



**PROJECT K - NSTP
Community Reading Program**

Introduction

Reading is the most important subject to be learned by a child. A child who does not first learn to read properly will learn little in this very dynamic society. If a child learns how to read and comprehend well, he will be able to cope better with the daily activities in school that would lead him to greater personal and social accomplishments in the future. Thus for a child to become an effective reader-learner, he must be able to build up a sense of genuine love and interest for reading. This would be further realized if the child's teacher together with parents and community where he belongs recognized their responsibility of assisting him in developing reading skills and competencies. One method of teaching and motivating children to read is through storytelling. This fun activity, which can be done at school or home, can bring up excitement for children about books and reading since children (especially those in the primary levels) are found to have innate love for stories --- may it be in the form of fairytales, folktales, and legends, among others. Storytelling, likewise, is one style of teaching and academic learning. Through storytelling, children learn listening and oral communication skills that would help in enhance their reading proficiency and comprehension.

Project K --- Karunungan para sa Kinabukasan ng mga Kabataan, in collaboration with National Service Training Program of De La Salle Lipa (NSTP-DLSL) would implement a Community Reading Program (CRP) conceptualized in cognizance of their roles in community mobilizing and organizing for strengthening the basic education of children in Lipa City. The CRP consists of three components: conduct of storytelling / reading sessions, establishment of community learning centers (CLCs), and parents' and communities training as partners for building better readers. For the initial implementation of the program, the storytelling/reading session will be carried out in 32 identified schools in Lipa City under the supervision of Department of Education (DepEd) Lipa Division.

**Guide to Effective Storytelling
TOPIC #1 – Introduction to Storytelling**

What is a story?

- Story as a narrative account of a real or imagined event. We use stories to pass on accumulated wisdom, beliefs, and values. Through stories, we explain how things are, why they are such, and our role and purposes in life. Stories are the building blocks of knowledge, the foundation of memory and learning.

What is telling?

- Telling is the live, person-to-person, oral and physical presentation of a story to an audience. Telling involves direct contact between teller and listener.
- The teller's role is to prepare and present the necessary language, vocalization, and physicality to effectively and efficiently communicate the images of the story. The listener's role is to actively create the vivid, multi-sensory images, actions, characters, and events – the reality – of the story in his/her mind based on the performance by the teller, and on his/her past experiences, beliefs and understandings. The completed story happens in the mind of the listener, unique and personal for each individual.

What is storytelling?

- Storytelling is the art of using language, vocalization, and/or physical movement and gesture to reveal the elements and images of the story to a specific live audience. A central unique aspect of storytelling is its reliance on the audience to develop specific visual imagery to detail, complete and co-create the story.

Why tell stories?

- Storytelling helps children understand themselves and relate to others. When children listen to stories, they often identify with the characters' experiences and feelings. This helps them understand their own fears, emotions, and feelings (Koralek, ____). In terms of reading comprehensiveness improvement, storytelling introduces the child to oral language patterns. The child needs wide experience and exposure with spoken language so as to achieve success in reading and writing.

What are the aims of storytelling?

Storytelling aims to:

1. Entertain and amuse the child
2. Facilitate development of reading skills by exposing the child to different oral language patterns.
3. Create a shared common experience. This aids in the development of a child's ability to interpret events beyond his immediate experience.
4. Develops a child's listening skills
5. Develop a positive attitude for books and reading in young children.
6. Aid in the development of an ethical value system.
7. Facilitate in the development of an extensive vocabulary in children.
8. Enrich the various areas of the curriculum, such as English, History, Filipino or Science.
9. Help the child appreciate his own cultural heritage, as well as the heritage of others.

Topic # 2 – Effective Storytelling

There are key elements to a successful story time

- Know and like your story
- Know and like your audience
- Make sure they match each other
- Be flexible

Finding and Choosing Stories to Tell

Consider the following points when choosing stories for children:

- Different age groups prefer different types of stories.
- Choose a story that you can bring close to your listeners' hearts based on the general experience and the level of comprehension of your audience
- Choose the tales that you yourself like.
- Choose stories that are very easy to understand with words that rhyme, repetitive phrases or sentence and action words; have fast and interesting movements/motions; and are close to the experience of children.

