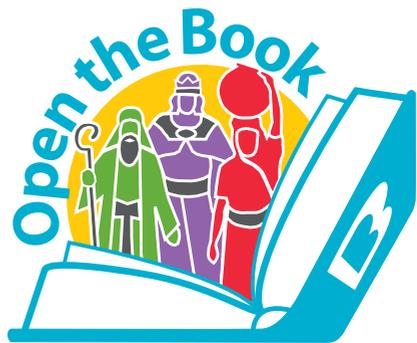




# Handbook 1

A first year of  
Bible storytelling



Bringing the Bible to life for every child  
in every primary school



# Contents

What is Open the Book?

How does Open the Book operate?

Our Aims

Our Code of Practice

Hints and Tips for Storytellers

How to use this Handbook

Year 1 Stories



# What is Open the Book?

**Hello and welcome to Open the Book and welcome to Bible storytelling in primary schools!**

However tempting it may be, please don't skip these introductory pages, even if you have been involved in **Open the Book** before.

**Open the Book** is a project which offers primary school children an opportunity to hear the major stories of the Bible, presented chronologically or thematically, during one school year. It is a free service given to each school by a team of Christians from local churches, who present the stories during Collective Worship. Each presentation takes a maximum of 10 minutes and can be incorporated into a wider school assembly, or can stand alone.

**Open the Book** aligns to the criteria used by OFSTED, ESTYN and SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) when inspecting acts of Collective Worship.

The **Open the Book** project is part of the Bible Society and is made up of a three-year rolling programme with an additional, but optional year of material based on Christian Values, which form part of the criteria for Church school acts of Collective Worship.

In Year 1, all the stories are taken from *The Lion Storyteller Bible* written by Bob Hartman, and give an overview of the Bible from Creation to the Ascension. Years 2 and 3 take a more modular approach, where each Value comprises five stories clustered around a theme. For these years, additional stories are provided by the *Open the Book Bible Storybooks*, to supplement those from *The Lion Storyteller Bible*. This suits weekly and fortnightly visits, or the timing can be more flexibly used – for example, monthly or half-termly.

*NB: Not every story in The Lion Storyteller Bible is used as part of the Open the Book programme.*

The additional but optional Christian Values material provides an Old and a New Testament story for each of the designated Christian Values. This material is called *Christian Values: A biblical approach*. It is important to give



a breadth of Bible storytelling and to keep the balance between Old and New Testament stories. Should your school require more values material on the same value, our website provides a list of possible options from the existing material, which could complement the Old and New Testament stories in *Christian Values: A biblical approach*.

The *Open the Book* materials, i.e. the Handbook and Storybook packs, are available only to registered Storytellers via our website: [openthebook.net](http://openthebook.net).

For further information, help, advice or feedback about the project, please contact:

**Open the Book, Bible Society**

01793 418355

Email: [enquiries@openthebook.net](mailto:enquiries@openthebook.net)

Website: [openthebook.net](http://openthebook.net)

## How does Open the Book operate?

- Each school has a regular team of at least four to seven people drawn from their local church(es). Individual teams are responsible for liaising with their local school regarding day, time, usual customs, security and safeguarding.
- **Open the Book** acts of Collective Worship should be presented regularly – weekly, fortnightly, monthly or even half-termly in some cases where the school's Collective Worship timetable requires the mix of other faiths.
- Before a team can access the **Open the Book** materials or start visiting the school, each team must be registered with **Open the Book** after being safely recruited by their church. These materials and access to the creative ideas, templates to make props, etc., are only available to registered volunteers who have agreed to our Code of Conduct and Code of Practice. (Please see our website [openthebook.net](http://openthebook.net) for details of how to register.)
- The team present scripted stories using a variety of storytelling methods. An **Open the Book** act of Collective Worship begins with a brief scripted introduction to ensure that each story is placed in context. For the Christian Values material, the value is unpacked or explained. The Handbooks give guidance on how to

present the individual stories with eye-catching visual aids and involving the children.

