

Blackrose International Storytelling

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**Raps and Rhymes,
Stories and Songs
for
Early Childhood
Professionals**

Welcome to my free storytelling resources for use in pre-school and early primary language programmes and storytimes. They are not categorized, however suggested themes are in brackets besides their titles. Some of the material can be found in my books, Tell Me One! storytimes, raps and rhymes for little kids, Tell Me Too! Tales for Terrific Talkers (co-written with speech therapist, Kerrie Murphy) and Tell Me More! Folktales for Little Folk, and some is only available here. Feel free to adapt them to suit your needs.

Balancing 5 picture books, 35 name tags, a margarine container of straws, assorted coloured paper (cut into right angle triangles), a box of blue dots, and of course her trusty black texta, this dashing figure is none other than the Children's Librarian off to Storytime. There she (or sometimes he) goes to entertain, enlighten and educate anywhere from 5 to 50 little ones in this the last free, fun-filled, family activity, besides going to the park. Some of you may have recognized yourselves in this guise. These raps, rhymes, stories and songs are for you and every teacher, childcare worker, special needs worker and parent entrusted with the often daunting, but always rewarding task of teaching children through storytelling.

STORYTIME WELCOME

I always open a storytelling session with young children by asking their permission to tell stories. This is my favourite introduction. I play the mandolin and sing, inviting children to participate with actions. Alternatively, you can clap hands, beat a drum or other percussive instrument (eg. castanet or tambourine), and don't forget thigh slapping!

Hello Giddy [welcome and introduction to storytelling]

Hello Giddy

How are you today?

How are you today?

How are you today?

Hello, Giddy,

How are you today?

And would you like a story?

If you'd like a story you just

Clap your hands (clap,clap,clap)

Stomp your feet (stomp, stomp, stomp)

Blink your eyes (blink, blink, blink)

And nod your head. (nod)

That's what I said.

(An alternative &/or additional verse for Story Reading)

Hello Giddy

Shall we take a look?

Shall we take a look?

At a picture book?

Hello Giddy

Shall we take a look

At a picture book today?

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TELLING STORIES AND READING THEM. IS ONE METHOD OF SHARING STORIES BETTER THAN THE OTHER?

Not everyone reads

Non - reading parents are less likely to borrow books from the library, attend library storytimes or give books as presents to their kids. I encourage these parents, usually indirectly, as it is their friends or family who bring children to events where I am storytelling, to ensure that their kids don't miss out on the pleasurable experience of reading, by encouraging other family members to read to them at every available opportunity. This means that the parents should make regular trips to the library to borrow books and always have a variety on hand at home for the babysitter, grandma or the next door neighbour to read to the kids. Many parents are embarrassed about their inability to read, so informing them about adult literacy classes should be done with sensitivity. Promoting adult literacy not only improves the quality of life of adults but impacts positively on their children. Sometimes people with English as a second (or third or fourth) language are proficient at reading and writing in languages other than English. Libraries providing picture books in their first language means that these parents can share the joy of reading aloud to their child. Following is a handout for Parents.

EVERYONE CAN TELL A STORY

Stories are a way of communicating love and joy, teaching life lessons and passing on cultural traditions and values. Storytelling plays a vital role in the development of a child's cognitive, emotional and social skills, in such a way that young children are both entertained and enlightened. Their ability to actively listen, interact appropriately and use their imagination is enhanced through participation in regular storytelling sessions. However, storytelling's most basic purpose is as a vehicle for having fun. Sharing stories should be a positive experience for both the teller and listener.

What Stories to tell?

Start with traditional nursery tales such as The Three Bears, The Three Pigs, The Gingerbread Man, and Little Red Riding Hood. Gradually increase your repertoire with other fairy and folktales such as Jack and the Beanstalk and Cinderella. Aesop's fables are a good source of short teaching stories, traditional stories from your own culture and stories from your childhood and family.

Why tell traditional stories?

They are stories you will most likely remember from your childhood, so you are familiar with them. They are satisfying stories! Otherwise they would not have survived for so many centuries and have versions in many different cultures. Most have rhymes that children can anticipate and then participate in.

When to tell stories?

Don't restrict storytelling to bedtime. Do it inside, outside and upside down if you so desire. eg. If you are baking and your child(ren) is watching, tell The Gingerbread Man. If you are in the park you can tell an active version of The Three Pigs as you move from one 'house' to the next. After you've read a picture book to your children, tell a story to finish off your session together.

How to tell stories?

1. Know the bones of the story, the characters and sequence of events and use your own words in telling it. Learn any rhymes off by heart. eg. run, run as fast as you can, you can't catch me I'm a gingerbread man.
2. Tell the story as though you want to be heard and you will be. You don't have to be an actor or a professional speaker to tell a good story, you just have to believe in yourself and trust the story.
3. Tell the story when your child(ren) is ready to listen, not when they're hungry, tired or wanting to be physically active.

Songs, Clapping, Rapping and Finger Rhymes

Include these in your daily activities. Instead of having the children watch the kids shows on TV while you go off and do your thing, sit with them and (re)learn some of the songs and rhymes. If you walk the talk and clap the wrap with your child, they'll not only enjoy sharing the experience with you but also become adept at moving their bodies to different rhythms and rhymes. Libraries are an excellent resource for collections of traditional and contemporary rhymes.

Reading aloud and telling stories to children are not mutually exclusive experiences, they are complimentary

WHAT SHOULD YOU BE READING?

If you aren't sure about what you need to read to keep up with the demands of teaching and caring for young children then follow these 3 pointers:

1. Ask a colleague or other professional for their recommendations.
2. Be clear about what you want out of the book ie. general/specific information, instructions for practical application or inspiration. Preferably all three.
3. Set aside times to read the book and take notes. If you're feeling inclined, then write a one paragraph review of the book for yourself and others to see, with your recommendations to purchase/borrow it or not. Keep 'reviews' in a folder on your computer or in a card index. (Make sure you have title, author, publisher, ISBN).

The 'other' books that all early childhood workers need to read are picture books; the latest releases as well as the old favourites. This is possible if you are a library worker, but childcare workers often have minimal resources at their centres. Childcare Centres should be members of their local library and invite librarians to come to their centre or if possible organize excursions to it. This is especially important if you are working with children who don't have books at home and whose parents aren't library users. Parents who wish to select books for their children will trust the recommendations of childcare workers. Here is a wonderful opportunity to promote reading by talking about your favourite and the children's favourite picture books. Keep in mind that not all picture books are suitable for young children because of their themes or wordiness, so it's a good idea to familiarise yourself with them first. If you are looking for a storytelling resource that can also be read aloud, please see my **Tell Me** books.

SEA

Down to the Sea [introduction, sea, water]

This little chant/song has accompanying actions. Either use Makaton signs or make up your own. Its a lovely way to introduce a storytelling session about the sea.

Down to the sea,
Come with me
Down to the ocean blue
Just me and you
Come down to the sea.

When introducing new rhymes I find it helpful to have a familiar melody, rhythm or pattern that children can follow. We do the rhyme they know then I teach them the new one.

12345 [whales, sea, animals]

1 2 3 4 5 (*count your fingers on your right hand*)
Once I saw a whale dive (*dive action with your right hand*)
6 7 8 9 10 (*count your fingers on your left hand*)
Then he breached back out again. (*dive up with your left hand*)

Where did you see him go? (*right hand over eyes looking out*)
Deep down to the sea below (*bring both hands down*)
I can see his splashing tale (*hands linked at thumbs to make fins*)
There he is the hump backed whale. (*continue splashing like a whale*)

Another of my standards is this clapping rhyme. For those of you who are unfamiliar with this traditional rhyme and those of you who want to renew acquaintance with it then here tis. (you can clap your hands, click your fingers or stamp your feet in time to the rhyme).

The Whale [whales,sea,animals]

If you ever, ever, ever, ever, ever,
If you ever, ever, ever see a whale,
You must never, never, never, never, never,
You must never, never, never pull its tail.

Cause if you ever, ever, ever, ever, ever,
If you ever, ever, ever pull its tail,
You will never, never, never, never, never,
You will never, never, see another whale.

Christmas

The following offerings are for celebrating Christmas. The précis of the Saint Nicholas story is suitable for older children and adults and you may like to use it before you tell the story which is suitable for younger children. A good time to have Santa come enter your session is after you've told the story. You may like to sing Santa Claus is coming to town or another Santa song.

