Training Info:

Workshops

Oral Schools

Audio Interviews
OBS Results
Graduation

OBS Locations
Oral Bible Schools

Practitioner Audio

Certify Leaders

After A Workshop

Multiplication Strategies
Training Info:

Workshops

Oral Schools

Audio Interviews
OBS Results
Graduation

OBS Locations

Practitioner Audio
Certify Leaders

After A Workshop

Multiplication Strategies
Training Info:

Workshops

Oral Schools

Audio Interviews
OBS Results
Graduation

OBS Locations

Practitioner Audio
Certify Leaders

After A Workshop

Multiplication Strategies
Training Info:

Workshops

Oral Schools

Audio Interviews
OBS Results
Graduation

OBS Locations

Practitioner Audio

Certify Leaders

After A Workshop

Multiplication Strategies
Training Info:

Workshops

Oral Schools

- Audio Interviews
- OBS Results
- Graduation

OBS Locations

Practitioner Audio

Certify Leaders

After A Workshop

Multiplication Strategies
Oral Bible Schools

**Training Info:**

- Workshops
- Oral Schools
  - Audio Interviews
  - OBS Results
  - Graduation
  - OBS Locations

- Practitioner Audio

- Certify Leaders

- After A Workshop

- Multiplication Strategies
Training Info:

Workshops

Oral Schools
Oral Bible Schools

Audio Interviews
OBS Results
Graduation

OBS Locations

Practitioner Audio

Certify Leaders

After A Workshop

Multiplication Strategies
Training Info:

Workshops

Oral Schools

Audio Interviews
OBS Results
Graduation

OBS Locations

Practitioner Audio

Certify Leaders

After A Workshop

Multiplication Strategies

Simply The Story (STS)
Oral Bible Schools (OBS):
Need, Design, Starting and Brief Results Audio Interviews
Special: Simply The Story (STS)
Oral Bible Schools (OBSs) - 2014 Update

Need for Oral Bible Schools

Question: If someone becomes a believer in Jesus and is not literate, where could that person go to Bible school? Right! Nowhere!

Actually, there is some help available. Dotted around the globe, there are schools that do teach students Bible stories and encourage the telling of those stories to others.

The STS-OBS also teach Bible stories and encourage the telling of stories to others, but in addition, these schools teach how to glean information from the stories and how to teach others deeply from them.

STS-OBS began in July 2009, all because a Filipino Christian touched by STS workshop training felt the call to start an OBS in his community. Since then, these schools have drawn mostly students who were looking for the financial help that they hoped the job training would provide.

But this Christian’s idea prompted us to set up some pilot STS-OBS whose curriculum was to teach only Bible stories and to encourage the telling of the stories to others. More schools followed, each STS leader learning from what their co-workers in other countries were discovering.

Now … praise God, Simply The Story Oral Bible Schools are springing up in various nations.

Design of STS Oral Bible Schools

Twelve students, hosted locally, shepherded by national STS instructors, learn Bible stories and study them oral style. No faculty—no campus—locally supported.

The students, who are a mixture of non-literate, semi-literate and preferred oral learners, learn how to dig deeply into the stories to discover treasures and how to teach others through discussion.

After trying different models, we settled on one that saw the most success. The students attend two weeks of school, then go back home for two weeks. This schedule allows the students to learn about 15-20 stories in that two-week period, and then they go home to practice teaching the stories to others. So the students alternate. For two weeks, students are in school and learn stories and practice them some in local outreaches. Then the students go back to their villages for two weeks. As well, that time home allows students to keep tending their ministries, homes and fields, making the school time away from their villages much less of a hardship.

Now … praise God, Simply The Story Oral Bible Schools are springing up in various nations.
Oral Bible Schools

Then the students come back to their schools and learn more stories.

Most graduates know close to 200 stories, which they then carry everywhere in their heart pockets. The

Starting an STS-OBS

Local pastors and Christians who have seen the value of STS arrange for a school in their region. After

The selected students, their church, family or village provide the students' food.

As possible, STS headquarters in USA endeavors to pay for solar players with recorded Bible stories, God's Story and a New Testament (as available). Those players help non-literate and semi-literate students learn and review the stories.

When recorded stories are not available, headquarters assists in the recording of the stories.

The school begins when local STS instructors lead a 5-day STS workshop in which they teach the twelve student

The believers who host, often pastors, serve as spiritual guides and problem solvers. For the schools where

Although we originally anticipated that most students would be single, young and non-literate, the population of the schools so far has been two-thirds married, two-thirds semi-literate and an average age of 37 years old!

During each of the two-week sessions of school, weekends are generally used for practical use of story

Brief Results of STS Oral Bible Schools

In-depth reports found on OBS Results .

India (One School) This pilot school ran for six months straight. Students learned an average of 40 stories and worshiped and prayed a lot. The students used stories in practicals as part of their school experience and by God's grace led hundreds to Jesus.

