Click on the speaker icon to the left or use the on-screen player below the speaker icon to hear a word from Bryan.

Bryan founded the story4all podcast on which he interviews leaders of story organizations and users of story. He, his wife and three teenage daughters live and serve God in Ireland.

Bryan tells in this audio report of using STS in his home. The positive impact of Bryan’s integration of story in the spiritual life of his family is seen many places.

Included in this family’s service is a trip to Peru. These five trained non-literate tribals in the STS preparation and presentation of Bible stories. The girls and Bryan’s wife traveled 36 hours on the Amazon and taught ... in Spanish!

When you click to listen and are hearing this short topic, if you do not see the volume-pause-play options on your screen, your computer may be set to send the audio player to your task bar at bottom of your screen.

Family Togetherness

In The Word and On The River—Together

“In the month of August, my family (5 of us) and I made a trip from N. Ireland to Atlanta and on to Lima and finally, the Peruvian Amazon. We were asked to bring an STS storytelling training to a remote jungle village called Ollanta - 36 hours boat ride away from the main city in the area, Iquitos.
“People gathered for the training from up to five days away by dugout canoe. They represented villages and communities covering a wide swathe of jungle territory. YWAM had been training these faithful souls for the last two years, several weeks at a time when they gathered regularly from their home villages to study and learn. Two years previously most of them were illiterate, and many still struggled to read and write. As a family we led them in an intensive, 5-day training in Spanish - the common language of the group - and used the curriculum and schedule of STS as the type of training offered.

“At first the group was unsure of a new, non-traditional, unexplored way of using story to make disciples and reach the lost, but they quickly and enthusiastically caught on.

They began to practice how to tell a story, look for treasures in the story and then present the story, re-tell it and then invite assistance from listeners to walk through (and further learn) the story for a third time.

These things were no mean feat for a group of Indians from one particular tribe who were renowned in the area for their stoic and lack of emotional response to life in general. How do you teach people the importance of gestures and facial expression in storytelling when they are not used to that?

“By the end of the week, these Indians in particular were amazing all who knew them, and also the missionaries working among them, about just how expressive they had learned to become! This became more evident as they tastefully enacted through drama, on the last day of the course, all that they had learned in the stories.

“One of the things that is difficult for everyone who starts with STS is learning how to skillfully lead others to discover truths and treasures in the stories presented. Again, our Amazonian students all struggled a little with this, but, as with the rest of the schedule we use for the training all over the world, we adjusted nothing (except one illustration about an elephant, which we replaced with a tapir to make it relevant for those who were not familiar with an elephant!).

“We dumbed down nothing in the training, but followed the same schedule used in Ireland and USA. The attendees all grasped the concepts and elements of the training to become very good storytellers and discussion leaders. We heard from several literate leaders - the older in the Lord among the attendees - who said to us, ‘We have read the Bible and these stories before; we knew them to a certain extent, but now they are in our hearts. We feel both excited and equipped to pass these stories on to others who live flung throughout the Amazon region. None of those people know how to read and write and they also have never heard of Jesus!’

More articles that show Family Togetherness Training Non-Literates | Family Outreach | Effect of STS in a Marriage and Ministry