

Tell Your Story

Quarter 11 • Lesson 13

Celebration

- 1. Connecting:** Listen to the story of Mary and Martha to review the parts of a story (Psalm 19:1–2; Luke 10:38–42).
- 2. Teaching:** Learn how to use discussion in stories.
- 3. Responding:** Tell your story to someone else.

SUPPLIES

- Bible

Optional Supplies:

- *The Action Bible*, image of Martha and Mary
- Student Pages
- Scissors
- Crayons

Teacher Tip: This lesson is intended to follow lessons 9–12 in this quarter. However, if needed, it can also be taught apart from these lessons.

Before teaching this lesson, think of a simple story from your life that children will be able to relate to. This could be a story from your childhood or a story with a situation that will be familiar to the children. This story should take about 1–3 minutes to tell. Be prepared to tell this story to the children as part of the Responding section of the lesson.

Teacher Devotion

*He did not say anything to them without using a story.
But when he was alone with his disciples, he explained everything.*
Mark 4:34

Jesus used stories to teach His followers how to live. He told stories that people could relate to and understand on a basic level. However, there was always more to His stories than some people could understand. Our own stories can be like this, too. When we tell stories from our own lives, others may understand certain parts of it. They may be able to picture the places we talk about or even the people we include in our stories.

Think of a time when you learned something about God through an experience you had. This may even be an experience that was very challenging. What was it about that experience that brought you closer to God? Have you ever thought about telling this story to someone else? If not, consider this: God can use your story to teach, encourage, and build relationships with others. God may even use the story to show His work in your life to encourage others. Try sharing your story with someone. You may be amazed at how God uses it!

Family Connection: Encourage family members to think of something joyful that happened to them. Ask them to tell this story to their children using words or actions that help the children experience the same joy.

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Listen to the story of Mary and Martha to review the parts of a story (Psalm 19:1–2; Luke 10:38–42).

Greet the children as they enter. Have the children sit in a circle in the middle of the teaching space.

Stories are very important. They tell us about our history, they teach us lessons, and they help us to share our experiences with other people.

The Bible is God's great story. It tells us about who God is and His relationship with us. Within the 1 great story, there are many smaller stories. The very first story in the Bible tells us that God created all things, including people. Listen to these verses about God's creation.

If possible, read these verses directly from your Bible.

*The heavens tell about the glory of God.
The skies show that his hands created them.
Day after day they speak about it.
Night after night they make it known.*
Psalm 19:1–2

Everything created by God has a story to tell because everything He created is part of His story. The sky tells the story of creation by showing that God separated the sky from the sea. It also shows that God created night and day. When we look at the sky, we can remember God's story of creation.

Stories can also help us to learn lessons and to communicate with others. Most stories include the following:

- Characters or people
- A place
- An event that leads to a journey
- A problem
- A way the characters try to solve the problem
- A lesson or a way the characters change

To help us remember each of these parts, let's listen to a true story from the Bible about Mary and Martha. This true story begins like this:

Optional: If possible, share the image from The Action Bible.

*Jesus and his disciples went on their way.
Jesus came to a village where a woman named Martha lived.
She welcomed him into her home.*

Luke 10:38

- **Where does this story take place?**

In Martha's home.

- **What event begins Jesus' journey with Martha?**

She welcomed Him into her home.

*She had a sister named Mary.
Mary sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said.*

Luke 10:39

- **Where did Mary sit?**

At Jesus' feet.

- **Why did she sit at Jesus' feet?**

She was listening to Him.

- **Because this is a true story, the characters are real people. Who are the people in this story?**

Mary, Jesus, and Martha.

Let's listen to what happened next to Mary, Martha, and Jesus:

*But Martha was busy with all the things that had to be done.
She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, my sister has left me
to do the work by myself. Don't you care? Tell her to help me!"*

Luke 10:40

- **What is the problem in the story?**

Martha is angry at her sister. Martha thinks Mary should be helping her with the work.

At this point in the story, Martha thought the problem was that her sister was not helping her with the housework. Sometimes, our problems are not what they appear to be. Listen to what Jesus said to Martha when He saw her frustration. Listen to what He said:

*"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered.
"You are worried and upset about many things.
But few things are needed. Really, only one thing is needed.
Mary has chosen what is better.
And it will not be taken away from her."
Luke 10:41–42*

What Jesus said is a little difficult to understand, but we know He was trying to help Martha. He explained to her that Mary made a good choice with her time.

- **What was Mary doing while Martha worked?**

She was sitting at Jesus' feet listening to Him.

- **Why would it be more important to stop and spend time with Jesus than it would be to do housework?**

Allow 2–3 children to respond.

In this story, Martha learns an important lesson from Jesus.

- **What did she learn?**

Allow 2–3 children to respond.

Jesus did not tell Martha to stop doing what she was doing, but He did explain that Mary was doing something important too. Mary was spending time with her Lord. Jesus taught Martha that it is important to spend time with God. This is a good lesson for us as well. Spending time with God is very important!

