



How to lead a story group

God's Word isn't just meant to shape only our personal lives—He can use our experiences with His Word in the lives of others! You can easily tell the story you learned to an individual or in a group context, like a small group Bible study.

Start here: The first step is for you to learn the story! If you haven't learned a story yet, read about how to learn a story on your own (available on the StoryRunners website and as a pdf called "How to learn a story on your own") before reading further.

You can tell a story in a small group setting, whether with believers, not-yet believers or a mixture. You can do this in person or even digitally through live video calling. Story groups work best with four to eight people.

Important: Just like when you learned the story, reading the passage of Scripture and taking notes are prohibited.

Follow this simple formula in order for story learning in a group:

1. Tell the story to the group.
2. Tell the story again. Encourage the group to listen closely this time, visualizing the scene.
3. Ask the group to retell the story together. "Who remembers what happened first? Then what happened?" If people forget the order, stop them and say, "Oh, something happened before that. Does anyone remember?" Let them help each other and jump in when they're lost.
4. Tell the story again twice with some kind of learning method. You tell it through the first time, as participants do the learning method. The second time, let the participants retell the story together with the learning method. Some ideas are:
 - a. Acting: Tell the story, and assign each person a role to play in the story as you tell it. For the second retelling, the participants continue to act it out and they must be the ones to retell it.
 - b. Storyboard: Have each participant use a piece of paper and a pen. Retell the story, scene by scene, pausing briefly after each scene so the participants can draw out what happens in the story. After your first telling, have volunteers use their storyboard to retell the story together.
 - c. Props: Listen to the story, pausing in between scenes, and use ordinary objects (paperclips, sticky notes, cups) in the room to reenact the story. The first time you use props, you tell the story with props. The second time, have the participants retell it as you (or they) move the props around.
 - d. Hand motions: Listen to the story, pausing after every sentence or two. For each sentence, ask a participant to create a hand motion to represent the main thought of that sentence. Have everyone in the group do each movement as you decide on the hand motions. The first time you use the learning method, you tell the story and help people



pick hand motions. The second time, go person by person, in the order of the hand motions, and have each participant say their line as they do the whole group does each hand motion.

5. Divide everyone into pairs. In each pair, one person will tell the story from start to finish, while their partner listens and helps. Then they switch roles. This way, everyone practices telling the story.
6. Gather the group back together and have a brave volunteer tell the story to the entire group.

Now it's time to discuss the story. Ask the following questions and give people plenty of time to come up with their answers. There's no need to rush to the next question. Also, stay in the story itself. If anyone has a question about the story, ask, "What does the story say?" The story is the teacher, not the storyteller. Sometimes the story doesn't answer someone's question, and that's OK.

1. What did you like in the story?
2. What did you not like or find confusing in the story?
3. What did you learn or notice about people in the story?
4. What did you learn or notice about God/Jesus/God's Spirit in the story?
5. Ask an application question. Pick the one that's best for your group. Some ideas for good questions are: "What do you learn about yourself/your heart in this story?" "What can you apply from this story to your life?" "Who do you most identify with in the story and why?"
6. Who will you tell this story to?

And, that's all you need to lead a small group with a story!