

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Storytelling, LIS 409LEA

Dr. Kate McDowell

Required Texts:

Haven, Kendall F., and MaryGay Ducey. Crash Course in Storytelling. Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited, 2007.

Haven, Kendall. Story Proof: The Science Behind the Startling Power of Story. Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited, 2008.

Keding, Dan. Elder Tales: Stories of Wisdom and Courage from Around the World. Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited, 2008.

Lipman, Doug. Improving Your Storytelling: Beyond the Basics for all Who Tell Stories in Work Or Play. Little Rock: August House, 1999.

Course Packet or E-Reserves:

Bishop, Rudine Simms. "Reframing the Debate about Cultural Authenticity." Stories Matter: The Complexity of Cultural Authenticity in Children's Literature. Ed. Dana L. Fox and Kathy Gnagey Short. Urbana, Ill: National Council of Teachers of English, 2003.

Charles, Anne, et al. "As the Twig is Bent..." Parabola 4.4 (1979).

Cross, Gilbert B., and Atelia Clarkson. "Folklore Research Tools." World Folktales. Ed. Atelia Clarkson and Gilbert B. Cross. New York: Scribner, 1980.

De Wit, Dorothy. "Elements of Programming." Children's Faces Looking Up: Program Building for the Storyteller. Chicago: American Library Association, 1979.

Hearne, Betsy. "Cite the Source." School Library Journal 39.7 (1993): 22.

---. "Respect the Source." School Library Journal 39.8 (1993): 33.

---. "Swapping Tales and Stealing Stories: The Ethics and Aesthetics of Folklore in Children's Literature." Library Trends 47.3 (1999): 509.

McKee, Robert. "Structure Spectrum," "Structure and Character," and "Structure and Meaning." Story: Substance, Structure, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting. New York: ReganBooks, 1997.

Mooney, William, and David Holt. "How Do I Make a Program Flow?" The Storyteller's Guide: Storytellers Share Advice for the Classroom, Boardroom, Showroom, Podium, Pulpit, and Center Stage. Ed. William Mooney and David Holt. Little Rock, Ark: August House, 1996.

Paley, Vivan Gussin. "Preface" and "Storytellers and Story Players." The Boy Who would be a

Helicopter. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1990.

Pink, Daniel H. "Story." A Whole New Mind: Moving from the Information Age to the Conceptual Age. New York: Riverhead Books, 2005.

Spindel, Carol. "The Spoils of Victory," "Coloring Books," "What do I Know About Indians?," and "The Wistful Reservoir." Dancing at Halftime: Sports and the Controversy Over American Indian Mascots. New York: New York University Press, 2000. 173-188.

Stone, Elizabeth. "Introduction," "Family Myths," and "Legacies." Black Sheep and Kissing Cousins. New York: Times Books, 1988.

Stone, Kay F. "Oral Narration in Contemporary North America." Fairy Tales and Society: Illusion, Allusion, and Paradigm. Ed. Ruth B. Bottigheimer. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986.

Syllabus:

Jan 19

Introduction to the course

Storytelling Games: Round Robin telling

Reading aloud vs. telling (demo)

Jan 26

Readings:

-A Crash Course in Storytelling by Kendall and Ducey (entire book)

-Clarkson article (online reserves)

Other Assignments:

--Find a timer (kitchen, on your cell phone, etc.) and get familiar with how it works. Try timing yourself telling something, anything, possibly a story or anecdote. You'll be using it to time your story rehearsals. Your first story should be 5-7 MINUTES long, preferably no longer. You should be using your timer to learn what 5-7 minutes feels like. Note the difference it makes in your perception of time to be telling a story during 5-7 minutes versus doing other activities.

Feb 2

Student Stories

Readings:

-Keding, Chapter One: Wisdom and Chapter Three: Heroes

-Search the blog <http://www.presentationzen.com/> for "storytelling" or "story," read through the posts that capture your interest, and come prepared to discuss how blog author Reynold's use

of storytelling connects with storytelling in the oral tradition.

