



Photography by Vaughan Ives

## Children love stories – especially Bible stories when they're interactive, engaging and fun.

**'When you act the Bible, it splashes a bit more colour on it. The stories don't seem as boring or black and white.'**

Thomas, Year 6.

That's what Open the Book is all about. Teams of between four and eight storytellers tell Bible stories in primary schools – using drama, props and costumes – to bring the stories to life. Whether it's as simple as a tunic for a child to wear or a large scale boat, the props make all the difference!

Open the Book has thousands of volunteers from local churches, dramatising Bible stories in a programme to provide a daily act of collective worship/assembly to work together and support their local school. There is also the option to use extra Bible stories with a Christian values approach.

## If you're a school teacher

- Open the Book can help your school meet the statutory requirement to hold a daily assembly or collective worship that is 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'.
- This programme is about storytelling, not preaching or evangelising, so children of all faiths – and those with none – can watch and interact with the stories in their own way. The stories feature well-known characters but also include important values like courage, patience and trust.
- Open the Book contributes to children's religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Storytellers sign up to our Code of Practice, which means they stick to the script, and fulfil relevant safeguarding requirements.
- Storytellers are groups of volunteers from local churches who come to the school and who prepare and practise in their own time.

**'Give Open the Book a go. The children enjoy it, and it's a good way of delivering Bible storytelling assemblies.'**

Susan Greensides,  
Headteacher, Manor Park  
Primary School, Knutsford



Photography by Layton Thompson

## If you're part of a church

- Open the Book aims to bring the Bible to life for every child in every primary school. It gives children the opportunity to discover the wonder and wisdom of the Bible for themselves.
- Storytellers are required to be DBS checked and are encouraged to attend training sessions.
- Maybe there are people in your church who are good at crafts or making costumes and could help in this way. Everyone can be involved if they want to participate.
- **You will have a lot of fun!**

### To become a Storyteller you will need:

- Time – around an hour, each session, during term time to present the story in school. Some teams operate a rota system for Storytellers to take turns on different weeks.
- *The Lion Storyteller Bible.*
- Open the Book Handbooks and Storybooks.



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Currently hundreds of thousands of children are hearing Bible stories each week – but many more are not. We have requests from schools which we can't fulfil because there are no local teams.

### Can you help?

If there's not already a team from your church, perhaps you could help set one up? Chat with your church leader.

There are currently over 13,000 volunteer storytellers across the UK going into schools, building relationships with staff and bringing the Bible to life in exciting ways to hundreds of thousands of children each year. They're doing a magnificent job, and we're on the lookout for more. The bigger our Open the Book team, the bigger the impact we can have!

## How it works

Open the Book has over 100 stories to be used in a programme that can run for four consecutive years. In the first year of Bible storytelling, there is a timeline overview of the Bible from Creation to Ascension. Each story comes with a scripted introduction, conclusion, time of reflection and a final prayer.

There is also a storybook and handbook of Christian values that can be used as a fourth year of material (available from March 2017).

Many of the stories come from *The Lion Storyteller Bible*, by Bob Hartman, and others have been specifically written for Open the Book. The stories come with a handbook, which contains direction notes, costume ideas, advice and tips.

Training can be provided, along with regular updated online resources and newsletters.

It's our volunteer Storytellers who make Open the Book such a success. They go into schools, build relationships with staff and bring the Bible to life through drama. Storytellers are part of a team formed from the local church or churches working together.

The stories are carefully scripted and directed so they're easy to present and preparation isn't hard. Teams find and fund their own props and costumes but this can be as simple as a tea towel on the head – and neighbouring teams often share props.

**No one is too old or young to take part!**



**'I love Open the Book and it's such a privilege and joy to take the stories into the schools.'**

Marian Matthews,  
Open the Book team leader at Goldington Green Lower School, Bedford

## Code of Practice

**Storytellers must sign up to our Code of Practice:**

- Stick to the script and present the story, 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 relevant safeguarding requirements.
- Uphold the copyright of Open the Book material.

**'...These are things we learned from our ancestors, and we will tell them to the next generation...'**

Psalm 78.1-8 (CEV)

## Contact

Go to [openthebook.net](http://openthebook.net) for more information and guidance.

