
Follow-Up Activities

why Mother Earth is “taking all green into her heart”? How does calling Earth “Mother” help us remember to be respectful?

? Many Americans are urging respect for our environment. Who are they? Think of conservation groups in your community. Do you know people who are involved in these issues? What are they doing to help?

? What actions can *you* take in your daily life to “take only what you need, with respect”—to help heal Mother Earth? Some examples might be bringing your lunch to school in a lunch box, saving and re-using your paper bags, using only as much water as you need to keep clean, turning off electrical appliances when you’re not using them, recycling clothes and toys, closing doors and windows when the heater or air conditioner is on, and not littering. What other things can you think of?

+ Imagine Little Deer going through your daily life with you. What would he see that shows respect or disrespect for Mother Earth? Make a list.

+ Write a letter to Mother Earth. Tell her how you feel about what is making her sick and what you will do to help make her well again.

+ The Cherokee had a written language by 1821. It was invented by a man named Sequoya. Find out more about him and write a report on what you learn.

+ Organize a class project to clean up or beautify a stream, park, or roadside—or even your own school grounds!

+ Read *The Education of Little Tree* by Forrest Carter (New York: Dell Publishing, 1976). It’s the true story of a 20th-century Cherokee boy growing up in eastern Tennessee.

An excellent resource for more questions and activities is Keepers of the Earth. See the reference in “Notes on the Story.”



8 RISING FAWN AND THE FIRE MYSTERY

told by Marilou Awiakta

Rising Fawn, a young Choctaw girl, and her family and neighbors are preparing to leave their homes and join other Indian tribes uprooted and forced to follow the Trail of Tears. Her grandmother (Ishtous, “the Deliverer”) gives her a small pouch containing a few kernels of corn to plant at the end of the journey. She tells Rising Fawn the corn represents life itself, for at the heart of each kernel lies a spark: the flame of its life and spirit, which like the sun and the Sacred Fire cannot be extinguished.

Before the tribe can begin its journey, they are set upon by soldiers, who massacre the Indians. But one dismayed soldier snatches up Rising Fawn, vowing to “at least save one of them.” He conceals her in a crate and takes her by steamboat to his family in Memphis.

Thinking it a kindness, the white couple take Rising Fawn’s moccasins, braid her long hair, dress her in clothes like theirs, and take her to white schools and churches. Through it all, she refuses to speak to them, even though they ask her name many times, or to let them take her little pouch.

Finally, after months of thought and meditation on the corn seed, Rising Fawn realizes that the spirit is still alive—within the corn and within herself. Not even the suffering she has endured can kill the fire in the seed and in her heart. So she goes to her new family and speaks for the first time, saying: “My name is Rising Fawn.”

Notes on the Story

Through the oral tradition, families preserve much American history and culture that otherwise would be lost. Two Choctaw families contributed to Marilou’s book *Rising Fawn and the Fire Mystery* (Memphis: St. Luke’s/Wimmer Co., 1983). Irving Knight of Memphis first told her the story, beginning with the words “I want to tell you about my great-grandmother...” The great-grandmother was Rising Fawn, who at the time of the story (1833) lived with her family near Friars Point, a river town in Mississippi about 50 miles south of Memphis.

Also living in the area at the time was the family of Tushpa. Tushpa’s son, James Culberson, wrote down in English the story of the family’s removal to Oklahoma as it had been told to him by the elders. His account includes descriptions of how news of the coming removal affected the family members—what they felt; what they said and did. Ruth Culberson Robertson of Oklahoma, James’ daughter, kindly allowed Marilou to use these details as historical background. And a great-granddaughter of Tushpa, Beverly Bringle, illustrated the resulting book.

In the story, a small pouch of seed corn helps Rising Fawn survive the tragedy that strikes her because her grandmother has made sure she understands that corn is more than food for the body. Through the wisdom of its ways, it also nourishes the spirit.

Before Viewing

American Indians have always revered corn for these reasons. *Our Mother Corn* by William Brescia (United Nations of All Tribes Foundation, Daybreak Press, Seattle, 1981) is an excellent resource for grades 5 and up on the origin of corn and its place in the lives and cultures of the Hopi, Pawnee, and Seneca people. The Cherokee story of Selu, Grandmother Corn, is included in *Keepers of the Earth* by Michael Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.

To help her tell *Rising Fawn's* story in this program, Marilou has a deerskin pouch and *Rising Fawn's* miniature pouch, both made in the traditional hand-sewn way by leathercraftsman Dan Hanrahan. She also wears a special "storytelling shawl" whenever she is invited to share stories and poems. Traditionally, Indian women carry or wear special shawls during ceremonial dances.

◆ The theme of "Rising Fawn" is mutual respect among people of different cultures. Hold a class discussion about what is required to create understanding between different peoples. How can someone not raised in a culture come to see its values, ceremonies, and beliefs from the point of view of the people who live them?

◆ Fire is a very important symbol in this story. Southeastern Indians often said, "We are people of one fire." The Choctaw ceremony of Loak Mosholi is an example of what this saying means and of the mystery of the Sacred Fire. Describe it for your students:

Throughout the year, each Choctaw band keeps the Sacred Fire burning in the Council House. This Fire signifies the presence of the Creator, the life-giving light of the sun, and the spirit of the people. In the fall, the Fire is brought onto the ceremonial grounds. Each family extinguishes its home hearth fire and cleans its fireplace. Then the people gather on the ceremonial grounds to celebrate the meaning of the Sacred Fire with song, dance, and prayers. They dance in a circle to honor the Creator's Sacred Circle of Life. At the end of the ceremony, each family lights a brand from that Fire and carries it back to re-light the home fire, bringing heat and spiritual comfort to the family. In James Culberson's account, a 12-year-old girl in the family was given the honor of

carrying embers of the Sacred Fire to Oklahoma.

Many European settlers made the mistake of thinking the Choctaw "worshipped" the fire itself. Discuss the ceremony with your students and talk about why this perception was wrong.

◆ Give your students some background information on the Choctaw. Like the Cherokee, the Choctaw had highly developed social, political, and judicial systems. By 1815, the tribe had one of the first and finest public school systems in the South. The original Choctaw Nation, which had already existed for centuries at the time America gained its independence, encompassed two-thirds of the present state of Mississippi, plus parts of Alabama and Louisiana.

Then came the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek on September 27, 1830 and the subsequent forced removal of the Choctaw to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). But the people refused to "vanish." They preserved their culture from generation to generation through their stories and ceremonies, and today the tribe is flourishing. The Mississippi Band of the Choctaw, located on a reservation near Philadelphia, MS, numbers about 6,000. The Choctaw Nation in Oklahoma has a population of 58,000.

◆ You may want to introduce your students to other books

RISING FAWN *continued*

Before Viewing *continued*

about American Indians, but bear in mind that many books written by Europeans contain misconceptions about Indian culture. An excellent guide to evaluating contemporary children's books about Indians is *Books Without Bias: Through Indian Eyes*, edited by Beverly Slapin and Doris Seale. It contains essays by distinguished American Indian writers, reviews of contemporary books, and a checklist with clear examples of how to identify cultural bias. The checklist is also available separately. For information, write to Oyate, 2702 Matthews St., Berkeley, CA 94702.

For Discussion After Viewing

Give each child a corn seed to hold during the following discussion.

? Why did Rising Fawn decide to speak? What made her feel that she was among loving people—that she was safe in the “warm earth”? How did the woman's giving Rising Fawn her own clothes back for Christmas show respect for the child's Indian culture?

? When Rising Fawn first came to Memphis, the white woman made her change her dress, her hair, and her shoes, telling her: “We want you to be one of us.” The woman thought it was a kind thing to do. Why wasn't it? Have you ever changed schools, moved to a new neighborhood, or had some other experience when you felt “different” from everyone else? How did you feel and act?

? What different customs did Rising Fawn experience in Memphis? What attitudes did she encounter about dancing, wearing bright-colored clothing, and other behavior that were different from her own people's beliefs? How was the church service different from what she had expected? Was it celebrated in a circle? Was there a Sacred Fire?

? What does fire signify in the Choctaw ceremony of Loak Mosholi? What other people use fire or lighted candles in their

religious ceremonies? Have you ever participated in such a ceremony?

? On the model of the Web of Life, corn is a strand of the web. Study your corn seed. Rising Fawn's grandmother had told her stories about the meaning of corn and the wisdom it teaches. How did knowing those stories help Rising Fawn survive in a strange land? How did the stories help her know how to live there? What does it mean to “be like the seed ... live deep in your spirit until the time to come forth”? What is the difference between using your “body eyes and ears” and your “spirit eyes and ears”? Think of your own family and heritage. What beliefs and customs help you be strong when you feel hurt or alone?

? Why is it important to listen carefully to what elders have to say? (Think of the grandmother's name: the Deliverer—one who “saves” others from harm and death.) What have you learned by listening to your own parents and grandparents? Does your family have sayings and stories that are passed down by telling them?

(Note: Indian chiefs regularly consult with the Elders. In the Councils, when an Elder speaks, everyone listens.)

? When Rising Fawn and the African-American woman smile at each other in church, what are

Follow-Up Activities

they saying to each other? How was Rising Fawn feeling before the woman smiled at her? How did she feel afterward? What other ways can you think of to show respect and acceptance to people who are “different”? Think back to times when you have felt different and “not one of the crowd.” What things can you remember someone doing to help you feel better?

✦ Find out about the American Indians who live—or once lived—in your area and study their history and customs. Your local library or Chamber of Commerce will have a list of American Indian organizations in your area. Invite a speaker from one of these organizations to your class.

✦ Watch a corn seed grow! Plant a seed in a clear cup or jar (with

the seed against the glass) and set it in a window. Watch how it begins to “come forth” as the sun warms the earth.

