off on a tangent.

When you pray, be sure to keep the prayer itself brief and focused. Ask God for focus and to open the hearts and minds of those involved in the discussion. If appropriate, you may also ask a trusted student to say a quick prayer for your group.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 27 Handout: The Resurrection** (on curriculum DVD).
- 10-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show **The Hour of Darkness Recap video** and **The Hour of Darkness video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** For each student: 1 postcard OR piece of paper and a pen.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>The Hour of Darkness Recap Video</i>	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>The Resurrection Video</i>	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY (<i>large or small group</i>)	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY (<i>small group</i>)	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hi, everyone! It's great to have you with us as we enter into God's story again together this week. But before we do, let's take a moment to pray together:

God, We come to you humbled by the way you love us every day. We thank you that you showed this to us once and for all by sending your only son, Jesus, to be a sacrifice for us. We pray that as we enter this time together today, you would continue to reveal your amazing plan to us, and captivate us with the mystery and hope of what is coming next. Amen.

As you can imagine, we have another very compelling part of the story to get to today. But before we do, let's take a look at the events of last week's story. Hopefully this will be a great refresher for any of us who weren't here or who may need to be reminded of what happened. It'll move pretty quickly, so be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play *The Hour of Darkness Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, that helped remind you of where our story has left us. Now I have the next video that will give us a quick look at where our story is headed this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *The Resurrection*. Needless to say, the story just keeps getting better and better from here, so you will want to pay close attention so that you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *The Resurrection* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 27: The Resurrection* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]**

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- What do you think life was like for Jesus' followers after his death?
- After Jesus died, why do you think some of his followers came to the tomb?
- What does this tell you about friendship and loyalty among Jesus' companions?
- When Jesus appeared to people after his resurrection, how do you think their lives were changed?
- What does Jesus' resurrection from the dead reveal about God's power over death and sin? What might this mean for your life?
- Do you believe that Jesus rose from the dead? What leads you to believe this?
- Before Jesus went up to heaven, he commanded his followers to "go and make disciples of all nations." What do you think this means?
- What does "making disciples" look like practically in your life?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *How does Jesus' resurrection change everything?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

Hopefully one of these questions will spark a something creative in your mind. If you're having trouble finding a way to respond, try to approach it from another angle by trying creating something that

CREATIVE OPTION:

Give each of your students a post-card OR piece of paper and a pen.

Tell them that they are going to have the opportunity to use their imaginations to enter the minds of those who first encountered Jesus' resurrection. Have each student choose a person or perspective from the story--it could be one of the women who saw the open tomb, Mary Magdalene, one of the disciples on the road to Emmaus, or Thomas.

Once the students have each selected a person, have each write a letter or note from the perspective of that person, telling a friend or family member about Jesus' resurrection. (For example, a letter from Mary Magdalene might begin: "Dear Mom, You won't believe this--the most amazing this has happened...!")

Give the students about 10 minutes to write their notes. Once they have finished, give a few students an opportunity to read theirs to the group. Invite all of the students to keep their notes in places where they will see them every day, as a reminder of the amazing and exciting news that the resurrection brings to every person.

you never have before. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you for these very insightful and creative responses. I am continually impressed at the ways you all find to respond to these stories. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to finding out what happens in our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, We are filled with hope and awe at the way that you decisively entered your own story. Thank you for showing us your love and power by conquering death and raising Jesus to new life. God we ask that you would continue to show us the "dead" areas in our lives that you wish to bring to life. May we also be assured every day that there is always hope, because you have power over everything--even the grave. We pray in the name of Jesus, who is alive! Amen.

NEW BEGINNINGS

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie or a novel, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

This chapter moves quickly through a few of the many significant events involving the early church in the book of Acts. Tying these events together are common themes, such as the work of the Holy Spirit, the characteristics of the early church, the emergence of martyrdom and persecution of the church. It also touches on Saul's radical life change. All of these events should yield great discussion and responses from your students.

"New Beginnings" can be found in: Acts 1-10; 12

ASK REPEATING QUESTIONS

Don't be afraid to address recurring themes from week to week.

As you move through these stories, you may have noticed that similar themes emerge--themes like "learning to trust God in hard times," for example. You may also notice that some of the questions provided in the teacher script may seem very similar through some of these lessons, if not exactly the same. As you facilitate your group's discussion, welcome these repeating questions.

