



Tell us a Story...

Getting creative with stories in the classroom.

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What we'll do

- Some warmers
- Some history on storytelling
- Some ideas for the classroom
- Some useful resources
- And have a bit of craic along the way

Fat Penguins!

Something to break the ice...

- The Mother Mouse
- The Galway Pirate

- How old is the Three Little Pigs?

It's 45,500 years old...

- Found in 2017, In the Leang Tedongnge cave, Indonesia.



- Source
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/1/14/worlds-oldest-known-cave-painting-found-in-indonesias-sulawesi>

What stories do

- Promote a feeling of well-being and relaxation
- Increase student's willingness to communicate thoughts and feelings
- Encourage active participation
- Increase verbal proficiency
- Encourage use of imagination and creativity
- Encourage cooperation between students
- Enhance listening skills

(British Council)

- Storytelling “is as old as time, and certainly predates the construction of the very modern notion of classroom ...with the capacity to transport the hearer beyond all boundaries of time, space, language, ethnicity, class and gender”

Wajnryb, R., *Stories*, CUP, 2003

- ‘The problem of how to make ... wisdom understandable, transmissible, persuasive, enforceable – in a word, of how to make it stick – was faced and a solution was found. Storytelling was the solution – storytelling is something brains do, naturally and implicitly ... [It] should be no surprise that it pervades the entire fabric of human societies and cultures.’

Antonio Damasio (Neuroscientist) A Self Comes to Mind:
Constructing the Conscious Brain, Pantheon, 2011

- "There are many advantages in putting storytelling at the centre of what we do, and in organizing our teaching around it."

Nick Bilbrough, Stories Alive, British Council, 2016



ONLINE STORYTELLING AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING WITH PALESTINIAN
AND SYRIAN CHILDREN IN GAZA, THE WEST BANK AND JORDAN

Today's story



- Nasreddin Hodja (multitude of spellings)
- In Arabic countries, Djoha
- Southern Europe, Giufa
- Swahili and Indonesia, Abunuwasi
- China, Āfántí
- Central Asia, Afandi

A long long time ago...



How do we remember the story?

- You will need some paper.
- Break the story into 6-8 parts.
- This is our 'story skeleton'. We add to the story in our own personal way.
- Some people remember bullet points, others graphics.
- Draw the story in 6 panels (no one is judging the artwork)
- Now we're going to retell it - using our senses.

