

Worlds of the Text

There is no text without context! Catholics read Scripture contextually. Students can enter the Worlds of the Text at any point. It is a dynamic and interactive model – it is non-linear!

World behind the Text

What was going on when the text was written?

CULTURE: What can be learned about the cultural world of the text (e.g. cultural codes, language, customs, beliefs, values, festivals, heroes)?

RELIGIOUS WORLD: What can be learned about the prevailing religious world of the text (e.g. rituals, laws, traditions, religious roles, different sects in Second Temple Judaism)?

ROLES & RELATIONSHIPS: What can be learned about roles and relationships at the time of the text (e.g. men and women, priests and slaves etc)?

HISTORY: Around what time is the text set? What is happening at this time in history in the community for which the text was written (e.g. Roman occupation, economy, power politics, status)?

AUTHORSHIP: Who might have authored, edited and/or translated this text? Is it the work of an individual or a community?

GEOGRAPHY: Where in the world is the text set?

COMMUNICATION: How might the text have developed from its origins to the written text (e.g. oral tradition, language)?

World of the Text

What is going on in the text?

PURPOSE: What type of text is it? Why might this text type have been created? Why has this author chosen this text type? Why has this reader identified the text type? What clues help the

CHARACTERS: Who are the characters in the text? What is the author trying to communicate through the characters' voices?

DISCOURSE: How have the main characters in the text used activities and interactions among people at this time? How do the characters use social language/codes/protocols to their advantage (e.g. ways of talking, acting, gesture, responding to questions)?

TEXT & TEXTUAL FEATURES: What key words or phrases, or interesting, new or difficult ideas need further exploration? What Biblical ideas can be used to find this information? What commentaries, Biblical dictionaries, Biblical atlases, annotated Bibles, online Bible search engines? What text features are in the text (e.g. imagery, metaphor, simile, repetition, contrast, symbol, vocabulary)?

CONTEXT: Where does the story take place? What happens in this text? What evidence can be found in the text of the life of the time?

TEXT ANALYSIS: Is this text fair? Who speaks and who is silenced? Can the original language in which the text was written help with understanding the text? Do other English translations give a clue to this? Do other concordances and online homilies on the text help? Consider the interests, needs and background of the intended readers of this text.

World in front of the Text

What meaning of this text today?

RELEVANCE: For whom might this text be relevant today (e.g. refugees, school communities, marginalised)?

MESSAGE: What are some messages that contemporary believers can take from this text in their time and place?

CHALLENGE: Is there anything in this text that might be open to challenge or questioning by a contemporary reader?

MEANING: What factors make it possible for contemporary readers to bring to this text interpretations not intended by the author?

RE-CONTEXTUALISATION: How can this text be re-contextualised to resonate in today's world? What mode and media could be used to express this text?

HERMENEUTICS: How might gender, culture or life experience, including the way a religion or religious groups, affect the way a contemporary reader might respond to the text? How may the experience of the reader add to the richness of interpretation? How do personal events or feelings shape meaning for the reader?

GOING FURTHER: How might a contemporary reader gain a deeper awareness of this text? How might this text be used in prayer? contexts (e.g. to inspire for justice, in prayer)?



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