

*Documenting
the Stories
You Tell!*



Ellen Patton

*My people, hear my teaching;
listen to the words of my mouth.
I will open my mouth with a parable;
I will utter hidden things, things from of old—
things we have heard and known,
things our ancestors have told us.
We will not hide them from their descendants;
we will tell the next generation
the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD,
his power, and the wonders he has done.*

Psalm 78:1-4



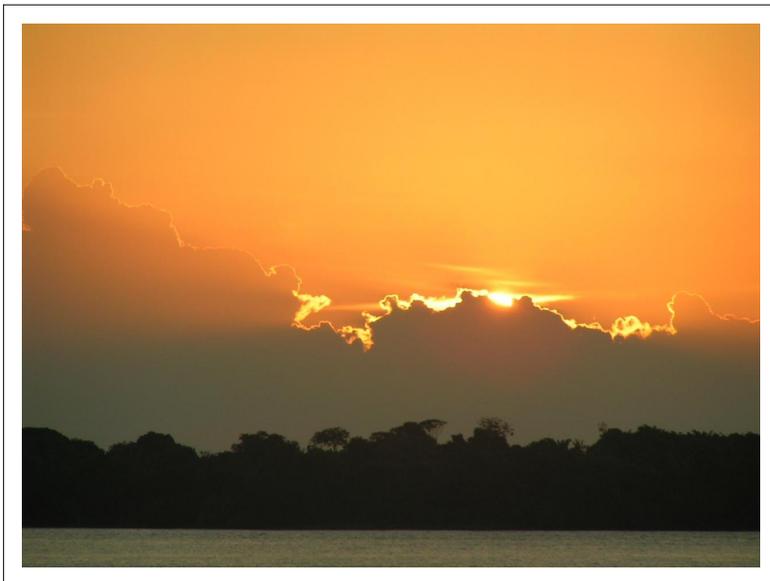
World Lizard Press

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All photos by Ellen Patton
front - Riverside cross in Icoaraci, Belem, Brazil
contents - Amazon river sunset
page 7 - My husband Wayne sharing stories with Luis and Fatima in Brazil
page 23 - Brazilian cake sandwich
page 31- Amazon river fish
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notes@pattons.org

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*Light
in a messenger's eyes
brings joy to the heart,
and good news
gives health to the bones.*

Proverbs 15:30

Why Go to the Trouble of Documenting a Story?

I learned Luke 14:15-24, the parable of the great banquet, a year ago for a storytelling concert entitled “Dinner With Jesus.” A year later, I found myself with another opportunity to tell it, this time for a lady’s study. As I delved into the story for a second round of performance preparation, I decided to keep the same focus as the first time, since it was relevant to this particular study. Fortunately, I still had most of my notes from the previous year, including how I had formatted the story, what I had told and how I had told it.

When I was first learning and studying this story, as well as the one right before it in verses 12 - 14, I spent some time on the phrase “the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind” because the handicapped are looked at much differently today than they were in Jesus’ time. I wanted to speak to today but retain the same ideas that Jesus may have been conveying with his words. So, I chose to use the poor, the disreputable, the brokenhearted and the disillusioned.

Although the words I had chosen and the focus I had wanted the story to have had been documented, the body language I had chosen for the poor, the disreputable, the brokenhearted and the disillusioned had not. I couldn’t remember what I had done to help communicate these realities. Had they been annotated somewhere, I could have asked myself if they still fit the circumstances of the new telling, instead of wracking my brain trying to remember what I had done or come up with new ones.

It was experiences like this that made me realize that other tellers might also find it helpful to have a resource to aid them in just such documentation. Thus, the Story Documentation Form was born.

What you choose to save for future reference is a personal choice. It will depend on how often you tell a story, the circumstances under which you tell, the purpose for which you tell and what is important to you. A story repeated numerous times may only need minimal documentation, but a story told this year and then not again for another year or longer may need more documentation to be of help to you.

The choice of what to include will also be influenced by how critical the information is to the story. Ask yourselves questions such as: How important it is to the telling? How long of a pause is needed in that particular spot? Does a certain gesture or expression need to be used, and possibly repeated, to best convey the focus of the story? What tone seemed to best maintain the integrity of the text?

Storytellers never tell the exact same story twice. Changes happen, not just because of a new focus for the story but because of changes in you, the audience, the amount of time you have to tell, and your knowledge of the story and the environment. If you are to tell a story a second or third time or more, don’t fail to realize that there will be differences so some of the blanks on the provided form may be filled out differently with each telling. The purpose of this form is not so you can tell the same story in the same way, but to give you a step forward in your preparing to tell again, by remembering what you did.

Most of the topics included here were taken from various readings, performances, and discussions with tellers. When a survey was done to ask tellers what documentation methods they currently used and what methods they would find useful to use in the future, the results were all over the place. Only a handful of basics, like reference and formatted words, were consistently chosen. It confirmed my belief that the choice of what you save in documenting a story is a personal choice.

The front side of this form (page 9) relates to facts about the story and its telling, most of which will not change the next time you tell it, with the possible exception of the title and the most important thing. They are included here since they are basic to the telling. There is also a place on this side of the form to record information about the audience for quick reference later.

The back side of the form (page 10) contains more of the topics that might change over time and with different tellings, with the exception of some parts of the story analysis and some of what you don't understand. These are the things that you may need to think through more and revise when preparing a story for a future telling.

Each section of the form is more fully explained on pages 11-15. Not all items will be important to a particular story at a particular time. Choose the ones that are most important to you and the audience at the time of each telling.

Some items will not fit on a single-sheet format and will need to be saved in another file or attached. These include formatted words used with markings relevant to the telling, musical scores, movement maps, outlines for longer stories and more. These are included on pages 16-18 for your reference. Some are also included in the examples.

A checklist of possible items for documentation is also included for quick reference on pages 19-21.

There are two examples of how a documented story might look starting on pages 23 and 31. The first is for a short story, Luke 14:15-24; the second is for the book of Jonah as a longer story.

The decision of how to store the packets of information for a story is a personal one and will depend on your preferences and purposes. If there are a limited number of stories, they could easily be stored in an accordion folder or three-ring binder. For more stories, a section of a file cabinet could be used. Each of the files and attachments that were not created in a computer system could also be scanned in and kept in a computer file, if a paperless system is preferred, and then printed out as needed. I have some stories kept in a binder, but also some in the computer. All the files I generate on the computer (i.e. the text) are kept in the computer in a file marked Bible Stories with the file name being the biblical reference under the year done.

Another decision to make is how to organize the files. If it is a Bible story the easiest and most efficient way would most likely be to organize them by biblical reference (i.e. book, chapter and verses) or possibly lectionary order and year, if they are lectionary stories within the church year cycle. If the story is not a biblical one, it could be filed together by title with stories from a particular source or stories of a specific character or theme grouped together.

It is my hope that this Story Documentation Form will help give you a framework upon which to hang your story and will prove useful to you in organizing and processing your thoughts, research, and performance choices for future reference. It is not meant to capture the whole picture, or every detail; rather, it is simply a method to document what you found most important to know so as to streamline and make more efficient your prep time for a future telling.

May you and your efforts be blessed!

Ellen Patton
Master Storyteller

Documenting the Stories

You Share



Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored his name.

Malachi 3:16

Story

Documentation

front

Biblical Reference, Translation, Source

TBI and MIT

Companion or Similar Stories

Words (meanings, pronunciations, key, threads, theme, etc.)

Connections

Title

Historical Context (time period, location told and written, author, original audience)

Research Notes

Tellings - Audience Notes

Story

Story Analysis:

What I Don't Know or Understand:

Special Considerations and Cautions:

Documentation

My Personal Experience:

Other:

back

Story Documentation Sections

(front page of form)

Biblical Reference, Translation, Source

This information is important for locating the story again and, if necessary, giving credit to the original source.

