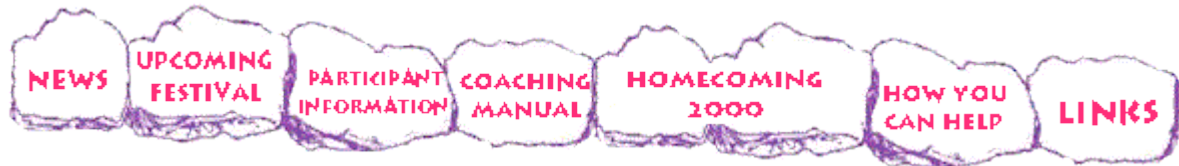




Tampa-Hillsborough County Storytelling Festival



ONLINE COACHING MANUAL

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Once Upon A Story:

*A Manual FOR
teaching storytelling*

Table of Contents

Welcome

[A Little Bit About the Tampa-Hillsborough County Storytelling Festival](#)

[Mission Statement](#)

[The Tradition of Oral Storytelling](#)

[42 Reasons for Teaching Storytelling](#)

How to teach storytelling

[Introductory Lesson](#)

[Choosing a Story](#)

[Fill out the Worksheet](#)

[Storytelling Etiquette](#)

[Methods for Learning the Story](#)

[Coaching the Storyteller](#)

[Sample Lesson Plans & Timeline](#)

[Teaching Notes for the Timeline](#)

[Storytelling Activities and Games](#)

[Criteria for Evaluating Storytelling](#)

[Suggestions for an Evaluation Panel](#)

[Ambassador Club](#)

Forms:

[Registration Card](#)

[Evaluation Form](#)

[Certificate](#)

[Story Summary Worksheet](#)

Appendices:

[Handout — Basic Storytelling Techniques](#)

[Professional Bibliography](#)

[Sunshine State Standards](#)

[Hillsborough County Benchmarks Covered by Storytelling](#)

[Curriculum Tie-ins](#)

SUPPLEMENTS:

[Current year's Festival at a Glance](#)

Participation Statistics Form

(please [send us](#) your mailing address if you do not have the current year's form)

[Bibliography of Tellable Tales](#)

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Welcome

Welcome to the world of storytelling. Before computers, slide projectors, blackboards, books and paper... there was storytelling, the world's first teaching tool. Before television, radio, vaudeville and drama, there was storytelling, the world's first entertainment. Before faxes, telephones, telegraphs, and the written word, there was storytelling, the world's best communicator. The ancient art of storytelling is alive and well today. Our world is full of technology. Yet, this simple art form, which we can take anywhere and use at work, school, and leisure, is one of our most effective tools. Best of all, it is free of charge. Storytelling speaks to the human heart, breaks through psychological barriers, establishes multi-cultural understanding, and enriches the teller as well as the listener.

We are all storytellers. Storytelling is as natural as breathing. The information in this manual will help you develop your children's storytelling talents. It will enable them to use storytelling in many areas of their school work and lives. We hope the ideas presented here will be helpful to you as you teach these important storytelling skills to your children.

Sincerely,
Priscilla Lakus and Virginia Rivers
Co-Chairpersons,
Tampa-Hillsborough County Storytelling Festival

THE TAMPA-HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY STORYTELLING FESTIVAL is produced by:

- The Friends of Library of Tampa-Hillsborough County, Inc.
- The Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library
- The City of Tampa Recreation Department
- The Tampa-Hillsborough County Storytelling Committee
- With the Support of the Arts Council of Hillsborough County and the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners.

Once Upon A Story: A Manual for Storytelling

was written by:
Tampa-Hillsborough County Storytelling Festival Committee members:
Amy Crane, Victoria Gregor and Virginia Rivers.

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

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A Little Bit About..

The Tampa-Hillsborough County Storytelling Festival

Since 1980, the TAMPA-HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY STORYTELLING FESTIVAL has had an ever expanding vision of storytelling as the essence of human experience. The Festival has non-profit status under the auspices of the Friends of the Library of Hillsborough County, Inc. Produced by the Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System and Tampa Recreation Department, the event is guided and advised by the Tampa-Hillsborough County Storytelling Festival Committee. Over thirteen other community agencies collaborate their efforts toward the success of this annual event.

The Festival has received national recognition as the largest storytelling festival in which children are the predominately featured storytellers. This award winning festival has won the National Storytelling Network's Southeast Region Service Award; the Outstanding Innovative Program Award for the State of Florida, issued by the National Parks and Recreation Department; and the Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Award given by the Florida Library Association.

Mission Statement

THE TAMPA-HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY STORYTELLING FESTIVAL engages people of all ages in the enjoyable pursuit of literature and nurtures the preservation of the oral tradition of storytelling. The Festival provides an opportunity for intergenerational, multi-cultural interaction through story and exposure to nationally renowned storytellers. Both children and adults receive training and actively participate in the ancient art of storytelling.

The Tradition of Oral Storytelling

The tradition of oral storytelling has been a part of human heritage and culture throughout history and was in existence long before the written word. Its unique social role is as a vehicle for passing on long-standing beliefs and customs. It has been used to spread news, teach lessons, relate historical events and explain natural wonders and phenomena in an entertaining way. Most important of all, it has been used to preserve and celebrate the history of the people. Today, storytelling is still an integral part of cultures and groups throughout the world and is an important tool in linking the past with the present.