Learning of stories was not dominant, and the leadership who oversaw them was not highly skilled in STS.

Kenya (Seven schools initially) Students learned 120 stories in four months!

To give a glimpse, they learned 120 stories in four months!

Nepal (One School) Tamang people. Of twelve students who started, eleven stayed in school the whole time. Their four months of actual time at the school took six months to complete due to strikes, holidays and farming needs.

As a result of telling their stories and people saved, the Tamang students planted six churches near the school and seventeen churches back in their villages.
A local Nepali pastor who had been involved for 19 years in trying to disciple the Tamang said, “I never did I think they could know deep things in the Bible like this.”

**Philippines**
(Two Schools) As explained, the first try at a school saw poor results due to the school’s providing job training. The second school, however, is now graduating soon. The third school, which had some, of the highest attendance, is due to graduate soon. A team will be visiting there to examine the results. See Philippines Results for most current posted report.

**Zambia**
(One School) “We managed to bring the oral school to the end with the total of ten students completing the training. AMAZING.”

### My Best Day Ever!

A missionary in Uganda who uses STS, traveled to Kenya to investigate the Oral Bible Schools. He, and one of his African leaders, met with our Kenyan leader. Together they traveled to a village that hosts two schools.

With only these three sitting and talking to some of the Oral Bible School students, the students felt the freedom to share some amazing personal stories. Our leader reported, “Of all I have seen so far in Simply The Story, I call this ‘my best day ever!’”

Five of the many stories told to the visitors by the students:

A lady said, “My sister died this morning. The family is there, but I had to make a decision. My sister is with Jesus.”

Another female student shared, “None of the other students knew about me when we all started the school. I didn’t let any of the other students know about me. But during the school, my husband and I separated for two years. We split very angry. We tore apart everything we owned as we left each other.

“But the stories. Oh, the stories. So many stories we learned and discussed showed us about love and forgiveness. That’s when my husband called me, just like that! Well, I am happy to say that we met and talked and the anger is gone and we have reconciled.”

Yet another student told this, “I am a single mother. To take care of my children, I do any jobs I can find, field work, house work─whatever is available.

“Well, I was invited to come learn some Bible stories. Taking off a day of work would be hard for me, but I decided it was worth it. I decided to come. “But what about the money I pay my bills if I was away from work for five days? I was gonna go home, but then the Lord touched me, so I stayed.

“Then again I was shocked. I came to find out that these five days were the beginning of a two weeks on and two weeks off plan. But you know, again I felt the Lord lead me to commit to the school and somehow it would be ok.

“Let me tell you what is happening. I now go to school for two weeks and keep learning more and more stories. And when I go home, plenty of good work is waiting for me and I am making enough to easily pay my bills and take care of my children.

Our leader told us, “While we talked with the various ladies in this school, the husband of one of the women students came over to talk. The husband said, “I just wanted to come see what was happening here that is having such a wonderful effect on my wife!”

One of the students in the men’s school told a story to the visitors that meant a great deal to them. “No one knew when I was going to inherit my grandfather’s house. I went to claim my inheritance. But my relatives said, ‘You don’t get anything. You’re not a son.’”

“Well, I got mad and I fought them and that’s when I got hit on the head with the machete. The student spoke with intensity. “Now one of the stories we did was about the children of Israel after they had victory over the Amalekites. The story convicted me. I was like that. I was trying to take by force what I thought was mine. God was not in that plan!”

“So I went back again to my village, but people didn’t trust me─well not at first. They said, ‘You’re coming back again? Well, I am happy to say that we met and talked and the anger is gone and we have reconciled.”
Fruit Bearing, First OBS Graduation in Africa

As God told us in His Word, there is a time to plant and a time to reap. The celebration of the first STS Oral Bible School (OBS) graduation in Africa proved to be a time of reaping!

We are transcribing some of the many heartwarming testimonies told to us at this Kenya celebration and hope soon to start posting them on our web site. For now, do enjoy the video testimony Ann Kavuo.

Any day when this plucky five-foot, 65 year-old widow can’t get a ride to school, she walks 10 kilometers to get there. (Non-literate people often carry Bibles and put pens in their pockets so they look “educated” and can gain credibility.)

Ann’s comment may reveal even more. Could it be that her perceived "need" to carry her Bible to give her credibility has evolved into a deeper need for spiritual sustenance for herself and others? Could it be that she feels a kinship with a larger family of believers who interpret the Word and have the sameXEZB5/7F7CJDEEN

Keep looking on our “What’s New” corner on the web site for more OBS audio and video testimonies.

Seventeen leaders from outside Kenya, representing eight countries, came to observe this celebration and to listen to the students describe their learning experience. Some of these students had never been out of their villages, so the fellowship of these believers and joy echoed loudly through their singing. Their praise melted our hearts.

