

STYLES OF STORYTELLING: Reflections of History and Culture

Grade Level: 6th Grade

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Length of Unit: Five lessons (1 hour each)

I. ABSTRACT

Every culture has its storytellers who relate the oral and written traditions of the people in a variety of styles. These stories do not simply entertain. They frequently pass along the values, beliefs and shared histories of an entire civilization. This unit gives both *Core Knowledge Sequence* materials for the 6th grade and an overview of storytelling from previous grades. Students are encouraged to analyze, synthesize and compare different forms of literature. They are also invited to re-invent certain aspects of classic stories. This will enable them to become storytellers in their own right.

II. OVERVIEW

A. Concept Objectives

1. Students read and understand a variety of materials.
2. Demonstrate a knowledge of plots and major characters in select fairy tales, folk tales, legends and fables from around the world.
3. Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.

B. Content from the *Core Knowledge Sequence*

1. Classical mythologies (*Core Knowledge Sequence*, page 136)
 - a. Apollo and Daphne
 - b. Orpheus and Eurydice
 - c. Narcissus and Echo
 - d. Pygmalion and Galatea(All of the above stories are found in *What Your 6th Grader Needs to Know: Fundamentals of a Good 6th Grade Education*, E.D. Hirsch Jr.)
2. Additional content (from other stories)
 - a. Religion and the Gods, Robert Hull
 - b. *Aesop's Fables*, Jerry Pinkney
 - i. The Shepard Boy and the Wolf
 - ii. The Grasshopper and the Ants
 - iii. The Tortoise and the Hare
 - iv. The Miller, His Son and Their Donkey
 - v. The Crow and the Pitcher
 - c. *A Twist in the Tail: Animal Stories from Around the World*, Hoffman/Omerod
 - i. A Birthday Surprise
 - ii. The Fox and the Crab Have a Race
 - d. *The Three Little Pigs*, Gavin Bishop
 - e. The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs, Jon Scieszka
 - f. *American Tall Tales*, Mary Pope Osborne
 - i. Johnny Appleseed
 - ii. Paul Bunyan
 - iii. Pecos Bill

- g. *Folk Tables and Fables of the Middle East and Africa*, Robert Ingpen and Barbara Hayes
 - i. Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp
 - h. *The Legend of the Poinsettia*, Tomie de Paola
 - i. *Stone Soup*, Heather Forest
- C. Skill Objectives
1. Students will identify main points and supporting details in a variety of texts and genres.
 2. Students will paraphrase, summarize, and synthesize information from a variety of texts and genres.
 3. Students will predict and draw conclusions about the story.

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- A. For Teachers
 1. Hirsch Jr., E.D. *What Your 6th Grader Needs to Know: Fundamentals of a Good 6th Grade Education*. New York, New York. Doubleday, 1993. ISBN 0-385-41120-0
- B. For Students
 1. Students will have a basic understanding of myths, legends, fables and fairytales from previous Core Knowledge grade levels.
 2. Students should have the basic ability to give oral recitations on selected literature.

IV. RESOURCES

- A. Osborne, Mary Pope. *American Tall Tales*
- B. DePaola, Tomie. *The Legend of the Poinsettia*
- C. Forest, Heather. *Stone Soup*
- D. Ingpen, Robert and Barbara Hayes. *Folk Tales & Fables of the Americas and the Pacific*
- E. Hull, Robert. Religion and the Gods
- F. Hirsch Jr., E.D. *What Your 6th Grader Needs to Know: Fundamentals of a Good 6th Grade Education*
- G. Pinkney, Jerry. *Aesop's Fables*
- H. Hoffman, Mary and Jan Ormerod. *A Twist in the Tale: Animal Stories from Around the World*
- I. Scieszka, Jon. *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs*
- J. Bishop, Gavin. *The Three Little Pigs*

V. LESSONS

Lesson One: Myths: Stories from Ancient Peoples

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students read and understand a variety of materials.
 - b. Demonstrate a knowledge of plots and major characters in select fairy tales, folk tales, legends and fables from around the world.
 - c. Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Classical mythologies (page 136)
 - i. Apollo and Daphne
 - ii. Orpheus and Eurydice