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

42 Reasons For Teaching Storytelling

Compiled by Victoria Gregor,
Booker T. Washington Middle Magnet School, Hillsborough County Public Schools

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1. Provides positive sharing experiences for students.
2. Benefits the listener as well as the teller.
3. Provides opportunities for self-expression.
4. Fosters development of self-confidence, pride, poise, and self-esteem.
5. Stimulates interest in reading for pleasure.
6. Skills learned are transferred to other reading and writing activities.
7. Shows the relationship between the written word and spoken word.
8. Enhances vocabulary and language development.
9. Teaches and reinforces oral skills in all areas of the curriculum.
10. Introduces effective patterns of language.
11. Supports and reinforces concepts taught across the curricula.
12. Promotes development of listening skills.
13. Develops and strengthens visualization skills.
14. Develops awareness of how words affect an audience.
15. Gives students insight into human behavior and motives.
16. Reinforces and enhances both writing and reading skills.
17. Creates a link between reading skills and writing skills.
18. Promotes internalization of effective writing techniques.
19. Provides an opportunity for students from all reading levels to succeed.
20. Enhances development of higher thinking and analytical skills.
21. Strengthens the ability for recognition and memory of details.
22. Develops an awareness of varied writing styles.
23. Enhances ability for identification of main idea.
24. Aids in strengthening ability to recognize sequencing details.
25. Develops higher level of comprehension.
26. Fosters the development of creativity.
27. Provides for subconscious acquisition and familiarity with narrative patterns.
28. Furnishes a vehicle for the passing on of factual information.
29. Promotes an enthusiasm for learning.
30. Creates an opportunity for students to have fun while learning.
31. Gives teachers insight into students' feelings.
32. Is a tool for evaluating and capitalizing on students' strengths.
33. Provides teachers an opportunity to learn a great deal about the needs of their students.
34. Fosters positive peer interaction and cooperation.
35. Promotes an appreciation for the talents of others.
36. Effectively integrates social studies and science into the language arts curriculum.
37. Assists in meeting the Sunshine State Standards.
38. Assists in meeting criteria for [Hillsborough County benchmarks](#).

39. Reinforces learning of Florida Writes skills.
40. Helps promote multi-cultural sensitivity and understanding.
41. Keeps alive the beliefs and culture of a people.
42. **AND, THE MOST GRATIFYING REASON OF ALL:** Reluctant students who do not feel as competent as their peers in reading and writing, and who are considered "losers" by themselves and others, often become the star storytellers. This positive experience turns students around and changes their outlook on what they can accomplish.

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

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How to Teach Storytelling

Introductory Lesson

Storytelling is an oral art. The storyteller uses only him or herself to relate the tale. Everyone knows some stories. The old nursery tales such as *The Three Bears*, *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, *The Little Red Hen*, *Henny Penny*, and *The Gingerbread Boy* are just a few. When teaching children to tell stories, approach the lesson by using the nursery tales, which are familiar to all ages, as examples.

- Begin the lesson by telling the children what storytelling is. Explain that it is a speaker who has a tale to tell.
- No books are used and props are not necessary in formal storytelling.
- Discuss a little of the history of storytelling and why it is an oral tradition (see [Welcome section](#)).
- Tell the children that they are already storytellers and know nursery tales that they could tell to a friend. Explain that they will now learn to tell other stories.
- Tell or read a story to the children and then lead them in identifying the beginning, middle, climax, end, and the main idea of the story.

THE BEGINNING This is where the problem is identified. (The problem in *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* is that all of the grass on their side of the bridge is gone and they are hungry.)

THE MIDDLE This is where the sequence of events are told. Emphasize the importance of maintaining the correct order. (If the big Billy Goat Gruff had crossed the bridge first, the story would have been different.)

THE CLIMAX This is the exciting part (the fight with the troll).

THE END The winding up of the story. (The Billy Goats Gruff crossed the bridge and ate until they got fat.)

THE MAIN IDEA This is what the story is all about. (The Billy Goats Gruff need green grass to eat. The only green grass is on the other side of the bridge. They win against the troll and are able to go across the bridge to get the grass that they need.)

- Explain to the children that they should identify each of these parts of their story when learning to tell it.

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

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Choosing a Story

This is the most important part of the process, and the most time consuming. It is important for the teller to find a story that he or she can live with for a few months. It shouldn't be too long or too short, and it should fit the teller's sense of humor, action and drama.

Have the children look through fairy tales, folk tales, legends, fables, and myths. Try to allocate at least 20 minutes a day for eight days. Use the Storytelling Bibliography to find books, and steer children to the 398, 398.2, 292, and 293 Dewey sections of the library. Consider checking out a variety of books from the library for use in your classroom or center. Librarians can help you find a variety of stories appropriate for telling from a particular culture to go with a unit of study.

Reading stories aloud to children may help them find stories that they would not find on their own. Hearing a story read gives some idea of how the story will sound when told, and how long it is.

