

*"Follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people."  
Mark 1:17*



# BELT TEACHERS GUIDE

MULTIPLYING TRUTH. TRANSFORMING LIVES.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With gratitude to the amazing, gifted people  
– teachers, artists, administrators, leaders, servants –  
God has brought to BELT through the years  
that made it what it is.

And to those who are yet to come who will take it further and higher.

And to God, who allows us glimpses of His marvelous activity in  
lives across the globe.

May His kingdom come and will be done!

*“Thank you, God, for sending us messengers who have taught us how we can  
transform Congo into a place of hope, justice, righteousness and freedom.”*

Pastor Saidi, DR Congo

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## About Us

*“We were like dry bones. BELT gave meat and fat on our dry bones. Now we can bring life to the church and community.”*

*Pelek, Papua New Guinea*

# The Story of BELT

(Providential History and Words)

By Heidi Evans, BELT Thailand

This is a history of God's workings, vision and words to BELT. If anything fruitful or virtuous results, it is because of Him. He is the One who steers and moves this ship.

## **400<sup>th</sup> New Testament Dedication (1995): BELT vision birthed**

The year was 1995. The place – Papua New Guinea. High levels of anticipation, as well as attention, surrounded Wycliffe's 400th New Testament dedication. The invitation went out from the Bible translator to his son for a YWAM team to train the nationals in their new vernacular Bibles following the dedication. In response, a combined group from School of the Bible and Teachers for the Nations from YWAM Tyler came together to join this highlight in the life of the Barai people. Three weeks of pouring through their new Bibles and basic DTS/SOTB teachings, under the probing of the Holy Spirit, resulted in many transformations. The Lord began to speak about multiplying Bible teaching teams to go into the nations, and in these remote jungles, BELT was birthed. The fruitfulness of this venture, combining the strengths of Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT) and Youth With A Mission, along with God's blessing, prompted further cooperative projects of Scripture engagement around the world.

## **“Spread out your Tent Poles” (1999)**

*Isa 54:2-3 "Enlarge the place of your tent; stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, spare not; lengthen your cords and strengthen your pegs. For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left. And your descendants will possess nations and will resettle the desolate cities."*

This was a season of multiplication, of not holding back. BELT seminars were running full-steam, not only in many PNG people groups, but also in Central America, Africa and Asia through a large, dedicated team. The Wycliffe connection remained strong – they opened to BELT access to their resources and seminars, allowed us to share in their conferences, their experts were

giving input and shaping BELT. In one such discussion, the name of BELT was coined. It was a season of growth and development and laying down of the foundations of what defined the BELT ministry.

### **The Vision of the Locusts (1999)**

*Prov 30:27 “The locusts have no king, yet all of them go out in ranks.”*

In this midst of expanding opportunities and interest, the BELT ministry was to remain decentralized, but unified in its vision and core values.

### **“Dance with the one that brung ya” (2001)**

As BELT had its beginnings with Wycliffe Bible Translators, we were to keep them as a main focus of ministry. Our desire was to send a team to all invitations from WBT.

### **The Vision of the Trees (2003)**

As the first BSN (Bible School for the Nations) in Nicaragua was being birthed as a tool to equip YWAMers with a Biblical worldview as well as a tool to train and multiply BELT workers, BELT was in crisis. The thriving team from early on began to dwindle until only the original pioneer was left. Desperately seeking God in a coffee field, He deposited the vision of the trees.

The first tree was a big shade tree in the midst of the coffee garden – tall, with big branches, and birds were coming and singing in its branches. BELT would be like this tree – growing large and being a blessing to many.

God then showed another tree – around the trunk, many vines were growing from the ground around it into many branches overhead. God would bring people around the vision of BELT to strengthen and multiply it.

### **Give me that Mountain! (2007)**

*Joshua 14:10-12 “And now, behold, the Lord has kept me (Caleb) alive... and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old.... Just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war.... Now therefore, **give me this mountain of which the Lord spoke in that day; for you heard in that day.... that the cities were great and fortified. It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said.”***

After Nicaragua, God raised up another team that went to Australia. Caleb’s cry became ours, resonating deep in our spirits. With courage, we were to

pursue the difficult mountains/inheritations that God was giving BELT. From this was birthed our first key initiatives: Nepal (training YWAM church planters through BSN and BELT), the Pacific (mobile BSN and BELT teams reaching the island nations), and DR Congo (delivering BELT training to 30 people groups in the north-east Congo). BELT moved from just running seminars to taking on strategic projects.

### **Vision 12+ (2008)**

*Ezekiel 47:12-13 “Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing. This is what the Sovereign LORD says: ‘These are the boundaries of the land that you will divide among the twelve tribes of Israel as their inheritance....’”*

BELT would be like the trees planted by the River of Life bringing healing to the nations and bearing fruit regularly. It would be established in twelve gateway locations which would aid in expanding the BELT network.

- in the AMERICAS – Madison (N. America), Nicaragua (Central America) and Brazil (S. America)
- in AUSTRALASIA – Perth (Australia), Pacific islands and Indonesia
- in ASIA – Nepal (S. Asia), China (Central Asia) and Thailand (SE Asia)
- in AFRICA – Congo and E. Africa, Nigeria (W. Africa) and South Africa

### **Annual Summits**

After almost a decade of focusing on multiplying the Bible School for the Nations (as a tool to train up BELT staff), the inauguration of BELT’s international summits brought fresh momentum and words for this next season.

### **Surge (2017)**

“Surge” - a great sudden and powerful forward or upward movement. Just like with the blowhole, where jets of water erupt abruptly when the conditions are right (high tide, rough storm at sea), so likewise, there was a sense that God’s timely surge was coming to erupt new initiatives and expansion in BELT.

BELT has been in a season of calmness – but we are sensing God’s surge mounting. We are seeing lightning in the distance. We believe God is wanting to birth fresh vision, new expressions, and new teams and leaders to take BELT to the next level. And as the storm stirs, and the surge rises, this ministry will move again, powerfully and abruptly. It might look messy. Our faith will be stretched and grown. But this ministry will move in the midst of the storm. Isaiah 51:15-16

### **Seeding Disciple-making Movements (2020)**

“It’s not about what you accomplish, it’s what you set into motion that matters. What you accomplish is short-lived. What you set into motion can last for generations.” Bill, the bus driver

More than just running Bible seminars, we are being called, by God’s grace and enabling, to seed disciple-making movements around the world. We are to focus on, and invest heavily in, empowering local teams. They, in turn, are to be trained to intentionally multiply disciple makers who will, in turn, multiply disciple makers and so on.



# BELT Vision, Mission, Values

## BELT Vision

The vision of Biblical Education & Leadership Training is to see communities and people groups transformed by the Word of God through empowering community and church leaders who have limited access to Biblical training.

## BELT Mission

Our mission is to partner with mission organizations (prioritizing Wycliffe Bible Translators) and indigenous churches to develop leaders through culturally relevant Bible training that teaches them to apply the Scriptures to every area of life and equips them to teach and influence others. 2 Tim 2:2

## BELT Core Values

As a ministry of Youth With A Mission, BELT affirms YWAM's foundational values and further emphasizes the following guiding principles.

***Relying on the Holy Spirit*** – We recognize that experience, expertise and skills in no way can replace the probing, convicting and life-altering activity of the Holy Spirit. As such, we teach, mentor and lead in humility and in dependency on Him.

***Pursuing truth*** - We desire to be life-long learners. We strive to know, love and obey God and his Word, and to reason from the Scriptures to every area of life. We see the Bible as the primary instrument for affecting change in people and the world.

***Empowering others*** - We purpose to equip believers so they will flourish in their relationship with God and others, as well as grow in their leadership and reliance on God's guidance and provision. We desire to seed movements of disciple-makers that impact every sphere of society.

***Contextualization*** - We strive to contextualize our training and ministry to be relevant and easily grasped among those with various ways of learning, various cultural and educational backgrounds, as well as in their heart language.

***Participatory learning*** - We encourage participants to take an active role in their learning. We utilize interactive, creative and reproducible training methods that

guide people to discover truth through engaging with the Bible, the Holy Spirit and each other.

***Excellence*** - We strive for godly maturity in our character, and for the highest quality in all we do. We serve whole-heartedly out of love for God so people of all nations might know and glorify Him.

***Partnerships*** - We partner with mission organizations and indigenous churches because we believe effectiveness and God's blessing are multiplied in unity and collaboration with other believers.

# BELT TOOLS & INITIATIVES

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## BELT TOOLS

- TRANSFORMATION SERIES SEMINARS
- 2-3 DAY BELT TASTERS
- 2 MONTH BOOTCAMP
- 3 DAY FOLLOW-UP CAMP
- KIDS RESOURCES
- YOUTH RESOURCES
- YACHTS MINISTRY
- AUDIO BIBLES
- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- BIBLE DISTRIBUTION
- ORAL SEMINARS

## OPPORTUNITIES

YWAM SHIPS: PNG  
AUDIO BIBLES  
BELT FOR KIDS  
BELT FOR YOUTH  
OMT PARTNERSHIPS  
RADIO SEGMENTS  
SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Bangladesh: Providing spiritual formation training for more than 500 young adults around the country.

Yachts for Life: Delivering Bible training and community development to remote outer island communities of the South Pacific via two yachts.

DR Congo: Empowering church and community leaders in eleven regions in the north-east, containing more than 30 people groups.

Norway: Impacting and training Europeans to share the Word of God in Europe and beyond.

Papua New Guinea: Running seminars with young people alongside oral Bible recording, translation and distribution in schools and communities.

Nicaragua: Equipping high schoolers, churches and communities locally and beyond.

## BELT INITIATIVES

## **BELT Guiding Document**

The desire of BELT is to see God’s Kingdom expanded on earth through the transformation of individuals, families, churches, and communities by the Word and Spirit of God. To that end, we seek the help of God and partnerships with those who love Him. Thank you for taking the time to learn about us.<sup>1</sup>

### **History of BELT: the Wycliffe Connection**

The first BELT seminar, conducted in a remote language group in Papua New Guinea, saw God impact many lives. The synergy between YWAM and Wycliffe Bible Translators in that first seminar began a partnership resulting in BELT teams assisting in Scripture engagement activities in many language groups around the world.

The Transformation Series (TS), BELT’s initial primary training tool, was developed with a purpose of making the Bible understandable and culturally relevant in people groups who had limited access to Bible training. Since 1995, BELT teams have conducted over 450 Bible seminars in more than 60 countries, in partnership with Wycliffe, YWAM and local churches.

### **BELT’s Connection to the BSN**

Eight years after BELT commenced, YWAM’s Bible School for the Nations (BSN) was developed with the goal to:

- Multiply and train BELT workers and YWAMers to have a greater Biblical foundation in knowing God and His message along with tools to effectively communicate the Bible
- Provide deeper, accessible, practical Bible training in the nations

Many on the BSN pioneering team were involved with BELT in some way. So what had been developed in BELT over the years influenced the teaching

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<sup>1</sup> To learn about BELT’s vision and core values, please go to: “BELT Vision, Mission, Values”. To learn more about BELT’s initiatives in the nations, go to: “BELT Vision and Initiatives”.

methodology of the classroom, and the BELT seminars provided a practical vehicle to bring transformational content taught in the BSN to the nations.

The relationship between BELT and BSN continues to be mutually beneficial. The BSN helps to strengthen BELT staff with a deeper Biblical foundation, while BELT helps to provide significant outreach opportunities to grow BSN staff and students in leadership and cross-cultural training skills and kindle a passion for teaching the Bible in the nations. BELT additionally provides an avenue to BSN graduates who are passionate about discipleship to continue teaching the Bible through a YWAM global ministry.

### **Curriculum and Resources**

The Transformation Series, TS, are 2+ week seminars, with three levels aimed to challenge and equip participants personally and in their leadership. The Storying version (discussing key Biblical narratives relating to seminar themes) is available at [www.ywambelt.org/resources](http://www.ywambelt.org/resources).

The goal of the TS is to see individuals transformed, churches strengthened, and communities impacted.

- Transformation of the Heart, TS1, focuses on a leader's relationship with God and his/her response to the Gospel message.
- Transformation of Character, TS2, deals with the importance of discipleship and skills for godly leadership.
- Transformation of Society, TS3, discusses how to impact a society (focusing on the family, the church and civil government).

The Discovery version of TS2 and TS3 additionally provides a chronological overview of the Bible while examining key biblical leaders (TS2) and related seminar themes (TS3).

### **University Credit and Use of the BELT Curriculum**

Although BELT's TS material is available for anyone to use, in order to qualify for two credits with the University of the Nations (U of N) Extension Studies, certain elements must be in place to help ensure a quality seminar. These include: a YWAM BELT qualified team leader or coach in attendance (see

description below); team members trained in BELT's philosophy and methodology (through CCT or BIT – see below); seminar duration of at least two weeks (approximately 35 hours per week) with an outreach component; and 80% attendance by the participant. In order to receive a BELT certificate of completion, all of the above must be present, though the team leader would not need to be a YWAMer.

Though BELT teams have cross-cultural and communications training, we rely on experienced local workers to help with contextualization and rely entirely on the Holy Spirit to bring transformation. The BELT Teachers and Leaders Guides, as well as the BELT Information Packet expand further on these things.

