

Preparing well for the Creative Writing Workshop (12-18 years)

Choosing your story:

- Choose one of your favourite parables of Jesus', or one of his miracles, or another favourite story. You might like to pray about which one to choose, and that the Holy Spirit will inspire you as you work on your story.
- Read it in several different versions of the Bible or watch an episode from 'The Chosen' on YouTube.
- Watch a video of the story online – search for one on www.max7.org if you are not sure where to start.
- Search for Bob Hartman on YouTube – he is probably the world's best Bible storyteller and he is very creative. He has also written Bible Story books that you can find online and maybe in your school or local library.

Preparing your story ideas:

- Think about the story from a different angle. Tell the story from the perspective of one of the characters. It could be the main character, but it could also be the character's wife, friend, etc.
- Imagine you are in the story. What can you see, smell, hear, feel, and taste?
- What are the different characters feeling at different times in the story?
- You could act out the story with your family to help you experience the story in a fresh way and to find new ideas.
- You could also plan a family worship based on your chosen story, so that the whole family can help you to explore the story.
- What do you like best about this story? How can you highlight that?
- What is the most important message in the story for you? How will you make sure that the message is heard by others, without being too obvious or preachy?
- Where are you in the story, or which part of the story is most about you? What difference will that make to how you tell the story?
- What does this story tell you about God's incredible and wonderful love for you and everyone else? How will you help people to experience that love?

Writing an outline

- Every professional writer starts by creating an outline of their story, with as much detail as possible.
- Every professional writer also writes a first draft – which is their first try at writing the story. Then they work to improve it. This is like doing a rough carving in wood, and then sanding the edges to make everything beautiful.
- You will get the most out of the writing workshop if you have a good outline for your story, or if you have written out the first draft of your story.
- Then you can work with a writer during the day to help make your good story even more amazing!
- Read your story aloud to yourself, or to someone else, or ask someone else to read it aloud to you. This is a good way to hear how the words sound and whether they flow

nicely and smoothly, or whether you have repeated words too often, or a sentence is too long. Listen carefully and hear where you need to make changes.

Bringing your story to the workshop

- Handwrite or print out your story leaving wide margins around the edge of the paper for notes. Also, leave two lines free between each line of writing, so that you have space to write down any fresh ideas before working them into your final story.
- If you want to illustrate your story, you might like to create some artwork to illustrate scenes from the story, or even take photos. Bring any pictures for your story with you to the workshop.

I look forward to seeing you all there!

Karen Holford

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