Not all stories are appropriate for telling. A tellable story does not need pictures, props, or costumes in order for a listener to understand the story. A tellable story is not a condensation of a longer book such as *Pinocchio* or *Gulliver's Travels*. A tellable story is not a poem or some other literary work memorized word for word. A tellable story is not a retelling of a movie or television show. A tellable tale should have a recognizable beginning, middle, climax and end.

Good choices come from the oral tradition: they have been told and refined for countless generations. Stories that have come from the **oral tradition** can be grouped as follows:

Fairy tales have magic characters such as witches and fairy godmothers, as well as human or animal characters. The solution to the problem is usually reached through magical means.

Folk tales are stories that originated from the common people and are often associated with a specific country or people. The characters are often stereotypes of ordinary people, and extraordinary things often happen to them.

Legends have some basis in historical fact, which may have been distorted or exaggerated as they have been told over the years.

Tall tales involve characters that are larger than life. They may be based on actual people or events, but they are exaggerated so much as to make them seem impossible.

Fables are short stories with a moral lesson. They often feature animals that act like people.

Myths are made up to try to explain why things are as they are in nature, customs, and institutions.

Literary stories are not from the oral tradition. They were written by an identifiable author. These stories are often difficult to tell, because they rely on the skillfully crafted language of the writer and lose something if they are not told word for word. Examples are the *Just So Stories* by Rudyard Kipling. (Stories from the oral tradition have been told so often that they have been reduced to the bare essentials, and therefore the teller is free to embellish.)

Some stories are appropriate for adaptation to tandem telling format (two tellers work together to tell a

story). This is an advanced skill, and is not appropriate for all tellers.

Beware of stories with dialects. It takes great skill to do dialects well. If not done well, the story may be offensive to some listeners as they may feel the teller is making fun of them. If the child really likes the story, look for other versions using sources such as Margaret Read MacDonald's *The Storyteller's Sourcebook*.

Children in a classroom or recreation center should be encouraged to select different stories. If 15 people are telling the same story over and over, it will soon be stale for everyone in the group.

(HINT: have older children make a list of stories/sources they have read that are possibilities for telling. This is a good way to slide in a lesson on bibliographies! Map skills can also be used by finding countries of origin for folktales on the map.)

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

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Fill out the Worksheet

After the children have selected their stories, have them fill out a [Story Summary Worksheet](#). Knowing the important parts of the story will help the student understand his/her story better. Then the story will be easier to remember; this allows the child to learn the story "by heart" in his own words rather than "by rote."

The parts of the story should have been defined in the [introductory lesson](#). You may wish to review this information before the children complete the worksheets. Help the students think of words to define the main characters in the story (i.e. was Goldilocks a vandal or careless?, was Little Red Riding Hood someone who always disobeyed her mother or was she spacey and forgot she should not speak to strangers?).

At this point you may want to review the children's selections to make sure they meet the tellable tale guidelines in the preceding section. It is the leader's responsibility to make sure that stories learned to be told at the evaluation session meet the [choice of story guidelines](#).

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

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Storytelling Etiquette

- Stories are to share and tell. While we encourage the art of sharing stories, we want to encourage respect in our community. You deserve respect. Respect others.
- A storyteller's personal, family, and original stories are her/his copyrighted property. It is unethical and illegal to tell another person's original, personal, and/or family stories without the permission of the author/storyteller.
- Folklore and folk tales are owned by the public, but a specific version told by an individual teller or found in a collection is the author's or teller's copyrighted property. If you like a folktale a storyteller has told, ask that teller for a reference or where it can be found. Research the story by finding other versions, and then tell it your way.
- Published literary tales and poetry are copyrighted material. They may be told at informal story swaps, but when you tell another's story in a paid professional setting, you need to research copyright law.
- ***When telling anywhere, it is common courtesy to credit the source of your story.***
- Pass stories, share stories, and encourage respect within the storytelling community.

Please feel free to copy this etiquette statement and pass it out or read it at storytelling events. While some of it pertains primarily to professional storytellers, much of it contains principles that children should be aware of, such as crediting sources for materials, and not plagiarizing. Compiled by storytellers Barbara Griffin, Olga Loya, Sandra MacLees, Nancy Schimmel, Harlynn Geisler, and Kathleen Zundel.

We like to add the Golden Rule: listen politely to the teller; soon you will be telling and will want to be treated with the same kindness and consideration.

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

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Methods For Learning a Story

Everyone has their own favorite methods, tricks, and secrets. The following are suggestions, but children should be encouraged to find the method that works best for them personally. The most important thing, of course, is practice, practice, practice!

- Read the story aloud **over and over and over** in front of a mirror. Try to make eye contact with yourself as much as possible. Don't worry that when you look away from the story, you don't repeat it word for word.
- Copy the story from a book to paper.
- Draw a picture outline of the story. This helps you see the story as a series of pictures/scenes. It is NOT meant to be an art project; stick figures are fine. Use balloons to hold important words/phrases. After the pictures are done, try telling the story just using the pictures. (It is much easier for some to tell a story as a series of images than as a set of memorized words.)
- Make a story map (a listing of key words, phrases, or scenes in sequence). Example using "The Little Red Hen:" (the map would show her returning to her friends for help with each step and their saying "Not I!")

