



GOD'S CREATURES TELL THE STORY

Joseph and the Coat of Many Colors

Teacher's Packet

FREE ♦ PHOTOCOPY FREELY FOR YOUR CLASS

Five lesson plans, discussion questions for two age bands, a three-level reproducible Bible Detective worksheet, a new ten-question quiz with answer key, background notes for the teacher, and projects built around a timeline that spans ninety-three years. Built for readers ages 11–17 from the full narrative of *Joseph and the Coat of Many Colors*.

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How to Use This Packet

Three tracks, one book. Pick the one that matches your setting and ignore the other two. Everything here may be photocopied for your own class or family.

Track One — Family Devotions (three weeks)

- Nineteen chapters plus the epilogue. One chapter a night runs three weeks; two a night runs ten days.
- Close each reading with one question from page 4, chosen for the age at your table.
- Assign each family member a reporter to follow — Penny, Professor Hoot, or Dominic — and have them report what their reporter noticed that the others missed.
- Use the devotion starters and prayer on page 6 for the Sunday evenings.

Track Two — Sunday School (five weeks)

- **Week 1 — The Favorite.** Chapters 1–4. A coat, two dreams, and a family that cannot speak peaceably to one of its own.
- **Week 2 — The Descent.** Chapters 5–8. Sold, promoted, falsely accused, imprisoned, and forgotten for two more years.
- **Week 3 — The Rise.** Chapters 9–10. Thirty years old, out of a dungeon and into the second chair in Egypt in a single morning.
- **Week 4 — The Test.** Chapters 11–14. Three journeys, a planted cup, and a brother who offers himself in another's place.
- **Week 5 — The Reckoning.** Chapters 15–19 and the epilogue. A reunion, a blessing with crossed hands, and a promise about a coffin.

Track Three — Homeschool (across subjects)

- **History.** Middle-Kingdom Egypt — administration, granaries, scribes, and how a foreigner could hold high office.
- **Science.** Grain preservation, moisture and mold, and why drying matters. The book's two-jar experiment is genuinely good; see page 7.
- **Math.** The timeline problem on page 7. Joseph's life is unusually well dated and the arithmetic rewards care.
- **Geography.** Canaan to Dothan to Egypt to Goshen, and the same road walked four times by four different sets of feet.
- **Writing.** Judah's speech in Genesis 44 is one of the finest in Scripture. Use it as a model for persuasive writing.

A NOTE ON CHAPTER 6

Chapter 6 covers Potiphar's wife and includes descriptions of her advances. Nothing in this packet sends students back to those pages for discussion. The teachable material there is integrity when no one is watching, and being falsely accused without becoming bitter — both are handled on pages 3 and 4 without reference to the specifics.

Before the First Session

- Build the timeline on page 8 for yourself before week one. Nearly every hard question in this book is a question about how much time passed.
- Photocopy pages 5 and 9 — one per student. Everything else is for you.
- Read the note above about chapter 6 before assigning any reading.

A NOTE ON THE AGE BANDS

This packet is banded 11–13 and 14–17. The book's own appendices still use younger bands from an earlier edition; where the two differ, follow the packet.

Five Lesson Plans

Each lesson names a key verse, the chapters to read, one main point, and one activity that can be done in the room. The lessons require the book; the verses are ones the narrative itself puts on the page.

1. A Coat Nobody Needed

READ Chapters 1–4 · **KEY VERSE** *Genesis 37:4*

Main point: Jacob’s favoritism is not a background detail; it is the engine. Scripture says the brothers could not speak a kind word to Joseph, and it lays the blame at the father’s feet before it lays any at theirs. Joseph then reports two dreams that confirm every fear they already had.

Activity: Two columns — what Jacob did wrong, and what the brothers did wrong. Both columns fill. Ask whether one excuses the other.

2. Faithful in a Place He Never Chose

READ Chapters 5–7 · **KEY VERSE** *Genesis 39:9*

Main point: Joseph does excellent work as a slave, then as a prisoner, in situations he did not choose and could not leave. When tested privately, he frames his refusal as loyalty to God rather than fear of getting caught. Doing right costs him everything and he does it anyway.