If the story is not from the Bible, note where it originated (what book, magazine, website, journal, etc.) as well as where you have filed it in your home or office. If permission from the author or publisher has been granted to use it, note where you have filed that written permission.

In addition to the story itself, “Source” could also include anything used within the telling of a story, such as music, photos, and/or videos. All of that information may be too extensive to fit into the little box on the form; in that case, the “Other” section on the back side of the form can be used or if it is extensive it can be saved as a separate document. Again, it’s important to remind yourself where these supplemental resources can be found, maybe even including copies, if possible, as attachments with this form.

TBI and MIT

Once you have studied the story and it’s background and begun to choose paths for telling you may be deciding the Theological Big Idea (TBI) and the Most Important Thing (MIT). They both give a framework and focus to your telling.

The theological big idea, or TBI, is what the passage reveals about God. It is God centered . What God is revealing about himself may not change over time, but there may be choices that need to be made about which theological idea(s) are most important to the telling of your story. This is especially true if the story is a longer one.

Doug Lipman, in *Improving Your Storytelling*, (p. 87) states, “One of the crucial elements to emerge as you tell a story is what the story means to you.” Your interpretation of the story or the main meaning of the story to you is what Lipman calls the most important thing or MIT because of its importance in providing a framework on which to hang your story. Try to state your MIT in one sentence. Your MIT for a story may be evident to you the first time through a story or your thoughts may take time to percolate. The MIT is personal to the teller and can vary from one telling to another.

The most important thing and the theological big idea may be the same thing but they do not have to be. One may choose to focus on an important message the story speaks that is not the main theological point.

Companion or Similar Stories

It can be helpful to know about, and possibly use, other versions of your given story or other stories that shed light on your story.

The Bible often has multiple versions of the same story. This is particularly true between the Gospels but there are other overlaps as well (multiple Creation stories, I and II Chronicles with both books of Kings and Samuel, even large repeated sections like when Peter quotes Joel at Pentecost, etc.). At the very least, it’s instructional to be aware of these connections; noting the similarities and differences, whether or not you choose to also tell one of these selections at the same time as your given story. Even exploring if there are other relevant stories about the same character, topic or theme can be enlightening to your telling.

If the story is not a biblical one, you might want to include similar stories here with the same focus or format. For example the Brazilian folk tale of the race between a monkey and a sloth to the top of a tree is much like the American folk tale of the race between the tortoise and the hare.

Words

The Bible, especially, is full of important but often unfamiliar and difficult-to-pronounce words. Be informed, inspired and prepared!

Included in this section is research into individual word meanings, pronunciations, and variations in spellings or names. For example, the Sea of Chinnereth (or Kinnereth) is the same body of water as the Sea of Galilee and the Sea of Tiberias.

As words in a language are not always translatable one for one, it is helpful to look at several different translations of your story and note variations in words used. The Amplified Bible is a good resource for examining differences. Translation variations may give you a place to start exploring a story as you consider why a particular word was used in a certain place..

Also, key words and phrases, especially if they're repeated (verbal threads) may stand out to you for some reason (it's good to explore why) and help you focus in on an MIT.

Connections

It's always good to help the audience link their lives with the biblical stories, making the sacred texts relevant for now.

Linking our lives to the story through a point of identification helps make the story more personal to the listener and may help them to better remember parts of the story. It helps to bridge the gap between the "then and there" and the "here and now".

The bridge between the listener's story and the story you are telling should include a variety of options. You may need to suggest connections from obvious to sublime or grand and general to specific. Remember, these are for the audience and not all of the possibilities will speak to you. For example, you may not have thrown a party where no one showed up like in Luke 14:15-24, but maybe someone in your audience has.

Questions that you could use to prompt more connections and conversation about the story can be made from these possibilities. The connections you may choose to emphasize, like your telling, may be influenced by your MIT.

Title

This is for quick, easy story identification and focus.

This might change with a new telling if you were going to have a different emphasis. For instance, Luke 15:11-32 is commonly known as "The Prodigal Son." But sermons have been preached on "The Prodigal Father," "The Prodigal Family," "The Prodigal Sons," or even something like "True Grace." You might want to create your own title based on your telling and don't just copy an existing one.

Historical Context

None of these stories happened in a vacuum. It's important to understand the original context if integrity is to be maintained in the telling of them.

These basics set the story in their historical context. This includes the time period when the story occurred, when and why it may have first been told and/or written, who the original audiences were, what was going on in their world that might have influenced the story as well as the hearer's experience of it. Looking at why and how the story mattered back then may give modern tellers and audiences insight into its original impact and invite similar reflection for them now.

Research Notes

Biblical commentaries are full of helpful information for filling in the gaps and painting a clearer picture of the realities and potential impact of each story.

Historical information not recorded under Historical Context could be noted here. In addition, you may also want to include information on culture, story background, and genre (is your story an epistle, poetry, wisdom, prophetic, historical, etc.).

Something you may want to be intentional about researching is the geographical context of a story. This could greatly enhance your, and your listeners understanding of it. For instance, Nineveh was over 500 miles from Jonah's home and, from that location, Tarshish was in the opposite direction from Nineveh. If need be, for clarity, include a map as an attachment.

What is learned by research into the story is not likely to change with time. Information may be added, or corrections made, but most notes will essentially remain the same each time you tell that story. Although you may have more notes than can fit in this section, the most important ones should be recorded here for ease of reference. If your notes are extensive, they can be included as a separate attachment.

Tellings and Audience Notes

Practical notations for each telling to help with repeat performances in the future.

Recording when, where, why, and to whom you have already told the story could be important if you are choosing to tell that story again or are working with the same audience at a different time. Just knowing the story was told at a particular church may not be enough. You may want to know the specific age group and/or demographic of the audience and what their reactions were. Knowing this could be helpful if, for example, you are selecting a story for another group with similar demographics or if you are selecting a story for the same church or group at a different time.

Story Documentation Sections

(back page of form)

Story Analysis

A summary of the basic plot and narrative arc such as problems or crises and resolutions, characters and their actions and motivations, tone, twists, setting ... the classic who, what, where, when, why, and how.

When beginning an analysis it is helpful to note the type of story. This could range from being a metaphor to categorizing it as a mystery or using a characteristic of a main character such as calling the story of Balaam a donkey story.

If the story is a metaphor or a parable you should identify the parts and their meanings and consider why the original teller may have chosen those things. For example, building and agriculture are often used in metaphor in the Bible since they are universal. Almost everyone, no matter what time or culture, can relate to crops being rained on or a building needing a foundation.

Also important to note are any themes, symbols, or types in the story and their significance.

The basics of a story itself do not change over time. A character in a story is there forever, although, one may choose to emphasize one character one time and a different one the next. Also, the emotions or motivation a particular character displays may change depending on your MIT and how you view the story and your audience make up. This is especially true if you choose an emotion or motivation to convey for a particular character that is not explicit in the story.

The point of view you choose to tell the story from is a choice that also affects the whole story. If you choose to be a character in the story, one observing the story, a peripheral character or the narrator will impact how you tell the story and what you choose as your focus.

The same is true for the way one looks at the story's structure or how it is outlined. How a story is outlined can change depending on your MIT. For an excellent example see Doug Lipman's *Improving Your Storytelling*, chapter 8.

In analyzing the story you may want to include some options such as marking action words, descriptive words, emotions or gestures in the story. This may need to be included as a separate attachment.

Story analysis should include the application of the story in today's day and age. It may be the same or different than the culture and time period in which it is set. Ask yourself, what is the relevance and application to a particular situation.

What I Don't Know or Understand

Notes for further research or frank confession/discussion when performing

This section is to record what you don't understand about the story. Some of the things not understood could be cleared up by further research, others questions may remain unanswered. Sometimes a teller may try to answer unanswered questions by the way they tell the story, such as having a particular character express an emotion or give a reaction that is not explicitly stated to answer the question what might they have been feeling.

