

"We are, as a species, addicted to story. Even when the body goes to sleep, the mind stays up all night, telling itself stories."
- Jonathan Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal*

We are all Storytellers

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- 1) **Storytelling has been around as long as humans have been.** This oral tradition was used to entertain, unify and advise.
- 2) **Humans share stories on a daily basis.** Every personal narrative or discussion involves storytelling.
- 3) **EVERYONE can be a captivating Storyteller.** Personalize stories that are meaningful to you and share them YOUR way.



Once Upon a Time . . .

Use your body, voice, and eye-line to bring a story to life.

Know your story: If you are sharing a fairy tale, fable, or tall-tale, read it through several times before sharing it with an audience. Read it aloud, or practice saying the story out loud on your own. Tell stories that you are excited about.

Perfection is NOT important. Telling a cohesive story is!

Know your audience: Adults, teens and older children may delight in a gruesome retelling of *The Little Mermaid* while younger audiences may be deeply frightened of *Hansel and Gretel* or *Little Red Riding Hood*. As *the* storyteller, you have the right and freedom to adjust a story to fit the needs of your audience. Abridge or modify a story as needed.

Voice: Use volume, speed and different voices to weave the story. PRACTICE this ahead of time.

Slow recitation may equal sadness or calmness, speed may mean excitement or danger.

A quiet voice can draw your audience's attention. A loud voice can surprise or add fearful tension.

Eyeline: Looking up may indicate that you are looking at a giant, or that the character feels smaller or helpless. Looking down may indicate a more powerful character like a King or a parent. In stage art, changing character is indicated by changing your line of sight. Practice with a mirror may help. ONLY do what feels natural and best.

Body: Use movement, gestures and even props. Imagine how each character would move and behave. Don't be afraid of looking silly. Everyone will be drawn into the story and will no longer even notice you. You can sit or stand or move around to tell the story. Mime can be a great way to tell a story!

Questions to ask yourself. What was my favorite story as a child, and now? What lessons would I like to share through storytelling? Why do I want to share this story? Why is it important to keep this story "alive" and relevant to my audience?

"We're so complex, we're mysteries to ourselves; we're difficult to each other. And then storytelling reminds us we're all the same."

- Brad Pitt