Activity: Ask what would change about your week if the reason you did right was “how could I sin against God” rather than “someone might find out.”

3. Two More Years

READ Chapters 8–10 · **KEY VERSE** *Genesis 41:16*

Main point: The cupbearer forgot him, and Genesis records the delay in a single flat sentence: two full years. Then Joseph is shaved, dressed, and standing before Pharaoh, and the first thing out of his mouth is that he cannot interpret dreams — God can. Thirteen years of hardship did not make him grab for the credit.

Activity: Put the ages on the board — 17 sold, about 27 imprisoned, 30 before Pharaoh. Ask what each of those thirteen years cost, and what it built.

4. The Cup in Benjamin’s Sack

READ Chapters 11–14 · **KEY VERSE** *Genesis 44:33*

Main point: Joseph engineers a situation identical to the one that ruined him: the favored younger son of Rachel, in trouble, with the other brothers free to walk away. Judah — who proposed selling Joseph — offers to take Benjamin’s place. The test was never about the cup.

Activity: Read Genesis 37:26–27 and 44:18–34 back to back. Same man, twenty-two years apart. Ask what repentance actually looks like when you can see it.

5. You Meant It for Evil

READ Chapters 15–19 and the Epilogue · **KEY VERSE** *Genesis 50:20*

Main point: Joseph does not say the harm was small or accidental. He names it as evil in the same sentence in which he says God meant it for good. Both halves have to stay. Then he asks to be carried out of Egypt one day — still believing a promise made to his great-grandfather.

Activity: Write Genesis 50:20 on the board and cover half of it, then the other half. Ask what each half alone would teach, and why neither is safe by itself.

Lesson two is written so that it can be taught without opening chapter 6. See the note on page 2.

Discussion Questions

Choose three or four per session. The second band assumes students can hold two true things at once, which is what this story mostly asks of a reader.

AGES 11–13

1. Jacob gave one son a coat and the others nothing. What do you think that felt like at dinner in that house?
2. Joseph told his brothers both dreams, out loud, knowing they already resented him. Was that brave, careless, or something else?
3. Joseph worked hard for Potiphar even though he had been sold there against his will. Would you have?
4. The cupbearer promised to remember Joseph and then forgot him for two years. Has anyone ever forgotten something they promised you? What did the waiting do?
5. Joseph told Pharaoh he could not interpret dreams — God could. Why say that when he was standing in front of the most powerful man alive?
6. Joseph recognized his brothers immediately, and they did not recognize him at all. Why do you think he waited so long to tell them who he was?
7. When Joseph finally said “I am Joseph,” his brothers were terrified rather than happy. Why?
8. Joseph wept several times in this story, sometimes where no one could hear him. What does that tell you about what he was carrying?

AGES 14–17

1. Genesis blames Jacob’s favoritism before it blames the brothers’ cruelty. Does naming the cause make the crime smaller? Where is the line between explaining and excusing?
2. Joseph is described as excellent at every job he is given, including two he was forced into. What is the difference between accepting a situation and endorsing it?
3. Being falsely accused cost Joseph years and he never, in the whole account, defends himself to Potiphar. What does his silence suggest?
4. Joseph names his first son “God made me forget” and his second “God made me fruitful.” What does the order of those two names tell you about how healing worked for him?
5. Joseph puts his brothers through an elaborate test rather than revealing himself at once. Was that manipulation, wisdom, or unfinished pain? Argue it from the text.
6. Judah offers to become a slave so Benjamin can go home. Compare that with Judah’s proposal in Genesis 37:26–27. What changed a man that much?
7. “You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good.” Explain why removing either half of that sentence produces something false.
8. Joseph ran Egypt for eighty years and still asked to be buried in Canaan. What does that request say about where he thought he belonged?

Bible Detective

“A good reporter always pays attention to details.” — Penny the Squirrel. Three levels. Answer from the book, then check the verse. Answer key on page 10.

