

Splat Facts: The Old Testament

The Old Testament Overall:

- Represents the Chosen People's faith experience over nine hundred years
- Developed in three stages
- The first part of the Bible
- Centers on the covenant God made with his Chosen People
- Contains forty-six books
- God inspired multiple authors to record Salvation History.
- Records Salvation History prior to the coming of Jesus Christ
- Describes the covenant that God made with the Jewish people
- Consists of several sections with multiple books in each one
- Includes the Pentateuch (or Torah) and the historical, wisdom, and prophetic books

Oral Tradition:

- Most people had no access to writing implements, and few could read.
- The Old Testament initially existed in the minds of the Chosen People.
- Before the actual physical writing took place
- The Chosen People told stories of their religious heritage in order to preserve them and to pass them down to younger generations.
- Stories and traditions came from the experiences the people had with God and with each other.
- For centuries, ancient peoples of many tribes and cultures around the world recounted laws, told stories, sang songs, and celebrated sacred events to preserve the history of their peoples.
- Nonliterate people depended greatly on their memories and became capable of remembering quite a bit of information.
- Many of the biblical traditions were in story form because it was easier to remember stories.

Writing:

- Began during the reign of King Solomon, perhaps around 950 BC
- Solomon's monarchy would have been wealthy enough to employ scribes who did the actual work.
- Scholars believe that the scribes first wrote oral traditions about the creation of the world and Israel's history up to the conquest of Canaan.
- After writing oral traditions about the creation of the world and Israel's history, the scribes recorded the stories of the kings.
- Scribes wrote first about the early kings such as King Saul and King David.
- Some of the prophets wrote their own books.
- The prophets' disciples and secretaries were often the ones to collect and record their prophecies, sayings, and teachings.

Editing:

- Began in the sixth century BC
- The process of collecting, combining, and improving the texts
- This is why many of the Old Testament books are compilations, the work of several people.
- The last of the Old Testament books dates to around 100 BC.
- This process clarifies why some books have sometimes-confusing repetitions and explains why other books, such as the Psalms and Proverbs, are really collections of wisdom from many people over the years.

Name _____ Date _____

Handout 3-C

Foldable Notes

Cut on the thick solid lines and fold on the dotted lines.

The diagram shows a large rectangle with a thick solid horizontal line and a thick solid vertical line intersecting at the center. This creates four equal quadrants. Within each quadrant, there is a vertical dotted line, one on the left and one on the right, which are intended to be folded. The thick solid lines are intended to be cut out.

Splat Facts: The New Testament

The New Testament Overall:

- Describes the Good News of Jesus Christ and his New Covenant with humanity
- Twenty-seven books share the Good News and talk about the spread of the Gospel in the early Church.

The Gospels:

- The heart of the Bible—because through them, you can know Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and learn how to live as his disciple
- We stand in Mass when the priest reads from this part of the Bible.
- The most important biblical texts
- The formation of these books took place in three stages.
- These four books share the Good News God accomplished for you through his Son, Jesus Christ.

The Historical Jesus:

- Time period: 6 BC–AD 30/33
- Jesus lived the typical life of a Jewish boy growing up in Nazareth, a town in Galilee, and learning the carpenter trade from his foster father, Joseph.
- Jesus came onto the public scene probably about AD 28.
- Traveled the countryside of Galilee and Judea and into the small towns where he taught, healed, and proclaimed the coming of God's Kingdom
- At the instigation of some religious leaders who saw Jesus as a threat, the Roman prefect, Pontius Pilate, crucified him.
- Three days later, Jesus rose from the dead and visited his Apostles.
- In those days, many Jews could not read, so students needed to remember what their teachers taught them. Knowing that his audience would want to remember his teachings, Jesus used easy-to-remember vivid stories, short sayings, striking images, poetic language, and other similar devices.

Splat Facts: The New Testament

Oral Tradition:

- Time period: AD 30–50
- The Apostles believed that Jesus was the awaited Messiah and the Son of God and followed his command to “go into to the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature” (Mk 16:15).
- Remaining pious Jews themselves, the early Christians believed that Jesus was the fulfillment of God’s Old Testament promises.
- The Apostles first announced the marvelous things God had accomplished in Jesus to their fellow Jews.
- The Apostles later found that Gentiles were also receiving the Holy Spirit. Early Christians then began to preach to both Jews and Gentiles throughout the Roman Empire.
- The preaching of the early Christians took three forms, one of which was the *kerygma*, or preaching to unbelievers.
- In their preaching, Sts. Peter and Paul presented a basic outline of Jesus’ Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension.
- Sts. Peter and Paul used passages from the Hebrew Scriptures to show that Jesus fulfilled prophecies made about the Messiah.
- Some disciples began to assemble collections of material about Christ such as miracle stories, his parables, and the Passion narratives.
- The preaching of the early Christians took three forms, one of which was *didache*, or further teaching to those who had accepted Jesus.
- Catechizing believers meant repeating the message and explaining it in greater depth.
- Early converts needed additional instruction about how to live a more Christ-filled life. Originally, this instruction was shared orally.
- The preaching of the early Christians took three forms, one of which was the liturgy, or Christian worship.
- Early Christians recalled Jesus’ central moments, teachings, and prayers in the early Eucharistic celebrations. Some examples include Jesus’ words at the Last Supper, the Lord’s Prayer, and his Passion.
- The Church’s primary interest was to interpret the meaning of Jesus’ main deeds and sayings, to share the Good News with as many people as possible.
- In some cases, different local communities slightly varied the wording of what was prayed at liturgy. However, they faithfully recounted the spirit of what Jesus did and said.
- Many of the earliest Christians expected that Jesus would come back “to judge the living and the dead” in their lifetimes. There were more urgent things for them to do than writing, such as preaching the Gospel and preparing for the Lord’s return.

