

Getting Started

Introductions

Set up circle and pocket chart.

Introduce Circlekeepers, Sacred Stories, and current theme.

ID groups; pass out bags with materials; participants make nametags.

Attendance

Take attendance, greet participants, distribute bonus items as appropriate: folders and brochures to first-timers, certificate to four-timers, book to six-timers.

Explain the Talking Piece

For some of the activities in Sacred Stories class we use a talking piece.

The talking piece creates a space in which everyone can speak and 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: **star**

We will use it for a check-in round; 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

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 let us see if we can all accept these agreements: I accept these agreements...

Opening: The Presentation and the Story

Tell **Matthew 2:1-12**

Engaging the Story

☐ Familiarity

☐ Read Around

☐ Storyboard

It's easier to learn a story if you break it down into episodes or parts.

Just like pre-production work in movie-making, we are going to create storyboards for this story to help us learn it.

This story has **four parts, so divide your paper into **four** sections.**

I'll tell the story one episode at a time. Close your eyes or focus on the candle and see what is happening in your mind's eye as I tell the story.

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.

Optional: Partners team up; everyone tell the story once; clap for each telling.

☐ Titles

Working in pairs, participants decide on titles for each part of the story and on a title for the whole story.

In a round, pairs share the titles with the group (write on chart).

☐ I Wonder

Biblical stories invite us to wonder about things.

Because they are such old stories about people who lived in a very different culture, we don't understand some things in the stories.

Some of us haven't heard many biblical stories and have lots of questions about them.

Even if we have heard lots of biblical stories, they still inspire wondering.

So... What questions do you have of this story?

What does it make you wonder about?

Print responses on lined 4x6 index cards.

Pass each card around to the person who had the wondering to place in the circle.

Do a second round for people to address the question or wondering of their choice.

☐ **Connections**

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

Connection topics are named by the Circlekeeper and posted on a chart.

- ❖ **The magi were ancient astronomers who studied the stars and consulted with kings. Tell about a time you gazed at the stars.**
- ❖ **The magi were considered to be very knowledgeable and wise individuals. Who is someone you consider to be wise?**
- ❖ **The magi brought gifts to baby Jesus. What gift could you bring the infant Christ this year?**

Winding Up

Prayer & Comment Cards

Collection

Gather all the items in the Circle and those passed out which need to be returned.

Closing

Standing in the Circle, conclude with prayer and/or song such as “Go Now in Peace.”