

Storytelling in Schools

- Quantitative Studies
- Innovative Programs

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### Curriculum Applications

Art • Music • Drama

History • Language Arts

Mathematics, Physics and Science

Oral Interpretation & Presentation

Cultural Awareness & Understanding

Classroom Behavior

Behavioral Problems

Student/Teacher Relationships

Teacher Training

Libraries • Museums

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Researched, compiled and written by
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www.storynet.org

Storytelling in Schools

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We welcome all new contributions  
to this booklet and web site.

Please let us know if you discover  
teachers, storytellers, storytelling  
programs in schools, books,  
articles, journals, organizations  
or web sites that are curriculum-  
based but not included in the  
**Storytelling in Schools** booklet  
and web site.

We will update the booklet and web  
site on a regular basis and your  
input will be extremely valuable  
in keeping information current.  
Please tell us about any curricular  
areas that are of particular interest  
to you.

We thank you in advance for your  
contributions. It is our goal to  
build a comprehensive, ongoing  
resource that will benefit all who are  
interested in and devoted to the use  
of storytelling and storytelling  
techniques to support and enhance  
the standard school curriculum.

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A reference guide to a wide
variety of educational programs
(K-college) that demonstrate the
value of using storytelling and
storytelling techniques across
the curriculum in traditional
classrooms.

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[www.storytellingschools.org](http://www.storytellingschools.org)  
including  
a Free Downloadable Booklet

# Storytelling in Schools

National Council of Teachers of English  
Excerpts from their position statement.

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What Is Storytelling?

Storytelling is relating a tale to one or more listeners through voice and gesture. It is not the same as reading a story aloud or reciting a piece from memory or acting out a drama—though it shares common characteristics with these arts. The storyteller looks into the eyes of the audience and together they compose the tale. The storyteller begins to see and re-create, through voice and gesture, a series of mental images; the audience, from the first moment of listening, squints, stares, smiles, leans forward or falls asleep, letting the teller know whether to slow down, speed up, elaborate, or just finish. Each listener, as well as each teller, actually composes a unique set of story images derived from meanings associated with words, gestures, and sounds. The experience can be profound, exercising the thinking and touching the emotions of both teller and listener.

Why Include Storytelling in Schools?

- Everyone who can speak can tell stories.
- Students who tell a story first can write about it more easily later.
- Listeners encounter both familiar and new language patterns through story.
- Both tellers and listeners find a reflection of themselves in stories.
- Story is the best vehicle for passing on information.
- The comfort zone of the oral tale can be a path to the written one.

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## Purpose

As discretionary funds in schools shrink, it is often arts programs that disappear first. It can be difficult to demonstrate the real value these projects contribute in supporting and enhancing the standard curriculum. This is especially true for storytelling programs.

The purpose of **Storytelling in Schools** is to highlight storytelling programs across the country that are curriculum-based and represent a collaboration between teachers and storytellers or that teachers undertake on their own using storytelling techniques to teach curricular subjects.

## Organization

**Storytelling in Schools** has two sections:

- A free downloadable booklet listing **Quantitative Studies** (with backup measurements) and **Innovative Programs** (anecdotal).
- A supporting web site for extensive follow-up detail and contact information.

## How to Use

- Download the free booklet to give to arts and school administrators who hire storytellers to work within the curriculum.
- When administrators read the booklet and go to the web site, they will get additional descriptions of the programs that interest them, as well as contact details.
- The information they receive will demonstrate the value of storytelling in schools.

# Storytelling in Schools

Youth, Educators and Storytellers Alliance  
National Storytelling Network  
Excerpts from their position statement.

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Storytelling in Education? YES!

Since the human race began, people have told stories to each other, to pass on family lore, values and beliefs, common history and heritage, to teach factual and conceptual information, to entertain, and to form bonds of friendship.

Storytelling helps students be active not only in presenting but also in focused listening and reacting, enhancing the vital skills of communication.

In all academic areas, storytelling enlivens the delivery of curriculum, accelerates and enhances curriculum learning and engages learners. Storytelling helps students stretch and expand their thinking.

Through Storytelling:

- Connections and understandings are formed about and between the past, present and future.
- Horizons are broadened.
- Understanding of and empathy toward other races and cultures is increased.
- Auditory processing, listening and visualization skills are supported and practiced.
- Critical thinking and decision-making skills are encouraged.
- Memory is enhanced and attention spans stretched.
- Fear of public speaking is reduced.
- Writing skills are strengthened.
- Characters, events and settings come alive.
- Students learn core academic skills including math and science as well as language arts.