Hen lives with lazy Dog, Cat, and Mouse
Hen finds grain of wheat
Friends won't help, so she plants it alone ("not I")
She cuts it alone ("not I")
She takes it to the miller alone and carries flour home ("not I")
She bakes bread alone ("not I")
She eats alone since she did all work alone

- Tell the story in the your own words. (However, it is often helpful to memorize the first and last lines of the story. This way the story will start and end smoothly.)
- Tell the story to anyone (or anything) that will listen, such as dogs, cats, stuffed animals, baby brothers, friends, families. The more the story is told, the more firmly it will be planted in your mind.
- In the classroom, start out telling to a partner, then to a group of four, then eight, and so on. This gives children a good chance to practice listening, to see ways to tell (and sometimes how not to tell), and is an opportunity to learn about giving constructive criticism. (If children are assigned new partners every day, it prevents boredom from hearing the same story over and over and over.)
- Read the story into a tape recorder and then listen to it over and over. Listen for expression, pauses, and so on. Re-record the story to see if you have improved.
- Tell the story to yourself whenever you have a chance - when walking the dog, washing the dishes, waiting for a ride. You will learn the story well enough that you will be able to tell it even if you are distracted while performing (for example, if a baby starts crying).

Encourage parents to get involved. Send home a letter and a copy of the Basic Storytelling Techniques (in the Appendix). Invite the parents to come to class to help listen and coach.

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Coaching the Storyteller

The actual telling of the story may require coaching by you, the instructor. Listen to the story as often as possible while the child is learning it.

Remember that storytelling is an art, and there are many styles of performing that are appropriate. But suggestions for improving technique (such as speaking clearly and slowly, eye contact, etc.) are necessary. As with everything, always give positive feedback first, and then constructive criticism. Have a list of positive statements, such as: that was a good effort, your voice was loud and clear, you knew your story well, I can see you have practiced, you kept your hands (or feet) still as you told the story, you did a good job of keeping eye contact with the audience.

In the beginning, everyone will find critiquing less threatening in small groups. Listeners can help critique also, but lay down the ground rules:

- Don't laugh at someone's telling unless it is meant to be funny.
- "Put downs" are not acceptable.
- Whatever is said must be positive, and said in a way that will help the teller the next time he or she tells the story.
- Answer the question, "What can the teller do to make the telling better?"

Model good critiquing by telling a story using bad techniques. For example, begin by telling with no eye contact. Ask for feedback. Then continue telling with eye contact, but tell in a monotone. Ask again how you are doing, and make sure the students are giving you positive feedback and constructive criticism. Another exercise is to have the children critique a professional teller (either a live teller or one on audio or video tape).

When children are working in a small group "workshop" setting rather than telling in a "performance" setting, it is acceptable to interrupt with comments and suggestions. For example, if the child says, "The wolf looks at Little Red Riding Hood and thinks 'That looks like a tasty dinner,'" but the child tells it with no emotion, stop her and ask if that is how the wolf would really say it. If that doesn't help, ask how she would say the same thing about a pizza. If the child still needs help, ask the others in the group to say together, "That looks like a tasty dinner!"

When children are telling in a "performance" setting, do not interrupt the teller. Keep notes for each teller. Go over them with the entire class after the teller is finished, so that all learn from your comments. You may also go over the notes with each teller individually.

If you have access to a video camera, tape the children telling their stories. This is a good way to fine tune a tale, particularly the movements and gestures.

Specific areas to work on when coaching tellers: (see also the [supporting games and activities](#))

Projection: The storyteller must be heard by the entire audience, even the back row, in order to be effective. Listen from the back of the room with a two-sided prompt card which has a green "good" side and a red "louder!" side. Keep the good side facing the teller as long as projection is good; flip to the louder side if the voice is too low.

Clear speech and proper enunciation: The audience must understand what the teller is saying. Make note of those words which need to be improved and go over them with the teller after he has finished the story.

Memory: Events need to be recounted in order and to the end for the story to make sense. If a child says he or she doesn't know the story, ask him to get his story map or pictorial outline to refer to if he has trouble. Often, the child will discover he knows the story better than he thought he did. If he gets stuck, ask him to summarize the rest. Tell the student you expect him to practice, and that you'll let him try again tomorrow. Remind the child that it is much easier to tell the story in his own words (learning by heart, storytelling) than to try to remember the exact words used in the book (rote memorization).

Body movement: Helps the audience visualize the story. However, remember that storytelling is NOT theater; do not act out the story. Choose those parts of the story with the most important and appropriate images when adding movement. Each movement should have meaning. Movement that is overdone or with which the storyteller is not comfortable can be a distraction. A rule of thumb is do not move more than three feet, do not pace, and do not turn your back toward the audience. The arms should be relaxed — don't flail.

Eye contact: The teller should interact with the audience. Looking at the floor, the ceiling, or the wall at the back of the room shuts out the audience. However, the teller should not "stare down" the audience.

Developing characters: Posture and voice enhances the story. For example, is the witch stooped and is her voice crackling? Sometimes this develops naturally as the story becomes part of the storyteller. Other times the children need to be encouraged to think more about the characters they are telling about.

