

Mary Magdalene's Story

On the day after the sabbath, while it was still dark, Mary went to Jesus' tomb, carrying a jar of oil to anoint his body. Suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came & rolled back the stone & sat on it. Mary looked into the tomb & started weeping.

The angel asked her, "Woman, why are you weeping?"

She said to him, "They have taken away my Lord, & I do not know where they have laid him." She turned to leave & saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?"

Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, & I will take him away."

Jesus said to her, "Mary!"

She turned & said to him, "Teacher!"

Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father."

Mary went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord!"

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What was Mary Feeling?

Improv Game #1 - Who's Greeting Me?

One person is designated as "it" & sits at a distance from the group, with her or his back to the group.

Pick someone in the group & point at him or her. That person says "Hello!" in a disguised voice. "It" has to figure out who said hello. If successful, he or she can pick a new person to be "it," & join the group while the new "it" takes her or his place.



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What was Mary Feeling?

Improv Game #2 - Is Someone Behind Me?

One or two people are "it." Everyone else needs to scatter throughout the room & choose a place to stand in. They should tightly close their eyes. The people who are "it" will roam around the room & try to eliminate the other players by standing behind them for ten seconds without them knowing. If they succeed, they tap the players on the head & the players sit down quietly. If a person suspects that one of the people who are "it" is standing behind them, they should ask "Is someone behind me?" If they are right, they join the "its" & sneak up on other players. If they are wrong, they sit down quietly.

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Theological Questions

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Let's think of some questions. Some examples might be:

- +What does this story say about God?
- +Are there really angels?
- +Why doesn't Mary recognize Jesus right away?

What other good questions might we ask?

Spend some time discussing possible answers to the questions that you ask as a group. Remember that all questions are totally acceptable, and that you don't have to have all the answers. Sometimes a good question is more important than an easy answer.



Pre-Production Tasks

Script Writer Extraordinaire - Mary Magdalene

Your assignment is to write a script that tells Mary's story with humor, wisdom, & pathos. Use the questions below:

Who are the characters?

What happens at the beginning?

What happens in the middle?

What happens at the end?

Which characters are changed by the story, & how are they changed?

Here are some Bible passages that you can use to go deeper into the story: Matthew 28:1-10, Mark 16:1-11, Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-18.

When you're done with a first draft of the script, find someone to read it & give you feedback. Use their suggestions to revise.



Pre-production Tasks

Superlative Set Designer

Talk with the script writer to find out how many scenes she or he is planning, & which locations they're set in. Then create the sets. Here are some ideas:

If you & your collaborators choose to shoot a live-action video, you can:

- +use old sheets, house paint, & stands made from PVC piping to create backdrops.

- +arrange an existing room or outdoor space as a set.

If you & your collaborators choose to make a stop-motion video, you can:

- +make a set in an old box, if you're doing clay-mation or using toys & figurines.

- +paint a scene on a large piece of paper, if you're doing paper cut-out animation.



Pre-Production Tasks

Charismatic Character Designer

Design what the characters in the video will look like. Talk with the script writer to find out how many characters there will be in the video.

Then think about what costumes they should wear if it's going to be a live-action video, or what they should look like if it's stop-motion.

If you & your collaborators choose to shoot a live-action video, you can design costumes from whatever old clothes are available.

If you & your collaborators choose to shoot a stop-motion animation, you can:

- + use clay to create characters, or cut-up old fabric or felt to create costumes for small toys & figurines
- + create paper cut-out figures using stiff paper, a needle, & thread.



Production Tasks

Acting Genius!

Get a copy of the script from the script writer and memorize your lines. Try to get into the mindset of the characters. Work with a partner to answer the following questions:

What is my character's favorite childhood memory?

What's the saddest thing that ever happened to my character?

Does my character care about her or his looks? Does he or she walk with a straight back, or a slouch?

Does she or he have any distinctive physical habits, like brushing hair out of her or his eyes?

How does my character feel about the other characters in the script?

Think of some good questions to ask your partner about his or her character.



Production Tasks

*Scintillating Cinematographer/
Amazing Stop Motion Animator*

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Work with the set-designer to think about how you're going to shoot the script. Plan your shots & make notes on the script. Here are some principles to keep in mind:

Because westerners read from left to right, good guys often enter from the left in our movies. Bad guys enter from the right, because watching someone walk in from the right is counter-intuitive to us & makes us work harder.

If you shoot a character from below (worm's eye view), they seem threatening or dominant.
If you shoot a character from above (bird's eye view), they seem diminished or weak.

You can use close-ups to make us feel more intimate with a character. You can use wide shots to make us feel distanced from a character or scene.

When the actors or stop-motion figures are ready, shoot the video.

