

The Case of the Big Nothing

Genesis 1



Story-telling Tips

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Choose story action cues and/or prepare storyboard figures, if using. (Included in Visual Aids book)
3. Practice telling story with the storyboard pictures, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary.

During your presentation:

1. Maintain as much eye contact as possible as you tell the story.
2. Put up storyboard figures/add story action cues as you tell the story. Allow the children to help you put them on the board, if desired.
3. Include the children in your story with a few questions about what they think will happen or words/concepts that might be new to them.
4. Watch the kids for signs that their attention span has been reached. Shorten, if necessary.

INTRODUCTION/ LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS

“Our story is called: The Case of the Big Nothing. Here is your listening assignment.” Read from Detective Dan’s Listening Assignment signs, but questions are summarized below:

Detective Dan’s Lesson #1 Listening Assignment:

I need to find out:

- 1. What started out as a big nothing?**
- 2. Who changed the big nothing into something? What did He change it into?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is Isaiah 44:24

“I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself.”

I need to find out:

- 1. What did the LORD start with when He made the heavens and the earth?**
- 2. What did the LORD use to stretch out the heavens and spread out the earth?**

Detective Dan’s Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but only 4 of them are in the story.

Our six clues were: a computer, a bird; a fish; a mountain; a construction worker; and, a lion.

Hold each of them up for the children to see as you identify them.

I need to figure out:

- 1. Which four belong in the story and which two don’t?**
- 2. Who did the LORD give a special spirit so they could know Him and praise Him?**

Read the assignment questions, THEN SAY,

“Ok, Deep Down Detectives! Put on your best listening ears and see if you can hear the answers to Detective Dan’s questions. When I finish telling the story, we will see if we can answer all the questions.”

Read the Bible Truth story, answer questions, present the gospel and lead in prayer.

Answers to questions; the gospel; and, ACTS prayer are included with the story text.

The Case of the Big Nothing *Genesis 1*

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics) Numbers correspond to storyboard pictures and placement upon the storyboard. Always feel free to use less pictures, if it's best for your kids. Simply black out the numbers next to pictures you do not plan to use. All pictures are found in the Visual Aids book. Put BG (background) pictures on storyboard ahead of time. SB pictures (listed below in story text) are added to board as you tell the story. These numbers are also found on the back of each picture.

Tip: Stack pictures in numerical before telling story for easy use. Use sticky-back velcro to attach pictures to storyboard felt. Use sticky-tac putty to stick a picture on top of another picture.

Look around you. Look out the window. What do you see? Trees? Flowers? Birds? Squirrels? Dogs? The sun? The sky? People?

What do you see?

This story is about how all these things came to be.

Now, close your eyes. Shut them tight. What do you see? Nothing? Our story starts out in a time when there was not even the darkness you see when you shut your eyes. It was back when everything was a BIG NOTHING! That's right! Nothing at all! Nothing, that is, except (SB1) God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God has always lived. He had no beginning and He will have no end! How amazing He is!

I don't know about you, but I don't LIKE nothing. I love all of the beautiful and enjoyable creatures and things I see around me in this world.

What do you like in the world around us?

Now, I can't imagine being very happy living in a world of BIG NOTHING. I can only imagine being lonely!

But God wasn't lonely at all, when our world was just a BIG NOTHING. He was happy.

And God wasn't just a LITTLE happy, He was COMPLETELY happy. Yes, He was as happy as He could be back then, before everything was made.

Can you guess why?

It is because God is always perfectly happy just in Himself—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. After all, there is no one more wonderful to know and love than God. All the creatures and things we love and enjoy in this world are just little reflections of how wonderful He is. God didn't need all those little reflections to make Him happy. He already had Himself! And that was best of all! Perfect Wonderfulness!

But even though God wasn't lonely and didn't need anyone or anything else to be happy, He CHOSE to make something...actually A LOT of somethings. He chose to make our whole world. He did it, just because He wanted to. He did it, because He had (SB2) a great plan for it—a plan to display His beautiful goodness and share it with a very special kind of creature who could know and enjoy Him.

