

Stories From the African Diaspora

By Mary J. Kelly / StorytellingU

Grades: K - 5th



Something about Mary J. Kelly, MFA

Mary J. Kelly is a celebrated performance artist: actress, storyteller, teaching artist and published playwright. She has been performing for over 30 years in schools, colleges, businesses, and organizations. Mary's education and experience include a Master of Fine Arts from Arizona State University-Tempe in theatre/performance/production. Her BFA is in theatre education/child drama. She has written and performed in several theatrical presentation and storytelling programs.

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

Mary's performances enhance the Florida Standards in language arts and theater.

Welcome to the show!

Once upon a time, there was - or there was not? Welcome to the world of storytelling. Storytelling is one of humanity's oldest art forms of communication and educational methods.

About the Program

Mary repertoire includes folk and fairy tales, personal and fictional stories from the world around us. She brings her characters to life through voice, movement, and audience participation. Mary's stories are about familiar friends in near and faraway places; Grandmother Oak tells Woody stories, Brer Rabbit finds trouble, a goat and tiger become best of friends and many more fascinating characters. These stories play a genuine part in our shared journey to explore our world, to discover the story from within, and to have fun.

Program Goals

- To introduce students to the art of oral traditions/storytelling.
- To help the students expand their world through story.
- To learn how others overcome obstacles or change behaviors.
- To foster a better understanding and appreciation of other cultures.
- To encourage students to think imaginatively.
- To create an entertaining and safe environment in which to learn.

Standards for Theater Etiquette

TH.K.S.1.1	Demonstrate appropriate audience behavior at a live performance.
TH.1.S.1.1	Exhibit appropriate audience etiquette and response.
TH.2.S.1.1	Exhibit the behavior necessary to establish audience etiquette, response, and constructive criticism.
TH.3.S.1.1	Demonstrate effective audience etiquette and constructive criticism for a live performance.
TH.4.S.1.1	Exhibit proper audience etiquette, give constructive criticism, and defend personal responses.
TH.5.S.1.1	Describe the difference in responsibilities between being an audience member at live or recorded performances

Theater Etiquette:

Note: Please share this information with your students

Ask the students what they think the proper behavior/etiquette is during a live performance.

Show respect for the performer by:

- Refraining from talking with other students
- Sit and try not to move around during a performance
- Listen and pay attention to the performance
- Be courteous and show respect to other audience members

YOU CAN:

- Laugh, answers questions, and react to performance.
- Show your support and appreciation *after* the performance is finished with applauding when the performance ends.

Information relating to performance genre and content

Storytelling and theater have much in common, but storytellers generally tell a story, while actors show a story. Storytellers depend on an audience to be active listeners and to draw on their imagination to follow interwoven plots that may span many years. The storyteller expresses the point of view of all the characters within the story.

The listener's role during storytelling is to engage his or her imagination within the world that the storyteller is creating. Because storytelling often does not involve visual elements which extend beyond what the teller can do with her own body, the listener must use his imagination to "actively create the reality of the story in his or her mind." The listeners draw upon their perceptions, past experiences, and understandings to create the story, making the listener a "co-creator" of the story as experienced.

Pre-show Inquire

The National Storytelling Network defines storytelling as "the interactive art of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener's imagination" Storytelling is an ancient art that has existed in all cultures across the world.

Pre-Performance Discussion

- What is oral storytelling?
- Where can you find stories to tell?
- What are your favorite kinds of stories to tell?
- What skills do you need to become a good storyteller?
- How many of you have heard stories about your family members? (Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.)

Pre or Post-show Activities

Choose a short story for the student to retell.

- Read the book aloud
- Re-read and discuss the story
 - Beginning
 - Middle - Problem

- End - solving the problem
- Make a story chart
 - Setting (where/when)
 - Characters (Who)
 - Sequence/Plot/Problem (What/why/end)
- Discuss the dialogue
- Have the students retell the story using their own words.

Post Show Inquire

- What did you like about the Storytelling Performance?
- What was your favorite story?
- How did the Storyteller let you know:
 - What the characters were like,
 - What the characters were thinking,
 - How they behaved?
- What skills did the Storyteller have to become a good storyteller?

Standards that relate to the activity

LANGUAGE ARTS

LAFS.K.RL.1.3	With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.
LAFS.1.RL.1.2	Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate an understanding of their central message or lesson.
LAFS.1.RL.1.3	Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.
LAFS.2.RL.1.2	Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.
LAFS.2.SL.1.2	Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
LAFS.3.RL.1.2	Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral, and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
LAFS.3.RL.1.3	Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
LAFS.4.RL.1.3	Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
LAFS.4.SL.1.2	Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
LAFS.5.RL.1.2	Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.
LAFS.5.SL.1.2	Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

THEATER

TH.K.O.3.1	Compare a story that is read to one that is acted out.
TH.K.S.2.1	Pretend to be a character from a given story.
TH.K.S.3.1	Use imagination to show a person at work, using the body and voice to communicate ideas.
TH.1.S.3.2	Describe characters and plot development discovered during dramatic play.
TH.1.S.3.3	Distinguish stage space from audience space to show an understanding of the physical relationship between audience and actor in a performance.
TH.1.O.1.1	Demonstrate how the parts of the story go together by acting out a story with a beginning, middle, and end.
TH.2.C.1.1	Describe a character in a story and tell why the character is important to the story.
TH.2.C.3.1	Identify important characteristics to discuss when sharing opinions about theatre.
TH.2.S.1.2	Compare, explain, and exhibit the differences between play-acting, pretending, and real life.
TH.3.F.2.1	Identify non-theatre professions that require the same skills as are used in theatre.
TH.3.H.2.2	Create and tell a story, fable, or tale.
TH.3.S.3.1	Create and sustain imagined characters and relationships, using basic acting skills, to tell a simple story.
TH.4.H.1.2	Define how a character might react to a new set of circumstances in a given story.
TH.4.H.2.2	Re-tell stories, fables, and/or tales from cultures that settled in Florida.
TH.5.O.3.1	Describe a variety of theatrical methods and/or conventions that a group of individuals can use to communicate with audiences.

TH.5.H.3.3	Demonstrate how the use of movement and sound enhance the telling of a story.
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TH.5.H.3.4	Act out a character learned about in another content area.
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Vocabulary and Key Concepts:

**Storytellers have many different presentation styles they may incorporate techniques utilizing any of the art forms such as drama, music, dance, and art.*

Storyteller: The person who is telling the story

Narrator: The presenter of the story. (The person who is telling the story)

Audience: The people assembled to watch and listen to a performance, concert, etc.

SIMPLE STORY STRUCTURE: BEGINNING, MIDDLE - PLOT/PROBLEM, END

Characters: Who is in the story (animals, people, creatures, etc.?)

Place: Where the story takes place

Time: When the story happens

Plot: The sequence of events in the story.

End: How is the problem resolved?

TOOLS OF THE STORYTELLER

Body Language:

Facial Expression: A look on the character's face conveying thoughts or feelings

Gestures: How the character uses their body movements to communicate

Vocal Expression: The rhythm, tone, speed, tempo, etc. of the character's voice.

Dialogue: The words spoken by characters in a book, movie, story or play, or a section of a work that contains spoken words

DRAMATIZING STORIES

Stage Pictures/Tableaus: A representation of a scene by a group in appropriate costume posing silent and motionless

Retell: To tell something such as a story or joke again, especially in a different form. (To tell in one's own words)

Dramatize: Play out the story. (To dramatize a literary work or a real event)

Version: One of the many possible presentations of the same plot

Bibliography/ Discography

Enrichment/Extensions to Lesson: Resources

1. Creative Drama in the Classroom and Beyond (7th Edition): Books: Nellie McCaslin by Nellie McCaslin
2. Creative Drama for the Classroom Teacher (4th Edition): Books: Ruth Beall Heinig by Ruth Beall Heinig
3. The Creative Classroom: A Guide for Using Creative Drama in the Classroom, PreK-6.
4. Children Tell Stories: Teaching and Using Storytelling in the Classroom (Multimedia DVD included with the book) (Paperback) by Martha Hamilton & Mitch Weiss
5. When Stories Come to School: Telling, Writing, and Performing Stories in the Early Childhood Classroom (Paperback) by Patsy Cooper
6. Storytelling: Process and Practice by Norma J. Livo, Sandra A. Rietz