For example, a question like: "What practical steps can you take to trust God more?" can be a great takeaway question for a variety of different stories. In the same way, a question like "How would you describe God's character, based on this story?" is a great way to gauge how students are connecting each story to their view of God. As students journey through the stories, questions like these have the potential to take on new meaning with each new story--especially if the students are continuing to wrestle with them in their everyday lives. Whether or not questions like these are provided in the script, find and reuse the questions that you feel your students can resonate with and respond to best.

Don't miss the opportunity to encourage students to connect the story to not only their own, but also to that of their corporate faith community (small group, youth group, church) and the larger picture of the worldwide Church today.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 28 Handout: New Beginnings** (on curriculum DVD).
- 10-12 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Story Rewind 7 video** and the **New Beginnings video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** For every 3-4 students: 1 poster board OR large piece of paper; markers
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise**

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while

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from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>Story Rewind 7</i> Video	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>New Beginnings</i> Video	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Hello, everyone! Welcome back for what I hope is going to be another great time together. Before we begin today's story, let's take a moment to pray together:

God, What an amazing time you have given us to come together and unpack this story! We are so excited and grateful that you sent a hero in Jesus to come to our rescue and give us hope through his death and resurrection. As we investigate what's next in the story, we ask that you would continue to show us our place in your plan as it continues to unfold. Move in our hearts and motivate us to be the people that you want us to be. Amen.

We have another very compelling story to look at today. But before we do, let's take a look at where our story has brought us in the last 27 weeks. Hopefully this will be a great reminder for us about the larger story that is going on in the midst of these smaller stories. As always, this recap will move pretty quickly, so be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play the *Story Rewind 7* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

Just as a reminder, in every Bible story that we go through together, we are looking for TWO story lines going on: an **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. The Lower Story are the smaller stories we will look at each week that tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives.

[It may be helpful to call on students to briefly define what the Upper Story is, and what the Lower Story is, to ensure that students are starting to remember these from week to week.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Hopefully, that helped remind you of where our story has left us. Now I have the next video that will give us a quick look at where our story is headed this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *New Beginnings*. This part of the story gets pretty intense, so you will want to pay close attention. Ready?

[CUE: Play the *New Beginnings* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 28: New Beginnings* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: **DISCUSS** –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups**. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Why do you think Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost was so effective?
- What do you think about the Holy Spirit speaking through them with different languages?
- Is the Holy Spirit still at work in the world today? How have you experienced it or seen it at work?
- How would you describe this first "church" of Jesus followers? What kinds of things did they spend their time doing?
- Why do you think the message of Jesus Christ spread quickly?
- Why do you think the religious leaders disliked the early Christians?
- How was Saul's (Paul's) life dramatically changed?
- How do you think the early Christians able to remain faithful even in the midst of extremely difficult circumstances?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *What has happened in your life that caused you to view God in a brand new way?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Divide students in groups of 3-4. Tell them that they are going to pretend that they have been given the responsibility to start their OWN church or ministry--wherever and however they want!

Give each group a poster board OR large piece of paper and markers. Tell them that they are going to create a poster for their new church, telling the surrounding community what their church is like. Before they begin to create their poster, tell the students to spend a few minutes planning their church and its mission. Your students might want to think about these things:

- What will it be known for?
- Where will the church meet?
- Will it have a specific mission?
- Will it serve a specific community or people group that it serves?
- What will the church be called?
(Encourage students to think of a church name that has significance to their mission.)

Once they have talked about the church they will start, encourage the students to be free with how they use their poster. They can draw pictures, write things, include scripture on it--whatever they think would best communicate what their "new" community of Jesus followers is like.

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Hopefully one of these questions will spark a something creative in your mind. If you're having trouble finding a way to respond, try to approach it from another angle by trying creating something that you never have before. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you for these very mature and thoughtful responses. I am so impressed with how you are connecting this story to your own. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to finding out what happens in our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, We are so excited and honored to be a part of a community of faith that has been gathering for thousands of years, and that has experienced such amazing things as a result of your Holy Spirit. Thank you for giving this same spirit to each and every one of us, to be with us through even the toughest times. May we continue to grow as a community of your followers and figure out what it means to be a blessing to all people in your name. Amen.

