

Once upon a time, long ago, far back in the mists of time, an ancient Pleistocene shaman sat by a flickering campfire surrounded by attentive members of his tribe. He looked at the people around him, catching their eyes. With a mysterious look and a commanding voice, he began to tell a story of the great hunt...



The Power of Storytelling

Creating a Story Centered School



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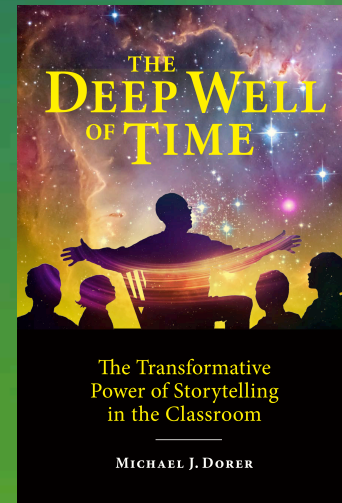


The Source

- This is based on my book,

The Deep Well Of Time: The Transformative Power Of Storytelling In The Classroom

- From *Parent Child Press*



What is Storytelling?

Storytelling is an ancient and universal art.

- An oral medium, it uses voice, expression, movement, and gesture.
- Stories offer narratives concerning events that are fictional, factual, personal, or mythological—or any combination thereof.
- As stories are told, the teller may involve embellishment and improvisation, or they may adhere closely to a set text.
- Storytelling is universal. It has existed around the world in every culture.



Storytelling is a spiritual Act

Storytelling enriches the spirit of the teller, and stories touch the spirits of the children who are listening.

Stories, like all art, open our minds to the strange and wonderful world (and universe!) that surrounds us.

Why We Use Stories

The Gift of the Memorable

- Holism: Stories are a way to grasp a whole so large that it may be beyond comprehension.
- Developing the skill of careful listening.
- Developing literacy
- Engaging the imagination.
- Developing creativity
- Stories are a tremendously effective method of passing on culture

The Final Reason

(Maybe the Biggest!)

Children love them!

Let's Tell a Story



The Four Strange Brothers

An Arithmetic Story

The history of the Story









What did this story do?



Some Considerations

- Is this a true story?
- Technical and Psychological Lessons
- *The Gift of the Memorable*
- When Should Stories be Offered?
- The Storyteller
- Myth and Truth

Stories for the Montessori Classroom

Truth, Fact, Fiction, Fantasy, and Imagination

- Infants
- The Toddlers and Children's House
- Elementary
- Beyond

Kinds of Stories

1. Great Lessons
2. Curriculum Stories
3. Origin Stories
4. Biographical Histories
5. Personal Stories
6. Character Development Stories
7. Creative Dramatics

Other Story Types

- *Narratives*
- *Mini Stories*
- *Myths*
- *Legends*
- *Folk Tales*
- *Fairy Tales*
- *Parables*
- *Mime*
- *Story Games*
- *Character Development Stories*

Great Lessons

- *The Story of the Universe.*
- *The Coming of Life.*
- *The Coming of Humans.*
- *The Story of Language.*
- *The Story of Mathematics.*

Curriculum Stories

A curriculum story is like a gift to the children in a classroom. Most stories in elementary Montessori classes are of the curricular type.

- *Arithmetic*
- *Biology/Science*
- *Geography*
- *Geometry*
- *History*
- *Language*
- *Arts*

*If History were taught in the
form of stories, it would never
be forgotten
- Rudyard Kipling*

More About Curriculum Stories

- Curriculum stories are somewhat unique to Montessori.
- Each story is tied to a specific concept, lesson, chapter, or unit in the Montessori curriculum.
- They may also be linked to particular learning materials or presentations.

Why Use Curriculum Stories?

They:

- Inspire,
- Animate,
- Strike the imagination,
- Invigorate,
- Motivate,
- Balance the curriculum, and
- Involve both sides of the brain.



The Rebellious Pronoun

(The King and the Prince)



What did this story do?



Origin Stories

- The beginnings of all things
- Great Lessons are actually a set of special origin stories
- Sometimes called *Why* or *Pourquoi Stories*
- The stories of names: *Margaret*
- *The Story of Soap* – how it was written

Biographical Histories and Personal Stories

- Biographical Histories are stories of people: Archimedes, Il Fibonacci, Maria Montessori, Mother Teresa, Albert Schweitzer, etc.
- One example in the book is the *Story of Pythagoras*
- Personal Stories: These are stories about you



Hot Lunch at My School



What did this story do?



Character Development Stories

These are stories that emphasize some specific positive character trait, for example:

- Honesty
- Fairness
- Friendship
- Kindness
- Respect
- Generosity

See the stories of master storyteller Jonathan Wolff



The Little Red Spoke

Creative Dramatics

1. Many stories can become dramatic.
2. Dramatize: *The Rebellious Prince*
3. *The Noun and the Verb*



Creative Dramatics: The Verb Family



Preparing to Tell a Story

- Chart it
- Practice
- Use a mirror
- Use friends and family
- Learn it – don't memorize it

Telling the Story

Tell The Story – Do Not Read

- Eye Contact
- Intonation
- Timing
- Characterization
- Physicality and Movement
- Props: The Object Lesson
- Duration
- The Teller's Experience

After Telling the Story

- Immediately review
- Evaluate
- How did it feel?
- What were the children like? Include behavior.
- How about length?
- Other issues?

Creating Your Own Stories

- Starting with the Personal
- Base It on a Folktale
- Details
- Names
- Old-Fashioned Language
- Repetition

Make up a story

Think of a time when you needed a band aid?

- *What happened?*
- *How were you hurt?*
- *Did you cry?*
- *Who war with you?*
- *Who put on the band aid?*
- *Did you learn anything?*

Story Centered

- The Story Centered Lesson
- The Story Centered Curriculum
- The Story Centered Classroom
- The Story Centered School

Building Story “Centeredness”

- Frequency of stories
- Regularity of stories
- Commonality of stories throughout the subjects, classroom, school
- Building a common story culture
- Establishing ritual
- Children writing stories
- Talking about stories to parents and others

Start Telling Stories!

- You can bring the fun, energy, and power of storytelling to your classroom, school, or home
- Yes, you can do it!
- You should do it!
- You need to talk and share about it.

You can encourage what Maria Montessori referred to as the child's "great power of imagination" and the child as a "force for the discovery of truth." Children will be delighted with your stories and will come to lessons with new-found enthusiasm!

Questions or Ideas?



The Deep Well of Time: The Transformative Power of Storytelling in the Classroom

by Michael J. Dorer

From *Parent Child Press*

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