To plant the seed so that it’s visible through the glass, make a funnel of stiff paper and put it in the empty jar. Fill the funnel with earth, insert the seed between the paper and the glass, and then gently remove the funnel by pulling it upward.

✦ All corn is “Indian corn”—corn was the Native American people’s gift to the world. By the time Columbus came to America, the Native peoples had developed hundreds of varieties. One of them was multicolored or “calico” corn—the variety we now usually call “Indian corn.” Select an ear of this corn with many different-colored seeds. Take the seeds off the cob and use them to make a “Harmony Circle” on a piece of paper. How does this circle relate to the United States motto “E Pluribus Unum”—“From the many, one”? Do we all have to be alike to cooperate and live in peace? Notice that the colors of the corn kernels represent the four races of people in America.

✦ Read the book *Rising Fawn and the Fire Mystery*. In it, you will find many details of life on the frontier in Memphis, which in 1833 was a gateway to the West with only about 500 permanent residents.

RISING FAWN *continued*

For Further Study

Marilou reports that *The People Shall Continue* by Simon J. Ortiz (Children's Book Press, 1977) is "the single best overview of Native history for children that I've ever seen." Ortiz is Acoma and a poet, and his book is meaningful for people of all ages.

Another excellent story told in the Indian way is *Night Flying Woman, An Ojibway Narrative* by Ignatia Broker (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1983). It is the story of a little girl who grows up through the time of transition from a traditional society to an urban one. By the time she has become a grandmother herself, it looks as if the children have all forgotten Ojibway ways. Then one day a small girl comes to her and respectfully says, "I should like to hear the stories of our people."

American Indian history provides a wealth of material for individual or class projects. Students may want to pick a particular tribe for a "historical" study of culture and customs.

Older students may be interested in researching one of the many political/legal issues regarding Native American rights that are causing controversy today. Allocation of water, mineral, and other resources on reservation lands; custody of Native American remains and artifacts now housed in museums; and issues involving access to and use of sacred Indian sites are some examples. The question to keep in

mind: To what extent do such issues reflect a continuing "culture clash" between Native Americans and European-Americans? And how do they relate to the Native American principle of living in harmony with the Sacred Circle of Life?

AFRICAN-AMERICAN STORYTELLING

by Gina Kinchlow

Background for Programs 9-10

Oral traditions have always been prevalent in African communities. Family histories and genealogies were stored in the memory banks of some of the oldest people in the community. On various occasions, these walking history books would provide entertainment and education by telling the histories of the families.

Storytelling is only one of a host of genres in oral tradition that have been significant aspects of African-American culture and tradition. A brief inspection of African-American history takes us back to the institution of slavery, the vehicle by which a great majority of African-Americans were brought to America. The strategies and unusual acts of inhumanity that surrounded slavery made it necessary for enslaved African-Americans to rely heavily, if not solely, upon oral traditions.

For example, reading and writing were forbidden to slaves. Through strict enforcement of this rule, the slaveowner could keep his human chattel in a world of illiteracy and ignorance, allowing the owner to maintain a position of superiority and control. As a result, slaves came to rely almost totally upon the spoken word. It was usually by "word of mouth" that news and other information was passed on throughout the slave quarters.

A dramatic example of the use of oral traditions by African-

Americans during slavery times was the singing of spirituals as a means of delivering messages to other slaves about escape plans, dangers lurking, or important news from the "big house."

Although storytelling as an oral tradition has provided much entertainment and enjoyment to many, it has also proven its usefulness as a teacher and sometimes as a life saver. The painful lessons that had to be learned about man's inhumanity to man were best taught when told in the form of a story. In addition, stories provided hope, patience, and perseverance in the midst of darkness.

There is more than one way to tell a story in the African-American tradition. One of the most recognized settings for telling a story is the one employed by Mama Yaa in *Telling Tales*: The storyteller invites listeners to gather around and hear the story. The storytelling act has a clearly defined beginning and end, as well as a stationary audience.

This style of storytelling is probably most popular because it is most conducive for telling and hearing the story. African-Americans have employed this storytelling style since first being brought to America. Clearly, the act and art of telling a story was one of the most portable traditions to be carried over to the New World and incorporated into the slave lifestyle.

Moving outside of this struc-

tured circle of storytelling, one begins to see the wider range of colorful stories that are told in some rather unusual settings and circumstances in the African-American communities.

For example, in rural areas, African-American communities delight in opportunities to come together and socialize with friends and neighbors. Sometimes an informal gathering in front of the general store becomes a storytelling session. Someone begins to tell a "big ol' lie"* that fascinates and entertains an ever-changing audience.

An urban example of storytelling can be found on a street corner or in a pool hall, where African-American men will gather to talk awhile, "signify," and occasionally hear the rhymes and rap poems of a familiar "local." This stylized verbal art weaves a story while at the same time using a contemporary beat and language. Again, there is no designated time, place, or audience and no clearly defined beginning or end. But a story, indeed, is being told.

Perhaps it is the use of language or, more specifically, the unique oral traditions, that most clearly reflect African-American culture and heritage. From the

* This is the term Zora Neale Hurston coined in reference to the folktales that would emerge out of the African-American community.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN STORYTELLING *continued*

singing of a spiritual to the performance-style sermons of the African-American preacher to the more urban oral forms such as rapping and signifying, African-American history and culture is deeply rooted in the spoken word.

Storytelling, like these other oral forms, remains with us. Its usefulness to the community as an entertainer and teacher is realized as we continue to design variations upon a tried and true theme.

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9

THE PARABLE OF THE EAGLE

told by Mama Yaa (Gloria Bivens)

One day a farmer went out into the woods in search of berries and found a wounded bird in the bushes. The farmer took the bird home and put it in the chicken coop with his chickens. The next morning, the farmer fed the poor wounded eagle, who was barely able to move his wing, along with his chickens. Later, the kind farmer invited a stranger passing through to stay the night.

The next morning, the stranger asked the farmer why he kept an eagle with his chickens. The farmer said the bird was no eagle, it was a chicken. The two men bet on it. The stranger picked up the eagle, flung it into the sky, and watched as it fell to the ground. The stranger had lost his bet, but he didn't give up. The next day, the eagle still couldn't fly—but the stranger still wouldn't give up.

Early the following morning, the stranger told the farmer not to bother with the chicken feed. "We're not feeding chickens today," he said, "we're making eagles fly." They went deep into the woods and high up into the hills to a place where, when you looked down, it seemed like there was no bottom. Again the stranger flung the eagle up into the air. The eagle weakly stretched out his wings. When he looked down and saw "no ground was to be found," the eagle "pointed his head straight toward the sun and he was seen flying high all over the sky."

If you want to succeed, all you have to do is try. ■

Notes on the Story

In her introduction to the story, Mama Yaa refers to Aesop, the slave who is commonly credited with writing thousands of fables and was one of the inventors of the form. Very little is known about Aesop, including which fables are his and which were written by others. What little we do know, says Joseph James (in his collection of Aesop's fables, New York: Macmillan Co., 1964), comes from the ancient historian Herodotus. According to Herodotus, Aesop was a Greek slave who lived in the 6th century B.C. and "was killed in accordance with a Delphian oracle." He lived at a time when free speech was dangerous; hence the use of the fable for political purposes.

J.A. Rogers, in his book *The World's Great Men of Color* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), devotes a chapter to Aesop and gives a 14th century monk, Planudes the Great, as his primary source. Aesop, he says, was "a native of Phrygia, in Asia Minor, and a Negro slave, 'flat-nosed ... [with] a black skin from which he contracted his name (Esop being the same with Ethiop).'"

The Kentucky state motto Mama Yaa mentions—"United We Stand/Divided We Fall"—comes from the Aesop fable "The Bundle of Sticks."

Aesop is not the only writer associated with the fable. For a collection of fables by a variety of fabulists, see *The Book of Fables* (New York and London: Frederick

THE PARABLE OF THE EAGLE *continued*

Notes on the Story *continued*

Warne and Co., 1962), which includes works by Jean de la Fontaine (French), John Gay (English), and Hitopadesa (Indian), among others.

African stories, like fables, are full of animal characters and sprinkled liberally with proverbs. Parables are common. Living with and learning from nature is a common theme. “The Parable of the Eagle” shows its African heritage both in its content and in the telling.

Before Viewing

◆ Most of the stories in *Telling Tales* have a point and leave the listener with a lesson to be learned. Certain kinds of stories, generally very short tales, have the specific purpose of teaching a moral. These stories are known as fables and parables. Animals or inanimate objects are often characters in fables.

Ask your students whether they have read any of Aesop’s fables. Can they briefly recite one or two? (For example, “The Fox and the Grapes,” “The Boy Who Cried Wolf,” and “The Tortoise and the Hare” are well known fables generally attributed to Aesop.) What moral is taught in each tale?

By thinking of specific fables with which children are familiar, you can help them define what a fable is. When they watch “The Parable of the Eagle,” ask them to look for ways Mama Yaa’s story resembles a fable and ways it differs.

◆ Students will undoubtedly notice first Mama Yaa herself—her African dress and jewelry; the cow-tail switch she holds and uses in the story; and the *balafon*, the African instrument she plays at the story’s conclusion. Her appearance in this program offers an opportunity to introduce African culture into the classroom.

Although Mama Yaa is from Louisville, KY, she has traveled through the West African countries of Togo, Ivory Coast, and

Gambia and to the Virgin Islands. In her travels, she studied the African oral tradition and African culture. Have students trace Mama Yaa’s journeys on the map.

Mama Yaa recalls sharing stories with West African storytellers on her trip. She says the village elders—the *jali* or the *griots*—tell the oral narratives for the education of the listeners. Like Aesop, these elders have the responsibility of teaching their people values and of leading them to understanding. The cow-tail switch is carried by the storyteller; the one Mama Yaa uses was given to her by a storyteller in Togo as a symbol of being connected to a common ancestry in the oral tradition. You can introduce the switch and its significance by reading “The Cow-Tail Switch” from Harold Courlander’s *The Cow-Tail Switch and Other West African Tales* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1947).

