

Effective Storytelling

by Edie Cunningham, Former BVI Associate Director

Funny-bone tickling stories, rhymes, bedtime stories and God's story—kids love them all. Our Creator gave kids an intrinsic desire to hear a story, making the art of storytelling an ageless means for conveying eternal values. Storytelling can engage a kid's heart, soul and intellect and cause transformation.



For over 49 years BVI has developed top-notch stories with child-appealing flashcard visuals. Each visualized story helps a teacher to skillfully MTIGV—Make The Invisible God Visible! And now that we've gone digital, storytellers can project BVI illustrations on the big screen for large audiences using a computer and multimedia projector.

Preparing to Tell a Story

Read the story to yourself several times.

Identify the plot, setting, and characters.

Study the illustrations: note how they coordinate with the high places of the story.

Practice turning the pages (or advancing the images in your computer) and telling the story aloud at least once.

Photocopy the small illustrations from the teacher's text, paste them onto index cards, and add facts to trigger your memory.

Summarize sections of the story to fit your time constraints.

Telling a Story

Rely on the Holy Spirit, your Helper, to tell the story with confidence.

Make certain all can see. If you use a multimedia projector, lighting should be correct for viewing pictures and for the storyteller.

Show illustrations at the appropriate time and keep your hands from covering large portions of the picture. If the story progresses beyond the illustration, lay the book down or cover the multimedia light source. Then continue the story until it is time to turn to the next visual. This will focus the attention of the audience back onto the storyteller.

Maintain eye contact as you tell the story.

Reflect the emotions of the story with your voice (tones) and facial expressions (sad or happy face).

Use dialogue instead of repeating, "he said, she said."

Convey the intended message of the story through the narrative. Avoid sermonizing; rather, interact with your audience by asking questions and giving application at the end of the story.

Review high points of the previous chapter (when telling a multi-chapter story) using the illustrations as you ask factual, interpretive and application questions.

Follow this storytelling format: introduction, facts of the story, climax and ending. Wrap up by solving the problem that you introduced in the story. End on a high point.

Storytelling demonstrates the beauty of the spoken word and its power to harness children's listening skills and imagination.

