

# starters

## how to read a newspaper

### INTRODUCTION

This could last up to 15 minutes and lead into a main course or dessert. The idea is to get people recognising the skills they use to understand everyday writing and how this can be applied to seeing the different sorts of writing in the Bible.

### STRUCTURE

You need three newspapers - a mixture of tabloid and broadsheets. Read them through and cut out examples of some of these different sorts of writing:

- a news story
- an advert
- a death notice
- a problem page letter
- a letter to the editor
- a political cartoon
- an obituary
- a list of stocks and shares
- a list of horse races
- a crossword
- a celebrity story

Give some cuttings to several small groups of people and ask them to identify the sort of writing and where you would find this in a newspaper. After a few minutes ask someone from each group to summarise the different types of cutting they have been given.

With the whole group, point out how this shows the way we all distinguish between different styles of writing. This is an important skill for us in interpreting what we read. Mistaking one form of writing for another can seriously damage someone's chances of understanding a text.

Ask the group what forms of writing there are in the Bible. Gather their responses without worrying about the terms people use. The list may include history, biography, poetry, miracle stories, sayings, parables, prophecy and laws amongst other things.

Ask the question: Is it important that we recognise the different forms of writing in the Bible, as we do when reading a newspaper? If so, why?

Note:

Keep this short and sparky, so it can lead into a fuller discussion if that's what you plan to do. The idea is to stir up thinking that will go on after the activity ends.

