

Joseph reader's theater

FK reading level overall: 5.0

Scene 1 - tattletale

CHARACTERS: Joseph, Jacob, Dan, Gad, Reuben, Merchant, Judah, Potipher, Potipher's wife

PROPS: Colorful coat

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Genesis 37 & 39

FK reading level: 3.8

JOSEPH: Dad, that's the report on my brothers.

JACOB: What a bad report. I'll see to it they straighten out.

DAN: (*aside to brothers*) That tattletale Joseph has gotten us in trouble.

JACOB: But for you Joseph, my favorite son, I have a gift.

JOE: What a beautiful robe. Colorful, ornate, fit for a ruler!

GAD: I can't stand Joe! (Others ad lib agreement)

DAN: He's a 17 year old spoiled brat!

Scene 2 – the dreamer

JOSEPH: Last night I dreamt we were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it.

DAN: Do you intend to reign over us?

GAD: Will you actually rule us?

NARRATOR: They hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said.

JOSEPH: I had another dream. This time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me.

JACOB: What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?

NARRATOR: His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

Scene 3 - Joseph Sold by His Brothers

JACOB: Your brothers graze the flocks near Shechem. Go and see if all is well with your brothers and with the flocks, and bring word back to me.

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JOSEPH: Very well.

NARRATOR: Joseph went but his brothers saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him.

DAN: Here comes that dreamer!

GAD: Come now, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns and say that a ferocious animal devoured him.

DAN: Then we'll see what comes of his dreams.

RUEBEN: Let's not take his life; don't shed any blood. Throw him into this cistern here in the wilderness, but don't lay a hand on him.

NARRATOR: Reuben said this to rescue him from them and take him back to his father.

DAN: Grab him!

GAD: Take off that special robe of his.

DAN: Throw him into the cistern.

GAD: Great. Now let's eat.

DAN: That looks like a caravan of Ishmaelites.

JUDAH: What will we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? Come, let's sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood. (*BROTHERS ad lib agreement*)

DAN: How much for this slave?

MERCHANT: Twenty shekels of silver.

GAD: Where are you headed?

MERCHANT: Egypt.

RUEBEN: Joseph is gone! The boy isn't there! Where can I turn now?

JUDAH: We sold him to some merchants.

GAD: We can cover this up.

DAN: Let's dip his fancy robe in goat's blood, take it back to dad and let him draw his own conclusions.

NARRATOR: So they did.

JUDAH: Father, we found this. Examine it to see whether it is your son's robe.

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JACOB: (*grieving*) It is my son's robe! Some ferocious animal has devoured him. Joseph has surely been torn to pieces.

NARRATOR: Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and mourned for his son many days.

RUEBEN: (*to audience*) ^{All} of us sons and daughters came to comfort him.

JUDAH: But he refused to be comforted.

JACOB: I will continue to mourn until I join my son in the grave.

NARRATOR: Meanwhile, the Midianites sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard. The LORD was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master.

Scene 4 – Potipher's house

POTIPHER: The LORD is with you Joseph and He gives you success in everything you do.

JOE: He is a mighty God.

POTIPHER: I am putting you in charge of my household, and entrusted everything I own to you.

NARRATOR: The LORD blessed the household and fields of the Egyptian because of Joseph.

POTIPHER: I need concern myself about nothing with Joseph in charge.

POTIPHER'S WIFE: (*aside to audience*) Joseph is well-built and handsome. (*to JOE*) Come to bed with me!

JOSEPH: No. With me in charge, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?

NARRATOR: Potipher's wife kept trying however even though Joseph refused and avoided her. One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside.

POTIPHER'S WIFE: (*grabbing his cloak*) Come to bed with me!

JOSEPH: No!

NARRATOR: Joseph ran leaving his cloak in her hand.

POTIPHER'S WIFE: (*screaming*) Help! Help!

NARRATOR: Other servants rushed to Potipher's wife.

