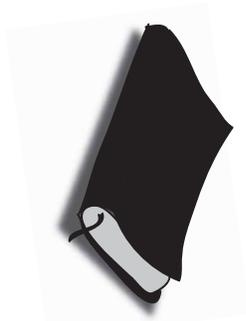


METHODS FOR LEARNING a STORY

3

1. Read the story aloud over and over in front of a mirror. Learn the story “by heart” rather than “by rote”.
2. Copy the story from a book to paper.
3. Draw a picture outline of the story.
4. Make a story *map* listing key words, phrases, or scenes in sequence.
5. While most of the story should be told in your own words, it is often helpful to memorize the first and last lines of the story..
6. Read the story into a tape recorder, and then listen to it over and over. Listen for expression, pauses, and so on.
7. Tell the story to anyone (dog, stuffed animal, etc.!) The more the story is told, the more firmly it will be planted in your mind.
8. Tell the story to yourself whenever you have a chance—walking the dog, washing dishes, waiting in line.

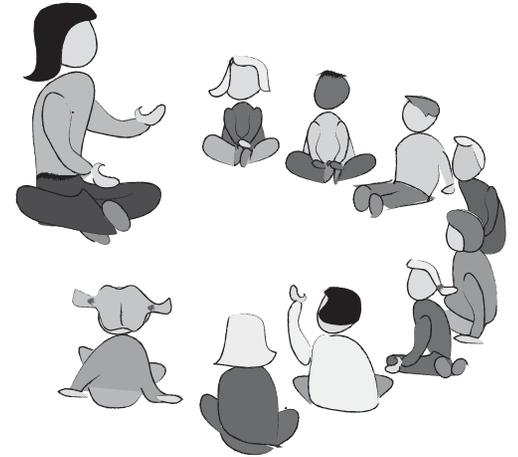


1. *A single theme, clearly defined.*
2. *A well developed plot.*
3. *Style: vivid word pictures, pleasing sounds and rhythm.*
4. *Characterization.*
5. *Faithful to source.*
6. *Dramatic appeal.*
7. *Appropriateness to listeners.*

2

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD STORY

STORY TELLING



When children listen to stories, they use their imagination.

Because children are more involved in creating the pictures of the story, they are more likely to remember the characters, sequence, and moral of the story.

It is not enough to tell a story out of intellect. “What leaves a heart...touches a heart.”

GENERAL STORY TELLING TIPS

- 1. Observe the children during the telling. Adjust and make clarifications as needed.**
- 2. Encourage interaction and participation (not by asking questions).**
- 3. Modify the pace and length to match the experiential and developmental level of the children.**
- 4. Use voice variations, facial expressions, gestures, and repetitive phrases to draw the young listeners into the story.**
- 5. Use appropriate words and descriptions that help young children imagine the happenings.**
- 6. Retell the same story many times, since young children are building their understanding of the story.**
- 7. Stimulate the listener's five senses while telling the story without over stimulating.**
- 8. Identify the truths of the story and relate it to the child's life.**
- 9. Refrain from using props during the story that detract from the child's ability to stay with the story line.**

Young children enjoy predictability, repetition, humor, and active participating in the story presentation. When stories are too complicated or the storyteller is too dramatic, the child will “turn off” or simply move away from the experience.

Adapted from

Tell It Again by Shirley C. Raines and Rebecca Isbell; Gryphon House; Beltsville, Maryland; 1999.

“The Art of the Storyteller” by Aline G. Chan; *The Leader*, December, 1987.

“Storytelling,” Jennifer Curtis; Salado, TX; January, 2002.

BASIC STORY TELLING TECHNIQUES

2

1. Memory --

The story should flow.

2. Vocal Quality --

Projection: The storyteller should speak so that all can hear.

Diction: The Storyteller should enunciate carefully and use her/his voice effectively.

Speed: The story should not be told too fast or too slow.

Personality: The flavor of the story should be brought out by the storyteller's presentation; i.e., humorous story, scary story, tall tale. Use plenty of expression. Your voice should show when the characters are said, happy, frightened, sleepy, etc. You will lose the listener's interest if you speak in a monotone. Vary your volume and speed. Use pauses effectively. Add some movement to add interest to the story and emphasize key plot points and actions. However, do not act out the story.

3. Poise --

The teller should be relaxed while presenting. Beware of nervous habits, such as playing with hair, shuffling feet. The teller should make good eye contact. If you have a difficult time looking at the listeners directly in the eye, look at their foreheads.