- After the story there is an opportunity for guided quiet reflection. This gives the children time to reflect on some aspect of the story or on something which relates directly to them and their friends. This is followed by a short closing prayer, which the children are invited to make their own by joining in with the 'Amen' at the end. It is very important that the children are not coerced into participating in prayer by the use of phrases such as 'Let us pray' or 'Close your eyes while we pray'.
- Additional advice is available from **Open the Book** to support teams working in a predominantly multi-faith school.
- **Open the Book** is a scripted intervention. All the scripting for the assembly is contained in this Handbook, and in *The Lion Storyteller Bible* (2008 expanded edition), *Storybooks 2* and *3* or *Christian Values: A biblical approach*. Head Teachers value **Open the Book** because they know what has been said and can answer any queries or complaints. Please uphold the integrity of **Open the Book** by sticking to the script. Great care has been taken to ensure that the material can be used in a Christian or multi-faith context. Please resist the temptation to change it. This is covered in training, but, should you need to seek clarification, please contact **Open the Book** via [enquires@openthebook.net](mailto:enquires@openthebook.net).
- For copyright reasons we expect each volunteer Storyteller to have their own copies of *The Lion Storyteller Bible* and the relevant **Open the Book** Storybooks and Handbooks.
- **Open the Book** Storytellers are eligible to apply for an Enhanced DBS check (without a check of the barred list) before attending a school as an **Open the Book** Storyteller. It is the responsibility of the sending church(es) to ensure that Storytellers are safely recruited and the appropriate DBS checks are carried out in accordance with their own church or denominational procedures. The responsibility for this lies with the churches who send them into their local school; it is neither the role nor the responsibility of **Open the Book**.



# Our Aims

- To present the Bible in primary schools in an accessible and enjoyable way.
- To tell the stories in ways which enable the children to engage imaginatively with the text.
- To equip, encourage and enable volunteers from churches to deliver good quality assemblies.
- To assist primary schools in meeting their statutory collective worship obligations.
- To contribute to the children's religious, spiritual and moral education.
- To contribute to the biblical literacy of each new generation.
- To enhance children's understanding of the nation's Christian heritage.
- To encourage links between school and church in a local context.

# Our Code of Practice

All storytellers should agree to ...

- stick to the script and present the story simply, without addition or improvisation, following the guidelines in the **Open the Book** Handbooks.
- allow each story to speak for itself, as a Bible story, not as a sermon.
- liaise closely and sensitively with schools, and be mindful of the educational environment.
- make minimal demands on schools and be aware of being invited visitors.
- show respect and sensitivity to those of other faiths, and to those with none.
- fulfil the relevant safeguarding requirements – i.e. follow the **Open the Book** Safeguarding Policy and the Safeguarding Code of Conduct and any related procedures.
- uphold the copyright of **Open the Book** materials.

Storytellers must be accompanied by members of staff during all assemblies/acts of Collective Worship.

# Hints and Tips for Storytellers

- Remember to open your *Lion Storyteller Bible* when you say the words 'Open the Book'. It is an action which enables children across the country to relate to the project.
- Elastic bands help to keep the pages open at the relevant story and also secure the Handbook (open at the correct page!) to the front or back cover of the book.
- When you and your team are preparing the **Open the Book** story, it's a good idea also to read the original story in the Bible. It will give you vital context and important insight.
- The *Christian Values: A biblical approach* Storybook, written by Bob Hartman, has been designed to sit inside *The Lion Storyteller Bible*.
- It's well worth the effort of making some good quality, high impact props. Forward planning is the key to this! Many churches have capable people who may not like storytelling but who are willing to help in practical ways.
- To benefit from all the great prop ideas, alternative stories, etc., Storytellers will need to log in to the website with their unique registration login.
- Be inspired by other teams and share your experience too. Aim for variety in your presentation.
- Make sure you have a full run-through before you present the story to the children; if you are relaxed and confident, your enthusiasm will come across to the children.
- Ask for volunteers, give instructions and practise words or actions with the children before the Introduction, otherwise the flow is lost and you'll probably have to repeat it.
- When introducing a sound or action for pupil participation, include a clear stop signal in your instructions.
- Speak loudly and confidently, look up and smile – even if your knees are shaking!
- When characters say their own lines, the narrator can sometimes leave out 'he said' or 'she said'. Leave them in if they describe how the words are said: 'he whispered' or 'she shouted angrily'. If God is 'off stage', leave them in too.
- Remember that the reputation of **Open the Book** depends on Storytellers adhering to our Code of Practice. Please respect the fact that the wording in the booklets has been prepared very carefully with today's sensitive educational

environment in mind. However tempting it may be, avoid drawing points from the story or adding your own interpretation beyond those given in the booklets.

