

Bright Start Foundation - Parenting in a Pandemic

Storytelling Module 2:

Bringing stories to life at home by Tell Tale Hearts

Handout to accompany Session 3

Introduction: Welcoming Participants, thanks and Outline:

Brief re-cap of last week – how did you find the task? I hope you enjoyed finding out what your child might wish for and sharing another wish story – did you try replacing a word with a gesture? If you have questions – please put them in chat box.

This is our 3rd practical webinar to focus on **Visual and sensory aids to enhance stories**.

We will look at how to build the world of the story beyond the pages of a book by using simple materials and objects from the home.

Artist background: Natasha Holmes and how she became a storyteller:

- Trained in storytelling and physical theatre at Ecole de Philippe Gaulier, in London
- Performer/puppeteer for range of theatre companies touring UK & internationally
- Artistic Director of Tell Tale Hearts, making theatre for Early Years since 2004
- Performed storytelling in theatres, festivals, libraries, nurseries, universities, literary events and schools for over 15 years

What makes a good story for children?

- A clear structure: beginning, middle and end
- Relatable characters
- Humour
- Moral lessons
- An intriguing/relatable dilemma
- Empathy
- Simple phrases, language, rhyme that can be easily repeated
- Surprises

How can you enhance children's understanding through visual aids?

- 1) World building – providing physical clues to encourage children to visualise the setting
- 2) Physical scene setting helps children to sequence the story by linking main events/action with place
- 3) Visual & sensory aids can help make a complex part of a plot easier to understand ie. The fiery paste solution to the dragon
- 4) Develops imaginative possibilities for children ie what creature might live in a cave like this?

Shared Story -The Dragon of Krakow – From Poland

When watching the story I want you to observe:

- 1) What different props/objects I use to tell the story
- 2) What characters/beasts are brought to life using visual aids?
- 3) How the final event is enhanced by props/materials

Demonstration Video 1: <https://vimeo.com/416687266>
(video lasts approx 15 mins, played to end)

Check in with set Questions: What answers did you come up with? You might notice different things to me – that's fine. Everything you noticed is valid.

- 1) **What different Props/objects:** suitcase as cave & sheep, cloth as river, bowls as village but also used as mixing bowl, scarf as fire of dragon
- 2) **Different characters/beasts brought to life:** The sheep with wool shawl over suitcase, Krakos with hat, Dragon with fire scarf
- 3) **Final event:** The Sheep trap and how the Dragon drinks all the river water causing his body to explode

How to build on the story experience post video:

- Have you any spare fabric that your child(ren) can use to make a cave? Can you give your child(ren) different animals/beasts to be inside the cave? Or can they act one out and you have to guess?
- Can you role play the scene where your child is the chef and mixes the fiery paste to spread on the sheep. Can your child play at being different roles within the story: Krakos, the dragon, or one of the three friends?
- Can you and your child(ren) think of other ways the villagers could get rid of the dragon? Can your child(ren) act any of them out?

How can you incorporate props/visual-aids into your storytelling / reading?

- 1) Choose a simple household object ie scarf, bowl, wooden spoon, hat. Etc and use it to represent a character or creature from your story. You can do this by either wearing it to become the character/creature or by using the object as if it is the actual character/creature itself (eg how the fire scarf is also used to become the dragon as part of the narration).
- 2) a) Using fabric, cushions, scarves and household items can you create a landscape as it is described in your story?
b) Can you use this landscape to demonstrate where & how the main action takes place as you read the story?

Suggested Task:

- 1) Can you make a habitat for a mythical creature out of things you have at home: cushions, fabric, boxes, scraps, pegs – photograph it and draw and name the creature that lives in it. What does the creature want most of all?
- 2) Can you find another story that has a mythical beast in it, like Sinbad and the Roc bird, etc... and can you use two or three household objects to help tell the story?



Other Storytelling Links:

<https://www.telltalehearts.co.uk/families/>

<https://storynet.org/what-is-storytelling/>

<https://childdevelopmentinfo.com/child-activities/storytelling-for-children/#gs.emkcur>

<https://medium.com/@yash.hsquare/importance-of-storytelling-in-child-development-b63593921a33>



<https://earlyarts.co.uk/story-telling-role-play>

<http://www.thesensoryprojects.co.uk/covid19-resources>

More resources and links for sensory storytelling

<https://www.unicorntheatre.com/primary-schools> - free online theatre from London's leading theatre for children. Check out the Anansi Tales in October.