Precis: Saint Nicholas was born in Western Turkey and died 342 AD. His parents were wealthy merchants who died of the plague, but left him very wealthy. He went to live with his uncle, a monk and took his vows to become a priest. He gave his wealth away, often in secret. His most famous acts of anonymous gift giving were to save three young women from lives of slavery or prostitution because they did not have a dowry and were therefore ineligible to marry. Throwing the three sacks of gold into their socks averted this dreadful fate. Nicholas dreamt that he would become a Bishop. His dream came true and he became the Bishop of Myra and was imprisoned under the reign of the Roman Emperor, Diocletian, who hated Christians. Miraculously Nicholas survived the torture chambers and when the Roman Emperor Constantine came to power, he and the other persecuted Christians were released from prison. People referred to anyone who survived the Diocletian torture chambers as 'saints'. He returned to his people at Myra and continued his work until he died. He is known as the patron saint of children, fishermen and pawnbrokers.

The Story of Saint Nicholas

Long, long ago in a country far, far away there lived a man called Nicholas. When he was a little boy, his mother and father died of a terrible illness so he had to go and live with his uncle.

Nicholas's uncle was a monk, who went around looking after poor and sick people. Nicholas saw what joy helping people brought to his uncle and he decided that when he grew up he too would spend his life helping people.

One night he had a dream that he would become a priest. He studied hard at school and when he was a young man his dream came true and he became a priest. Every day he thought of new ways to give away the gold his parents had left to him when they died. He didn't want people to know it was him helping them out, so he gave the gold away secretly.

One day he heard about a man who was going to sell his three daughters because they did not have enough money to get married. He made up a little sack of gold and crept past their house in the dead of night, then tossed the bag through the open window into the girl's bedroom. It landed in the eldest girl's sock, which she laid out at the bottom of her bed each night.

Now she could marry a nice man and did not have to be a servant. The next year Nicholas made up another sack of gold and tossed it through the window in the dead of night and it landed in the second daughter's sock. Now she could get married. The third year he did it again, and the gold landed in the youngest girl's sock. Only this time their father was keeping watch and he saw Nicholas throw in the gold and he chased after him.

“Wait”, he called, Father Nicholas, why did you give my daughters the gold?

“Because they needed it,” he replied.

“But why didn’t you tell us who you were?”

Nicholas laughed.

”Ho ho ho. It is good to give and not have anyone know.”

And then he looked very serious and he said. “Now don’t you go and tell anyone you saw me, will you?”

But of course it’s very hard to keep a secret about someone’s good deeds. Because Nicholas didn’t stop giving away gifts, especially to children, people soon found out about him. They said he was a Saint and called him Saint Nicholas, because he was so good and kind.

Today people remember Saint Nicholas. He even has his own day of the year, St Nicholas Day on December 6th. In many European countries he gives special gifts to children and is known as the patron saint of children. He is given a special name, Santa Claus. On one night of the year, children still put a stocking out on the end of the bed in the hope that Saint Nicholas will come in the dead of night and fill it up with presents.

The Little Fir Tree [Christmas, nature, celebration of difference]

Telling : *This story can be simply told with no props, or it can be told as a dramatic story or play, with you or the children being the trees and presenting themselves and their gifts to a cradle with a doll in it. In the corner is the Christmas tree.*

Hints : *Present the fruit and nuts whole, so they can't be eaten throughout the story. Make sure you don't use poisonous berries, leaves or flowers.*

Extension : *This story can be used to introduce the decorating of the Christmas tree. Include more 'food' trees and have a feast afterwards. Get children to sample the fruits eg. olives, oranges, walnuts. Talk about texture and taste and the food traditions surrounding Christmas or other festive occasions. As this story is a story of origins, encourage them to talk about other ways particular traditions or rituals may have come into place.*

A long time ago a baby was born and a wonderful celebration took place. Everyone from all over the land came to look at the baby and bring him gifts. Even the trees brought gifts for him.

First came the blossom trees, with their beautiful flowers and berries. They offered themselves as colourful and fragrant decorations.

Then came the big cedar, oak, gum and willow trees, who offered to shade and shelter the baby with their abundant foliage.

Next came the trees that bore fruit and nuts. There was the orange tree and the walnut tree and the olive tree and even the apple trees came. All of them offered their scrumptious gifts to the baby.

