

The Bible: a Literary Work and an Artistic Presentation of Human Experience

Summary

The activity shows in practice how sacred texts (in particular the Bible) can be read and analysed as a literary work with all the approaches and techniques of literary analysis.

Description of the activity

The Bible is a diversity of form and content. It is a variety of narrative genres, stylistic forms, poetry and prose. The activity gives the students the opportunity to engage with sacred texts on another level. An advantage of this activity is that students do not need to have a particular religious orientation to take a literary approach to texts. The activity can be organized in the form of informal discussion between the different groups of students, which the teacher previously engaged with different tasks. The teacher can give to each group of students a different type of story from the Bible (a hero story; epic; comedy and tragedy) and ask the group to identify:

- What values does the hero embody
- What conflicts does this hero face
- Actions
- Relationships and roles
- What are the narrative devices in the plots of the stories

Activity structure

- **Preferred premises of the activity:** the activity can be held in class or outdoors. It is important for the premises to secure a safe environment for students to feel free to express their thoughts.
- **Resources needed:** A white board, projector or a black board (if the students want to show their findings from the assignments).
- **Recommended number of people participating:** between 20 and 30 students as maximum number.
- **Previous knowledge of participants necessary:** Some particular knowledge about literature genres, narrative techniques, etc. will be necessary.
- **Activity duration** (what is the time necessary for the activity to happen; is it a onetime event or could be held as series of events throughout the school term): The activity can be held as regular activity for example once a week till all the student group present their findings about their stories.

Learning Objectives

Students to acquire knowledge both about the Bible as a text but also knowledge about some specific literary approaches and techniques used in it.

Expected Outcomes

Students will understand better the nature of sacred texts (the Bible in particular).

Target group

Students between 12 and 16 years of age.





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Subject of the curriculum in which the activity could be implemented

Literature
Philosophy

Learning style of this activity

Verbal, Social

Learning objects to be used with this activity

(<https://bibleasliterature.wordpress.com/>)

Variations of the activity

The activity can be done using role-play – putting students in different roles of the characters of the stories discussed and after the role play is done everyone is to be asked about the literary techniques used, about their feelings, understanding and awareness of the topic.



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