



LANGUAGE ARTS

STUDENT BOOK

▶ **6th Grade** | Unit 9

LANGUAGE ARTS 609

Reading the Bible

INTRODUCTION | **3**

1. SECTION ONE 5

BIBLE STORIES, PARABLES, AND PROVERBS | **6**

REPORT WRITING | **12**

SPELLING AND HANDWRITING | **16**

SELF TEST 1 | **21**

2. SECTION TWO 24

BIBLE POETRY AND PROPHECY | **25**

REPORT WRITING | **30**

SPELLING AND HANDWRITING | **38**

SELF TEST 2 | **42**

3. SECTION THREE 46

BIBLE HISTORY AND LAW | **47**

REPORT WRITING | **50**

SPELLING AND HANDWRITING | **52**

SELF TEST 3 | **56**



LIFEPAC Test is located in the center of the booklet. Please remove before starting the unit.

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Analyzing The News

Introduction

The Bible was written to, for, and by real people. All the words of the Bible were written to real people living at the time the words were written. All the words of the Bible were written for real people, whenever they might live. All the words of the Bible were written by real people. What to write and how to write it was told to the writers by the Holy Spirit of God. Peter wrote (2 Peter 1:21), "...holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Nevertheless, real people were both the instruments of the writing and the reason for the writing.

Because God wanted real people—people He loves—to understand His will and walk in His way, He caused many of His teachings to be told in story form. Even history is a kind of story. Another means God used was poetic form. Poetry speaks to the feelings of people.

In this LIFEPAAC® you will study the literary forms that are found in the Bible. You will study how to make a good written report, and you will make a written report on a Bible theme.

Objectives

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you should be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAAC. Each section will list according to the numbers below what objectives will be met in that section. When you have finished this LIFEPAAC, you should be able to:

1. Identify seven Bible literary forms.
2. Describe the main characteristics of Bible stories and parables.
3. Choose a specific topic for a written report.
4. Identify sources of information for a written report.
5. Describe the main characteristics of Hebrew poetry.
6. Describe the main characteristics of Hebrew prophecy.
7. Take notes for a written report.
8. Identify the purpose of writing a report.
9. Outline notes for a written report.
10. Tell why Bible history is different from other history.
11. Tell what is meant by the term "The Law" as used to identify Bible writing.
12. Draft, correct, and finalize a written report.
13. Spell new words correctly.
14. Correctly form letters.

1. SECTION ONE

Did you know that most of the “Bible stories” you have enjoyed hearing in Sunday school are “short stories” just like the ones in literature? You will study the short-story form and learn to find the short stories in the Bible. You will also learn about parables in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. You will learn the way to start to make a report and begin the preparations for making a report on a Bible topic. You will also learn to spell new words with two, three, and four syllables. In handwriting you will practice writing difficult letters.

Section Objectives

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Identify seven Bible literary forms.
2. Describe the main characteristics of Bible stories and parables.
3. Choose a specific topic for a written report.
4. Identify sources of information for a written report.
13. Spell new words correctly.
14. Correctly form letters.

Vocabulary

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section:

delegation (del' u gā' shun). A group of representatives.

exploit (eks' ploit). Bold unusual act; daring deed.

intensify (in ten' si f ī). To make stronger in feeling or idea.

mock (mok). Laugh at; make fun of.

parallelism (par' u lel iz um). Likeness; correspondence; agreement.

raid (rād). An attack.

specific (spi sif' ik). Definite; precise; particular.

stimulate (stim' yū lāt). Excite; rouse to action.

unleavened (un lev' und). Not leavened; made without yeast.

valour (valor) (val' ur). Bravery; courage.

Note: All vocabulary words in this LIFEPAK appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

Pronunciation Key: hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, term; it, īce; hot, ōpen, ôrder; oil; out; cup, pūt, rūle; child; long; thin; /TH/ for then; /zh/ for measure; /u/ represents /a/ in about, /e/ in taken, /i/ in pencil, /o/ in lemon, and /u/ in circus.

