

RESPOND

Session 4: Bible drama workshop – Patience

Aims and Objectives

Pupils dramatise the bible story using scripture as a starting point and previous learning related to the linked virtue, through a series of drama exercises and script writing. This creative process helps pupils to deepen their enquiry and personal reflection and to communicate their learning to others about what Jesus and his followers can teach about the virtue of Patience.

Patience is described in the Bible as one of nine fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5) The fruits of the spirit in their biblical context are Christ-like qualities aspired to by followers of Jesus, and enabled by faith in Jesus as a personal Saviour and the transforming work of the Holy spirit on a believer's character and life.

Link to Virtues Assembly preparation

The script based on the biblical text and linked virtues learning with the resulting short drama, are designed to be used in the Virtues assembly along with outcomes from previous learning activities.

Resources:

- Print out of the Bible text <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2%3A22-40&version=ICB> (enough for pupils working in pairs)
- Video clip from The Life of Christ – Simeon and Anna downloadable on the website
- Script excerpt of the scene from The Life of Christ - Wintershall Act 1 scene 4
- St Luke 2:22-40 script outline
- Character list for the scene
- Links to additional information – history and theology

Suggested location: school hall or outdoors if weather is favourable

Setting up the workshop space

Seat pupils in a horseshoe shape to allow a stage area at the open end (with plenty of additional floor space to allow group work) and explain to pupils that they are being set a challenge which is quite demanding, to dramatize scripture linked to their values learning (KS1, KS2 and KS3) Explain that they will learn new skills to help them engage with the story whilst also be able to use freedom of expression. The latter takes courage and confidence and in order to ensure all feel safe to express themselves freely, it is suggested that at this point a group contract (compare with a class values and behaviour contract) is verbally drawn up regarding attitudes and choices related to the drama workshop. See below for suggested approach to this.

Agreeing a verbal group contract

What do we need for our creative journey to dramatize this life changing story?

Affirm that each pupil's contribution is needed and valued. Ask pupils what will enable them to engage and feel safe to express themselves. Suggest including the following elements in the contract: listening to others and to yourself, mutual respect, find Inspiration from own experience, freedom to experiment with ideas, courage to improvise, celebrating other's contributions (KS1, 2 and 3) KS3 might want to consider issues of injustice, inequality,

Activity 1 - Scripture scrutiny – reading and recalling

Read the bible text as a group.

Simeon and Anna's story – the presentation of Jesus in the temple - St Luke 2:22-40

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2%3A22-40&version=ICB>

Refer to relevant background information for this biblical account, provided in history and theology on the website under 'Patience', to ensure pupils understand the context of the story and the position of faith of the people in the account. Discuss what is difficult to understand, what it might have been like for people at the time. Identifying particularly anything that might be difficult to understand, for example how God helped Simeon and Anna wait patiently in faith for their reward, the promised Messiah?

Retell the story using story circle/consequences

In the horseshoe pupils retell the story they have just heard, each person taking the story up where the previous person left off. An object can be passed around to focus pupil's attention.

Additional ideas can be found in 'Thirty story activities' in Margaret Cooling's – Story and Drama Toolkit – see PDF extracts from this publication on the Wintershall education website – by kind permission of Margaret Cooling and The Bible Society)

INSPIRE The tradition of dramatising Scripture

Explain that this Bible drama workshop is part of the tradition of retelling stories and particularly Bible stories goes back many years. Jesus was known a creative story-teller and the Bible is full of examples. Followers of Jesus continue to communicate God's Story, including the life of Jesus and teaching on the kingdom of God.

Drama is a particularly powerful tool for story-telling. For example Wintershall's production of The Life of Christ, is a biblical drama, a retelling of Jesus's life story <https://www.wintershall-estate.com/events/the-life-of-christ/>

For more information on the history of biblical story telling through drama and Passion plays click on this link to The Passion Trust website. <http://passion-plays.co.uk/what-is-a-passion-play/>

Activity 2 - Motivational exercise – How have others dramatised this biblical account?

Watch the video clip: Simeon and Anna – The Presentation of Christ in the temple Act 1 scene from The Life of Christ, Wintershall

Consider with pupils – *How does the dramatised version of the story help you understand the biblical account? What does it reveal about the virtue of patience?*

Additional suggestion for KS2 and KS3 - Listen to voice clip of James Burke-Dunsmore (actor who plays Jesus) explaining how Biblical drama helps him understand more of what Jesus was like and what can be learnt from his life and interactions with people, as well as how rehearsing dramatised scripture impacts him personally. Go to the 'Listen' section of the website or read the excerpt in 'Dramatising scripture' under 'Script Excerpts' section of the website.

Identify the level and angle of pupil's engagement with the story

Ask pupils to discuss in pairs, the following motivational questions: *Do you want to tell the story? Why do we want to tell this story? What message do we want to get across about waiting patiently? What aspects of the story do you feel strongly about?* For example, injustice, inequality, suffering, miracles...

Actor tip: Actors and directors often use motivational exercises to help them engage with the script or story or to consider different viewpoints

KS2 and KS3 Listen to a selection of voice clips James Burke Dunsmore (actor who plays Jesus in The Life of Christ) explaining how dramatising the Bible, rehearsing and performing helps him understand more of what Jesus was like and what can be learnt from his life and interactions with people, how it has impacted him personally.

Activity 3 –Translating Biblical accounts (bible stories) into scripts

Pupils sitting in a horseshoe on the floor, look at copies of the scripture formatted as a script.