Some people may shy away from stories that are confusing or too unclear but these may be the very stories that provide the best grist for the mill. If your performance allows for reflection time or a Q&A session afterwards, talking about the questions everyone has allows communal feedback and learning. Making notes of what you don't know or understand can be an inviting jumping off point for discussion and discovery.

Special Considerations/Cautions

These are things to remember or take into account for particular audiences, as well as critical points for all audiences.

Critical or special moments in the story can be critical or special by the teller's choice, but other times the crisis or special moment is a permanent part of the story. An example of a critical point in the story might be where the climactic pause needs to be long, or something as simple as not to point to individuals at this point. Other non-critical gestures, voice inflections and pauses can be noted on the printed-out narrative and filed as an attachment.

Sometimes there are special considerations or cautions in telling a story, like something to leave out or be certain to include for a particular audience demographic. Or, you may want to note that the story is better for mature believers or for those who are not Christians.

My Personal Experience

This is a journal of sorts to document where you were (emotionally, spiritually, physically, psychologically, intellectually, etc.) when you previously worked on this story.

This section includes those things that matter to you and are personal to you as a teller. They may or may not intentionally influence an individual telling; that's up to you. They may be things you choose to share with others or keep private. They will, however, let you know "where you were" when you made choices that influenced your previous tellings.

Some of these may change over time, others may not. What one continues to learn about the story through further studying and telling of it can be added, but the history of it does not change and may be instructional for you as you are reminded of what you were thinking/feeling/struggling with at the time.

Here are some topics and questions you may want to actively consider as you work on a story. These, in turn, could then be tweaked for use in leading a discussion with others after a telling.

- ~ Why did I chose this story to learn? *[Why might we choose this story to learn/study?]*
- ~ Why do I feel this story is important to me today? *[How is this story important to you today?]*
- ~ My likes and dislikes about the story/characters/events. *[What did you like about the story? What did you not like? What character did you like/not like or identify with and why?]*
- ~ What jumps out for me? *[What grabs you or most gets your attention about this story?]*
- ~ What questions do I have about the story? *[What questions does this story raise for you?]*
- ~ How am I challenged by this story? *[How does this story challenge you?]*
- ~ What have I learned about God by studying this story? *[What can we learn about God from this story?]*
- ~ What have I learned about others by studying this story? *[What can we learn about others from this story?]*
- ~ What have I learned about myself by studying this story? *[What can you learn about yourself from this story?]*
- ~ What have I learned from presenting this story to others? *[Have you told or in some way shared this story with others? If so, what did you learn or experience?]*
- ~ Has this story led me to make any changes in my life? *[What is our response to this story in our lives? What might we do differently?]*
- ~ What personal connections have I made with this story? *[In what ways have you experienced this story in your life? Did it evoke any particular memories for you?]*

Remember, this section is personal. It's your space to focus on your interaction with the story. If any part would be fruitful to share with others, that's icing on the cake.

Other

This is the catch-all section.

It seems one always needs another space for something not covered in the other areas, or to expand into from another area. Among other things, this section could include a list of other files or attachments that you used as part of the story and where they are located.

Attachments

Some of the things you may want to save related to your may be too long for the Story Documentation Form and will need to be kept on separate pages. Here are some of the possibilities. Not all will be used for every story.

Written Narrative

By far, this is the most common method used for documenting stories.

Whole books exist that give us the words of a story without including any of the other items listed here or in any of the Story Documentation Form sections. But re-animating silent words back into an oral experience takes some work and documenting what you might have said gives you a head start in a future telling.

Even if one has a formatted text (see examples on pages 25-26 and 33-36), the nature of storytelling is that it is likely a close approximation of what you will actually tell. But, a “script” makes a good place to start, especially if the original text has been modified in any significant way. Modifications may be as simple as changing a place that has more than one name to the one that is most recognizable, or an added cultural note to clarify, such as adding the word “flat” to the description of the roof in the healing of the paralytic brought to Jesus by his friends. It would include modifying a phrase to keep the same general idea but also give a slightly different perspective such as in Luke 14:13 and 21 where I changed “the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame” to “the poor, the disreputable, the brokenhearted and the disillusioned.”after studying the story and its context.

Remember that the way a text is formatted, and which words are used, are a function of what you consider the most important thing (MIT). The words, formatting, and emphasis may change for a future telling, especially if a different MIT is chosen. They may also change over time as you change.

For some, the way the text is formatted helps the teller know where to pause, for example. Verbal threads and patterns which give cadence to the story can be marked or highlighted, as can important words or phrases.

Certain words in a text can be marked to help give expression and action to the telling. One may choose to actively nod their head, rather than say “Someone nodded their head,” for instance. The same goes for adjectives and adverbs. One may choose to say “he said ...” and actually say the subsequent phrase quickly, rather than say “he said quickly” and then the actual phrase. For this reason it may help to mark them in the original narrative, so you know later what you did and where it came from. Color can be used to mark text if it is helpful, using pen or colored pencils or highlighters to differentiate different topics. If, under some circumstances, you leave out certain non-critical parts of the story because of lack of time, audience age or demographic, etc., those omissions can easily be noted on your written narrative page.

The page itself can be formatted in different ways. I have found it useful at times to use only the left half of the page for the text, leaving the right half blank. The blank half can be used for story boarding, rebus or drawings that help you learn the story or it could be used for performance notes. When practicing the page can be folded in half, hiding the words, yet making them easily available if needed. Usually, I make mine in a larger than normal type, like a 14 point. Then the text can be seen at a glance if it is laid down somewhere so I can freely move when practicing. When printing, I do not print on both the front and back of the page so the print of the other page can’t be seen. This also can make it easier to flip through. (See examples on pages 25-26 and 29-30)

Possible ways to mark up and use your written narrative to aid you in re-animating the words:

- ~ Include the original text for reference
- ~ Significant changes made in transferring from written to oral and why
- ~ Story divided into segments or episodes with memory-triggering titles
- ~ Formatting the words to highlight structure, cadence, pauses etc.
- ~ Noting cautions and things to leave out of the story for this telling
- ~ Marking verbal threads, patterns
- ~ Marking verbs/action words
- ~ Marking key adjectives or adverbs/descriptive words
- ~ Marking words to emphasize or stress when telling
- ~ Noting or marking movements or gestures a character makes
- ~ Noting the emotions

Accompanying Media

Knowing what you combined with a story and where you found it can prevent a lot of headaches in the future!

If you choose to tell a story combined with any type of media, that information, including where to find the original source, should be documented with the story. Source information is important if you need to relocate an item, give credit, or know in what capacity you might be able to use a particular media. Songs, video and pictures can enhance the message and emotions present in the telling of a story so it is important to remember what was done and where it came from and possibly why.

Visual reminders like illustrations, storyboard, rebus, and pictographs

Keeping the drawings done to help us learn a story may not win you an art contest, but will aid with recall.

When learning a story, some benefit from creating a storyboard, or drawing out the story in some manner, or providing some sort of visual representation of the story. These images can serve as reminders of what you may have done when you learned the story. Sometimes included in these drawings are reminders of a special phrase or gesture that was utilized.

Outline, story analysis, maps and research notes

Not enough space on the form? Include as an attachment such as a map to help you picture the details.

If the story is a longer one, an outline or summary or story analysis may be longer than will fit on the Story Documentation form and may need to become an attachment. Depending on the story and need for exactness of words, an outline with a few key words or special phrases noted may be enough to help you recall the story for telling. Biblical stories may require more exactness of text and so may need to have a formatted text documented.

Diagram of character placement and/or movements

It's easy to mix up the where of a character when telling. Use a movement map to help keep from stepping on the wrong character.

