

Study Guide for Teachers

Sherry Norfolk

"Out of the Darkness"

About Sherry Norfolk:

Sherry, with a B.A. in Elementary Education (Indiana University 1970) and a Masters in Library Science (Indiana University 1979), performs and teaches storytelling residencies through the Georgia Council for the Arts, Alabama State Council on the Arts, Kentucky Arts Council, Alaska Arts Council, South Carolina Arts Commission, and Young Audiences of St. Louis. Her 17-year career as a children's librarian led her to storytelling as an effective means of motivating children to read, and her years in the pre-K and primary classroom taught her the power of storytelling as an educational tool. Sherry currently serves as consultant to Turner South in developing and implementing their "Storytelling in Education" project. She and her husband Bobby are the co-authors of *The Moral of The Story: Folktales for Character Development* (August House Publishers, 1999).

Curriculum Connections

Language Arts K-3: as students listen they will predict/infer actions & outcomes; compare & contrast one story with another; make generalizations; think about cause and effect; make the distinction between fantasy and realism

Social Studies: K-3: stories are drawn from many different cultures, including Cherokee, African, Plains Indians

Science: K-3: Daytime and sun; the moon and stars

Program Objectives:

Student will learn that:

- People all over the world have sought to explain the phenomenon of sunlight, moon phases, and the constellations through story
- Fiction -- in the form of stories -- complements fact. These stories provoke curiosity about scientific explanations of the phenomenon of light.
- There are always many ways to think about a question. Each perspective brings new insight and understanding.

Program Summary

Folktales from around the world delve into the miracle of the arrival of light in the world: how the sun came to be in the sky, the placement of the stars in the heavens, and the mysteries of the moon.

Vocabulary

Astronomer -- a scientist who studies the stars, planets, etc.

Constellations -- clusters of stars and the "pictures" people see in them

Pourquoi (how and why) story -- a story that attempts to explain a particular aspect of nature

Overview of Art Form:

Storytelling is the art of using words, gestures, facial expression, and body language to bring a story to life in the listener's imagination. From the beginning of time, storytelling has been the way cultures have preserved and celebrated their memories, passed on their values and belief systems, entertained, instructed and reported. Today, storytelling continues to invite us all to "Enter the Theater of the Mind -- the Imagination!"

Pre and Post Activities

Pre: What are some of things we know about sun, moon and stars? How do we know these things? What kinds of questions do we still have about the sun, moon and stars? What questions do you think that people long ago had? How did they answer their questions?

Post: *Multicultural:* Each of these stories comes from a different culture. Look at the ways habitat, religious beliefs and cultural values are reflected in these stories.

Arts: Crayon layering -- cover paper thickly with one layer of bright colors, then cover that layer with thick black tempura paint or crayon. Kids carefully scrape away the black layer to create pictures that glow "out of the darkness."

Literature & Language Arts: ask kids to write their own how-&-why stories about sky phenomena

Science: explore the scientific explanations of the phases of the moon, the constellations

Math: explore concepts of relative size, using the sun, stars, moon -- or a scale model of the solar system

History & Social Studies: Discover ways in which a sky phenomenon such as a solar eclipse or a comet effected the course of history.

Foreign Language: teach children the Spanish (or Japanese or German) words for sun, moon, and stars

Visual Arts: Look at the ways light is represented in the paintings of Van Gogh, then ask the kids to create a sun painting

Music: Listen to Holst's "The Planets."

Resources

Belting, Natalia. *The Moon is a Crystal Ball: Unfamiliar Legends of the Stars.*

Birdseye, Tom. *A Song of Stars: an Asian Legend.*

Bishop, Gavin. *Maui and the Sun: a Maori Tale.*

Bruchac, Joe. *Stars of the Milky Way.*

Edwards, Carolyn McVicar. *Sun Stories: Tales from Around the World to Illuminate the Days and Nights of Our Lives.*

Jablow, Alta. *The Man in the Moon: Sky Tales from Many Lands.*

Lurie, Alison. *The Heavenly Zoo: Legends and Tales of the Stars.*