

## Discussion starters for Children's Ministry Training Capturing the Story, Measuring the Success

by Rhonda Haslett

### **Theme: Super Heroes**

Don't forget the snacks and mixer activities that are related to the super hero theme along with your party decorations.

### **Opener: (6 Min)**

Say: Today there are many heroes among us, and for just a moment we want to capture the story of one of our Fellow Ministers who has done an amazing feat.

**Share with pictures a story of someone on your team that has done something incredible. Be sure to use the techniques from the "story telling handout" you will utilize in the brainstorming portion of session one to reinforce learning.**

### **Transition**

After the story of the minister, close by stating something like: "\_\_\_\_\_ has done an amazing thing and you wouldn't have known about it unless someone captured the story for you today."

Effectiveness is not only seen by the fruit of our actions, but also by the stories our kids are sharing with one another and parents. We want to take a bit of time to share success stories as well as attempt to share ideas on how to create more ways to share the life changes we see in those to whom we minister.

### **Session 1:**

**"It's a Bird It's a Plane..." - Call It by What It Is**

**How Stories provide proof of effectiveness in ministry.**

**(approximately 35 Minutes)**

### **Opener**

Ask: Think back to a time when you worked through something difficult in ministry and when the end came, the results were worth sharing. Share your story with someone. (4 minutes)

OR

Have you ever experienced something so amazing and not had the opportunity to share it with someone? (You could just explode with anticipation or if it was bad news- so heavy you felt depressed...)

Ask: How did you feel after you heard your friend's story of how he or she worked through a difficult situation?

Get large group responses (compelled, motivated, compassionate...)

Say: Would you say that his/her story was proof of the situation; that it was the testimony/ witnesses story about what happened? Stories told are like evidence of what is happening in our lives.

Say: We want to hear great stories of success in our ministries AND we want to share great stories with others.

*Transition:* (1 Min) Let's take a few moments to look at some common story telling techniques and see how we can apply them to the story you just heard as well as utilize those techniques in our classes to make the stories come alive.

*Work:* (5-10 Min)

Take just 5-10 minutes to share a resource on storytelling to get the participants engaged. (<http://www.jamiedoyle.com/rector.html> or <http://www.eldrbarry.net/roos/eest.htm> You can utilize the resources provided or come up one of your own. Keep it simple to allow the discussion to be the outcome of the resource). Make copies of that resource for your attendees to look over as they discuss- and as a resource for storytelling in their own ministries after the inspiration of the meeting wears off.

*Action:* (10 Min)

Ask:

- From the resource just reviewed, what are the basic elements of a story?
  - Get responses from the large group (3 minutes)
- Now, with your partner, identify those same elements in the stories you shared/heard in at the beginning of today's session. (3 minutes)

- What made the story so powerful or interesting? (1-2 minutes each)
  - If time allows, get responses from the large group.
- How did hearing the story encourage you? (1-2 minutes each)

Get the groups attention back to the front. Wrap up any discussion as you feel appropriate before concluding this portion of the training.

Closing comments: (3 Min)

How did we know Batman was so great or that The Hulk actually was compelled to protect people in his anger or that Larry Boy truly knew where to find his strength? Someone captured the story. Someone told the story in a way that interested people. What they did was worth telling.

It is our responsibility as ministers to share the stories of God's Word in a relevant and compelling manner that will help those within our influence turn to God and praise Him. Not only is it our responsibility to share the story of God through His word; He has placed us within a community to encourage one another. Our stories of how God impacted our lives is highly effective in bringing others to Christ as well.

In our ministries there are worthy stories of kid's lives being changed and minister's lives changed by their service. Those stories have to be shared! God is bringing hope, healing and salvation. When others hear about the good reports they are moved to pray or get involved in the work of the Lord.

In our next session we will develop some ideas on how we can share the stories of those among us as a tool of discipling others.

**Session 2: (60 Minutes is estimated time to complete)**  
**“Super Hero meeting at the Hall of Justice”**  
**Ideas and Brainstorming**

**Opener: (5 min)**

[preparation]

Bring in adds or place pictures of adds on a power point slide or show a commercial on the web (Or hey, why not all of the above?). To prove your point of many approaches to promotion, you could bring in a variety of tools and approaches to advertising.