The amount of movement a teller can employ while performing a story is quite dependent on the space provided and the circumstances of the telling. A stage in a theater as part of a concert will be different than a story told on Sunday morning from the pulpit or one told to a few friends seated at a table. But, for example, when I retell Jonah, it's helpful for me to remember later on in the story that, earlier, I placed the

boat and Tarnish to my left, Nineveh to my right and God slightly up and right of center; these placements probably won't change, regardless of the size or circumstances of the place I'm telling. See an example of a movement map on page 40.

But I will only have those placements ingrained in my muscle memory if I've been consistent with them while practicing. This is where having a visual diagram can be very helpful, not just in the learning of the story, but in the recall of it later during a telling. It's difficult to aid the audience in seeing the story if I don't first see it clearly in my own mind.

Recordings, Video or Audio

Have a video or audio recording? A great way to know what you really did in the heat of the moment. Useful for both memory and review for improvement.

While reviewing the stories I had done for my basic level of the Academy of Biblical Storytelling, it was quite helpful to watch the video that had been done of my story concert. Be sure to record somewhere where the file can be found.

Documentation Checklist

For ease of reference

Reference, translation, source:

- biblical reference including main translation used
- source if non-Biblical, including if it is a personal story
- source of any additional material used
- permissions granted
- where any additional information is filed, like permissions and original copies

Title:

- title or brief summary of the story (often connected with the TBI and/or MIT)

TBI and MIT

- TBI- theological big idea, what is God revealing about himself
- MIT- the most important thing or main idea in the story as you tell it.
- why this MIT was chosen

Companion or Similar Stories:

- stories told in conjunction with your chosen story
- similar stories that could be told with your chosen story
- other stories that shed light on this story, whether or not performed at the same time, or ever

Words:

- key words and phrases including repeated ones (verbal threads)
- words that stand out to you and why
- word meanings and/or word pronunciations
- word variations between different translations and versions
- name variations of people, places or things

Connections:

- connections to the story, including questions that could be used to help others connect and relate

Historical context:

- where, when, (time period, season of year), why, and to whom the event originally happened
- where, when, (time period, season of year), why, and to whom the story was originally told
- why the story mattered at the time and hearers expectations
- possible original impact
- what was happening in their part of the world at the time

Research Notes:

- commentary notes
- story background
- geographical context
- cultural notes
- historical notes

Audience Notes:

- date and location told
- audience demographics
- audience responses
- why chosen for this audience

Story Analysis:

- type of story, story genre
- concrete story analysis such as characters, setting, time frame , events, problem, resolutions
- the who, what, when, where, why, how
- outline of the story
- abstract story analysis such as characters motivation and emotions if specified.
- gestures the people in the story make
- emotions characters might have given the historical and cultural context
- themes, symbols, types
- metaphor analysis
- why relevant today and it's application
- point of view: who are you and who are the audience?

Don't know or Understand:

- what you don't understand or know about the story and/or telling

Special Considerations and Cautions:

- critical or special moments in the story
- cautions and considerations in telling
- type of audience for the story

Personal:

- Why did I chose this story to learn? *[Why might we choose this story to learn/study?]*
- Why do I feel this story is important to me today? *[How is this story important to you today?]*
- My likes and dislikes about the story/characters/events. *[What did you like about the story? What did you not like? What character did you like/not like or identify with and why?]*
- What jumps out for me? *[What grabs you or most gets your attention about this story?]*
- What questions do I have about the story? *[What questions does this story raise for you?]*
- How am I challenged by this story? *[How does this story challenge you?]*
- What have I learned about God by studying this story? *[What can we learn about God from this story?]*
- What have I learned about others by studying this story? *[What can we learn about others from this story?]*
- What have I learned about myself by studying this story? *[What can you learn about yourself from this story?]*
- What have I learned from presenting this story to others? *[Have you told or in some way shared this story with others? If so, what did you learn or experience?]*
- Has this story led me to make any changes in my life? *[What is our response to this story in our lives? What might we do differently?]*
- What personal connections have I made with this story? *[In what ways have you experienced this story in your life? Did it evoke any particular memories for you?]*

Other:

- attachments or other files associated with the story and/or telling and where they are filed
- continuation of other sections
- anything not covered elsewhere which the teller considers important

Attachment Checklist

Written Narrative

- include the original text for reference
- significant changes made in transferring from written to oral and why
- story divided into segments or episodes with memory-triggering titles
- formatting the words to highlight structure, cadence, pauses etc.
- noting cautions and things to leave out of the story for this telling
- marking verbal threads, patterns
- marking verbs/action words
- marking key adjectives or adverbs/descriptive words
- marking words to emphasize or stress when telling
- noting or marking movements or gestures a character makes
- noting the emotions expressed

Accompanying Media

- source information
- storage location
- why chosen

Visual reminders like illustrations, storyboard, rebus, and pictographs

Outline, story analysis and research notes

Geography notes and maps

Diagram of character placement and/or movements

Recordings, Video or Audio

Example 1

Luke 14:15-24



*“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters;
and you who have no money, come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.
Why spend money on what is not bread,
and your labor on what does not satisfy?
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and you will delight in the richest of fare.
Isaiah 55:1-2*

Luke 14:15-24

The Parable of the Great Banquet

And someone at the table with Jesus said,
“Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast
in the kingdom of God.”

And so Jesus told him this story: “There was
a man who prepared a great banquet and
sent out invitations to many guests. And
then, as was the custom, when the banquet
was ready, said to his servant,” Go and tell
those who have been invited, ‘The banquet
is now ready, come.’

The servant went out and did as the master
had ordered.

“But they, all alike, began to make excuses.
The first said, ‘I’ve... I’ve...um... I’ve just
bought some land, and I need to go look at
it.

Please, Please excuse me. I can’t come’

“Another said, ‘I have just bought five pairs
of oxen, five pairs, and I must...I must go
see how they pull.

Please, please excuse me. I can’t come.’

“Still another said, ‘I just got married, ha,
ha, ha, I can’t come.’

And so “The servant went back and reported these things to his master. Then the master became angry and ordered his servant, ‘Go, go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and invite the poor, the disreputable, the brokenhearted and the disillusioned.’
(crippled, blind and lame was original)

And the servant went and did as his master had ordered. When he returned he said to his master, “Sir, what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.”

Then the master told his servant, ‘Go, go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, for my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those who rejected my invitation will get a taste of my banquet.’”

MIT -You are invited. Will you come?

<p>Biblical Reference, Translation, Source Luke 14:15-24 NIV</p>	<p>Title Invited to a Banquet; Parable of the great Banquet</p>
<p>TBI and MIT MIT: You're invited, will you come? TBI: God invites us to come join him.</p>	<p>Historical Context - time period, location told and written, author, original audience Told by Jesus at a meal at a pharisee's house - This one was in response to a guests comment about being blessed to eat at the feast in the kingdom of God.</p>
<p>Companion or Similar Stories Part of a set of dinner stories in Luke 14: Also in Mt 22:2-14 v12-14 have same set of invited.</p>	<p>Research Notes What meaning did poor, crippled, blind, lame have in that time? They were not respectable, sometimes considered to have sinned badly for such problems to befall them. Outcasts of society. Invitations would go out saying a feast was going to happen and one would accept or decline. Then, when it was ready a servant would be sent around to let them know its time. The first set that were invited most likely would have accepted the first invitation. The others would have been more spur of the moment. Married men were exempt from military service for one year - but not to go to a feast was an excuse.</p>
<p>Words - meanings, pronoun, key, threads, theme, etc Crippled - blind - lame replace with disrespected - broken hearted - disillusioned to keep same idea (Keep poor)</p>	<p>Tellings - Audience Notes 11/18/18 Nashville UCC - pre Thanks giving breakfast - mixed 11/25/18 Basore - ABS concert - Dinner w/ Jesus - Adults S.S. 11/22/18 Family Thanksgiving 11/28/18 Montgomery co. jail - Dinner w/ Jesus concert - Adult women</p>
<p>Connections Special invitations; Feasts, having or going to one; cooking for a crowd; invitation turned down you wish you'd accepted; showing love to the poor, disrespected, broken hearted and disillusioned; excuses.</p>	

Story

Story Analysis:

- Man - prepares banquet - sends servant out.
- angry at excuses - rejections - invites others - wants a full house - invites more.
- Those invited
 - first set - make excuses
 - second set - town
 - third set - backroads/country lanes.only 2nd & 3rd set come
- invites those who probably wouldn't be invited to feasts
- note progression - town → backroads
- servant - goes and invites, relays messages.