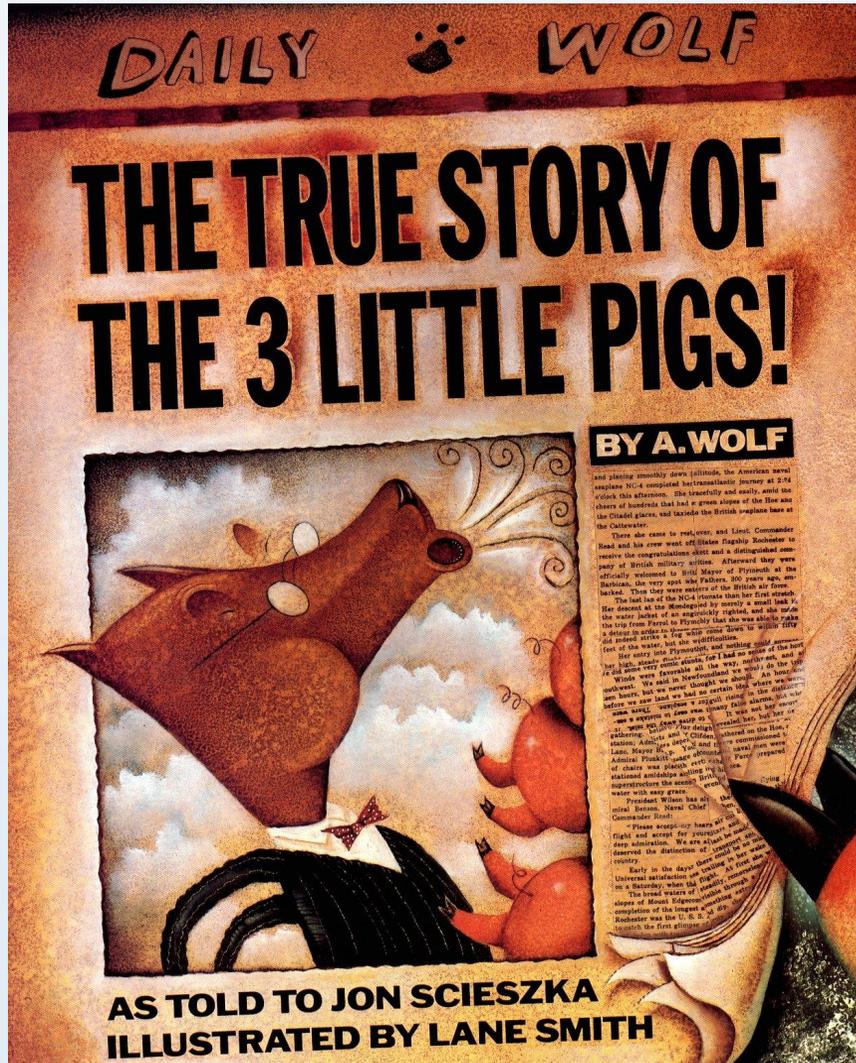
Retell it from different perspectives

- How would the story go if we told it from the girls point of view?
- The seeds / animals / the soil / passers by?
- The wind / clouds?
- Time itself / the moon / the sun?

- We'll work together and get creative!

- Does the story have the same ending and/or meaning?

Some great examples



Classic tales told from different perspectives.

- The Three Little Pigs from Mr A Wolf's perspective.
- Little Red Riding Hood from the grandmothers perspective...or the hungry wolf?
- Jack and the Beanstalk from the point of view of the Golden Goose, or the Beanstalk, the innocent Giant?

Creative response tasks

Inspired by David Heathfield, Mario Rinvoluceri, Noreen Caplen-Spence, Dr Alida Gersie.

- focus on mental imagery
- make tableaux (frozen images)
- improvised roleplay
- choose a gift for a character
- Movement / dance
- create a poem / song
- draw a picture of something memorable from it.

Personal response questions. Pick 4/5.

1. Which character made a strong impression on you?
2. Who enjoyed the story in this class?
3. Who in your family might enjoy this story?
4. What was the strongest image in your mind during the story?
5. What colour(s) was the story?
6. What kind of settings did you imagine?
7. Can you describe what one of the characters looked like in your imagination?
8. What sounds did you imagine during the story?
9. What was your strongest feeling during the story?
10. What surprised you in the story?
11. What upset you in the story?
12. What made you laugh?
13. What did the story mean to you personally?

How to tell the story (as the teacher)

- focus on direct speech
- find posture, expressions, mannerisms, voices of characters
- feel characters' emotions
- use sensory effects, gesture and mime, especially for repeated actions
- use a simple prop to engage students' interest or to add an element of surprise
- repeat a phrase or rhyme accompanied with a gesture which students can join in with
- vary the volume, pitch and tempo of the voice
- practise the beginning and the ending

Nasreddin and the Pot

- I'll tell a tale, then we will work on techniques to learn and re-tell it.



What we'll do.

- Mime whole story with no dialogue and complete silence.
- Act it out with dialogue – eliciting possible dialog beforehand
- Tell entire story.

Improvised Storytelling

Why use Improvised Story making?

- most spoken communication is unplanned
- students learn to deal with not knowing what comes next
- they pay close attention to their partners and respond spontaneously
- students collaborate creatively



Anyone know what it is?

- Scéach (Irish) / White Thorn Bush
- Fairy tree put there by 'the other crowd' or 'the good people'.
- Mess with one, and you'll have a piseog on you. (a curse).
- Entire motorways with EU funding have been re-routed to avoid them.



Storytime!

- The Scéach, the Big fairy man, and the match.
- I'm going to tell Part 1 of the story, afterwards in groups you are going to create part 2, before I tell *my* part 2.
- After all, there is no *wrong* part 2!

The storyteller and their identity

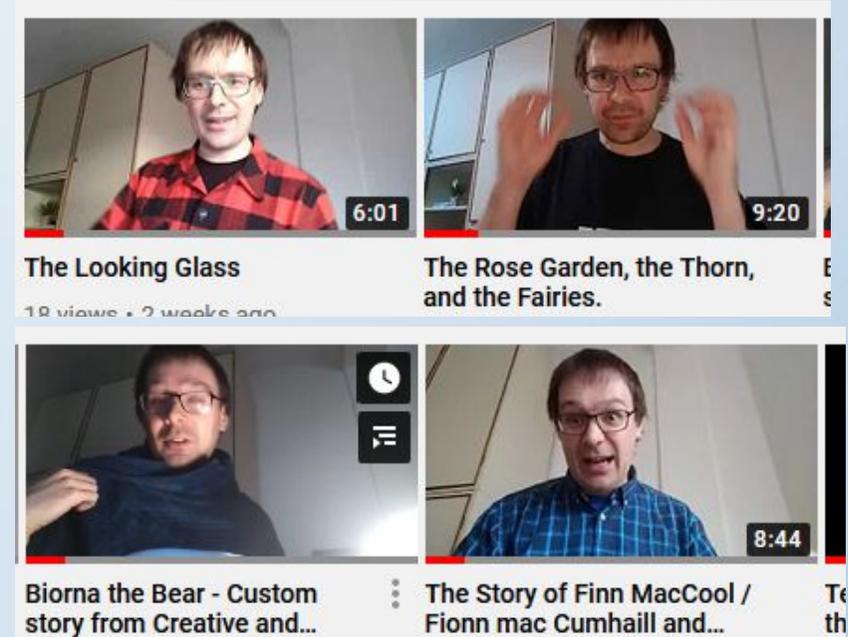
- 'If a teacher reads the story from a book the page is often between her and the students. When she tells, she is a fountain and the words of the story gush forth from her. She and the story are one as the water is with the fountain.'