### **Levels of BELT Trainers**

Within BELT, there are three levels of trainers, depending on experience, training and capability. To ensure and sustain quality in BELT seminars, it is encouraged that a BELT team include at least one team leader or coach.

1. **Instructor** – has completed a CCT (Cross-Cultural Training) or BIT (BELT Instructors Training) seminar. A BELT instructor is guided by a BELT coach or a BELT team leader.
2. **Team Leader** – has completed at least two full BELT seminars (TS1 and preferably TS2 as well) with a BELT team leader or coach present, has completed a BELT orientation seminar (either CCT or BIT), has a good understanding of the BELT vision, content and methodology, and is able to mentor others on their team. A BELT team leader is assessed and approved by a BELT coach.
3. **Coach** – has completed all three TS seminars, has completed a CCT or BIT, has a comprehensive understanding of the BELT content (what), methodology (how) and philosophy (why), has completed a BSN or equivalent, and is approved by a BELT elder. The BELT coach should be involved in on-going mentoring and empowering of BELT team leaders and instructors. He or she should be integrated into the BELT network, and is accountable to the global eldership team.

## **BELT Instructors Training**

There are three training paths for those desiring to become qualified BELT instructors.

1. **For BSN participants**, the one-week Cross-Cultural Training (CCT) module (taught by BELT staff or BSN staff having BELT experience), provides a foundation in teaching the Bible in a cross-cultural setting. For BELT seminars led by these BSN staff and students, BELT certificates can be issued to seminar participants and U of N credit can be received if the seminar qualifies. See University Credit and Use of BELT Curriculum for more details.
2. **For YWAMers**, preferably graduates of YWAM Bible training programs, BELT's 2-week BIT (BELT Instructors Training) provides additional training in BELT content, methodology and Biblical worldview. For BELT seminars led by those completing BIT, BELT certificates can be issued to seminar participants and U of N credit can be received if the seminar qualifies.
3. **For non-YWAMers**, BELT offers the 2-week BELT Instructors Training which provides training in BELT content, methodology and Biblical worldview. Although further BELT staff involvement is recommended in running a seminar, it is not necessary. U of N credit, however, cannot be given for participants completing these BELT seminars unless U of N standards are met. BELT certificates can be issued if a qualified BELT team leader is present and the seminar qualifies.

### **Support**

We are excited about the grassroots multiplication of Biblical truth around the world, and we hope to see this continue through the use of the BELT materials. We would be happy to assist you or connect with you for any additional training or resources.

BELT Eldership Team

## BELT Transformation Series Outcomes

We recognize that the following thinking (head), desiring (heart) and doing (hands) outcomes of the Transformation Series (TS) are only possible as the Holy Spirit brings transformation in the lives of participants. The role of the BELT instructor is to partner with the Spirit of God by facilitating learning<sup>2</sup> from the Word of God with relevant application, and by fostering a safe environment for building trust and humility (vulnerability) in relationships.



### Participants will:

1. *Learn and share a chronological overview of the Bible.*
  - a. **TS1:** Become familiar with the “Bible Road Overview”, knowing where key Bible stories fit into it.
  - b. **TS2:** Present the “Bible Action Overview” and use storying skills to highlight key biblical characters and show where they fit on the “Bible Road Overview.”
  - c. **TS3:** Identify where stories about the main spheres of society fit on the “Bible Road Overview.”

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<sup>2</sup> True learning is understanding, remembering and reproducing what is taught.



2. *Study about God, his ways and how we are to relate and flourish in all areas of life.*
  - a. **TS1:** Explore God and the gospel message, emphasizing God’s loving character, the creation of people in his image for friendship with him, his grief over the destructiveness of sin, and his kindness in offering salvation and restoration for all people.
  - b. **TS2:** Explore the Christian life and godly leadership through studying the lives of key biblical leaders, emphasizing how they grew in friendship with God, as well as qualities of Christian character and servant leadership.
  - c. **TS3:** Explore the biblical purpose and the primary responsibilities of the main areas of society, emphasizing family, church, and civil government. Examine how God restores people and communities to his original purpose and design.
3. *Grow in faith and loving relationship with God, resulting in hope that personal and community transformation can take place.*
  - a. **TS1:** Experience transformation of the heart through **revival** of genuine relationship with God, growth in devotional habits and intercession, commitment to holy living with others, and increased enthusiasm for missions.
  - b. **TS2:** Experience transformation of character through **renewal** of devotion to God (in faith, obedience and purity), attitudes in servant leadership (of humility, excellence, releasing and empowering others), desire for restoration and unity in relationships, and commitment to missions.
  - c. **TS3:** Experience transformation of society through **reformation** of all areas of life, especially in *the family, church and civil government, and increase in hope* that they will see their communities healed and become a place of light and blessing.
4. *Demonstrate increasing confidence and ability to teach what has been learned and grow in enthusiasm to be involved in evangelism, discipleship and missions within and beyond their own community.*

- a. **TS1:** Teach Bible stories (with follow-up questions) about God and the Gospel message during an outreach in the community and in churches.
  - b. **TS2:** Teach Bible stories and share principles of godly character and leadership from the lives of Bible characters during an outreach in the community and in churches.
  - c. **TS3:** Teach a topical message on the main areas of society, sharing Bible stories and principles that will bless a community or nation. With a group, develop a six-month plan to influence one area of society locally, implementing the first stage during the community outreach.
5. *Engage in culturally relevant training by reading and studying Scripture in their heart language(s), by leading worship and prayer times, and by participating in contextualized learning, activities and application.*
  6. *Pursue unity between different groups and churches by humbly restoring and strengthening relationships, and working together to transform families, churches and communities.*
  7. *Develop as leaders (in their abilities and attitudes) by applying biblical principles of leadership into their own lives and spheres of influence.*

## Teachers that Impact

*“This seminar was the first time someone taught the Bible and I was able to understand. Thank you for making it so clear for me!”*

Cawdee, Thailand

# The Key Ingredient

By Heidi Evans, BELT Thailand

The year was 1998. The place was Nepal, a country gripped by Maoist uprising. Violence, extortion, and intimidation were widespread. But inside the walls of one small mud brick church tucked away in the Himalayas, there was an entirely different scene. Peace ruled. Submission to the Highest Authority reigned. Hearts flooded over with the goodness and grace of God. Wills bent to His sovereignty and rule. Hearts stirred in the thick presence of the Living God. Rising hours before dawn, the trainer met with the Master. This was the one non-negotiable for this seminar. The payoff? Holy visitations – every day. A divine presence that lingered beyond the time in the classroom. A heavenly presence that was visible in the class photo at the end of the seminar – a supernatural glow that surrounded the students and instructor.

I regret to say, I was not that teacher. Nor was that a BELT seminar. But upon hearing of that experience, something was unleashed in my heart that yearned for more than just what my training alone could deliver. More than any force of personality, any show of natural giftings or learned techniques or years of experience could even begin to reproduce. It was something accomplished by the Holy Spirit alone in partnership with a desperate, dependent heart.

*God, don't let me substitute artificial means for an encounter with you.*

*“For our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.” 1 Thes 1:5. My prayer now has become, God don't let me substitute artificial means for an encounter with you.<sup>3</sup>*

One very sad commentary in the Bible is found in Mk 1:22, *“They were amazed at His (Jesus’) teaching; for He was teaching them as one having*

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<sup>3</sup> Dawson, J. 2012, November 14. YWAM Podcast Network [Audio podcast].

*authority, and not as the scribes.*” May God grant that not be the commentary of my life, of my teaching! Friends, if we are not connected to the source of Authority, we will have no authority in our teaching. Jesus demonstrated complete dependency on the Father from the outset, and was thus able to act and speak authoritatively as the Father directed (John 12:49). And He offers those who are likewise yielded this same authority (Mat 28:18-20) – authority that comes with full conviction, pierces deeply, and results in real transformation.

Do we want to be excellent messengers, effectively communicating God’s truth, using every means to reach our audience? YES! But our techniques and methods – though they can greatly assist to keep our audience engaged and bring clarity to our message – will never transform lives. If we desire our teaching to change hearts, we must be in touch with the only One who can access them. *“A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a dealer in purple fabrics who was a worshiper of God, listened to us; and the Lord opened her heart to pay attention and to respond to the things said by Paul.” Acts 16:14.* The word *opened* in the original Greek is *dianoigō*, which means, “to **open thoroughly what had been closed**. To open one’s soul (mind, will, emotions), to rouse in one the faculty of understanding or the desire of

learning.” And that, friends, cannot be manufactured by any methodology, no matter how masterful; that is the work of the Holy Spirit.

So with humble desperation, let us seek the Holy Spirit to illumine our minds and to change our hearts – and then call on Him to move with the same power upon our hearers. For the Holy Spirit can take information and

turn it into revelation that will change lives. Let’s create conditions conducive to transformation and give the Holy Spirit plenty of room to move, to speak, to work.

*“When we speak, we are not trying to please people, but God, who tests our hearts.”*

*1Thessalonians 2:4*

# Jesus, the Master Teacher

By Heidi Evans, BELT Thailand

If we want to be transformational teachers, we would be wise to glean from the greatest teacher of all time. Let's journey with Jesus to uncover his methods and study a teacher that truly transforms lives.

## **Principle 1: True teaching isn't about giving knowledge, but stimulating students to get it.<sup>4</sup>**

"It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray." Luke 11:1

Jesus said it was important, and then He spent more time doing it than talking. His modeling created a readiness and hunger for further instruction.

Teaching is most effective when the learner is properly motivated. The true function of a teacher is to create the most favorable conditions for self-learning. Consider what motivates you to learn. Remember people try harder when learning gives pleasure, satisfies a need, or promises to be useful.

## **Principle 2: The way people learn determines how you teach.**

"Go to the sea and cast a hook, and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel; take that and give it to them for me and for yourself." Matthew 17:27

Jesus could have said "pay your taxes; God will provide" but He knew his fishermen friends were mostly oral communicators and tactile learners so he used object lessons, lots of stories, visual displays, hands-on demonstrations. We seldom find Jesus lecturing.

There are many different ways people learn. There is no right or wrong way. God has gifted us uniquely to learn in a way that suits us. Our goal is to teach to the various learning styles that will be present in our audience. Be sure to

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<sup>4</sup> Principles 1-5 adapted from Hendricks, Howard. (2003) *Teaching to Change Lives*.

*“Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing it is stupid.”*

*Albert Einstein*

vary techniques and utilize team teaching to maximize various style strengths on your team. The main learning styles are:

- **Verbal** (auditory): think in words rather than pictures. They learn best through discussions, music, oral presentations, etc. Make sure they sit close to the front so they can hear.
- **Tactile**: have a hands-on approach. They like to handle objects physically. They find it hard to sit still for long periods. Utilize objects, activity, games, drama, dance, etc.
- **Visual**: think in pictures. Can be easily visually distracted. Use maps, diagrams, detailed handouts, demonstrations, drama, models, chalk drawings, etc.
- **Logical**: think systematically. Be careful of veering off topic. Present thoughts in an organized order. Present storying questions with a logical flow.
- **Musical**: Voice quality, rhythm and tempo are important. Use intonation as you teach. Incorporate music during teaching and response times.
- **Social**: Group work, teams and play are important. Use games, discussion groups, role plays, group assignments, etc.
- **Solitary**: Internal processors; reflective times are important. Promote meditation and contemplation, quiet times, journaling activities, etc.

*“Every student can learn. Just not always on the same day or in the same way.”*

*George Evans*

### **Principle 3: Maximum learning is the result of maximum involvement.**

Luke 10:1,17. Sending out of the 70 disciples. Jesus didn't just teach them, but he sent them out on outreach to replicate the things they had seen and heard from him.

*"I hear and I forget. I see  
and I remember. I do and I  
understand."*

*Chinese proverb*

In verses 17-19, the disciples started to really get it: prayer works, God is powerful, God loves all people, God provides. True learning takes place when the audience understands, remembers and reproduces the message.

An important principle of education worth mentioning is the 20/40/80/90 rule:

- People remember roughly 20% of what they hear.
- They will tend to remember 40% of what they hear and see.
- They will remember about 80% of what they hear, see and touch.
- They will remember about 90% when they have to replicate/teach something.

**Principle 4: If you stop growing today, you stop teaching tomorrow.**

"Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." Luke 2:52

Jesus chose to grow up like everybody else – including studying for thirty years before beginning his ministry. He positioned himself as a learner, someone who needed to grow. He likely had several teachers. Jesus also learned from nature and the world around him.

Growing implies effort, intentionality, moving in a direction. We often think of seeds when we think of growth. Just like small seeds, inside of you is a wealth of potential – some realized, some dormant. It will take stretching and effort to see your full potential released.

Like Jesus, seek to be a lifelong learner, rather than an expert with all the answers.

*"He who dares to teach  
must never cease to  
learn."*

*Richard Henry Dann*



- Ask questions.
- Seek out opportunities to grow new skills. If you have never failed, you have never lived.
- Self-evaluate – strengths, weaknesses, how to improve.
- Maintain a consistent study and reading program.
- Allow God to minister to you. God wants to work through you, but he can't until he works in you.