- Remember the three Ps – Pray, Prepare, Present.
- Above all – HAVE FUN! If you enjoy communicating, the children will love to listen!



# How to use this Handbook

This Handbook is your essential companion to **Open the Book** storytelling, along with *The Lion Storyteller Bible*.

Please make sure you've read the preceding pages so you're familiar with the Open the Book approach, you're happy to abide by our Code of Practice, and also that you've read through our Hints and Tips for Storytellers for general guidance and advice on preparation and performance.

## **What's different about the first year of Bible storytelling?**

The stories in the first Year of Bible storytelling are a chronological timeline from Creation to Ascension and link to the academic year. We recommend that this programme of storytelling is commenced before October half term. Please remember that except where otherwise indicated, all these stories should be presented in the order shown. This means that what we know as the "Easter" stories will be told at the end of the summer term, completing the sequential series of stories about Jesus' life on earth.

Generally, these stories are pitched more towards Reception and Key Stage 1, although Key Stage 2 will enjoy being part of the stories and benefit lots from hearing them.

The rest of this Handbook provides you with guidance notes to each story. The left hand page contains your 'script' for introducing and concluding the story. All text to be read aloud is in bold. The right hand page tells you what Storytellers are needed, and how best to prepare for the presentation, including ideas to increase the impact of the story as well as additional resources that are available on our website with your unique login as a registered Storyteller.

**Open the Book** is committed to presenting Bible storytelling at its very best and this Handbook has been designed to help all volunteer Storytellers to get the most from the stories themselves, and from the presentation opportunities they have.

# Year 1 Stories

story	title	page	based on
1	In the Beginning	12	based on Genesis 1–2
2	A Sad Day	14	based on Genesis 3
3	A Special Promise	16	based on Genesis 6–9
4	God’s Friend	18	based on Genesis 12,17,18, 21
5	Joseph the Dreamer (A)	20	based on Genesis 37–41
6	Joseph the Ruler (B)	22	based on Genesis 37–41
7	The Secret Baby	24	based on Exodus 1–2
8	The Great Escape	26	based on Exodus 7–14
9	A Long Journey	28	based on Exodus 16–40
10	The Walls Fall Down	30	based on Joshua 6
11	Samuel Hears a Voice	32	based on 1 Samuel 3
12	David the Giant Killer	34	based on 1 Samuel 17
13	The Wise King (C) (D)	36	based on 1 Kings 3
14	Jonah the Groaner	38	based on Jonah
15	Daniel and the Lions	40	based on Daniel 6
16	A Time to Build	42	based on Nehemiah 1–4
17	The Wise Men’s Visit	44	based on Matthew 2
18	The Boy in the Temple	46	based on Luke 2
19	Jesus is Baptised	48	based on Matthew 3
20	Jesus’ Special Friends	50	based on Luke 5
21	Down through the Roof	52	based on Luke 5
22	The Storm on the Lake	54	based on Mark 4
23	The Marvellous Picnic	56	based on Matthew 14
24	The Lost Coin (C)	58	based on Luke 15
25	The Big Spender	60	based on Luke 15
26	Jesus and the Children	62	based on Mark 10
27	Jesus and the Taxman (C)	64	based on Luke 19
28	The Great Parade	66	based on Matthew 21
29	An Important Meal	68	based on Mark 14
30	A Dreadful Day	70	based on John 19
31	A Happy Day	72	based on Luke 24
32	Goodbye At Last!	74	based on Luke 24
(E)	The First Christmas	76	based on Luke 1–2

*All stories are taken from The Lion Storyteller Bible (2008 expanded edition)*

*(A) followed by first page of Joseph the Prisoner*

*(B) preceded by second page of Joseph the Prisoner*

*(C) can be left out if insufficient weeks in school*

*(D) please check with your school before presenting this story*

*(E) can be used in the last week of autumn term*

## INTRODUCTION

*Hold up a Bible. Can anyone tell me what kind of book this is?*

*Allow time for the children to answer. Yes, it's a Bible.*

*You can extend this with a series of different-looking Bibles: "This one is very old, this one is in a different language" or whatever you have managed to find. Hold up The Lion Storyteller Bible.*

And here is another kind of Bible. I like this one because it has pictures in it. The Open the Book storytellers use this one a lot. You may know that the Bible contains many stories, but did you know that these stories link together to form one, long story about God and the people here on earth? Today we're going to hear the very first story in the Bible.