POTIPHER'S WIFE: Look, this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house.

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SERVANT: The cloak will be proof when you tell Potipher.

POTIPHER'S WIFE: That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house. This is how your slave treated me.

POTIPHER: (*angry*) Throw Joseph in prison, the place where the king's prisoners are confined.

NARRATOR: While Joseph was there in the prison, the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden.

WARDEN: Joseph, you are capable. I put you in charge of all those held in the prison, and responsible for all that is done here. (*aside to audience*) I need not pay attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD is with Joseph and gives him success in whatever he does.

Scene 5 -The Cupbearer and the Baker, Genesis 40

CHARACTERS: Joseph, Narrator, cupbearer, baker
FK reading level 4.9

NARRATOR: Some time later, Pharaoh was angry with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker, and put them in the same prison where Joseph was confined.

JOSEPH: Why do you look so sad today?

CUP: I had a strange dream last night.

BAKER: I did too, but there is no one to interpret or dreams.

JOSEPH: Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams.

CUP: In my dream I saw a vine in front of me, and on the vine were three branches. As soon as it budded, it blossomed, and its clusters ripened into grapes. Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes, squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup and put the cup in his hand.

JOSEPH: This is what it means; the three branches are three days. Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your position and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand, just as you used to do when you were his cupbearer.

CUP: Good news!

JOSEPH: But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison. I was forcibly carried off from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon.

BAKER: I too had a dream: On my head were three baskets of bread. In the top basket were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head.

JOSEPH: This is what it means. The three baskets are three days. Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head and impale your body on a pole. And the birds will eat away your flesh.

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NARRATOR: The third day was Pharaoh's birthday. He restored the chief cupbearer to his position, so that he once again put the cup into Pharaoh's hand—but he impaled the chief baker, just as Joseph had said to them in his interpretation.

CUP: (*sadly and ashamed*) But I, however, did not remember Joseph; I forgot him.

Scene 6 - Pharaoh's Dreams, Genesis 41

NARRATOR: When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had two dreams that troubled him.

PHARAOH: Bring the wise men and magicians so they may interpret my dreams.

CUPBEARER: Yes, Pharaoh.

PHARAOH: I dreamed I was standing by the Nile, when out of the river there came up seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed among the reeds. After them, seven other cows, ugly and gaunt, came up out of the Nile and stood beside those on the riverbank. And the cows that were ugly and gaunt ate up the seven sleek, fat cows.

WISE: Puzzling dream.

PHARAOH: In my next dream seven heads of grain, healthy and good, were growing on a single stalk. After them, seven other heads of grain sprouted—thin and scorched by the east wind. The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven healthy, full heads.

WISE: We cannot interpret these dreams.

CUPBEARER: Today I am reminded of my shortcomings. A young Hebrew I was in prison with interpreted both my dream and the dream of the baker. Things turned out exactly as he interpreted them to us: I was restored to my position, and the other man was impaled.

PHARAOH: Send for Joseph.

CUPBEARER: I will.

PHARAOH: I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.

JOSEPH: I cannot do it, but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires.

PHARAOH: In my dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile, when out of the river there came up seven cows, fat and sleek, and they grazed among the reeds. After them, seven other cows came up—scrawny and very ugly and lean. I had never seen such ugly cows in all the land of Egypt. The lean, ugly cows ate up the seven fat cows that came up first. But even after they ate them, no one could tell that they had done so; they looked just as ugly as before. Then I woke up.

WISE: Strange.

PHARAOH: I dreamed again that seven heads of grain, full and good, growing on a single stalk. After them, seven other heads sprouted—withered and thin and scorched by the east wind. The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven good heads. I told this to the magicians, but none of them could explain it to me.

JOSEPH: The dreams of Pharaoh are one and the same. God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads of grain are seven years; it is one and the same dream. The seven lean, ugly cows that came up afterward are seven years, and so are the seven worthless heads of grain scorched by the east wind: They are seven years of famine.