How Schools Operate

The OBSs have been in session in Kenya for two months to one year. The students from Vihiga, the first school to complete the full year, made up the graduating class. Most students are men; a few schools are mixed and one trains all women.

The schools scattered throughout the southern part of Kenya operate two weeks on and two weeks off. Some students commute, but most live in the community and walk a few miles to school. They learn Bible stories and passages and discuss them STS style. About two-thirds of the students actively serve as pastors or on a church staff. Nearly half of the students have been to seminary.

Of the 120 students who began attending these OBSs only four have dropped out! One student was dismissed after the first week because he was late and then absent. Two students left because their churches’ senior leadership because the men were needed in their villages, and one left because of sickness.

So far, leaders in Kenya and other African nations of Ethiopia, Sudan, Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Tanzania and others are discussing what they are seeing in Kenya to see how they can utilize the Kenya model to set up OBSs in their countries.

Because these schools are largely student-supported, only people hungry to learn Bible in an understandable and practical way are willing to come. The commitment to arrange for a school, and the self-support of the students create ownership and fosters responsibility.

For the first week of a new school, a qualified STS overseer leads an STS workshop. That training is followed by one more week of STS style of learning and discussing stories. Ongoing leadership is selected by the students from among their own ranks.

Overseers for the schools are selected from the growing pool of qualified STS instructors in Kenya. We found the depth of commitment to this work impressive, from those who have been trained at the STS Training Center, to those who have attended STS short courses, to those who have been trained by these ordained Christians as a way to create stronger leaders, pastors, teachers, church planters and evangelists.

None of the instructors are paid STS staff, and as rural pastors, they live on meager incomes. But, when these volunteers are away from home, a small honorarium, as needed, may be given to them by The God’s Story Project (TGSP).

After the initial two weeks together, the students organize their own study schedules. However, at the end of the year, students progress in practitioner skills, the supervisors teach their students how to train others as STS practitioners.

TGSP (the ministry that developed Simply The Story) covers the cost of sending the overseers to the schools—their bus fares, and food (and lodging if the overseer travels from far away). Overseers, when they travel a long distance, do an STS vision casting (sharing STS with new people) while traveling to maximize the use of funds.

During the students’ year of learning stories, they study together for two weeks. Then they go back to their villages and study individually or in groups. Two weeks at home also enable students to tend their fields and flocks or maintain whatever means of income they have.
Oral Bible Schools

Interaction With The Graduates

We sat and talked with ten of the twelve members from Vihiga, the village that hosted this first graduating class.

The other absent student was on a month-long suspension. His classmates, all who serve as pastors, decided that this was not an acceptable punishment.

The ten graduates with whom we conversed told us why they first came to the school and why they committed to the year-long training.

A new crop of students has already started a second OBS in Vihiga.

One of the challenges the men named was the distance some of them had to travel to attend school and another was that there were not enough schools for everyone. “Why don’t you make the schools larger so more can attend?”

“Humm,” I mused, “Good questions. I am wondering why Jesus didn’t think to have more than twelve disciples? He could have trained a lot more people at once if He had thought to have a larger school.” The students all laughed.

“But if there were a lot more students than twelve in a school, what would happen to accountability among the students?” I suggested. “You live in different villages, and stepped out of the boat to see if the OBS was really from God. Those in your village who stayed in the boat were all blessed when Peter and Jesus came to that boat and only then did the contrary wind stop. I suggested. “You live in different villages, and stepped out of the boat to see if the OBS was really from God. Those in your village who stayed in the boat were all blessed when Peter and Jesus came to that boat and only then did the contrary wind stop.

I wanted the students to solve the problems of schools being too far away and the need for schools to accommodate more students. “You live in different villages, and stepped out of the boat to see if the OBS was really from God. Those in your village who stayed in the boat were all blessed when Peter and Jesus came to that boat and only then did the contrary wind stop.

All ten graduates stated that they wanted to start assisting in workshops so they could become certified instructors and then move on to become overseers. “We want to help lead a school like the one we have just experienced.”

Future Plans, “We Want to Go There!”

The majority of the students in all ten schools expressed their interest in learning to teach and in becoming certified instructors!

When the Kenyan STS instructors met before this graduation celebration, they looked at the map being prepared for them.

So as you will see on the

STS-OBS map of Kenya, the instructors mapped out places in the northern part of Kenya where they plan to travel.

We first met instructor “A” in Nairobi in 2008. He works in the north. His testimony shows the difficult ways that he has to travel even by foot, by camel, by Airbus!

Hopefully, prayerfully, by God’s grace these motivated instructors, who are willing to make these hard treks to the north, will be able to establish more schools. Already school number eleven in Kenya is about to begin!

More Results of OBS and listing of OBS in Session