Storytellers, once registered, can access further ideas and information as well as order the materials and products.

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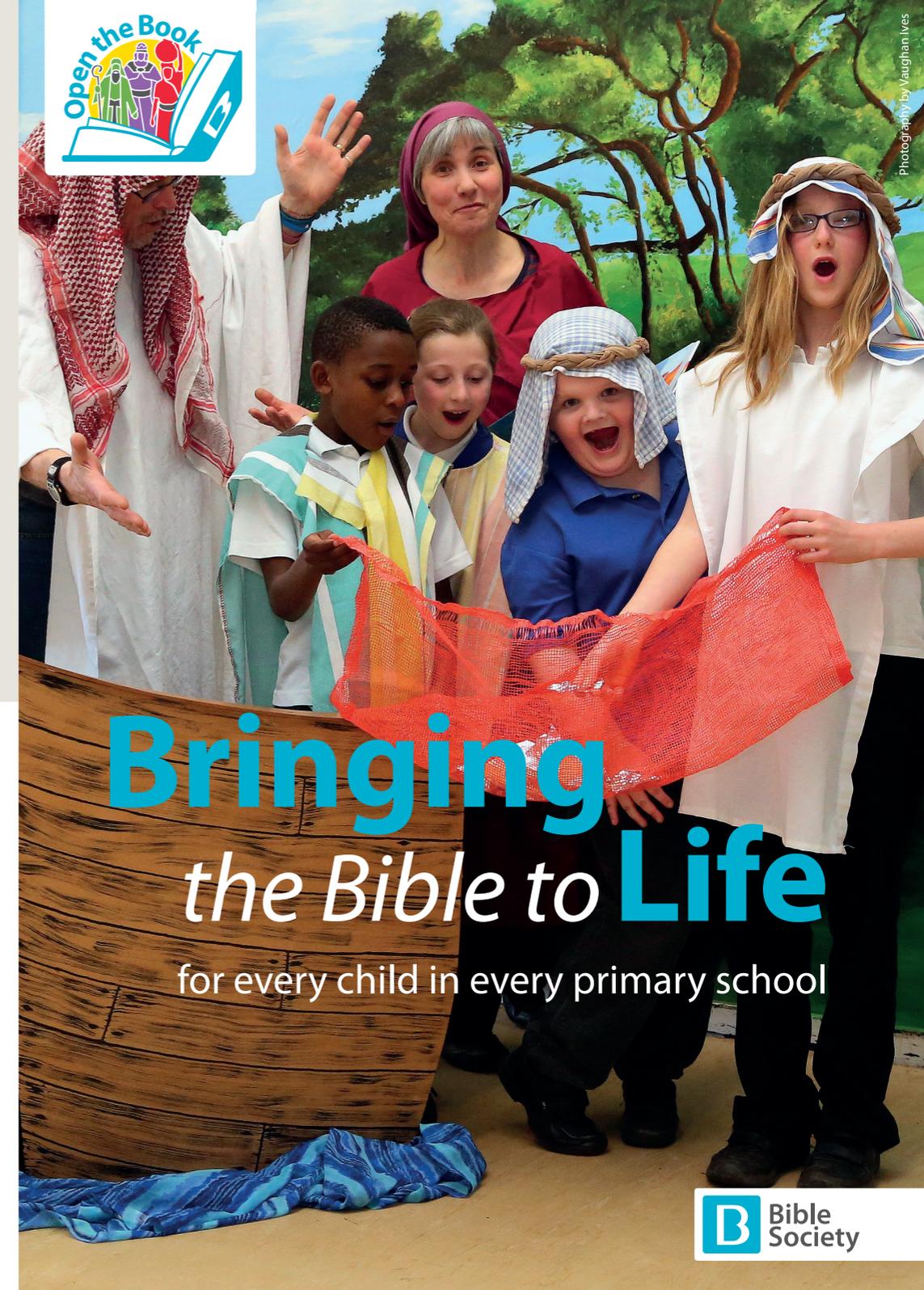
Open the Book is part of Bible Society.

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# Bringing the Bible to Life

for every child in every primary school