

How to Tell a Story

Time yourself beforehand. Keep stories under 10 minutes. (Three written pages might take 15 minutes when you tell the story aloud.) Long stories can bore your audience!

Tell it in your own words. Don't try to memorize every word. Remember the few lines of plot, and let them come out. Let your imagination work. But do remember to practice telling your story.

If you get stuck, keep going. Don't frown, stop, apologize, or say, "oops!"

- One trick is to describe details of sounds, colors, smells, clothes to give yourself time. (This trick also triggers your imagination.)
- Another is to stay silent and look into people's eyes—they'll think you are pausing on purpose to build suspense.
- Don't look at the floor to remember! Nobody but you knows what you were going to say, so they will never spot a difference.
- REMEMBER: There are no mistakes! If you make up something new this time, it may be something great to keep for the next storytelling.

Pretend you're confident. Don't apologize as you start or seem shy. People want to hear the story, and they want you to succeed. Relax, breathe, and have fun!

Accept the applause! Look at people, smile and bow. Clapping means they liked it.