Mama Yaa’s presentation is similar to what she saw in West Africa. Like the village elders, she uses musical instruments—and her voice as an instrument itself. As children watch the program, have them imagine they are sitting in a West African village on a nice warm evening when the moon is full.

For Discussion After Viewing

? What does eagle learn in the story? Is there a lesson appropriate for humans, too?

? Read two or three other fables in class, ones where animals figure prominently. Do the animals have human characteristics? Human personality traits? Why do you suppose fabulists used animals as characters in these tales?

? Look at the text of a fable in a collection of Aesop's. Notice how short a fable is. Mama Yaa's version is a good example of how a storyteller embellishes and changes a story. What elements does Mama Yaa add to the story?

This question can help you call attention to the song, dialogue, and movement she puts into her rendition, as well as to the props and musical instruments she uses.

? Look at a map of the African continent and compare its size to North America and other continents. What countries make up Africa? (Help children understand the breadth of the continent and the variety of its people as well as the similarities we think of when we think of African culture, music, and stories.) Is it possible to generalize about African people, culture, and stories?

? How can stories from other countries help us understand people from those countries? Are people from different countries more different from us than alike

or vice versa? Explain your answers. Have you met children from other countries? Have you learned anything about similarities and differences from the various stories in the *Telling Tales* series?



Follow-Up Activities

+ With your students' help, make a list on the blackboard of common proverbs or wise sayings (e.g., a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, time waits for no man, an apple a day keeps the doctor away, a penny saved is a penny earned). Ask students to write a very short story or fable from which one of these proverbs could be derived. The tale should end with that proverb. For a variation on this exercise, have children make up their own proverbs.

+ Harold Courlander's *A Treasury of African Folklore* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1975) contains a wealth of stories from all parts of Africa. Among its contents is a list of Ashanti sayings and proverbs, many of which lend themselves to the creation of fables. Select several African proverbs which you think will kindle the imagination of your students and ask them to write short stories illustrating the proverbs. Suggest they use animals as the principal characters.

THE PARABLE OF THE EAGLE *continued*

For Further Study

Mama Yaa integrates music and song into her storytelling. A digression into African music can build on children's curiosity about the instrument she plays. What Western instrument does the *balafon* resemble? What other musical instruments do children associate with Africa?

With the help of the school music teacher, someone in the community, or a good book and records from the library, introduce students to a variety of African instruments and songs. If possible, have students draw comparisons between traditional African instruments and familiar American instruments. For example, ask students to research the origin of the banjo.

10

ANANSI'S RESCUE FROM THE RIVER

told by Mama Yaa (Gloria Bivens)

Anansi decided to go on a long journey deep into the forest. He told no one where he was going or how long he would be gone. When he didn't return, the worried villagers called his six sons. Each of his sons had a special power, enabling them to find and rescue their father, who had been eaten by a great fish.

When they returned to the village, the villagers celebrated with lots of feasting, singing, dancing, and drumming. Anansi got so full that he went for a walk in the forest. There on the ground he found a round white light, which he wanted to give to his sons in gratitude for saving his life. But when they saw the beautiful, bright light, Anansi's six sons fell to arguing and bickering among themselves over who deserved it.

Anansi took the light back into the forest to think. He sat there all night but couldn't decide who was most deserving. Finally he called upon the spirit of the Ashanti, who took the light back into the sky. When he returned, Anansi found the whole village arguing. Anansi said it was his decision to make, and that since all of his sons wanted the light and no one was willing to share, they would have to look for it in the sky. And this is why Anansi is said to be responsible for the moon at night.

*I stepped on a pin,
The pin bent,
And that's the way the story went. ■*

Notes on the Story

The Anansi tales are told by the Ashanti of Ghana, West Africa. Anansi is said to be the owner of all the stories in the world.

These stories, too, have morals. In many of them, Anansi, the spider, is a trickster. But in this story we see another side of Anansi: his wisdom. Tales like "Anansi's Rescue from the River" explain why something is the way it is. Mama Yaa attributes this story to one of the great leaders of the Ashanti, Osei Tutu.

Mama Yaa sometimes calls the spider Kwaku Anansi. "Kwaku" means Uncle, which is the name of a Wednesday-born male child. An uncle is very important in Ashanti culture: He is an elder given the great responsibility of shaping the minds of his nieces and nephews.

The rhyme Mama Yaa concludes with was collected by Zora Neale Hurston and can be found in *Mules and Men*.

Some folklorists have associated the "Aunt Nancy" tales in the U.S. with the African-American presence on Southern plantations as a result of the transplantation of Africans to America for slavery. It's easy to see how "Anansi" of Ashantiland can become "Aunt Nancy" of the South.

Three sources of additional Anansi stories are *Anansi the Spider* by Gerald McDermott (Holt, 1972); *Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock* by Eric Kimmel (Holiday House, 1988); and *Anansi, the Spider Man* by Philip Sherlock (Crowell, 1954).

ANANSI'S RESCUE FROM THE RIVER *continued*

Before Viewing

Find Ghana on the map. This is the land of the Ashanti, the source of the Anansi stories. The Anansi story in *Telling Tales* is of the variety that tries to answer some age-old question of why or how something came to be. Perhaps children can think of other stories that explain how something came to be (how the world came to be; why the sun, moon, and stars live in the sky; why the moon follows the sun).

For Discussion After Viewing

? Discuss Anansi's character. If Anansi were an animal, what animal do you think he would be? Are you surprised to find out Anansi is a spider?

? What was the special talent of each of Anansi's six sons? How did their talents enable them to save their father?

? Anansi is faced with a very difficult decision. What must he decide? Why is this decision so difficult? Do you think Anansi's decision is the best decision that could be reached? What were his alternatives?

? What is the moral of this story?

? Discuss sibling relationships. Do you have any ideas about how to promote harmony within the family?

? Can you think of other wise men or women who were faced with very difficult decisions? (Solomon quickly comes to mind.) Perhaps you can think of similar decisions you've faced—in arguments between friends, for instance.

Follow-Up Activities

+ Every culture seems to have its share of stories explaining why something is the way it is and how it came to be that way. Think of Greek myths, for example. Ask students to write their own stories explaining something. Here are some topics to get you and them started:

- why spring follows winter
- why the sun rises in the east and sets in the west
- why you can hear the ocean's roar when you put a seashell up to your ear
- how the robin came to have a red breast
- how fire was discovered
- how the storyteller came to have a cow-tail switch

+ In this story, the trickster side of Anansi is not evident. In many ways, though, Anansi is very like Jack of the Jack tales. As we saw in the Jack tales, there are several sides to Jack. Ask students to find other Anansi tales in the library. Using several tales, have students describe Anansi. Can they find any tales where Anansi is a trickster?

What other tricksters have they come across in *Telling Tales* or in other folktales? How do they account for the popularity of trickster heroes in stories from Appalachia and Africa and among African-American slaves?

+ Have students create a spider web out of multicolored pieces of yarn and a tree branch with an

interesting shape. Or make a “God’s eye” using two pieces of wood crossed at the center and yarn. Weave the yarn in a circle around the wood to make a web/God’s eye.

✦ Ask students to find out more about spiders. What kinds of spiders live in their region of the country? What are some traits of spiders? Often people think of spiders in negative terms; what are some good things spiders do? Can students come up with any reasons why a spider might be chosen to be a hero?

✦ Because of the great number of characters and the sequence of events, this story is a good one to dramatize, perhaps in mime, as the teacher reads or retells the story. Everyone can play a part: Anansi, his six sons, the great fish, villagers, the spirit of the Ashanti, etc.

While this activity can be done with no props or costumes, it might also be fun to create simple props and costumes. Each son, for example, might select one object to symbolize his special talent. Villagers can wrap themselves in colorful scraps of material. The point is to keep it simple, allowing a few pieces to suggest characters.

✦ You’re now more than halfway through the series. Perhaps it’s time to take time out for a little celebration. In “Anansi’s Rescue from the River,” Mama Yaa

describes an Ashanti celebration, a festive occasion of feasting, singing, dancing, drumming, and storytelling. With a little bit of research into African culture, your class can sponsor its own celebration.



MUSIC: THE RHYTHM OF LIFE

by Tom Bledsoe, Joy D'Elia, and Rich Kirby

Background for Programs 11-12

Music does not come from outer space, although it sometimes seems that way to the listener. It comes, of course, from people. The singer or player brings to the song or melody an elaborate personal, social, and cultural identity. To fully appreciate a song, we need to see it in the context not only of our own lives but also of the lives of the people who created it.

The sheer amount of music we are exposed to in modern society makes it hard to sort out styles and influences, much less learn the stories behind songs. But it is important that we do so. Music has become so prevalent and influential that it affects the way we see ourselves and others. The classroom can be where a fuller understanding of music begins.

Today's students are faced with a staggering array of musical styles about which they know very little. A cruise down the radio dial may present classical, traditional, bluegrass, gospel, blues, swing, jazz, soul, and rock music of all densities and descriptions. A 10-year-old friend of ours confided how confusing it is to be identified through music:

"In my school," she said, "we have a club; and if you don't listen to heavy metal, you can't belong to it. But I'm not sure: There's 'heavy metal' and 'metal'; is there also 'light metal'?"

As a teacher, you have a unique opportunity to encourage your students to look past the labels to discover why songs and different

styles of music exist and evolve—and to help students sing their own songs. Following are some suggestions for activities you can use to help students discover the songs within and around them.

FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

✦ Play a version of "Name That Tune," but change it to "Name That Theme." Choose a variety of songs related to some topic—current events, holidays, famous people, etc. The songs could even be related to your social studies or math classes. After playing these songs for your students, ask them to think of more examples. You can also use this activity to introduce the concept of different types of songs: work songs, sea shanties, gospel songs, etc.