Final sentence should be chilling - Who will not be at the feast in the Kingdom?

What I Don't Know or Understand:

- Why did those who made excuses really decline after accepting the 1st invite?
- Why did the master desire a full house - even to inviting what I assume were strangers?

Special Considerations and Cautions:

Documentation

back

My Personal Experience:

The desire of the master to have a full house stands out. He went to extra effort to invite those in an ever widening distant circle.

I choose this for my concert because I've always liked Luke 14 and all the stories Jesus tells at the dinner to a variety of guests. The chapter influenced my Theme, "Dinner with Jesus".

My birthday party, here on the island where I live, was attended by a variety of people. Some grew up in church, some have sorted pasts and would fit those invited.

Need to ask myself - who am I choosing to share Jesus and his love with?
who am I inviting to my table?

Other:

Attachments: Formatted Story
Story marked with emotions/motions.
Suggested song.

Luke 14:15-24

The Parable of the Great Banquet

And someone at the table with Jesus said, "Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."

And so Jesus told him this story: "There was a man who prepared a great banquet and sent out invitations to many guests. And then, as was the custom, when the banquet was ready, said to his servant," Go and tell those who have been invited, 'The banquet is now ready, come.' [smile, air of expectation]

The servant went out and did as the master had ordered.

"But they, [all alike, ^{emphasis}] began to make excuses. [Shake head no, pause at []]

The first said, 'I've... I've...um... I've just bought some land, and I need to go look at it.

Please, Please excuse me. I can't come' [thinking, then like brushing someone off]

"Another said, 'I have just bought five pairs of oxen, five pairs, and I must...I must go see how they pull.

Please, please excuse me. I can't come.' [proud and excited, hand open, palm out, 5 fingers up. Then, an I can't be bothered look]

"Still another said, 'I just got married, ha, ha, ha, I can't come.'

[Laugh, trace a shapely figure, shake head]

And so "The servant went back and reported these things to his master. Then the master became angry

and ordered his servant, 'Go, go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and invite [shake fist]

the poor, [hands cupped together in front]

the disreputable, [look to one side, cover side of face towards listeners with one hand]

the brokenhearted [hand over heart]

and the disillusioned.' [close eyes, pass hand over eyes palm to face]

(crippled, blind and lame was original)

[Pause after each group]

And the servant went and did as his master had ordered. When he returned he said to his master, "Sir, what you ordered has been done, but there is still room."

[Motion to listeners]

Then the master told his servant, 'Go, go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, for my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those who rejected my invitation will get a taste of my banquet.'

[Slowly, with sadness, shaking head (about to cry)]

[With emphasis]

MIT - You are invited. Will you come?

Luke 14:15-24

The Parable of the Great Banquet

Attachments

Accompanying Media

A great song for accompanying is “Come to the Table” by the Sidewalk Prophets. The video could be shown while telling the story with sound off and then played again with the song. In the video various people receive a written invitation in an envelope to “come to the table”. In the lyrics a variety of people are also invited.

For : all audiences music and lyrics

Link: Audio <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NP940GV5Pas>

Video with lyrics: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXXxLwxfo0U>

Lyrics: <http://www.songlyrics.com/sidewalk-prophets/come-to-the-table-lyrics/>

Chorus: He said come to the table

 Come join the sinners who have been redeemed

 Take your place beside the Savior

 Sit down and be set free

 Come to the table

Example 2

Jonah



*“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”
Mark 1:17*

Chapter 1 Run (from a sovereign God)

The Lord told Jonah, son of Amittai, “go and cry out
 against that great city of Nineveh
 because their wickedness has come up before me.”
 But Jonah, Jonah went down to Joppa,
 hoping to escape from the presence of the Lord.
 There he found a ship headed for Tarshish,
 (the opposite direction from Nineveh)
 He paid the fare, and went on board, down into the ship.
 He joined those going to Tarshish,
 thinking he could flee from the presence of the Lord.

The Lord hurled a great wind toward the sea
 and a violent storm arose, the ship threatened to break up.
 The sailors were afraid,
 each one cried out to his own god,
 and they tossed the cargo overboard.
 But Jonah, Jonah meanwhile had gone below deck
 laid down and was fast asleep.
 The Captain came to Jonah and said,
 “How can you sleep at a time like this?
 Get up! call on your god,
 maybe your God will take notice so we will not die.”

Then the sailors said to each other, “Let’s cast lots
 to find out who is responsible for this trouble. “
 and...the...lot...fell...to...Jonah.

So the sailors questioned Jonah,

“Who is to blame for this disaster?
 What kind of work do you do?
 Where do you come from?
 What is your country?
 And who are your people?”

And Jonah, Jonah answered,
 “I am a Hebrew
 I worship the Lord, the God of heaven
 The one who made the sea and who made the dry land.”

The sailors were terrified by Jonah’s response and asked,
 “What have you done?”
 Now, Jonah, Jonah had already told them
 that he was running away from the presence
 of the Lord.

And the Lord, the Lord caused the sea to become rougher and rougher.

So the sailors asked Jonah,
 “What should we do to you so the sea will become calm?”
And Jonah, Jonah replied, “Pick me up and throw me overboard
 into the sea,
 and it will become calm.
 I know it is my fault this storm has come upon you.”
The sailors rowed hard trying to try to return to land,
 but they could not.

God caused the sea to become even wilder and more violent.

Then the sailors cried out to the Lord, (Jonah’s God)
 “Please don’t let us die for taking this man’s life
 don’t hold us accountable for an innocent man’s death
 you, O Lord, have done as you pleased.”
and then, the sailors picked up Jonah and threw him overboard
The sea stopped it’s raging.
The sea grew calm.
The sailors stood in awe of the Lord,
 they offered a sacrifice and made vows.

And the Lord, the Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah,
 and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Chapter 2 Repent (to a sovereign God)

And Jonah, Jonah after three days and nights,
 prayed to the sovereign Lord his God
 from the belly of the fish Jonah prayed.
“I called to the Lord out of my distress
 and he answered me,
 from deep in the realm of the dead I called for help
 and you listened.

God you hurled me into the depths, into the heart of the sea .
 Currents swirled around me,
 waves and breakers swept over me.
I said I have been banished from the Lord’s sight
 yet I will look again towards his temple.
 The engulfing waters threatened me,
 the deep surrounded me,
 seaweed wrapped around head,
 to the roots of the mountains I sank down,
 the earth beneath barred me in forever.

Yet, Lord, you brought my life up from the pit,
 when my life was ebbing away,
 I remembered you Lord.
 My prayer rose to you into your holy temple.

Those who cling to worthless idols
turn away from God's love and mercy for them.
I will sacrifice to you with shouts of grateful praise
What I have vowed I will make good.
Salvation comes from the Lord."

Then the Lord, the Lord commanded the fish and it vomited Jonah onto dry land

Chapter 3 **Obey** (a sovereign God)

The Lord told Jonah a second time go to Nineveh
to proclaim the message he would tell him.
This time, Jonah, Jonah obeyed and went.
Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city.
It took three days to go through it.
On the first day's walk, Jonah began to go through the city
calling out the Lord's message,
"forty more days and then Nineveh will be overthrown
forty more days and then Nineveh will be overthrown
forty more days and then Nineveh will be overthrown."

The people of Nineveh believed God's message,
they proclaimed a fast
and all of them from greatest to least put on sackcloth
as a sign of mourning for the things they had done.