CUPBEARER: Famine! This will be a great tragedy.

JOSEPH: God has shown Pharaoh what he is about to do. Seven years of great abundance are coming throughout the land of Egypt, but then seven years of severe famine will ravage the land. The reason the dream was given to Pharaoh in two forms is that the matter has been firmly decided by God, and God will do it soon.

CUPBEARER: We must prepare, Pharaoh.

JOSEPH: Let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt with commissioners over the land to take a fifth of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance.⁵ They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food⁶ This food should be held in reserve for the country, to be used during the seven years of famine that will come upon Egypt, so that the country may not be ruined by the famine.

PHARAOH: The plan seems good.

WISE: We agree.

PHARAOH: Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?

CUPBEARER: No.

PHARAOH: Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you. I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

NARRATOR: Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger.

CUPBEARER: He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.

WISE: He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command and people shouted before him,

ALL: Make way!

CUPBEARER: Thus Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

WISE: Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

CUPBEARER: Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence and traveled throughout Egypt collecting the food produced in those seven years of abundance in Egypt and stored it in the cities.

WISE: In each city he put the food grown in the fields surrounding it.

CUPBEARER: Joseph stored up huge quantities of grain, like the sand of the sea; it was so much that he stopped keeping records because it was beyond measure.

ASENATH: Joseph married me, Asenath and we had two children.

JOSEPH: I name my firstborn Manasseh because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household.

ASENATH: He named the second Ephraim.

JOSEPH: God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering.

CUPBEARER: The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end, and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said.

ASENATH: There was famine in all the other lands, but in the whole land of Egypt there was food.

WISE: When all Egypt began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food.

PHARAOH: Go to Joseph and do what he tells you.

CUPBEARER: When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened all the storehouses.

JOSEPH: We will sell the grain to the Egyptians, for the famine is severe throughout Egypt.

ASENATH: All the world came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe everywhere.

Scene 7 - Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt, Genesis 42

REUBEN: The famine is severe everywhere. Father, we will starve without more food.

JACOB: Why do you just keep looking at each other? I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us, so that we may live and not die.

REUBEN: Who shall go?

JACOB: All but Benjamin. I am afraid that harm might come to him.

NARRATOR: When Joseph's brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces to the ground. As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he pretended to be a stranger, and they recognized him not.

JOSEPH: (*harshly*) Where do you come from?

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REUBEN: From the land of Canaan to buy food.

JOSEPH: (*remembering his dreams about them*) You are spies! You have come to see where our land is unprotected.

REUBEN: No, my lord, your servants have come to buy food. We are 12 brothers, all the sons of one man.

JUDAH: The youngest is now with our father, and one is no more

REUBEN: Your servants are honest men, not spies.

JOSEPH: You are spies! And this is how you will be tested: As surely as Pharaoh lives, you will not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. Send one of your number to get your brother; the rest of you will be kept in prison, so that your words may be tested to see if you are telling the truth. If you are not, then as surely as Pharaoh lives, you are spies!”

NARRATOR: Joseph put them all in custody for three days.

JOSEPH: Do this and you will live, for I fear God: If you are honest men, let one of your brothers stay here in prison, while the rest of you go and take grain back for your starving households. But you must bring your youngest brother to me, so that your words may be verified and that you may not die.

JUDAH: Surely we are being punished because of our brother. We saw how distressed he was when he pleaded with us for his life, but we would not listen; that’s why this distress has come on us.

JUDAH: Didn’t I tell you not to sin against the boy? But you wouldn’t listen! Now we must give an accounting for his blood. (*JOSEPH turns away, weeping*)

NARRATOR: They did not realize that Joseph could understand them, since he was using an interpreter.

JOSEPH: (*to his Egyptian servants*) Bind Simeon and take him to prison. Fill their bags with grain, but put each man’s silver back in his sack. Add provisions for their journey.

