

## **Getting Started with Lesson Materials:**

Building a classroom of materials is a joyful process, but might also feel daunting. You do not need a complete set of stories to get started. Begin with one story; make the next one you need, and the next. Or set aside a materials making time with other Friends in your meeting to make materials (kids and teens can help!). I've found that preparing the materials for a story helps me to connect with the story and can be part of my preparations for telling the story. The space where GP/F&P are being used should have all the stories that children have heard *accessible* for them to choose as their work after the story and wondering. So you don't need to make available stories children have not heard yet – you can build as you go. Grow the story experiences together, and grow the classroom of materials.

The thoughts below are in addition to the guidance you will find in the Godly Play Volumes with stories (most Friends use stories in Volumes 2,3,4) and the Faith & Play publication. Those sources provide a comprehensive list of materials needed for each story, and the Faith & Play volume has templates for several stories. What I hope to provide here is a guide to what you might use to get started with the core stories of Godly Play® and the Faith & Play story collection.

*\*\*In italics are tips and adaptations I have made to story materials.\*\**

### **I. Where to find materials on the web:**

1. Godly Play Resources (US): <http://www.godlyplayresources.com/>

A really helpful page of GPR website has DIY prints and materials that are very reasonably priced. You would need to mount on wood, card stock or stiff felt, but this is a great option. [https://store.godlyplayfoundation.org/collections/all?pf\\_pt\\_product\\_type=DIY](https://store.godlyplayfoundation.org/collections/all?pf_pt_product_type=DIY). GPR also sells patterns for woodworkers, and has made materials much more accessible with new options! I also use the pictures on the website as a guide when I'm creating materials myself.

NOTE: The Equity Audit that Godly Play Foundation has meant important changes to materials. You can find those toolkits all here: <https://www.godlyplayfoundation.org/equity-audit-toolkits>

2. QuakerBooks of FGC: <https://quakerbooks.org/collections/faith-and-play>

QuakerBooks sells kits for many Faith & Play stories.

Another resource for support is the **Faith & Play Facebook page** – It's a place where conversations about materials happen – where to find pieces, how to approach making something yourself, etc. It's also a place for the growing community of practice to share ideas and information!

## II. Sacred Stories in Godly Play® (The Complete Guide, Volume 2)

**Baskets** – Try to be consistent about the kind of basket you use; tray baskets or shallow ones with no handles are recommended for Sacred Story materials. IKEA has very reasonably priced sets of 3 nested baskets.

**Desert box** – you can make one from wooden materials or use a piece of fabric that ties together as a “**desert bag**.” *If you use a plastic storage box, you need to fill it within 1” of the top with sand, or the children won’t be able to see into it. You can put a block of lightweight material, like foam, in the box and then pour the sand around and over it. Just as deep, but not as heavy!*

**People figures for desert box stories** – Lots of ways to do this, including using clothespins (round heads) or cutting out of foam. Natural objects can be used. They need to be able to stand up in the sand of the desert box/bag. There are relatively inexpensive crepe rubber people: <https://ryseltoys.com.sg/product/lauri-crepe-rubber-puzzle-see-the-difference/>. Godly Play Resources sells a [“DIY” set of wooden people with markers to color them](#).

**Creation** – This story has benefitted from the Godly Play Equity Audit and you can find those changes and templates for materials [here](#). You can paint a simple set of cards, using the pictures in the Godly Play book (Volume 2) or online at Godly Play Resources as a guide. Craft stores sell the 4”x5” wooden “cards” you’ll need to paint on. You’ll need a black, felt underlay.

**Ark and the Flood** – This is a very expensive set to purchase from Godly Play Resources, and you can find ones elsewhere on the web – Try to find a wooden one, and as simple as possible. Etsy is a good resource! I have plans created by a Friend in NYYM which I can share if you have a woodworker ready to help!

*Two things to keep in mind about these materials: you need to be able to hold the ark over your head, so it can’t be heavy or have loose pieces. Also, you really only need 4 sets of animals plus a dove for the story – it is fun to have more animals for when children want to work with the story themselves.*

**Great Family** – Another story with an [Equity Audit Toolkit](#). In addition to 4 people, you’ll need two pieces of thick blue yarn, and two blocks to represent the city of Ur and the town of Haran. Plain blocks from a woodshop or children’s blocks work fine!

**Exodus** – People, two pieces of blue felt (Red Sea) and a small basket of matzo. You can wait and add the matzo before telling the story – it’s often best not to keep it on the shelf, depending on your space.