CREATIVE OPTION CONTINUED

After about 15 minutes, invite groups to share their churches with the rest of the group.

NOTE: As an alternative, you can have groups create posters for the first church, as it's described in the story. What might a modern-day poster for that community of people look like? What would it say? How would it be different from modern churches today?

PAUL'S MISSION

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie or a novel, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

Chapter 29 is a quick overview of Paul's early ministry, as found in the book of Acts. If time allows, spend some time with your students reading through some of Paul's earlier letters to the churches that he visited on his journey. (Recommended: Romans 1; 3–6; 8; 12; 15; 1 Corinthians 1; 3; 5–6; 10; 12–13; 15–16; Galatians 1; 3; 5–6; 1 Thessalonians 1–5)

Because this part of the story contains so much activity, the StoryReaders telling will rely heavily on the narrators. For these parts, be sure to choose more capable readers who will be able to carry the story in a lively way, given its many details.

"Paul's Mission" can be found in:
Acts 13–14; 16–20; Romans 1; 3–6; 8; 12; 15; 1 Corinthians 1; 3; 5–6; 10; 12–13; 15–16; Galatians 1; 3; 5–6;
1 Thessalonians 1–5

ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

Making your students feel valued can lead to greater engagement.

During a group discussion, it is important to remember to verbally affirm every student who shares an answer or an opinion. As a leader, it is easy to become distracted by listening for a "correct" answer or by thinking about what question you are going to ask next. Following up every student's response by saying something positive like "that's a good point" or "I like your point of view"--or even something as brief as "Thank you for sharing."--can boost a student's confidence and encourage the student to participate again in the future.

Even if a student's answer is incorrect, off-track, or different from your own opinion, it's important to thank the student for sharing. In doing this, you are not necessarily affirming the student's answer. You are, rather, affirming the student's willingness to share--a trait that you want to cultivate and encourage as much as possible for healthy discussions.

Don't miss the opportunity to encourage students to connect the story to not only their own, but also to that of their corporate faith community (small group, youth group, church) and the larger picture of the worldwide Church today.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 29 Handout: Paul's Mission** (on curriculum DVD).
- 8-10 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **New Beginnings Recap video** and the **Paul's Mission video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** For each student: One (1) index card and a pen.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise**

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while

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from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>New Beginnings Recap Video</i>	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>Paul's Mission Video</i>	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

PAUL'S MISSION

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome, everyone! I'm so glad you're back with us for what I hope is going to be another great time together. Before we dive into our story for today, let's take a moment to pray before we begin:

God, Thank you for bringing us back together to continue this journey of discovery. You have pulled us all in to such an unbelievable, life-changing story of grace, forgiveness, and restoration through Jesus. We ask that, over the next couple hours, you would continue to open our eyes to see ourselves as characters in this story. Help us to focus, to listen, and to fully understand the things you have to say to us today. Amen.

We have another amazing story to look at today. But before we do, and to remind us of what happened last in the story, let's take a look back at last week's chapter. As always, this recap will move pretty quickly, so be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play the *New Beginnings Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, that helped remind you of where our story has left us. Now I have the next video that will give us a quick look at where our story is headed this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *Paul's Mission*. This part of the story gets pretty intense, so you will want to pay close attention. Ready?

[CUE: Play the *Paul's Mission* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 29: Paul's Mission* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups.** Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- After his conversion to Christianity, how would you describe Paul's passion and mission in life?
- What would you say is your unique passion and mission in life?
- When in a new city, why do you think Paul always began his outreach at the Jewish synagogue?
- Why do you think Paul and his fellow prisoners stayed in the prison when they could've escaped?
- What do you learn from the story of the jailer?
- In what setting or environments is it difficult for you to talk about Jesus? Why?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *How could you courageously live out your faith?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

Hopefully one of these questions will spark a something creative in your mind. If you're having trouble finding a way to respond, try to approach it from another angle by trying creating something that you never have before. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Give each student an index card and a pen. Explain that they are going to have the opportunity to create their own **MISSION STATEMENT** for their lives. Emphasize that just as Paul had a clear vision of what he was supposed to do with his life, it is important for us to be continually asking ourselves where God wants to use us.

