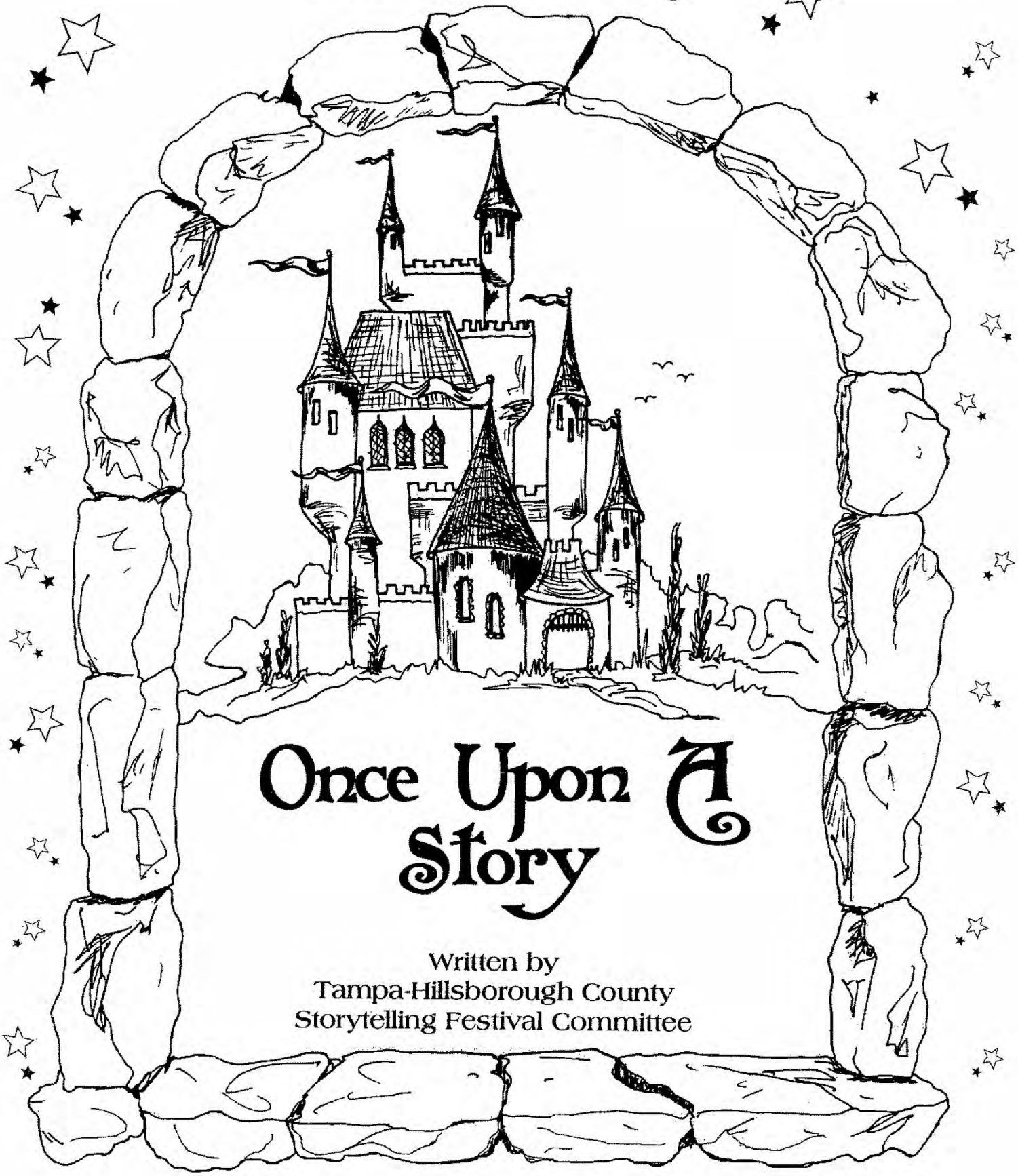
A Manual For Teaching

Storytelling



Once Upon A Story

Written by
Tampa-Hillsborough County
Storytelling Festival Committee

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.

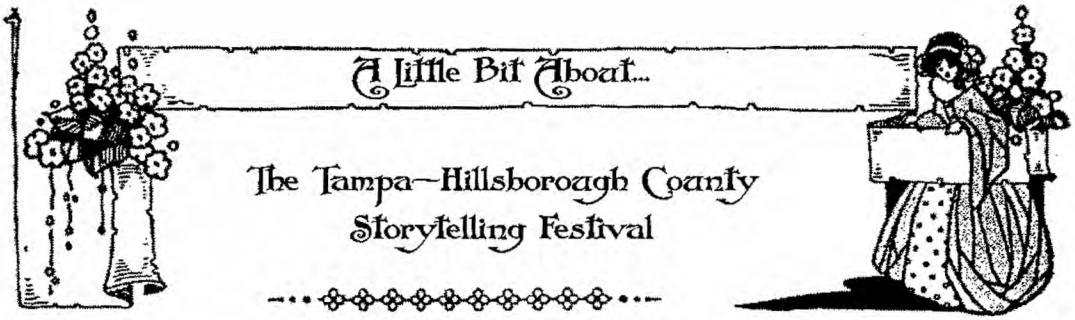
We are all storytellers. Storytelling is as natural as breathing. The information in this manual will help you develop your children's storytelling talents. It will enable them to use storytelling in many areas of their school work and lives. We hope the ideas presented here will be helpful to you as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

Sincerely,
Festival Coordinators
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 Storytelling Committee
  Friends of Storytelling Chapter
- The Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System
- The City of Tampa Parks and Recreation Department
- Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department
  School District of Hillsborough County
  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 *originally* written by:
Tampa-Hillsborough County Storytelling Festival Committee members:
Amy Crane, Victoria Gregor and Virginia Rivers.



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 Tampa-Hillsborough County, Inc. Produced by the Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System and Tampa Parks and Recreation Department, the event is guided and advised by the Tampa-Hillsborough County Storytelling Festival Committee. Over thirteen other community agencies contribute 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 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.

Dedicated to the Memory of Virginia Rivers

The Tampa/Hillsborough County Storytelling Festival was co-founded in 1980 by Virginia Rivers and Linda O'Conner-Levy to provide a means for children to learn stories and develop their sense of self-worth by sharing the stories with others.

In her life-long roles as Educator, Puppeteer and Storyteller, Virginia continually strove to empower children and families to enjoy creative and responsible lives.

Comments From Some of Our Storytelling Fans

"Storytelling is like a soup: Everyone wants a heaping bowl of interesting characters, seasoned with plenty of complications, and an ending that makes us hunger for more. The Hillsborough County Storytelling Festival delivers all of that and more."

Tamara Green, Professional Storyteller

"Storytelling gave me the voice and confidence I felt that I had been missing out on in my life."

Haley Lindbak, Former Student Storyteller

"When my daughter started storytelling in the first grade, I could see her confidence start to grow. She was a storyteller through the fifth grade and enjoyed the experience immensely. She was constantly looking for the next story."

Christy Meitzler, Parent

"The art of storytelling serves as a form of entertainment, educational experience, a means to preserve cultural awareness, and provides the vehicle to instill moral values."

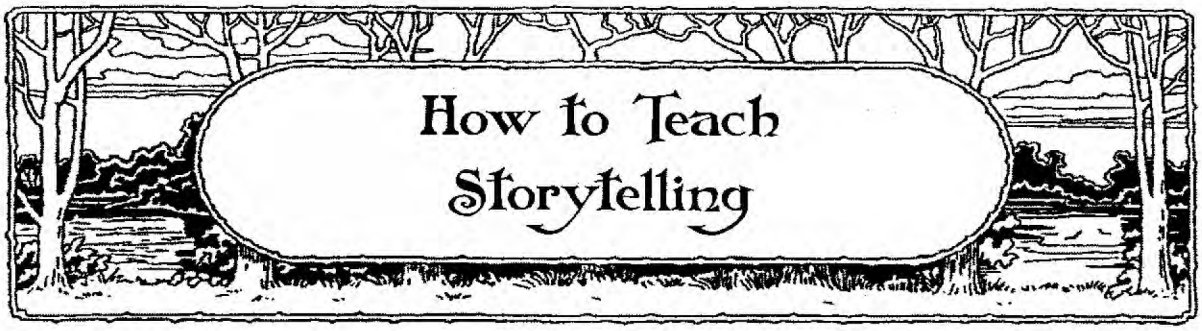
Marlene Lazzara Sacarello, Teacher

"Reluctant students who do not feel as competent as their peers, 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."

Victoria Gregor, Teacher and Author "44 Reasons to Teach Storytelling"

"The skill of storytelling began before the written word and remains an invaluable tool of communication, even in this age of emerging technologies. Whether with voice alone, or accompanied by pictures, props, puppets, physical movements, or digital interactions: being a good storyteller opens doors and breaks down communication barriers worldwide."

Joe Stine, Former Director of Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Libraries



Introductory Lesson

Storytelling is an oral art. The storyteller uses only himself 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.
- Books and props are not used 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 Goats Gruff* is that all of the grass on their side of the bridge is gone 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 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 to 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.

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 a Storytelling Bibliography to find books, and direct the 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 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 written by an identifiable author. These stories are often difficult to tell. They rely on the skillfully crafted language of the writer and lose something if they are not told word for word. (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.)

After the children have selected their stories, have them fill out a Story Summary Worksheet (pages 29-30). Knowing the important parts of the story will help the student understand his/her story better, and make it 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?).

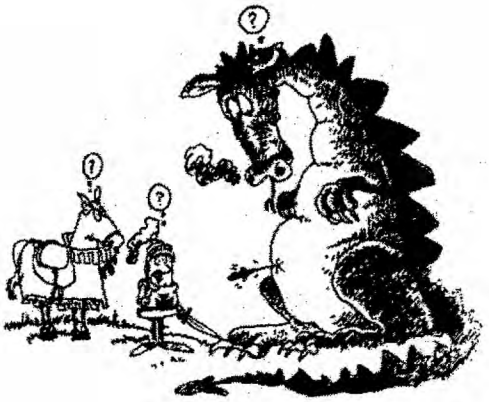
At this point you may want to review the children's selections to make sure they meet the tellable tale guidelines in the preceding section. It is the leader's responsibility to make sure that stories learned for the evaluation session meet the choice of story guidelines (pages 6-7).

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 not allowed.
- Folklore and folk tales are owned by the public. 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. 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, Harlynne Geisler, and Kathleen Zundel.

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

No videotaping allowed due to copyright laws.

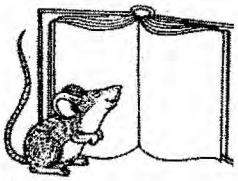


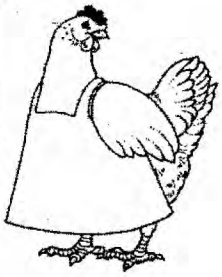
Methods For Learning a Story

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!

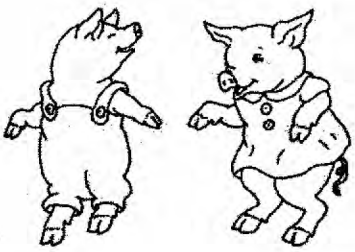
- Read the story aloud ***over and over and over*** in front of a mirror. Try to make eye contact with yourself as much as possible. Don't worry that when you look away from the story, you don't repeat it word for word.
- Copy the story from a book to paper.
- Draw a picture outline of the story. This 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

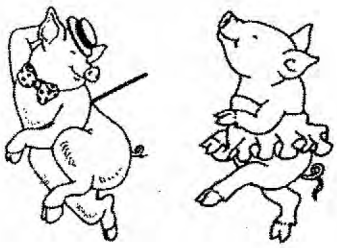




- Tell the story in the your own words. (However, it is often helpful to memorize the first and last lines of the story This way the story will start and end smoothly.)
- Tell the story to anyone (or anything) that will listen, such as dogs, cats, stuffed animals, baby brothers, friends, families. The 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.



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. However, 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, the child says, "The wolf looks at Little Red Riding Hood and thinks 'That looks like a tasty dinner '" If the child tells it without emotion, stop and ask if that is how the wolf would really say it. If that doesn't help, ask how the child 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 the supporting exercises on pages 16-20)

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.

SAMPLE LESSON PLANS AND TIMELINE

week 1

Choosing a Story . . . . . .

Storytelling performance by an experienced story-teller. The performance can be live, or on video or audio tape.*

Discuss storytelling and its history (Welcome: pgs. 2-3)

Play a group storytelling game. (Games and Activities: pgs. 16-20)

Discuss how to choose a story (pgs. 6-7)

Children begin reading stories individually and in pairs.*

week 2

Choosing a Story continues . . . . . .

All children should have chosen a story (pg. 6-7) and completed the worksheet. (pgs. 29-30). *

week 3

Learning the story . . . . . .

Go over the techniques for learning the story (pg. 9)
Go over the criteria used in evaluation. (pg. 21)
Give each child a copy of the criteria.

Let each child read his story to a partner.

Let each child make a story map or a story board of his story (pg. 9)

Let the children use just their story board or map to tell their story to a partner

Play one of the memory games. (pgs. 16-20)

week 4

Making your story your own . . . . . .

Play games and activities listed under *Personality.* (pgs. 16-20)

*Indicates there is additional explanation in the teaching notes following the chart.

SAMPLE LESSON PLANS AND TIMELINE

week 5

Review evaluation criteria. (pg. 21)
Play a video of a professional storyteller. Let the children evaluate the teller.*

Practice Story . . . . . .

week 6

Coaching with Peers . . . . . .

CHILDREN TELL THEIR STORIES TO EACH OTHER DAILY
USE GAMES AND ACTIVITIES TO HELP CHILDREN IMPROVE THEIR SKILLS.* (pages 16-20)

week 7

Have a mini-storytelling festival in you classroom or playground.
Invite everyone on the playground or from other classrooms. *

Polishing the story . . . . . .

CHILDREN TELL THEIR STORIES DAILY TO LARGER GROUPS.
USE GAMES AND ACTIVITIES TO HELP CHILDREN IMPROVE THEIR SKILLS.* (pages 16-20)

week 8

Division Evaluations for Festival Quality Storytellers . . . . . .

Don't stop now!!!!

Keep practicing until the festival!!

*Send in your registration cards.** (page 25)

*Indicates there is additional explanation in the teaching notes following the chart.

Teaching Notes for Timeline

WEEK 1 — *Introduce storytelling and begin choosing story*

***Monday** 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).

***Wednesday** 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.

WEEK 2 — *Choosing a story*

***Friday** Story Summary Worksheets are found on pages 29-30 in the manual. Begin filling out the forms 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 5 — *Practice the story*

***Monday** Go over the criteria. Explain that this is how their storytelling is going to be evaluated. They need to know what the evaluators want. Let them pretend they are the evaluators at a festival and show a video of a professional teller. Remind them to look for the positive ways the storyteller is meeting the criteria. Talk about things the storyteller did that made the story more interesting.

WEEK 6 — *Coaching with peers.*

***All Week** 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. 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.

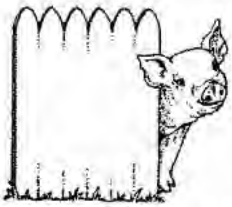
WEEK 7 — *Polishing the story*

***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.

- Continue practicing. 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 (Appendix: page 31) and the evaluation criteria to parents. Encourage them to help their child polish his story.
- Copy the Registration Card (page 25). 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 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 *Send in **all registration cards** (page 25), both **Festival Quality and not festival quality**. Be sure Festival Quality box is marked for all children evaluated festival quality.



Storytelling Activities and Games

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.

Skill	*# of Activity*	*Skill*	*# of Activity*
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*

Skill: 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

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

- 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:page 5)
- 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 mic

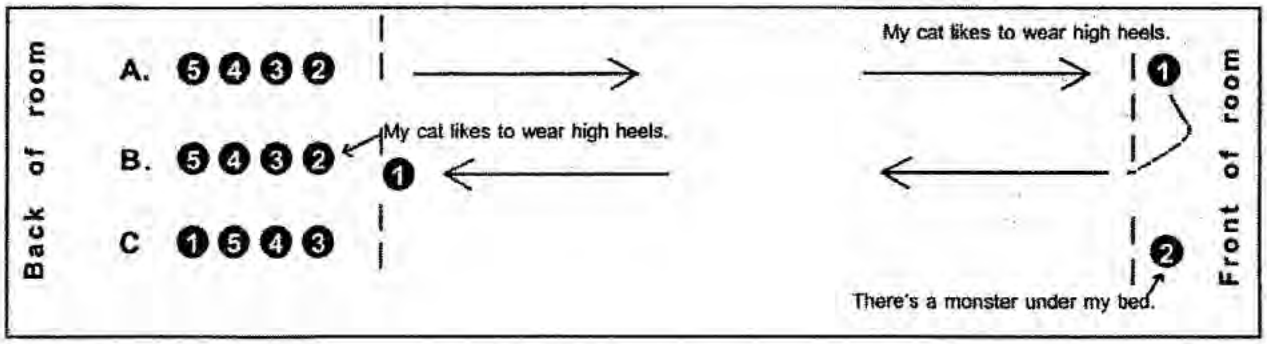
- Have the children choose a character from their story and pretend to be that character. If they were telling the story of "Little Red Riding Hood" they might choose to be the grandmother or the woodsman. Let them imagine how that person would talk, walk, etc.
- Have a mock television interview of these 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 Riding Hood tells me you've been sick. What kind of illness do you have?"
  "What does you 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

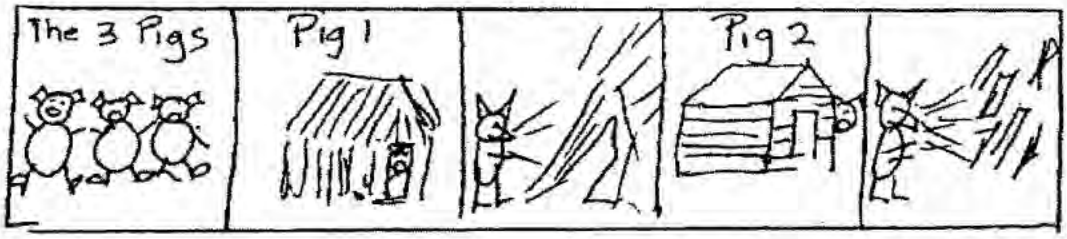
- Have the children line up at the back of a large room. The first child goes to the front of the room and says a sentence (this can be something silly or a fantasy sentence such as "My cat likes to wear high heels" or "Last night I discovered a monster under my bed").
- The child at the front of the 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. (See diagram below.)
- 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*

Skill: 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 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*

Skill: 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 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.

http://www.hcplc.org/hcplc/justkids/reading/storytelling.html
www.tampastory.org

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.

Traditionally, storytelling is an oral narrative art form. Therefore, props or costumes are not allowed. Staged puppet shows and theatrical dramas are not permitted.

After the children have learned their stories, they *must* 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. *If you need to locate* a *judging panel please contact the Youth Services Coordinator at 813-276-2012.* 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 (page 21). The criteria are also explained on the evaluation form (page 28). 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 three or four tellers, details begin to blend; 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 this manual (page 26).

Storytellers who are evaluated to be "Festival Quality" or "Ambassador Quality" will be eligible to tell their story at the culminating Festival. Their registration cards must be marked to show they are "Festival Quality" *or "Ambassador Quality" Storytellers.*

*Festival Quality- meets the criteria on page 21

**Ambassador Quality- exceeds the criteria on page 21, and are videotaped at the festival and have opportunities to participate in future storytelling venues. This can lead to storytelling camps as well as state and national festivals.

All children and their families and friends are invited to attend this free Festival.

For statistical purposes, please send in registration cards for all participating storytellers. Those marked Festival Quality *or Ambassador Quality* will receive invitations to be featured at the culminating Festival. *All Festival Quality storytellers* ***must*** *register for the festival by the deadline on the website. www.tampastory.org*

Registration forms are available on page 25 of this manual as well as on the website.

Coaches will send forms to:

Youth Services Coordinator
c/o Storytelling Festival
Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library
900 N. Ashley, Tampa, Florida 33602

Any Questions?
Call
Youth Services Dept.
813-276-2012

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 *Youth Services coordinator (813-276-2012)* 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. They will be eligible for a special storytelling gift to be awarded in a drawing if they tell 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 all locations where youth storytellers perform is the responsibility of the youth tellers' families.

Storytelling Festival Registration Card

☐ Festival Quality Storyteller
☐ Ambassador Club

PLEASE PRINT

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Parent's email address: _____

Child's Home Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____ Home Phone: _____

School/Playground: _____

Contact Person: _____

Email Address: _____ Ph: _____

Name of Story: _____

Length of Story: Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____

Storytelling Information Card

Storytelling Festival Registration Card

☐ Festival Quality Storyteller
☐ Ambassador Club

PLEASE PRINT

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Parent's email address: _____

Child's Home Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____ Home Phone: _____

School/Playground: _____

Contact Person: _____

Email Address: _____ Ph: _____

Name of Story: _____

Length of Story: Minutes: _____ Seconds: _____

Storytelling Information Card

THE TAMPA-HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Storytelling Festival Committee

Proudly presents this

Special Acknowledgment

to: _____

for promoting and participating in

the art of storytelling as a folk tradition.

Awarded on this _____ day of _____, _____.

_____ _____

Evaluation Form

School _____
Rec Center _____
Storyteller _____
Story _____

	COMMENTS	Festival Quality YES	NO
CHOICE OF STORY Appropriateness for storytelling Held interest of audience			
MEMORY Does the story flow smoothly from start to finish?			
PROJECTION Voice quality clear and distinct			
DICTION Correct enunciation and pronunciation of words			
PERSONALITY Reflected mood of story Eye contact made with audience			
POISE Is the storyteller relaxed?			
TIME Story must be ten (10) minutes or less			
OVERALL PRESENTATION Judges viewpoint			

HANDOUT: STORY SUMMARY WORKSHEET (page 1 of 2)

NAME: _____

The name of the story I want to tell is _____

from (book/author) _____

The country or culture that my story comes from is _____

Where does the story take place? _____

List the main characters and a few words to describe each: _____

_____

_____

What is the beginning? _____

What is the problem? _____

What is the middle? _____

List events in order: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

HANDOUT: STORY SUMMARY WORKSHEET (page 2 of 2)

What is the climax or most exciting part? _____

_____

What is the end? _____

_____

What is the main idea? _____

_____

List phrases that should be memorized: _____

_____

_____

What are the closing lines that end the story?_____

_____

Draw your storyboard or story map here:

HANDOUT: Basic Storytelling Techniques To Keep In Mind

Memory: The story should not be memorized word for word. The story should flow when told; the teller should not have to stop to think about what comes next.

However, memorize the first and last lines of the story for a comfortable start and a smooth finish.

If you goof, keep going. Just pause, take a deep breath, and continue. Don't interrupt the flow of the story by apologizing or starting over.

For example, if in telling "The Three Billy Goats Gruff' you forgot to mention that the grass was all eaten up on the goats' side of the river, have the first goat say to the troll, "It's me, the little Billy Goat Gruff, and I want to cross the bridge to go eat the grass on the other side because there is no more grass on this side."

Vocal quality:
- **Projection:** The storyteller should speak so that all can hear.
- **Diction:** The storyteller should enunciate carefully and use her/his voice effectively.
- **Speed:** The storyteller should keep the pace – not too fast and not too slow.

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

Voices should be used effectively to bring the characters to life. However, do not use more than three different voices in one story.

Use plenty of expression. Your voice should show when characters are sad, happy, frightened, sleepy, etc. You will lose the listener's interest if you speak in a monotone. Vary your volume and speed. Use pauses effectively.

Add some movement to add interest to the story and emphasize key plot points and actions. However, do not act out the story.

Poise: The teller should be relaxed while presenting. Beware of nervous habits, such as playing with hair, shuffling feet.

The teller should make good eye contact. If you have a hard time looking audience members directly in the eye, look at their foreheads.