Ask: (as a whole group)

- Each of these companies are promoting something. Can you tell what it is? What do you think their goal is for each of these companies?
- What method do you see used for promotion? (video, pictures, written documents, music, etc.)
- Is there one that best motivates you?

Absolutely! In this session we're going to try to apply the story telling techniques talked about in our last session to the open possibilities for helping get the stories out about what God is doing in our ministries.

[In preparation]

Create signs with the single number one, two, three or four on it and post it around the room in different areas.

Jigsaw approach to learning and brainstorming

- Depending on how many people are at the training, have them get into groups of 4-5 in a group. Then number each person 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5.
  - **(10 Minutes) Begin brainstorming**
  - **A list...**
    - While the entire room is in their groups of 4-5, ask everyone in the room to help you list the ways you can share stories of God's working 1) in your class, 2) in your church or 3) in your community.
    - Depending on how many groups you have identify the top ways to share the God stories (If you have a group of 4 then identify the top four ways to share the God stories. If you have a group of 5 then identify the top five.)

- Now...assign a way of sharing a story to each of the papers you posted in the areas of the room. (Remember, the ones you prepped before-hand and hung around the room).
  - Have one member from each group move to the area of the room where the brainstorming on how to share a story of God's working in the ministry. Ask the group to be as specific as possible by coming up with what would be said, who would be contacted to make this happen, how would it look)
    - Ideas: Bulletin highlight (what are some ways to get this to happen?)
    - Idea: If through your website (what way can you highlight a story of God working in your ministry through the web?)
    - Idea: If on a bulletin board (what are some ways this could be executed?)
    - Idea: If you have a regular meeting, this could be a place to share stories (how could this come to pass)
    - Idea: Platform time (will it be live interview, video, or just a power point slide highlight?)
- **(10-minutes)** Then allow time for discussion and brainstorming to happen.
  - You should have 4 or 5 groups of people brainstorming at each topic. (BE SURE EACH OF THEM TAKE NOTES BECAUSE THEY WILL GO BACK TO THEIR ORIGINAL GROUP AND TEACH THE OTHERS IN THE ORIGINAL GROUP OF 4-5 WHAT THEY LEARNED AND BRAINSTORMED)
  - Set the parameter of discussion to allow brainstorming to come up with answers to: "What and How, When, Where and who" will be a part of making this idea come to pass?"

**(20-25 Min)** go back to their original group (remember the 4-5 people) and teach what they have learned to the rest of the group.

- Give each person 5 minutes in their group to teach the others beginning with the topic that was numbered 1 and then 2 and so on until all topics have been taught to their little group. (If there is a group of 4 this should take 20 minutes. If there is a group of 5 this should take 25 minutes.) **Someone will need to announce when the 5 minutes is up for each person teaching the topic to their group.**

**5+ Minutes-** After the brainstorming time, give some time for personal reflection. Ask them to write what they will attempt to implement in their own ministry setting from this brainstorming time. If time allows let those who wish, share what they came up with. It might inspire others!

**Closing: (6 Min)**

What story telling time of God's working would be complete without immediate stories told by others from this meeting. Where did you see a super hero in our training time today? Share your story right now! (take one or two testimonies)

**Wrap up:**

**Today we**

- **looked at some techniques for good storytelling**
  - **in hopes to help us not only identify some fabulous workings by God in our own group of people**
  - **but also to help us share the good story of those who have gone before us from God's word.**
  - We came up with some ideas that can be implemented for our church ministries, classes among students and even within our own lives.

I have enjoyed being a part of some amazing super hero's here today. I am pleased that God has privileged us to capture and share the stories of past and present as a way to see the effectiveness of our ministries.

Close in Prayer.

**Other Resources related to Storytelling and the holiday of Easter**

[http://www.religionlink.com/tip\\_050131a.php](http://www.religionlink.com/tip_050131a.php) A dozen ideas for Lent, Easter and Passover

<http://www.sugardoodle.net/Easter%20Ideas/Easter%20Story%20Cookies.shtml> Easter Story Cookies as a way to share the story of Easter.

<http://www.teacherhelp.org/easter.htm> Completely free Easter skits, story ideas and activities related to the Easter Story.