

## Getting Started

### Opening: Greeting and Story

*Teach and do Greeting Song.*

*Light candle, sing “Listen to the Word,” tell story, pray.*

### Explain the Talking Piece

**We’ll do different activities to learn this story**

**Sometimes we’ll use a talking piece.**

**The talking piece creates a space in which everyone can speak & listen in peace.**

**Each person in the circle gets a chance to speak without being interrupted, and to listen without needing to respond.**

**When we are using a talking piece, here is how it works:**

- 1. The talking piece is passed around the circle from person to person.**
- 2. Only the person holding the talking piece may speak.**
- 3. It is always okay to pass; just say, “I pass.”**

### Check-In Round

**Today our talking piece is: \_\_\_\_\_**

**When the talking piece comes to you please...**

- 1. Say your name**
- 2. How familiar you are with this story (new, heard before, could tell)**
- 3. A word or more about how you are feeling today**

**I’ll go first...**

### Agreements Round

**We’ll form a covenant group.**

**These are the four agreements for our time together:**

- 1. Honor the talking piece—when it is being used, speak only when you are holding it**
- 2. Speak from the heart—tell your truth as you are comfortable to share**
- 3. Listen from the heart—be attentive, with a positive spirit; avoid side conversations, comments or questions.**
- 4. Protect personal privacy—Tell about God, Jesus, this class and the story we learn, but keep confidential personal information that is shared**

**Now we’ll do a round to see if we can all accept these agreements.**

**I accept these agreements...**

**That’s the only thing you “have” to do; everything else is optional—you can always pass.**

## Engaging the Story

### Word I Heard

**Listen to the story again, this time close your eyes or focus on the candle.**

**As you listen, notice if any word or phrase gets your attention... *Read or tell story***

**Before you open your eyes, think of a word or phrase from the story that got your attention, or another word or phrase that comes to mind...**

*Ring chime... Now open your eyes.*

**For this round, name a word or phrase that you heard in the story, or that came to mind in response to hearing the story.**

### Repeat After Me (RAM)

**In ancient times before writing, sacred stories were learned by heart and told from memory.**

**The most ancient form of education was to repeat the words of whatever was being learned—the technical term is “chirp”; I call it RAM.**

**It also helps us learn if we get more of our body into the telling, not just our mouths.**

**So, copy my gestures and repeat after me...**

### About the Story

*Circlekeeper gives background information to help the participants listen to the story in its original context or to understand how the Bible works.*

**These stories took place a long time ago.**

**And they took place far away from Ohio.**

**The culture, geography, and way of looking at things was very different than ours here in Ohio in 2018.**

**So it's hard understand these stories, and it's easy to misunderstand them.**

**It helps to know some things about the stories from people who have devoted their lives studying the original languages they were told in, and the ancient cultures who composed them.**

**So for each story I'll give you an “About the Story” handout with some information that might help you understand it better, the way people who first heard them would have understood them.**

*Distribute “About the Story” handout.*

**As a round, using the talking piece, anyone who likes to read out loud can take turns reading one paragraph at a time.**

**When the talking piece comes to you, read a paragraph and if you don't want to read, just pass the talking piece on to the next person.**

**If you lose your place, your neighbor can help you.**

**I'll start... *Read “About the Story.”***

**Any questions or comments about what we read?**

**Storyboard**

*Distribute clipboards, markers, and story maps.*

**This is a \_\_\_ -part story, so divide your paper into \_\_\_ sections; number them. Close your eyes or focus on the candle and see what is happening in your mind's eye as I tell the story.**

*After about 2 minutes give a 30 second warning then ring chime.*

**Now open your eyes, and in the first section of your paper draw a picture of what you saw as you listened to the first part of the story.**

*Repeat for other parts.*

**Tell to a Partner**

*Instruct participants to pair up with a partner and take turns telling the story to their partner using their storyboard to help remember (no peeking at other side).*

*When both have told what they remember of the story, they check the script and evaluate what they remembered, left out, and/or added in extra.*

**Connections**

*This is a round activity, using the talking piece.*

*Each person has an opportunity to respond to possible connections between the story and their life experience.*

*Connection topics are named by the Circlekeeper who goes first.*

*The pattern of the Connections is as follows:*

**In this story, \_\_\_\_\_**

**So this story invites us to tell about \_\_\_\_\_**

## **Winding Up**

**Closing: My Story in God's Story**

*Tell the story again in a prayerful manner.*

*Participants are encouraged to listen to the story keeping in mind the connections they have spoken aloud or have made in silence, allowing the story to hold their life experience in a sacred space.*

**Blessing Each Other**

*Standing in the Circle, sing "Go Now in Peace" and/or pray.*