✦ Find a song with a strong, steady beat and add new "verses" about your class members. Compose a two- to four-line introduction about yourself, then ask each student to add a few lines. Encourage creativity. The descriptions do not have to focus just on name and physical appearance; they can include likes, dislikes, favorite foods, and other personal details.

✦ As an alternative to the above, create a song about the class as a whole. Encourage students to add lines describing one another.

✦ Have students teach the class songs they have heard at home from parents and grandparents. If some of these songs are in different languages, have the words translated. Discuss the countries they came from and look up the places on a map or globe. Talk about how when people move, songs are one of the things they take with them.

FOR OLDER STUDENTS

✦ Have the students collect lyrics to songs they hear every day. The songs can be contemporary songs heard over the radio, songs sung by parents and relatives, or school songs. Each child can compile his or her own songbook containing the lyrics and a short history of where each song came from. Encourage diversity of musical sources.

✦ Various types of music have been controversial throughout the ages. Talk about the music controversies of today—racism and obscenity in music, censorship, record labeling. Why do you think various people and styles are found offensive? Do you think it is possible for government to censor the music of today? Is there already a form of censorship imposed by record companies, radio programmers, etc.? How do you feel about these issues? Look into your own collection of music. Could any of it be found offen-

sive? As teacher, you may have found yourself acting as the “censor” during the lyric-collecting project. Discuss the basis for your own guidelines, or work as a class to make up guidelines.

✦ Talk about the current styles of popular music—rap, country, punk, heavy metal, soul, rock, etc. What is the predominant audience for each type? Why do you think particular people are drawn to a certain kind of music? This question has no right or wrong answers; it is meant to help students examine why they like the music they do. Discuss the effects home life, radio, peers, teachers, MTV, and other influences have on their choices.

✦ If you have access to video equipment, making a music video can be a good final project. It sounds easier than it is, so try not to plan anything too elaborate. The various jobs—scriptwriter, director, cast, propmaster, etc.—can be distributed among the class members. Give yourself as much time as you can for this project; you’ll need it!

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A good source of recordings and videos of traditional musical styles is Appalshop Inc., 306 Madison St., Whitesburg, KY 41858, (606) 633-0108. Call or write for a catalog.

11

WICKED JOHN

told by Rich Kirby, Tom Bledsoe, and Joy D'Elia

Wicked John, a blacksmith widely regarded as the meanest man on Earth, surprises everyone by befriending a beggar. The beggar turns out to be Saint Peter, who thanks John for his kindness and offers to grant him three wishes.

John seems to squander the wishes, using them to get back at the children who aggravate him while he's working. But later those wishes come in handy as John takes on and whips the devil and his two sons.

When Wicked John dies, he is turned away from heaven for being so mean. Then he tries hell, but the Devil wants nothing to do with him either! He hands John some coals and tells him to go start a hell of his own. ■

Notes on the Story

Folktales are like rivers, always flowing and changing. You can dip up a bucketful anytime you want, but you can never get the whole river. Storytellers, too, can give you only what they have dipped up from the stream; it will be different for every teller.

"Wicked John and the Devil" is a traditional tale from Appalachia. The version told here is based on several other versions, including the one Richard Chase included in *Grandfather Tales*. Chase's version was itself a collation of versions of the story he had heard in Virginia and North Carolina.

Grandfather Tales and another Chase collection, *Jack Tales*, have introduced two generations of people to Appalachian storytelling. Chase collected stories in Virginia and North Carolina. After collecting several versions of a story, he would collate them and put pieces together to create a finished version that would be different from what any one person had told him. Some of the Virginia originals he worked with have been published in *Outwitting the Devil: Jack Tales from Wise County, Virginia* (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1987), edited by Charles Perdue. It is interesting to compare these verbatim renditions with the more literary tone of Chase's books.

"Wicked John" also has been changed a bit by various tellers. Compare the version told in the program with Chase's, with that

of Barbara Freeman of the Folk Tellers (*Tales To Grow On*, Weston Woods Records, 1981), and with the traditional version told by Orville Hicks (nephew of the legendary Ray Hicks) on June Appal Records.

This story fits into the long tradition of tales of people dealing with supernatural forces and the various fears and threats we sum up in the figure of the Devil. "Wicked John" celebrates one small victory (of sorts) in this contest.

Before Viewing

- ◆ Discuss what a blacksmith does and the importance of the smith to a traditional farming community.
- ◆ "Wicked John" comes from a farming society before the advent of the industrial age. Even though that time was not so very long ago for much of the country, it may be far removed from the experience of the children in your class. Talk about what life was like in such a community. How was work divided between the sexes? What work was expected of children?
- ◆ Ask your students what other stories they have heard that have a character described as "wicked." (Cinderella's wicked stepmother and the Wicked Witch of the West in *The Wizard of Oz* are examples.) Talk about what happens to these characters. Since this story is called "Wicked John," what sort of person do you expect John to be? What do you expect to happen to him? When you watch the program, the story may surprise you!

For Discussion After Viewing

- ? Now that you've seen the story, how would you compare John to the other "wicked" characters you've heard or read about? Does what happens to John early in the story seem fair or appropriate? What about the end of the story?
- ? Compare John with Jack. They both get involved with powers stronger than themselves, and they both escape by calling on still stronger powers. But Jack is the perennial innocent, while John is wicked. While listening to the story, do we sympathize with John? Is he the "hero" of the story the way Jack is the hero of his? Why or why not?
- ? A common character in the Jack tales is a king who must keep his word, no matter what. In this story, Saint Peter probably regrets the promise he makes to John, but he keeps it anyway. Why? How important is it to keep your word? What happens to a person who doesn't?
- ? In this story, John seems to have stumbled into a small corner of the ongoing battle between good and evil. Quite by accident, he joins the winning side. If the beggar had turned out to be the devil instead of a saint, would John have accepted three wishes? Would you have expected something different to happen to him as a result?
- ? What does this story say about

WICKED JOHN *continued*

For Discussion After Viewing *continued*

the world in general? Is it a battleground? Do you have to choose sides? Do you have to be a good person to do good deeds? If a bad person does a good deed, does it “count”? Does it make that person a good person? Why do good deeds at all? Finally, why didn’t John get into heaven?

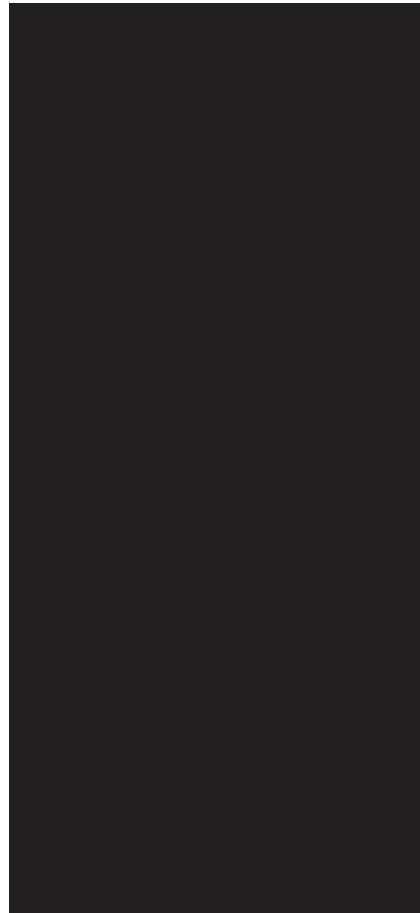
Don’t worry if you can’t answer all these questions. After all, people have been arguing about them for thousands of years!

Follow-Up Activities

✦ Visit a blacksmith. A local crafts organization may be able to help you contact someone who does demonstrations at fairs or would even be willing to come to your school. If you can arrange such a visit, let the students try out the tools. Talk about the differences between this “old-fashioned” way of making things from raw metal and modern factory methods. How are “hand-made” items different from “store-bought” ones?

✦ Listen to some further adventures of the Devil. “The Devil and the Farmer’s Wife,” a ballad widely known both here and in England, is one example. In it, the Devil takes a farmer’s wife as payment of a debt, but she’s so hard to deal with he ends up bringing her back. Jean Ritchie has recorded it several times, John McCutcheon performed it on June Appal Records’ *How Can I Keep from Singing?*, and Hobart Smith recorded a highly traditional version for Folk-Legacy Records.

Other stories involve a mortal beating the Devil in a contest. “The Devil and Daniel Webster” and Charlie Daniels’ song “The Devil Went Down to Georgia” are two examples.



12

JACK AND THE MAGIC MILL

told by Tom Bledsoe, Rich Kirby, and Joy D'Elia

Jack obtains a magic mill that, when the right phrase is uttered, churns out an endless supply of whatever is requested. He sells it for \$5,000 to his brother Tom, who plans to make a fortune in pizza. But Tom realizes too late that he forgot to ask Jack what phrase to use to stop the mill. He is soon overwhelmed with pizzas and ends up paying Jack another \$5,000 to take the mill back.

Then another brother, Will, returns home from a journey with a bag of gold and hears about the mill. He devises a plan to produce a lot of salt and sail it to France, where there is a shortage. Will buys the magic mill from Jack, puts it on a boat bound for France, and starts producing salt.

Unfortunately, Will, too, has neglected to learn the phrase needed to stop the mill. Pretty soon the boat is filled with salt and about to sink. So Will tosses the mill overboard into the ocean, where it continues to crank out salt to this day. If you don't believe it, just taste the water!

The storytellers begin and end this program with songs: "Henry, My Son" and "This Land Is Your Land." Special discussion questions and activities are listed for each song. ■

Notes on the Story

This story is adapted from Leonard Roberts' "The Magic Sausage Mill," which is included in *Bought Me a Dog*, a University of Kentucky Press publication. It is similar to *Strega Nona* by Tomie DePaola (Prentice-Hall, 1975; a Caldecott Honor Book). *Strega nona* is Italian for "witch grandmother"; in the story, she has a magic pasta pot.