When the word of the Lord reached the king of Nineveh,
he rose from his throne and took off his royal robes,
he put on sackcloth and sat down in the dust,
Then he issued a proclamation in Nineveh,
a royal decree of the king and his nobles:
no person, no animal, no herd and no flock is to taste anything,
do not let them eat or drink,
let people and animals be covered in sackcloth,
everyone is to urgently call on God,
everyone should give up their evil ways and their violence.

Who knows?

Maybe...

God may yet relent and with compassion
turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish.

When the Lord saw what the people of Nineveh did,
how they turned from their evil ways,
he had compassion
and the Lord, the Lord relented
and did not bring on Nineveh the destruction he had declared.

Chapter 4 Rights (of a sovereign God)

Now Jonah, Jonah was greatly displeased with all of this, for it all seemed very wrong to him,
and he became angry,
so prayed to the Lord saying,
“isn’t this what I said Lord when I was still at home?
that’s what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish.
Because, I know that you are
are a gracious and compassionate God
I know that you are
slow to anger.
I know that you are
abounding in mercy and love
and I know that you are
a God who relents from sending disaster.
Now O Lord take away my life
for it is better for me to die than to live.”

And the Lord? The Lord asked Jonah
Is it right for you to be angry?

So Jonah, Jonah went out and sat down at a place east of the city.
There he made himself a shelter and sat in its shade.
Then he waited to see what would happen to the city.

Now the Lord grew up a leafy plant over Jonah,
to give shade for his head and ease his discomfort.
And Jonah, Jonah was very happy about the plant.
But, at dawn the next day, God provided a worm
which attacked the plant so it withered.
And when the sun had risen, God provided a scorching east wind.
The sun blazed on Jonah’s head and so he grew faint.
And Jonah, Jonah wished he was dead and said to the Lord,
“ It would be better for me to die than to live”

And the Lord, the Lord replied
“Is it right for you to be angry about the loss of the plant?”
Jonah replied, “It is and I’m so angry I wish I were dead.”

But the Lord, the Lord said to Jonah,
“You have been concerned about this plant,
though you did not tend it or make it grow.
It sprang up overnight and it died overnight.
And should I not have compassion on the great city of Nineveh? In which there are
more than 120,000 people, the young children,
who do not know their left hand from their right,
and also many innocent animals?”

Story Documentation

front

<p>Biblical Reference, Translation, Source</p> <p>Jonah (1-4) all NIV.</p>	<p>Title</p> <p>Jonah's Story</p>
<p>TBI and MIT</p> <p>MIT: God is sovereign secondary: Cry out to God.</p> <p>TBI: God's salvation and loving mercy.</p>	<p>Historical Context - time period, location told and written, author, original audience unknown - author</p> <p>Jonah was a prophet to N. Kingdom 793-753 B.C. while Sereboam was King. Book was probably written soon after.</p> <p>N. Kingdom and Ninevah were arch enemies. Ninevah was capital of Assyria and was an evil violent place.</p>
<p>Companion or Similar Stories</p> <p>Jonah is mentioned in 2 Ki 14:25 Story foreshadows Christ: Mt 12:40; 16:4 and Luke 11:29-30</p>	<p>Research Notes</p> <p>Ninevah was a large, violent and cruel city over 500 miles from where Jonah lived [at the hepher]. N. Kingdom fell to Assyria in 722-721 B.C. - it was destroyed in 612 B.C.</p> <p>Jonah in 1:9 describes for the sailors a high deity - one who made both the sea and dry land - this would have frightened them as their deities were for one or the other.</p> <p>Fasting - putting on sackcloth and sitting in dust are signs of humility (humbling) and repentance.</p> <p>What were some of Ninevah's evil ways? - Na 1:11, 2:12-13 Na 3:1, 4, 16, 19.</p> <p>What motivated Jonah to run? see 4:2</p> <p>Some see this story as a parable or allegory with Jonah representing Israel in the midst of pagans (sailors) calling on their false gods in the midst of the Lord's judgement (storm) + showing Israel's unwillingness to share her favored relationship.</p>
<p>Words - meanings, pronoun, key, threads, theme, etc</p> <p>Nineveh - [NIN eh vuh]</p> <p>- Jonah's disobedience - obedience</p> <p>- Jonah's continued anger.</p>	<p>Tellings - Audience Notes</p> <p>12/8/19 Part of MAB's concert - Centerville Grace - mixed</p>
<p>Connections</p> <p>God's call - obeyed or not; compassion for an enemy, Fleeing God.</p> <p>A storm at sea</p> <p>The biggest fish I ever caught (or saw)</p> <p>Plants that die overnight</p> <p>Long journeys with a lot to think about</p> <p>Going someplace you'd rather not.</p>	

Story

Story Analysis:

- see attached outline.

Climax: ① Jonah's salvation comes from the Lord?
and ② God's do you have a right to be angry?

Jonah: disobedient, reluctant, disconnected (after all he's asleep in a storm) reluctant to tell sailors how to calm the storm till asked. It took him 3 days to come around in the fish's belly.
Did he go with a combination of reluctance but also pleasure at the thought of Nineveh's destruction?

4:1 Contrast God's lack of anger at the Ninevites and Jonah's quick and deep anger.

Action goes from Jonah's place (assumed) to Joppa to Med. sea, to fish to vomit to Nineveh to outside Nineveh (Nineveh and Joppa/Tarshish were in opposite directions)

Special Moments: Jonah's salvation comes from the Lord; acknowledging God's love, compassion, gracefulness, mercy and being slow to anger & relenting from sending disaster

What I Don't Know or Understand:

Did Jonah ever come to accept the Lord's compassion for Nineveh [or even understand?]

How would they have cast lots - various theories from drawing sticks or something with pebbles?

Special Considerations and Cautions:

Lots of geography to incorporate - see attached.

Questions in 1:10 Do they carry accusations?

Documentation

back

My Personal Experience:

I chose this story for my concert because it is a story of redemption - Jonah and Nineveh. And a story of many crying out to the Lord (Theme from Ps 107)

We sometimes don't want others to receive the same qualities of God that we have. Jonah's disobedience and Nineveh's evil ways are both sin - with all its implications - in God's eyes.

Sometimes we need to go and show love and God's message with those we would rather not. Are we open to go willingly and with a real desire for them to experience God's mercy?

We see some mighty big fish here on the Amazon!

Also there are a few stories I've read of people swallowed by whales and surviving but with bleached/damaged skin - suppose Jonah may have a reminder of his time in the fish?

Other:

Attachments: Text

: outline

: Movement map

: drawings for storyboard/learning

Jonah - God is Sovereign

Chapter 1 **Run** (from a sovereign God)

- 1:1-16 God told Jonah to go and cry out against Nineveh, but Jonah ran away, hoping to escape from his presence.
- 1:4-6 God is sovereign over nature.
- 1:7- 10 God sees to it that Jonah gets chosen as the one responsible.
- 1:11-12 Jonah acknowledges God's sovereignty over the seas.
- 1:14-16 The sailors acknowledge God's sovereignty.
- 1:16 God in his sovereignty provides a means of salvation for Jonah.

Chapter 2 **Repent** (to a sovereign God)

- 2:1-7 Jonah prayed to the sovereign Lord his God.
- 2:8-9 Jonah praises a sovereign God and recognizes his salvation.
- 2:10 God's grace and mercy.

Chapter 3 **Obey** (a sovereign God)

- 3:1-4 God told Jonah a second time go to Nineveh and he obeyed.
- 3: 5 The people of Nineveh recognized the sovereignty of God.
- 3:6-9 The King of Nineveh recognized the sovereignty of God.
- 3:10 A sovereign God responded and relented of the threatened destruction.