Right at the very back of all the trees stood the little fir tree. She had no gifts at all to offer. No fruit or nuts, berries or flowers, and because she was small she couldn't even offer any shade.

The little fir tree was very upset because she didn't have a gift to give the baby. Above her the stars twinkled. As they looked down upon the little fir tree they felt sorry for her and came down to rest in her branches. The little fir tree now glowed with their light. When the little baby saw the little tree with its beautiful, shiny lights he was so happy, he began to smile.

From that time on, whenever that little baby's birthday is celebrated, people find a little fir tree and they decorate it with shiny coloured lights. And now that little fir tree has become the most important tree of all... the Christmas tree.

You may like to sing a Christmas carol like O Tannenbaum (O Christmas Tree) to follow the story. A platter of oranges cut into segments can be handed around your audience.

*I wrote **Jingle Bells: the Beach version** with a pre school teacher's words in mind. She said that something with rashy shirts and hats would be great. They were winning the battle to get kids to wear sunblock, but shirts and hats was another matter. Remember to slip, slap, slop. And then there were the kids who kept asking about the snow at Christmas. As a child I lived at the foot of the Snowy Mountains in NSW and I remember one year waking up to a blanket of snow on the ground. But we've had more blue moons than white Christmas's in Australia. (For the bold an adornment of bathers, sunnies and sunblock should be the go, with an accompanying bucket and spade to wave about).*

Jingle Bells [Australian Christmas, beach]

Surfing at the beach,
Gonna catch a wave.
Playing in the sand,
I bought my bucket and spade.

Got sunblock on my face,
A rashy shirt and hat.
Christmas day will soon be here,
Hooray lets give a clap. Hey

Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells,
Jingle all the way.
Oh what fun it is to surf
At the beach on Christmas Day, Hey, (repeat)

THE CASE FOR POLITICAL CORRECTNESS IN CHILDREN'S RHYMES

A lot of people think 'political correctness' is a hangover from the 70's. As I was very fond of the 70's and still have my Skyhooks album and Amco flairs, being accused of political correctness doesn't worry me. I believe there is a place for challenging the use of sexist and racist terminology and concepts, particularly in children's rhymes. The rhyme **My Mother Said** opens with,

'My Mother said, I never should,
Play with the Gypsies, in the wood.'

This is based on the notion that 'gypsies' are bad people who shouldn't be associated with. In reality the Romany people (often referred to as gypsies) have suffered, and still do, extreme forms of racism such as exclusion, abuse and harassment.

By changing 'gypsies' to 'tigers' there is no change to the integral concept of the rhyme, and it removes the racist innuendo. The same applies to the popular children's elimination rhyme **Eeny Meeny Miny Mo**.

Yesterday I heard my 4-year-old neighbour say 'catch a nigger by the toe.' I called out to her that I thought it was 'catch a tiger by the toe,' and said the rhyme. Today her older sister told me that her mum said it was 'nigger', so I explained that 'nigger' was a word that upset people and that 'tiger' was the one I liked to use.

I remember hearing a version once that said 'catch a nickle', but I think this was too close to 'nigger' and was still heard as such.

Why we don't we just let these rhymes die a natural death? If they stopped being published or performed on children's TV programmes, wouldn't they just fade into oblivion?

Some of the most racist rhymes I remember from my childhood have done exactly that. So why haven't others?

I believe that the power of the spoken word is alive and strong. One of its favourite dominions is the school playground. Here children learn variants of their parents and grandparents rhymes. The origins of these rhymes may be rooted in human tragedies, social mores or political upheaval, but that means little to the children who say them. They are rhythmical, easy to learn and remember and fun to say. The most effective way of challenging racist and sexist material in children's rhymes is not through suppression, but infiltration. Teach the kids alternative versions. That also might mean saying them in front of older family members so they too can hear the contemporary versions. Storytimes are an ideal place to say them. And if anyone challenges you on being PC, remind them that anti-racist work takes many forms. I look forward to hearing the responses. Here's a couple for starters (apologies to any tigers that may be offended by them).

Eeny Meeny Miny Mo

Eeny Meeny Miny Mo
Catch a tiger by the toe.
If he roars, let him go.
Eeny Meeny Miny Mo.

