Jonah’s unfinished conversation

Read Jonah 3:9–4:11. Sort six claims by what the passage supports, conflicts with or leaves open. Bring a Bible in the translation your group uses.

SUPPORTS
The text backs this claim.

CONFLICTS
The text gives a reason to reject it.

LEAVES OPEN
The passage does not settle it.

Cut the cards apart, or write a category beside each. Add the verse you used.

A

Jonah names God's mercy while explaining his earlier flight.

Category _____

Verse _____

B

The king says he knows for certain what God will do.

Category _____

Verse _____

C

Jonah is pleased about the plant that provides shade.

Category _____

Verse _____

D

Jonah grew the plant himself.

Category _____

Verse _____

E

The final question refers to animals as well as people.

Category _____

Verse _____

F

Jonah changes his mind after the final question.

Category _____

Verse _____

Facilitator steps, roles and answer key are on page 2.

Accessible version and optional Wayfold app

Keep the passage open

Suggested length: 20 minutes. Adjust the pace to your group. The activity is a close-reading exercise for adults or teens.

Prepare · about 2 minutes

Bring a Bible for each pair. Choose a reader, finder and questioner. In a pair, share the third role. Scissors are optional. Keep the answer key face down.

Read · about 4 minutes

Read Jonah 3:9–4:11 together. Notice the change from the city’s response to Jonah’s response. Revisit the wider book if a question needs context.

Sort · about 8 minutes

Place each card under Supports, Conflicts or Leaves open. Record a verse and explain the decision. Rotate the roles after two cards. Disagreements are a reason to reread.

Check and discuss · about 6 minutes

Compare the six decisions with the key. Revise a decision when the passage gives a reason. End by discussing the question below.

THREE ROLES TO ROTATE

Reader — Read Jonah 3:9–4:11 aloud from your chosen Bible. Reread a requested verse and its surrounding sentence.

Finder — Find the strongest verse for a card. Read enough context for the others to check the connection.

Questioner — Ask what words support the decision. If a claim goes beyond the passage, ask what information is missing.

ANSWER KEY

A · Supports · Jonah 4:2 — Jonah connects his earlier flight with what he knows about God's character.

B · Conflicts · Jonah 3:9 — The king asks whether God may turn and relent. His question expresses uncertainty.

C · Supports · Jonah 4:6 — The narrative reports Jonah's gladness because of the plant.

D · Conflicts · Jonah 4:10 — God says Jonah did not work for the plant or make it grow.

E · Supports · Jonah 4:11 — The question names the people of Nineveh and its many animals.

F · Leaves open · Jonah 4:11 / end of the book — The book ends with the question. It does not report a reply or a later change of mind.

A QUESTION TO LEAVE WITH

How does the final question change the way you read the earlier scene with the plant? Point to details in Jonah 4:6–11. Keep personal reflection separate from claims about what Jonah did next.

Reuse: groups, teachers and libraries may print, photocopy or share the complete, unmodified packet free with credit to Honest Little Apps. Cards include statements to test against the passage. All teaching prompts are original. Bring your group’s Bible.

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