**Principle 5: To truly impart information requires identification.**

“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” John 1:14

The Incarnation is all about a God who desires to be close to his people. He comes to us as a friend and brother (rather than a commander-in-chief), identifying with our humanity.

*You can't reach someone without love and you can't love without identifying.*

The word communication comes from the latin “communis”, which means common. Before we communicate, we should establish commonalities. The greater the commonality, the greater the potential for communication.

- Jesus met people at their own level of understanding and interest/need. He did not speak above them or use the language of higher learning.
  - Jesus was approachable. Even outcasts wanted to be with him.
    - Jesus identified with people - he wept, he was tempted, he suffered.
    - Jesus loved. Will your students remember this about you?
    - You can't identify if you don't listen.
- Jesus was not a one-way communicator. He asked questions; listened; reasoned; dialogued. Of the 125 incidents of Jesus communicating with others, 54% were initiated by his hearers. Instead of proclaiming the

*“But the aim of our instruction is LOVE that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith.”*  
*1 Timothy 1:5*

message he wanted people to hear, he responded to their questions, objections, doubts. Do we let our students influence our communication agenda?

**Principle 6: To teach a message, you must first live that message.**

“I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.” John 13:15

Jesus communicated his vision of life in relationship with God, and modeled its values. He served his disciples, even washed their feet. He loved his enemies and prayed for forgiveness for his own murderers.

Lessons are better ‘caught’ than ‘taught.’ As teachers, we must take care that our character and example are consistent with the message that we speak. Our lives should enhance and reinforce the truth that we proclaim.

***Principle 7: Have faith in the One who calls you more than in the circumstances and fear raging against you.***

Matthew 14:28-31. Peter walks on water. (Full story in Matthew 14:22-33)

Peter had some huge courage in the midst of the crazy storm to say “tell me to come”, but it was based on the One who called him. Then he took his eyes and focus off Jesus and allowed the lightning, waves, and wind to shake his faith. Peter allowed FEAR to grip him - False Evidence Appearing Real. Storms at sea are very real and very scary. But the greater reality was Jesus was inviting him to a life of deeper faith, to huge growth and Jesus was going to be right there with him.

Doubt and fear will only keep you from fulfilling God’s call. Satan knows unbelief and fear lead to inaction. The fears we don’t face become our limits.

*“Keep a close watch on yourself and on your teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.”*

*1Timothy 4:16*

And we will find ourselves with missed opportunities, missed growth, and missed intimacy with him.

*FEAR:  
Forget Everything And Run  
OR  
Face Everything And Rise*

So how do we regain courage? Courage isn't based on a change in circumstances (the wind only calmed down after Peter returned into the boat), but it's based on a change in us – when our eyes and focus are again realigned with Jesus.

Notice Jesus immediately responded to Peter's cries for help and reached out to help him. If you step out in faith, Jesus will always be there for you.

**Principle 8: If you want authority in your teaching, you must be connected to the Source of authority.**

“They were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” Mark 1:22

Teaching that comes with authority is full of conviction and pierces deeply. It does not rest in our natural gifting, or personality, or ability to communicate. It's birthed from a humble desperation, seeking the Holy Spirit to illumine our minds and change our hearts.

The Master routinely went out early to pray and commune with the Father – the source of his authority. If we want our teaching to change hearts, we need to be in touch with the One who can access them. If we learn anything from Jesus, it is to stay connected. Learn dependence on the Holy Spirit – He is the one who qualifies us.

**Reflection:** Consider these 8 points. Is there one that stands out? Make a plan of action to grow in this area.

# Character that Matches our Message

By Daniel Holmberg III, BELT Mexico

Character. It is the mark that is left behind in the world, seen by others, based on our continued external actions. Christian character connects internal moral excellence with external faithful actions.

Too many people in the world seek knowledge and truth before virtue and character. Moral excellence (applied understanding) is where character and transformation are found.

For years, I have struggled with virtue and character. Character comes from hope and consistency in suffering. We all want hope, but none of us want to

suffer. We all want to claim faith, but few want to walk 24-7 in clean conscience through virtue. We all want someone else to change, but few are willing to live that change.

*Christian character connects internal moral excellence with external faithful actions.*

Character. It is not having to defend our heart intention. Character is not convincing someone to adjust their perception about us. It is actually what

people see about us. In real life, intention isn't enough. What is real is character and action. Reality is what is actually spoken, not what we desired to speak. Reality is what is seen, perceived, and understood by all. What will that look like for your life when you give account for every word, thought, and deed?

As I've had more and more opportunities to meet incredible Christian leaders from all over the world, I've realized more and more how their charisma, ministries, vision, or gifting no longer impress me very much. We don't really do anything to get capacity and charisma.

Gifts are by grace and don't speak about someone's character or morality. Good visions come from God Himself, so again it doesn't really speak about the quality of a leader.

More and more, I want to know the man or woman behind the public light. I want to know what the kids have to say about mom or dad's consistency and faithfulness. I desire to sit with the spouse and hear about the reality of self-control and good communication. I want to hear from the ones that know what is hidden in the darkness – the shame, weaknesses, fears, and suffering.

In this light, I can see what is true about this leader in reflecting God's character: the real depths of self-control, of being quick to listen and slow to speak, slow to anger, quick to forgive, and quick to extend mercy. I want to hear the kids share about how they see mom or dad reading the Bible, praying and fasting. I want to hear the spouse share about the character of the other in moments of tension, suffering, doubt, and anger because this is when I learn about the true character of the leader.

As we teach in the Bible School for the Nations, "The character of the messenger must be consistent with the message being carried." Character is the one thing that is real in the eyes of others. When I die, I can't give an apology for what I lived, said, and did. The mark I leave behind will just be what others perceived, heard, and saw of my real character.

**Reflection:** Is your character as a Christian consistent with the message that you carry? Consider 2 Peter 1:5-8 and Romans 5:3-5.

**Challenge:** Read the proverb of the day to begin each day. As you pray and read, ask the question, "What is my character? Am I living a virtuous life? Am I a fool or the wise man/woman?"

# Character Counts! Personal Evaluation

Content and methodology are the first two parts of the transformation equation. But everything rises or falls on character. Based on 1 Timothy 3:2-7.

*1 Cor 11:28 "Let a man examine himself".*  
*Gal 6:4 "Let each one test his own work."*

Scale

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
(need to improve)                      (doing very well)

### A. Trustworthy; strong integrity

Do you behave in a godly fashion when no one is looking and in the small things? Are you working on changing ungodly patterns? Do you have a plan of escape when temptation comes? Are you known as someone who keeps your promises? Do you invite honest feedback from friends? How would others rate your character?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

### B. Committed to loving one's spouse

Do you truly value your mate as a gift from the Lord? Do you consider them in your decision making? Husbands, do you love your wives as Christ loved the church (and served her and sacrificed for her)? Do you direct your family to Jesus and pray together? Wives, do you love and respect your husbands, encouraging them on in the Lord, committing their weaknesses to God in prayer rather than complaining? Singles, do you treat the opposite gender with respect and purity?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

### C. Good judgment; wise in handling practical matters

Do you plan ahead? (Goals? Priorities? Resources needed? Potential obstacles?) Are your decisions based on emotion or based on biblical principles? Do you get wise counsel when making decisions?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

#### **D. Strong self-control**

Do you exercise self-control in your thoughts? In your actions? In your emotions? In your words? How do you respond when corrected or disrespected?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

#### **E. Admirable; honorable**

Do others want to follow you because they see your godly character, wise decision making, and humility (admitting your mistakes)? Are you a servant or seeking rewards and power? Do you help others become even better than yourself?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

#### **F. Friendly; available**

Are you available to others - seeing people as opportunities not interruptions? Do you have a positive, approachable attitude that brings joy to others or are people nervous or afraid to come to you?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

#### **G. Good teacher, communicator**

Do you have an attitude to listen and learn? Are you teachable? Are you a diligent student of the Word of God? Are you living what you are teaching? A good communicator is honest, transparent, gracious – are you?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

#### **H. Not drunk, irresponsible**

Do you have healthy habits – with food, exercise and rest? Do you manage your body like it's God's property?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

### **I. Not angry, but gentle**

When the pressure is on, what comes out of you? Are you easily angered and quick to criticize, or do you extend grace? Do you hold grudges against others?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

### **J. Not argumentative**

Are you threatened by others' difference of opinion? Do you demand your own way or to seek the best possible solution during a conflict? Do you seek first to understand before trying to be understood?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

### **K. Not greedy for money or motivated by it**

Are you willing to compromise what is right for money or to achieve success? Do you look to God as your provider? Are you grateful for what you have or are you jealous of others possessions? Are you generous?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

### **L. Has healthy and happy family relationships**

Would people say your home is a place of love, care, joy, peace and harmony? Are disagreements resolved well in your household? Is there mutual respect and honor between you and your spouse and between you and your children?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

### **M. Good parent**

Are you a good example of the heavenly Father to your children? Do you pray with your children, teach them the Scriptures, and bring them to church? Do you regularly show your kids love and affection and value? Are your children angry or frustrated (may be the result of poor parenting)? Do you discipline in love or anger?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5



## **N. Good reputation outside of church**

Does the way you live attract non-believers to Jesus? Do they see a life that reflects Jesus and the fruit of the Spirit or a hypocrite (who doesn't practice what he preaches)?

1

2

3

4

5

### **Reflection:**

1. Circle your lowest three.
2. Develop a plan of action for at least one of these. Write it down.
3. Discuss your plan with one other person and pray with them. Let this person become your accountability partner and report your progress weekly with him/her.
4. If you want, have your spouse (or best friend for singles) go through this and evaluate you.

## Overcoming the Fear Factor

By Anna Wagner, formerly BELT Norway

***"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere - in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8***

When I was little, my friends all wanted to be rock stars. The last thing I wanted was to stand in front of a group of people who were all looking to me for something, so my dreams were different from theirs. I dreamt of jobs where I wouldn't have to work around others: being a researcher, a writer or a scientist sounded perfect. Then I became a Christian, and things changed. I wanted to be with people, and a lonely job was not so attractive anymore. God used teachers in my life to change me and grow me, and with that grew a longing to share with others what had been shared with me.

But sharing didn't come easily for me. The first time I taught in a classroom, the back row couldn't hear me because I spoke so softly. Things are different now, and one of the things that changed for me was the message in Acts 1:8 that a friend highlighted to me one day. Our task is to be witnesses, no more. A witness sees something and wants to tell the world about it. Their task is not to produce what they see, or to make something happen, it's solely to tell others about something that someone else made happen. According to Acts 1:8, not even the power to share those things comes from us. That took a load off my shoulders. My task as a witness then, is to see and to tell, but God will do the rest - show me what I need to see and fill me with power to tell others about it.

This Scripture also tells me something about the things I share about. They are things that I have seen myself, the things in my life that I can trace back to God's hand. A witness is someone who lives through something before they tell others about it. As teachers, it is easy to get stuck thinking that we are to deliver a stack of information to others, that we are to have some downloadable message that our listeners can carry around. But that thinking reveals a flawed view of what teaching is to be – like it's bits of information being passed from one person to another.

If we want to teach for change, we need to teach the things we believe in enough to have committed to live them out in our own lives. If we take the message we are teaching seriously, it will also help the people who listen to take our message seriously. Witnessing and teaching in an Acts 1:8 sense is for the sake of transformation, and for that to happen, we need to prioritize connection before information. We need to pray and ask God how we can see that message lived out in our own lives and teach from those experiences. That way we can also teach with conviction and with practical examples for people to see what it looks like to live out the message we carry.

***"Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you." John 13:13-15***

It is the last supper and Jesus spends a big chunk of it washing his disciples' feet. He is doing the job of a servant. The example Jesus is giving with washing feet is that of practical work, but serving is not limited to just that. Just before the supper, he sent two of his disciples ahead of him to prepare for the dinner, a very practical thing to do. Serving is practical, but it is not just about cleaning toilets and doing the menial tasks. Serving is practical because it has to do with seeing and meeting the needs of another. It has to do with who it is focused on. Because of this, teaching is about serving the needs of another too.

Teaching is serving because you sit up late at night reading and studying and researching in order to have something to share. You spend hours putting together learning experiences that will make sense and be helpful for people who are going through the material for the first time. You have invited God to search your heart, convict you of things, and painfully and painstakingly put together your own testimonies as they relate to the message you are bringing. Teaching is serving because you walk the path that is your message and you map it out and make sure you know the way by heart so that you can bring others with you next time, without them having to make too much

effort. You broaden that path so that it's easy to get from one point to another - and that is hard work. That is your authority to teach.

You come only with the authority of a servant: a servant of God and a servant of the people you teach. That is the only authority we have been given because even Jesus states that what he said was not said with his own authority, but with the authority of God. (Jn 14:10) That we teach with the authority of God should not scare us, but rather should take a weight off of our shoulders because we realize it is his message, not ours. Standing in front of people is not about you, but about the people in front of you, and about God. All we do is serve, and God only asks that we serve with what we have.