Splat Facts: The New Testament

The New Testament Writings:

- Time period: AD 50–ca. 120
- Luke gave this description of this period: “Since many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as those who were eyewitnesses from the beginning and ministers of the word have handed them down to us, I too have decided, after investigating everything accurately anew, to write it down in an orderly sequence for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received” (Lk 1:1–4).
- Some of the first New Testament books written were the letters of St. Paul.
- The Evangelists examined the sources, including those from eyewitnesses, and then organized the material into a written account.
- The evangelists had unique ways of telling the story because they wrote to different Christian communities.
- Mark highlighted Jesus’ suffering, portraying a man who freely gave his life for humanity.
- Matthew emphasized Jesus as a teacher who perfectly fulfilled the Jewish prophecies made about him.
- Luke presented Jesus as a Savior for all people, one who reaches out especially to the poor and neglected.
- John focused on Jesus’ divinity.
- One reason for moving into this phase was that the end of the world was not coming as quickly as anticipated, so the early Christians saw the increasing necessity to preserve the accuracy of the apostolic testimony concerning Jesus for the future.
- One reason for moving into this phase was that some people were distorting the original and authentic message of the Gospel. Early Christians needed an authoritative written record of the Good News.
- One reason for moving into this phase was that Christians needed more instruction. This state would provide a record to help instruct Christians about the faith in a consistent way and serve as guides for liturgy.
- Moving into this stage allowed the Church to send writings—for example, St. Paul’s letters—to new and growing local churches.

Educated Guessing Game

Challenge your students to determine the category of book from which each of the following passages is drawn. Award a bonus point to any team who can name the actual book.

A note about the Gospel passages: These were selected to highlight the elements of the Gospel described in the text. Be careful not to indicate to students that these passages are “exclusive” to the Gospel quoted in this exercise.

Gospels:

- When they drew near Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tethered, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them here to me. And if anyone should say anything to you, reply, ‘The Master has need of them.’ Then he will send them at once.” This happened so that what had been spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled. (Matthew 21:1–4)
- Then [Jesus] said to them, “My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch.” He advanced a little and fell to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass him by.” (Mark 14:34–35)
- Jesus replied and said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. (Luke 10:30–34)
- They asked him, and said to him, “Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” John answered them saying, “I baptize in water, but among you stands One whom you do not know. It is He who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:25–29)

Educated Guessing Game

Acts:

- At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said, “Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry.” Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us—beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.” So they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias. And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two You have chosen to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles. (Acts 1:15–17, 21–26)
- Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Acts 2:43–47)
- Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus. And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply. But when they had ordered them to leave the Council, they began to confer with one another, saying, “What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name.” And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.” (Acts 4:13–20)
- Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia; but John left them and returned to Jerusalem. But going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidian Antioch, and on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. After the reading of the Law and the Prophets the synagogue officials sent to them, saying, “Brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it.” Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, “Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen.” (Acts 13:13–16)

Educated Guessing Game

Pauline Epistles:

- I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles. I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith." (Romans 1:13–17)
- I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves. (1 Corinthians 5:9–13)
- I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed! For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ. (Galatians 1:6–10)
- Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory. For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:13–19)
- For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ. Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. (Colossians 2:5–7)
- Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. (1 Timothy 3:8–10, 14–15)
- I appeal to you for my child Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment, who formerly was useless to you, but now is useful both to you and to me. I have sent him back to you in person, that is, sending my very heart, whom I wished to keep with me, so that on your behalf he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel; but without your consent I did not want to do anything, so that your goodness would not be, in effect, by compulsion but of your own free will. For perhaps he was for this reason separated from you for a while, that you would have him back forever, no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. If then you regard me a partner, accept him as you would me. (Philemon 1:10–17)

Educated Guessing Game

Catholic Epistles:

- My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism. For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives? Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? (James 2:1-5)
- But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Peter 2:9-10)
- But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. (2 Peter 2:1-3)
- Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (1 John 4:7-11)
- But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, "In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts." These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. And have mercy on some, who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh. Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (Jude 1:17-25)

Educated Guessing Game

Revelation:

- Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength. (Revelation 1:12–16)
- A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne. (Revelation 12:1–5)
- And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (Revelation 12:7–9)
- Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.” (Revelation 21:1–4)