- iii. Narcissus and Echo
 - iv. Pygmalion and Galatea
(All of the above stories are found in *What Your 6th Grader Needs to Know: Fundamentals of a Good 6th Grade Education*, E.D. Hirsch Jr.)
 - a. Additional content (from other stories)
 - i. *Religion and the Gods*, Robert Hull
 - 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will identify main points and supporting details in a variety of texts and genres.
 - b. Students will paraphrase, summarize, and synthesize information from a variety of texts and genres.
 - c. Students will predict and draw conclusions about the story.
- B. *Materials*
 - 1. Overhead projector
 - 2. Transparencies
 - 3. Multi-colored markers
 - 4. Copy of *Religion and the Gods*, Robert Hull
 - 5. Copy of *What Your 6th Grader Needs to Know: Fundamentals of a Good 6th Grade Education*, E.D. Hirsch Jr.
 - 6. Copy of Appendix A
 - 7. World maps
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 - 1. Myth – A traditional story containing heroes, supernatural beings and specific events related to the cultural context. Frequently used to explain natural phenomena such as creation, storms and seasonal cycles. Also used to explain life events such as birth, death and changes of fortune.
 - 2. Epic Poem – a long poetic composition usually centered upon a hero in which a series of great events or achievements is chronicled.
 - 3. Titan – Any of the sons of Uranus or Gaea. The Titans included Coeus, Crius, Cronus, Hyperion, Iapetus, Oceanus, Phoebe and Rhea. The Titans are perceived as beings of enormous size and strength.
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 - 1. Teacher will read “Apollo and Daphne” out loud.
 - 2. Students will break down into three groups of seven. Each group will be assigned one of the three remaining stories from Lesson Content.
 - 3. Students will read the assigned story silently, select a group spokesperson and report to the class on the main characters and central points.
 - 4. Students will break into four groups of five for the Culminating Activity. They will be told to select one of the stories (stories will be listed on the board) to be presented in Lessons One-Four and to choose to do a skit, a puppet show, a flannel board presentation or a character analysis based on one of these stories. Each group will have 10 minutes to do their presentations in Lesson Five.
 - 5. Students will participate in a guided discussion on main topics, characterization, and purpose of selected literature. Example of questions that might be asked are:
 - a. Who was Zeus in the Pantheon of gods?
 - b. What is the main point made in the love story between Narcissus and Echo?

- c. What was Orpheus' role in the story presented in class?
 - 6. Students will begin filling out Appendix A (complete as homework).
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
 - 1. Active participation in class discussion
 - 2. Accurate completion of Appendix A

Lesson Two: Fables: A Morality Play

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 - 1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students read and understand a variety of materials.
 - b. Demonstrate a knowledge of plots and major characters in select fairy tales, folk tales, legends and fables from around the world.
 - c. Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.
 - 2. Lesson Content
 - a. *Aesop's Fables*, Jerry Pinkney
 - i. The Shepard Boy and the Wolf
 - ii. The Grasshopper and the Ants
 - iii. The Tortoise and the Hare
 - iv. The Miller, His Son and Their Donkey
 - v. The Crow and the Pitcher
 - b. *A Twist in the Tail: Animal Stories from Around the World*, Hoffman/Omerod
 - i. A Birthday Surprise
 - ii. The Fox and the Crab Have a Race
 - 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will identify main points and supporting details in a variety of texts and genres.
 - b. Students will paraphrase, summarize, and synthesize information from a variety of texts and genres.
 - c. Students will predict and draw conclusions about the story.
- B. *Materials*
 - 1. Overhead Projector
 - 2. Transparencies
 - 3. Multi-colored markers
 - 4. Copy of *Aesop's Fables*, Jerry Pinkney
 - 5. Copy of *A Twist in the Tail: Animal Stories from Around the World*, Hoffman/Omerod
 - 6. World maps
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 - 1. Fable – A short tale to teach a moral lesson. Fables frequently employ images of animals and nature.
 - 2. Aesop – Greek writer of fables.
 - 3. Analogy – A similarity between features of two or more things on which a comparison may be based.
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 - 1. Teacher will read “The Tortoise and the Hare” and “The Crow and the Pitcher” out loud.
 - 2. Students will break down in five groups of four and read silently one of the five remaining stories from Lesson Content. They will then select a