REUBEN: Load the grain on their donkeys and we leave.

NARRATOR: When they stopped for the night one of them opened his sack to get feed for his donkey, and he saw his silver in the mouth of his sack.

BENJAMIN: My silver has been returned. Here it is in my sack.

JUDAH: (*trembling*) What is this that God has done to us?

NARRATOR: They arrived home and went to Jacob.

REUBEN: The man who is lord over the land spoke harshly to us and treated us as though we were spying on the land.

BENJAMIN: We are honest men; we are not spies.

JUDAH: We explained we were twelve brothers, sons of one father. One is no more, and the youngest is now with our father in Canaan.

REUBEN: Then the man who is lord over the land said to us, ‘This is how I will know whether you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me, and take food for your starving households and go. But bring your youngest brother to me so I will know that you are not spies but honest men. Then I will give your brother back to you, and you can trade in the land.’

BENJAMIN: As we emptied our sacks, we found in each man’s sack was his pouch of silver!

JACOB: (*frightened*) You have deprived me of my children. Joseph is no more and Simeon is no more, and now you want to take Benjamin. Everything is against me!

REUBEN: You may put both of my sons to death if I do not bring him back to you. Entrust him to my care, and I will bring him back.

JACOB: My son will not go down there with you; his brother is dead and he is the only one left. If harm comes to him on the journey you are taking, you will bring my gray head down to the grave in sorrow.

Scene 8 - The Second Journey to Egypt, Genesis 43

CHARACTERS: Reuben, Jacob, Judah, Benjamin, Narrator, Joseph, Steward

REUBEN: Father, the famine is still severe in the land and we have eaten all the grain we brought from Egypt.

JACOB: Go back and buy us a little more food.

JUDAH: If you will send our brother Joseph along with us, we will go down and buy food for you. But if you will not send him, we will not go down, because the man said to us, ‘You will not see my face again unless your brother is with you.’

JACOB: Why did you bring this trouble on me by telling the man you had another brother?

JUDAH: The man questioned us closely about ourselves and our family. ‘Is your father still living?’ ‘Do you have another brother?’

REUBEN: We simply answered his questions. How were we to know he would say, ‘Bring your brother down here’?

JUDAH: Send the boy along with me and we will go at once, so that we and you and our children may live and not die. I myself will guarantee his safety; you can hold me personally responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him here before you, I will bear the blame before you all my life.

REUBEN: As it is, if we had not delayed, we could have gone and returned twice.

JACOB: If it must be, then do this: Put some of the best products of the land in your bags and take them down to the man as a gift—a little balm and a little honey, some spices and myrrh, some pistachio nuts and almonds.

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REUBEN: Yes, father.

JACOB: Take double the amount of silver with you, for you must return the silver that was put back into the mouths of your sacks. Perhaps it was a mistake.

JUDAH: We will.

JACOB: Take your brother also and go back to the man at once. And may God Almighty grant you mercy before the man so that he will let your other brother and Benjamin come back with you. As for me, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved.

NARRATOR: ⁵So the men took the gifts and double the amount of silver, and Benjamin also. They hurried down to Egypt and presented themselves to Joseph.

JOSEPH: Take these men to my house, slaughter an animal and prepare a meal. They are to eat with me at noon.

BEN: (*scared*) Why did he invite us to his house?

JACOB: (*frightened*) We were brought here because of the silver that was put back into our sacks the first time.

REUBEN: (*worried*) He wants to attack us and overpower us and seize us as slaves and take our donkeys.

JACOB: Steward, we beg your pardon, our lord. We came down here the first time to buy food. But at the place where we stopped for the night we opened our sacks and each of us found his silver—the exact weight—in the mouth of his sack. So we have brought it back with us.

REUBEN: We have also brought additional silver with us to buy food. We don't know who put our silver in our sacks.