### ***"He will convict the world." John 16:8***

Your position as a teacher is one of a witness and a servant. God's position is the One who convicts people of his truth. If we teach his message, he is the one who is committed to carry it all the way to people's hearts. He is the one who initiated the whole process, and he wants to see it through. He also cares about the people that you teach, and you can be sure that he will work as hard as he can to make sure his message reaches the innermost parts of people. And it doesn't stop there. He also works to transform their lives with the help of that message. Give him room to work, in your preparations and in the classroom, and give him time to touch people's hearts. Don't put that pressure on yourself. You are but a witness, he is the one who initiates the process, oversees it and brings it home, into the heart of people, and into their very lives.

### ***Journaling Response<sup>5</sup>***

- In a notebook, record your hopes, concerns and fears about teaching.
- Before the Lord, consider what the root of each fear is.
  - What are contributing factors to this fear?
  - What would help in overcoming this fear?
  - What may hinder your ability to overcome?

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<sup>5</sup> By Evynn Schlender, BELT/BSN Madison.

- Prayerfully commit these things to the Father, seeking more revelation and breakthrough.
- Pursue a plan to help in overcoming if needed.
- If possible, share with another person for prayer and encouragement.

# Turning an Outline into a Personal Masterpiece

By Nathan “Hobbes” Wagner, formerly BELT Norway

A great strength of the BELT ministry is that the teaching outlines provide a framework for the ministry’s teaching content that can easily be used by anyone in any place. The challenge this presents though is in the personalization and contextualization of the content. With the teaching outlines, it can feel as though you are not teaching something that comes from you, but rather reciting a script. This thinking, however, misses the heart of BELT and the purpose of the materials. If the BELT outlines are the wooden frame of a house, it is still up to us, as teachers, to take care of the walls, floors, ceilings, paint colors, interior decorations, and everything else that makes the house unique.

But how do we go about doing this?

The first step is becoming familiar with the content while processing and applying it personally. It is not required that a BELT teacher knows everything there is to know about a topic before teaching it. A BELT teacher should, though, strive to teach from a place of authority. This means a few things. We should know more about our teaching topic than what we teach during a seminar. Pouring out into others is easier to do when the well from which you’re pouring is deep. We also want to reflect the YWAM value of “do first, then teach” as we engage in ministry. This means we should not try to teach on forgiveness, for example, unless we have honestly entered into a process with God in that area of our own lives. All these things should be done with the Bible open in one hand and the other lifted up to the Lord, receiving understanding and direction both from God’s Word and from his invited presence.

Next is the personalization of the actual teaching. This is where the transition takes place from “a BELT teaching outline” to “*your* BELT teaching.” The outlines will give you the topic, main ideas, and some useful key scriptures. Your job is to put those things together into a complete teaching that reflects both God and yourself to the ones listening. Here are some ways you can start putting “meat on the bones” of the outline:

- **Bible Storying:** After looking through the key scriptures on the outline, see which lends best to the direction you are particularly wanting to go. Additionally, if there is an unlisted narrative scripture that comes to mind and underscores an idea, feel free to use that. Telling the story in an engaging way on your own (or with the help of another team member or seminar participant) will add to the unique expression of the teaching.
- **Interaction:** Always be looking for places in the teaching where you can have the participants interact and engage with you, each other and with the content and scriptures. Discussion groups, reading groups, role plays, creative activities, review, and application processing will give the participants a greater sense of ownership of the material.
- **Testimony:** As you look through the main ideas of the teaching, are there any stories or experiences from your own life that relate? These can be stories of personal revelation or your own journey processing the point. Or stories of how God interacted with you in revealing the topic, or even ways that God has been directing your thinking during your preparation. This obviously inserts you personally into the teaching, but it has the added benefit of showing what it looks like to interact with the topic. It also gives you a more relatable authority from which to communicate.
- **Object Lesson/Illustration:** With more abstract ideas (love, faith, grace...), it can be helpful to use something concrete to aid in understanding the idea. Think of stories that show the idea. Look for physical, tangible things that can be used to demonstrate/explain the idea. A great example of this could be teaching the participants to make paper airplanes, and then destroy them, to communicate the care that went into God's design of us and then the destruction that sin causes to that design. The insight of your local contacts at the ministry location could be invaluable in this. Ask for things or common experiences that will help the idea make sense for the people there.

With all these elements, make sure that they strengthen, rather than distract from, the main ideas. If you cannot make a clear and easy connection between one of these elements and a main idea of the teaching, it is time to re-think it. Either cut it out in favor of something that does work, or adjust it so that it does make an easy connection to the topic.

Finally, the teaching needs to consider the audience and be designed for them. In the early stages of teaching preparation, this will be done through both cultural research to get a sense of how these ideas could be relevant, and through asking God to help you discern which aspects of the teaching need more focus, given what he knows already about the hearts and lives of the ones you will be teaching. As you arrive at the ministry location, pay attention to the place, culture, people, and anything else that could be useful in understanding the context of your setting. This will help you to make sure illustrations, stories, group activities, and application points make sense and are appropriate. Again, lean heavily on your local contacts and translators to help you get a sense of these things.

Finally, remember to express yourself through your teaching. God doesn't just want this material to be taught, but he values the fact that it is YOU teaching it. The things that make you a unique person are the same things that will make this teaching unique, more than just a script or a list of facts and Bible verses. So seize this moment to create your own masterpiece!



## Instructor Self-Evaluation

	<b><i>Meets Goal</i></b>	<b><i>Needs Some Work</i></b>
<b><i>Introduction</i></b>	Grabs attention of audience and introduces topic well.	No introduction (or introduction doesn't pull in audience). Goes right into points.
<b><i>Organization &amp; Flow</i></b>	Well organized; easy to follow flow of thought. Stays on topic.	Disorganized; difficult to follow. Gets off topic.
<b><i>Context-ualization</i></b>	Makes topic, posters, illustrations, techniques relevant to audience/culture.	Little research to make lesson appropriate culturally; not adjust teaching to meet needs.
<b><i>Illustrations</i></b> <i>(stories, images)</i>	Interesting, concrete, practical, relevant to audience.	Dull, too abstract or not relevant to audience or point being made.
<b><i>Techniques</i></b> <i>(dramas, visual aids, discussion...)</i>	Used effectively to facilitate and enhance processing, learning and review. Time appropriate.	No techniques used or not relevant. Too much time spent on techniques. Little processing of techniques when needed.
<b><i>Bible Storying</i></b>	Keeps close to Biblical text. Interesting, expressive; uses quotes, characterization and movement. Relevant & clear questions leading to main idea / application.	Too much deviation from Biblical text. Dull with little expression, movement, characterization or quotes. Some questions are unclear or not relevant to the main idea of the story. Too much time spent on Qs.
<b><i>Participatory Learning</i></b> <i>(Discovery learning)</i>	Allows audience to discover main ideas and answers through interaction with Bible, good questions and activities. Teacher reinforces answers and fills in missing points.	Focus is on the teacher giving answers rather than the audience discovering answers. Strong emphasis on lecturing. Little or no discussion. Poor questions to guide audience to main ideas.
<b><i>Outline &amp; Poster</i></b>	Effective interaction with outline and lesson content. Poster woven into lesson &	Little interaction with lesson outline or poster. Missing key content of outline. Unclear or inadequate explanation of poster.

	explained clearly; referencing other posters as appropriate.	
<b>Review &amp; Feedback</b>	Effective review & feedback to assess learning. Ties previous lesson ideas into current lesson. Adjusts teaching if audience not understanding.	Inadequate or unclear review or feedback. No references back to previous lessons or posters.
<b>Application &amp; Conclusion</b>	Relevant application. Time made for response and Holy Spirit. Strong closure - includes prayer, reviews main idea.	Little or rushed application. Lacks relevance or is culturally inappropriate. No review of main idea at end; no closure.
<b>Humility &amp; Appearance</b>	Vulnerable in sharing life stories. Reflects dependency on God in teaching. Honors audience by neat appearance.	Little vulnerability. Comes across as having all the answers. Little display of needing God in teaching. Underdressed; clothes are stained or wrinkled.
<b>Enthusiasm &amp; Humor</b>	Has enthusiasm for topic; speaks with conviction. Uses humor appropriately.	Lacking enthusiasm or conviction (belief in ideas). Inappropriate humor.
<b>Voice &amp; Eye Contact</b>	Voice is clear, loud, varied tone. Minimal fillers (“um”). Good eye contact with audience.	Too soft, unclear or monotone. Eyes stuck on notes or only on a few people, not whole audience.
<b>Space &amp; Posture</b>	Effective use of room space. Open posture; not slouching on podium.	Stands in same place or stays behind podium.
<b>Time</b>	Understands key ideas so can adjust teaching to cover them within time allotment. Finishes within given time.	Too much time used on less important parts of lesson or on techniques. Way over or under time.
<b>Interpreters</b>	Reviews lesson plan with interpreter prior to teaching. Speaks slowly and in short sentences.	Speaks too quickly. Sentences too long. No preview of teaching with interpreter. Speaks to the interpreter rather than audience.

Action steps for growth:

## Methodology that Impacts

*“It has been a struggle to know what to preach each week in our church. The BELT seminar has not only given me material to teach, but also showed me how to be more creative and use stories to teach the Bible. As a result, I have more confidence to teach and preach.”*

Church planter, Nepal

# When Revival Came: Discovery Learning

Dr. John Ommani, SIL Kenya

It was the African Azusa Street. The revival first broke out in East Africa in 1930 at a tiny Anglican mission station in southeast Rwanda, spreading among Ugandan Anglicans and then into Kenya and Tanzania. Because of it, about 85 million charismatic Christians can be found in Africa today when even 100 years ago, there was only a handful. The revival effects have been more lasting than almost any other revival in history, so that today there is hardly a single Protestant leader in East Africa who has not been touched by the revival in some way. It is essentially a lay movement, African in style and control, that has transcended tribal, racial, and church divisions.<sup>6</sup>

*“The model of the pastor as ‘big man’ who knows it all means that people have to sit and listen, and often this does not lead to engagement with Scripture in life-transforming ways.” Dr. Ommani*

According to an African leader, the revival happened when the method of Discovery Learning was used. *“The model of the pastor as ‘big man’ who knows it all means that people have to sit and listen, and often this does not lead to engagement with Scripture in life-transforming ways. In many traditional cultures, leaders taught through stories, questions, and riddles, allowing people to interact and*

*discover.”* Dr. John Ommani Luchivia<sup>7</sup>. The question for us today is will we continue with the model of the one-sided presentation or will we adopt interactive methods that allow people to engage with Scripture and discover transformative truth for themselves?

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<sup>6</sup> Harper, Michael. “New Dawn in East Africa: The East African Revival.” Christianity Today. Issue 9: Heritage of Freedom: Dissenters, Reformers, & Pioneers, 1986.

<sup>7</sup> Luchivia, John Ommani. (2009, October). Overcoming the Big Man Syndrome in the Church. Workshop presented at the World-Wide Scripture Engagement Consultation, Malaysia.

The Discovery Learning method<sup>8</sup> is a group dialogue which secures active participation of members in two-way communication. The Bible is discussed in small groups, not preached. Answers are not provided to participants, rather materials and direction are given to find the answers.

### *What are the strengths of discovery learning?*

- It is the basic learning method in oral cultures.
- It removes the “big man” syndrome, where there’s dependency on the one at the front for the answers.
- It builds ownership of a biblical culture rather than “the white man’s religion”.
- It equips all believers to share and lead.
- Church groups are more engaged and vibrant.

*The Discovery Learning method is a group dialogue which secures active participation of members in two-way communication. The Bible is discussed, not preached.*

### *What are some guidelines to follow?*

- Break into smaller groups.
- Choose a **narrative**. The story must be relevant to their needs (felt and real).
- Those who are able to, read the Bible out loud for the group.
- Have questions to consider the text as well as for application. Discuss.
  - The first question is general, “What impacted you the most?” Then go deeper. Eg. “What were the disciples feeling?” Ask questions to get to the meat of the story. Eg. “Why did Jesus do this?” End with an application question, “What can we learn from this story?”
  - Concerning corporate practices: in groups, they discuss what the Scriptures say about the event or practice. They share how their culture agrees or contradicts this. They discuss how Scripture can be applied in their context. The “big man” listens, summarizes what is said and agreed upon.

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<sup>8</sup> Luchivia, John Ommani. (2009, October). Overcoming the Big Man Syndrome in the Church. Workshop notes presented at the World-Wide Scripture Engagement Consultation, Malaysia.

- Concerning individual growth: after reading the Scripture, people share their own experiences and how they have applied or struggled with the teaching and culture. They discuss and agree on how these Scriptures should be applied and what needs to be changed. In small groups they pray for one another.
- Concerning further application: each individual/group comes up with a plan of action on how to share and implement what is learned. They share together and pray. They can share their progress over the year.
- Listen and summarize what is said and agreed upon.

*What are principles for the facilitator?*

- The teacher must die (not provide the answers).
- People remember better if they participate.
- Discussions are best if everyone participates.
- People learn well if we demonstrate the skill or attitude we want them to learn.
- Different activities make learning more interesting.
- Decide on 2-3 objectives for what they want/need to know, a skill to practice or an important attitude to adopt.