Choose two or three pupils to be recorders to take notes from peer responses remaining pupils in pairs. Choose a small team of script editors (two or three)

Consider the following as a whole group: *What information has been given to us in the biblical account? For example stage directions about people, What message does the story offer?*

What aspects of the account needs to be amplified to help the actors and audience engage effectively? What needs to be shown rather than told? (pupils in pairs annotate their scripts)

What sources can we use to help us add material to the script?

Suggestions: our own experiences, The Bible, historical accounts, other people's responses - paintings, passion plays. Refer back to the biblical text and Wintershall's dramatised version of the story.

Discuss responses (recorders take notes of peer responses) Agree additions as a group to add to the script.

Script editors collect in annotated scripts from peers and use them as a reference for making agreed additions to the class script. **NB** This task can be completed at the same time as Activity 4.

Activity 4 - Choosing characters for the Cast

Refer to the cast list provided for suggestions

Support pupils in peer to peer casting of characters – to help explore and explain the biblical account and the virtues message.

Discuss: What different characters will help us explore and explain the story? Who communicates the message? Who is essential and why?

What different viewpoints are needed? crowd members and temple worshippers, for example, Jewish priests, men, women and children, Gentile men, women and children, Roman soldiers. Characters could be arguing about the Romans, what's difficult about being under Roman occupation, what difference a new leader might make.

Pupils discuss and decide on casting characters to retell the story. The Life of Christ character portfolio – 'People' with character images and descriptions might be useful as a reference here. This can be found on the Wintershall Education website under 'People'.

Role play viewpoints and responses

Choose a series of character groups so that everyone has a part to play. In character groups think creatively about possible responses: for example, disciples, Pharisees, scribes, Gentiles, Jewish people, temple worshippers – amazement, disbelief,

Display the script outline on the interactive whiteboard and ask pupils in character groups to role play a series of different responses between them. Support pupils in thinking about appropriate responses that they can rehearse as a group and contribute to the scene. Script editors observe each group and make additions to the script while the rehearsal takes place.

Additional suggestions for getting into role

Play rumours game

Ask children to get into a circle in their character group. Give a series of sentence prompts+: I saw, I heard... invite them to imagine being in the scene and choosing a viewpoint using these prompts. like Chinese whispers, but sentence to be passed is relevant to 'the Healing of the leper' e.g *I saw ...a leper asking Jesus for healing, I saw...Jesus heal the leper, I heard...*

Group share.

For further ideas see excerpts from The Story and Drama Toolkit, Margaret Cooling on the Wintershall Education website

Return to horseshoe and rehearse the scene

With teacher support the cast rehearse the sequence of events in the scene. Script editors complete revised script while the run through takes place then share it with the cast as directors.

Activity 5 - Use 'what if?...' questions to prompt creative thinking and sharpen drama.

Pupils consider What if?'...questions such as *How do the characters come into scene and come out?*

For example: Jesus's identity was acknowledged by someone in authority, Anna was the first to officially tell others about baby Jesus being the Messiah.

How do all the elements change? For example, the threat to Israel changed through receiving reward of waiting. The leper being healed or Jesus washing his disciple's feet changes: people's attitudes, social status, relationships, minds, emotions.

Actor tips:

Actors use improvisation to generate ideas. James Burke-Dunsmore describes how using absurd ideas in workshops if get stuck with improvisation, in order in to return to what is needed.

Some What ifs?... to get pupils thinking

Patience: *What if Simeon is angry with God, drops the baby? What if Mary and Joseph didn't turn up or forgot the pair of doves? What if Simeon fell asleep, hadn't been able to wait?*

Love: *What if Jesus caught leprosy? What if the person with the disease wasn't healed?*

Consider contemporary viewpoints. KS3 could look at actor interview clips on the website

Activity 6 - Run through 2

Pupils prepare for a second run through. Support pupils in considering the following pointers about additions and subtractions: *What helps you understand the story and its message? Is the script entertaining? Does it translate the story clearly? Does it prompt more questions? Is it predictable Are we serving ourselves or benefitting the story? Do we have enough information? Is any of the dialogue, action adding to the story – or taking away from it?*

A selection of these could be printed out in large type for the script editors/ directors to use as cue cards.

Activity 7 (KS2 and KS3) Additional considerations

Consider ACTIONS and REACTIONS

When characters approached Jesus or vice versa what were the characters thinking or feeling?

For example:

What were Simeon and Anna thinking and feeling? How did Joseph and Mary, Pharisees, temple worshippers react to Jesus, to Simeon's prophecy, Anna's revelation?

What character strengths and qualities did Simeon, Anna, Mary and Joseph show? Courage, faith, determination,

Consider TRANSFORMATIONS

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Think through each character's experience:

How does each character including Jesus come into scene and go out?

Telling the whole story:

How do they change and go through transformation?

Activity 8 Assembly drama preparation

Prepare the stage setting in the school hall.

Run through the whole assembly including the Bible drama.

Bible Drama Workshop Plenary Reflection

What have you learnt about the virtue? What has impacted or changed your perspective? What are you going to do about this in the future?

What have we learnt about the virtue through dramatising scripture: Jesus's example and viewpoint, his followers viewpoint, your peer's viewpoints, your own viewpoints?

How do we understand it more?

Suggested Activities that can be run in parallel to the Bible Drama workshops as preparation for the assembly:

Support pupils in:

1. Complete virtues wordle
2. writing a script for the assembly
3. Prepare Virtues Powerpoint explaining the Virtues Enquiry learning journey for assembly
4. Sourcing or making simple props