STEWARD: It's all right; don't be afraid. Your God, the God of your father, has given you treasure in your sacks; I received your silver. Here is your Simeon.

NARRATOR: When Joseph came home, they presented to him the gifts they had brought into the house, and they bowed down before him to the ground.

JOSEPH: How is your aged father you told me about? Is he still living?

REUBEN: Your servant our father is still alive and well.

NARRATOR: They bowed down, prostrating themselves before him, just as JJJ had seen in his dreams about the sheaves and stars.

JOSEPH: Is this your youngest brother, the one you told me about?

BEN: Yes. God be gracious to you, my son.

NARRATOR: Deeply moved at the sight of his brother, Joseph went into his private room and wept. Returning he said

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JOSEPH:

there. Serve the food.

NARRATOR: The men had been seated before him in the order of their ages, from the firstborn to the youngest; and they looked at each other in astonishment.

JOSEPH: (*to steward quietly*) Serve Benjamin's a portion was five times as much as anyone else's.

Scene 9 - A Silver Cup in a Sack, Genesis 44

JOSEPH: Fill the men's sacks with as much food as they can carry, and put each man's silver in the mouth of his sack. Then put my cup, the silver one, in the mouth of the youngest one's sack, along with the silver for his grain.

STEWARD: Yes, sire.

NARRATOR: As morning dawned, the men were sent on their way with their donkeys

JOSEPH: Go after those men at once, and when you catch up with them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid good with evil? Isn't this the cup my master drinks from and also uses for divination? This is a wicked thing you have done.'

STEWARD: Yes, sire.

NARRATOR: When the steward caught up with them, he repeated these words to them.

REUBEN: Why does my lord say such things? Far be it from your servants to do anything like that!

JUDAH: We even brought back to you from the land of Canaan the silver we found inside the mouths of our sacks. So why would we steal silver or gold from your master's house?

REUBEN: If any of your servants is found to have it, he will die; and the rest of us will become my lord's slaves.

STEWARD: What you have said is right, but only the one who is found to have it will be my slave, and the rest of you will be blameless.

NARRATOR: The steward searched and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. They tore their clothes, and each one loaded his donkey and returned to Joseph's house.

JOSEPH: What is this you have done? Didn't you know that a man like me could uncover the truth by divination?

JUDAH: What can we say to my lord? How can we plead? How can we justify ourselves? God has exposed your servants' iniquity. We are now my lord's slaves—both we and the one in whose possession the cup was found.

JOSEPH: I swear that I will not do this. The man in whose possession the cup was found will be my slave. The rest of you can go in peace to your father.

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JOSEPH: Sir, please let your servant speak personally to my lord. Do not be angry with your servant, for you are like Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, ‘Do you have a father or a brother?’ and we answered my lord,

REUBEN: ‘We have an elderly father and a younger brother, the child of his old age. The boy’s brother is dead. He is the only one of his mother’s sons left, and his father loves him.’

JUDAH: Then you said to your servants, ‘Bring him to me so that I can see him.’ But we said to my lord,

REUBEN: ‘The boy cannot leave his father. If he were to leave, his father would die.’

JUDAH: Then you said to your servants, ‘If your younger brother does not come down with you, you will not see me again.’

REUBEN: “This is what happened when we went back to your servant my father:

JUDAH: We reported your words to him.

REUBEN: But our father said, ‘Go again, and buy us some food.’

JUDAH: We told him, ‘We cannot go down unless our younger brother goes with us. So if our younger brother isn’t with us, we cannot see the man.’ Your servant my father said to us,

REUBEN: ‘You know that my wife bore me two sons. One left—I said that he must have been torn to pieces—and I have never seen him again.

REUBEN: If you also take this one from me and anything happens to him, you will bring my gray hairs down to Sheol in sorrow.

JUDAH: So if I come to your servant my father and the boy is not with us—

REUBEN: his life is wrapped up with the boy’s life—

JUDAH: when he sees that the boy is not with us, he will die.