BIBLE STORIES, PARABLES, AND PROVERBS

Stories are good teachers. Stories are more interesting than plain teaching, and stories show the right way by examples. Even short illustrations are stories of a kind. The “short story,” however, is a recognized literary form. Short stories, as a recognizable literary form, are found in the Bible. Parables are stories, too, but have a different form. Proverbs are short sayings that suggest good principles. You should learn to recognize and appreciate each of these Bible literary forms.

Short story. A literary form found in the Bible is the short story. The stories in the Bible are all true stories. An exact example of the short-story form is the book of Esther. The book of Ruth might be called a long short story. It fits the form of a novelette, but, of course, it is a true story.

To fit the short-story form, a story must have only a few main characters. Any other characters must be necessary to the action and not interesting in themselves. The time covered by the story must be brief—a few hours, a few

days, or possibly two or three separated periods of time, all closely related in some way. Not much description is given, either of the looks of the characters, the look of the scenery, or the thoughts of the characters. A short story covers too brief a time to allow for describing character development. The action of the short story centers around one happening or possibly two or three closely related incidents.

Most of the short stories of the Bible have been included in the Pentateuch, the historical books of the Old Testament, and the Acts of the Apostles. Stories about the heroes of certain periods of history make history real. Especially in Bible history, stories about individuals who obeyed God or individuals who went against God’s will are found. These stories make us understand that people make history.

Look for the “short stories” that are woven into the history of Israel. The one you are going to read is in Judges, Chapter 6. To follow is the story of the call of Gideon, retold in today’s language.



The Call of Gideon

Gideon drew himself up to the edge of the wine press pit and looked cautiously around. Not seeing any of the **raiding** Midianites, he climbed out of the pit and stretched. Gideon was a strong young man, but threshing the wheat was back-breaking work, and hot. Gideon threshed the

wheat down in the wine-press pit so that the Midianites would not see it.

As Gideon wiped the sweat and threshing dust from his face and neck, he wondered how much longer his father would stay in Ophrah in the land of Manasseh. Many of their neighbors had gone to live in dens and caves in the mountains. Some had found places in the mountains that were naturally walled-in by rocks and were easy to guard.

“Seven years!” Gideon thought, sighing. For seven years the Midianites had swarmed over the land, crossing from the east side of the Jordan River. They arrived suddenly, every harvest, thundering in on hundreds of camels. Those huge, ill-tempered beasts alone were enough to scare the Israelite farmers into helplessness. Each harvest time the Midianites pitched their tents on the farms. Each time they rounded up all of the sheep, oxen, and asses. Each time they packed up all the grain and fruit, and off they went. Neither the prayers to Jehovah nor the sacrifices to Baal, which some of the Israelites were making along with their Baal-worshipping neighbors, seemed to make any difference.

Suddenly Gideon was aware of someone sitting beneath the big oak tree near the wine press.

“The Lord is with you, you mighty man of **valour**,” said the stranger.

Gideon’s heart began to pound. Something was different about the man and about the greeting. Could the stranger be a prophet?



No prophet had been preaching in Israel that Gideon had heard of. Nevertheless, Gideon decided, the stranger must be a prophet, so he said, “Excuse me, but if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? Why do we not see miracles like the wonderful deeds the Lord did for our fathers when He brought them from Egypt? Now the Lord has thrown us aside and let the Midianites ruin us.”

The stranger looked straight at Gideon and said, “Go in the strength I give you! Go and save Israel from the Midianites! Go, for I am sending you!”

Gideon was astonished at the face of the stranger—a face of holiness and power and love. Gideon was astonished at what the stranger said. Could it mean what it seemed to mean?

Scarcely able to reply, Gideon stammered, “Oh sir, how can I save Israel? My family is the poorest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and no one thinks much of me.”

“But I will be with you! And you shall destroy the Midianites as quickly as if they were one man!” was the man’s reply. Now Gideon was really stunned.

Too humble to believe at once that he would really be called to save Israel, too shy to ask more questions but needing to be sure, Gideon asked the stranger to show him a sign.

Gideon also remembered his manners. No stranger should ever be allowed to leave without first being offered hospitality, and Gideon knew he should offer him food.

