

# APPENDIX 2: GOING DEEPER

## – FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 11 TO 14

Often, the stories we are told as younger children have clear-cut heroes and villains. In these stories, it is easy to spot who is good and who is evil. But as we get older, we might start to see that things are not always as clearly defined. This section contains ideas to help young people explore the meaning of the terms ‘hero’ and ‘villain’. It includes suggested discussion topics, and links to resources relating to the Bible stories covered in the ‘Super Sleuths’ holiday club materials.

What do we mean by ‘hero’ and ‘villain’?

Have a group discussion about what makes a hero and a villain. Here are some suggested discussion questions:

- What characters or people come to mind when you think of the terms hero & villain?
- What makes a hero?
- What makes a villain?
- How would you define each of the terms?
- What are the key differences between the terms?

### Heroes and villains in the Bible

Split into groups, and challenge participants to create a list of heroes and a list of villains from the Bible. Ask each group to share their lists, and reflect on any similarities and differences between groups.

Use the URC Youth Trialogue episode on the theme of heroes and villains – [bit.ly/tri-heroes-villains](https://bit.ly/tri-heroes-villains)

Watch clips from the episode, and ask participants to share their own thoughts on the questions raised. What other questions do participants have on the theme of Heroes and Villains?

- Which biblical characters come to mind when you think about the terms hero and villain. Why?

- Who is your personal hero? Why?
- Who do you find difficult to categorise as a hero or villain? Why?

Take a look at the Bible stories covered in the holiday club, and think about which characters in the stories might be heroes and villains. Here are some suggested discussion themes and resources for each Bible story:

### Ruth

#### Resources:

- Trialogue episode on ‘Refugees’ which looks at the story of Ruth [bit.ly/tri-refugees](https://bit.ly/tri-refugees)
- JPIT Hostile Environment Youth Resource, focusing on welcoming the stranger [bit.ly/jpit-hostile-environment](https://bit.ly/jpit-hostile-environment)
- Wherever you will go, Charlene Soraia [bit.ly/wherever-you-will-go](https://bit.ly/wherever-you-will-go)

Listen to the song and reflect on the words. How do they relate to the story of Ruth? Ruth 1:16

Ruth had to make a decision: Go home to safety, or stay and look after her mother-in-law. She chose to stay.

According to The Children’s Society, an estimated 800,000 children and young people are classed as ‘young carers’.

A young carer is a person under 18 who regularly provides emotional and/or practical support and assistance for a family member who is disabled, physically or mentally unwell or who misuses substances, or who looks after somebody because the primary carer is unable to do so (maybe because of work commitments).

They can miss out on a lot of the things other people take for granted – days out with their



friends, holidays, sometimes even school, in order to look after an elderly or infirm relative. They are, usually, not just responsible for caring for another person, but for the household duties as well, like vacuuming, cooking and washing up.

- Do you know anybody who is a young carer?
- What things would you have to give up in order to look after someone you loved?
- Can you find out about what support is available for young carers?

## Mary and Martha

### Resources:

- Trialogue episode 'Taking time out' [bit.ly/tri-time-out](http://bit.ly/tri-time-out)
- Swedish Bible Study Method – Use the tool at [www.theresource.org.uk](http://www.theresource.org.uk) to explore the Bible story together [theresource.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Swedish\\_Bible\\_Study.pdf](http://theresource.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Swedish_Bible_Study.pdf)

Anyone who has a brother or sister will get angry with them at some time. If we want to have friends round to our house, or guests are coming to visit, we will often be told to help tidy up, and not everyone helps as much!

It was the same with Mary and Martha. They knew that Jesus, a friend of theirs, was visiting, and Martha got upset with her sister, and with Jesus, that while Mary sat and listened to what Jesus was saying, Martha was having to do all the work to make sure that their guest was comfortable.

It was all about priorities, really. What mattered more: making Jesus comfortable, or listening to what he had to say?

The advert for Mars Bars used to say 'A Mars a day helps you work, rest and play'. Which do you think is the most important?

Sometimes the work we do goes unnoticed, unrewarded and unappreciated. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't do it.

- Organise a litter-pick around your church or

local area. Not everyone will notice' but some people will – and it will make a big difference.

- How can you make sure you get a good balance in life and in your faith between the busy times and the quiet times?