The Storyteller

A storyteller should know what the story is about. He/She must put expression in the voice and use different tones for different characters. Always look at the people/audience and keep the story exciting.

Tools of a Storyteller

A. Voice

- Use good English or Filipino. Do not try to overly precise in speaking. Use your voice to create the atmosphere or tension as the story progresses. Modulate your voice to help establish the mood you want. Sometimes, lowering the voice is more effective in establishing suspense than raising it. Avoid nervous habits such as "ah" and "um". Speak clearly in sentences.
- Dialogue should make use of different characters. Use the storytelling "V", shifting your direction (or posture) as the dialogue switches from character to character. However, be careful not to be overly dramatic, trying to change your voice in a too dramatic manner. This technique may actually be distracting. Also, it is very difficult to maintain this and your character might end up using the wrong voice.
- Speak simply, quietly, and directly. Speak loud enough to be heard easily. Be careful with enunciation. Use a low pleasing tone quality.

B. Timing / Pacing

- Pacing involves both the volume and rate at which you speak, and the progression of the action in the story. Dialogue slows down a story's pace. Narrative action speeds it up.
- Timing and pacing also includes changing the pitch of your voice, as well as varying and changing the speed and tempo of speaking.

C. Body Language (Facial Expressions and Gestures)

- Pay attention not only to your voice but also to body movement and control. Keep gestures simple and natural. Gestures should add to the story, not to detract from it. The gesture should feel "right" when you see it. Avoid showy movements.

D. Imagination

An effective storyteller should learn how to visualize the story for himself.

Some things to remember include:

- √ Right at the start, give a lot of thought to the appearance and the personality of the character, the setting, and the other things that affect the character.
- √ One technique that can be used is to always keep in mind that the eyes, mouth, hands, feet, and other parts of the body can be used as aids in telling the story.

E. Characterization

Characterization is important in differentiating the characters from one another and making them memorable. These steps can be taken for better characterization:

- √ Study each character well.
- √ Understand the role played by each character.
- √ Visualize the appearance as well as the voice of the character.
- √ Focus on the main character first. Study his dialogue. Imitate his speech.
- √ Once you have mastered the main character, move on to others until you master all the characters in the story.
- √ In actual storytelling, show difference between the characters through the use of actions: How does a character carry himself? How does he use his eyes or his mouth? How does he move his arms?

Use of Enlivening Devices

An enlivening device is anything to make the storytelling experience more lively and stimulating. The following are some devices you can use to make the storytelling session more enjoyable for you and your audience:

Puppets. *Finger Puppets.* Cut-out shapes of people or animals from construction paper. Cut a piece of paper and glue ends together to form a small ring big enough to fit your finger snugly. Attach this to the cut-out shape.

Sock Puppets. Sock puppets are simple to make and yet they can be brought to life very easily and effectively. The movable mouth controlled by the puppeteer's hand allows the puppet to move and take on a wide range of expressions.

Glove Puppets. Like sock puppets, glove puppets are easy to make. They are excellent materials to use in storytelling. Although facial expressions are fixed unlike sock puppets, they communicate their moods through the movement of their "hands". They can also pick up props and other materials.

Stick Puppets. One can make this kind of puppet as complicated or as simple as one likes. It can have one to three sticks. Stick puppets with three sticks have one stick operating each arm and one supporting the body.

String Puppets. String puppets or marionettes, have strings attached to their head and limbs. The puppeteer manipulates them from the top.

Shadow Puppets. These are cut-out shapes of people and objects from thin cardboard held behind a thin sheet cloth or paper and illuminated to cast shadows.

Props. The props may be toy animals, dolls, fruits, toy houses or other objects used to represent the characters or events in the story. Props are used the same way as puppets.

Flannel Board. This is most appropriate for stories with only a few characters. While the storyteller reads or narrates the story, he sticks the characters or objects involved, on a flannel board. If a flannel board is not available, sticking pictures on a plain wall or blackboard with masking tape will do.

Blackboard (Chalk talk). While narrating the story, the storyteller draws the characters and important objects on the board. If there is no board, a big piece of paper can be used as a substitute. Instead of chalk, markers or crayons can be used as drawing materials.

Cut-outs (Cut Stories). The storyteller cut outs the shape of characters, animals, and objects that appear in the story. Practice is needed to perfect this technique.