“Please stay here until I can go home and return with a present for you.”

“I promise to stay,” replied the stranger.

Hurrying home, Gideon quickly prepared the roasted young goat and the bread (there was only time for **unleavened** flat cakes). He put the meat and bread in the same basket and carried the broth in a pot. He did not want to take a servant with him. Suppose the stranger were gone? Suppose he had imagined the whole scene? How foolish he would look in front of a servant.

With relief Gideon saw that the stranger was still under the oak tree. Gideon approached and presented the food.

“Place the meat and the bread on this rock,” said the stranger, pointing to a rock close at hand. “Pour the broth over the bread and meat.”

Gideon obeyed, his excitement increasing all the while. His feeling that this was no ordinary stranger was growing stronger.

The man reached out with his walking staff and touched the meat and bread. Instantly fire came out of the rock and burned up the bread and the meat, wet as they were from the broth! And just as instantly the stranger disappeared!

“Oh, help me, my Lord God!,” cried Gideon. “I am afraid because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face.”

Though the pounding of his heart sounded like thunder to him, Gideon could still hear the voice that said, “It is all right. Do not be afraid. You will not die.”

Gideon sat down to think about the meaning of all that had happened that day. It gradually became clear to him that the Lord God had really called him to the task of saving the



Israelites from the Midianites. But he was not sure what he should do next.

After a while Gideon thought, “I will at least build an altar here where the angel of the Lord appeared to me and where God talked to me. The altar will show my Baal-worshiping neighbors that Gideon worships Jehovah, the Lord God.” He set to work gathering the stones and piling them up to form an altar. “The Lord God promised me that He would use me to bring peace to my people. I will name this altar ‘Jehovah’s Peace,’ and it will stand here as a witness.”

The day was gone when Gideon had finished. Gideon was worn out with the hard work of the day and the excitement of the special thing that had happened. He ate his supper and went to bed expecting to sleep soundly.

Sometime after everyone was asleep, Gideon was suddenly wakened. The voice of the Lord God again!

“Gideon, take your father’s best ox and hitch it to the altar of Baal that belongs to your father. Pull the altar of Baal down! Then cut down the heathen sacred grove next to it. Build an altar for the Lord God on the rock. Use the wood from the grove for firewood. Sacrifice the ox on the altar.”

Gideon was wide awake and ready to go by the time the orders were given. “I won’t wait until daylight,” he thought. “The men of the city will

be furious. If I wait until daylight, I might not even be able to do it.”

As quietly as he could, Gideon awakened ten of his men servants and told them the plan. Silently they harnessed the ox and placed the ropes around the altar. Praying that the people of the city would be kept soundly asleep, Gideon urged the ox forward. Down tumbled the altar.

Setting some of his men to cutting down the grove, Gideon with the others quickly built a new altar to the Lord God. Then, with his men gathered around, Gideon witnessed to his trust in the Lord God by sacrificing the ox on the altar.

Daylight was greeted by shouts of, “Who did it? Who pulled down the altar of Baal?”

That kind of secret does not stay secret long, and soon a **delegation** of men from the city were at the door of Gideon’s father, Joash.

“Bring him out, Joash. Bring Gideon out. We are going to kill him for tearing down Baal’s altar and cutting down our sacred grove.”

Joash stood in the door and **mocked** them, “Do you have to take care of Baal? If Baal is a god, let him take care of himself. Let Baal handle it if someone pulls down his altar.”

And that was the end of that matter—but just the beginning of the wonderful things God had planned for Gideon. Gideon did indeed rid the land of the Midianites. The stories of his **exploits** are written in Bible history and his faith has been mentioned many times over the centuries.



Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1.1 What does Judges 6:1 tell you that helps you to understand the story better?

1.2 Was Gideon’s family worshiping and following the Lord God or Baal?

1.3 Had Gideon been taught anything about the Lord God?

Fill in the guide to the story about Gideon.

1.4 I. Setting:

II. Characters:

A. Main characters: _____

B. Other characters: _____

III. Action: _____

Review what you read about what makes a short story and answer yes if the story about Gideon followed the following measures of a short story.