Other:

-Storytelling in Daily Life assignment due next week

Feb 9

Student Stories

Readings:

-McKee, three chapters (online)

Feb 16

Student Stories

Cultural Respect, Cultural Authenticity (guest lecturer Yeo-Joo Lim)

Readings:

- Hearne, Betsy. "Swapping tales, stealing stories" [e-reserve]
- Child_lit Listserv Discussion Archive, "Tikki Tikki Tembo and Cultural Accuracy in Folktales" (Available from <http://fairrosa.wordpress.com/2009/09/16/tikki-tikki-tembo-and-cultural-accuracy-in-folktales/>)
- Griffis, William Elliot. *Fairy Tales of Old Japan*. London: George G. Harrap, 1911.
- "The Tide-Jewels" (Available from <http://tinyurl.com/brmhnx>)
- Look at this map of Korea (Corea) in context of the above tale: http://www.korea.net/news/news/newsView.asp?serial_no=20071121026&part=102&SearchDay=

CHOOSE ONE OR MORE of the following readings:

- Eder, Donna J. "Bringing Navajo Storytelling Practices into Schools: The Importance of Maintaining Cultural Integrity." *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 38.3 (2007): 278, 19; 296. (Available from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com.proxy2.library.uiuc.edu/cgi-bin/fulltext/120127173/PDFSTART>)
- Bishop, Rudine Sims. "Reframing the debate about cultural authenticity" [e-reserve]
- Lenox, Mary F. "Storytelling for young children in a multicultural world" (full text available at <http://www.springerlink.com/content/xg4x8752q3j2q7t2/>)

Feb 23

Student Stories

Readings:

-Lipman, *Improving Your Storytelling* (entire book)

GUEST LECTURE/DISCUSSION: Dan Keding, <http://www.dankeding.com/>

Other:

-Stories Told in Class posting due Friday Feb 26 (one week in advance of the on campus day)

-Future Stories File due Mar 2 (no live session that Tuesday, assignment due by midnight CST)

No class Mar 2 (LEEP weekend/travel and extra Future Files work time)

ON CAMPUS DAY FRIDAY MAR 5

Storytelling Festival

Students tell stories, schedule TBA

Mar 9--No class (LEEP weekend travel)

Note forum posting due Mar 9 AND large reading, listening, and viewing assignment due next week

Mar 16

Digital Storytelling

Readings:

-brief review of Lipman

-Haven, The Power of Story, entire book (chapters 1-10)

-Watch this student-created digital story, by GSLIS alum Caitlin Savage: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80JqIqYsZXQ>

-Browse the website: <http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/>

-Browse the website: <http://electronicportfolios.org/digistory/>

-Skim the story "Alternate Ithaca Tom" at <http://www.newsweek.com/id/63886> and/or listen to the audio version from the Moth Podcast, episode available from <http://mefedia.com/entry/tom-weiser-alternate-ithaca-tom/14870616>

[spring break]

Mar 30

Student Stories

Readings: Family Stories

-Keding chapters 4 and 8

-E. Stone 3 chapters (online)

Apr 6

Final Project Topics Due (for individual projects)

Student Stories

Readings: Schools and Storytelling

-Keding chapter 7

-Paley 2 chapters (online)

Apr 13

Student Stories

Readings: Story Programming

-Review Lipman Section 3

-De Wit chapter (online)

-Mooney and Holt chapter (online)

Apr 20

Student Stories

Readings:

-Keding chapters 5 and 6

-K. Stone chapter (online)

Apr 27, Last Class

Review Haven and Ducey text for discussion

Final Projects Discussion

Final Projects Due

ASSIGNMENTS

Five components determine your final grade:

- 1) Participation,
- 2) Telling Three Stories,
- 3) Storytelling in Daily Life paper,
- 4) Future Files, and
- 5) Final Project: Group or Individual.

==Participation==

Participation is particularly important for this class, both as tellers and as audience members. You should plan to be present for all of the synchronous sessions, except in cases of emergency. Class participation includes 2 parts:

- 1) Readings and live chat discussions: Complete all assigned readings and prepare to discuss them. Attend all live sessions and participate in giving your fellow tellers feedback. Expect to be

participating in a meaningful way via chat every week, during every live session.

2) Forum postings: All postings are required for all students. Postings are due within the week assigned, prior to the live session meeting for that week. Postings should be about 150-300 words in length (one to three paragraphs.) Although these are informal compared to your other written assignments (below), please practice clear communication in your professional writing by editing for spelling and grammar.