- group spokesperson and give a brief report on characterization and main topics.
3. Students will participate in a guided discussion of main points, characterization and purpose. Examples of questions that might be asked include:
 - a. Why was the hare so confident?
 - b. Why do you think the shepherd boy sounded a false alarm?
 - c. In the story, “A Birthday Surprise,” what do you think the real surprise was?
 4. Students will work in their culminating activity groups for 10 minutes of planning. (Stress that this is a creative free form, activity.)
 5. Students will begin Appendix B (complete as homework).
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Active participation in classroom discussion
 2. Accurate completion of Appendix B

Lesson Three: Once Upon a Time ... Timeless Tales

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students read and understand a variety of materials.
 - b. Demonstrate a knowledge of plots and major characters in select fairy tales, folk tales, legends and fables from around the world.
 - c. Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. *The Three Little Pigs*, Gavin Bishop
 - b. *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*, Jon Scieszka
 - c. *Folk Tales & Fables of the Middle East and Africa*, Robert Ingpen and Barbara Hayes
 - i. “Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp”
 - d. Aladdin (Disney or Little Golden Book)
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will identify main points and supporting details in a variety of texts and genres.
 - b. Students will paraphrase, summarize, and synthesize information from a variety of texts and genres.
 - c. Students will predict and draw conclusions about the story.
- B. *Materials*
1. Lots of imagination
 2. Copies of Appendix G
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Fairy tale – A story usually for children about magical creatures (elves, fairies, witches, dragons, etc.)
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Students will volunteer to act out “The Three Little Pigs” based on their knowledge of the fairy tale.
 2. Students will then take turns reading aloud parts of the original “Three Little Pigs” tale to determine the accuracy of their depiction.
 3. Teacher will read aloud *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* to demonstrate how an age-old tale can be applied to contemporary times.

4. The teacher will read aloud an abbreviated version of “Aladdin and the Magic Lamp.” (Little Golden Book or Disney). A brief discussion will follow, including the use of Appendix G.
 5. Students who will be doing their culminating activity on “Aladdin” may work on their presentation, while the rest of the class will begin reading silently the original version of “Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp” to prepare for their essay.
 6. Students will write a comparison/contrast essay analyzing the two different versions of Aladdin, including their thoughts on which version is better. This will be done as homework.
 7. Students will be asked to volunteer to bring one ingredient from the Stone Soup recipe for Lesson Four. (See Appendix D)
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Active participation in class discussion
 2. Successful completion of the comparison/contrast essay

Lesson Four: Tall Tales and Their Origins

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students read and understand a variety of materials.
 - b. Demonstrate a knowledge of plots and major characters in select fairy tales, folk tales, legends and fables from around the world.
 - c. Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. *American Tall Tales*, Mary Pope Osborne
 - i. Johnny Appleseed
 - ii. Paul Bunyan
 - iii. Pecos Bill
 - b. *The Legend of the Poinsettia*, Tomie dePaola
 - c. *Stone Soup*, Heather Forest.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will identify main points and supporting details in a variety of texts and genres.
 - b. Students will paraphrase, summarize, and synthesize information from a variety of texts and genres.
 - c. Students will predict and draw conclusions about the story.
- B. *Materials*
1. Map, page vii, *American Tall Tales*
 2. Copies of Appendix D (Stone Soup Recipe)
 3. Stone Soup ingredients (brought by students)
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Legend – A non-historical, non-verifiable story handed down in both oral and written traditions. These stories are frequently regarded as historical and may in fact contain genuine, historical elements.
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Class will divide into groups of four and will be assigned one of the above five legends on which to focus.
 2. Each group will take 15 minutes to read and discuss their assigned legends among themselves.

3. Each group will then present before the class an overview of the legend with each member actively participating. This will include their thoughts on where they think the story originated and why (5 minutes each group).
 4. Teacher will provide a brief background on each legend and will present and discuss map on page vii, *American Tall Tales*.
 5. Make Stone Soup. While the soup is cooking, students will work on culminating activities.
 6. Eat Stone Soup!
 7. Using the stories in Lesson Four as models, students will write a contemporary version of the legend of their choice. This will be done as homework.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Active class participation
 2. Successful completion of contemporary legend

