

RENEWAL

2011 SOUTHEAST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Creative Storytelling for Kids

PRACTICAL TIPS:

- ❖ Know your audience! You must connect with your audience. You can't do an illustration about teletubbies with 4th grade boys. You can't do an illustration about taking a math test with preschool kiddos. **DON'T TALK DOWN TO KIDS!** Talk on their level.
- ❖ Mix up your presentation methods. Don't always use puppets. Don't always dress as a Bible character. Don't always use flannelgraph. Mix it up and keep it fresh. Watch out for ruts and routines.
- ❖ Use props when appropriate. Household objects can be transformed into almost anything. (ABCs)
- ❖ Have a strong beginning & middle and then ***nail the ending***. Too many teachers start off strong, but don't think through the middle transitions or how to wrap it up. That causes you to ramble and have sloppy transitions. Think about your story in 3 snapshots. Have a plan for how the story is going to end and stick to it. Practice your closing line.
- ❖ Stick to the main point. Don't get lost in a tangent that doesn't have anything to do with your bottom line. Keep hammering that main point throughout the story.
- ❖ Be flexible. If you are losing your audience, change it up. Insert a personal example, change positions. Don't lose them! Stay connected throughout your story...keep the pulse on how your kids are responding. Watch their body language. Are they leaning forward quietly listening? Or are they squirming around? Pay attention to the cues and stay flexible. (In High School, Mr Lipman told personal stories)
- ❖ Think about the unused viewpoint. Try telling Daniel's story from the Lion's viewpoint. What did the sheep think about the Heavenly Hosts filling the sky?
- ❖ Animate an inanimate object. David might have used "Rocky the Rock" or Moses used "Stickwert the Stick". What do you think "Bernie the Burning Bush" thought when he caught fire? They may have an interesting story to tell. (Exodus 3: Moses! Holy Ground. Use the black hat with green leaves stuck to it)
- ❖ Use sensory language to help them visualize the story. The sun was beating down so hot on their backs, the flames were so bright it hurt their eyes, smoke filled the air and they breathed it in, the darkness closed in around them.

BODY LANGUAGE:

- ❖ Storytelling requires movement. Don't get stuck behind a podium. If you are reading, keep your audience engaged by keeping eye contact.

- ❖ Think about levels. Are you always standing as you tell the story? Try crouching down during a serious point, or sitting in a chair. Different posture and levels can communicate a shift in the story.
- ❖ Are you moving with the story? If Paul is walking down Damascus road, take a walk around the room. Is Jesus on the boat, rock back and forth with the waves. Invite the kids to be a part of the action. (Story of Jesus teaching in the boat: Mark 5:1-11)
- ❖ Use your voice! Don't just use one tone of voice for the entire story. Different characters have different voices. Think about how you would read a story to your child. Bible storytelling is the same.
- ❖ Sound effects are fun. Is there are creaking door? How about a knocking at a door. Anybody getting in water? How about thunder? Have the kids help make sound effects to keep them engaged.
- ❖ Use different volume levels in your voice. Whispering is a sure fire way to get kids quiet. They don't want to miss what you are saying! (Calms the storm: Luke 8:22-25)
- ❖ Can you use lighting in your story? If an angel appears, try a bright flashlight. If it is storming, how about some lightning?
- ❖ Interact with the kiddos. Can you use one of them onstage to help move the story along? Use an older kid to be the wall of Jericho and have them fall down when the Israelites yell. (Wall of Jericho)

VIDEO IDEAS

- ❖ Stick people with narrative.
- ❖ Whiteboard drawings.
- ❖ Interviews.
- ❖ Chin people.