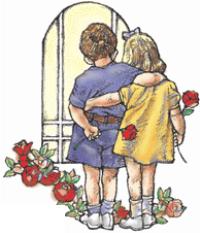


# The Teacher's Pet



*Love each child with your eyes, with your smile, and with your words.*

## 5 Steps to Becoming a Better Storyteller

Bible story time is the focal point of every session. Unfortunately, too many teachers wind up boring young children during the Bible story time because they do not work on simple basic guidelines to good storytelling:

**Guideline #1 – Teach from the Bible,** not your curriculum. Children need to see you as a teacher of God's Word – not merely a reader of a curriculum product. Have your open Bible in front of you throughout the story, and clearly state

that the story is true: "It really happened to real people."

**Guideline #2 – Know your story** well enough to talk *with* your students rather than read to them. Make simple notes to help you remember and properly sequence the three or four most important events. When your eyes are not tied to the words of the story, you are free to focus on the faces of the children in your class. By *telling* rather than *reading* the story, you

will be better able to express enthusiasm through your face and voice. Knowing the story well also enables you to freely use your hands to move any Bible story figures on the flannel board.

**Guideline #3 – Ask good questions** at the beginning and end of a story. Young children need to hear a logical flow in the story line. Since their attention is easily diverted, they need to hear a story from beginning to end without interruptions in order to understand it. Decide what you want children to focus on in the story. Ask them to listen for that before you begin telling the story (e.g., "In our story today, listen to find out what God wanted David to do.") Then at the end of the story, ask them to give you the information from the story they just heard (e.g., "What did God want David to do in our story?") Asking questions in this way helps children discover information on their own. And children will remember what they

discover for themselves longer than the things they merely hear us tell them.

**Guideline #4 – Emphasize the main goal of the bible story character.** This element is the key to being able to recall information in the story. Clearly define the main goal of the principal character in your story. Emphasize this goal when you tell the story. By your emphasis, children's ability to recall the main goal will increase dramatically.

**Guideline #5 – Practice.** Take time to practice telling your Bible stories out loud! Use a cassette tape recorder, practice occasionally with another teacher from your department, tell the story to a family member, or even practice storytelling in front of a mirror. Be sure that you are giving your best to God and to the children He has entrusted to you.

- via Sunday School Smart Pages

