

Exploring Origins

Exploring Stories of Origins

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Storytelling Then and Now

In this activity, you will explore ideas about oral story telling by examining how storytelling has changed from that of creation stories to legends, folklore, and modern-day story telling. The purpose of this activity is:

- to learn about the history and function of these stories; and
- to expand your communication skills through the application of one or more communication activities listed here.

PROBLEM

What do we know about the art of oral story telling through creation stories, mythology, legends, and folklore?

PROCEDURE

You will participate in a class investigation of the oral story telling literary genre.

- Begin with closely listening to a creation story. This story may be presented by your teacher, by a classroom visitor, or by you!
- In groups of 3-4, retell the story as you heard it. Listen carefully to each student's version of the creation story. Jot down any notes that will help you remember if or how stories varied for later discussion. After all students have retold the story, share any differences that appear in your notes with your group.



Consider the following:

- Are there differences in what each of you heard? If so, what are explanations for these differences?
- What stayed the same? What explanations do you have for similarities?
- Does oral storytelling offer any opportunities that are not true in written storytelling? If so, what are they?
- Are there drawbacks to oral storytelling? If so, what are they? How does written storytelling address these issues?

ADDITIONAL ORAL STORY TELLING OPPORTUNITIES:



- Read the following paragraph:

“He came from nowhere. One minute the store was empty; the next minute he stood there frantically flipping through the CDs as though his life depended on it. His red shirt was torn; his jeans were creased and fitted, not casual and loose like I like to wear them. He dodged from one display to another, sockless in too-big moccasins that slapped the floor when he walked. I decided to see if I could help. As I approached him, he looked up at me. I could see in his eyes that something was terribly wrong. . . .”

The class should be divided into groups consisting of 3-4 members each. Retell the unfinished story **without referring to any notes** to members in your small group. As each of you completes the story, be as creative as you choose. You may tell your story as a modern-day myth, legend, or folktale, being careful that it meets the myth\legend\folktale criteria as noted in the Student Text, *Exploring Stories of Origins*, *Storytelling Then and Now*."

Consider the following:



- Myths attempt to interpret or explain something in the world around us. Does this story lend itself to mythological storytelling? Why or why not?
 - Could the scenario lend itself to that of a legend? If so, how? If not, why?
 - How could the scene serve as an introduction to a folktale? If your answer is that it couldn't, why not?
2. Create your own scenario set in the past, present, or future. Without the benefit of writing it down, share your story orally with the rest of your group.