

STORYTELLING

What makes a GREAT storyteller?

We are going to watch some wonderful storytellers tell stories. **Listen** and **watch** closely.

As you watch and listen, try to think about:

How the storyteller uses their **voice**. **Do they:**

- Use different voices for different characters?
- Change the pace? Sometimes talk fast, sometimes talk slow?
- Use emotion in their voice? Can you tell if a part is funny or sad or scary just by listening to their voice?
- Make sound effects or noises with their voice?
- Use emphasis? Do they make some words stand out more than others by being extra loud or soft or stretching out the syllables?

How the storyteller uses their **face** and **body**. **Do they:**

- Use facial expressions? Can you see them smile or frown or look shocked or scared?
- Use their hands and gestures? Do you notice them using their hands to help tell the story? Do they clap or point or gesture with their hands?
- Walk around or move when they tell the story? Or do they sit still? Or do they use a mixture of both?

Here are some great storytellers you might like to watch online with your class.

STORYLINE ONLINE has lots and lots of picture books and storybooks read by famous actors. You can choose one from their collection if you click on this link –

<https://www.storylineonline.net/>

- I like listening to David Harbour read *Snappy the Alligator (Did Not Ask To Be In This Book)* – click this link if you'd like to listen to that one:
<https://www.storylineonline.net/books/snappy-the-alligator/>
- And I also love watching Oprah Winfrey read *The Hula-Hoopin' Queen* – click this link if you'd like to watch that one, too:
<https://www.storylineonline.net/books/hula-hoopin-queen/>
- AND Michelle Yeoh reading *Lotus & Feather* – click here to watch that one:
<https://www.storylineonline.net/books/lotus-and-feather/>

DIANE FERLATTE is an award-winning storyteller who has toured the world telling stories. She is truly a master of the oral tradition using expression, gesture and emotion to create multiple characters for each story. Through stories, songs, American Sign Language, humour and audience participation, she brings her tales to life. You can watch her tell some stories at the National Storytelling Festival – follow this link: <https://youtu.be/Zb1Xa97Bv9Q?t=390>

LEN CABRAL is an internationally acclaimed storyteller who has been enchanting audiences with his storytelling performances at schools, libraries, museums and festivals since 1976. You can watch him tell some stories to the students at Millville Elementary School in America online – follow this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gckgH2DKqDA>

You can also watch 11-year-old **CHRISTIAN DIAZ** tell the story of *The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig*. He is a student storyteller for Frisco Public Library's Lone Star Storytelling Festival (Texas, USA). Follow this link: <https://youtu.be/YCGzUPPwUWo>

For older students, you might like to watch some young storytellers perform their first-person, real-life stories at **The Moth**. The Moth is a famous event which started in New York City, in which people tell their stories based on a theme to an audience without using any notes. You can find a selection of stories performed by teens here - <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRmR7jg2s4-RLRKvxlSnqeR7IQhAeQRTc>

AND There are also some really great stories performed by storytellers available on **The Moth** website. Some of these are only available in audio form, others you can watch on video and some have transcripts – so you can see how they wrote their stories! Follow this link: <https://themoth.org/education/stories>

After watching different storytellers discuss:

1. What makes these people such good storytellers?
2. What kinds of props did they use?
3. Why is it important for a storyteller to speak clearly and loudly?
4. How did the storytellers use their bodies and faces to tell the story?
5. How can music be used in storytelling?

Younger Students | Worksheet: A Storyteller

Discuss with students how a good storyteller uses their whole body to perform or tell a story to their audience.