Roberts was a collector who did extensive work in the eastern Tennessee/eastern Kentucky region and published a number of books of folktales and songs. His work is important not only for the material he gathered but also for the accuracy with which it is presented: He avoided much of the editing, combining, and "cleaning up" done by previous collectors. His *Sang Branch Settlers* is a valuable resource book on stories, songs, and the people who gave them life and context.

JACK AND THE MAGIC MILL *continued*

Before Viewing

◆ Discuss myths—the stories that explain natural occurrences and phenomena. For ideas, try Edward Dolch’s *“Why” Stories* (Garrard, 1958), *Afro-American Folktales* (Pantheon, 1958), and collections of Native American and Greek myths.

◆ Discuss the importance of listening to instruction. How do we learn to do unfamiliar tasks (operating machinery, assembling toys, etc.)?

For Discussion After Viewing

? In the story, Jack makes quite a lot of money on the magic mill, even though it causes much trouble for his brothers. Does Jack deserve his windfall profits? What aspects of Jack’s situation (family relationships, finances, etc.) influence your opinion? What does Jack do to earn the money he makes?

? Why did Tom and Will get into trouble? How could they have avoided it? Have you had similar experiences? If you have, what were the consequences?

? The practice of dumping garbage and trash into the ocean is a major environmental issue in our own time. How does this practice relate to Will’s act of desperation in throwing the mill overboard? Could it have similar consequences? What alternatives can you think of?

? This story offers an explanation for a natural phenomenon: why the ocean is salty. Can you think of other stories you’ve heard that explain why something is the way it is? Try making up one or two of your own.

Follow-Up Activities

✦ Divide the class into groups of five or six students and let each group select or write a short story (under five minutes). Then break the story events down into sections and have each person make a painting, drawing, or other type of picture to illustrate his or her section. Try to make the story complete without using unnecessary or repetitive pictures. (Of course, a picture can be used more than once to represent a recurring event.)

When the illustrations are ready, the group should practice telling the story together, using the pictures. The person who did each illustration is also responsible for narrating that section of the story. The narrative can be made more interesting by including dialogue between characters/narrators, but stress to the students that the *story* is always the most important consideration. The section of this teacher’s guide entitled “Group Storytelling” gives more information on how to conduct this process.

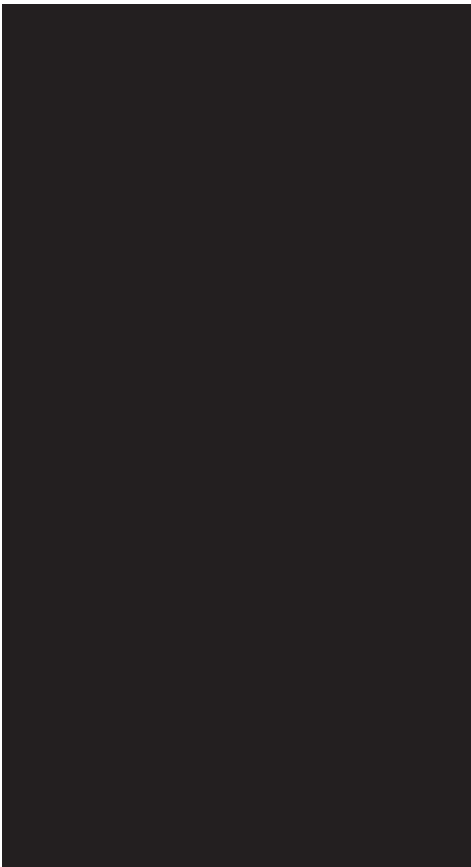
When the artwork and narrative are working smoothly together, let the students share the stories with the other groups and other classes.

✦ You can expand the above activity and introduce students to moviemaking by having them videotape their presentations. Mount each picture in succession on an easel or bulletin board and focus the camera on the picture as

“HENRY, MY SON”

the narrator tells the story. Use the pause button to stop the camera and allow for changes of illustration and narrator.

To give variety and life to the images, practice panning the artwork, varying between long and close-up shots, zooming in or out, and using any other camera “tricks” or techniques the students can think of.



Notes on the Song

The version played here is an English music hall version of “Lord Randall,” an English ballad widely known in this country. Much has been written about the song because, in most versions, Lord Randall is poisoned by his sweetheart, who is jealous of Randall’s mother. This version, learned from Pete Seeger, spares the listener the Oedipal implications.

“Henry, My Son” is a classic story-song with a simple, repetitive tune and a singalong chorus added to a very direct story line. The mixture of humor, tragedy, and irony makes it a favorite in any classroom. This version juxtaposes contemporary expressions (“tinkertoy”) with Elizabethan dialect common in the Appalachian region (“yaller”).

Before Viewing

- ◆ Discuss different ways of telling stories—narrative, ballads, mime, etc.—and find examples of each.
- ◆ Talk about the storytelling traditions reflected through ballads. Why might people write songs to chronicle events?

“HENRY, MY SON” *continued*

For Discussion After Viewing

? Discuss the issue of food safety and poison awareness. How could Henry have been saved today? How could his accident have been prevented in the first place?

? What is a dialect? Where do dialects come from? Is a dialect “incorrect” if it disagrees with the “standard” version of a language? Does the use of non-standard grammar reflect upon the intelligence of the speaker? Should everyone speak the same? Why or why not?

? Who defines “standard grammar”? What are some reasons to learn it? Is something valuable lost in the process?

? What are some expressions common in your area that would be considered unusual somewhere else? What expressions that *you* would consider unusual have you heard people from other areas use?

Follow-Up Activities

+ Select a song with parts that can be sung by different people and divide into groups to sing it. Some examples are “Billy Boy,” “Green Grow the Rushes—O,” “Garbage,” and “Froggie Went a-Courtin’.”

+ Find songs that work with subjects or activities throughout the school day—counting songs for math, food/eating songs to announce lunchtime, historical songs, topical songs for social studies classes.

+ Make up “mini-operas” by singing lines you would normally speak. Use poems, stories, and made-up material. Warning: This activity can get pretty silly!

+ Write a ballad about something that has happened in your school lately. One easy—and common—way is to use an existing melody and change the words.

+ Ask the students for examples of ballads handed down in their families. Investigate the actual events behind the songs. How accurately do the songs reflect the events?

+ Assign a report—but tell the class to write it as a song.

+ Discuss how music helps identify and unify peer groups, schools, communities, states, and countries. What anthems or “official” songs can your students think of? Have students research

how these songs came to be adopted as anthems and the meanings they hold for both individuals and groups.

“THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND”

Notes on the Song

This song was written by Woody Guthrie. The melody was actually taken from a Carter Family song, “Little Darlin’, Pal of Mine”; Guthrie added new lyrics. This practice has been common throughout the history of music. Settlers from the British Isles often would use an old tune and change the words to fit their new, American situation. Some examples are “Sweet Betsy from Pike”; “The Streets of Laredo”; “Gosport Tragedy,” which was to become “Pretty Polly”—and even “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

After being told that another musician had used one of *his* melodies for a new song, Guthrie replied, “That ain’t nothin’! He just stole from me. I steal from everybody.”

Guthrie had his roots in country music. Through his travels and experiences during and after the Depression, his style gradually developed into that of a politically active folksinger. “This Land Is Your Land” was written as an alternative to the Irving Berlin song “God Bless America.”

Before Viewing

- ◆ Watch the movie *Bound for Glory*, a biography of Woody Guthrie. What did Guthrie see and experience during his travels and during the Depression to move him to political activism?
- ◆ Discuss current folksingers and the messages—political, social, environmental—they are trying to spread.

For Discussion After Viewing

- ? Various people have suggested that “This Land Is Your Land,” “God Bless America,” or “America the Beautiful” should replace our current national anthem. Why do you think the replacement has never happened?
- ? Discuss the lyrics of “The Star-Spangled Banner” and the three other songs mentioned above. How does each song portray America? Which do you feel is the most accurate portrait?



“THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND” *continued*

Follow-Up Activities

✦ Listen to the music of different folksingers—Tracy Chapman, Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger, etc. Discuss the similarities in their music. How would the class define “folk music”?

✦ Choose a common theme and have each student find a song relating to it and either sing the song or recite its lyrics to the class. The environment might be one topic, although the theme does not have to be political. Encourage students to choose songs that have personal meaning for them, rather than just picking current “Top 40” songs.

✦ Show and discuss *Sunny Side of Life* (available from Appalshop Videos in Whitesburg, KY), a video portraying the rich musical heritage of Appalachia.

✦ Discuss the “regional” musical styles popular in your area and invite local musicians to play for the class. They need not be professionals. In fact, your students may have parents, grandparents, or other older relatives who play or sing in some traditional style. Invite them; you may be surprised at how much both they and you will enjoy this activity.



13

ASH PET

told by Anndrena Belcher

Like Cinderella in the familiar fairy tale, Ash Pet is a poor orphan forced to do all the work for an old woman and her two “prissy-tailed” girls. In this version, the ball is a church meeting and the fairy godmother is an old witchy woman whom Ash Pet befriends. The King’s son falls in love with her at the meeting and follows her home. In order to elude him, Ash Pet stops and tells him she’s lost her slipper. When he goes to find it, she slips away. His search for her finally brings the King’s son to the old woman’s home, where he discovers Ash Pet under a washtub.

But the story doesn’t end here. Instead, the three women decide to get rid of Ash Pet by pushing her into the river. Down in the water, Ash Pet is kept in an underground cave by a great big Hairy Man.