Sound effects: Sound effects make some stories more interesting. Noise puts interesting cadence into the story and it often offers opportunities to involve audience participation. Of course, remember that not all stories have plot lines that accommodate things like creaking doors, wind howls, and animal sounds.

Mood and tone: These create the atmosphere of the story. Is the mood one of fear, romance, comedy? All the elements of the story help to create the mood. Help the children "feel" the story. Encourage them to be emotionally involved with the characters and events in the story.

Rate/speed: The character and situation often dictate how fast or slow a particular part of a tale should be delivered. Children often have a tendency to speak too quickly, so that it seems they are racing through the story. Help them to have a variety of speeds within the story, appropriate to the mood.

Finally, help the children remember that memorizing a sequence of events is only a very small part of storytelling. Festival Quality Storytelling involves using some of the techniques listed above to give the story a personality of its own. It is personality that makes a story vital and alive and not just a rote telling of events.

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

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Sample Lesson Plans and Timeline

and Teaching Notes for Timeline

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(for a more nicely formatted version, see the [printed manual](#))

WEEK 1 — *Introduce storytelling and begin choosing story*

Monday: Storytelling performance by an experienced storyteller. The performance may be live, or on video or audiotape. (Children need a model. They need an example of how a good storyteller looks and sounds. Perhaps you might tell a story or if you are not comfortable with that, you might invite a librarian or storyteller from the community. If these are not available to you, use a video or audio tape of a professional storyteller [available at school and public libraries].)

Tuesday: Discuss [storytelling and its history](#). Play a group [storytelling game](#).

Wednesday: Discuss [how to choose](#) a story. Children begin reading stories individually and in pairs. (In addition to having the children read the stories silently, let children pair off and read their stories to one another. This can be a great help for children who have reading difficulties. It also helps them try to make the story sound interesting for someone else.)

Thursday and Friday: Choosing a story continues.

WEEK 2 — *Choosing a story continues*

Friday: All children should have chosen a story and completed the worksheet. (Begin filling out the [Story Summary Worksheets](#) earlier in the week as a child has decided upon his story. You may need some older teens or community volunteers to come in to help with this. Check the worksheets to make sure they've been filled out correctly. These worksheets can help the children better understand their story.)

WEEK 3 -- *Learning the story*

Monday: Go over the [techniques for learning the story](#). Go over the [criteria used in evaluation](#). Give each child a copy of the criteria.

Tuesday: Let each child read his story to a partner.

Wednesday: Let each child make a [story map or story board](#) of his story.

Thursday: Let the children use their story board or map to tell their story to a partner.

Friday: Play one of the memory [games](#).

WEEK 4 -- *Making your story your own*

Monday: Play [games and activities](#) listed under personality.

Tuesday through Friday: Continue playing games and letting children practice telling their stories to each other.

WEEK 5 — *Practice the story*

Monday: Review the [evaluation criteria](#). Explain that this is how their storytelling is going to be evaluated. Children need to know what the evaluators want. Play a video of a professional storyteller. Let the students pretend they are the evaluators at a festival and evaluate the teller. Remind them to look for the positive ways the storyteller is meeting the criteria as well as the negatives. Talk about things the storyteller did that made the story more interesting.

Tuesday through Friday: Children continue practicing their stories with partners and small groups.

WEEK 6 — *Coaching with peers.*

All Week: Children tell their stories to each other daily. You will want to listen to the children individually as often as possible. Everyone can have a turn telling their story if they pair off to tell their story to one another. Children should know their sequence of events and not have to work from their book or notes. The listening partner can use the worksheet or storyboard to prompt the teller.

Notice the skills that are a problem for some of your children. Use [games and activities](#) to help them practice those skills.

WEEK 7 — *Polishing the story*

All Week: This week, plan to have a mini-storytelling festival at your school or playground. Invite parents, children from other classrooms, or other participants at the playground. You could also take your storytellers to a day care or senior retirement facility to tell their stories. In addition,

- Continue practicing and using skill-building [activities](#) as needed. Now all your rehearsals should resemble a final evaluation.
- Let the parents know their child is participating in the Festival. Encourage them to attend the next week's evaluation. Send home the handout [Basic Storytelling Techniques](#) and the [evaluation criteria](#) to parents. Encourage them to help their child polish his story.
- Copy the [Registration Card](#). Make sure you have a registration form for each child who attempted to learn a story, even if they do not wish to be evaluated. This statistical information is critical to the Storytelling Festival Committee for grant purposes.
- Fill out all registration cards in advance for participants in next week's evaluations. You may need to do this personally. Be sure to spell their names correctly. Check their address (including apartment #), zip code and telephone number and make sure it is correct.

WEEK 8 — *Evaluations for Festival Quality Storytellers*

Friday: Have an [evaluation panel](#) review all of the storytellers. [Send in all registration cards](#), both **Festival Quality and not Festival Quality**. Be sure Festival Quality box is marked for all children evaluated to be Festival Quality.

Don't stop now! Make sure everyone keeps practicing until the Festival!!

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[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Storytelling Activities and Games

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The games and activities listed in this section will help children acquire some of the storytelling skills which are needed in order to be evaluated a Festival Quality Storyteller. The games and activities are numbered. Listed below are the skills which appear in the [Criteria for Evaluation](#) and [Evaluation Form](#). Next to each skill will be the numbers assigned to the games or activities which are helpful in developing this skill. (Note that there are additional games and activities on some of the web sites listed on our [Links](#) page.)