## Timothy

### Resources:

- Trialogue episode 'Hope in the darkness' [bit.ly/tri-hope](http://bit.ly/tri-hope)
- Random acts of kindness [randomactsofkindness.org/kindness-ideas](http://randomactsofkindness.org/kindness-ideas)

Sometimes, Timothy must have been overwhelmed by what he was being asked to do, and what was expected of him. He was only young, after all.

But Paul encouraged and supported his young friend all the time, and that was really important to Timothy.

When was the last time you encouraged someone? Who are the people who encourage you?

A 'thank you', a cheer or a quiet word can make a real difference to someone who is struggling, or who thinks they can't do what is being asked of them.

Set yourself a challenge to be more encouraging and supportive today.

And then do it again tomorrow, and the day after that. And the day after that...

- As a young person, do you feel called by God like Timothy was?
- How can you share your faith to encourage others?

## Esther

### Resources:

- Bible Project Esther Overview video [bibleproject.com/explore/video/esther](http://bibleproject.com/explore/video/esther)
- URC Youth Heroes and Villains [urc.org.uk/heroes-and-villains](http://urc.org.uk/heroes-and-villains)





A bible study on Esther is available on page 49 of the resource.

- Trialogue episode on Activism & Advocacy [bit.ly/tri-activism](https://bit.ly/tri-activism)
- Theory of Change video from URC Youth Advocacy month [bit.ly/theory-of-change-urc](https://bit.ly/theory-of-change-urc)

Have you ever been told a secret? Did you keep it?

Esther was told a secret and she knew that, if she kept it, the king would be killed. She decided it was not right to keep the secret, and the king's life was saved.

Sometimes we hear secrets. Sometimes those secrets are about other people being hurt. Every church has a Good Practice policy which explains what we should do when we hear, or suspect, someone is being hurt.

Ask someone in your church to show you the Good Practice policy, and learn what you should do if you hear that sort of secret.

Esther had to be honest about who she was. Her husband, King Xerxes, didn't know that she was a Jew, and had agreed with his advisor to kill all the Jews in his kingdom. She risked her life by telling Xerxes that she, too, was a Jew, and begged him to stop persecuting people who were like her.

It takes great courage to stand up for what is right sometimes. There are always people who are bigger or stronger than us. But it is important that we let our views be known when there is injustice.

- Make a list of the things that you know about, and where you wish you could make a difference. It could be the environment, poorer countries not having enough food and medicine, or it could simply be something like there not being a pedestrian crossing near the school.
- Ask someone at church to help you to do something about it – writing a letter to your local MP or starting a petition.



## Abraham and Sarah

- Table talk [www.table-talk.org](http://www.table-talk.org)

Table talk is a conversational game which creates space for the big (and not so big) questions of life. Invite some participants from across different generations to take part in the activity. What wisdom can you learn from the different generations? What questions would the different generations like to ask each other?

- Trialogue episode on “Big Questions” [bit.ly/tri-big-questions](http://bit.ly/tri-big-questions)

Abraham and Sarah lived in a tent. They went from place to place with a group of other people in their tribe because God had told them to live in a new land, and had promised Abraham he would have a son. Abraham was the tribe’s leader.

Abraham and Sarah wanted a child, but Sarah was too old, so Abraham had a child, Ishmael, by another woman, and Sarah loved him.

But because they were faithful people, God granted them their wish and, despite being very old, Sarah gave birth to Abraham’s son, whom they called Isaac.

Isaac was Ishmael’s half-brother.

Nowadays, we would call Abraham, Sarah, Ishmael and Isaac a blended family, but it must have been a real shock to Ishmael to see that Abraham and Sarah now had a son, and that they seemed to love Isaac more than they loved him.

- How do you think Ishmael felt?  
How do you think Sarah felt?
- Has God ever asked you to trust and stay faithful when it’s difficult to believe?
- How do you decide what is true?

## Summary

All of these characters are being investigated by our detective teams. What evidence is there that they belong to the infamous gang of disciples? Choose some other Bible characters, such as Peter, David or Moses. Investigate them in the same way, and build up a case file. Then role-play a trial, with two teams giving evidence for and against each about whether they are true disciples – whether they are heroes or villains.

## Prayer



Almighty God,  
As we search and investigate the world around us, help us to be a magnifying glass for your love;  
Bringing focus to injustices and inequality in our society;  
Questioning when things are not right; interrogating those in power, and holding them to account.  
Help us to find the evidence of your truth and clues of your presence in the world,  
As we discover and share the wonder of all that you are with all those around us.  
**Amen.**