My Mother Said

My mother said, I never should,
play with the tigers, in the wood.
If I did, she would say,
naughty girl, to disobey.
Your hair won't curl, your eyes won't shine,
you naughty girl, you shan't be mine.
My father said, if I did
he'd rap my head, with a teapot lid.
The wood was dark, the grass was green,
in came Sally, with a tambourine.
I went to sea, no ship to get across,
I paid ten dollars, for a blind, white horse.
I sat on his back, was off in a crack,
Sally tell my mother, I aint coming back.

OUTDOOR STORYTIMES

These rhymes work well outside on a fine day. Make sure the children know the boundaries you have set for them (eg not past the gum tree and as far as the back fence) set up the 'story spot' (it might be on a mat, a patch of grass or a seat) and also have a loud instrument such as a horn, whistle or drum that everyone has to listen for. When you play it once it means everyone has to 'freeze'. When you play it again they have to come back to the 'story spot'. Have a few practices first so they know the 'game'.

Bubbles [wind, shapes]

This rhyme works wonderfully if you have a bubble pipe or bubble ring. Say the rhyme and then children chase the bubbles to pop them.

Bubbles, bubbles, bubbles
Bubbles everywhere.
Bubbles on my nose,
Bubbles on my hair.
Big bubbles, little bubbles,
Lets see if they pop.
Pop, pop, pop, pop,
Pop, pop...pop!

Running Running Running [actions]

This rhyme can be done running or walking on the spot if you are inside. If you're in the park let the kids go wild. You will want them to hear you to follow your directions, so have a back up whistle to blow as STOP. Teachers may like to try jogging around the oval and saying the poem with their class.

Running running running
Running down the hill.
Running running running STOP
Now we're standing still
(pant pant pant, puff puff puff)

Running running running
back up to the top.
Running running running
When can we ... STOP?
(pant pant pant, puff puff puff)

Running running running
Running very fast
Running running running
Now we're home at last.

Puffing Billy [trains]

The great thing about trains is that they can have 1, 2 or 20 carriages and they can either chug or rollick along at lightning pace...but beware of derailments. Children make a line to form Puffing Billy. Place one hand on the shoulder of the child in front. Make the appropriate sounds and actions to the song. A train whistle is a bonus with this rhyme.*

** thanks to Ros Bulloch from Manning and Great Lakes Early Intervention Centre for this suggestion which seems to be the most comfortable and secure connection for 'carriages' to attach to each other.*

Here comes Puffing Billy
Puffing down the track
Here comes Puffing Billy
Clicketty clicketty clack
Here the whistle blowing
WOOOOWOO WOOOOWOO
Chugga chugga chugga chugga
Choo choo choo
Chugga chugga chugga chugga
Choo choo choo

STORYTIMES FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART

These storytimes are not only an opportunity to celebrate the lives of older people in your community, they can provide a bridge of friendship and understanding between the generations. Many children do not see their own grandparents and great grandparents and many nursing home residents don't get to see children. This activity satisfies both needs.

Give your regular storytime participants an invitation for them to give to a Special Older Person they would like to come to Storytime. In addition, invite your local nursing home or retirement village residents to come along. They might like to bring a plate of food to share, that they cook themselves or buy. Alternatively you can provide the refreshments.

Create a space during your session for older people to contribute their favourite rhyme, riddle or nursery rhyme when they were a child. You might like to start off with a traditional one that you use at storytimes, such as **open shut them**, **incy wincy** or **twinkle twinkle**, just to get folk going. Expect some old favourites and a few that are a little more obscure.

Ask the teller about the context that they used to say the rhyme.(The story behind the story). Who taught it to them? Did they sit on someone's knee? Use your judgment to see whether the teller is happy to tell from where they are sitting or whether they are able to come out the front.

Here are some ideas for inclusion in your storytime. This song can be sung or chanted.

The Old Woman who Swallowed a Fly

There are many ways this song can be performed. Because it's traditional, many parents and grandparents also know it. It's therefore particularly suitable for All Age Occasions.

Telling: *The storyteller wears a storytelling cloak. Plastic animals are lined up for children to choose and place into a cloak pocket. Alternatively give the animals out first and the children put them in when their animal is called.*

Hint: *Small children are reluctant to part with things they have been given so this method works best with older ones. Instead of 'real' animals, paper or felt cut-out animals can be stuck onto the cloak. Give children particular lines to say. eg. 'Perhaps she'll die.' Pause when you go through the order of the animals to allow children to guess them.*

There was an old woman who swallowed a fly,
I don't know why she swallowed a fly,
Perhaps she'll die?