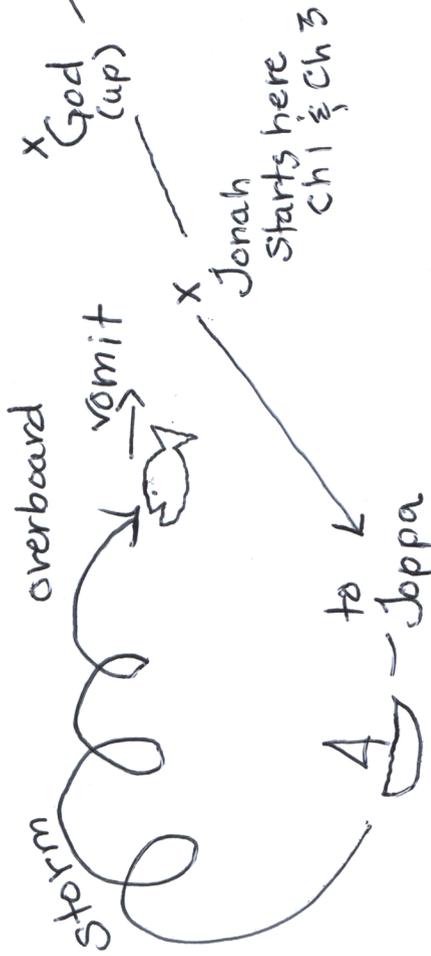
Chapter 4 **Rights** (of a sovereign God)

- 4:1-2 Jonah becomes angry God exercised his sovereignty.
- 4:3 Jonah recognized God's sovereignty over life by asking for death, his grace and mercy.
- 4:4 God questions if Jonah has the right to be angry he exercised his sovereignty.
- 4:5 Jonah ignores the sovereign Lord.
- 4:5-7 God shows his sovereignty to Jonah (again).
- 4:8 Jonah recognized God's sovereignty over life by asking for death (again).
- 4:9 God questions if Jonah has the right to be angry he exercised his sovereignty (again).
- 4:9 Jonah recognized God's sovereignty over life by asking for death (again).
- 4:10-11 The sovereign Lord questions Jonah why he should not have concern and compassion for those he is sovereign over.

MIT God is sovereign

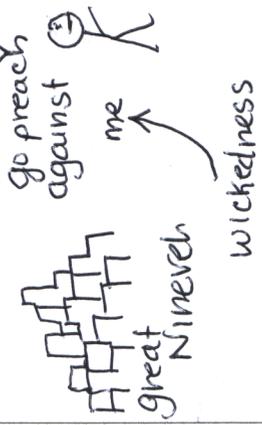
secondary IT Cry out to God

front



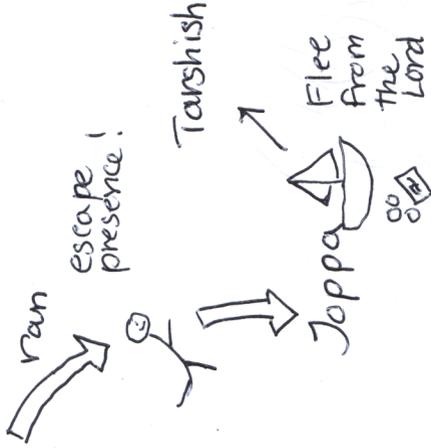
Movement Map Jonah

Word of the Lord



Jonah, son of Amittai

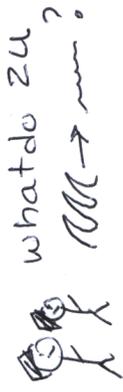
Jonah 1



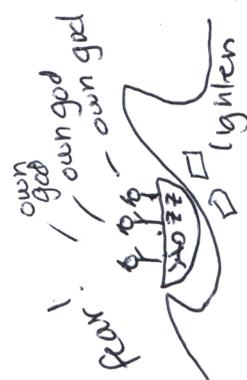
ah! terrified!



Q - what have you done? knew - already told Lord => ?



