Grandma's favorite read aloud Bible stories ©: Jonah part 1
Jonah 1:1-16

A LONG TIME AGO THERE WAS A MAN NAMED JONAH….

He was a special man. He could hear God!! They called him a "prophet" because Jonah could tell all the people what God was going to do!!

Well, one day, Jonah heard God. God said, "Jonah, I want you to go to a great big city called Ninevah. It is a VERY bad city!! The people there do terrible things and I can't stand it anymore! Go and tell them!"
But Jonah didn't want to!! He didn't like the people in Ninevah! He hated them! So Jonah ran away! He decided to hide from God. So he found a ship going to a faraway land, bought a ticket and went aboard! (and God watched)

When the ship was far out in the water, God sent a really big storm!! It was throwing the ship around so badly that the ship was about to break into pieces! The sailors aboard the ship were so scared and they all began praying to whatever they thought could help. The sun god, the Mother Earth and the God of the Seas ---- but not to the real God! The sailors started throwing all the heavy things off the ship so the ship wouldn't sink!

But …WHERE was Jonah?
You know where he was? Sleeping! In the bottom of the ship! Sleeping through the storm!
The captain of the ship was angry and went and woke Jonah up. "Get up sleepyhead!" We are all about to die and you are asleep?! Pray to YOUR God – maybe HE will help us!" (But Jonah did not – he was trying to hide from God!)
The sailors said, "we've got to do something! I know! Let's throw dice to see who the gods are angry at". So they did – and Jonah lost! The sailors looked at Jonah and said" Who ARE you? What do you do? Where are you from? Please! Tell us! Why are YOU in trouble?"
So Jonah fessed up! "I am a Hebrew and I believe in the Lord, the God of heaven who MADE the sea and the dry land and I am running away to hide from Him" Now the sailors were REALLY afraid! "Why have you done this???!"

Then the storm started getting worse! And the sailors screamed at Jonah, "Tell us what to do to calm this storm!" Jonah knew what had to done, so he said, "Just pick me up and throw me overboard into the water and then it will calm down the storm. I know the storm is my fault!" But

the sailors thought that was crazy!! Throw him overboard? They couldn't do that!! They decided to row harder and try to make it to shore.
But God was watching!

They couldn't do it! God made the storm too strong and the more they rowed, the stronger it got! Then-- the sailors knew which God to pray to – so they prayed to the Lord. "Please, Lord we know it's wrong to kill a man so don't punish us or let us die in this storm for throwing Jonah overboard! You, Lord, made this storm for a good reason". And when they finished praying , they picked up Jonah and threw him in the water – AND THE STORM STOPPED!

Now the sailors felt soooo afraid of such a mighty God who could stop a storm! He was stronger than ANY of their gods. They offered God a gift and promised to follow Him always! Now they truly believed in the Lord, the God of heaven who made the sea and dry land.

But what happened to Jonah???