REUBEN: Then your servants will have brought the gray hairs of your servant our father down to Sheol in sorrow.

JUDAH: Your servant became accountable to my father for the boy, saying, ‘If I do not return him to you, I will always bear the guilt for sinning against you, my father.’ Now please let your servant remain here as my lord’s slave, in place of the boy. Let him go back with his brothers. For how can I go back to my father without the boy? I could not bear to see the grief that would overwhelm my father.”

Scene 10 – Joseph reveals himself, Genesis 45

JOSEPH: (*choked with emotion*) I am Joseph! Is my father still living?

NARRATOR: His brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified.

JOSEPH: I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

JOSEPH: So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. Now hurry back to my father and say to him, ‘This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don’t delay. You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me—you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute.

JOSEPH: You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is really I who am speaking to you. Tell my father about all the honor accorded me in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly.

NARRATOR: Joseph threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping.

STEWARD: Pharaoh, Joseph’s brothers have come.

PHARAOH: I am pleased. Joseph, tell your brothers to bring your father and your families back to me. I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you can enjoy the fat of the land. Take some carts from Egypt for your children and your wives, and get your father and come. Never mind about your belongings, because the best of all Egypt will be yours.

NARRATOR: Joseph gave them carts, provisions for their journey, new clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and five sets of clothes.

JOSEPH: Take father these ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and other provisions for his journey. Don’t quarrel on the way!

NARRATOR: They left Egypt and came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan.

JUDAH: Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is ruler of all Egypt.

JACOB: (*stunned*) I’m convinced! My son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.

Scene 11 - Jacob Goes to Egypt, Genesis 46 & 47

NARRATOR: God spoke to Israel in a vision at night.

VOICE OF GOD: Jacob! Jacob!

JACOB: Here I am.

VOICE OF GOD: “I am God, the God of your father. “Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph’s own hand will close your eyes.

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JACOB: Judah, go ahead to get directions to Goshen.

NARRATOR: Jacob brought with him to Egypt his sons and grandsons and his daughters and granddaughters—all his offspring taking with them their livestock and the possessions they had acquired in Canaan. With the two sons who had been born to Joseph in Egypt, the members of Jacob's family, were seventy in all.

JACOB: (*to Joseph*) Now I am ready to die, since I have seen for myself that you are still alive.

JOSEPH: When Pharaoh calls you in and asks, 'What is your occupation?' you should answer, 'Your servants have tended livestock from our boyhood on, just as our fathers did.' Then you will be allowed to settle in the region of Goshen, for all shepherds are detestable to the Egyptians.

NARRATOR: Joseph chose five of his brothers and presented them before Pharaoh.

JOSEPH: (*to PHARAOH*) My brothers and my father's household, who were living in the land of Canaan, have come to me. The men are shepherds; they tend livestock, and they have brought along their flocks and herds and everything they own.

PHARAOH: What is your occupation?

REUBEN: Your servants are shepherds just as our fathers were.

JUDAH: We have come to live here for a while, because the famine is severe in Canaan and your servants' flocks have no pasture. So now, please let your servants settle in Goshen.

PHARAOH: Your father and your brothers have come to you, and the land of Egypt is before you; settle your father and your brothers in the best part of the land. Let them live in Goshen. And if you know of any among them with special ability, put them in charge of my own livestock.

JOSEPH: This is my father.

JACOB: May God bless you.

PHARAOH: How old are you?

JACOB: The years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty. My years have been few and difficult, and they do not equal the years of the pilgrimage of my fathers.

NARRATOR: Joseph gave his family property in the best part of the land, the district of Rameses, as Pharaoh directed. He provided his father and his brothers and all his father's household with food, according to the number of their children.

JOSEPH: There is no food in the whole region because the famine is severe.

JACOB: Both Egypt and Canaan waste away because of the famine.