There was an old woman who swallowed a spider,
That wriggled and jiggled and squiggled inside her.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly,
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die?

There was an old woman who swallowed a bird.
How absurd to swallow a bird.
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,
That wriggled and jiggled and squiggled inside her.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die?

There was an old woman who swallowed a cat.
Fancy that, she swallowed a cat.
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird,
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,
That wriggled and jiggled and squiggled inside her.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die?

There was an old woman who swallowed a dog.
Oh what a hog to swallow a dog.
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat,
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird,
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,
That wriggled and jiggled and squiggled inside her.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die?

There was an old woman who swallowed a goat.
Opened her throat and swallowed a goat.
She swallowed the goat to catch the dog,
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat,
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird,
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,
That wriggled and jiggled and squiggled inside her.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die?

There was an old woman who swallowed a cow.
I don't know how she swallowed a cow.
She swallowed the cow to catch the goat,
She swallowed the goat to catch the dog,
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat,
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird,
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider.
That wriggled and jiggled and squiggled inside her.

She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die?

There was an old woman who swallowed a horse!
And what do you think happened?
She died of course.
(She should have eaten it with tomato sauce!!!)

This riddle should be directed to older people who will very likely know the answer.

30 white horses upon a red hill.

Now they stamp,

Now they champ,

Now they stand still.

What are they?

Answer: The teeth and gums

My daughter loves it when my mother pokes her false teeth out. You maybe lucky and have additional entertainment with someone who can do this trick too. An Easter theme can be incorporated into your older person's storytime by telling this simple story about the Easter Bunny.

Easter Bunny's Helpers [Easter, food, sharing]

"I'm sick", said the Easter Bunny. Who is going to deliver the Easter eggs to all the girls and boys? The Easter Bunny set off to find out who could do this very important job. Brown cow will you take the Easter eggs to all the girls and boys? And brown cow said "MOO...I'm too busy giving milk to the farmer."

Tabby cat will you take the Easter eggs to all the girls and boys? And tabby cat said "MIAOW...I'm too busy having kittens."

Grey mare will you take the Easter eggs to all the girls and boys? And grey mare said "NEIGH...I'm too busy carrying the children on my back.

Pink pig will you take the Easter eggs to all the boys and girls? And pink pig said "OINK...I'm too busy eating up the slops."

Then through the grass came a sliding and a slithering Black snake.

I'll take the Easssstter eggsss to all the girlssss and boyssss. I love eggssss. But the Easter Bunny wondered whether Black snake could be trusted. Do you think so? ...

Is there someone here who isn't too busy to deliver the Easter eggs, and who isn't going to eat them?

Choose 2 volunteers and give them an empty basket.

You're looking for the Easter eggs aren't you? *(to the basket holders)*

Oh dear. You have to collect the eggs first and put them in the basket and then you can give them out to all the girls and boys. Now where are the Easter eggs?

Hide Easter eggs around the room beforehand. Address your audience.

If you find an egg you can bring it to the Easter bunny's helpers and fill up the basket.

When all eggs are collected then you distribute them to young and old alike.

This rhyme was written to help children learn the days of the week. It can be sung or rapped as a group or choose 7 children to each be a day of the week and say a line.

Stamp your feet for the days of the week [learning days of the week, shoes]

Stamp your feet for the days of the week *(All together)*

Monday I wear runners
Tuesday is shoes day
Wednesday I go barefoot
Thursday I wear thongs
Friday is for flip flops
Saturday its sandals
Sunday is slipper day
And then we start again

(repeat and include stamp your feet for the days of the week)

*This poem can be done as a call and answer rhyme, where the leader says the first 3 lines and the group say the 4th in each verse. It's also fun to do dramatically with 'real' shoes. There is a strong beat that can be clapped or stamped in time to the poem. If you want to include this one in a storytelling session then the story **The Elves and the Shoemaker** is a great follow up.*

Shoes Go On My Feet [shoes]

(Leader)

Old shoes, new shoes,
Red and white and blue shoes,
Specially for you shoes,

(All)

Shoes go on my feet.

