

Suggestions to Help You Learn Your Story

1. Read your story out loud over and over again.
2. Make a bare bones outline or pictorial graphic organizer of the story to help you visualize the sequence of images and events. Practice telling the story with the help of your story map.
(Apps and website you could use instead for Bare bones: Popplets, Educreations, Padlet.com)
3. Try recording your voice using an app such as Voice Record Pro (free) or your recorder on your computer. Read your story into it and then listen to it over and over again. Listen to your voice for expression, pacing, pauses, and clarity.
4. The beginning and ending of your story are very important – practice how you will begin and how you will end – place those images in your mind to help you out. My may even want to memorize the first and last lines of your story so that you can begin and end the story with confidence.
5. You must then learn the plot of your story so that you feel very comfortable telling it. We encourage you to tell the story in your own words. Just be sure to choose simple, powerful language that has the same feeling as the style of the story. Write down the vocabulary that will work for you story to help the listeners “see” the story in their minds. Remember to use your 5 senses when telling (smell, hear, touch, taste, see).
6. A big mistake beginners make in telling stories and writing stories is the overuse of pronouns. Example – “He said that they were all playing over there and she was the one who got them in trouble.” I don’t know about you but I don’t know who or what that sentence is about! Make sure you use details and stay away from the pronouns as much as possible.
7. Some stories may have a part where the audience can join in. For Example, there may be a song or verse which is repeated several times, such as, “I’ll huff and I’ll puff and I’ll blow your house down” from *The Three Little Pigs*. Younger children especially love to participate in a story. If you want the audience to help you, encourage them by saying, for example, “Please join in on this part.” Or “Let’s try that together.”
8. Summary of ways of practicing:
 - a. Tell your story whenever you get a chance and to anyone who will listen. The more you tell, the more it will become a part of you. Telling is the only way to discover the places in your story where your memory fails you. Telling your story to listeners will show you other places where you’ll want to work to improve your telling. Ask listeners to point out nervous habits or any other movements that distract them from the story.
 - b. Try telling into a recording device (apps, computer)
 - c. Try telling with an imaginary audience or set up your stuffed animals – look all around the room, and don’t stop during the telling.
9. Over learn your story! Think it through anytime you have a spare minute – while riding the bus, or walking to school, or taking out the garbage. The story will become a part of you, and you will feel confident when you get up in front of the group to tell it. Practice your story at least three times a day until you know it, and then once a day to keep it fresh in your mind.
10. Enjoy! You’ll find out that each time you tell the story to a different audience, you’ll tell your story differently. I can’t wait to hear you!!

TELL Your Story

Storytelling Techniques and Tips

Voice – use it or lose it

- Voice has expression. Practice reading sentences with angry, sad, frightened, surprised, excited, and frustrated, confused, and so on. Nothing will make listeners lose interest more quickly than someone speaking in a monotone.
- Although you should always speak loudly enough so that all your listeners can hear you, you must be sure to vary the volume of your voice. You may speak louder for effect while at other times you'll want to have a softer voice. See what works best through out your story. Practice different volumes to see which is most effective.
- Vary your rhythm or tempo
 - Try not to rush or go too slowly when telling the story.
 - When there's a lot of exciting action you'll want to speak more quickly. When events are urgent speak of them with urgency. But there are times when you will want to speak slowly to create a feeling of suspense and anticipation.
 - Be brave enough to use silence when it's called for. This can be the most effective moment in a story. It creates intensity and allows the listener a chance to breathe.

Eye Contact

- It is very important that you look at your listeners as you tell the story. This makes them feel involved in the story and you will be able to see enjoyment of the story in their eyes. If you have a large audience, pan your head from each side so everyone knows you are talking to them.