In the hope that someone will hear her, Ash Pet sings. She is heard and eventually rescued by the King’s son. “Come back here with that woman,” calls the Hairy Man as they escape. The King’s son does return—but with the old woman and her two daughters, who can be heard squalling down there in that river even now. ■

Notes on the Story

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ASH PET *continued*

Before Viewing

This story is a good one to use to illustrate how stories move from one country to another or from one teller to another, changing as they are passed on. Explaining where the version of a story they are familiar with came from will help students understand the oral tradition. Following are some suggestions for exploring the oral tradition, either before or after viewing the program.

- ◆ Use a map to show students Wise County, Virginia, where Granny Shores (the storyteller from whom this version of “Ash Pet” was collected) lived.
- ◆ Find photos of Granny Shores in *Outwitting the Devil: Jack Tales from Wise County, Va.*, edited by Charles L. Perdue, Jr. (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1987). Discuss how she is like the students’

grandmothers and great-grandmothers. If you cannot find the photographs, ask students about their grandparents and whether or not their grandparents have told them stories or taught them anything special.

- ◆ Have students bring in old family pictures and artifacts.
- ◆ Have students dress up in old clothes (try to find clothes that country people would have worn in 1900, 1920, 1930, and 1940).
- ◆ Talk about differences in the styles and functions of clothes from that old-time culture and now.
- ◆ Have students interview older family members or close family friends as part of an oral history project.

For Discussion After Viewing

- ? What unfamiliar words or phrases did you hear in the story? Make a list of these words or phrases and figure out their meanings through their use in the story. What are some examples of colorful language or old-fashioned phrases used in your family?
- ? Discuss the plight of orphans today. How does it compare to the plight of orphans 70 years ago?
- ? Discuss child labor. What kinds of laws have been passed to protect children? How recent are they?
- ? Do you ever feel jealous or greedy? What makes you feel this way? Discuss greed, jealousy, and competition as these relate to the situation between the two sisters and Ash Pet.
- ? How does Ash Pet help herself out of her situation even though she is poor?
- ? What other versions of this story have you heard?
- ? What is the moral of this story? What lessons can be learned?



Follow-Up Activities

✦ Draw pictures of the characters in the story. Draw “before” and “after” pictures of Ash Pet.

✦ Make paper dolls of the story characters and use them to tell the story out loud. Tape record the students telling the story.

✦ Split the class into six groups, with each group representing a different point of view. How would the old woman tell the story? The King’s son? Each group will tell the story from the point of view of one of the characters: the old woman, a prissy sister, the witch, the King’s son, the Hairy Man, and Ash Pet. How are the versions alike? How are they different?

✦ Ask students to go home and ask their parents and grandparents to tell their versions of this story. You may want students to tape record their relatives’ versions.

✦ Write a modern-day Ash Pet story.

✦ Experiment with voices and body postures to get the feel of the characters. Would the Hairy Man stand with the same posture as the prissy girls? How do the prissy girls sound when they speak?

✦ Have students pair off. One student from each pair should become “big,” the other “small.” Have them move around each

other and experiment with this big/small relationship (without talking). At the end of the exercise, discuss what happened in the experiment. How did it feel to be “small”? To be “big”?

To extend the big/small experiment:

- Discuss how Ash Pet, the prissy girls, the old woman, the Hairy Man, the King’s son, and the witch are big/small. What happened when Ash Pet got “big”? How did the sisters respond?

- Do students have big/small brothers or sisters?

- What are some other big/small relationships in school, the home, the community, and the world? Which countries are big and powerful? Does “small” mean “powerless”?

✦ Have students write and sing the Ash Pet story in a ballad. (You may want to enlist the aid of the music teacher, who can explain what a ballad is—a song that tells a story—and help students create their own). Can they add instruments or sound effects to their ballad?

For Further Study

Find different versions of the Ash Pet story from different countries (e.g., the Russian version or others mentioned in the introduction to this story). Compare the versions; look for similarities and differences. Talk about how different cultures share folktales, how stories are timeless. For an ambitious project, have students learn different versions to act out.

14

MUTSMAG

told by Anndrena Belcher

Mutsmag is the youngest of an old man's three daughters—the “least one,” as they say in the mountains. The father offers a reward to the daughter who can take a sieve to the river, fill it with water, and bring the water back to him. The two older daughters both try and fail because the water runs right through the sieve. Mutsmag, with help from a little bird, lines the inside of the sieve with mud and straw and returns with the water. As a reward, the old man gives Mutsmag a rusty old Barlow pocketknife that he says “has some magic in it.”

After the old man dies, the three daughters sell off his property, and the two older girls decide to travel to New York City. Mutsmag begs them to let her come, too, and they reluctantly agree. But they soon tire of her presence and tie her to a tree. Her father's knife comes in handy then: She uses it to cut herself free and runs to catch up with her sisters.

Mutsmag goes on to save her sisters from a witchy woman and a giant, with the knife playing a big part in the adventures, but they continue to treat her badly. Then one day the “least one” slays the giant and wins a bag of gold from the Queen. With that reward, the three sisters return home together and live happily ever after. ■

Notes on the Story

Mutsmag has been compared to an Irish folktale, “Molly and the Giant.” The two stories are unusual and important in that they feature female characters as active heroes. Mutsmag uses what is often considered a masculine tool—the knife—to overcome her foes, yet she is very feminine in her nurturing and forgiving attitude toward her sisters. She embodies and dignifies both male and female in how she uses her wits and her listening abilities matched with the knife handed down to her from her father. She is one with the natural world and is not afraid to venture into the world of the witch and giant in order to complete her task and get what she needs to go home and start a new life for herself and her sisters.

Before Viewing

◆ Read the Richard Chase version of this story, or the summary contained here, to your students. Ask them to draw the characters and incidents before seeing the videotape. Then, after they have watched the program, talk about how their perceptions of the characters and story changed from listening and imagining to viewing and imaging.

◆ Ask the students for other stories that feature female heroes. What are these characters like? What “feminine” abilities and strengths do they have? What “weapons” does a heroine—as opposed to a hero—typically use?

For Discussion After Viewing

? List some of Mutsmag’s personality traits. How would you describe her? What was Mutsmag’s gift?

List three ways in which you are like Mutsmag. What is your gift? (Name one or more.)

? Describe Polly and Betsy. What are their traits? Name one way in which you are like Mutsmag’s sisters.

? What is the significance of the bird in the story?

? As you listened to the storyteller describing how Mutsmag’s father awarded her the knife, did it seem to you that a rusty old pocketknife was a fitting reward for Mutsmag’s cleverness? Did your opinion of this gift change as the story progressed? Did Mutsmag understand the knife’s value? Did the father?

? How is Mutsmag a heroine? How does she use her knife? How is she like Jack, the hero of several other stories you’ve heard in this series? How is she different from him? What do the stories about these two characters tell you about the societies the stories came from? What kinds of personality traits, abilities, and behaviors were seen as admirable? Is the answer to that question different depending on whether you’re talking about a man or a woman?

? Were you surprised that

Mutsmag forgave her sisters for their treatment of her? Why does she treat them so well? Have they changed at the story’s conclusion?

? Talk about differences between rural and urban living. How have families changed as America has urbanized?

MUTSMAG *continued*

Follow-Up Activities

✦ Look around at your family members, study old family photographs, and then examine your own physical features and see whether you can tell which side of the family you look like. Has your family told you, “You’ve got eyes just like so and so” or “You turned out just like ——”?

✦ Some of the language-related activities suggested throughout this guide are appropriate to many of the stories. By now, you will have a good idea of how your particular students respond to different activities. Pick one that has worked well in your classroom and adapt it for use with this story. (Examples of language activities include retelling the story from the viewpoints of various characters, breaking into groups to tell the story, and having students narrate and/or act out different parts.)

✦ Rewrite the story into a modern-day setting. Describe Mutsmag today in your own community, neighborhood, or city. Discuss growing up in a one-parent home or with people other than your family.

✦ Talk about rhythm in language, music in language, and the importance of rhythm in telling a story. Listen to the story and to the voices—the rhythms, volumes, and inflections. Draw a graph to represent the music of the voices in the story. Use a different line or

symbol to represent each voice. What is the design?

✦ Have each student select a story featuring a male hero—perhaps a Jack tale from this series, but any story will do—and rewrite it with a female hero.



15

BALAAM FOSTER'S FIDDLE

told by Anndrena Belcher (with Ed Snodderly on dobro)

Balaam Foster, a young man born into slavery, has a talent for fiddle playing. He makes a little money playing for the white folks, but he dreams of much bigger things. He wants to be the best fiddle player in all the land—to be so good he can buy his way to freedom.

One day he sits by the creek and talks out loud to his fiddle about these dreams. And the fiddle talks back! It tells him to go make an X at the crossroads nine nights in a row, then do whatever “someone or something” tells him to do. Balaam follows the instructions, and soon he begins playing better and better, winning all the contests and becoming known as the greatest fiddler in the land.

Balaam goes on to live a long, full life. He marries and has a family, and he always stays true to himself and his music. Then one day he announces to his wife and children that he is going to die. He plays for them one last time, then closes his eyes.

But as they are leaving to get the preacher, they hear fiddle music coming from the house. They rush back, thinking he is not dead after all, only to discover that Balaam is gone—and so is his fiddle. ■

Notes on the Story

Fiddles and other stringed instruments have often been viewed as base and earthy and evil. Frivolity surrounds the maker of music. The music frees the body and maybe the soul to romp and play; to step outside the bounds of the normal life of work and drudgery.

Both religion and institutionalized work rules teach us to conform and suppress our spirit in order to be “good” or, in the case of the work ethic, in order to produce work measured satisfactory to the boss and to the society at large. Stories like this one involve a kind of “subversion” of this idea. The music is seen as a magical force that frees up the spirit inside and allows a person to ignore or get around the usual rules of behavior. For more examples, see *A Treasury of American Folklore* by B.A. Botkin (American Literacy Press, New York).