*Self-reflection for facilitators after the lesson.*

- How much did I talk?
- How did I encourage quieter ones to participate?
- How did I encourage more talkative ones to allow others to contribute?
- How did I communicate respect and affirmation when people shared?
- Did I show respect and inclusion of elders?
- Was there relevant application of the Scriptures?
- Did I direct them to clear biblical text if they veered off?

*“When you teach  
(your student)  
something, you take  
away forever their  
chance of discovering  
it for themselves.”*

*Jean Piaget*

## Where There is No Power-Point Tips for teaching BELT in Rural and Oral Areas<sup>9</sup>

By Ben Poulton, formerly BELT Nepal

In many societies lacking a tradition of literacy, you may find some who can read, but even they will find it hard to reason (for example ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions are a struggle). Thus, teaching techniques that are suited to oral learners will have greater success in much of the world, where functional illiteracy is about 75%. Think of how Jesus taught with stories and illustrations about everyday things that people understood. Try to be interactive, simplify your message to the main ideas, be practical and aim for them to be able to repeat your message to others.

### Guidelines for teaching:

#### ◆ Be clear about your message.

Three principles have guided my teaching for as long as I can remember:

1. *Write yourself clear, pray yourself deep.* In other words, write out your message to make it clear, and pray to make it powerful.<sup>10</sup>
2. *If you do not know what you want to say, no one else will either.* You should be able to say the main idea of your teaching in a sentence or two. Once you have it clear in your mind, then you can think about how to make it clear to others. It is pointless to be excited to teach, but have no message.
3. *It doesn't matter what you said, it matters what they heard.* This applies both to making your message easy to understand, and also to making sure that they didn't miss your point because they were hung up on something.

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<sup>9</sup> The author's experience given here relates particularly to Nepal and Bangladesh.

<sup>10</sup> Professor Hitchen. "Communication and Preaching." Laidlaw College, Auckland. 2000.

*Once I was teaching about God's love using Genesis 16 where Hagar runs away from Sarah. I wanted to show that God takes notice of a runaway, disgraced, foreign, slave girl. Hagar even comes up with a new name for God: "The God who sees me." But the class was distracted from this point about God's love for all people. They were hung up on the question of whether or not it was right for Abraham to have two wives. This was relevant for them because in the class was an old man, a new believer, who had two wives. I never used that story in Nepal again - there are many other stories to share God's love.*

◆ **Be bold with your message. God's truth has its own authority.**

My life verse has become "If anyone speaks, let him speak as one speaking the very words of God." 1 Peter 4:11a. This is the verse God gave me the first time I went to teach a BELT seminar when I was feeling very intimidated. Now I pray it for myself every time I speak. And I refuse to be intimidated by my audience, even if I am going to preach on something challenging.

◆ **Be interesting to listen to.**

Remember that your class has probably had little practice listening to a lecture. Don't let them fall asleep- vary your voice, move about a little, frequently break up your teaching with discussion and activities. Have them move about regularly too – taking the class outside for teaching illustrations is helpful.

◆ **Teach storytelling from the Bible.<sup>11</sup>**

*In one place I was teaching, I watched an old lady who could not read. Each session I told a Bible story, repeated the story and asked them to try and repeat it to the person sitting next to them. She was on the edge of her seat*

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<sup>11</sup> L Schall, personal communication, 2012-2014.



*as I told the story, enthusiastically repeated it to her partner, and volunteered to retell it to the class the following day. I knew that she had learned from the story what she could never have learned by a lecture.*

Bible stories should be short, about 2-3 minutes long, and easy to memorize (take out unnecessary details - names, place names and irrelevant conversation). A good way to ensure that you are staying close to the Bible is to write the story out and then go through it and make sure that you can put a Bible verse next to every sentence (this is called anchoring the story).

Focus the story on the main point and discuss it afterwards to make sure it is understood. In truly oral cultures, the first and most important step before discussing and applying the story is **memorizing** it. This can take some time, but it is well worth it. There are several creative ways to retell the story in a way that will help people to learn it: act it out, use random objects gathered from around the class to mark points of the story, or draw it cartoon style. Most people need to go through a story several times to remember it. Work together as a group to help each other.

If everyone can read, a method that works well for memorizing short stories (like an incident or parable from the gospels) is this: open the Bible, read the story aloud, close the Bible and try to say it all without looking. Then open the Bible and read it out loud and repeat this process until you have it perfect.

You can act out or dramatize the story, but if you want shy people to feel that they can tell the story to others, it may be more effective to simply tell it so that they do not feel they need to be good at dramatizing it in order to tell others.

#### ◆ **Share personal stories.**

Personal stories can be a very effective way to show humility, gain interest and to draw out a response in people. Leave out distracting details, like amounts of money.

*With one team I was helping, two of the teachers had made great sacrifices to pay for their plane tickets over to Nepal. One had sold his car, the other her horse. When they shared this testimony, it greatly challenged the Nepali class- they said that they realized that not all Westerners were rich and that if God could provide for them to do missions, then God could provide for Nepali people to do missions too. The class actually took up an offering for missions and gave it to one of the teachers.*

◆ **Never shame anyone in class.**

Many students have suffered forms of educational trauma, including shaming comments and physical discipline. Always try to encourage (even if answers seem random); it's likely they are already afraid of the teacher. In Nepal I realized that people had fear in their eyes if I acted out a drama with a stick (because their teachers had beaten them), so I tried to not even use a pointer.

Encourage people to ask questions on the topic but remember that in many places, questioning the teacher shows disrespect. You may have more luck if they discuss the topic in a group before you ask for questions.

◆ **Limit use of writing on the board.**

If educated enough, participants will attempt to copy anything you write, but they may not be focused on what you say at the same time. Be aware that those with less education will take an extremely long time to copy anything. Bible verse references or short definitions are good to write on the board.

◆ **Use drama.**

Drama is a highly effective way to teach and people often get into it, even using costumes. Dramas do not translate well if they have a lot of words in them. If you don't speak the local language, do simple dramas that do not

depend on words, or give a Bible story to a group and get them to act it out (they will need some time to prepare). Often in the class, there will be a handful of enthusiastic actors that you can give the story to the night before, or you can break the class into groups and give each group time to practice a story, then act it out.

*“If we just teach with our mouth, people fall asleep, but if we use actions and dramas, people will learn... If we preach with pictures, our audience will remember the teachings.” Nepali BELT participant*

◆ **Engage in discussion.**

Oral learners absorb much when they can discuss together what they are learning. The simplest technique is to pause every 20-30 minutes (or after an activity) and invite them to discuss what they are learning with the person sitting next to them or in a small group. This is also a helpful technique when some people in the class do not speak well the language being translated into - others can make points clear to them.

You can also have questions for a group to discuss after reading a Bible passage together (but this takes time: they will take a long time to copy the question, to read the passage and then to make sure that they get every detail of the question. They will often be afraid to miss the answer so they will do this in detail, even if the point seems simple to you.)

◆ **Use illustrations.**

Use simple, relatable examples of practical things. It is good if the class has to get up and move to do the exercise as usually they will not be used to sitting and listening for any length of time.

◆ **Utilize posters.**

Contextualize the BELT posters – draw them according to what you see around you (typical dress, buildings, cultural norms...) If you are coming up

with a new poster, try to distill the message into simple, large images with few words and relevant colors.

Help the class to copy the posters as they may have had little practice drawing. Encourage them to refer to the posters in teaching others. I have universally seen that participants were curious to learn what the posters meant, and that they understood the message better and were more able and excited to teach others with them.

*“Normally when we go to share the gospel with people, they are not interested to listen to us. But when we took the posters, they were curious to know what the picture was about and they listened to us.” Nepali BELT participant*

◆ **Have different people read the Bible aloud.**

Never assume people know a Bible story - some will be new believers, most will not have read much of the Old Testament. There will usually be a couple of people who read well - use them for long passages and ask others to read short verses (letting them know in advance is helpful for them to practice). This helps everyone to get familiar with the Bible, which alone is a big outcome from the seminar.

◆ **Include practical components.**

Some things that you can require a class to do are:

- Teach something from class to their family.
- Go on a weekend teaching outreach.
- Build something together.
- Do a trash pick up.
- Create a small craft that they can keep as a memorial of the message.

- Take an offering.
- Tell a Bible story to their neighbour.

◆ **Feedback reveals what is actually being learnt.**

In many places, rarely will participants directly respond to open questions like ‘what did you learn yesterday?’ But if you ask them to discuss with a partner first and then ask one man and one woman to share with the group, you will have greater success. This is also a simple way to do review.

One way to check if everyone is gaining the basic concepts is a True/False quiz where everyone in the class has 2 cards - one red and one green. You ask a question, they shut their eyes and raise the red if the answer is false, and the green card for true. From this, you can see how many people know the answer on their own (but that is a very individualistic perspective for communal cultures.)

◆ **Review is vital to learning.**

There are many ways to do this - discussion groups, team quizzes, having a group/individual present a short teaching from what they learnt, a ‘gallery walk’ where people go in pairs explaining the posters you have been using.

◆ **Tips for teaching through a translator.**

Use short sentences. Use complete sentences. Leave out unnecessary jokes. Use less pronouns. Go over the teaching beforehand with your translator if possible. Check that they understand your key words and key ideas. Learn what you can about how that language works and what words they use.

◆ **Relationship is vital.**

Try to build relationships and take away barriers that set the teacher apart. Here are some things that can help even when you do not speak the language (and they will love it if you try to learn some):

- Learn their name.
- Join them in food preparation and dish clean up.
- Sit with people at meals.
- Sit on the floor when everyone else is sitting on the floor, even if you are offered a chair.
- Join in sporting activities.
- Organize fun nights with games, drama, songs, dance and poetry.

I pray that you will teach with boldness and clarity and effectively transmit God's message to willing hearts!

# The Art of Bible Storying

By Mark Evans, BELT Thailand

A storyteller is like an artist with a blank page before them, creating a mental picture for all his/her listeners.

## Crafting a Story

### 1. Internalize the story

Read the passage of Scripture several times slowly. Try to internalize the story to make it your own. Internalizing the flow of the story is more important than memorizing every single word.

### 2. Find the following in the story:

- *Main characters* - try to connect with them as much as possible and learn about them
- *Locations* - position different characters and things in relation to each other
- *Emotions stirred up by the story* – these can be explicit or implied
- *Key words or phrases* – help in deciding what parts to include and if there are parts that can be excluded for clarity sake
- *Key quotes* – using quotes creates interest in the story

### 3. Stay as close to the Biblical text as possible

Don't add extra details or words not in the story or change its chronology of events, instead bring out the richness already in the story. You can, however, put difficult phrases in your own words to make it flow easier for you. As a storyteller, you can choose to leave out certain details or parts of the story for a desired effect or emphasis. It may be helpful to first write the story out as you would tell it.

### 4. Follow up questions

Identify the author's main point of the story and make sure that it comes out clearly. There are three types of questions:

- **Review questions** – ask “who” and “what” questions. Walk chronologically through the story to review the main characters and events. This is especially important in oral cultures - they need to

remember the story well in order to process deeper questions. Examples: “Who are the two main characters in the story?” “What was the question the person asked Jesus?” “What was Jesus’ answer?” “What happened next?”

- **Meaning and Biblical Worldview questions** – ask “**why**”, “**how**” or “what does this teach us about...” questions. Dig deeper into the story to bring out the author’s intended meaning. Draw out the main ideas and principles about God, people, sin, the family, civil government, etc. Examples: “Why did Jesus respond in that way?” “How do we see the love of God revealed by what happened in this story?” “What does this story teach us about sin?”
- At first you can keep the questions more general (open) to give room for a variety of responses, but more directed questions may be needed to point the audience towards the main point of the story.
- **Application questions** – ask specific questions about how the audience is going to immediately apply the main points of the story in their lives. Examples: “Why is this so important for us to remember for our lives?” “What are some practical ways we can do this in this coming week?”

## Presenting the Story

- For best comprehension and processing in oral cultures, you may want to tell the story a couple of times and even have each person in the audience tell it to their neighbor.
- The most important thing is that we visualize the story happening ourselves, because only then will the audience be able to visualize it as well. We must create a world in our minds as we explain how the story unfolds. “If you see it – they too will see it. If you don’t see it – they won’t see it.”<sup>12</sup>
  - **Reacting** - be an emotional guide to your audience by reacting to what you are seeing.
  - **Gesturing or miming** - point to or interact with things and characters in the scene as you talk about them. This makes them seem more real.

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<sup>12</sup> From The Backyard Bard, [www.thebackyardbard.com](http://www.thebackyardbard.com).



- **Acting** - demonstrate the actions or events that you are talking about.
- **Characterization** - use a different tone of voice / accent or different stance to distinguish different characters.
- **Interacting with the audience** - one essential difference between storytelling and acting is that you acknowledge the audience is there. This means you must have eye-contact with them and you can even use them to help tell your story.

### Using Sets of Stories

- Know the issues and barriers to the gospel in the target audience.
- Plan stories that will most effectively address these issues or barriers.
- Put stories in chronological order and connect the stories together by reviewing the previous story or stories and relating them to the new story (review-new-review).

