



Storytelling Arts NJEA Workshop Series

Let's Go Exploring, Storytelling as a Gateway to Global Community

Presented by: Ellen Musikant

November 6, 2009 1:00pm – 4:00pm

HANDOUTS:

Early Childhood Learning Goals

Listening to stories, children will be exposed to and participate in a process that will include the following goals*:

- Children will hear well-articulated and beautifully spoken language, and they will begin to model on that language.
- They will hear meaningful vocabulary in new contexts.
- They will learn story form and motif.
- They will be exposed to cultural diversity through listening to stories from the world's folk traditions.
- They will learn that the exciting stories they hear can be found in books, which one day they will learn to read.
- They will play with the sound of language as they repeat rhymes, chants and songs.
- They will have a positive and meaningful relationship with their storyteller.
- They will learn to understand their own feelings by identifying with the characters in the stories while learning to empathize with others as well.
- They will learn critical thinking skills when they begin to anticipate how a story will unfold, and they will begin to predict repetitive patterns even on a first telling.
- They will discover that learning and sharing language through stories is a joyful part of life.

* These goals were developed in cooperation with other storytellers affiliated with Storytelling Arts, Inc.

Do Tell! A Slap Dash Technique for Learning a Story to Tell

NOTE: This workshop is designed to encourage you to *learn* **and** prevent you from *memorizing* your story. Please do not try to learn the story word for word. Feel free to improvise. That is the art and craft of storytelling, and the key to telling stories for very young children. You are telling not only “by heart” but “from the heart.”

YOU HAVE 30 MINUTES FOR THIS PROCESS.

Read your story silently to yourself.

Decide the overall **mood or tone** you’d like to convey with the story. (Is it serious and thoughtful, quiet and soothing, silly and ridiculous?) Now read the story aloud trying to capture that quality.

Now, read it again - slowly. Concentrate on **visualizing** the story - its settings and its characters; its sounds, smells, tastes, sights and textures. The more concrete you make these “head pictures” the easier you will be able to move away from the written word. When its your turn to be the storyteller, it will be as though you saw something and experienced it and now you’re telling about it.

If there are particular **chants or phrases** that you will need to memorize write them out and practice them. (e.g., “Run, run as fast as you can! You can’t catch me I’m the Gingerbread Man.”)

NOW - put away the story text. Try to not look at it again. Write a very **brief outline** of the story, listing the plot’s sequence. The bare bones of the story. Don’t try to write the story word for word or the descriptions. Just list significant events. This should take one or two minutes. If you’d rather, do this with *drawings* like a comic strip or storyboard.

Decide if and how you will include audience participation. This may include song, chant, gestures, filling in the blanks, questions and answers, etc. Practice those moments while you practice telling the whole story to yourself.

Now, making sure your story, outline, pictures, notes are out of sight, tell your story to an imaginary audience. By this time you will probably know the whole thing and its just a matter of letting go. Have fun. If you have fun your audience will have fun.

We'll come back as a whole group and I'm hoping a few volunteers will tell their stories. The only way to become a storyteller is to tell a story!

Stories for Early Learners

Baby Rattlesnake's First Rattle - a little rattlesnake gets into trouble and learns a lesson. [Pawnee - Native American. In Shake It Up Tales! Stories to Sing, Dance, Drum and Act Out by Margaret Read MacDonald and picture book, *Baby Rattlesnake* by Lynn Moroney and Te Ata]

Caps for Sale: A Tale of a Peddler, Some Monkeys and Their Monkey Business by Esphyr Slobodkina (literary). I don't tell that many literary tales, but this has always been a favorite. It was first copyrighted in 1940. It has animals, a little tune, colors, repetition, sequence and a great joke that your listeners can get in on! [Slobodkina was born in Siberia, grew up in China and immigrated to the US as a teenager.]

A Drum - a chain tale in which a poor kind boy makes a series of trades until by chance (or his good deeds) he gets exactly what he wants. [India]

The Ghost with One Black Eye - a very silly story that children love...you can find it all over the internet.

The Gingerbread Man - there are lots of variants from all parts of the world. Eric Kimmel wrote *The Runaway Tortilla*; Norwegians have *The Pancake*; Russians have *The Bun*. In each case a boastful tasty morsel is chased and eaten. Yum. [United States]

Goldilocks and the Three Bears - my favorite story to tell to 3's. Their faces reflect Baby Bear's distress. Even so, they laugh great big belly laughs when he cries at his discoveries. [England]

Groundhog's Dance - groundhog tricks seven wolves by teaching them how to dance. [Cherokee - Native American. In Nursery Tales Around the World by Judy Sierra]

The Gunniwolf - a lot of similarities to *Little Red Riding Hood*, but this wolf just wants a sweet song so he can sleep. This is a jump story (designed to make listeners jump) so sometimes I need to modulate it if there are very sensitive listeners in the room. But after hearing it once, everyone wants to hear it again. [America - mid-Atlantic]