<u>Skill</u>	<u>Activity Number</u>
DICTION	2 ; 8 ; 12 .
PROJECTION	2 ; 8 ; 12 .
MEMORY	1 ; 5 ; 6 ; 9 ; 10 ; 14 .
POISE	7 ; 11 ; 12 .
PERSONALITY	2 ; 3 ; 4 ; 7 ; 10 ; 11 ; 13 ; 15 ; 16 .

1. I Remember

Skill: Memory **Materials:** none

Players can be seated in a circle or in rows. A good game to play while on a bus.

- A familiar form of this game is called *Going On A Trip*. One person begins by saying, "I am going on a trip and I am taking....(one pair of jeans)." The next person says, "I am going on a trip and I'm taking one pair of jeans and...(a pair of sneakers)." Each person playing the game repeats all the previous items being taken on the trip and adds a new item. When someone

makes a mistake you start all over with a new sentence.

- Try making the game more specific by saying, "I am going on a trip to the beach...", then have all the objects be things you might take to the beach. You can also play it after returning from a field trip or activity by say, "I went to the aquarium and I saw...(a whale)"...etc.
- Make it more storytelling specific by using a familiar story such as *The Three Bears* and say, "I told the story about *The Three Bears* and I told about...(a mama bear)...(three bowls)..(a broken rocking chair)..." etc.
- Instead of adding objects to a list, try adding adjectives to a sentence. You could start by saying, "I know a bear.....I know a (brown) bear.....I know a brown (big) bear....I know a brown big (shaggy) bear...I know a brown big shaggy (hungry) bear..." etc.

2. Mystery Voice

Skill: Projection, Personality, Diction

Materials: Deck of cards made from 3x5 index cards. Each card has the name or picture of some character on it.

- Children work in pairs, each pair being a team.
- Child "A" draws a card. He/She says something in the voice of the character on the card. What the character says can also be a clue to who he/she is as long as no names are used in the dialogue.
- His partner gets 3 chances to guess who the character is.
- If his partner guesses correctly the two man team gets a point. If he fails they do not get a point.
- The next team takes a turn in the same way until every team has had one turn.
- Go around a second time and this time team member "B" draws the card and has "A" guess who he is.
- The game continues until everyone has had at least 3 or more chances to draw a card.
- If you run out of cards, reshuffle them and put them back in the drawing pile. **Ideas for cards:** Wicked Witch, baby bear, mama bear, papa bear, whiny complaining stepsister, robot, wolf, princess, king, frog, giant, etc.

3. Actions Speak Louder Than Words

Skills: Personality **Materials:** activity cards

- Write different mime or charade activities on index cards (1 activity per card). Use activities like "walking", "drinking water", "eating an apple", etc. Have each student randomly choose one card and "perform" the action for the rest of the group to guess.

4. Feelings

Skill: Personality **Materials:** list of emotions

- Choose a story the children are familiar with, such as "The 3 Little Pigs", "Goldilocks and the 3 Bears" "Little Red Riding Hood".
- Using a list of emotions (happy, sad, angry, surprised, frightening, puzzled, etc.) have children take turns telling a portion of the story using the emotion you assigned to him/her.

5. Mini-stories

Skill: Memory **Materials:** none

- Stories need to have a beginning, middle, and end. Have a child tell something that happened to him in 1-2 minutes. Remind the students that the "mini-story" needs to have 4 parts. (see [Introductory Lesson](#))
- After the student has told his "mini-story", have the rest of the class identify the 4 parts in the "mini-story."

6. Listen & Help Tell The Story

Skill: Memory **Materials:** (optional) flannel board and flannel board pieces

- Tell your children a story or have one of the children read or tell a story. Start with short simple stories. The story can be followed by some of these activities.

- Use cut-out or flannel board pieces to see if the children can reconstruct the story by putting up the pieces in the order that they appear in the story. With older children you can print cards with the main events in the story and then let them try to put them in order or create a puzzle with them. This will help teach them sequence of events.
- Have one of the children volunteer to tell from memory the story you told or divide the story into three parts (beginning, middle, end) and have one child tell each part.
- Form a circle and let the first child begin telling the story. When he/she stops, or at a prearranged signal (whistle, bell, etc.) from you, the next child in the circle must take up the story. A variation of this is to have the children make up their own story.

7. Character Interview

Skill: Personality, Poise **Materials:** Microphone or fake mike

- Have the children choose a character from their story and pretend to be that character. If they were telling the story of "Little Red Ridinghood" they might choose to be the grandmother or the woodsman. Let them imagine how that person would talk, walk, etc.
- Have a mock television interview of these characters as if they were on a talk show. In the beginning, the teacher can do the interviewing. Later, the children can interview each other. Some questions you might ask are:

"How old are you?"

"Where do you live?"

"Grandmother, Little Red Ridinghood tells me you've been sick. What kind of illness do you have?"

"What does your house look like?"

"Mr. Giant, I understand some boy named Jack has ripped off some of your treasures. Just exactly what did he steal? How do you feel about it?"