NAME _____ DATE _____ SCORE _____ / 12

LEVEL ONE

1. How many brothers did Joseph have in total?

2. In Joseph's first dream, what bowed down to his sheaf?

3. How much silver did the brothers receive for him?

4. Joseph told the cupbearer and baker that interpretations belong to whom?

LEVEL TWO

5. How old was Joseph when his brothers sold him?

6. What name did Pharaoh give Joseph?

7. How many of Jacob's family came to live in Egypt?

8. What request did Joseph make about his bones?

LEVEL THREE

9. How old was Jacob when he arrived in Egypt, and how many more years did he live?

10. What did Joseph name his firstborn son, and what does the name mean?

11. What did Jacob do while blessing Joseph's sons that upset Joseph?

12. **Super Sleuth.** Which brother offered to stay in Egypt in Benjamin's place — and what had that same brother proposed years earlier?

Family and At-Home

Five devotion starters, a prayer, and one application to carry into the week. None of these require a craft table or more than fifteen minutes.

DEVOTION STARTERS

One — Favorites. Jacob loved one son more and made it visible, and it cost the family twenty-two years. Ask, carefully and without accusing anyone, whether our family has any coats — things one person gets that the others notice. Read Genesis 37:3–4.

Two — Good work in the wrong place. Joseph did excellent work in two places he never wanted to be. Ask what each person is doing right now that they did not choose, and what doing it well would look like anyway. Read Genesis 39:2–4.

Three — The forgotten years. Two whole years pass in one sentence while Joseph sits in prison. Ask what our family has been waiting on longest, and whether we have decided God forgot. Read Genesis 40:23 and 41:1.

Four — Naming what God did. Joseph named one son for the pain he could finally put down and the other for the fruit that followed. If we named this past year, what would we call it? Read Genesis 41:51–52.

Five — Both halves of the sentence. “You meant evil; God meant it for good.” Talk about a hurt in this family’s history and practice saying both halves out loud without softening either. Read Genesis 50:19–21.

MEMORY VERSES

- *Genesis 39:9* — how then could I do this great wickedness?
- *Genesis 41:16* — it is not in me; God will give an answer.
- *Genesis 50:20* — you meant it for evil, God meant it for good.
- *Romans 8:28* — the New Testament sentence built on the same idea.

A FAMILY PRAYER

Father, You were with Joseph in the pit, in the house, and in the prison, and You never once explained Yourself to him along the way. Give us the grace to work well where we did not choose to be. Keep us from bitterness in the years nobody sees. Teach us to forgive without pretending the wound was small, and to trust that You are writing something we cannot read yet. In Jesus’ name, amen.

APPLICATION FOR THE WEEK

Joseph waited thirteen years before anything visible changed. Choose one person in this family who is in a hard stretch right now, and for one week do something concrete for them each day without announcing it. At the end of the week, do not tell them. Talk about it here instead.

And keep one line of a journal each day naming a single thing that has not changed. Joseph lived thirteen of those years in a row. It is worth knowing what seven days of it feels like.

Activities and Projects

Ordinary household supplies only — two jars, some rice, paper, a calculator. Nothing here needs a craft store.

AGES 11–13

The Two Jars. *Supplies: two jars with lids, dry rice, ten drops of water, labels.* Fill both halfway. Add ten drops of water to the jar marked “damp,” seal both, and set them somewhere warm. Check every few days for two weeks. This is the whole reason Joseph’s grain had to be bone dry before it went into a storehouse for seven years.

One-Fifth. *Supplies: a bag of dried beans and a bowl.* Count out a hundred beans, then set aside twenty. That is the tax Joseph imposed across all of Egypt for seven straight years. Ask how a country reacts to that when the harvests are excellent and nobody can see a famine coming.

Coat Design, Rethought. *Supplies: paper and colored pencils.* Design a coat for each of the twelve brothers instead of one. Then explain in a sentence why Jacob did not do that, and what it would have changed.

Twenty Pieces of Silver. *Supplies: paper.* Look up what a slave typically cost in that period, then look up what Judas was paid in Matthew 26:15. Write three sentences on what the two numbers have to do with each other, and what they do not.

Dream Journal. *Supplies: a notebook.* There are six dreams in this story — Joseph’s two, the cupbearer’s, the baker’s, and Pharaoh’s two. Chart each one: who dreamed it, who interpreted it, and how long before it came true. The pattern in that last column is the point.

AGES 14–17

Build the Timeline. *Supplies: paper, a ruler, a calculator.* From Genesis 37:2, 41:46, 41:53, 45:6, 47:9, 47:28 and 50:26, construct Joseph’s dated life: sold, imprisoned, promoted, reunited, Jacob’s death, his own. Then answer two questions the chart makes obvious. How old was Joseph at the reunion? And how many years did he live in Egypt after his father died?

Audit the Appendix. *Supplies: the book’s Appendix D and your own timeline.* Compare your chart against the printed one. At least one entry will not reconcile with the others. Find it, say which figure has to be wrong, and show the arithmetic. This is what fact-checking actually looks like.

Judah’s Speech. *Supplies: Genesis 44:18–34.* Read it aloud, slowly. Then map its structure: what he establishes first, what he saves for last, and where he shifts from the facts to his father’s face. Write your own eight-hundred-word appeal on any subject using the same architecture.

Two Coffins. *Supplies: Genesis 50 and Exodus 13:19.* Genesis ends with a coffin in Egypt; Exodus picks the same coffin up four centuries later. Write five hundred words on why the writer of Genesis chose to end a book of beginnings that way.

The Egyptian Storehouse. *Supplies: paper.* Design a granary for a hot climate with no electricity: how does grain get in, get out, stay dry, and stay safe from rodents? Then compare your design with the notes on page 8.

For the Teacher

Background you will want before a sharp fourteen-year-old asks. The dates below have been worked out from the text.

THE TIMELINE, RECONCILED

Joseph is seventeen when sold (37:2) and thirty when he stands before Pharaoh (41:46) — thirteen years as slave and prisoner. Seven years of plenty put him at thirty-seven when the famine begins (41:53). The reunion happens two years into the famine (45:6), so he is thirty-nine, not forty — which also matches the book's own note that the reunion came twenty-two years after he was sold. Jacob arrives at 130 (47:9) and lives seventeen more years (47:28), dying when Joseph is fifty-six. Joseph dies at 110 (50:26).

HOW LONG THE BONES WAITED

The 430 years of Exodus 12:40 run from Israel's arrival in Egypt to the Exodus. Joseph lived through about seventy-one of those years after the family came down, so his coffin waited roughly 360 years, not 430. Joshua buried the bones at Shechem at the end of the conquest (Joshua 24:32) — within a generation of the Exodus, not centuries after it.

EGYPTIAN GRANARIES

Thick mud-brick walls for insulation, floors raised against damp and rodents, a filling opening at the top and a draw-off at the bottom, and often a cone or dome to shed heat and maximize volume. Grain went in thoroughly dried; some containers were sealed with clay. Scribes kept written inventories — Egyptian record-keeping is what made a national reserve possible at all.

WHY A SEVEN-YEAR FAMINE WAS EXTRAORDINARY

Egypt's agriculture ran on the annual Nile flood, which made harvests unusually dependable. A single bad year was familiar; seven consecutive failures contradicted everything Egyptian experience predicted. Joseph's plan asked a prosperous country to prepare for something its own history said would not happen.

WAS THE COAT REALLY “OF MANY COLORS”?

The Hebrew phrase is uncertain. It may describe a long-sleeved ornamented robe rather than a multicolored one — the sort of garment worn by someone who does not do field labor. Either reading gives the same message to ten working brothers, which is why the coat provokes what it provokes. Worth mentioning; not worth arguing.

SEVENTY OR SEVENTY-FIVE?