# Overlooked and Under-Reached: Oral Learners

Compiled by Heidi Evans, BELT Thailand

A vast eighty percent of the world learns best through oral means (International Orality Network, 2018). These 6 billion oral learners require or prefer non-print forms of communication, depending mostly on verbal means to learn, to communicate with others, and to express themselves.

Interestingly, the record of the Scriptures themselves indicate that most were transmitted orally before being committed to writing. In fact, it has been estimated that only 5% of the people in the New Testament churches were literate. Rather than give a system of theology, the Bible primarily describes the characteristics of God and man through a wealth of narrative “pictures”; it also presents the great drama of salvation, and communicates through numerous symbols, such as baptism, the breaking of bread, the cross, etc. In fact, God’s greatest revelation is not written or even verbal, but the life of Christ, who is the visible symbol of the invisible God (Brown 2004).

The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization reported, “An estimated 90% of the world’s Christian workers work among oral peoples using literate communication styles. Orality issues raise an urgent cry for effectiveness.”<sup>13</sup> As oral communicators think, learn and communicate differently than print-oriented communicators (who depend on reading/writing for most of their communication), let us adjust our thinking and our methods in order to engage them more effectively.

See the following chart to understand how oral communicators learn best and implications for our seminars, teaching and interactions.

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<sup>13</sup> Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, *Making Disciples Of Oral Learners*, 2005, available at: [https://www.lausanne.org/docs/2004forum/LOP54\\_IG25.pdf](https://www.lausanne.org/docs/2004forum/LOP54_IG25.pdf) [accessed 28 April 2019]

Preferences of Oral Learners <sup>14</sup>	Implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn from real-life, people-oriented events. Use stories of human action to store, organize and communicate much of what they know.</li> <li>• Remember information as relates to events in life not as general principles.</li> <li>• Concrete relational thinkers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid principles and abstract concepts (eg. use Bible stories that show God's qualities more than abstract statements about his qualities.) Use realistic visuals.</li> <li>• Present Scriptures in clear chronological order.</li> <li>• Use life-like settings. Oral communicators learn themes more easily if the Biblical event is similar to situations in their own lives (events typical of their own culture and felt needs).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scripture passages that explain or encourage should be set inside Bible stories.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on Bible characters and the events that happen to them when presenting Biblical themes. (For example, in a message on forgiveness, begin with a drama of a typical family situation in which forgiveness is needed. As one family member asks another what to do, the second one relates a narrative from the Bible that exemplifies forgiveness – like Stephen forgiving those who were stoning him - and then gives the moral. This is then applied to the family situation.)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn by observing and imitating, listening and repeating, memorizing stories and songs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use audio and audio-visual media as the primary means of reaching oral communicators (more appealing and memorable).</li> </ul>

<sup>14</sup> Brown, Rick. 2004. Communicating God's Message in an Oral Culture. *International Journal of Frontier Missions*, 21(3), 122-128.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Bible storying, songs and repetition.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound quality is highly valued. Oral learners are deeply affected by the sound of what they hear. The credibility of a message is related to how realistic it sounds.</li> <li>• The appeal, attention span, and retention for an oral learner will be increased if the recording/speaking sounds nice and is naturally spoken.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use high-quality voices, heightened dramatic effects, appropriate music, song, and sound effects.</li> <li>• Narrative songs seem to be particularly characteristic of oral cultures. Scripture-in-song is the most popular method of presenting Scriptures; a straight reading of Scripture is the least popular.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue is highly valued. Oral learners tend to communicate in groups and learn mostly in interaction with others. They can't think about something very long without dialogue.</li> <li>• Speech is seen as a way of relating to people or as entertainment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interruption is not offensive, because dialogue is valued. It is not uncommon for people to talk and to ask questions during a storytelling session.</li> <li>• Use group discussion and include lots of interaction.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appreciate repetition in case something was missed the first time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repetition with slow, short, and simple sentences can make translation more pleasant to listen to, more likely to be understood, and easier to memorize.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value drama and melodrama. Prefer exaggerated characters in stories. Use exaggerated praise or scorn. Emphasize struggle against an enemy. If there are no actors, a good storyteller could make it feel like the drama is happening.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage exaggerated descriptions and melodramatic intonation. Although these may sound “phony” to print-oriented people, they can seem quite natural and appealing to oral communicators.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The practice of memorizing material passed down through generations leads to an emphasis on tradition, a looking to the past. So oral cultures tend to be slow to accept new information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated listening to new concepts (through stories that show themes contrary to their worldview) can help to overcome the reluctance to accept new ideas and changes in belief.</li> </ul>

## Our Top Three Mistakes

By Heidi Evans, BELT Thailand

Beginnings are chocked full of excitement, daring and dreaming, but they can also be riddled with mistakes. As BELT, we have certainly had our share of blunders and gaffes through the years - particularly the early years, as we had much growing to do. Thanks to the gracious input from Wycliffe/SIL and other insightful seminars, mentors and books, we continue to develop and improve - and offer better training as a result. Our hope is that future teams can learn from (and not repeat) our top 3 biggest mistakes. Here they are.

**Less is more:** When the first BELT seminars were pioneered, as graduates from YWAM training schools, we were so excited about the material we had just received, we wanted to pass on as much as we could. What resulted was three weeks packed full of teaching – one topic in the morning, another in the afternoon. We tried to give participants a mini version of our training, but instead overloaded our students with such vast amounts of material that it was impossible to take it all in.

This is no longer the case. We have since learned to tackle only one topic a day, and simply focus and allow mastery of 1-3 key ideas, in roughly twenty-minute chunks (before changing things up with an activity). Afternoons are reserved for interactive skills training, small groups, literacy groups or outreach preparations. ***Covering less well, meant participants could actually learn more.***

**Participatory learning:** In those early days, we presumed the only way to get our mounds of content across was through lecturing. Viewing our polite participants' eyes getting heavy under the weight of our one-sided presentations, we would push on. After reconsidering the effectiveness (or rather ineffectiveness) of our methods, we came to conclude that ***teaching is not actually about passing on information, but it is rather about motivating participants to want to learn and then seeing them unlock their own learning as they become active agents in the discovery of truth.*** By connecting content with the interest, knowledge, and needs of our participants, they then became more engaged as they saw its relevance. By

using question-based learning, they became actively involved and motivated, giving opportunity for biblical truth to reshape their worldviews.

Now the focus is off us altogether as the ones providing the answers. Instead, the focus is on our audience discovering answers through interaction with the Bible (and each other), directed relevant questions, and other related learner-based activities. We have taken on the role of guides, as we spark our students' interest to learn, point them in the right direction, reinforce answers, fill in the gaps, review essentials, and expound on main ideas. And when our participants are then able to understand, remember and reproduce key truths, we know they have learned well. When those truths further result in transformation, we know God has also participated in their learning, our ultimate goal.

**Contextualization:** I remember an early BELT presentation on the character of God that used a bicycle as the visual illustration. I also remember our participants not understanding it in the slightest. After all, we were in the middle of the jungle where bikes were not. And so began our journey into the world of contextualization.

***Contextualization attempts to communicate in terms and ways that makes sense to people within their local cultural setting.*** This extends to not only our content and stories, but also includes our posters, techniques and ourselves (our dress, interactions, manners...). If our goal really is understanding, we need to adapt our thinking, communicating and behaving to fit our audience's cultural framework. This involves research, lots of questions, consulting with interpreters and organizing committees and hosts, lots of observation and intercession. By maintaining an openness to trying new ways of doing and seeing things, we can create connections between our world, our participants and the contextualized world of the Word of God.

Let's together create a BELT culture where it's normal to be learner centered – considering our participant's ways of learning and capacities and culture, regularly adjusting our methodology to be most effective and conducive to learning, teaching in a way that honors and blesses and models a new way to actively engage others.

Here's to a brighter, less error-filled future!

## Application! Application! Application!

Dr. Tom Bloomer, University of the Nations

As YWAM, we place a high value on the transformative discipleship process. That means each BELT session is incomplete unless it is accompanied by opportunities for Holy Spirit probing, response and application - the most integral part of our teaching times. Let us **not rush the work of the Spirit!** Let's be facilitators of the Holy Spirit, incorporating worship and intercessory response as we sense when revelation is happening. Let's not rely on cookie cutter application activities – let us **wait on the Holy Spirit for what He is wanting to uniquely do on each occasion.**

Tom Bloomer<sup>15</sup> offers some insights to ensure effective application of the Word.

**Praise and worship** are invaluable preparation means to receive the Word. Praise and worship are also very effective at the end of the teaching time. They permit the student to commit what he or she has just heard to the Lord,

hear directly from Him in confirmation, and make concrete the application. We must leave time for this kind of 'vertical application' which can seal the word in our hearts.

*"It is essential to give people the opportunity to act on the truth of God."*

*Oswald chambers*

Another vitally important form of vertical application is the **prayer time** immediately following the message.

Meals, breaks, or other activities are

not our priority: application of the Word is the priority. The Spirit's presence is often especially manifest at the end of the message. I have seen Him

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<sup>15</sup> Excerpted from Effective Application of the Word; Tom Bloomer, Manaus, November, 1993; Printed April 12, 2017 Page 14 of 435. 2017 UofN Reference Guide. Copyright © 1995 by YWAM/UofN; revised 1997, 2000, 2005, 2015.

grieved because of the way the session has been concluded. Life-changing covenants are sometimes made at the end of the message, and it is here if anywhere that application must be made.

**Small groups** were originally designed to be application times for the messages. Students could have time to ask questions that were more personal. The small group leader could explain points that were not clear, relate the day's teaching to what the Lord was saying to the student earlier, etc. There would be time for prayer one for another, taking the application deeper.

**Outside the classroom:** Students observe teachers closely, often listen more attentively outside the classroom than in. It is in these times that application of the classroom content can be most effectively made. Eating areas, sports zones and relaxing spaces are often the best ministry locations.

**Skits and role-playing** can be very effective application strategies. They can be effectively prepared in small-group time, as the students wrestle with the concepts in order to be able to present them visually.

**Intercession** for the nations is perhaps the best all-around learning and application activity we have. In real intercession, a student is listening to the Lord, and praying His prayers. The students are integrating what they have heard in the classroom about God's heart for the nations, missions, mercy and judgement, etc., and using these concepts under Divine inspiration to produce effective prayers that will be used of God to actually change real situations. What better application could there be, than processing the teaching with God Himself?

**Outreach:** the outreach was originally designed for application. Staff are there to relate the present experiences, often difficult and/or unexpected, to the teaching from the Word. Teachings such as living by faith, forgiveness, spiritual warfare, prayer, confronting sin, servant-hood, etc., are challenged to be lived out. Outreaches are a sixteen-hour-a-day learning situation, and staff who are sensitive to the opportunities will be teaching informally all day long.



## The Laws of Learning<sup>16</sup>

<p><b>1. The Law of Primacy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First impressions are the most lasting.</li> <li>• What we do at the beginning is vital to help adults overcome fears &amp; doubts.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How to Implement the Law</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a safe, fun place to learn; include group bonding.</li> <li>• Be approachable. Take initiative to know your students.</li> <li>• Explain schedule, expectations, goals.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. The Law of Intensity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dramatic, or exciting teaching is more likely to be remembered than a routine or boring one.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How to Implement the Law</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use memorable words, stories, pictures, dramas, experiences.</li> <li>• Express enthusiasm for subject.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. The Law of Effect</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persons accept and repeat tasks that are pleasant and satisfying and avoid ones that are frustrating.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How to Implement the Law</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use different methods in teaching.</li> <li>• Eliminate fear, frustration, humiliation, boredom in teaching.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. The Law of Disuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A skill not practiced or knowledge not used will be forgotten.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How to Avoid the Law</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach things that can be practiced immediately &amp; repeat the skill often.</li> <li>• Link new info with what is already learned. Review.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. The Law of Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent feedback and review helps people remember.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How to Implement the Law</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use various ways to review.</li> <li>• Get feedback to ensure understanding</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. The 20/40/80/90 Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only 20% of what is heard will be remembered. 40% of what is heard and seen. 80% of what is heard, seen and handled. 90% of what is taught to others.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How to Implement the Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use visual aids, posters, object lessons, dramas, models, games, hand motions, outreaches.</li> <li>• Avoid lecturing for more than 20 min.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. The Less is More Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presenting less material well is more effective than heaping information on the audience.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How to Implement the Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on essentials &amp; promote mastery of them.</li> <li>• Cover 1 topic/day. Get feedback to check on learning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. The Rule of Relevance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The more relevant the communication is, the better the response will be.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How to Implement the Rule</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contextualize. Plan relevant applications, illustrations.</li> <li>• Find out students' needs before teaching.</li> </ul>

<sup>16</sup> Adapted from Davis, E (2005). Principles of Adult Learning and Teaching, Teaching and Training Adults, Workshop manual, Dallas, TX, pp 55-60.

# Transformative Learning Environments

Compiled by Heidi Evans, BELT Thailand

We all long for teaching that transforms and fruit that remains. Various ingredients come together in the transformation equation, including personal character, Bible content, teaching methods, and the Holy Spirit. One final element we want to examine is that of the learning environment.