- 1.5 _____ Few main characters
- 1.6 _____ Short time covered
- 1.7 _____ Not much description
- 1.8 _____ Action centers around one happening or two or three closely related happenings

Parable. A parable is a short teaching story. The story compares something to something else in order to help people see relationships or consequences. Some form of parable has been known among almost all peoples of the world. The Israelites knew parables that were something like the Greek fables. Jotham, the youngest son of Gideon, told one such parable to warn the men who had killed his brothers. Jotham's parable is recorded in Judges 9:8–15.

In the parable Jotham told, he compared the men of Shechem and Millo to trees and the man they had chosen as king to a rough, thorny shrub. He compared the better men they might have chosen to be king to the olive tree, to the fig tree, and to the grape vine. All of these are useful plants, but the thorny shrub is useful only to start a fire.

Sometimes parables are explained, sometimes they are not. Jotham explained his parable to mean that trouble would come from Abimelech, who had been chosen king. He said fire would come from Abimelech and devour the people of Shechem and Millo. The rest of Judges chapter 9 tells what kind of trouble actually happened.

The parables of the New Testament are better known. Jesus used parables frequently throughout his teaching ministry. Jesus' parables were somewhat different from Old Testament parables. Jesus' parables always had special meaning that could only be known to those who had spiritual understanding. Often Jesus explained the spiritual meaning to His disciples when they were away from the crowd.



Read the following Bible passages and write the parable that each passage records.

1.9 2 Samuel 12:1–4

1.10 2 Kings 14:9

1.11 Isaiah 5:1–7

1.12 Matthew 13:3–9

1.13 Mark 2:21

1.14 Luke 20:9–16

Proverb. Proverbs are a form of Hebrew verse. Proverbs are not poetry in the same way psalms are. Proverbs have the characteristic of Hebrew verse that is called **parallelism**. Read this proverb (Proverbs 15:1):

“A soft answer turneth away wrath:
but grievous words stir up anger.”

Notice these things: (1) the proverb is in two parallel parts; (2) two contrasting things are the subjects of the two parts (soft answer and grievous words); and (3) different words

are used for the same thing in the predicates (wrath and anger). Sometimes the second part of the proverb explains or **intensifies** the first part.

Open your Bible to any chapter of Proverbs and notice how frequently this pattern is followed. Parallelism is a literary device used by the Hebrew writers to help people remember. Every people has its own proverbs. The Hebrew proverbs belong to Christians as well as to the Hebrews because God caused them to be written down for our benefit, too.



Match the parallel parts of the proverbs.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1.15 _____ A faithful witness will not lie:</p> <p>1.16 _____ A wise son heareth his father's instruction:</p> <p>1.17 _____ Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith,</p> <p>1.18 _____ A friend loveth at all times,</p> <p>1.19 _____ There is a way that seemeth right to a man,</p> <p>1.20 _____ Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain:</p> <p>1.21 _____ The wise shall inherit glory: of fools.</p> | <p>a. than a house full of sacrifices with strife.</p> <p>b. but the end thereof are the ways of death.</p> <p>c. for out of it are the issues of life.</p> <p>d. but a false witness will utter lies.</p> <p>e. but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.</p> <p>f. but a scorner heareth not rebuke.</p> <p>g. and a brother is born for adversity.</p> <p>h. but shame shall be the promotion of fools.</p> |
|---|---|

Complete the following statements.

- 1.22** A short story that teaches by comparing something to something else is a _____ .
- 1.23** A short, wise saying is a _____ .
- 1.24** In the Bible parables may be found in both the a. _____ and the b. _____ .
- 1.25** The time covered in a short story is _____ .
- 1.26** Short stories have _____ main characters.
- 1.27** The short-story form may be found in the Pentateuch, the
- a. _____ and the
- b. _____ .

REPORT WRITING

In this section you will learn the beginning steps of writing a report, and make preparations for a report that you will write on a Bible topic. You will learn how to choose a topic and where to find information.

Study each section carefully. If you can learn to follow these beginning steps, it will help you

write a good report. Though it may not seem like it, these steps will actually save you time!