How Spider Got His Thin Middle - an Anansi trickster tale that explains the shape of a spider's middle. [Africa/Carribbean/American - various including Adventures of Spider:West African Folktales by Joyce Cooper Arkhurst]

It Could Always be Worse - a poor man lives with his large family in a very small house. He is advised to bring all kinds of animals into the house. Seems crazy, right? But he does as he is told. When he is told to put all the animals back where they belong - he cannot believe how quiet and big his house is. A fun story to act out. [Eastern European Jewish-Yiddish]

Jack and the Beanstalk - a good long narrative with a great refrain. I tell this one to children after they are in the story listening habit. [England]

Johnny and the Three Goats - a story with troublesome goats, a lot of crying, and a bee that saves the day. Good opportunity for predicting story outcome. Bzzzz. [Norway]
Also see: **The Ram in the Chile Patch** [Mexico]

Just Rewards: Or Who is that Man in the Moon and What's He Doing Up There Anyway? by Steve Sanfield. - a tale of kindness versus greed as two neighbors take markedly different approaches to saving a magical wounded bird. For 4 years and up. Children get very involved with the ethical questions raised. [based on Chinese folktale]

Little Red Riding Hood - great story, exciting characters, multiple settings, memorable dialogue! [French]

The Little Old Lady Who Hated Housework - a complaining woman is visited by fairies who teach her to enjoy her work. This is a long story so I tell it to children after they are in the story listening habit. [Scottish - You can find it in *Shake It Up Tales*, MacDonald.]

The Little Old Lady Who Wasn't Afraid of Anything - this is only the littlest bit spooky. Just enough to make it fun to tell in late October - there is a pumpkin and peculiar shenanigans. [Literary, Linda Williams]

Lizard's Song - a picture book by George Shannon. Bear wants Lizard to teach him a song but keeps forgetting it until the lyrics are re-written to fit him better. [literary, but has the feel of a folktale]

The Snooks Family - a very silly story. From Juba This and Juba That by Virginia Tashjian. [England]

Sody Salleratus - lots of fun to tell, lots of repetition. Children will compare it to *Three Billy Goats Gruff*. [American]

Something from Nothing by Phoebe Gilman. A retelling of a classic folktale in which a grandfather changes a blanket into a jacket into a vest into a necktie into a button which is lost and all that is left is a story. [Yiddish]

Three Billy Goats Gruff - spatial and size relationships, and of course a Troll. [Norway]

The Three Little Pigs - There are many versions available of this very popular tale, including one told from the Wolf's point of view. I tell the traditional, old-fashioned version in which the foolish pigs get eaten up (consequences for their foolishness), but the big bad wolf gets his just deserts as well! [England]

What's in Fox's Sack? - another old tale with a chain of events, a sly fox, and a very smart woman. [England - various including picture book by Paul Galdone]

Resources for the Storytelling Classroom

August House: 1-800-284-8784; www.augusthouse.com
folktales at the library 398.2

Beyond the Beanstalk: Interdisciplinary Learning through Storytelling
by Lynn Rubright Heinemann, 1996

Children Tell Stories: A Teaching Guide
by Martha Hamilton & Mitch Weiss Richard C. Owen, 1990

The Golden Thread: Storytelling in Teaching and Learning
by Susan Danoff Storytelling Arts Press. 2006

The Moral of the Story, Folktales for Character Development
by Bobby and Sherry Norfolk August House, Inc. 1999

Story Proof; The Science Behind the Startling Power of Story
by Kendall Haven Libraries Unlimited, 2007

The Storyteller's Start-up Book: Finding, Learning, Performing and Using Folktales
by Margaret Read MacDonald August House, Inc. 1993

The Storytelling Classroom: Applications Across the Curriculum
by Sherry Norfolk, Jane Stenson, and Diane Williams Libraries Unlimited. 2006

Touch Magic - Fantasy, Faerie and Folklore in the Literature of Childhood
by Jane Yolen August House, Inc. - reprint

Story Collections available from August House

by Sharon Creeden

Fair is Fair: World Folktales of Justice

by Pleasant DeSpain

The Emerald Lizard: Fifteen Latin American Tales to Tell in English and Spanish
Thirty-Three Multicultural Tales to Tell

by Heather Forest

Wisdom Tales from Around the World

Wonder Tales from Around the World

by David Hold & Bill Mooney

Ready-to-Tell Tales

by Margaret Read MacDonald

Earth Care: World Folktales to Talk About

Peace Tales: World Folktales to Talk About

Shake it Up Tales! Stories to Sing, Dance, Drum, and Act Out

Tuck Me in Tales: Bedtime Stories from Around the World

Twenty-Tellable Tales

Other Story Collections

from: WW Norton & Co.

Favorite African Folktales

by Nelson Mandela

Outfoxing Fear: Folktales from Around the World

by Kathleen Ragan

Fearless Girls, Wise Women & Beloved Sisters: Heroines in Folktales from Around the World

by Kathleen Ragan

...and more

Best-Loved Folktales of the World

by Joanna Cole, Anchor Books

Favorite Folktales from Around the World

by Jane Yolen, Pantheon Books