Origami. Instead of cutting paper, the storyteller folds paper into animals or objects. This technique is best used for stories about animals and flowers.

Costumes. To let the children have the feel of the setting or what the character is like, dressing up can help the children visualize the characters in the story more clearly. A simple scarf, *sarong*, or *malong* can provide an infinite number of possibilities for costumes and character visualization in storytelling.

Diorama. This device tries to show realistically a place or an event using miniature figures or objects arranged carefully in a small box or sand table.

Pop-up Pictures. Some books already have this feature; pictures that pop-up or move when the pages are turned.

Animal Models. Many stories for children have animal characters. Children enjoy animals, especially those familiar to them. When a story features unfamiliar animals, children tend to ask questions about them. Anticipating these questions, the storyteller can make animal models to use as aids in telling the story.

TOPIC # 3 - The Process of Effective Storytelling

Before telling the story

Relax before the actual storytelling. Prepare everything needed before the audience assembles. Welcome the children, using a carefully modulated voice --- neither too high nor too low. Set a low-key atmosphere.

Bridging the gap between the children and words found in the story: "unlocking difficulties"

A. Unlock Difficulties

This is done before telling the story to make sure that all the key words in the story are understood by the children. It also aids in vocabulary development.

Ways to unlock unfamiliar words:

REALIA

DEMONSTRATION

REPLICA

CONTEXT CLUES

B. Develop a purpose for reading: Schema Preparation

After unlocking the difficult words, the storyteller needs to develop a smooth transition to reading the story. The storyteller can develop a purpose for reading the story to the children via preparing the child's schema (child's previous knowledge and experiences). This can be done by asking motivation and motive questions.

Beginning the Story

After getting answers to the motivation and motive questions from the children, the storyteller can proceed to introduce the story. To do this, introduce the title and do not forget to acknowledge the author and illustrator.

Actual Telling of the Story

The most important part of storytelling is the actual telling of the story. There are three methods of telling a story: reading from a book, narration with props, using creative dynamics and involving the audience.

Reading from a book: The story is read aloud directly from the book.

Narration with props: The storyteller simply narrates the story. The use of enlivening devices and participatory activities can help make storytelling session via narration more interesting.

Using Creative Dynamics: This style will surely generate excitement and enthusiasm among the listeners (Alitaptap, 2000). The storyteller could wear costume, put on make-up, memorize the main character's line then go on to explain an enchanting tale to the listeners. This would make the story seem more real than just reading from a book or bringing along some props.

Involving the audience: Let some of the listener's play as minor characters or inanimate objects like maybe a post or a stone. So instead of being passive listeners, the audience can actively participate in the storytelling itself.

Tips for the storytellers:

1. Be prepared to deal with disruptions.
2. Maintain eye contact with your audience.
3. A child who is unruly may sometimes respond to having the story told more directly to him or her. Do not allow one child to spoil the story for everyone. Having another adult present to aid in removing unruly children is helpful.
4. If the entire group is restless, do not get angry with them.

TOPIC # 4 – After the Storytelling

Talking about the story

Discussion after the storytelling (questions that can be asked):

- a. Getting to know the setting
 - Where does the story take place?
 - What are the characteristics of the place?
 - When did the story happen?
- b. Getting to know the characters
 - Who is the main character?
 - What do you know about him/her?
 - Who are the characters?
- c. Getting to know the problem
 - What does the main character want to achieve?
 - Why can he not achieve it?
 - What did he do to overcome his problem?
- d. Summarizing the plot
 - How did the story start? What does the character want to achieve?
 - What is the climax of the story?
 - How does the story end?
 - What takes place so that the story can end the way it does?

Gradual Psychological Unfolding

Engagement Activities

Posters	Drawing
Charts	Puzzles
Letter-Writing	Mapping

Enrichment Activity

- Dramatic reading of the story
 - Assigning according to characters and narrator (individual and group reading)
 - Assigning according to the sequence of events
- Theater for children
 - Chamber theater
 - Creative Dynamics
- Exercises
 - Who said the line?
 - Complete the story
 - The more the merrier
 - Which happened first?
 - Who am I?
- Telling the story through the music or sound effects
- Paper, pencil, and/or art activities

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