This story might not end the way we thought it would. It might not feel like this is an end to a story. Some stories do not have clear endings. Characters might not get where they wanted to go or learn what you thought they should learn. Our own stories can be this way too. Sometimes we may try to solve a problem, but we may not be able to solve it. However, when this happens, we usually learn and grow from our problem.

It is fun to tell stories, but stories can also teach us things about our own lives and the lives of others. Today, you will tell your own story to someone else.

2. Teaching: Learn how to use discussion in stories.

When you tell a story, it is also important to tell it in a way that is interesting for people to listen to. This is why it is important to add details to a story. In the story of Martha and Mary, we hear the words Martha and Jesus say. This is called dialogue. Dialogue is important because it tells us what the people in a story are thinking and how they relate to each other.

Help the children to pair up for the next activity.

Let's take a moment to talk with someone about something that is happening. We will pretend someone in our community is giving free bread to everyone. We arrive where the bread is being given out. There is a large crowd gathered in this place. Think about what you might say to your friend when you find him in the crowd.

Tell your partner what you would say about the free bread, the crowd, or your emotions. For example, I might say, "I am so excited for this bread!"

- **What would you say?**

Encourage the children to find someone to talk to about the situation. Remind the children to show their emotions as they say what they think about the situation. Give them about 1 minute to share their thoughts with others.

You can add discussions to your story to add interesting details about what your characters say. You can also add interesting words that describe the story action to tell a story. Let's practice this by completing some thoughts. When I tell you a thought, you will use a descriptive word to end it.

For example, I like fruit because it is so ____.

- **What word might you say to describe the fruit?**

Children may respond with words such as: juicy, sweet, delicious, good, or other similar words. Allow about 3–4 children to respond.

These are all good words that describe fruit. Let's use more descriptive words to complete these thoughts.

You may choose to allow children to call out their descriptive words at the same time. Or you may choose to ask a few children to respond to each thought. Be sure to have the children respond to each of the following thoughts.

That tree over there is really ____!

I did not want to go there alone because it was so ____.

If I were to describe my brother, I would say he is ____.

I like listening to music because it makes me feel ____.

Descriptive words make a story more interesting because it helps the listener experience the action and emotions with the characters. It can help the listener imagine what is happening in the story as if it is happening to her.

3. Responding: Tell your story to someone else.

Teacher Tip: There are no right or wrong responses to this activity. Some children may tell very simple stories that do not tell much about themselves, while others may share something personal that has happened to them. Some stories will be recent events, while others may be stories the children have told before. Encourage the children to tell any story that they think of.

Let's put all of the parts of a story together to help us tell our own stories. I will tell you a story about something that happened to me. Your story will be different from mine, but this might help you to start thinking about what your story will be about.

Tell a simple story about something that happened to you. Be sure it is something that the children can relate to. If you remember a story from your childhood, this might help the children to relate to your story. Your story should only take 1–3 minutes to tell to allow plenty of time for the children to tell their own stories.

Now I will give you some time to think of a story you want to tell. Let's start by thinking of a problem or difficult situation you have experienced. When you have thought of a problem or difficult situation you could tell a story about, put 1 thumb up.

Pause for 30 seconds or until most of the children have their thumbs up.

Now, try to use the parts of a story you have learned about to help you create your story. Remember, the parts of a story are:

Characters or people

A place

An event that leads to a journey

A problem

A way you tried to solve your problem

A lesson or a way the characters change

If you did not solve your problem, think about how the situation changed you or what you learned from your problem. I will give you some quiet time to think about your story.

Help the children to spread out so each one has at least a small amount of space around him. Create a quiet, calm environment. You may say a prayer with the children, dim the lights if you are inside, or have the children hum or sing a calming hymn. Once it is quiet, ask the children to think of things that have happened in their lives they could tell a story about. Give the children 2–5 minutes to think about their stories. They may close their eyes or whisper quietly to themselves if this helps them to think.

Optional: If you are using Student Pages, give the children 1–2 minutes to colour and cut or tear out their characters.

Now take a moment to decide how you want to share your story. You use interesting voices or act out your story. You may also want to include discussions or interesting words in your story. Take a moment to decide how to tell your story.

Give the children 30 seconds to decide how to tell their stories. Then have each child find a partner to share with. Ask the children to choose 1 partner in each group to go first. Then allow about 1–2 minutes for the first child in each pair to share his story. Alert the children when it is time for the second partner to share her story. Give the second child 1–2 minutes to share.

Walk around the room as the children share their stories. Be attentive to what children are sharing, but try not to comment. This is a time for children to openly share a story from their lives.

Teacher Tip: Some children may share stories of scary situations or bad things that have happened to them. Be prepared to report any abuse or other maltreatment you hear about. Follow your church's reporting guidelines for any concerns you may have about the treatment of the children in your class. If you are unsure about your church's policies, talk to your church leadership.

It was wonderful to hear all of your stories! Remember, God created all of us to tell and learn from stories. When we love and believe in Him, God makes us part of His great story!

End class by saying this blessing, based on Psalm 19:1–2, over the children.

Blessing: May you understand the importance of telling your stories. May you know that you are part of God's story.

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song, if possible. "Holy Forever" by Chris Tomlinson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkHgxCemCRk>