

Imagine Your Story: Storytelling Workshop with Diane Edgcomb

How to Tell a Folktale!

1: Find a story that you love! Search through collections of folktales at the library to find one that interests you or choose a story you already know and love! Make sure the characters are ones you would have fun acting out! The advantage to looking in a book is that there has already been hard work done selecting story material for the collection. If you search on the internet you often don't receive information on the source of the story or on the culture it comes from. Don't forget that your local library has a whole section devoted to Folk and Fairy Tales in section: 398.2 Ask your librarians if they have a favorite collection!

Favorite websites to find stories to tell:

"Catch the Story Bug resource list": created by Karen Chace, Storyteller and Teaching Artist.

<https://www.storybug.net/links.html>

A New England based storyteller, Karen is also an internet researcher. She has compiled a comprehensive list of story based resources to draw from when looking for stories to tell.

"Earth Teller Tales" created by Fran Stallings

<https://www.franstallings.com/Environmentor>

Fran is an environmental educator and storyteller. The focus of her list is nature and that gives it an added plus! Each story is indexed and many contain accompanying comments on the culture and the nature element in the story.

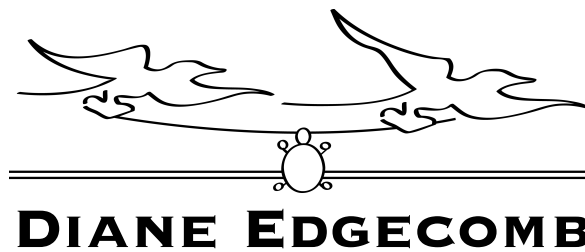
2: Develop a Voice and Body signature for each character. For each character that appears in the story, find a voice quality that does not change and a body position that you put on every time that character speaks. Remember! Character is about what is Unchanging or "Stuck" or easy to identify. The clearer you are about your signatures the easier it is for your audience to know who is speaking!

3. Find places in your story for DIALOGUE -DIALOGUE is where one character speaks to another character. Some folktales don't have much dialogue but you can create those moments by finding lots of places in the story where the characters can talk or interact with each other. The more places you find for this interaction the more fun it will be!!

4: Know what happens in the story. Read your story three times and then put it down and don't look at it again. If you read it three times and while you read it, you see the places in the story and feel the feelings of the characters and what happens to them, you will know the story well enough to tell it to someone else. Remember you will NOT be memorizing the story. If you memorize you are remembering someone else's WORDS and not remembering THE STORY.

5. Tell the story to Someone Else. When you tell the story to someone else, imagine the story is happening right NOW and you are a part of it. Act out all the characters and situations and bring them to life. Imagine your way into the story and your audience will see and experience it too.

Most importantly HAVE FUN!!



Imagine Your Story: Starting a Family Storytelling tradition.

Sharing stories is a great way to share our lives. It activates the imagination and helps develop lifelong access to creativity. Starting a family storytelling is as easy as choosing a time and a place for it. Some possibilities are: just before bedtime; after dinner when the dishes are done; or as a special weekend activity. Sitting in a circle to share stories is best with everyone seated on the same level. The circle signifies that we all have an equal place when sharing our thoughts, ideas and stories.

Storytelling Games:

Round Robin

Everyone sits in the story-sharing circle. A story is begun by one person with one or two sentences to set up the story sharing beginning elements such as WHERE the story happens and/or WHO the story is about. The story is continued by the next person in the circle who adds another sentence or two to develop it. It continues around the circle with each person adding onto and developing what came before with only one or at most two sentences. Round Robin is a great learning tool for introducing story vocabulary like setting, characters, and plot. It also gives us practice bringing disparate things together to create a satisfactory ending.

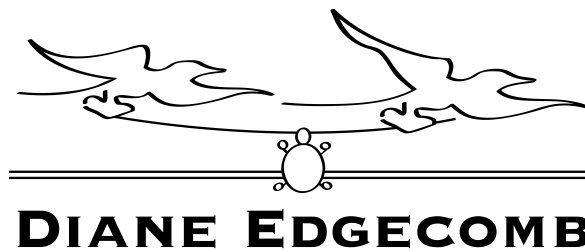
Round Robin: Fortunately / Unfortunately

The person starting begins a tale with one sentence to create a setting and a main character. The beginning should be positive because the next person in the circle will counter that by beginning his sentence with "Unfortunately," and adding something difficult or UNFORTUNATE to the story. The following person then begins his story sentence with FORTUNATELY, changing the tone to something positive. The story continues around the circle with each person adding alternately fortunate or unfortunate events and situations. This game lends itself to teaching about plot elements or story-events because the changes in the story are based on plot points as to whether something "fortunate" or "unfortunate" happens.

Imagine Your Story: True Life Tales!

Story Seeds:

Often a short, simple anecdotal story can spark others to remember similar stories. See if anyone in the circle can think of a story based on one of the following story prompts: "Unusual Pets" "My favorite Teacher" "The Right Book for Me" "The Surprise Present" "Creatures in the House" "I thought it was an Emergency!" "I was LOST!" After one person has shared a story tidbit encourage others to share a story it made them think of.



HANDS ON STORYTELLING! Stories inspired by OBJECTS!

ANIMATING OBJECTS

For those of you who have played pretend by using legos or other toys this is an even better use of your imagination! Anything you see and can take into your hand you can use like a puppet in a play and tell its story. This is a favorite game of mine and it really is as easy as picking up any object that you see. Take an object and hold it up like it's a puppet. Have the object speak and tell the story of what it is and how it lives its "life." What is the voice? Just like we did in my storytelling workshop you can find a voice signature. You can pick up another nearby object and they can talk to each other- have a dialogue! First tell the object's life story and then see what happens if two objects are together on an adventure!

HEIRLOOMS OR WHAT'S YOUR BACKSTORY?

Look around the house to find a favorite object to bring to the story-sharing circle. You can hold it while you tell its story. Do you have any idea how or when it was made? Can you get any clues? Is the object made by hand or machine? Where was it made? What is it used for? If you don't know then do some research OR make it up (but always let your listeners know at the end if these are true facts or just your imagination). It is especially interesting if you can bring something to the circle that has lasted through generations in your family. How did it come to you? Who gave it to you and what were they like? Why do you like it?

After you have told the true story you can make up more of the story using your imagination. If the object were telling its story and not you- what would it say? What was its life before it came to you? What would it want to do if it could do anything in the world? If you don't know the story then do some research OR make it up.

A NOTE IN CLOSING

Sharing stories is a wonderful way to communicate. It can be made even more wonderful if after a story is told there is a moment for members of the circle to say One Positive thing about the story they just heard. But Only positive!!! When stories are new, we need to have the good feelings that come when we know that they are appreciated. If we feel their value then we can continue to grow our stories and our story-making ability