Lesson Five: Culminating Activity

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students read and understand a variety of materials.
 - b. Demonstrate a knowledge of plots and major characters in select fairy tales, folk tales, legends and fables from around the world.
 - c. Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Student presentations based on literature presented in Lessons One-Four.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will identify main points and supporting details in a variety of texts and genres.
 - a. Students will paraphrase, summarize, and synthesize information from a variety of texts and genres.
 - b. Students will predict and draw conclusions about the story.
- B. *Materials*
1. Construction paper (assorted colors)
 2. Scissors
 3. Glue (school glue)
 4. Drawing paper
 5. Crayons
 6. Flannel board
 7. Assorted flannel board figures
 8. Assortment of puppets (knights, dragons, kings, queens, etc.)
 9. Assorted costume items (crowns, fairy wings, animal mask, etc.)
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Reference Lessons One-Four.
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Divide students into groups of four (done in Lesson One).
 2. Have groups select one of the following activities: puppet show, flannel graph presentation, skit or oral character analysis.
 3. Each group will then do a 10-minute presentation based any of their pre-selected literature presented in the unit.

- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
 - 1. See Appendix E

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

See Lesson Five

VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

- A. Appendix A (Identity and Functions of the Gods)
- B. Appendix B (Analysis of a Fable)
- C. Appendix D (Stone Soup Recipe)
- D. Appendix E (Rubric for Culminating Activities)
- E. Appendix F (Curriculum Tie-ins)
- F. Appendix G (Geographic Origins of Aladdin)

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. Colorado Model Content Standards for Reading and Writing: Suggested Grade Level Expectations (6th Grade). 02/09/00.
- B. DePaola, Tomie. *The Legend of the Poinsettia*. New York: G.P. Putnam & Sons, 1994. ISBN 0-399-21692-8.
- C. Forest, Heather. *Stone Soup*. Little Rock: August House Little Folk. ISBN 0-87483-498-8.
- D. Hall, Robert. *Religion and the Gods*. New York: Franklin Watts Grolier Publishing, 1999. ISBN 0-531-14539-5.
- E. Hirsch Jr., E.D. *What Your 6th Grader Needs to Know: Fundamentals of a Good 6th Grade Education*. New York, New York. Doubleday, 1993. ISBN 0-385-41120-0.
- F. Hoffman, Mary and Jan Ormerod. *A Twist in the Tale: Animal Stories from Around the World*. New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1998. ISBN 0-0850-5946-6
- G. Ingpen, Robert and Barbara Hayes. *Folk Tales & Fables of the Middle East and Africa*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1994. ISBN 0-7910-2758-9.
- H. Osborne, Mary Pope. *American Tall Tales*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc, 1991, ISBN 0-679-80089-1.
- I. Pinkney, Jerry. *Aesop's Fables*. New York: Sea Star Books, 2000. ISBN 1-58717-000-0.
- J. Scieszka, Jon. *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs*. New York: Viking 1989. ISBN 0-670-82759-2.

Appendix A – Styles of Storytelling

IDENTITIES AND ACTIONS OF THE GODS

1. Listed below are the gods commonly known as the 12 Olympians. Research these deities and find (1) Their Roman and Norse counterparts and 2) the area of their individual influence.

(Example: Athena – Goddess of Wisdom)

GREEK

ROMAN

NORSE

Zeus

Hera

Athena

Poseidon

Apollo

Artemis

Demeter

Hermes

Ares

Hephaestus

Hestia

2. Demeter is the Goddess of Fertility. She was seen as being responsible for the success of farmers. How might the Greek view a famine or a drought? What might they do to try to correct the problem?

Appendix D – Styles of Storytelling

Stone Soup Recipe

STONE SOUP

**One large stockpot
One stone the size of an egg
Two quarts of water
One quart of tomato juice
Several carrots
An onion
A couple of potatoes
A couple of stalks of celery
A cup of peas**

**A cup of corn kernels
A tomato
A bunch of green beans
Small pieces of broccoli
Small pieces of cauliflower
1/4 cup of uncooked pasta
A tablespoon of salt
1/4 teaspoon of pepper
A loaf of bread**

Set a time and place when friends can gather to cook together. Each friend brings some vegetables to contribute to the soup. Have several adults on hand to help with the cutting pouring.

Pour the water and tomato juice into a large stockpot (liquid should fill half-way). Wash the stone thoroughly and add it to the soup. Simmer the mixture on the stove until the soup bubbles.