“Relationship is at the center of the universe and the image of God... Just as our triune God is relational, we are made in that same image... So much of our identity is based on relationships, and our identity is shaped in connection with people... Classrooms that have strong group connection and identity (with strong attachment, feeling loved and valued) are usually far more transformative. That’s why building group bonding and identity is key to (impacting seminars), having group members that relate well to each other, support each other, respect others’ viewpoints, and who work effectively together.”<sup>17</sup>

The impact of positive group dynamics in an effective learning environment cannot be underestimated:

1. Impact on inner growth and healing. Wounded people heal in relationships. Maturity, repair, and faith development are all intimately tied to relationships.<sup>18</sup>
2. Impact on physical health. Research shows that belonging and social support (being loved, respected, and understood) can have a profound effect on health (including reducing stress, heart disease and improving quality of life). Trust, honesty, and compassion are the three elements necessary in these healing relationships.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Smith, B (2018). *Facilitating Spiritual Growth in Bible School Staff: Towards a Biblical Theology of Humanity*. Unpublished Capstone Project, University of the Nations, Kona, Hawaii, pp 37, 40-41, 93.

<sup>18</sup>Friesen, J., 2010. *Living from the Heart Jesus Gave You*. Pasadena, CA: Shepherd's House.

<sup>19</sup>Jonas, W., 2022. *How the Right Relationships Can Help You Heal*. [online] Psychology Today. Available at: <<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/how-healing-works/201811/how-the-right-relationships-can-help-you-heal>> [Accessed 2 April 2022].

3. Impact on learning. Heightened negative emotions (like anxiety, self-doubt, boredom), have been shown to impede learning. So sensitive, warm, welcoming environments can help ease negative emotions and allow learning to take place.<sup>20</sup>

Signs of strong group bonding and identity:<sup>21</sup>

- Classrooms tend to be noisier, have joking and personal interaction
- Healthy disagreement is present with respect for different opinions
- Important questions receive a thorough airing
- Trust, support and affirmation are evident
- Individuality and diversity are accepted
- Each helps others to learn
- Group engages in activities and discussions
- There is freedom and responsiveness during application times
- Students share openly at a deeper level (vulnerability)
- Comradery continues outside of class times (enjoy being together)
- There is empathetic prayer for one another

Ways to promote connection and build group bonding:<sup>22</sup>

- **Pray.** God can work supernaturally in hearts to produce the unity and comradery we desire. He can also provide insight and inspiration to help in the process. Ask for the Holy Spirit's involvement in each life and in the classroom. Pray for each participant by name.
- **Create a safe, fun, supportive environment.** Participants need to feel cared for, welcomed, understood, and respected which helps in building community. Developing a climate of trust and fun allows for the group identity to be formed.

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<sup>20</sup> Hui Chin Lin, G., 2022. *Pedagogies Proving Krashen's Theory of Affective Filter*. [online] Files.eric.ed.gov. Available at: <<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED503681.pdf>> [Accessed 3 April 2022].

<sup>21</sup> Adapted from Davis, E (2005). *Building a Cohesive Adult Group*, Teaching and Training Adults, Workshop manual, Dallas, TX, p 139.

<sup>22</sup> Some ideas adapted from Raccoon Gang, *What Makes a Good Learning Environment*, 2018, available at: <https://raccoongang.com/blog/what-makes-good-learning-environment/> [accessed 28 April 2019] and Teaching Monster, *Ten Ways to Create a Positive Learning Experience*, 2018, available at: <http://teaching.monster.com/benefits/articles/8704-10-ways-to-create-positive-learning-experiences?page=2> [accessed 28 April 2019].

- **Begin the day with worship and prayer for each other.** Regular worship and ministry times give way to encounter God’s presence in a powerful, healing, and unifying way. Allow different student teams to lead these times.
- **Be approachable, warm and engaging.** From the very beginning, help students get to know you (through your introduction, on breaks, during meals and outside of class). This will go far in rebuilding past poor educational experiences and in establishing camaraderie and trust.
- **Use lots of group work, interactive games, group bonding activities.** Especially in the beginning, this builds healthy connections among learners. Games and activities help break down cliques, barriers and awkwardness, and assist in integrating all students, providing a sense of belonging. Mixing up the groups each time allows for more bonding opportunities.
- **Use an open classroom set-up that is warm and inviting** and doesn’t feel institutional. Chairs can be arranged in a circle or semi-circle rather than in rows like at school. If appropriate, the teacher should sit (as a fellow-learner), rather than stand. Bring flowers. Utilize candles and other creative reflective exercises. Share snacks, especially in the first get-to-know-you session. Using an appealing, welcoming environment will help create an environment of warmth and facilitate openness to you and to each other.
- **Practice hospitality** - whether it’s a meet and greet or having a love feast, hospitality builds a warm, safe and inclusive environment.
- **Provide unrushed opportunities for vulnerability, sharing, and application.** Listen with compassion and respect. Keep confidences.
- **Maximize informal discipleship times** outside the classroom which can open the doors to greater trust and vulnerability.
- **Address participants by name.** Names are our identity - use them as much as possible. Learn your students’ names and the correct pronunciation from the beginning. Use games to help students get to know each other’s names straight away.
- **Model and promote mutual respect for all.** Build a culture of respect for students and their opinions. Strive for mutual understanding rather than agreement and conformity. Use “please” and “thank you” - giving respect affirms the value of the individual and builds healthy rapport.
- **Minimize negative emotions.** Prepare student-centered activities that encourage interest, fulfillment, and motivation.

- **Listen. Be fully engaged.** Students deserve our attention. We should be careful that when listening, we are not physically turning away, sighing, frowning, talking to someone else, on our phones, or looking away. We show people they matter by our body language.
- **Make eye contact.** This recognizes students for the valuable people they are. (Be mindful to be culturally appropriate.)
- **Accept more than one answer.** If students are brave enough to answer, thank them. Say “That’s not exactly what I’m looking for” instead of “Wrong answer.” Ask open-ended questions like “What do you think”.
- **Keep it positive.** Encouragement is a key to motivation and building confidence.
- **Greet students at the door.** This creates a welcoming environment from the very beginning. It sends the message they are important and their presence is desired.
- **Give time to answer questions.** Students need at least 6-8 seconds to process a question. Provide time for them to reflect, write down a few words, discuss with a neighbor, etc. This gives students long enough to think of an answer or learn what their partner is thinking so everyone is prepared to answer.
- **Address learners’ needs.** Keep your schedule flexible to give room to meet expectations, concerns, and needs. This sends the message that they are important; that you are there to help them succeed.
- **Celebrate successes.** When learners’ achievements are recognized, it creates a sense of achievement and reward. It is especially significant when it involves the whole group.

# Preparing an Effective Teaching

By Ben Poulton, formerly BELT Nepal

*“Write yourself clear, pray yourself deep.”*

Preparing even a short teaching may take 6-20 hours, depending on how well you already know your material. Do not stop when you have mastered the content. You also need to take time to plan interaction with your audience.

## Always start with Prayer

- Ask for the presence of the Holy Spirit to be with you.
- Ask for God’s guidance and wisdom (Ps. 127: 1-2).
- Consider your Audience
- Who will be attending the teaching?
- What do they want to hear?
- What are the specifics that the participants need to learn (knowledge, skills and attitudes)?
- What is God wanting to do in their lives, community?

## Use a Good Introduction to Grab Attention

*What is the purpose of an introduction?*

- Greeting
- Spark interest
- Introduce the topic
- Establish credibility
- Build a platform/foundation for the message.

*How long should your introduction be?*

About 1/10 of your message. Too long and you cut into your message. Too short may be confusing or may not achieve your goals.

*Possible Techniques* (you may use more than one to cover all the goals of an introduction):

- Introduce yourself and your family (picture)

- Testimony e.g. how this topic (or studying/preparing for it) has changed or challenged you
- Personal story that relates to the topic
- Bible story with questions
- Pose a question and give time to reflect and discuss
- Prepare audience for the topic with a prayer
- Drama
- Relate to a song, testimony, etc from before your message
- Relate to a current event/ news /festival
- Joke (relaxes you, gains attention – test it out first if it’s culturally appropriate)
- Explain significance of the topic
- Connect to a previous teaching; build off a review

The historical background of a Bible book is not usually interesting enough by itself as an introduction. Make sure that any story you use is clearly linked to your teaching.

Your introduction and conclusion should have a plan to them. It may be helpful to write them out. A weighty message with an unprepared introduction and conclusion is like a dull axe.

### **The Body Expounds the Topic**

*“If you are not clear about your message, no one will be clear about your message.”*

- Start with the end in mind – what is the goal of your instruction? Write out your overall goal and specific objectives that outline the development of your content.
- What will the participants do in order to learn the content? Record creative learning tasks, exercises, and activities to meet each objective.
- Select activities that appeal to different learning styles and get the content across well, and even try to get the participants to practice doing something. Variety (in activities, techniques) is helpful to motivate the learners and maintain interest.

- Make sure you spend the most time on the most important point(s). Go over them again and again; review them; do activities to reinforce the content. Get feedback to make sure students get it.
- Explain each main point using a story, a testimony, a diagram or a drama or something else.
- Personalize outlines by sharing your experiences that relate to the topic; create fresh activities to reinforce the content.
- Show how your outline (and poster) fits in with the flow of the teaching to that point. Your teaching is part of the overall story of the Transformation Series and part of the journey of each student.

## **The Conclusion Wraps it all Up**

*What is the purpose of a conclusion?*

- Bring closure and finish strongly (signal end of teaching)
- Review
- Application: leads to change (this is important so keep enough time for it). Plan and pray for a specific response (even if you have given this message before, you need to pray about how to apply it to this group)

*Possible Techniques:*

- Neighbors discuss what they learnt
- Question to reflect /discuss /record answer
- Get alone to pray
- Action eg. practice forgiveness; confess something
- Create a memorial
- Write a response in a journal
- Record sin, lay at the cross, and burn
- Prayer for one another
- Song with prayer response
- Wait and listen to God together
- Review (Repeat points; get audience to repeat; pairs discuss; take questions)
- Poster (Explain points as a review; have a volunteer explain; have audience explain in pairs)



## Creative Teaching Techniques<sup>23</sup>

### Warm-Up Activities

**Partner Introduction:** Participants find a partner. They share who they are, why they came, and what they would most like to learn. Then each person introduces his or her partner to the larger group.

**Symbolic Object:** Individuals find something either inside or outside the room that is symbolic of their job (interests), country, or culture, and share it with a partner.

**What's Unique:** Individuals in groups of two share with each other something about themselves that is unique. Then each individual introduces his or her partner to the group.

**Ball Toss:** The person holding a ball says his name then calls out another person's name and tosses the ball to that person. The recipient repeats his own name and calls out another name and tosses the ball to that third person. This continues until everyone in the room has received the ball only once. After the first round, the same pattern is repeated but 2 more balls get added and the speed picks up. If a ball is dropped, it is returned to the very first person of the chain. The goal is to get all 3 balls through the chain without dropping them.

**Descriptive Words:** Individuals in groups of two write or draw descriptive words/images about themselves on pieces of paper. The partner selects one or more, and the individual has to explain the one(s) that are chosen.

**Good News/Bad News:** Individuals share with the person next to them one good thing or one bad thing that has happened; then they pray together.

### Learning about People's Expectations

**Ball of String:** The leader states an objective or expectation, then throws the ball of string to someone in the group while still holding on to a piece of the string. This individual states a personal objective or expectation, then throws the ball to another person—and so on. The string becomes intertwined in everyone's hands, showing how the group will relate to

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<sup>23</sup> Adapted from Davis, E (2005). Techniques for Creative Adult Learning, Teaching and Training Adults, Workshop manual, Dallas, TX, pp 111-119.

each other in all kinds of ways during the instruction. The participants have to rewind the string, illustrating how the group must cooperate to accomplish tasks.

### Activities That Teach Content

**Case Study:** A real-life situation is presented. Participants analyze and suggest solutions, usually in groups.

**Content Cards:** Each individual is given a stack of cards. Each card contains a statement, or image (from one of the posters) that needs to be learned or reviewed. Persons work in pairs or small groups and explain the cards.

**Flash Cards:** Each term or image is copied on a large card. Participants choose a card, then find the person(s) with the matching term/image. After five minutes to discuss the terms/images, each team explains their card to the group.

**Large Content Cards:** A statement or image is printed on the front of a large sheet of paper (using different colors if possible). If desired, the explanation can be printed on the back. They can be: (1) placed around the room for reinforcement of learning; (2) chosen from a stack and explained to the group; and/or (3) divided and given at random to small groups of participants for discussion.

**Group Discussion:** The group discusses and reports back about questions related to the teaching.

**Idea Inventory:** Individual participants suggest as many ideas as possible on a given subject or problem. After all the ideas are presented, they are evaluated and/or prioritized.

**Item Selection:** Flash cards or statements/images written on sheets of paper are placed face-up on a table. Individuals choose one for explanation to the group.

**Personal Reflection:** In a fifteen-to-twenty minute period of quiet thought, participants read specific Scriptures or think through a problem, and have a time of reflection. There may be sharing at the end of the quiet time if desired.

**Question-and-Answer Period:** In a ten-to-twenty minute period, the teacher asks the group a variety of specific questions or vice versa.

**Role Play:** A situation that needs to be changed or needs insights is acted out. After hearing the teaching (or brainstorming solutions), the situation

is re-enacted applying correct principles. Reverse the role play so participants switch roles and act the situation out again - helps participants see both sides of the situation.

**Skit:** A brief dramatization of a circumstance or scripture is presented.

**Posters:** Large sheets of paper or cloth can be used to present and/or display content. These can be reviewed at the end of a teaching or unit.

**Tutoring:** One learner teaches another individual.

**Word Association:** Participants share the first thoughts that come to mind about a key word, concept, or idea.

**Object Toss:** When an object is tossed to them, each person has to name one of the points that has been taught and explain it.

**Sharing and Prayer:** After participants reflect on the material taught, they divide into groups of three or four. Each person shares at least one thing they believe the Lord would have them work on as a growth area, and another individual in the group prays for that person and the specific request.

**Problem Solving:** The learners are placed in groups of three or four, and each group is given a real-life instructional problem to solve. A summary is presented to the larger group, and there must be at least three suggestions of how the problem can be handled.

**Panel Discussion:** 3 or 4 persons discuss different ideas about the topic and answer questions from the audience.

**Debate:** 2 parties compete in persuading others to accept or reject a view.

**Creative Writing:** participants develop stories, poems, journal entries, radio scripts, newspaper columns, or songs on a designated topic.

## Ways to Place People in Groups

- Draw numbers, words, or topics
- Individual choice
- Match halves of Bible verses
- Number off
- Same color of candy selected forms the group
- Same animal sound (animal card picked from hat) forms the group

- Neighbor-Nudge: Persons discuss questions with the person(s) sitting next to them
- Matching Cards: Distribute large cards - half have different words or images on them, one to a card. On the other half of the cards is written an explanation (or complementary image) of one of these words/images. Every person selects a card, then has to find the person who has the matching one.

### **Ways to Select a Group Leader**

- Appoint someone in advance
- Have someone volunteer
- Have the group select someone
- The first (or last) individual to sit down with the group
- The individual who has come the longest (or shortest) distance to attend
- The individual with the birthday closest to the present date
- The oldest (or youngest) individual in the group

### **Ways to get Feedback**

**Can of Worms:** Questions, problems, or unresolved points are written on slips of paper and put unsigned in a can. Individuals draw one out and read it aloud in turn. The individual, others in the group, or the teacher can give a response.

**Circular Response:** In small groups, each person can share what they are thinking about the issue or subject under discussion, three sentences maximum. There is a second opportunity to go around in the opposite direction. Comments can be made only in turn. Each person has the option to pass.

**Debriefing:** The participants debrief with each other in small groups, with someone reporting a summary back to the larger group.

**Sweet and Sour:** Offer sweet candy in one container and sour candy in another. Persons choose one, or both, and then share what they have learned that has helped them or what may be personally or culturally difficult to change or what needs more explanation.

## Ways to Review the Learning

**Ball Toss:** As the ball is tossed to an individual, that person has to call out the answer to whatever is being reviewed (choose carefully so as not to embarrass those who may not know or wouldn't want to speak).

**Choosing Candy:** The participants are divided into small groups on the basis of their choice of a piece of candy from several types available. Those who choose the same kind form a group. Each group is assigned the task of reviewing a certain part of the teaching.

**Flash Cards:** The instructor has large cards with key words or images which the learner must explain before the group (smaller groups may be better).

**Gallery Walk:** The posters are displayed around the room. Then, to review, the participants walk around in twos or threes, discussing their content.

## Transformation Series Level 1 Illustrations

Stories, dramas, and activities can all be utilized to bring teachings to life and bring clarity and impact to our messages. Understanding the setting, cultural background and practices of the audience should influence what stories or illustrations to use and content to emphasize. Note: Bible stories (told skillfully and accompanied by a few questions to engage the audience in the text) can be used effectively as a way of introducing a topic (see samples in TS Storying sets). What follows is not an exhaustive list of illustrations – your divinely-inspired creativity opens up many more possibilities.

### Pursuing the Truth

- **Demonstration:** Take the class outside and find a tree. (If it is impossible to go outside then get a volunteer to act as a tree.) Get a knife and declare that you are going to kill the tree, then cut off a leaf. Ask if the tree will die now. Then try again with a small branch. ‘Will it die now?... How can I kill this tree?’... ‘You must cut it off at the root!’ It is the same with changing a situation- we need to get to the root ideas.
- **Drama:** blindfold one person – have another blindfolded person lead them (verbally) through the room. Q: How well could they get around? Read Luke 6:39. Jesus accused the deceived Pharisees of misguiding others, resulting in trouble. Who wants to fall into a pit or walk into a wall? Remove 1 blindfold and have that person now verbally lead the blindfolded person through the room. How’d it go this time? Follow the One who speaks truth and it will go well with you. Also learn God’s message well enough so we can lead others in the right way (can’t disciple others in what we don’t know ourselves).
- **Game:** telephone (when persons in a circle whisper in their neighbor’s ear what the original person first whispered to their neighbor. Break into girls circle and guys circle). Last person shares what heard (usually completely different message). Point - must go to the original source to get the real message - (then can know for sure the message is not distorted). So we need to go to God’s Word to get the real message, not going to others whose ideas can be very distorted.

- Drama: Running without a message (2 Samuel 18:19-30). Two compete to get to teacher first, shouting 'I have a message for you' but when asked, each does not know what the important message is. Third person calmly walks up with the Bible and reads Prov 19:2 "Enthusiasm without knowledge is not good; impatience will get you into trouble." (GNT) Sometimes we eagerly share without first having a good understanding of the message ourselves.
- Story: True experience of being lost (in the Himalayas but could be anywhere) because of not looking at a map. Instead relied on the advice of a fellow traveler - who mistakenly gave directions in the wrong direction, which led to the edge of a precipice at 16,000 ft. The team almost mutinied. Then pulled out the map and somehow managed to get to a tea house before losing all daylight in the snowy mountains. The Bible is our map/guide (just like the map was put together by people who know the way). We don't just trust the ideas of others to be correct. Following wrong advice can lead to disastrous consequences. Note: maps are not used in most non-western cultures, but a person who knows the way (has been before) can be substituted in the example instead.
- Activity: Thoughts-> actions-> habits: have a volunteer put a coat on and off 3 times. Ask the class which arm was first? When you form a habit, you will do things the same way. Guard your thoughts to form good habits.

## **The Greatness of God**

- Illustration: Describe the vastness of the universe (if possible with a picture from NASA / Hubble telescope) as a concrete picture of the infiniteness (unmeasurable greatness) of God. Eg. The closest star (Alpha Centaurus) is a mind-boggling distance away. Follow this with the personalness of God - that God calls each of the billions of stars by name. Then make an application point that God knows your name and everything about you and relates to you on a personal and relational level (unlike the gods of many belief systems).

- Stories: Use Bible stories to show the greatness of God (especially important in Buddhist or animist cultures) over nature (Jesus calms the sea), sickness (Jesus heals a man born blind) and death/suffering (Jesus raises Lazarus).
- Activity: Teach hand signs for each of the 6/7 days of creation to introduce God's amazing abilities at creation.
- Demonstration: God sees all – tell students one person will hide (let them quietly slip outside). Students look for him/her in classroom. Can anyone find them? God sees them. All of our ways are laid bare before Him.
- Demonstration: Have neighbors begin to chat/read to each other simultaneously. Who did God hear? Everyone. He hears your private cries, silent whispers.
- Activity: give everyone playdough to make an animal. Now have them breathe life into them. Whose came alive? The divine breath breathed into a pile of dirt and made it a living being. With just a word, He created light. Who compares?

## The Goodness of God

- Activity: After reviewing God's greatness, to clarify the difference between greatness/nature and goodness/character, bring someone up and have the audience describe him. Then point out their hair color, eye color, strong flexing muscles, etc - these are characteristics describing their physical attributes which don't change (greatness/nature). Character is what they do with these attributes - they can choose to hit someone if they are upset or cuddle someone when happy.
- Story: Moses on Mt. Sinai asks God to show him His glory (the fullness of who God is). Ex 33: 18-23. God reveals only His "goodness" - His character attributes (i.e. his greatness/nature attributes are not listed because an understanding of God's character attributes is essential to knowing God.)
- Story: The prodigal son – act or tell. Solicit what we learn about the father? Jesus relates the heart of the father in the story to the Father Heart of God. It connects a lot of the character attributes together in one



story. It is important to show how these character attributes are all related - coming from a heart of love.

- Activity/illustration: Use a flower to talk about the character attributes of God (love moves through the stem to nourish the petals (all of God's character attributes are motivated by love); the fragrance is like the holiness of God; the sun faithfully shines each day on the flower. Distribute a flower to each participant (or make one) – can record on each petal each attribute as share about them.

### **Building Friendship with God**

- Drama: Act out the story of Mary and Martha. As good as Martha's intentions were, Mary chose the better thing.
- Illustration: Show a bill with the face of the country's leader on it. Talk about what a good friend he is. Quote information about him. Then have pre-arranged an audience member who asks questions about the leader's favorite food, his hobbies, what he's most passionate about, when you last had a chat with him etc. Knowing about someone doesn't equate to knowing him personally. Same with God.
- Drama: two friends meet, one does all the talking without once stopping to let the other speak a word. Is this what our times with God are like? Take time to listen.

### **Value and Design of People**

- Story: value of people. From Genesis 16, where Hagar runs away from Sarah. God takes notice of a runaway, disgraced, foreign, slave girl. Hagar even comes up with a new name for God: "The God who sees me."
- Demonstration: hold a local bill of high currency (who wants it?) Crunch it up, step on it, spit on it. Who wants it now? Did anything I do change its value? Or its purpose? It doesn't matter what's happened in life, what's been said, how we've been treated, each person is of infinite worth and value to God. His design and purpose hasn't changed for us despite what our circumstances or feelings may dictate.

- Drama: Mind, will and emotions. 3 people act as the mind, will and emotions of 1 or 2 people, both mind and emotions try to sway the will in a decision-making process (e.g. who to marry, who to hire/fire...)

### **God's Laws of Love**

- Story: daughter falling through an unbarred window as she was getting a closer look at toys below. Church later installed bars - was it to deprive other kids? It was to protect other children from also getting hurt. Same with every single law God gives us - for our protection so we do not get hurt. His laws are like those bars of protection. – keep us in a zone of safety
- Activity: ring of safety. People stand in a circle, locking arms. One person outside the circle tries to break through (don't let them). Then have one person leave the group declaring they will go their own way and they get pushed down by the person on the outside. God's laws are there for our protection. Satan would love to tear us down, and is able to when we walk away from God's protection.

### **The Root of Sin**

- Drama: Me! "Me" is the only word ever used in this drama. Any activity is possible- sport, singing a duet, playing a guitar, drawing, getting married. Every activity begins amiably, but when ME gets in the way, it ends in chaos. Vary the tone but only use the word me, singing or drawing or sport work well for competing, marriage is also good in some settings.
- Demonstration: a glass of clean water is like a right heart, but as we make selfish choices (give examples and as do, add dirt or dark food coloring) – who wants to drink this?

### **The Destructive Consequences of Sin**

- Drama: share the story of your life apart from Jesus - as do, slowly wrap rope around your limbs and body (or have 1 person do this) until you

can't move. This is what sin does to each one of us. List other consequences of sin - personal wounds, hurt relationships, trust lost, financial set back... We are stuck, trapped, slaves to sin. How can we be freed? Without going too much into grace of God teaching, mention in the next session we will talk about God's amazing solution to our sin problem - which is Jesus (throw off rope).

- Teach the participants to make paper airplanes to communicate the care that went into God's design of us. Then destroy them, showing the destruction that sin causes to that design.

### **The Kindness of God in Salvation**

- Drama: share the testimony of hurts and pains acquired in your life - pacing with a back pack on your back which gets heavier with each hurtful thing that happens to you, each lie we believe, each wrong choice we make. Share about your encounter with Jesus – drop backpack (or have “Jesus” remove it) - load is removed by Him.
- Activity: Sin box. With a cross in front of the room, read the crucifixion story. Jesus died so we might live. As someone plays an instrument softly, have people ask God if there's anything in their lives that pains his heart? Maybe a hidden sin? Displeasing thought life? Hurtful tongue? Angry spirit? Record whatever God might bring to mind on a piece of paper. Then in a symbolic act, go to the foot of cross and leave the paper there. When the group is finished, take a box outside that has those papers in it, and burn it, then bury it. Symbolizes God removing our sin as far as the east is from the west. Celebrate the forgiveness he offers to the repentant heart.

### **Salvation from Sin (repentance and faith)**

- Activity: faith fall. Have someone drop off a table into the clasped arms of a group - a great demonstration that faith is more than mental ascent, it's an action as well.

## Missions

- Testimony: have a local who is engaged in mission/reaching out share their heart - what they do, why they do it, what God is doing (go through their testimony with them beforehand).
- Illustration: bring out some objects. Eg a shirt - who does this belong to? Pull out your backpack - who does this belong to? Your wallet? Your every breath? All belong to Jesus. We give what is His back to Him - as a gift of gratitude - to invest it in what matters most to Him.