But how DID God make everything? Well, if you or I make something new, we have to start with some sort of STUFF: clay, or paper, or cardboard, or sticks, or something.

What do you think God started with?

But not God. He didn't need any stuff to make this world. God started with a BIG NOTHING... and Himself. He would create everything by (SB3) His own powerful word. He simply said what He wanted to be and it was made. Just as simple as that.

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

God started His great work with the earth. At first, it didn't have any shape yet and it was empty and watery and oh, so (SB4) dark. (SB5) God's Spirit hovered over the waters. God was ready to bring shape and life to everything.

(SB6) "Come, light!" God said, and a beautiful light began to shine. He separated it from darkness and gave a name to each. The light was called Day. The darkness was called Night. That was what God did on the first day He made things.

On the second day, God separated the watery stuff so that there was open air around the earth. He called the watery stuff up above, (SB7) "sky". The (SB8 place next to SB7) rest of the waters stayed down on the earth. That was what God did on the second day He made things.

On the third day, God said, "Waters on the earth, gather together! Dry land, appear!" So (Move SB8 down to bottom of board) the waves of the water bunched together and soon land could be seen. (SB9) Mountains and (SB10) flatlands. (SB11) Hills and valley. God named the dry land "Earth," and the waters He called, "Seas." God looked at the wild, splashing waves. He looked at the rich, dark ground, and it was good. There was no sin in it. It was just the way He wanted it to be for His great plan.

Now God began to fill all the spaces He had made. "Trees and plants, sprout up on the earth!" And as soon as He said it, up popped grass and leafy plants all over the earth-- all over (SB12 cover up SB9) the mountains; and (SB13 cover up SB11) the hills and valleys; and (SB14 cover up SB10) the flatlands. And oh, what wonderful trees with such yummy fruit! God looked at the beautiful green world and it was good. There was no sin in it. It was just the way He wanted it to be for His great plan.

On the fourth day, God said, "Lights, fill the sky!"

What are the lights God made for the sky?

God made soft lights for the night— (SB15) stars and the moon. A (SB16) big, blazing light for the day—the Sun. "Give light to the earth, day and night. Make hot summer, crisp fall, cold winter and warm spring, year after year," the LORD commanded them. And so they did. That was what God did on the fourth day He made things.

On the fifth day, God made creatures to live in the beautiful sky and in the wavy waters. "Fish and sea creatures, fill up the waters!" God said. "Wriggle and splash! Have families and make lots more fish! Birds, fill up the skies! Flap around and soar! Have families and make lots more birds!" He commanded. And so, they did.

(SB17, SB18) Brightly colored fish, mighty sharks, and whales, twisty-turny dolphins swam about in the seas. (SB19) Eagles glided on the wind, (SB20) parrots squawked from the trees, and (SB21) hummingbirds buzzed busily around all the flowers. That was what God did on the fifth day He made things.

On the sixth day, God filled the earth with land animals.

What are some of the land animals God made?

"Come, (SB22) cows and horses, goats and sheep! All you farm animals! Come, (SB23) bears and lions and elephants! All you wild animals! (SB24) Come, ladybugs and lizards! All you little creatures that creep along the ground! All of you: have families and fill up the earth!" God said. And so, all those creatures came to be, by God's command.

God looked at the beautiful, busy world of creatures He had made. There was no sin in it. It was just the way He wanted it to be for His great plan.

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

God had only one more creature left to make. It was that one, very special kind of creature that He planned to share Himself with.

Can you guess which creature God had not yet created?

It was people! People were to be the best creature of all, for He planned to give them a special gift no other creature would have.

“Let’s make people in our own image. They will have a spirit --a special heart-- to know and love Me and each other,” God said.

So, God made (SB25) man and woman with a special heart inside. And He gave them names.

Do you know what the names of the first man and woman were?

God called them “Adam and Eve.” He put them in Eden, the garden home He made for them. “Eat the good fruit from the trees. Have a family, and fill the earth!” He told them. “I’m putting you in charge over everything I’ve made on earth. Explore it all and make it your home.