Mario Rinvoluceri 'Story telling: the language teacher's oldest technique'

- Every teacher has their own storytelling identity and it's not something you 'pick up' over night, it's something that grows, and students can see that coming through when you tell a story.

My identity

- "Your personal repertoire will slowly form and talk about you, reveal who you are, much more than you imagine. So take it easy, don't force yourself, let the stories guide you."
Enedina Sanna Piccolo Manuale di Storytelling o Del Raccontare con la Voce (Soon to be published)



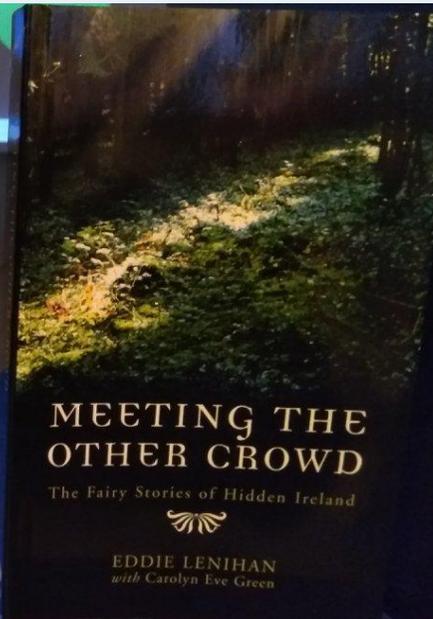
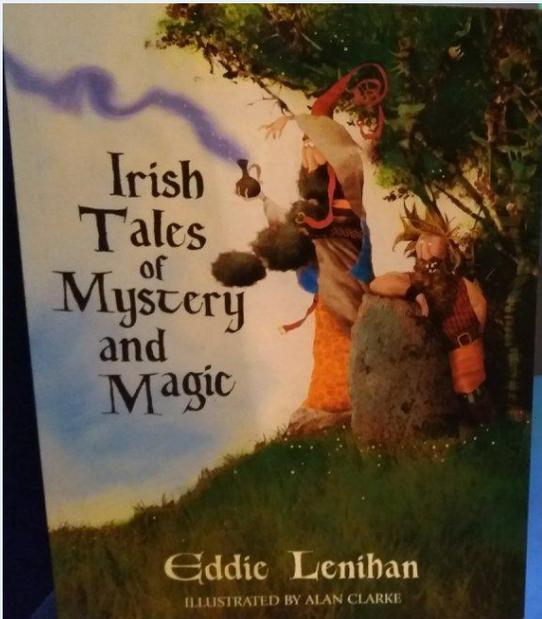
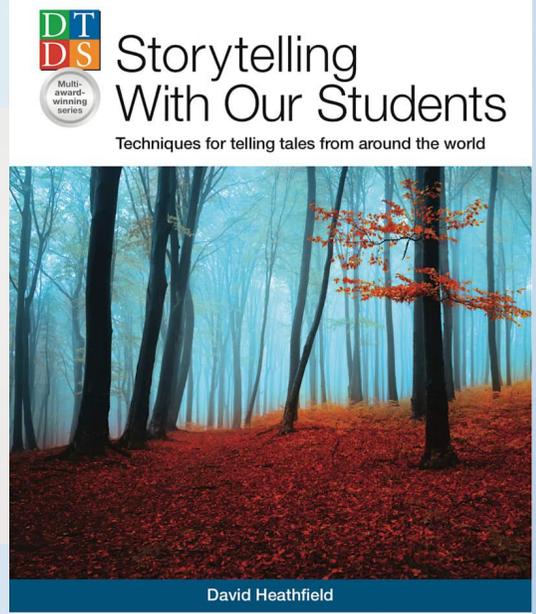
Further reading and courses



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Creative and Engaging Storytelling for Teachers Certificate

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Join Co-hosts David Heathfield, Harry Kuchah Kuchah and Alan Hall for a night of storytelling from all around the world.



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International Conference and Exhibition for English language teaching professionals

A Cornucopia of Tales and Tellers

- Podcast – at all the regular podcast hosting services



“Show me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.”

Xun Kuang, Confucian philosopher, 4CBE

Questions / feedback?

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