

Storytelling

Ideas for 4 lessons, based on storytelling, for teachers to deliver in adult literacy classes

Lesson 4 and beyond



This is a set of ideas for lessons rather than a prescribed plan. By now, you should be using storytelling more confidently and be ready to design your own lessons.

There are enough ideas here for several lessons, if you have time within your busy schedule.

Using other creative art forms with Storytelling

If you have time, you can explore stories from the English folk heritage, or from other parts of the UK. And there are lots of fascinating Celtic stories. Or you might decide to look at tales from other parts of the world. When you and your learners have decided on where to focus, you could:

- Collect traditional stories or legends from there
- Find examples of relevant artwork
- Use music and dance with story
- Source a storyteller who knows about that tradition.

How to do this. If for example, you focus on Africa:

- Explain to students that oral storytelling has always been very popular in Africa and in other countries too. Every culture has its Storytellers and those Storytellers pass on their cultures' traditions by telling the stories of the past. Point out that all the family traditions, including art work and handiwork are also passed down from generation to generation.
- Divide the class into presentation teams. Each team should include both 'storytellers' and 'artists'. Ask your students to look for a traditional African story to tell orally. Explain that each team of storytellers has only to learn one very short story by heart, dividing it so that each storyteller tells one part.
- Meanwhile, using the internet, the artists in each team are to look at the art of that country (or ethnic group) and illustrate the main parts of the story. Encourage them to copy the traditional art style (they will find lots of examples of this on the internet by looking up African Art on Google).
- Schedule a performance of the stories (perhaps on an Art Exhibition Day or on an Open Day) and invite other classes and members of the community to attend. Before the performance, have students design a leaflet showing when and where they are going to show the pieces they have created. Have students distribute the programme to the audience. They could also make leaflets for the performance.

- Invite an African Storyteller to your class to tell authentic and original African Tales. You can do this by using the Society for Storytelling website www.sfs.org.uk

Other teaching options

Suggest that teams choose their own countries to focus on now.

As a follow-up to the performance, have students find the countries on a map.

Start up a discussion to examine the similarities and differences among the tales and to explore students' conclusions about them.

Encourage students to write and perform a tale about recent times in their chosen countries. If they continue to focus on Africa, an example might be a story based on Nelson Mandela's life or his time in prison.

Find examples of music from the country of each story. Students interested in dance and movement could use those activities to tell the story they hear in the music.

The Reading for Pleasure suite of materials:

- CPD modules: Reading for pleasure in a number of contexts
- Storytelling: CPD unit with lesson ideas
- Families, Learning and Storytelling: Using archives for community cohesion
- Take Your Partner: Engaging emergent adult readers
- Technology and Reading: How to use blogs, wikis, iPods and e-books to promote reading
- Putting two and 2 together: Creating a bridge between literacy and numeracy learning
- Resources for libraries: Guidance on how to engage families to read for pleasure