“Balaam Foster” leaves it to the listener to decide whether the voice Balaam heard was his own, a demon’s, or an angel’s—whether the music was a force for good or evil. An example of a story that deals with fiddle music and specifically ties it to evil or the devil is “Jim Barton’s Fiddle.” You can find it in *Witches, Ghosts, and Signs*, collected by Patrick Gainer of West Virginia.

A more recent version of this kind of folktale surrounds Robert Johnson, a Mississippi guitarist who made pioneering blues

BALAAM FOSTER'S FIDDLE *continued*

Notes on the Story *continued*

recordings in the 1930s and died very young (under rather mysterious circumstances). Local legend has it that Johnson made his own “deal with the devil” to get his signature musical style; the story also involves a crossroads. In fact, one of Johnson’s best-known songs is “Cross Road Blues,” which Eric Clapton called “Crossroads” when he recorded it.

Recent years have seen something of a rediscovery of Robert Johnson, with the release of a *Complete Recordings* package by Columbia Records and the publication of a biography, *Searching for Robert Johnson* by Peter Guralnick.

A recent theatrical movie, titled *Crossroads*, has a related story line involving a young man with a classical musical education who tries to become a “real blues man” by enlisting the help of an older man who is rumored to have made the same kind of pact.

Before Viewing

◆ Artists, musicians, dancers, writers, and thinkers historically have been viewed as outside the norm. They often have been stereotyped as either lazy “ne’er-do-wells” or snooty, temperamental individuals who are immature and “unproductive.” Creativity itself has sometimes been viewed as a gift from the gods, and sometimes as a product of “black magic.”

Talk about attitudes toward artists and thinkers throughout history. Discuss how they have been viewed by mainstream society. What kinds of societies have supported them, and what forms has this support taken? Does the social class of the artist make a difference? Talk about the difference between artistic people in the upper classes (Mozart, for instance) and the everyday “folk

artist” of times past. Were there similarities and differences in how these people were viewed? What about today?

◆ Discuss slavery; read some of the history of slavery and the Civil War. Ask your students to imagine what it would have been like to live in the United States as a slave. What would it feel like to be owned—bought and sold—by somebody else? Why did slaveowners make their captives give up their own names, languages, clothing, music, foods, religion, and traditional ceremonies? What effects did this have on the slaves themselves? Talk about what things in your own family and your own culture tell you who you are and what your own worth is. Make a list.



For Discussion After Viewing

? Where do you think the voice in the fiddle came from? Was it Balaam's own inner voice? Was it a devil? An angel? Do you have a voice inside you telling you what to do or what not to do?

? Balaam was born a slave and wanted desperately to free himself. What did he do to accomplish that? He had some doubts about what he was doing; a little voice inside told him he might be "crossing the line" into the supernatural. Was he right to do what he did? Was Balaam a hero? Why? What do you think happened to him at the end of the story?

? Discuss and list some ways in which people feel trapped in their everyday lives. Talk about work, school, chores, homework, family, money. What about physical appearance—height, weight, skin color, frailty or disabilities—how do they trap people? How do we each free ourselves to be who and what we want to be?

Name some things you do that make you feel free. Do you play music, sing, dance, walk outside, hike, climb trees, bicycle, write stories, tell stories, make things?

Discuss some people in your everyday life, or some people you have heard about, who you think are truly free. What are they like? What do they do every day? How do they feel about themselves?

What are your dreams about your own future?

Follow-Up Activities

+ Play some traditional-style recorded fiddle music—or invite a fiddle player to come play for the class. Then, for comparison, listen to some classical violin music. Talk about the differences between "fiddlers" and "violinists." Is it just the music they play? Are they trained differently? Does the distinction involve social class? "Professional" versus "amateur" status? What different things do you think of when you hear the two terms? What does the distinction say about the way these people and the kinds of music they play are seen by society?

This discussion can lead into a talk about the idea of "high" versus "mass" or "popular" culture. Think of some examples of artists who came out of upper-class backgrounds and compare them to some artists who came from poor and/or working-class backgrounds. Is there a difference in the art they produced? Did they go the same routes to get where they got? Were they recognized by society in different ways? What is "folk art," and how is it different from other kinds of art?

+ Have students research leading figures in the abolitionist movement. You can assign written reports, lead a class discussion on them, or even have students write scenes and act them out as characters.

+ For older students, here's an exercise designed to get them

thinking about slave ship conditions and slavery in general:

Bring a box for each student. Cut a hole in the top for the head. Place students in the boxes, one next to the other with no space in between. Make up a language which you will use in talking to the students while they are in the boxes. Assign each student a name from this new-made language. Turn out the lights and put on some African music. Leave the room for a while.

When you return, discuss the following questions:

- How did you feel in the box?
- What did you want to do?
- What did you think about your name?
- Did the music suggest images of Africa, slavery, the boats? Draw or paint these images.
- What sounds did you think of? Write them down.

+ Throughout the world, various peoples are fighting for ethnic recognition, nationhood, democracy—freedom. Ask the class for examples and discuss them. What about here in the U.S.: Are there people here who are not free? Discuss the Constitution and the rights embodied there. Do we each have these rights?

+ Compare "Jim Barton's Fiddle" with "Balaam Foster's Fiddle." Look for similarities and differences in how the fiddle and music were viewed—by family, by society, and by the artist.

THE BANJO AND THE LOOM

Notes on the Poem

“The Banjo and the Loom” was written by turn-of-the-century poet and visual artist Emma Bell Miles. Emma was born near Cincinnati in a small Kentucky town named Rabbit Hash. When she was about 9 years old, her family took her farther south to a place called Walden’s Ridge in the mountains of Tennessee.

As a child, Emma was sickly and needed to be outdoors a lot. But she took to reading and writing early: She had learned to read by the age of 3 and had gone through all of her mother’s schoolbooks and *Harper’s* magazines before adolescence. Later her father promised her some money if she’d keep a journal for a year, so she did just that.

Emma loved to explore the woods and waters with their wildflowers, plants, and birds. When she went off to school, she soon got homesick for her mountains. So she quit school and came home to tend her sick mother.

After her mother died, Emma immediately ran off and married the dark, handsome mountain man she had been courting, whose name was Frank Miles. Her father and her friends thought she had married beneath herself. She inherited the house her mother had built, but she and Frank got to live there in peace only until her daddy—a Presbyterian minister, a teacher, and a wizardly-looking little fellow—came home and pitched them out of the house.

From that time on until her

death at a young 39 years, Emma searched for home. Life with Frank was up one day and down the next, and her own career was no easier: She worked hard trying to earn enough money as an artist and writer at a time when society did not exactly support and encourage the self-expression of women.

Though she found a spiritual home in the birds, the woods, and the music around her, Emma often felt trapped in her attempt to free herself. “The Banjo and the Loom” reflects these feelings. Like the Balaam Foster story, the poem shows how musical instruments and music itself can free the spirit. It speaks not only to Emma’s relationship with Frank, but also to the juxtaposition everywhere of work and play.

Before Viewing

◆ Talk about the loom and how it works and the traditional role of women as weavers. What are the social implications of such a labor-intensive way of making fabric? How did women’s role in society change when factory-made clothing, rugs, etc. began to replace the homemade item? What were the benefits of this transition? The drawbacks? Are there still societies or cultures (the Navajo are an example) where hand weaving is practiced?

◆ Discuss the historical role of men as music makers. Did past societies encourage music making by women? Does ours? Are certain forms or styles of music seen as more the province of one gender than the other?

◆ Ask the students what they know about male / female roles in turn-of-the-century America.

For Discussion After Viewing

? What do you know about male/female roles in your own family's history? What were your family members working at in 1900? 1940? 1960? What are they working at now? What do you hear your family talk about in terms of changes in male/female roles?

? Do you feel stuck in any particular life situation because of your own gender? Think about chores, work, sports, and your future dreams. Do we have true equality between the sexes today?

? Discuss the suffrage movement. Who were some of its heroines?

Who are some leaders today in the women's movement? Think of some famous women leaders in politics, education, literature, science, the arts, athletics, history, space, architecture, and design.

What about women in your own family? What do they do at work? At home? Think of some women who are heroines in your family, your community, or your school.

Follow-Up Activities

+ Emma Miles wrote "The Banjo and the Loom" as a reflection of her own circumstances. To get students involved in the same process, assign the following exercise: Write a poem that represents a conversation between a male and a female in your family or community. Think of some women's issues of today and make them the topic of the conversation.

+ Have students look through their family albums for pictures of older people—grandparents, great-grandparents—and imagine what their lives were like. What did they do for a living? What wisdom or beliefs have they passed on? Of that which they have taught you, what will you keep? What will you change? Do you know yet? How do you decide?

Ask each class member to think of an ancestor—or even a living relative—who was a "pioneer" within his or her own family (the ancestor who moved the family to America, the first family member to go to college, etc.). Assign a short oral or written report on that person.



PASSING IT ON

by Anndrena Belcher

Background for Program 16

"My family never told any stories."

"How do I find out about my story? I never knew my grandparents."

"My family is just made up of everyday people who work in a factory. We are not of any ethnic group. We don't really have a story."

"I don't know my father. He left when I was little. My mother doesn't know her family's history. How am I supposed to know what my story is?"

"My grandmother is young-looking. She goes to aerobics class in Lycra leggings, and she looks as good as the teacher. She never told us any of them old stories!"

"How do I go about feeling connected to this history? How do I find out how I fit in? So much of my own family story is hurtful. The rest is lost somewhere in all the relatives who live all over the world, and I don't even know them!"

"I live in a large city. Stories? We ain't got time for stories! My mom works. I gotta help support the family. No, we ain't got no stories."