Genesis 46:27 counts seventy in Jacob's household. Acts 7:14 says seventy-five, following the Greek Old Testament, which counts some additional descendants. If a student spots the difference, they have read both Testaments carefully — say so.

HANDLING CHAPTER 6

The account of Potiphar's wife is in Genesis and in the book, and older students will have read it. If it comes up, keep the discussion on what Joseph did and why: he named the betrayal of his master and the sin against God, and he left the room. That is the whole teachable content. There is no reason to revisit the descriptions.

Professor Hoot's Quiz

Ten questions. Circle one answer for each. Scoring guide and answer key on page 10.

NAME _____ DATE _____ SCORE _____ / 10

1. How old was Joseph when his brothers sold him?
a) Twelve b) Seventeen c) Thirty
2. Who bought Joseph when he reached Egypt?
a) Pharaoh b) Potiphera, priest of On c) Potiphar, captain of the guard
3. How long did the cupbearer forget Joseph in prison?
a) Two years b) Two months c) Seven years
4. How old was Joseph when he stood before Pharaoh?
a) Twenty-five b) Thirty c) Thirty-nine
5. What did Pharaoh's dreams predict?
a) Seven years of plenty, then seven of famine b) A war with Canaan c) A flood of the Nile
6. What share of the harvest did Joseph store during the good years?
a) One-tenth b) One-fifth c) One-half
7. What did Joseph hide in Benjamin's sack?
a) A gold ring b) His silver cup c) A sealed letter
8. Which brother offered to take Benjamin's place?
a) Reuben b) Simeon c) Judah
9. Where did Jacob's family settle in Egypt?
a) Goshen b) Thebes c) Memphis
10. How old was Joseph when he died?
a) Ninety b) One hundred and ten c) One hundred and forty-seven

Bonus. Write out Genesis 50:20 in your own words — keeping both halves of what Joseph said.

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Answer Keys and Where to Go Next

QUIZ ANSWER KEY — PAGE 9

1	b — seventeen	6	b — one-fifth
2	c — Potiphar	7	b — his silver cup
3	a — two years	8	c — Judah
4	b — thirty	9	a — Goshen
5	a — seven plenty, seven famine	10	b — 110

Bonus. Accept any wording that keeps both halves — the brothers intended real harm, *and* God turned it toward saving many lives. Mark down any answer that drops the first half.

BIBLE DETECTIVE ANSWER KEY — PAGE 5

Level One. 1. Eleven, making twelve sons of Jacob (35:22–26). 2. His brothers’ sheaves (37:7). 3. Twenty pieces of silver (37:28). 4. God (40:8).

Level Two. 5. Seventeen (37:2). 6. Zaphenath-paneah (41:45). 7. Seventy (46:27). 8. To carry his bones out of Egypt to the land God promised (50:25).

Level Three. 9. He was 130 on arrival and lived 17 more years (47:9, 47:28). 10. Manasseh — God has made me forget all my hardship (41:51). 11. He crossed his hands, giving the greater blessing to the younger son, Ephraim (48:14–19). 12. Judah — the same brother who years earlier proposed selling Joseph to the Ishmaelites (44:33; 37:26–27).

SCORING GUIDE

9–10 correct — Senior Correspondent. Reading at the level of detail Penny would sign off on.

7–8 correct — Field Reporter. Solid. Send them back for the two they missed and let them find the verse themselves.

5–6 correct — Cub Reporter. The story landed; the dates did not. Re-read chapters 9 through 12.

Under 5 — Back to the Newsroom. Not a failing grade. Read the book together rather than assigning it.

WHERE TO GO NEXT — MORE FREE DOWNLOADS

- **The Six Sacred Rules of Divine Reporting** — one-page classroom poster.
- **Meet the Divine News Team** — one page, four character cards.
- **The Divine News Team: An Origin Story, David and Goliath, Daniel in the Lions’ Den, Elijah and the Prophets of Baal, Noah’s Ark Adventure** — Teacher’s Packets.
- **52 Questions: A Year of Family Bible Conversations** — one a week, from across the series. Coming soon.

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