**Ten Best Ways** – This one is a little more complex, and it’s worth looking at the one in GPR catalog/website for ideas. You need a Mt. Sinai, and a Friend came up with a super way to do this: Use the flower arranging foam you find in a craft store and carve it into the shape of the

mountain, and then spray paint with the textured paint that looks like “stone.” While finding a stone in your yard is a good idea, too, don’t pick a large or heavy one – Remember that kids need to be able to bring the story from the shelves to the circle themselves, and it can’t be heavy/dangerous. You’ll also need a heart-shaped box and the hearts inside that line up as the stones of a path and tell the commandments. You can use 10 small wooden hearts if you don’t have the GP materials. *I have made changes to the text of the “ten best ways” and can share that on request.*

### **III. Parables (in The Complete Guide to Godly Play, Volume 3)**

Keep in mind that parables are 2-dimensional because of their metaphoric quality, and are used “flat” on the underlay. (Laminating pieces helps them slide on the felt underlay.) *The idea is for them to be as open as possible, almost whimsical in their look.*

- A member of the Faith & Play Group has done line drawings (included) for parable figures. Please request a copy!
- There are prints for making these from Godly Play Resources — search in the [DIY section](#) or Volume 3. You’ll need to mount on a heavy cardstock, cut them out and laminate.
- Three often-used parables (Good Shepherd, Good Samaritan, Mustard Seed) have undergone changes with the Equity Audit. [Their toolkits are here](#), and in some case the templates are free.
- You’ll also need wooden boxes that you can paint gold yourself, and underlays in various colors of felt. It’s nice to have small, decorative boxes for the small pieces (birds, leaven, pearls) in these stories.

### **IV. Faith & Play story materials:**

I’ll add to what I wrote on the first page about purchasing kit materials from QuakerBooks that you absolutely can make many of these yourself. And if you’re ever unable to find a piece, be in touch because the Faith & Play trustees have a “stash” of materials we use to make the stories and we can try to help!

See the Faith & Play Stories publication for TEMPLATES for several stories!

Depending on your curriculum plans, I would start with *George Fox’s Big Discovery*, *Prayer and Friends Meeting for Worship*, *Listening for God*, and *Gifts* stories.

**Additional resources for making Faith & Play materials follow . . .**

## NOTES ON D.I.Y “PEOPLE” FIGURES FOR F&P STORIES

Many Faith & Play stories employ standing 3-dimensional figures to represent people. While other materials could be chosen, we most frequently use wood, which is durable, attractive and easy to work with. You could make your own figures out of 1¼ to 1½ inch dowels cut to desired lengths, perhaps with shaping to suggest neck and head. We find that using plain, pre-made wooden figures works very well—requires no special tools and is relatively affordable. These are available at craft stores in an assortment of sizes and shapes, and online from resources like [www.craftparts.com](http://www.craftparts.com).

The figures we use most often are just under 4” tall, and made of unfinished wood. They are available in both a “male” shape (columnar) and a more rounded, more “female” shape. In stories where generic people figures are needed (Listening for God, Prayer and Meeting for Worship, testimonies stories) any of the figures can be used, as the people they represent are an abstraction rather than specific people. Smaller figures are available to represent children and even babies. In stories where the figure represents a specific individual (George Fox, Mary Fisher, John Woolman, Elizabeth Fry) use the shape appropriate for the gender. An exception to this would be robed figures such as the sultan and his attendants in the Mary Fisher story, for whom a “female” figure works well.

Skin tones can be achieved in a variety of ways. Wax shoe polish is fast and results in pleasing tones, as do wood stain pens. Watercolor paint, spices (turmeric) and other can be used to good effect. A note on paste wax: browns, black and tans all work well, as does mahogany to get a reddish effect. We find it best to avoid cordovan (too purple) and oxblood (too pink). No hair or facial features are needed. For some stories (Listening for God, Prayer & Friends Meeting for Worship, Love’s Way, etc.) a red dot can be painted on the figure’s chest to represent the Light Within. Note that some Friends choose not to use the image of the red dot on figures.

Clothing can be made using fabric (usually felt because it has body and does not fray at the edges) or by painting the figures. For Quaker figures, grey paint in a variety of shades of grey is quick and easy. (Be sure to look for non-toxic paint.) The pattern for a woman’s dress follows. This pattern can also be used for the sultan’s attendants. Quaker men’s hats and bonnets can be made from grey felt (patterns follow). For the Lenape people in Woolman/Wyalusing, I recommend using very simple figures. The current publications show materials being used before we made important changes to this story. Please reach out with questions.

Use your imagination, don’t be afraid to experiment and have fun! Children seem to love the little people, and have no trouble knowing what they represent.