STEWARD: Joseph, you have collected all the money that is to be found in Egypt and Canaan in payment for the grain they were buying.

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JOSEPH: Take it to Pharaoh's palace.

EGYPTIAN: Our money is all gone but we need food.

JOSEPH: Then bring your livestock. I will sell you food in exchange for your livestock, since your money is gone.

EGYPTIAN: We will exchange our horses, sheep and goats, cattle and donkeys.

NARRATOR: When that year was over, they came to him the following year.

EGYPTIAN: We cannot hide from our lord the fact that since our money is gone and our livestock belongs to you, there is nothing left for our lord except our bodies and our land. Why should we perish before your eyes—we and our land as well? Buy us and our land in exchange for food, and we with our land will be in bondage to Pharaoh. Give us seed so that we may live and not die, and that the land may not become desolate.

NARRATOR: So Joseph bought all the land in Egypt for Pharaoh. The Egyptians, one and all, sold their fields, because the famine was too severe for them. The land became Pharaoh's, and Joseph reduced the people to servitude from one end of Egypt to the other.

JOSEPH: Now that I have bought you and your land today for Pharaoh, here is seed for you so you can plant the ground. But when the crop comes in, give a fifth of it to Pharaoh. The other four-fifths you may keep as seed for the fields and as food for yourselves and your households and your children.

EGYPTIAN: You have saved our lives. May we find favor in the eyes of our lord; we will be in bondage to Pharaoh.

REUBEN: The Israelites settled in Egypt in the region of Goshen.

JUDAH: We acquired property and were fruitful and increased greatly in number.

JOSEPH: Jacob lived in Egypt seventeen years, and the years of his life were a hundred and forty-seven.

JUDAH: When the time drew near for Israel to die, he called for his son Joseph.

JACOB: If I have found favor in your eyes, put your hand under my thigh and promise that you will show me kindness and faithfulness. Do not bury me in Egypt, but when I rest with my fathers, carry me out of Egypt and bury me where they are buried.

JOSEPH: I will do as you say.

NARRATOR: Israel worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

Scene 12 - Manasseh and Ephraim, Genesis 48

STEWARD: Your father is ill.

NARRATOR: Joseph took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim to see his father rallied his strength and sat up on the bed.

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JACOB: God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, blessed me and said

VOICE OF GOD: I am going to make you fruitful and increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you.

JACOB: Your two sons born to you in Egypt before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine. Any children born to you after them will be yours; in the territory they inherit they will be reckoned under the names of their brothers. Who are these?

JOSEPH: They are the sons God has given me here.

JACOB: Bring them to me so I may bless them.

NARRATOR: Jacob kissed them and embraced them.

JACOB: I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see your children too.

NARRATOR: Israel reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim's head, though he was the younger, and crossing his arms, he put his left hand on Manasseh's head, even though Manasseh was the firstborn.

JOSEPH: No, my father, this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head.

JACOB: I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a group of nations.

JACOB: So Jacob put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh

JACOB: May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked faithfully, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the Angel who has delivered me from all harm —may he bless these boys. May they be called by my name and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and may they increase greatly on the earth. In your name will Israel pronounce this blessing: 'May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.'"

JACOB: I am about to die, but God will be with you^{td} and take you^{td} back to the land of you fathers. And to you I give one more ridge of land than to your brothers, the ridge I took from the Amorites with my sword and my bow.

Scene 13 - Jacob Blesses His Sons, Genesis 49

NARRATOR: Then Jacob called for his sons and blessed them.

JACOB: Gather around so I can tell you what will happen to you in days to come.

REUBEN: To me, Reuben, he said: Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, the first sign of my strength, excelling in honor, excelling in power.

Turbulent as the waters, you will no longer excel,
for you went up onto your father's bed,
onto my couch and defiled it.

SIMEON: Simeon and Levi are brothers— their swords¹³ are weapons of violence. Let me not enter their council, let me not join their assembly, for they have killed men in their anger.