Body Language: Use of Gestures to Enhance Your Story

- Keep gestures simple. Remember, you are telling a story, not acting one out on a stage. What comes naturally to you when you are telling a story – facial changes, hands move, pointing, etc. Remember that any gestures you use should help listeners create better pictures in their minds, not cause them to focus more on you jumping up and down.
- Here's some examples:
 - She pointed to the moon in the sky. (Point over the heads of the audience and pretend to actually see the moon)
 - She pulled and she pulled and she pulled until she couldn't pull anymore (bend and pretend you're pulling each time)
- Beginnings: Walk up in front of your listeners with confidence, take a breath, look at your audience, and then say "My name is _____ and I'm going to tell you the story of _____," or any appropriate introduction.
- Endings: A strong ending will leave your audience feeling that the story had power. Finish the story with assurance. Wait for the audience to acknowledge your performance before returning to your seat. Take a short bow if you'd like, and say, "Thank you." If you feel your story doesn't have a clear ending you may need to pause a second and say "How about a hand for the story I just told?"
- If you forget a part of your story, don't panic. Just pause, picture where you left off, and then go on.

Fantastic Storytelling Resources for Beginning a Storytelling Club

Storytelling Books

Children Tell Stories: Teaching and Using Storytelling in the Classroom. Martha Hamilton & Mitch Weiss, Richard C. Owen Publishers (2005)

Raising Voices: Creating Youth Storytelling Groups and Troupes. Judy Sima and Kevin Cordi, Libraries Unlimited (2003)

Stories in My Pocket: Tales Kids Can Tell. Martha Hamilton & Mitch Weiss, Fulcrum Press, 1996.

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

Websites

Sue Kuentz's Storytelling Club Blog (Great place to go to see what's happening in my club. I add helpful websites, youtube videos, a bit of everything that would help out our students and their storytelling www.Door2lore.com

Beauty and the Beast (Martha Hamilton and Mitch Weiss's website) – games, activities, lessons <http://beautyandthebeaststorytellers.com>

Digital Storytelling <http://www.schrockguide.net/digital-storytelling.html>

Heather Forest's website – fun activities to try out with the kids <http://www.storyarts.org/>

National youth Storytelling Showcase: <http://www.nationalyouthstorytellingshowcase.org/NYSS/Welcome.html>

Storytelling in Education? YES! (position paper) <http://www.storynet.org/resources/YES%20Position%20Paper.pdf>

Upcoming Storytelling Events



1. October 27th – Guadalupe State Park Halloween Storytelling and Trick or Treating. Meet at the amphitheater, from 6:30 – 9:00p.m. Costumes encouraged – family outing, free food and drink
2. December 19th – Story “Caroling” at Tuscan Heights – student tellers roam in groups to various classrooms to tell their winter tales.
3. March 1, 2014 – UTSA Storytelling Festival, free for everyone! There will be a keynote speaker and breakout sessions. Our student tellers will have their own showcase between sessions.
4. April 8 – 12, 2014: TLA – Storytelling Round table will have 2-4 workshops available. There’s also a Thursday night storytelling concert
5. May – TSYC (Texas Storytelling Youth Challenge) @ St. Mary’s Hall – gentle competition of storytellers in grades 2 – 12.
6. SASA (San Antonio Storytellers Assoc.) meets the first Wednesday of each month, 6:30 – 8p.m. at Brookhollow Library (530 Heimer Road, north from Bitters Road and just east of Hwy 281)

Enrich Your Library Program with a Storytelling Club: You're already half there!

A. Introduction to the Storytelling Club with two of our young tellers (Avery and Sophia)

B. Resources (398.2, picture books, biographies, nonfiction, digital)

C. Club Organization

D. Opportunities for Storytelling

E. Activity – using expression

1. WILDNESS, VICIOUSNESS

A. I am an untamed wolf with pointed fangs ready to attack and destroy my enemy.

B. The savage wind howled through the valley with fury. It uprooted trees and crushed houses.

2. HAPPINESS, JOY

With only two seconds left to play, Susan kicked the soccer goal that won the game and made her team the champions.

3. COLDNESS

Huge icicles glistened in the frozen air, and the old man shivered as he pulled his coat around him.

Where to go for updates on Storytelling Club news: www.door2lore.com

Visit my blog for updates!

If you didn't receive a handout, my handouts will be at www.door2lore.com

Password is: storytelling