STORYRUNNERS®
A Cru Ministry

HOW TO LEAD A STORY GROUP

Purpose:

To guide participants through the oral equivalent of a Bible study as a tool for evangelism and discipleship.

Objectives:

1. Teach participants an oral Bible story from God's word

2. Lead participants through a series of questions and discuss the story devotionally 3. Challenge participants to share the story they just learned with others

Length:

1-1.5 hours

Preparation for leading a Story Group:

Learn the story you are going to teach. Click here to access,
PDF How to Learn a Story by Yourself (2026).pdf

Access all recordings of stories online at:
https://www.storyrunners.org/stories-v2/

Steps to leading a Story Group:

Step 1: Worship (5 minutes)

Tip: Make this as transferable as possible, so that you don't need any tools/materials. This will make it easier to do it in any setting. Keep it short so you have enough time for the discussion at the end.

*Step 1b: Accountability

If your group has met before, ask if anyone had a chance to share the story from last time and how that went. Encourage and celebrate! Ask for a volunteer to share the story from the last meeting.

Step 2: Tell the story two times (5 minutes)

Preface with: *"I'm going to tell you a story from the Bible. Together, we're going to learn this story so that you can retell it on your own by the end of this Bible study. The goal in learning this story is not to memorize what I teach you, but to internalize it. It's okay if you don't learn it word for word, so long as it makes sense and the events are in the correct order."*

Go over the Story Group Rules before you begin the story:

1. No notes- You cannot write anything down during this time. This is a strictly oral process of learning.
2. No Bible- If you brought a Bible, do not read it or refer to it. It will make it harder for you to learn the story as it's been designed to tell.
3. No distractions- Remove all distractions that will keep you from focusing during this time (mute your phones, put them away, etc.).
4. Stick to the Story- Similar to a traditional Bible study, we're going to discuss this story together. But, we want you to resist the urge to bring in other scripture passages, commentaries, or sermons you've heard about this story. This keeps everyone on the same level, no matter how much or little exposure they've had to the Bible. And this allows us to dig deep into the story and let the Holy Spirit guide the discussion.

Now, invite participants to close their eyes and/or imagine the scene as you tell

the story. You want them to visualize what they're hearing as much as possible. Let them know that you will share it twice, to begin with.

Step 3: Group Retelling

You will work, as a group, to recall as much of the story in the correct order as possible. You'll prompt/help them if they get stuck. Click the Learning Methods document to learn to creatively guide them through retelling the story.

Step 4: Learning Method

This will continue to reinforce their internalization of the story. Click here to access the Learning Methods document to see the various methods you can use.

Step 5: Pair Up

Divide the participants into pairs (or threes, if you don't have an even number) and have them tell each other the story to see how well they've internalized it so far. Be sure everyone in the group has a chance to finish telling the story to someone.

Tip: If you notice that people are struggling with recalling the story at this point, offer to tell it once more before dividing them up.

Step 6: Ask for a Volunteer

Bring the group back together and ask how everyone did with telling the story in pairs. Now ask if someone would like to volunteer to tell the story to the entire group. Let them know that you'll help them if they get stuck.

Step 7: Lead a Story Group Discussion (20 minutes)

Briefly remind everyone of the Story Group Rules before you begin this section:

1. No notes
2. No Bibles
3. No distractions
4. Stick to the story

Now, walk them through the following questions to guide the discussion.

NOTE: While keeping track of the time you have left, try to give space for silence

and reflection if no one answers right away. Also let them know that they can come back and answer previous questions after you've moved to the next one. This gives people freedom to process. 20 minutes should be sufficient for the Story Discussion time.

1. What did you like in the story?
2. What did you find challenging or confusing in this story?
3. What does the story tell/show us about people?
4. What does the story tell/show us about God/Jesus/Holy Spirit?
5. What does this story show you about yourself?
6. Who in your life would be encouraged to hear this story? *(Challenge them to go and share it with someone.)*

NOTE: For accountability purposes in challenging them to share the story, you may ask them who they plan to share it with and then, if your group meets together again at a later date, ask each person to share with the group how it went.