Let's OPEN THE BOOK at the story called 'In The Beginning'.

*Open The Lion Storyteller Bible (2008 expanded edition) and read In the Beginning*

## CONCLUSION

That was a pretty amazing first story – from nothing to all these wonderful things! Which part of the story did you like best? (Invite responses) Next week, we'll be coming back to tell the next part of the story. We'll be finding out what happened to the beautiful world that God made.

## QUIET MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Close your eyes for a moment and think of something beautiful you have seen. It might be the sea, a river, a tree or a flower. It might be a colourful butterfly, a shiny conker or a bright tropical fish.

*Allow time for reflection – silently count to 10 s-l-o-w-l-y.*

## PRAYER INTRODUCTION

Now I'm going to say a prayer and if you want to make it your prayer say "Amen" at the end after me.

## PRAYER

Dear God, thank you for all the beautiful things you have made. Please help us to enjoy them and look after them. Amen.

# Story 1 In the Beginning

## STORYTELLERS NEEDED

**Essential:** Narrator, voice of God.

**Additional:** Adam, Eve (not needed if using banner).

## SUGGESTIONS FOR PRESENTING THE STORY

- This is a fairly short, simple story so don't rush it. Allow the descriptive text to come alive for the children.
- This story can be done in two ways :

1 Use a Creation banner (see below).

2 Involve the children. (If you want to involve the children and this is your first visit to the school, then discuss your plan with the head teacher in advance.)

Divide the children up into four groups to be the 'green growing things', 'the flying things', the splashing things' and 'the walking, hopping things' (don't forget the 'stop' sign). Hide two adults to appear at the end as Adam and Eve.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR VISUAL IMPACT

- Collect a selection of Bibles for the introduction.
- Go for visual impact in this all-important first story. Wave large sheets of coloured fabric for light, sky, water and earth, or paint a sun, a moon and some stars on large cards attached to dowel rods. These can be lifted high as they are mentioned in the story.

It's worth putting your best effort into creating quality visual impact for this story – first impressions count, and will last!

## EXTRA RESOURCES – DOWNLOADABLE FROM WWW.OPENTHEBOOK.NET

- Ideas for developing a basic kit of core costumes and props.
- Inspiration from other teams for making a creation banner.

## MY NOTES

---



---



---



---



---



---



---

## INTRODUCTION

I wonder if you have ever spent a long time making something and then someone else has come along and spoiled it? It makes you feel very disappointed, doesn't it? Do you remember the wonderful world which God made in last week's story?

Well, today's story tells how God's beautiful world was spoiled.

Let's OPEN THE BOOK at the story called 'A Sad Day'.

*Read A Sad Day in The Lion Storyteller Bible (2008 expanded edition)*

## CONCLUSION

Oh dear! That was a sad story. I wonder what will happen in God's world next week?

## QUIET MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

Adam and Eve spoiled God's world because they didn't do as they were told. Close your eyes for a moment and see if you can remember a time when you missed out on something special because you didn't do as you were told.

*Allow time for reflection.*

## PRAYER INTRODUCTION

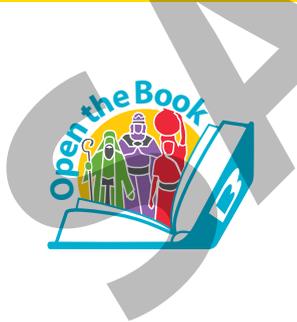
Now I'm going to say a prayer and if you want to make it your prayer say "Amen" at the end after me.

## PRAYER

Dear God, we are sorry that sometimes we do wrong things.

Please help us to know the difference between good and bad and help us to choose what is right. Amen.





Open the Book, Bible Society, Stonehill Green, Westlea, Swindon SN5 7DG  
Tel: 01793 418355  
Email: [enquiries@openthebook.net](mailto:enquiries@openthebook.net)  
Website: [openthebook.net](http://openthebook.net)  
Registration charity 232759

First published in 2008, this revised edition published 2014, reprinted 2016,  
updated 2017

Copyright © The British and Foreign Bible Society 2017

Sponsored by **Sir Halley  
Stewart** Trust

ISBN: 978-0-564-04687-4



9 780564 046874 >