hurled Great wind



Jonah: Z's

captain: z's? your god perish

sailors: cast lots, who's responsible

Hebrew God made RCC + 50's who who where what who

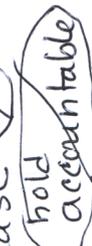
answer Jonah

land



taking & life → innocent & death → done as u pleased

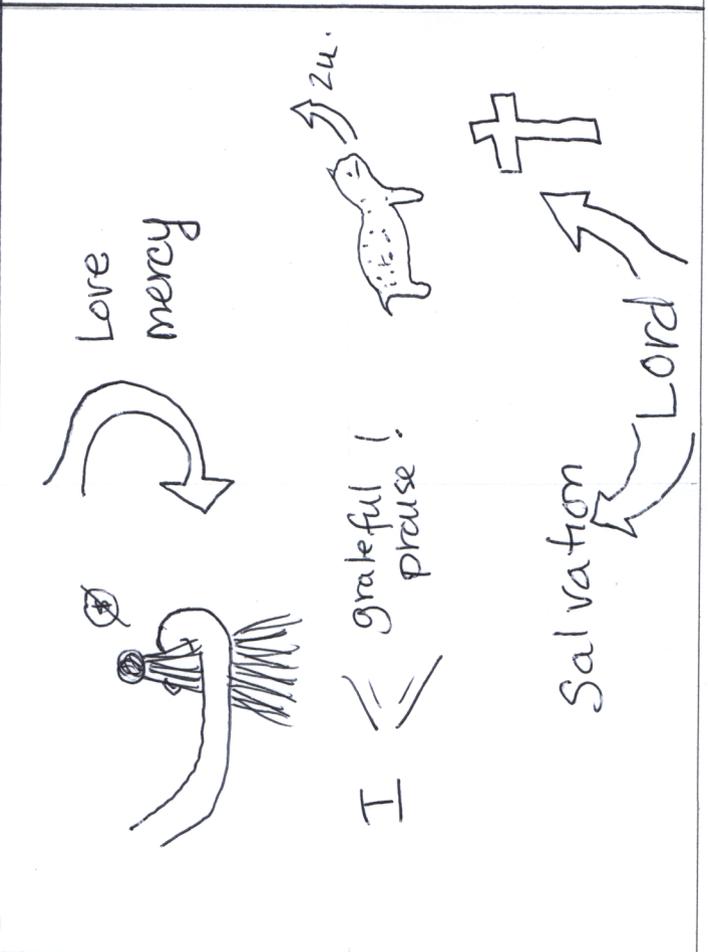
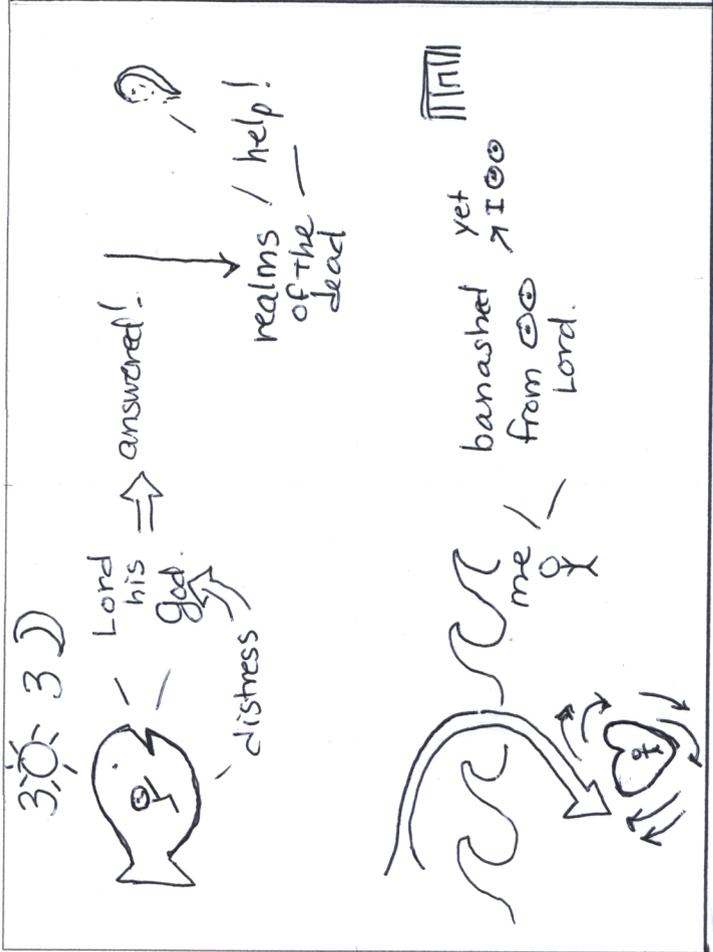
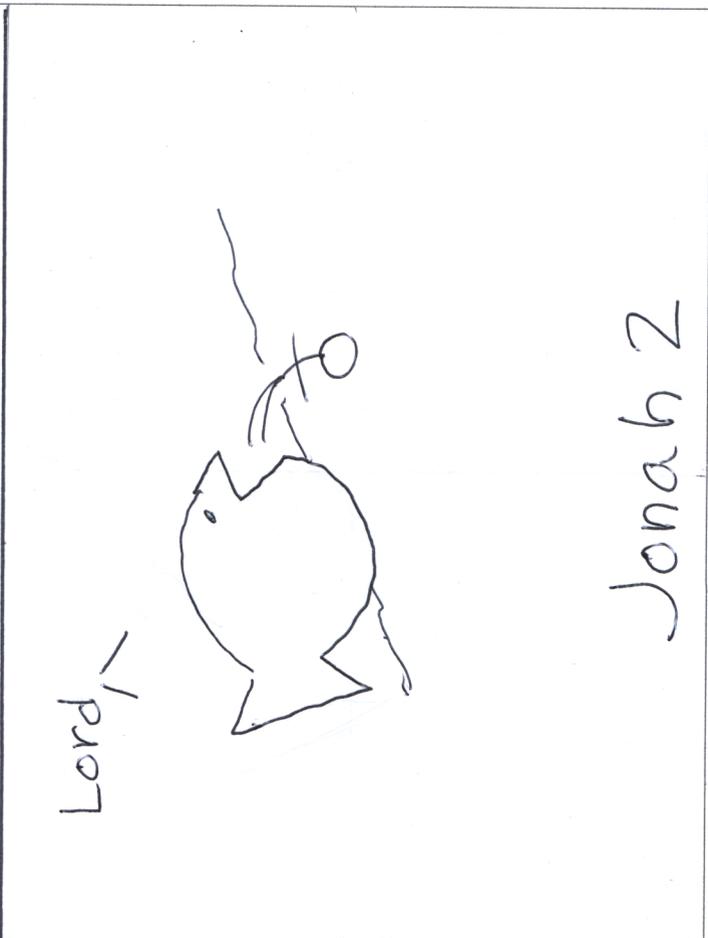
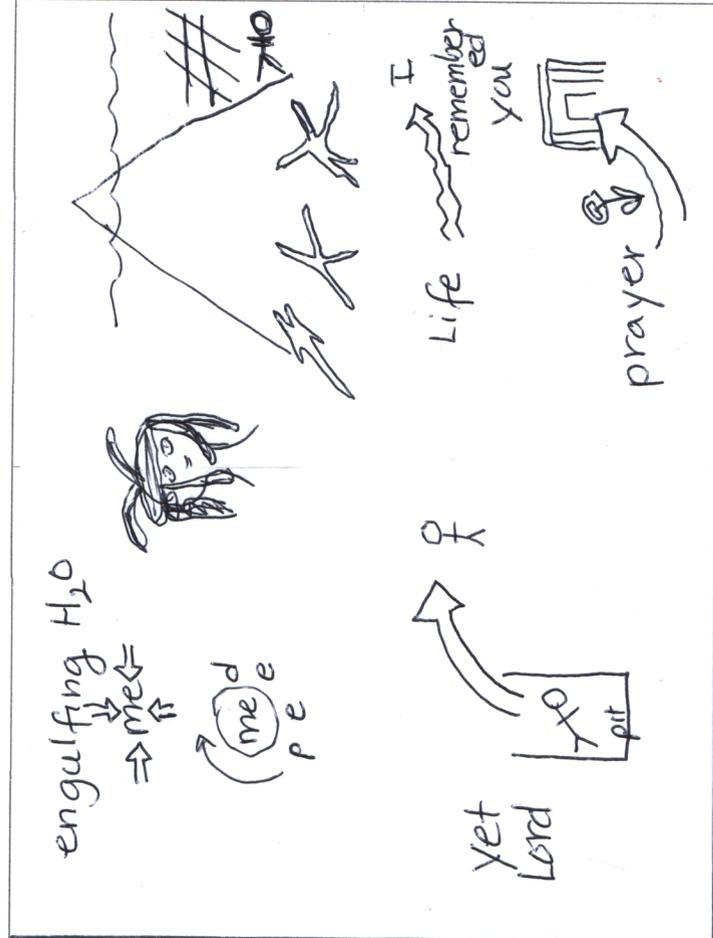
Lord



fear! awe!



3:00-3:30



displeased
 2 people → very wrong → angry!
 Lord ↑ prayed

Isn't this Tarshish
 why → Tarshish

I know you are a God who is [- gracious & compassionate slow to anger - abounding in mercy & love - relents from sending disaster]
 Lord ↑ better 4 me 2 die than 2 live
 Life

Jonah 4

Is it right for you to be angry?

→ east
 waited @ @ happen

Lord grew up shade for head! ease discomfort! very happy!

But... attacked withered died
 Scorching E wind
 blazed
 grew faint

① wished he was dead
 Lord.
 better 4 me 2 die than 2 live

Is it right for you to be angry - about the plant?

Lord said
 it is! I'm so angry wish I were dead!
 u R concerned tend make grow
 overnight → overnight.
 + should I not have compassion
 ? > 120,000 & ?
 + also many innocent ?

Annotated Bibliography Of Companion Resources

Books:

Holt, David and Bill Mooney, *More Ready-To-Tell Tales From Around the World*. August House, 2005.

Holt, David and Bill Mooney, *Ready-To-Tell Tales: Sure-Fire Stories From America's Favorite Storytellers*. August House, 2005.

These two books contain a variety of secular stories and each story has a section on telling tips which display a variety of things to consider when deciding what is important enough to document and why.

Lipman, Doug, *Improving Your Storytelling*. August House, 1999.

Chapters 7 and 8 discuss the Most Important Thing (MIT) and how it influences the story as well as how to make and work from an outline based on your MIT.

Livo, Norma J. and Sandra A. Rietz, *Storytelling: Process and Practice*. Libraries Unltd Inc, 1986.

Pages 127 to 149 contain information and an example story on marking paralinguistic elements among them pauses, intonation, emotion, movement, emphasis, voice and also audience participation. Spread throughout the book are also examples of outlining and representing story structure.

Woodward, (Martin) Paula, *30 Days to Tell: A Story-Learning Guide for Biblical Storytelling*, self published, 2015.

This guide is helpful leads you through learning a story and producing the things you might save in documenting your story. It is available through the Network of Biblical Storytellers web site: <https://www.nbsint.org/marketplace/>

Web Sites:

GoTell Communications, <http://gotell.org/>, accessed Novemembr 2019.

The GoTell web site contains a variety of documented stories for learning. Included with each story is the story in episodes, an audio telling, and an audio, video and written commentary and also an illustration.

Don Falkos, <http://blessedbythespokenword.com/>, accessed November 2019.

Story Exploration, <http://blessedbythespokenword.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Story-Exploration.pdf>.

Story Planner, <http://blessedbythespokenword.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Story-Planner.pdf>

Story exploration has questions that can help you explore both the concrete and abstract in a story. Story planner is a chart that can help you define the basics of a story.