(Leader)

Black shoes, brown shoes,
Wear them in to town shoes,
My favourite are the clown shoes,

(All)

Shoes go on my feet.

(Leader)

Mum's shoes, dad's shoes,
Good shoes, bad shoes,
Happy shoes, sad shoes,

(All)

Shoes go on my feet.

Healthy Bones Week can be celebrated with the following traditional song (Dry Bones) which I rewrote for that purpose. Storytelling is an effective and fun method of promoting good health to children.

Strong Bones [bones, health]

You may like to have a poster or a model of a skeleton that you can point to as you go through the way the bones are connected or have children to touch their own bones.

The foot bone's connected to the leg bone,
The leg bone's connected to the knee bone,
The knee bone's connected to the thigh bone,
The thigh bone's connected to the hip bone,
The hip bone's connected to the back bone,
The back bone's connected to the neck bone,
The neck bone's connected to the head bone,
Stand up and walk tall.

Strong bones they're gonna walk (*) around
Strong bones they're gonna walk (*) around
Strong bones they're gonna walk (*) around
Stand up and walk tall. (#)

() In progressive verses you can substitute other actions, such as hop, jump, run*

(#) If your group are wheelchair bound substitute the line,

Strong bones they're gonna sit up straight (3 times)
Sit up straight and tall.

You gotta drink milk (") to have strong bones,
You gotta drink milk (") to have strong bones,
You gotta drink milk (") to have strong bones,
Stand up and walk tall.
(") Accompanying action of drinking milk

You might offer alternative names for the bones, such as skull, patella, femur, tibia and spine. The teeth and the bones are connected so you can follow on with this riddle.

Question - Name 6 things smaller than an ant.

Answer - 6 of its teeth.

I think this was the first riddle that I learnt, from a Doctor Seuss book that came out when I was in Infants school. It really tickled my fancy...obviously if I am still telling it 40 years later!

One of my children's favourite never ending stories told to them by their father is this one. It was told to him as a child, and undoubtedly generations to come will hear it.

A neverending story [teeth]

Once upon a time there was an old man who had a hole in his tooth. And in that hole there was a note. And on that note were written the words...Once upon a time there was an old man who had a hole in his tooth. And in that...(and so on)

The Outback Rap [Australia, language]

*As a child, my favourite poem was **My Country** by Dorothea Mackellar. Although there are numerous verses in the poem, this one seems to be the most well known. As an adult I have reclaimed this poem and present it in different ways. The first is as an addendum to a story I tell by Dame May Gilmore, where I sing it to the tune of Advance Australia Fair. Go on try it for yourself. It works! The second is as the chorus in **The Outback Rap**. Making poetry accessible and interesting to children is a matter of selection and presentation. Three poets who have written some gems for children are Eleanor Farjeon, Spike Milligan and CJ Dennis. There are many wonderful contemporary poets but not all of their works can be appreciated out loud. The phrases "Hist, hark, the night is very dark" and "Hey there, hoopla the circus is in town" still excite me after 35 years. Saying that, I recommend that everyone who presents stories to children should have at their fingertips a treasury of 'say out loud' poems they can trot out. Don't worry if you haven't managed to memorise them, the children will love them anyway. And the more you say them, the easier it will become to remember them. This rap is a combined effort of Dorothea Mackellar and myself and is great fun to do with kids and clapsticks. It is suitable for older children.*

Yacketty Yack, Clicketty Clack,
Lets all do the outback rap.
Starve the lizards and stone the crows,
Send her down Hughie, hooray lets go.
Been beyond the black stump, been back of Burke,
Been up Woop Woop, going berserk.
I'm waltzing Matilda down the track,
I'm going bush and I ain't coming back.

Chorus

Yeah I love a sunburnt country
A land of sweeping plains,
Of rugged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains,
I love her far horizons
I love her jewel sea,
Her beauty and her terror,
The wide brown land for me.**
Yeah me ** Yeah me.

The red bull's loose and I seen a Joe Blake,
Got a jumbuck in me tuckerbag, shut the bloody gate,
Billy's on the boil, telly's on the blink,
Mum's on the warpath, I'll give you the wink.
So we load up the car, front, boot and rack,
Hooroo to the big smoke, see ya down the track.

Yacketty Yack, Clicketty Clack,
Lets all do the outback rap.

Chorus

* = clap

Optional use of clapsticks to set beat. Akubras may be worn back to front!