"I understand you three Billy Goats Gruff have been having a hard time getting food. What's wrong?"

"Is there any place you can get something decent to

eat?"

"There have been some nasty rumors about that bridge. What have you heard?"

- The only rule for this game is that the children have to include facts from their story in their answers. Stay away from yes or no questions. Help them get a feeling for the location of the story.

8. Voice Relay

Skill: Projection, Diction **Materials:** none

- Have the children line up at the back of a large room. The first child goes to the front of the room and says a sentence (this can be something silly or a fantasy sentence such as "My cat likes to wear high heels" or "Last night I discovered a monster under my bed").
- The child at the front of the room says the sentence while his back is to the relay line. He must say the sentence loudly and clearly, so that at the back of the room, the next child in the tag line can hear it.
- The first child then turns around and walks back. He/she tags the second child in line, who must repeat the sentence. They must repeat it exactly as the first child said it.
- After child #2 has repeated the sentence, he can take his turn. He goes to the front of the room and delivers his own sentence. Then he returns to tag the next person in line.
- As soon as the third player is tagged he repeats the second player's sentence, then takes his turn.
- Sometimes the person tagged cannot repeat the sentence correctly. This usually means that the sentence has not been spoken loudly, clearly and distinctly. When this happens the relay runner must return to the front of the room and say the sentence again.
- Replay the game later on and have the children use an exciting sentence from the story. Example: "Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

9. Storyboard Camera Shots

Skills: Memory (organizing details) **Materials:** paper, pencil

- Pretend you have a camera and are taking pictures of the most important moments in your story. What is the most important first picture in your story? Draw a snapshot of it in a box. Don't think of this as an art class. Use stick figures drawn with a pencil. Your snapshots should look like a comic strip boxes without any dialogue balloons.
- After you have finished drawing snapshots of all the important things that happen in your story, find a friend and tell him the story. Use the pictures you have drawn to remember the story.

10. Mental TV

Skill: Memory, Personality **Materials:** none

- The children close their eyes and turn on their mental television. The leader asks questions about a well-known character from a story. You might ask them to imagine the Giant in Jack in the Beanstalk. The leader might say, "See this person in your mental television. Describe his face...His eyes....His nose. What about his mouth and ears? What color is his hair? Is it straight or curly, wild or neat, long or short? What kind of clothes is he wearing?"
- After giving the children plenty of time to set their mental image, ask for volunteers to come up and describe their mental image of the character. (Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.)

11. Look Into My Eyes

Skills: Personality, Poise **Materials:** none

- Everyone sits in a circle. The leader is IT and starts the game by explaining that she is going to choose someone without saying a word, just by looking into their eyes and making eye contact.
- As soon as IT makes eye contact with someone, they keep looking at each

- other and maintain eye contact as they trade places.
- The person chosen then becomes IT and the game continues in this way.

12. Hello, My Name Is ...

Skill: Poise, Diction, Projection **Materials:** none

- Have a child walk into performance area (stage or front of the room), walk to the center, turn, plant his/her feet firmly on the ground and face the audience.
- Take a mental count of three while scanning the audience, and say, "Hello, my name is..... and the name of my story is"
- To exit, they scan the audience for a mental count of three, turn and walk off in the opposite direction. The idea is to practice a confident walk and a friendly look with no nervous mannerisms while they are walking or talking. The child should not begin talking until he has stopped walking and is facing the audience and should not leave the performance area until he has completely finished talking.
- This exercise can be expanded by practicing standing and smiling at the audience while they applaud. (This is harder than it sounds!)

13. Pass The Face

Skill: Personality **Materials:** none

- Everyone sits in a circle.
- The first person makes a face and shows it to everyone in the circle.
- He/she then turns his face to the person next to him.
- That person copies the face, shows it to everyone in the circle; and then changes to a different face which is passed on to the next person and so on.
- The emphasis here is to be creative and try not to repeat any of the faces that have been previously shown.

14. What's My Line?

Skill: Memory **Materials:** none

- Have a child take on the role of a well known story character — Goldilocks, Cinderella, Billy Goat Gruff, Troll, Sleeping Beauty, the witch from a story, etc.
- Keep the character a secret.
- The rest of the group asks yes or no questions about the character to find out who it is.
- The child who gets the answer correct gets to take the part of another character and the group asks questions again.

15. Point of View Stories

Skill: Personality **Materials:** none

- Read *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Jon Scieszka or another fractured fairy tale to the children.
- Discuss the difference between this story and the original version.
- Have students make up their own story based on another familiar story such as the wolf's point of view in *Little Red Riding Hood*, Goldilocks in *The Three Bears*, or the Troll in *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*.

16. Can You Describe It?

Skill: Personality

Materials: chalk board, chalk and eraser or large paper and marker.

- This game uses two players (listeners enjoy watching the performance). Player ONE stands ready to draw. His back is to player TWO. Player TWO holds an object (comb, scissors, jewelry, etc.). Player TWO may not tell the use or the name of the object. TWO gives directions on how to draw the object.
- Player ONE must draw the object using only the verbal description given by TWO. The drawing must be completed in 3 minutes. If they succeed, Player ONE and TWO change places and they continue with a new object.
- If ONE fails to make a drawing in 3 minutes, they must choose 2 other players to take their places. The team that draws and guesses the object correctly in the shortest time wins.

