

The Story

Issues in Stories

- Our lessons are based on issue because real life has issues.
- We use stories that help our children/teens figure out how to make their way in life, move into life with grounding principles are their foundation. This gives them insight into how to step into life in a more powerful way.
- The stories help us find common ground for our issues.
- The tension in the story is about real life.
- Use the Bible to illustrate modern issues from our daily lives.
- The stories are our mythology and contain universal wisdom.
- You are every character in the story.

Story Details

- What story, movie passage or experiential activity are you using to introduce the issue or theme and help the children create a connection to it? Any lesson connects better when the participants can have a common experience or see themselves in the story. Then, the discussion is more apt to stay focused on what they have shared together.

- **Rive Collins describes stories in this way:**

“Stories and storytelling lie at the heart of the human experience. Stories have been passed down from generation to generation, both in spoken and written word, and continue to help form and shape who we are.

Stories help us reflect on the past, explain our present, and imagine our future. Sewn across time, story-threads bind individuals to families and families to the world, enabling us to experience healing in our lives and envision a beautiful and just world.

Stories have the power to enrich our lives, shape the way we perceive and experience the world, and reveal the wonders of the human spirit.

Stories and storytelling can be powerful tools in healing, building and nurturing relationships, as well as in planting seeds of hope and light for the future.”

- Selecting the Story

~ Unity Worldwide Ministries, Youth and Family Ministry Guide

- After identifying the issue, look for a story that illustrates the issue.
- Consider which story best presents the issue on an age-appropriate level.
- Occasionally you may want to consider a different type of story experience, such as a 3 to
 - minute video clip that illustrates the issue, or an experiential activity that dramatizes the issue.
- The story, video clip, experiential activity or object lesson gives everyone a common experience and a base for discussion.

- Some stories have several points so you will want to be clear on the direction you wish to go. In a small program, a story that can be discussed on several levels works well because everyone can hear the story together and then break into small groups for an age-appropriate discussion and creative experience. You will probably need to word questions differently for each age.
- **We Use Stories Because Our Life is a Story**
 - Our lives are made up of stories. Some of us easily tell our stories and others hold them close, revealing little. But no matter how we choose to share them, the stories we tell help us to make sense of our world.
 - Sometimes our life experiences can feel so difficult that our imaginations begin to shut down. We allow fear to be our guiding force and we can no longer envision ourselves any place other than where we currently appear to be. Change seems impossible.
 - A story, as metaphor, provides us with a safe haven through which we “come to ourselves.” By speaking in terms of the symbols, characters and events of the story, we can teach ourselves about the issue without ever seeming to discuss the “topic.”
 - Unlocking our imagination is one of the essential keys to regaining access to our amazing ability to create the life of our dreams. Join us as we explore the power of story and the art of imagination.