

LESSON 12: STORYTELLERS MINI-PRODUCT

MATERIALS:

- How to Tell a Story handout (one copy per student)
- Exit Slip preferences (one copy per student)
- Word Wall card (**audience**)

OBJECTIVES:



Characters in folktales are usually stereotypes with set descriptions.

Characters in folktales are usually described using a single adjective.

Folktales have stock or set openings and closings to help storytellers remember them.

Students will be able to:

- participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.
- use spoken language to accomplish their own literary purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).



Key Terms:

- audience

SEQUENCE

WARM UP: What Does Storytelling Look/Sound Like?



Allow students to share the results of their homework assignment with a partner.

Explain to the students that last class they learned that storytellers must use appropriate adjectives and words in a story to help the listeners paint pictures in their minds.

Today, the students will continue to explore how storytellers use delivery (i.e., tone, fluency, expression, and dramatic effect) in order to keep their **audience** entertained and interested in the story. Add this word to the Word Wall.

Remind students that in ancient times, people didn't have

TEACHER NOTES



Remind students that when reading a story, the punctuation gives clues for how the story should be read and what kind of expression to use (i.e., sentences ending with exclamation points show excitement and the reader's voice should rise to a higher pitch, words that are written in all caps should be read loudly, and italicized

radio, television, or movies. Oral storytelling was one of the major forms of entertainment.

Ask students to think about a scene from their favorite television show, movie, or even a real-life event when a big speech was given or a story was told (i.e., a motivational speech given by a coach before a game, or by a captain before a battle).

Tell the students to close their eyes and envision what that person looked like, and how he or she gave that speech. While the students are forming a mental picture in their minds, ask these guiding questions slowly, allowing students to simply think and consider:

- *Think about how the speaker sounds.*
- *What tone is he or she using?*
- *How does the tone change?*
- *What happens to the speaker’s voice when he or she is excited?*
- *Does the speaker seem afraid or confident?*
- *Does the speaker pause a lot, or do the words flow?*
- *At the end of the speech, how does the speaker react to the audience?*

Distribute the How to Tell a Story handout. Ask students to choral read each section of the handout with you, continuing to think of the speaker they envisioned previously. Ask: *How well does the speaker they envisioned fit into each category?*

ASSESS: Student Self-Reflection and Personal Goals



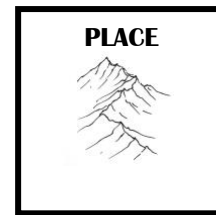
After reading the handout, ask students to underline the pieces of advice they think are the most important for storytellers to remember in order to be a good speaker.

Then, ask the students to reflect on their own abilities. What pieces of advice do they feel they need to focus on in order to be an even better storyteller? Ask students to double underline the pieces of advice that they really want to remember and work on in the upcoming weeks.

words should be read with emphasis).

Remind students that the message of the story can also give insight as to the tone the reader should adopt (i.e., sad stories should be read slowly and somberly, while exciting events should be read quickly).

Similarly, quotation marks show where a new speaker begins and stops talking. This is a way to use different voices to distinguish between characters.



It may be helpful for students to see a visual example of an exemplary storyteller or speaker. Teachers could provide clips from a movie or read aloud an excerpt from a familiar book that is set in a rural area that the students can easily relate to. (William Wallace’s speech before battle in *Braveheart* and Coach Herman Boone’s speech in *Remember the Titans* are examples of inspirational speeches.)



Asking students to identify advice that they feel is most helpful to them as storytellers gives them empowerment and ownership over their learning and provides a way for them to set goals for their continued learning.

ACTIVITY: Group Storytelling—Practice and Perform



Tell the class that today they are going to practice being a storyteller and speaking in front of an audience by participating in Reader’s Theater.

Explain to the students that Reader’s Theater is a way to practice delivering an oral story to an audience, but unlike typical theater, there are no prompts, costumes, or acting. The speakers use their voices to tell the story, not their bodies.

Ask students to gather in the groups that were created last class. Remind students that they have already selected the tale they want to tell, and have already given out the speaking parts. Remind students that today, they are choosing to retell a familiar story in their own words or creating their own tale.