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

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Criteria for Evaluating Storytelling

Choice of Story: The story must be from a published source. Folk and fairy tales, short stories, and long narrative poems are the most appropriate selections for storytelling. Picture book stories that rely on the illustrations for comprehension and adaptations of novels are inappropriate choices.

The story that was evaluated to be Festival Quality must be the one told at the Festival. No substitution will be permitted.

Original stories are not eligible for competition and evaluation but may be told at the swapping corner. The swapping corner is a feature of the Festival which is open to anyone who wishes to tell a story. Performers are not scheduled but tell on a first-come-first-served basis.

Memory The story should not be memorized word for word (unless it is a poem). The story should flow when told and the person should not have to stop and think of what comes next.

Projection The storyteller should project his/her voice so that all can hear. No electronic amplification is used.

Diction The storyteller should enunciate carefully and use his/her **voice** effectively.

Personality The flavor of the story should be brought out by the storyteller's presentation, i.e., humorous story, scary story, tall tale.

Poise The storyteller should be relaxed in his/her presentation of the story.

Time The story must last less than ten (10) minutes.

Properties or costumes: Traditionally, storytelling is an oral narrative art form. No properties or costumes are necessary. Staged puppet shows and theatrical dramas are not permitted.

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[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

Suggestions For an Evaluation Panel

After the children have learned their stories, they should be evaluated to determine which storytellers meet the criteria for being Festival Quality Storytellers. It is suggested that a judging panel have three members: a teacher, a librarian or other person familiar with literature, and a community person.

The idea of evaluating "Festival Quality Storytellers" is not a competitive process. The children are evaluated according to how well they meet the evaluation criteria. Therefore, you do not need to rate each storyteller first, second, etc. You merely need to determine for each individual child whether they adequately meet the [criteria](#). The criteria are also explained on the [evaluation form](#). Please feel free to ask for clarification of any of these criteria.

The evaluators should make notes as they listen to each storyteller. After hearing more than 3 or 4 tellers, details begin to blend; and judges may not remember the individual as easily as you may think without a few notes.

After all the tellers are done the judges meet to compare notes and agree who is and is not Festival Quality.

If a student meets most of the criteria but perhaps needs to "brush up" on one or two areas, you may select them as a Festival Quality Storyteller, telling them they are chosen on the condition that they improve in that particular area(s). Be sure to inform the students' coaches if you make any conditional selections so they can work with the child between judging and the Festival to be sure the final performance is polished. Every Festival Quality Storyteller needs to continue rehearsing his/her story in preparation for the culminating Festival. It works well to have them tell their story before other class groups.

Try to say something positive about each storyteller, even if their performance was not Festival Quality. Most students work hard to learn their stories and are often very nervous about the evaluating process. Whether they end up telling at the culminating Festival or not, they still need encouragement and a boost for their self-esteem.

All children who participate should be awarded a [certificate](#) at the end of the evaluation. A certificate, which may be photocopied, is included in the manual.

Outstanding storytellers who are evaluated to be "Festival Quality" will be eligible to tell their story at the culminating Festival. Their certificates may have gold seals or ribbons affixed to show that they are "Festival Quality Storytellers." *Their registration cards **must** be marked to show they are "Festival Quality Storytellers."*

Remember ALL children are invited to attend the Storytelling Festival. Any adult or child may tell a story at the Festival's Story Swapping Area (look for the bales of hay).

For statistical purposes, please send in [registration cards](#) for all participating storytellers. Those marked Festival Quality will receive invitations to be featured at the culminating Festival. All children and their families and friends are invited to attend this free Festival. Send forms to

Priscilla Lakus
Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library
900 N. Ashley, Tampa, Florida 33602
[by the date on the participant information page.](#)

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Priscilla Lakus at (813) 273-3648, or Jody Wren or Kelly Lambert at (813) 931-2106.

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

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Ambassador Club

The Ambassador Club was established to recognize and reward youth storytellers who help to "spread the word" about storytelling and the annual Storytelling Festival through their appearances at places other than the annual Storytelling Festival. Not only does their storytelling ability showcase the art form, but also the Festival. When these youth storytellers appear at a bookstore, festival, media interview, or some other venue, they represent the Storytelling Festival in a positive manner. They are therefore "ambassadors of goodwill" for storytelling.

Membership in the Ambassador Club is a great honor and is open through invitation only. If you have a superior storyteller who shows exceptional talent, please contact Creative Arts at (813) 931-2106 so that he/she can be considered for membership.

Youth storytellers selected for the Ambassador Club will receive a special Storytelling Festival button with a gold background as well as an "Ambassador" ribbon to be worn with their other storytelling ribbon at the Festival. Also, they will be eligible for a special storytelling gift to be awarded in a drawing if they perform as Ambassadors at other events. This drawing occurs just before the following year's Festival.

There are no membership fees for students who are members of the Ambassador Club. However, all transportation to and from any locations where youth storytellers perform is the responsibility of the youth tellers' families.

[\(Return to Contents\)](#)

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Do you have a question? Need more information? Contact us at:

info@tampastory.org



[\(Return to HOME Page\)](#)