Have each student spend a few minutes thinking of the thing that makes them most passionate in life or the way that they feel God is calling them to do good for their communities or the world. Once the students have their ideas, tell them to write their personal mission statement on their index cards. The form of many mission statements is: My mission is to ____ (what) ____ by ____ (how) _____. (An example might be: "My mission is to love those in need by volunteering to serve hot meals at a local homeless shelter.")

Remind your students that they don't need to have the mission of their entire lives figured out yet. Their mission statement can simply be one area of their lives that they are particularly passionate about, or through which they feel that they are doing what God created them to do. Also remind them that their mission doesn't necessarily need to be "church"-related, and that God can use people who are passionate about many things, from playing rock

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[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thanks everyone for these great responses. I am always challenged and inspired by what you come up with for these questions. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to finding out what happens in our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, We thank you that your gospel of redemption and salvation is for everyone, and that it has spread to us here today. We are also grateful that we get to participate in spreading this Good News through the gifts and passions that you have given us. May we continue to see that each of our stories is significant, and that you give us opportunities every day to be Good News to others. We ask these things in the name of Jesus, the hero of the story. Amen.

CREATIVE OPTION CONTINUED

music to making movies to creating designer clothing.

Once students have had 5-8 minutes to come up with their mission statement, invite willing volunteers to share their mission statements with the rest of the group. Be sure to applaud those who have the courage to share.

PAUL'S FINAL DAYS

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie or a novel, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

Chapter 30 moves quickly through the remainder of Paul's story. The story moves around quite a bit geographically, and the plot is full of a variety of different events. Because there is a lack of standalone "scenes" or explicit "teaching" points, it might be advantageous to focus your group's discussion on the overall scope of Paul's work and the reoccurring persecution and trials that he faced, rather than any one "moment."

Also, the text of the story never explains how Paul died, though Church history indicates that he was probably executed in Rome at the hands of the Roman emperor Nero. It is likely that, as Paul predicted, his life ended in martyrdom for the sake of the Gospel.

"Paul's Final Days" can be found in: Acts 20–23; 27–28; Ephesians 1–6; 2 Timothy 1–4

THINK COMMUNALLY!

Challenge students to think beyond individual application.

In responding to these stories, it can become easy to default to understanding their themes in relation to our lives as individuals. As your group discussion leads to application for everyday life, challenge your students to begin thinking beyond themselves and about the implications the story may have not only for them, but for their youth group, their church, their family, their community, or even the church as a whole.

Engaging in this perspective will allow your students to recognize that they are part of communities much larger than themselves, and that entire groups and systems are in need of redemption and grace, just as individuals are. It will also help them to think practically about the impact they can bring not only to their "internal" spiritual lives, but also to the outward-facing practice of the life that God desires.

Don't miss the opportunity to encourage students to connect the story to not only their own, but also to that of their corporate faith community (small group, youth group, church) and the larger picture of the worldwide Church today.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 30 Handout: Paul's Final Days** (on curriculum DVD).
- 8-10 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Paul's Mission Recap video** and the **Paul's Final Days video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** For each student: One (1) piece of paper, markers/colored pencils.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise**

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while

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from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY *(large or small group)*

5 minutes

Introduction and prayer

1 minutes

Paul's Mission Recap Video

2 minute

Brief responses to video

2 minutes

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY *(large or small group)*

10 minutes

Explanation and handouts

1 minute

Paul's Final Days Video

3 minutes

Creating symbols for the story

2 minutes

Sharing about our symbols

4 minutes

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY *(large or small group)*

25 minutes

Explanation

1 minute

StoryReaders scripture telling

12 minutes

Response to scripture

7 minutes

BREAK: teens move to small groups

5 minutes

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY *(small group)*

35 minutes

Discussion

15 minutes

Create responses to the story

10 minutes

Sharing responses to the story

5 minutes

Closing prayer

1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Welcome back, everyone! I'm so glad you're here for another great time of going through God's Story together. Before we dive into one of our last parts of the story today, let's take a moment to pray before we begin:

God, Thank you for giving us a reason to be excited and hopeful. Despite all the things in our lives that stress us out and bring us pain, we realize that you are a God who is so good to us and has great plans for us. We ask that, during this time together, you would help us to feel your presence as we engage with your story. Open our minds and our hearts to see something new in it, and continue to build in us a desire to become more like Jesus. Amen.