The worksheet has arrows pointing to part of the body pertaining to:

- Eyes: Eye Contact
- Face: Facial Expression
- Mouth: Vocal inflection / verbal communication / vocal inflection
- Hands: Gesture
- Body: Nonverbal communication / stance / posture / movement

Older Students | Worksheet: Storytelling Recipe

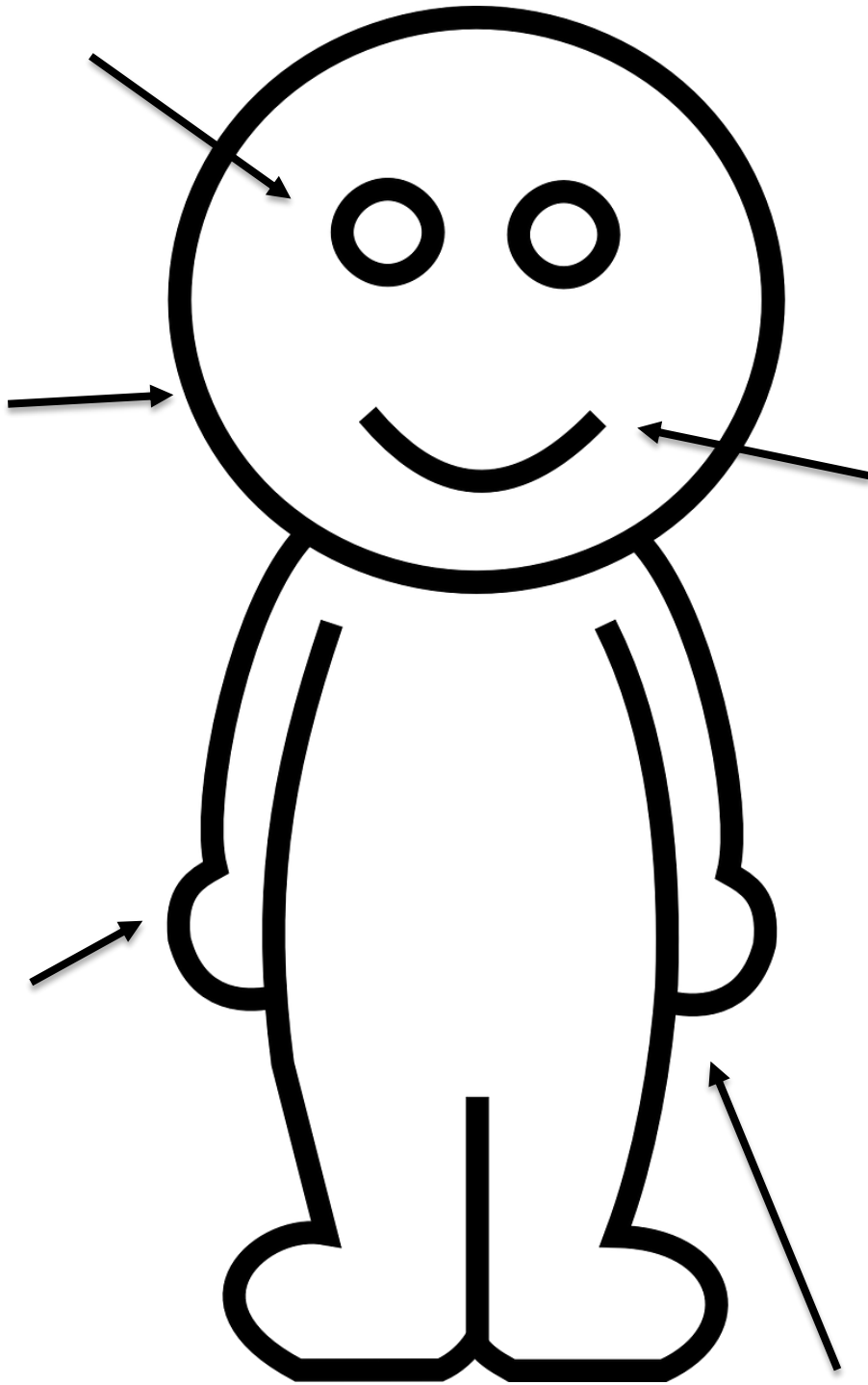
Use the idea of creating a 'recipe for good storytelling' as a way to frame your discussion about the techniques and performance skills of a storyteller.

Students may complete the worksheet individually, in small groups or as a whole class. Ask students to capture to all the pieces (ingredients) that make up a storyteller. This could include:

- One strong voice
- Imagination
- Funny facial expressions

Students should then consider the 'method' – how do all these ingredients go together to make a story?

A Storyteller



Storytelling Recipe



Ingredients

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Method

STEP ONE

STEP TWO

STEP THREE