Meanwhile, wash the vegetables and peel the carrots, onion and potatoes. On a cutting board, carefully cut the vegetables into bite-sized pieces. Add the carrots, onion, potatoes and celery to the pot and bring the soup back to a boil. Lower heat and simmer for 25 minutes or until vegetables are tender when pierced with a fork.

Add all the other vegetables and cook for 15 minutes more, stirring occasionally. Add the pasta and cook for another 7 minutes or until noodles are done. Season the soup with salt and pepper.

This recipe serves 10-12 adult-sized portions or 36– 4-ounce cup samples. To serve more people, use a bigger pot and more of everything. For variety, use other vegetables of your choice, add some crushed garlic during the last 10 minutes of cooking, or flavor the soup with a few pinches of dried spices such as dill, thyme, or parsley.

While the soup is cooking, sing songs and tell stories. When the soup is done, break the bread so that everyone has a piece. Serve the soup and enjoy a feast!!

Appendix E – Styles of Storytelling

Rubric for Culminating Activity

1. Did the student groups accurately depict the main points and characters of their selected story?

_____Yes _____No

2. Did the student groups make imaginative use of the materials provided?

_____Yes _____No

3. Did the student groups use creativity to paraphrase, re-state, or update their selected story or character?

_____Yes _____No

4. Did the student groups complete their presentation in the allotted time (maximum of 10 minutes per group)?

_____Yes _____No

Appendix F – Styles of Storytelling

Curriculum Tie-ins

Core Knowledge Sequence materials from previous grades

Core Knowledge Social Studies 6th grade

Greek and Roman Culture (pages 38-39)

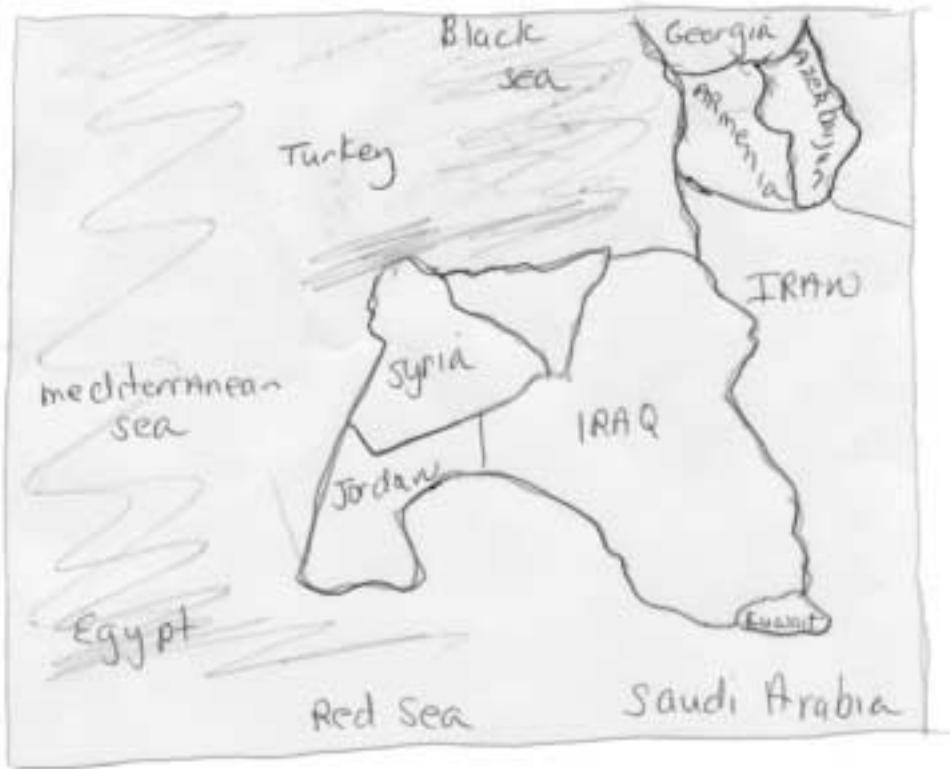
Middle East culture (page 38)

Immigration (the sharing of cultural ideas, page 142)

Visual Arts component

Classical Art: The Art of Ancient Greece and Rome (page 144)

Appendix G – Styles of Storytelling



The middle East

1. Gilgamesh the King
2. David and Goliath
3. Aladdin and the wonderful lamp
4. Joseph who dreamed the truth

Origin of Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp