

Practice Doing Elements of an Observation Worksheet

The purpose of doing an observation worksheet is for you to slow down, allowing you time to repeatedly read and meditate on the passage.

STEP ONE Remember to Pray As you start observing the book one chapter at a time, remember truth is revealed by the Spirit, so begin with prayer and continue in prayer. Luke 24:45 says, "Then He [Jesus] opened their minds to understand the Scriptures."

STEP TWO (who, what, when, where, why, how)

DOES THE TEXT ANSWER WHO?

Who spoke it? About Whom? Who are the major characters? Who are the people mentioned?

Practice Exercise: Do Lesson 1, Day 2, Question 1a.

DOES THE TEXT ANSWER WHERE?

Look for and double underline in green any place mentioned in the passage. Think of the place as the setting. It may be a city, a house, a prison, a pasture.

Practice Exercise: Do Lesson 1, Day 2, Question 2a.

DOES THE TEXT ANSWER WHEN?

Words such as "then," "after this," "until," and "when" show timing or sequence of events. They answer the question, When? Make a note in the text of any reference to time. As you mark these expressions of time, observe what you learn from noting "when" something occurs, which can be crucial when it comes to interpreting the text. Expressions of time can be marked by drawing a clock in the margin or by simply drawing a clock face over the word itself. You may want to color your clock green so you can spot it even more easily.

Practice Exercise: Read Genesis 37 and mark every reference to time.

DOES THE TEXT ANSWER WHAT?

What happened? What are the main events?

Practice Exercise: Do Lesson 1, Day 2, Question 1b

DOES THE TEXT ANSWER WHY?

Look for words like "because", "so", "that", or other such words that might answer a question that begins with why.

Practice Exercise: Read Genesis 37:22. Why did Reuben suggest throwing Joseph into the pit?

Now come up with another "why question" that is answered in Genesis 37.

DOES THE TEXT ANSWER HOW?

How can mean by what manner, or a state or condition, or to what extent, amount or degree.

Practice Exercise: Do Lesson 1, Day 2, Question 1c.

Now come up with another "how question" that is answered in Genesis 37.

STEP THREE Look for and Mark Key Words and Phrases

A key word is a word the author uses repeatedly in a significant way, or a word which cannot be removed from the text without leaving it devoid of meaning. A key word might be a noun, a descriptive word, or an action word that plays a vital part in conveying the author's message. "Walking through the text" at a slower pace, you will see key words and phrases.

You can either (1) color each use of the same word and its synonyms and pronouns in one color or (2) draw a distinctive diagram around that particular word to distinguish it from others.

Every key word is a who, what, when, where, why, or how word. At this stage, mark only one key word at a time as you read through the chapter. This means every time you mark a different key word, you'll read through the chapter again. Thus, if you are marking five key words, you will read the chapter five times.

Marking the text in this way helps you slow down and soak in the content of the chapter, letting the Holy Spirit minister truth to you as you read and re-read the Word. As a matter of fact, when you read Scripture over and

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over again you will find yourself automatically remembering it. You will also find yourself beginning to hide God's Word in your heart, rather than just skimming along making colorful marks on paper. The important thing is not the marking, but what you learn by marking that word.

Practice Exercise: Lesson 1, Day 1, Question 1.

STEP FOUR List What You Learned About Each Word A list is a compilation of every fact given about a particular word, subject, person, place, or event in a single chapter. These facts are answers to the 5 W's and an H. Put each list on a separate sheet of paper, heading it with the key word. (After you have refined your lists, you can transfer them to the margin of your Bible or worksheet.)

Practice Exercise: Lesson 1, Day 1, Question 2.

STEP FIVE Look for Contrasts, Comparisons, Terms of Conclusion

a. A **contrast** is an evaluation of things that are different or opposite in the context being viewed. Many times, contrast is noted by the word "but." For example, note the contrast between what God has and hasn't given us in 2 Timothy 1:7: "For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline." However, as you look for contrasts, remember the contrast is not necessarily between the actual words. It can be a contrast within the thought or body of truth conveyed by the words in that particular context.

Therefore, make sure that you are not just marking contrasting words, but contrasting thoughts. Many times the words "but," "however," or "nevertheless" show a contrast. When you see those words, read the context to see if two different things are being compared. You can make a mental note of the contrast, or if you prefer, you can note the contrast in the margin of your Bible.

What truth is being revealed through the contrast? What point is the author making through the contrast? That's what you want to discern.

Practice exercise: Find a contrast in Genesis 37. What point is the author making through the contrast?

b. A **comparison** always refers to things that are similar or alike. Many times the words "like" and "as" signify a comparison. Determine, if possible, what truth is being revealed through the comparison. Then note the comparison in the margin or mark it in the text.

Practice exercise: Find a comparison in Genesis 37. Hint: look for something the brothers said. How does this comparison reveal what the brothers were angry about?

c. Words such as "therefore," "for," "so that," "thus," and "for this reason" indicate that a **conclusion** or **summary** is being made or that a result is being stated. Therefore, watch for such terms! You want to underline these as you observe them in the text.

Practice exercise: Find a conclusion or summary in Genesis 37. There is a conclusion statement in Genesis 37 which could summarize the chapter.

STEP SIX Chapter Theme

A chapter theme should fall within two parameters: First, is it the main subject dealt with in that chapter? And second, does the theme relate to the overall book theme? If your choice of a theme or summary statement is truly the theme of the chapter, it will clearly relate to the book theme. Once you have the theme, record it on the At a Glance chart in the appropriate column. Do this for each chapter of the book. Eventually, as you study the book chapter by chapter, you will choose a key verse or phrase for each chapter that reflects or provides the basis for what you have chosen as the chapter theme.

Practice Exercise: Do Lesson 1, Day 2, Question 6.