General: Always introduce yourself and your story before you begin. Plant your feet firmly on the ground. Look around at the audience, take a deep breath, and then say· "My name is _____ ,and I'm going to tell you the story of _____,"or any appropriate introduction. Wait for the audience to finish applauding before you return to your seat. Take a short bow if you'd like, and say, ***"Thank you."***

Always credit the source of your story.

Professional Bibliography

Most of these books should be available at your local library. Check the library catalog at www.Hcplc.org or see your librarian for details.

Storytelling History and Developing Your Storytelling Technique:

Baker, Augusta. *Storytelling: Art and Technique.*

Bauer, Caroline Feller *New Handbook for Storytellers: With Stories, Poems, Magic and More...*

Dailey, Sheila. *Putting the World in a Nutshell.*

DeVos, Gail. *Storytelling for Young Adults: A Guide to Tales for Teens.*

Dubrovin, Vivian. *Storytelling for the Fun of It: A Handbook for Children.*

Hamilton, Martha. *Children Tell Stories: Teaching and Using Storytelling in the Classroom.*

Haven, Kendall. *Super Simple Storytelling: A Can-Do Guide for Every Classroom, Every Day.*

Lipman, Doug. *Storytelling Coach.*

MacDonald, Margaret Read. *Storyteller's Start-Up Book*

McBride-Smith, Barbara. *Tell It together*

Ross, Jeanette. *Telling Our Tales: Stories and Storytelling/or All Ages.*

Walsh, John. *The Art of Storytelling: Easy Steps to Presenting an Unforgettable Story.*

Creating and Compiling Family Stories:

Davis, Donald. *Telling Your Own Stories.*

DeVos, Gail. *Telling Tales: Storytelling in the Family.*

Green, Bob and D.G. Fulford. *To our Children's Children: Preserving Family Histories for Generations to Come.*

Moore, Robin. *Creating a Family Storytelling Tradition.*

Story Sources:

Holt, David. *Ready-to-Tell Tales.*

MacDonald, Margaret Read. *Three-Minute Tales.*

Sherman, Josepha. *Trickster Tales.*

Storytelling Web sites:

Aaron Shepherd's Storytelling Page..... http://www.aaronshep.com/storytelling/index.html

Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative..... http://www.hcplc.org

International Storytelling Center..... http://www.storytellingcenter.net

National Storytelling Network..... http://www.storynet.org

Tampa-Hillsborough County Storytelling Festival..... http://www.tampastory.org

Curriculum Tie-Ins

Because storytelling is an integral part of the way we approach learning, it's an import facilitator for learning in most areas of study in the school curriculum. Listed below are but a few suggestions to help integrate storytelling into your classroom activities.

ART:

- Analyze stories for use of strong imagery and visual details
- Use stories to develop themes.
- Use stories that create patterns or rhythms and translate them into visual patterns.
- Use stories to motivate and stimulate creativity.

HISTORY:

- Use stories that are based on historical events.
- Analyze details of stories that show cause and effect.
- Use biographical stories.

GEOGRAPHY/SOCIAL STUDIES:

- Tell or listen to stories that show the way of life, customs, and beliefs of an area or ethnic group.
- Incorporate stories into the curriculum that explain the why and how of the earth's formation.
- Use stories that have geographical details in the setting.
- When studying West African or Jamaican cultures, listen to Anansi stories then discuss how these stories reflect the cultural identity of the people.

LITERATURE:

- Use stories to enhance and reinforce vocabulary development.
- Tell or listen to stories that provide examples of how literary elements are used effectively
- Use stories to motivate and stimulate interest in reading and writing.

MATH:

- When teaching how to solve word problems, turn arithmetic equations into stories.
- Look for stories that include problem solving, inference, sequencing, and patterns.
- Use stories that make comparisons and show cause and effect.

MUSIC:

- Choreograph stories.
- Compose songs to go with the stories.
- Compose music to tell the story.

SCIENCE:

- For a unit on scientific theory, look for how and why stories such as Why Raven's Feathers are Black and How the Leopard Got Its Spots.
- For a unit on the rain forests, look at stories from or about the indigenous people of Brazil.
- To teach analyzing skills, use stories that show cause and effect or that make comparisons.