LEVI: Cursed be their anger, so fierce, and their fury, so cruel! I will scatter them in Jacob and disperse them in Israel.

JUDAH: My brothers will praise me; my hand will be on the neck of my enemies; my father's sons will bow down to me. I am a lion's cub; The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his.

ZEBULUN: Zebulun will live by the seashore and become a haven for ships.

ISSACHAR: Issachar is a rawboned donkey lying down among the sheep pens. When he sees how good is his resting place and how pleasant is his land, he will bend his shoulder to the burden and submit to forced labor.

DAN: Dan will provide justice for his people as one of the tribes of Israel.

JACOB: I look for your deliverance, LORD.

GAD: Gad will be attacked by a band of raiders, but he will attack them at their heels.

ASHER: Asher's food will be rich; he will provide delicacies fit for a king.

NAPHTLI: Naphtali is a doe set free that bears beautiful fawns.

JOSEPH: Joseph is a fruitful vine, a fruitful vine near a spring, whose branches climb over a wall.

JACOB: With bitterness archers attacked him; they shot at him with hostility. But his bow remained steady, his strong arms stayed limber, because of the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob, because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel, because of your father's God, who helps you, because of the Almighty who blesses you.

JOSEPH: With blessings of the skies above, blessings of the deep springs below, blessings of the breast and womb.

JACOB: Your father's blessings are greater than the blessings of the ancient mountains

JOSEPH: than the bounty of the age-old hills.

JACOB: Let all these rest on the head of Joseph

JOSEPH: on the brow of the prince among his brothers.

JACOB: Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; in the morning he devours the prey, in the evening he divides the plunder.

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NARRATOR: All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is how their father blessed them, giving each the blessing appropriate to him.

Scene 14 – Back to Canaan, chapter 50

JOSEPH: (*weeping*) Embalm my father, Israel.

EGYPTIAN DOCTOR: Yes, Lord Joseph. We will take the full forty days.

PHARAOH: All of Egypt will mourn for him seventy days.

JOSEPH: My father made me swear an oath and said, “I am about to die; bury me in the tomb I dug for myself in the land of Canaan.” Now let me go up and bury my father; then I will return.

PHARAOH: Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear to do.

OFFICIAL: All of Pharaoh’s officials will accompany you.

REUBEN: So will all of us, his children.

JUDAH: Only children and our flocks and herds will stay back.

OFFICIAL: Chariots and horsemen will go making this a very large company.

REUBEN: So we, the sons of Jacob, did as he had commanded us.

JOSEPH: We carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave which Abraham had bought.

OFFICIAL: After burying his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, together with his brothers and all the others who had gone with him to bury his father.

Scene 15 -Joseph Reassures His Brothers, chapter 50

JUDAH: (*worried*) What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?

REUBEN: (*afraid*) We should send word to Joseph, saying, “Your father left these words for you before he died: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.

JUDAH: Then we shall say: ‘now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father.

NARRATOR: When their message came to him, Joseph wept.

REUBEN, JUDAH (all brothers): We are your slaves.

JOSEPH: (*kindly*) Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don’t be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.

Scene 16 - The Death of Joseph, Genesis 50

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NARRATOR: Joseph stayed in Egypt, along with all his father's family.

REUBEN: Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim's children and the children of Makir son of Manasseh.

JOSEPH: I am about to die. But God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Swear you will carry my bones up from this place.

NARRATOR: Joseph died at the age of a hundred and ten. And after they embalmed him, he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.

Online games

Genesis 37 & 39: Young Joseph rags to riches Plays like Millionaire
<http://www.quia.com/rr/861125.html>

Genesis 40-47 challenge board Plays like Jeopardy
<http://www.quia.com/cb/789315.html>

Genesis 48-50 hangman
<http://www.quia.com/hm/819964.html>

Sons of Jacob Matching
<http://www.quia.com/jg/1432632.html>