

Introduction

Storytelling is an ancient art form that has been a part of every culture since the beginning of civilization. Before books, there were storytellers in every village and town who passed down the history and traditions of their culture. Storytellers travelled between villages and countries bringing with them tales of other lands. Stories were created for all reasons, from teaching the wisdom of the elders, to amusing people at large gatherings.

It is interesting to study the folktales of long ago to see how many stories are similar in their storyline and intent.

- Throughout the world the wonders of nature were explained through stories. From how the rabbit got its short tail, to the eclipse of the sun; storytellers created explanations of these phenomena, often using animals as characters that talked and tricked each other.
- A version of Cinderella appears in many cultures, different, yet always about a young girl whose hard life is changed by a magical character.
- And in many tales, it is demonstrated that hard work and perseverance in the face of adversity pays off in the end. And often it is not the strong, handsome soldier who wins, but the person who was honest and used his intelligence.

The words, "Tell me a Story" opened up worlds for people everywhere and took them to places they had never been.

Today we can continue that oral tradition, whether in a small group or with a school community, a tradition that has endless benefits for every child.

Through Storytelling we can....

- model wisdom and study character.
- use colourful vocabulary to enhance that of our listeners.
- demonstrate emotional characteristics and feelings to help children respond to their often turbulent world.
- develop visual imagery skills.
- assist children to problem solve through visualizing a situation and/or feeling.
- illustrate body language and facial expression through acting out characters.
- introduce children to other cultures or traditions.
- reinforce an understanding and sense of "story" to develop children's writing and reading comprehension.
- create a positive classroom climate.

The possibilities are limitless! *Tales to be Told* introduces educators and students to the time-honoured tradition of storytelling. We know oral language is the foundation of the pyramid on which all other communication skills are built. The stories and learning experiences in this book use the wisdom and wit of the ages to move students towards becoming strong oral communicators.

Tales to be Told is divided into three sections by grade level with curriculum related learning experiences for each story. Although they focus on specific grade levels, the stories themselves can be used with all ages. We invite you to modify our suggestions to suit the needs of your students. We had fun writing this book and we hope you have fun using it. Turn the pages and use *Tales to be Told* to guide your students into the magical world of storytelling.