Choosing a topic. Sometimes a topic is given to you so you do not have a choice. Other times you must choose the topic yourself. Here are some guidelines for you to follow.

SELF TEST 1

Write true or false (each answer, 2 points).

- 1.01 _____ Short stories are found in the Bible.
- 1.02 _____ Proverbs are long poems.
- 1.03 _____ Parables are very similar to proverbs.
- 1.04 _____ Parables are found in the New Testament and the Old Testament.
- 1.05 _____ Short stories have long, involved descriptions.
- 1.06 _____ Short stories in the Bible are true.
- 1.07 _____ Parables are always explained.
- 1.08 _____ A topic for a written report should be specific.
- 1.09 _____ You should always use just one source for a report.
- 1.010 _____ Your topic choices will decide where you will go for information.

Write the letter of the correct match (each answer, 2 points).

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1.011 _____ is a short teaching story. | a. the book of Esther |
| 1.012 _____ is characteristic of Hebrew verse used in Proverbs. | b. proverbs |
| 1.013 _____ was an idol. | c. parable |
| 1.014 _____ should interest you. | d. Gideon |
| 1.015 _____ are short sayings that suggest good principles. | e. parallelism |
| 1.016 _____ are brief in time. | f. Pentateuch |
| 1.017 _____ rid the land of Midianites. | g. the angel of the Lord |
| 1.018 _____ often used parables. | h. Jesus |
| 1.019 _____ is an example of a short story. | i. short stories |
| 1.020 _____ consists of the first five books of the Old Testament. | j. a topic choice |
| | k. Baal |

Complete the following statements (each answer, 3 points).

- 1.021** An example of a literary form included in the Pentateuch and in the Acts of the Apostles is the _____ .
- 1.022** Jotham's comparison of the men of Shechem and Millo to trees and the man they had chosen as king to a rough, thorny bush is an example of a _____ .
- 1.023** Parallelism is a literary device found in _____ .
- 1.024** The topic, *Animals of the World*, would be too _____ .
- 1.025** Short stories have _____ main characters.
- 1.026** A good source of information for a Bible topic would be the _____ .
- 1.027** A _____ compares something to something else in order to help people see relationships or consequences.
- 1.028** _____ are not poetry in the same way the psalms are.
- 1.029** The Hebrew proverbs belong to _____ as well as to the Hebrews.
- 1.030** "...Holy men of _____ spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Write the letter of the correct answer on the blank (each answer, 2 points).

- 1.031** The story of Gideon is an example of a _____ .
 a. short story b. parable c. proverb
- 1.032** A short story has a setting, characters, and _____ .
 a. a moral b. parallelism c. action
- 1.033** Gideon must have been taught something about the Lord God because _____ .
 a. he was Jewish
 b. he saw the angel of the Lord and cried to the Lord God for help
 c. he was hiding from the raiding Midianites
- 1.034** The passage in the New Testament telling of new cloth sewn onto old cloth is an example of a _____ .
 a. proverb b. short story c. parable
- 1.035** "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" is an example of a _____ .
 a. proverb b. psalm c. parable
- 1.036** "The wise shall inherit glory:" is parallel to _____ .
 a. "for out of it are the issues of life."
 b. "but shame shall be the promotion of fools."
 c. "but a false witness will utter lies."

- 1.037** "The wicked flee when no man pursueth:" is parallel to _____ .
 a. "but the righteous are bold as a lion."
 b. "but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame."
 c. "but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."
- 1.038** An example of a topic that is too broad is _____ .
 a. Hurricanes b. Animals of Speed c. The Bible
- 1.039** An example of a specific topic is _____ .
 a. Birds of the World b. Mars c. Astronomy
- 1.040** A good source of information for a report on *Hunting Whales* is _____ .
 a. an encyclopedia b. A Christian magazine c. a craft book

Answer the following questions (each answer, 5 points).

- 1.041** What are two characteristics of a short story?

- 1.042** What is the first step in writing a report and how would you go about it?

80 100	SCORE _____	TEACHER _____	initials	date
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