We have another very exciting story to look at today. But before we do, and to give us a little reminder, let's take a look back at what happened in our story last week. As always, this recap will move pretty quickly, so be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play the *Paul's Mission Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, that helped remind you of where our story has left us. Now I have the next video that will give us a quick look at where our story is headed this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *Paul's Final Days*. This part of the story gets pretty intense, so you will want to pay close attention. Ready?

[CUE: Play the *Paul's Final Days* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 30: Paul's Final Days* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]**

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- How do you think Paul able to endure the pain and trials that he suffered for his beliefs?
- What can you learn from Paul's life about how to face difficult circumstances?
- Why do you think Paul was willing to walk into the face of danger?
- What character qualities do you see in Paul?
- Where do you need courage like Paul's in your life?
- What practical steps can you take to develop an attitude like Paul's?
- How would you sum up Paul's life and message?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *When you "finish the race," what do you want people to remember about you? What do you hope your legacy be?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

Hopefully one of these questions will spark a something creative in your mind. If you're having trouble finding a way to respond, try to approach it from another angle by trying creating something that you never have before. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

CREATIVE OPTION:

Give each student a piece of paper and markers/colored pencils. Explain that Paul's story of perseverance provides for us a great model for fearlessly living out a life of radical faith in Jesus. Tell the students to think of their own lives, and invite them to think of what they want to be known for 50 years from now. Then ask them this question:

"If in 50 years, a movie was made about your life, what would the movie be about? What would your STORY be?"

After the students have had a moment to think about it, tell them that with the piece of paper, they are each going to create a movie poster for the movie about them. Encourage them to think of an image or two that would represent "scenes" in the movie. They should also think of a title and, if they would like, a tagline (ex. "One man's quest to be the best rodeo champion the world had ever seen.") They might also include reviews from movie critics, giving either a brief synopsis of the movie or film reviews (ex. "A true underdog story...Inspiring!") Also have the students think about which actor/actress would best play their character in the movie.

Give the students about 15 minutes to create their movie posters. As always, remind the students that there is no "right" way to do this

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[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you for these very insightful responses. I learn so much from you all every week. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to finding out what happens in the last chapter of our story next week!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, We thank you for stories like Paul's, which inspire us to press on in the face of adversity. We ask that, as we go from here, you would continue to show us ways in which we can be more courageous to be the kinds of people you created us to be. Help us to hold on to the things that truly matter, and to let go of the things that only hinder us from living and loving the way that you want us to. We thank you for Jesus and the power of his new life, through which all of this is possible. Amen.

CREATIVE OPTION CONTINUED

activity, and that they should have fun with it. Once they have finished, invite volunteers to share their movie posters with the rest of the group. Then encourage students to hang their posters in their bedrooms or their lockers at school, where they can be reminded of the stories they are living every day.

THE END OF TIME

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies center on Bible stories that have rich meaning that can have an impact on your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard to not let your mind wander to how you will teach this! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights and will help you anticipate your groups responses.

Leading this Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, then go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with you group, and ones you want to change or omit.

As always, continue to encourage your students to give their full attention while engaging with this story. Remind them that discussion outside of the parameters of the story is for another time. Encourage students that if they engage the story like a movie or a novel, allowing themselves to enter it, they will learn things they never have before.

Chapter 31 is the final chapter of the study, and the story comes from the book of Revelation. As you might imagine, it is perhaps the most unusual of all the chapters in this study. As you will see, the StoryReaders script is split primarily amongst the narrators, the Apostle John, and the words of Jesus and the others in John's vision.

While Revelation is written from the first person, in John's point of view, some liberty is taken in the StoryReaders by telling parts of John's vision from a third-person perspective, in order to create a more cohesive and narrative form. Before beginning, you may want to prepare your students that there might be some unusual imagery in the story, but that if they focus on the message of the story, there could be a lot to learn from this final chapter.

"The End of Time" can be found in: Revelation 1–5; 19–22

REWARD YOUR STUDENTS AND LEADERS!

Celebrate your journey through God's Story together.

As your students finish The Story, a great way to wrap up the time is to celebrate your students and leaders to show their value throughout this journey, and also to celebrate what God did over the course of the 31 weeks. You could do this by throwing a party, organizing a worship gathering, or by hosting an open-mic event to share artwork and stories of life-change that have emerged over the course of the study.