Adam and Eve were happy to obey. What a beautiful world God had given them! How wonderful it was to live in it! How fun it would be to explore it and make it their very own home! There was so much to do. So much to enjoy. And most enjoyable of all, was knowing and loving God.

At the end of the sixth day, God was done creating everything He had planned to create. He looked at it all and was very pleased. It was all good. It was all (SB26) VERY GOOD. There was no sin in it. It was just right. It was perfect for His good plans. And then, God rested from His work.

Cracking the Case: (story wrap-up for Listening Assignments)

It's time to see how we did with our Listening Assignment.

Detective Dan's Lesson 1 Listening Assignment:

1. What started out as a big nothing? The world we live in.

2. Who changed the big nothing into something? What did He change it into? God did. He created it with His powerful word.

For You and Me:

Isn't it amazing to think that God created the whole world with just His word! How very powerful He must be! But God didn't just use His great power to create the world. He even uses His great power to do great things inside of us. When we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior, God not only forgives us our sins, but He makes us His people. He changes our hearts so that they can know and love Him. He helps us to live His good ways. Ask Him to help you. He delights to do this!

Detective Dan's Lesson 2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Isaiah 44:24:**

"I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself."

1. What did the LORD start with when He made the heavens and the earth? Nothing.

2. What did the LORD use to stretch out the heavens and spread out the earth? His powerful word. He spoke and it came to be!

For You and Me:

God created the heavens and the earth to be a wonderful display of His goodness. He created people with a special heart to know and love Him, and to see and enjoy His goodness as they lived in His creation. Sadly, we have all chosen to disobey God, since those perfect, first days when God created the world. We have broken what God made so perfectly. But God has made a way for us to come back to Him. How? By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. God will forgive our sins and make us His people. He will restore the friendship He made us to have with Him. Ask God to help you. He loves to answer this prayer.

Detective Dan's Lesson 3 Listening Assignment:

Our six clues were: a computer, a bird; a fish; a mountain; a construction worker; and, a lion.

1. Which four belong in our story?

The bird, fish, mountain and lion belong.

2. Who did the LORD give a special spirit so they could know Him and praise Him? People.

For You and Me:

God created the heavens and the earth to be a wonderful display of His goodness. He created people with a special heart to know and love Him, and to see and enjoy His goodness as they lived in His creation. Sadly, we have all chosen to disobey God, since those perfect, first days when God created the world. We have broken what God made so perfectly. But God has made a way for us to come back to Him. How? By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. God will forgive our sins and make us His people. He will restore the friendship He made us to have with Him. Ask God to help you. He loves to answer this prayer.

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:****Can You Tell Me What God Made?****God Made All Things Good...****God Made Everything Good in Heaven and Earth!**

How wonderful life would have been, if people had kept on loving God as He created them to! How wonderful life would have been, if nothing bad had ever come into God's good world!

But bad things DID come into God's good world. People have not kept on loving or obeying God, have they? Why, even you and me, we disobey God. We do bad things. And now, we all deserve God's punishment. This is such sad news!

But there's good news, too! God loved us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to suffer and die on the cross, taking all the punishment for the sins of God's people. On Day Three, Jesus rose from the dead, proving He had really beaten sin and death for them. Now, God will forgive all who turn away their sins, and trust in Jesus as their Savior. That's how we become God's people.

If we do, what a wonderful beginning that will be! We will get to know God in our hearts, now. And one day, we will get to live with Him in heaven forever.

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, God, for being our Good Creator. You made people, in the beginning.
- C** God, You made people to know and love You with the spirit You gave them. But we all have disobeyed You. We have all chosen to not love You. We have lost the gift of knowing You. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You, God, for all the wonderful things You made for us to enjoy, like the sun and stars, animals, flowers, snow, families, etc. Thank You most of all, for making us in Your image so we can know You and see how wonderful You are in everything we see around us.
- S** God, work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from disobeying You and trust in Jesus as our own Savior. Help us to know You and love You with the spirit You put inside us. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit, that we might live for You and enjoy You forever. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Go to Lesson Plan, p.9 for the script to the rest of the lesson.