



EXPERIENCE 1

WORLD
BOOK
DAY

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ACTIVITY SUMMARY: Storytelling

Experience the art of oral storytelling. Plan and prepare an oral storytelling session and tell the story to an audience.

INGREDIENTS:

A selection of props (artefacts, photographs, props, figures) to be used as prompts to support either the retelling of traditional stories or as stimuli to generate new tales

These items could include a range of hats, a tie, scarf, wallet, set of keys and an old telephone.

A storytelling throne, cloak or dedicated area.

TIME:

A session to research stories. The students then read and select their story to retell before the next session when they prepare and rehearse their retelling. Each group then needs a short slot of time (which can be on another day, or spread throughout a week) to perform their retelling.

METHOD:

1. Choose a story to orally retell to demonstrate storytelling skills to the students.
2. Think about the props (objects or items of costume that might help you define characters or that emerge as important: for example keys, money, a stick, a bell).
3. Are there any repetitive phrases in the story? Memorise these so that you can emphasise them in your retelling and encourage the audience to say them along with you.
4. How many characters are there in the story and how can you make them stand out? What are the different ways you might use your body and voice?
5. After listening to your retelling and the students are now ready to choose their own stories to retell. Give them time in groups to choose stories from the school library collections and research traditional tales. Encourage them to note the key moments in the story and highlight key phrases that they will emphasise in their retelling. Draw visual story maps to help with this.

6. Invite students to collect or make props to assist them with their retelling and decorate the storytelling throne or special area.
7. Give each group time to rehearse and organise how they will retell their story.
8. Set up a dedicated rotating oral storytelling slot (for example, every breaktime or lunchtime for a week) to allow each group or individual to tell their story.

SUGGESTED TITLES:

- *Dark Tales from the Woods* by Daniel Morden (stories collected from an 18th-century travelling storyteller, Abram Wood, and handed down through his family) (PONT BOOKS)
- *Weird Tales from the Storyteller* by Daniel Morden (PONT BOOKS)
- *Russian Folk Tales* by James Riordan (OUP)
- *The Magic Lands: Folk Tales of Britain and Ireland* by Kevin Crossley-Holland (ORION)

USEFUL LINKS:

- storymuseum.org.uk/1001stories/ lists stories under themes and recommended age groups and includes categories for 11-plus and 16-plus
- The Society for Storytelling sitesfs.org.uk/ includes resources on storytelling skills and a calendar of regional and local events, some of which are suitable for a young audience.
- janblakestories.co.uk includes footage of talks about storytelling as well as performances.
- Daniel Morden is a brilliant storyteller. You can find his performances on YouTube: [youtube.com/results?search_query=daniel+morden](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=daniel+morden)

Based on activities and ideas created by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education