You might also dovetail the final chapter's theme of hope for redemption and restoration into an opportunity for a service project in your community.

Whatever you decide to do, make sure to honor both your students and leaders for their commitment to working through this experience with open minds and open hearts.

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 31 Handout: The End of Time** (on curriculum DVD).
- 8-10 Copies of the **StoryReaders Script** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReaders Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for students that would like to read along.
- Copies of the *Join the Story* Sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**.
- Show the **Paul's Final Days Recap video** and **The End of Time video** from the curriculum DVD.
- **Join the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response.
- **Creative Option:** For each student: a 4" x 4" square of poster board; markers; adhesive tape.
- **Optional:** THE STORY FOR TEENS—a Bible that corresponds with this study published by Zondervan.

StoryReaders Assignment:

Give out StoryReader Scripts (from curriculum DVD) to student and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a student to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

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. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS:

1. TWO LENSES

- Using copies of the StoryReaders scripts (or the actual passages from the Bible), have students read the selection quietly on their own. Have them read it with this particular question in mind: *What stands out to you as most important or most unusual in this story?*
- When they finish, have the students read the story again. This time, have them focus on the question: *What does this story mean for your life?*
- Encourage students to take notes of things that stood out to them during each reading.

2. RE-TELLING THE STORY

- Divide students into 2-3 groups, depending on the length/complexity of the story and size of your group. Assign a different part of the story to each group. Have each group read their part of the story amongst themselves.
- After 3-5 minutes, have members from each group re-tell what happened in their section of the story in front of the rest of the large group. Encourage them to recount as many details from the story as they can.
- **OPTIONAL:** Encourage group members to act out what happens while the story is being re-told. For a fun element, limit re-tellings to 1 minute each, so that students are forced to do a fast-paced reenactment.

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ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS

For each lesson, three additional storytelling options have been suggested, in order to provide some optional variety to your students' experience of the scripture. You may use them to either supplement or replace the Readers Theater experience. For each of the three options, you may either use the StoryReaders script provided or have students read directly from scripture. (Scripture references are noted at the top of the StoryReaders script.)

NOTE: Additional Storytelling Options may take longer than the allotted 10 minutes, depending on the type of exercise and number of students.

ANOTHER CREATIVE OPTION

A story-specific idea for an additional creative exercise has also been provided with this lesson. You may use and adjust the instructions for the exercise (see the "Creative Option" sidebar under the "JOIN THE STORY" section of the Teacher Lesson Script) to fit the needs of your group.

(Please note that additional materials may be required for this exercise, and the exercise may take longer than the allotted time for the JOIN THE STORY section, given the type of activity and the size of your group.)

ADDITIONAL STORYTELLING OPTIONS CONTINUED

3. STORYBOARD

- Divide students into groups of 3-4. Have each group read through the StoryReaders script within their groups.
- At the front of the room, hang 6-8 large pieces of paper. After 10 minutes, have one volunteer at a time (one from each group) come up and draw a major "scene" from the story on each large piece of paper. (Encourage students to use stick figures--just enough to represent what is happening in the scene.)
- When the storyboard outline is complete, review the series of events and ask the students to share if they feel that any major events from the story have been left out.

LESSON OUTLINE

Curriculum Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	5 minutes
Introduction and prayer	1 minutes
<i>Paul's Final Days Recap Video</i>	2 minute
Brief responses to video	2 minutes
PART TWO: SEE THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	10 minutes
Explanation and handouts	1 minute
<i>The End of Time Video</i>	3 minutes
Creating symbols for the story	2 minutes
Sharing about our symbols	4 minutes
PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY <i>(large or small group)</i>	25 minutes
Explanation	1 minute
StoryReaders scripture telling	12 minutes
Response to scripture	7 minutes
<i>BREAK: teens move to small groups</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY <i>(small group)</i>	35 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Create responses to the story	10 minutes
Sharing responses to the story	5 minutes
Closing prayer	1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hello, everyone! Welcome back for our final installment of our journey through God's story together. Before we dive into our last piece of storytelling, let's take a moment to pray together:

God, You have brought us on such an incredible adventure through this story--Your story--and we are so grateful. Thank you for all of these wonderful young people who have come along for the ride and who have taught me so much. I see you working in their lives every single week, and I am so excited for them. We pray that during our time together today, you would stir our imaginations to see you again in a brand new way, and allow us to dream big about the incredible future you have in store for us--your people. Amen.