==Telling Three Stories==

Story Selection Requirements:

First Story: Folktale (5-7 min)

Second Story: Folktale (5-10 min)

Third Story: Folktale, Personal Tale, or Digital Storytelling (5-10 min)

Each story you tell requires a two-part assignment:

- 1) WRITTEN DESCRIPTION (due one week before you tell)
- and
- 2) ORAL PERFORMANCE (live storytelling in class)

Assignment Description and Overview:

Each student will find, adapt, and tell 3 stories. Prepare for your storytelling by finding stories that fit the above parameters, learning the events in them so that you can tell them spontaneously, and making them your own by adapting the story you find to your own telling style. We will discuss this process extensively in the first two classes, so come prepared to take notes and ask questions.

Folktales, personal stories, and digital storytelling will all be defined in class. We start with folktales in this class for many reasons, the simplest being that they are from the oral tradition and are therefore stories you can retell in your own words without being in violation of copyright. Folktales have been honed by repeated telling, through the eons of oral repetition. The moment at which they were captured in print represents only one of many ways that they have been told orally, and so they are generally amenable to oral adaptation again. Other reasons will be discussed in class. In many cases, choosing to adapt folktales for all three stories is by far the easiest, most productive, and most rewarding use of your time.

1) WRITTEN DESCRIPTION: "Stories Told in Class" Forum Posting: (DUE ONE WEEK BEFORE YOU TELL EACH STORY) Details are available in the forum description.

2) ORAL PERFORMANCE: Telling Your 3 Stories, through the microphone of your headset (twice) and in person (once). You will be telling (without referring to notes, reading the text, or reciting from memory although you may memorize some phrases) 3 stories of your choice within the above parameters. Stories must fit the required time (see above). Learning timing takes

practice, so use a timer and time yourself during your rehearsal. You can tell and be heard by the entire class in the live session as you tell your story.

Tips on Selecting Stories to Tell: Think carefully about your storytelling goals in your story selection. Pick stories you love to think about and love to tell, because that enthusiasm will come through. Also pick stories that will give you telling experiences that you can carry to particular audiences. Think about possible programming and literacy promotion activities that could accompany the stories you choose.

==Storytelling in Your Daily Life==

You communicate with people throughout your day, in various ways. As you do, you invariably draw on stories you know or narrative forms to communicate what you want to say. For this assignment, observe yourself closely for the next few weeks, and then write a short paper about how storytelling functions as part of your everyday life.

You may choose to frame this as a story of your storytelling self. You may choose to answer some or all of the following questions:

- Which of these communications do you think of as stories? Why?
- Under what circumstances are you most likely to use a story or elements of narrative to communicate?
- What kind of storyteller are you: funny, poignant, didactic, or some other kind? What kinds of stories do you tend to tell most?
- What kinds of storytellers do you know? Who around you tells you stories on a regular basis, and why?
- In what ways do you strive to be a good listener to the stories of others?
- When have you learned something memorable from a story? Are there stories (read, heard, told, or all of these) that have stayed with you over time, that you have a long relationship with?

You have 1500-2000 words for this assignment, so be succinct and focus on the most important ways that you see storytelling occurring in your everyday life. You'll want to take good "observation notes" on a day-to-day basis so that you can identify patterns and spend time thinking about the uses of storytelling you encounter. Your paper should be the outcome of this reflection, not the initial reflections itself. Your writing should be making a clear claim or set of claims identifying, describing, and explaining the way you see storytelling functioning as part of your daily life.

Upload your 1500-2000 word file to Moodle in either .doc or .html format. Revise and be succinct.

Grades based on:

--clarity of writing

--clarity of examples of story experiences

--brevity of articulation

If for some reason you prefer not to delve into your own experiences, you may instead create a storytelling biography of someone else, but you must check with the instructor a week in advance of the assignment due date to take this option.

==Future File==

Your future file is a long-term tool for you in your career as a storyteller. During the semester, you should read as many stories as possible from various genres and cultures. Keep a file of those stories you might like to tell, including folktales, personal tales, fairy tales, myths and legends, and selections from contemporary literature. These might be stories you foresee using in the future for library programs, curriculum enrichment, literacy promotion at festivals, or stories that you can't yet foresee how or where you might use but want to keep.

Your file may be a simple word document, a blog, wiki, or other database as long as it is easily readable by the instructors. The file should consist of 15 or more entries and be approximately 10-15 pages in length. Each story entry should use the following form:

- Title of story
- Source(s) where found (in MLA citation style, which you can find online)
- Summary of story (one paragraph or a brief outline of story events)
- Cultural origins and how identified: source notes in the text, information in the story, etc.
- Audience (potential age level and audience settings: school, library, museum, etc.)
- Notes on adaptation for telling (what to do, what not to do, voices you might use, choruses for group participation, tone of telling, etc.)

Grades based on:

- professional writing (Avoid typos, grammatical errors, and use complete sentences.)
- completeness of entries (All 6 elements above fully and accurately given for each entry.)
- variety of stories in the file, including variety of cultural sources and stories for a variety of ages
- clear descriptions of intended audience, adaptation ideas, and literacy connections

==Final Project: Group Project OR Individual Paper==

Group Project : Storytelling Proposal Website (2-4 students per group)

Youth services librarians continue to find new, innovative ways to bring literature to life for children. You've been immersed in one of those ways, storytelling, for nearly a semester. This website project is an opportunity for you to take what you have learned as tellers and extend it to a practical situation. This is the kind of proposal you might create in seeking a grant, in making a presentation to a library board, or in convincing a principal and other teachers that

they could justify storytelling activities to the school board. Despite increased testing of children, librarians continue to hold literacy programs to give children an opportunity to develop a passion for narrative in all its forms. Schools continue to invite storytellers to be guests-in-residence. Children continue to be natural born storytellers, wanting only the encouragement of interested adults to develop and grow their narrative skills. This is your chance to polish an idea that may be the seed of a future grant or future concert series, through creating a website that clearly explains the idea and explores the potential outcomes.

First, Brainstorm an Idea for your Proposal. Your idea might be to host series of storytelling performances by a guest teller for the cultural benefit of a school or town, to use oral storytelling to help children gain or enhance skills in written storytelling, to promote children's own storytelling through forming a story troupe, to jump-start an oral history project in a school or neighborhood, or any other way of using storytelling to meet curricular or community goals. Your goals for using storytelling could be to facilitate greater oral and/or written literacy, to provide storytelling as an artistic enrichment experience for children, to stimulate children's own creativity as storytellers, or to spark an interest in local history.

Website Components

1) What's the Idea?

--A narrative description of your idea, your intended audience, and your anticipated activities and outcomes. You should answer the question: Why is this an good idea for a library?

2) Why Storytelling?

--Goals of your project, however specific or lofty, spelled out as clearly as possible. Many funding agencies expect to see clear goals or outcomes of proposed projects as well as means of evaluating those projects. Think both in concrete and abstract terms to generate these goals, and imagine ways you might document the outcomes of your efforts.

--Why is storytelling (or the idea that you're proposing using storytelling) a good fit for these goals?

3) Who's Involved? Identifying and Persuading Stakeholders

--Who would be involved with or affected by your idea? Think broadly, considering all potential allies or tangential beneficiaries of this project, including other community groups, institutions, parents/grandparents, etc.

--Write a one-page executive summary document that you could hand to board members, principals, etc. that clearly and succinctly explains your proposal, with enough information so that they could make a reasonable decision about whether to support this project. Make every word count.

--Provide a brief annotated bibliography of 3-5 best information sources about similar successful

projects. If an administrator wanted to learn more about this type of project, what would you recommend? This could include research that supports your project, “how we done it good” news pieces, and/or FAQs about similar projects.

4) What’s the Bottom Line? Identifying Logistical Elements

--Budget: including storyteller’s time, staff time, publicity, materials etc.

--Timeline: including times and places for storytelling events, proposed schedule for completion, and any other relevant activities such as evaluations, etc.

OR

Individual Research Paper

A research paper on a topic in storytelling of your choosing, 10-15 pages in length. Sources should include scholarly sources that address storytelling as well as 3 or more stories that you analyze, compare, or contrast in the paper. Format will depend on your topic and content. You must submit your topic for approval 4 weeks in advance of the final project due date.