The old folktales are relevant today and serve the same purpose now as they did a thousand years ago. The tales cut across ethnic, racial, and class lines in that the themes, the characters, and the lessons that lie within are universal. The tales cut across the urban/rural divider. Every town, city, and rural community can identify some characters like Jack or Mutsmag or the giant or the witch. But what happens when we each

look for our own personal folktale, our own fairy tale? Is it there?

The more workshops I conduct and the more performances I experience, the more I meet people who say they do not know their own story. They don't know the family history. They don't have an "old home place." Family traditions are harder to identify because the family unit does not exist as it used to. The family is spread out all over the place, and its members rarely get to visit one another.... Too much work to do; too little time.

Nevertheless, each person alive has a story to tell—a story of his or her own beginning in a family, at a place. Each person has a connection to the past; each person has helped to create the history of the world. If you know your family story, then you can see what you and your relatives did to make these contributions in certain passages of the story of what has passed. There is no one way to be a family, no one set of rules. Therefore, whatever the story is, that's the story!

My own family history is sketchy. There are lots of missing pieces. My Granny Belcher was orphaned at the age of 4. Her mother, Lena Justice Hurly, died when Granny was 2; her daddy, Adam, when she was 4. She and her sister and brother first lived with her granddaddy and grandmaw Justice. After her grandmother died, they lived on with her grandfather Justice until

he died. After that, it was first one relative, then another. They lived with people and worked for their keep. My Granny says, "Honey, I never had nary a soul to tell me one thing. Had to learn from livin' every day."

My Granny has always talked to us younguns and tried to teach us what she thought was important for us to know. "Children need a guide and a guard," she would always say. She has spent a lifetime trying to talk to people who knew her parents and learn more about them. And pictures have always been important to her. She has all the children, the grandchildren, and the great-grandchildren sitting on shelves and all over the walls. She cherishes the picture she has of her mother and the one she has of her daddy.

There is a lot of the family history that we'll never know because my Granny's parents died so young; but one thing I do know is that *lack* of story is a big part of my Granny's story, and now a part of mine. Sometimes we learn a lot from gaps in the record keeping. I always tell people, "Whatever is or is not there *is* your story! You don't have to know all the names and dates and birthplaces. Your grandma didn't have to know a dozen Jack tales to have a story to tell you! It is the life tale that is the biggest folktale of all time."

I was lucky. I had two sets of grandparents and lots of cousins

and aunts and uncles to feel connected to. My cousins played acting-out games, told jokes and scary tales. I was a child in the mountains in the 1950s, and we made a lot of our own entertainment. We played in the woods, on the riverbank, in the cellar. We had to use our imaginations. We had to make characters, create dialogue. Those processes were part of our culture.

Then my mother and father found work in Chicago and took me and my sister Sherry there to live. We found out right away that we had a language and a story that were different from the “mainstream.” We did well in school, but the mountains were always home, and we dreamed of going back. We spent time in the summer with my Granddaddy and Mamaw Mullins up on Laurel Branch and with my Granny and Paw Belcher over on the river at Belcher. We had their houses in the mountains to come home to, even if we didn’t have land or a house of our own.

My grandparents were good talkers, good storytellers. They didn’t tell us Jack tales. They didn’t know the Mutsmag story. But they talked about their lives, about farming, about the coming of the railroads, about the coal mines. They talked about the family and the characters and kin in the community. They told about moonshine, “haints,” and gardening. They knew that every plant had some medicinal value.

They listened to the birds and tried to make out their language. The leaves rustling in the wind, the thunder in the stormy sky, and the orange/red/blue fire burning in the grate at night—all these held messages, characters, faces, voices, and stories.

The past came alive with the images created by my Granny and my Mamaw, my Paw and Granddaddy. Thinking and talking about ideas, “ponderin’,” “studyin’ on” something, were important to them. They passed that notion on to me.

My daddy and mother talked about home, about the mountains and how they grew up in the coalfields. They told me and my sisters about games they played and chores they had to do. They talked about schoolteachers, work buddies, memories both bad and good. And when they remembered and talked, they lived it all again. I could see it in their eyes and watch the scare come up in my dad’s face as his eyes got big, his mouth gaped, and his arms rounded out and lifted to represent the monster.

Old-time people taught and talked in stories. They’d say, “You’re kinda like so-and-so over there on such-and-such branch.” If they wanted to let me know how they felt about a certain behavior of mine, they’d liken me to someone, then tell me a story about that person and what happened to him or her because of that same behavior.



PASSING IT ON *continued*

My grandparents and my own parents loved to think in symbols and abstract images. Sometimes the teaching was intentional, but sometimes I didn't even know whether they knew they were telling stories. They just communicated that way, and I listened. I wanted to listen because when they talked, their hearts were in it, and they were *there* in their imaginations. I could tell, and *I* went there, too.

We pick up gestures, mannerisms, expressions, use of language—communication skills—by being around someone and absorbing what they do and talk about and how they do it. I have watched my father rub his thumb and forefinger together when he talks and gets serious. My Grandpaw Rudy did exactly the same thing. I have also noticed parallels in how they lower their voices, slow down, speed up, or change inflection as they talk. Pass it on?

Sundays at our house, or rather our apartment, in the city of Chicago were usually the days when we were all together. Mother and Daddy would be home, and we girls would be out of school. We had breakfast late and, more often than not, Daddy would get to talking about “down home.” Once he started, my sister and I would prompt for more stories, more descriptions, more mental images. “Tell us what it was like when you was little!” we’d say. Those stories kept us connected to home, to my grand-

parents, and to a sense of belonging somewhere in a culture.

Outside our apartment, I heard lots of derogatory talk about “hillbillies”—our language, our culture, our beliefs. I knew we talked differently and often behaved differently, but I had to figure out why our ways were considered “wrong.”

Thinking about it, I remembered my Granny—her voice, her hair, her story. My Paw, going into the coal mines at the age of 13. My Granddaddy Mullins, a good man, a generous man, hard-working and funny-sentimental. I remembered my Mamaw Mollie: short and round, soft and playful. The sky couldn't hold more blue than her eyes. Her hair was soft, long, and white as the snow. When we called home in the winter after a snow, she'd say, “It's a real winter wonderland!”

They were intelligent, poetic, thoughtful, literary, musical people, and they taught me well. I knew I had a culture. I knew I had a story.

But what about the kid in the street? Who tells him his story? What about children who don't have fathers or grannies to “guide and guard” them?

They have stories, too, even though those stories might not have been passed down through the family. Each person's life story comes from the people with whom he or she has lived life. Family, friends, teachers, co-workers, the old man at the store,

camp counselors—all of them can be characters in a person's life story. All these people have their own life stories to hear and learn from. Ask them about their school, their home beginnings, their work, their games and dances, their pastimes and dreams. Everybody has something—some story—to pass on.

If you are looking for your story, ask the people in your family who are closest to you. Then talk to *their* brothers and sisters, friends who have known them awhile, and people they've worked with or for. Find the photographs of your family members and their relatives and friends. Each of these has a story to tell about time, place, event. Find out where you were born. Is there a story behind the name of the town? That's part of your own story. Do you know how you got your name? What were you like when you were little? Did you have a nickname? There are stories to be passed on from all kinds of sources.

We each have a story, and we each have a part in keeping memory alive. So, pass it on!

Suggested Activities

✦ Imagine what you want to be like as a grownup. What are the things you are experiencing now that you would want to remember and pass on?

✦ Conduct an oral history interview with an older family member and write it into a story about yourself and your family. Think about the interesting characters in your family and what you remember most from the interview. Write about these things.

Next, make a visual representation of one or more of these images. You can use a pencil, ink, paints, crayon, or even clay.

✦ Collect photos and family artifacts and bring them in to share. Can you tell the stories behind the items? Find out whether there are old clothes that have been handed down in your family. They have stories, too!

✦ Check other sources for information about your family. Many people have a family Bible in which marriages, births, and deaths are recorded. Or there may be a family cemetery where you can visit old gravestones. What other sources can you think of?

✦ If you have no knowledge of where your own family is buried, pick a time in your family history that interests you and look at other stones from that time. Gravestones and monuments can teach many things about art,

design, and what people from certain social classes were accustomed to doing.

✦ Get a map or atlas and look up where you were born and other places you've traveled. Trace the moves your family has made. What is the design? Draw it.

✦ Find out about dialect and oral expressions from where you were born. Are they different from the mainstream? How? What do you like/dislike about them?

✦ Write a story about one of your favorite family characters. If you could be just like someone from your family, who would you choose? Describe this character.

✦ If you don't know who your ancestors might be, estimate when they were born, where they were from, and what they were like. Describe these imaginary characters from your life. What did they work at? What did they look and sound like? What did they eat? What did they do for play? What do you like most about them? What would you want to pass on?

✦ Play the gossip game: Everyone sits in a circle, and someone whispers something to the next person, who whispers it to the next, and so on until it comes back to the first person. Now, imagine each person in that circle represents a generation. That is how things get passed on!



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Further Resources

We hope *Telling Tales* has whetted your appetite for more—more stories and more information about stories and ways to use them in the classroom.

Rather than append a lengthy bibliography here and risk leaving out an important source of stories or scholarship, we recommend you begin with the books listed in the “Notes on the Story” sections. These are books we have found useful, and they, in turn, can lead you to other resources. Many, in fact, contain very useful and detailed bibliographies.

If you are interested in additional information on collecting stories and folklore in your community or on developing a class oral history project, check into the resources at a college or university near you. Colleges often offer courses and help in such areas as how and what to collect and how to do it. For example, you can request a helpful “Golden Interview” form from Richard Blaustein at the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN 37614. Or write the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC for a current list of their publications.

NAPPS, the National Association for the Perpetuation and Preservation of Storytelling, also has numerous resources, including a magazine, a useful bibliography, and a directory of storytellers in the nation. The address

for NAPPS is Box 309, Jonesboro, TN 37659.

We hope these suggestions will get you started!