Give students time to write and/or practice telling their stories, monitoring and assisting as needed. Remind students that practicing reading aloud several times can help students achieve fluency as the student becomes familiar with the text, and can prevent inappropriate pauses and help ease nervousness.

Remind students that they are not being graded, and that this is an opportunity to experience the actual storytelling aspect of folkloristics. Encourage the students to support each other as they practice, and create a safe space for taking risks.
Say: Speaking in front of an audience and telling a story may not be for everybody, but you don’t know until you try!

Once students are ready, review how to be a good audience with the class and to give their classmates the same level of respect that they will want when it is their turn to speak. Emphasize that good audiences always clap for everyone, give the speakers their eyes and full attention, sit quietly without interrupting the speakers, and laugh only when appropriate.

Allow each group to perform their story for the class, and encourage the audience to jot down any notes or tips they should share with the speakers after the performances. These should include things that the speakers did well, parts



Students’ first venture into storytelling is a group effort to provide some safety for more introverted students. Students are all required to give each profession (i.e., Folklorists, Storytellers, or Literary Tellers that will be introduced in later lessons) a brief try so they develop an understanding of what their preferences are.





This is a discovery activity in that students will discover the best way to divide the story, to retell or read, or to figure out how long stories take, etc.

If students have difficulty working in groups, give them more structure by assigning group parts. Remind students that they must all contribute and collaborate. Here are some suggested additional roles students can be assigned:

- **Group Leader:** provides guidance and makes sure everyone’s voice is heard
- **Time Keeper:** keeps students on task and monitors time use
- **Scribe/Writer:** records ideas and contributions
- **Troubleshooter/Editor:** serves as a mediator, clarifies instructions if needed



Teachers can encourage students to create an original story that is representative of where they live, or that portrays a moral that is valued by the

<p>of the story the listeners liked the best, and suggestions for continued improvement.</p>	<p>community.</p> <p>Students can also modify a familiar folktale or fairytale and retell the story from a rural standpoint, changing the characters, setting, events, and messages to be place-specific.</p>
<p>DISCUSSION: Analyze Performances</p> <div data-bbox="207 558 393 758" style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: top;">  <p>GROUP</p> </div> <p>Once everyone has performed, meet together as a class to discuss the successes and challenges from today’s performances. Allow students to share their feedback and notes they took while watching the performances.</p> <p>Lead the discussion by asking the students these questions and allowing them to respond:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What did performers do well today?</i> • <i>What part of this task was difficult for you?</i> • <i>What should performers always do?</i> • <i>How did the audience affect your performance?</i> <p>Ask students to think about the advice they were given at the beginning of the lesson and their storytelling experience from today, and encourage them to add their own suggestions to their handouts as well.</p>	<div data-bbox="1133 491 1331 701" style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: top;">  <p>TIP</p> </div> <p>This post-performance evaluation will give students ownership and help them decide what their performance goals should be.</p>
<p>EXIT SLIP/ASSESSMENT OF PREFERENCES:</p> <div data-bbox="207 1262 393 1461" style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: top;">  <p>INDEPENDENT</p> </div> <p>To close the lesson, ask the students to reflect on their storytelling experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How much did you like being a storyteller?</i> • <i>What did you like/dislike about it?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Did you enjoy performing?</i> • <i>Do you like telling stories?</i> • <i>Do you like talking in front of the class?</i> <p>Give each student a copy of the <u>Exit Slip</u> and ask him or her to respond honestly to the questions, continuing to reflect on their feelings toward storytelling. Collect these and use them to inform decisions later for which job the student should have in the festival, and to use during teacher conferences in the upcoming lessons if necessary.</p>	<div data-bbox="1133 1192 1338 1398" style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: top;">  <p>PLACE</p> </div> <p>As an extension activity, students could use the exit slip as a model and research their favorite local author or storyteller. Students could discover what that speaker enjoys most about storytelling and how they became interested in storytelling, what kinds of stories they like to tell the best, if they ever feel nervous speaking in front of an audience, etc.</p>