Our final story is perhaps the most interesting and exciting one yet. But before we get into it, let's give ourselves a little reminder about what happened in last week's chapter of the story. As always, this recap will move pretty quickly, so be sure to watch and listen carefully!

[CUE: Play the *Paul's Final Days Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes)]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you? Was there anything that you had forgotten about?

[Get a few quick responses to these questions, don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Hopefully, that helped to remind you of where our story took us last week. Now I have another video that will show you how our story ends up this week. After the video we will take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Now, let's watch this week's video, *The End of Time*. This part of the story is pretty different from anything we've heard so far, so you will want to pay close attention. Ready?

[CUE: Play *The End of Time* Video from the curriculum DVD (3 minutes)]

[CUE: Give each student the *Chapter 31: The End of Time* handout found on the curriculum DVD]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an image or symbol for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes we will share our creations.

[CUE: DISCUSS – After two minutes, ask a few students to share a briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind what they were drawing. After three or four minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES**Teacher SCRIPT** (please personalize this):

As usual, there's a lot to take in from this story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, so I have asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, I encourage you to draw or write key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned student and adult volunteers read the *StoryReaders* script all the way through without stopping. (10 minutes) NOTE: For alternate ways of interacting with the text, see the "Additional Storytelling Options" section under *TEACHER PLANNING*.]

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: DISCUSS –After two minutes, ask a few students to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

–What were the key events from the story?

–What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher SCRIPT (please personalize this):

Right now we are going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: send students into **small groups. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN THE STORY segment of this study.]**

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: **DISCUSS** – Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.]

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- John is writing to a church who is being heavily persecuted by the Roman empire. What emotions do you think Christians felt when they first read John's revelation?
- How does John describe Jesus when he first sees him in the vision?
- What do you learn about God from his actions and descriptions in this chapter?
- What does this chapter reveal about what heaven will be like?
- Why do you think it's important to think about and set your hope on heaven?
- How does this vision of what will happen in the future impact how you live today?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: (questions are also on handout)

- *Which character or part of the story did you see yourself in?*
- *What areas of your life and our world need to be redeemed or renewed?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

Hopefully one of these questions will spark a something creative in your mind. If you're having trouble finding a way to respond, try to approach it from another angle by trying creating something that you

CREATIVE OPTION:

Give each student a square of poster board and markers. As you do, remind the students that in John's vision, Jesus says "I am making all things new!"

Tell them to think of their daily lives and the places and people they come into contact with on a regular basis. (Their home, their school, their work, their friends, their family, etc.) Now have them think about, out of all those places and people, where there lies brokenness, pain, suffering, or need for restoration. If necessary, tell the students to make a list on one side of their square of poster board. Then explain to the students that their task is to pick ONE of the things on their list, and to imagine how that thing would look different if it was restored and redeemed, back to the way it was originally intended to be.

Once they have had a moment to think, tell the students that they will have 10 minutes to draw, write, or graffiti a description of what that redeemed "piece" of their world would look like.

After students have had time to create their squares, invite any willing volunteers to show and explain their squares to the rest of the group. When they have finished, invite the students to attach their square to a wall or large poster board, so that all of the scenes create a mosaic of restoration and redemption. Display the combined piece of art in your meeting space or church for all to see, as a reminder of God's promise to restore all things.

never have before. In a few minutes, we will talk about your responses. I am really excited to see what you come up with!

[While students are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also, ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.]

[CUE: SHARE – Ask a few students who are willing to share their response to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script (please personalize this):

Thank you for these incredible responses. You all did so well with a rather strange story. I am so impressed with how you have responded during these response times over the course of the Story.

I hope that you have all enjoyed this journey through God's Story as much as I have--I hope we'll be able to experience it again sometime soon!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, What an amazing adventure it has been! We thank you, from the beginning to the very end, for showing us new things about you and about ourselves through this incredible Story, a story that continues on as we continue to live our lives following you. Thank you for giving us hope for the future, and grace for every day. We thank you, the Author of the greatest story, for your hope, your grace, your peace, and your love. Amen.