

Writing – Summarising a Text

The Parable of the Talents

a) Read the **Parable of the Talents** in **Matthew 25:14-30** below:

¹⁴ 'For it is like a man going into another country, who called his own servants and entrusted his goods to them. ¹⁵ To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his own ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶ Immediately he who received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. ¹⁷ In the same way, he also who got the two gained another two. ¹⁸ But he who received the one talent went away and dug in the earth and hid his lord's money.

¹⁹ 'Now after a long time the lord of those servants came, and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ He who received the five talents came and brought another five talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents. Behold, I have gained another five talents in addition to them.'

²¹ 'His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

²² 'He also who got the two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents. Behold, I have gained another two talents in addition to them.'

²³ 'His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things. I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

²⁴ 'He also who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you that you are a hard man, reaping where you didn't sow, and gathering where you didn't scatter. ²⁵ I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the earth. Behold, you have what is yours.'

²⁶ 'But his lord answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant. You knew that I reap where I didn't sow, and gather where I didn't scatter. ²⁷ You ought therefore to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back my own with interest. ²⁸ Take away therefore the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. ²⁹ For to everyone who has will be given, and he will have abundance, but from him who doesn't have, even that which he has will be taken away. ³⁰ Throw out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

- b) *Discuss the story with a partner or small group. What are the main events of the story? Who are the characters? What does each character want (their objective)? How does it end? What 'journey' does each character go on during the story? What is the meaning of the story? Why was it written down?*
- c) *With your partner or small group, write a **summary of the text in exactly 15 words**. The word limit **must** be respected! Set a time limit, e.g. 10 minutes, then, each pair or group reads their sentence out loud to the class. Teacher and other students provide error correction and give general feedback. Consider how the word limit affected your use of language.*
- d) *Repeat step c) except write a summary of the text in **exactly 10 words**.*
- e) *Repeat step c) except write a summary of the text in **exactly 5 words**.*
- f) *Repeat step c) except write a summary of the text in **exactly 1 word**.*
- g) *The whole class discusses: how easy was it to summarise the text? How did you decide what to leave in and what to omit? Has it changed the way you thought about this Bible story at the beginning of the lesson?*

Holy Bible text courtesy World English Bible: <http://ebible.org/web/MAT25.htm>