STORYTELLING: TALES FOR LIFE

More than ever we need to give our children positive life experiences and offer them a world that is just, peaceful and compassionate. Even if we feel that the world we inhabit in our daily lives does not reflect these qualities it is beholden upon us to present our 'alternative' world at every opportunity; and what better way than through the world of story. We need look no further than traditional stories; folk and fairytales, myths and legends to find the stories to fulfil this quest. I state this with the following reservations; many myths are creation stories, which although culturally important, do not necessarily, relate to this purpose. Many legends are too complex for small children to appreciate, so are better told or read to older children.

There are definite ideas propounded in traditional stories. Goodness always triumphs; evil will be punished; justice will be served; everyone will live happily ever after. What is so appealing in these tales is their simplicity. They are archetypal. Good and evil are black and white, which is necessary in developing a child's healthy understanding of virtues and vices. The shades of grey come later, for us to struggle with in our emerging adulthood.

Another common aspect to these stories is that of character reversal, which is especially appealing to children. Here the youngest, the poorest, the silliest will become the hero, the king or the wise one. This validates the concept that an individual, no matter how seemingly powerless, can change the course of events, for the better.

Many 'nursery tales' and folktales have animals as their main characters. Their anthropomorphic structure enhances a young audience's identification with the characters and offers a wonderful opportunity for dramatic presentation of the story. It's not unusual for children listening to a nursery tale to spontaneously join in with the actions, words or animal noises.

To find folk and fairytales in your local library, go to the 398 section in the Children's area. You may be overwhelmed by the choices you have. One of the difficulties is finding a suitable version to learn and tell, as many are literary

stories, suitable for reading but needing modification for telling. An example is Joseph Jacob's **Three Little Pigs**. It begins with the quirky rhyme,

*Once upon a time when pigs spoke rhyme
And monkeys chewed tobacco,
And hens took snuff to make them tough,
And ducks went quack, quack, quack, O!*

These can still be your opening lines to the story, even when telling to very young children, who love the bounce of a well spoken rhyme. However this version, the 'original' has additional activities the third little pig does to outwit the wolf, such as getting turnips, apples and a butter churn, which are usually left out in told versions. Editing nursery and fairytales is essential when using a written version(s) as the foundation for your told story. My basic rule is to not let description detract from action. I like to work with the bones of a story and add to that if and when appropriate to my audience and the context of the telling.

Suitable 'oral' tellings of traditional tales can be found in the Tell Me books. The following story is an example of an oral version of a folktale as opposed to a literary version. It can be told without the book or read aloud.

The Three Little Pigs [animals]

My story of The Three Little Pigs can be told ignoring the duality of teller and children's roles. Participation by the children can be invited by a pause at the end of a question, or as the children are familiar with the story it comes unbidden. Alternatively use this dual storytelling format, which works similarly to a play script.

Teller : Once upon a time there were three little pigs. The first little pig built his house out of straw. But who should come along?

Children : The big bad wolf.

Teller : And he said.

Together : Little pig, little pig, let me come in.

Teller : And the little pig said.

Together : Not by the hair of my chinny, chin, chin.

Teller : And the big bad wolf said.

Together : Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in.

Teller : So he huffed and he puffed and he blew the house in.

Together : (BLOW)

Teller : So the little pig ran to his brother's house. It was made out of... sticks. But who should come along?

Children : The big bad wolf.

Teller : And he said.

Together : Little pigs, little pigs, let me come in.

Teller : And the pigs said.

Together : Not by the hair of our chinny, chin, chin.

Teller : So the big bad wolf said.

Together : Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in.

Teller : So he huffed and he puffed and he blew the house in.

Children : (BLOW)

Teller : So the little pigs ran to their brother's house. It was made out of... bricks. But who should come along?

Children : The big bad wolf.

Teller : And he said.

Together : Little pigs, little pigs, let me come in.

Teller : And the pigs said.

Children : Not by the hair of our chinny, chin, chin.

Teller : So the big bad wolf said.

Together : Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in.

Teller : So he huffed and he puffed. And he puffed and he huffed. And he huffed and he puffed. But he could not blow the house in. Then the big bad wolf had an idea. He climbed up the side of the house.

Together : (act out climbing and click tongue 4 times)

Teller : He crawled across the roof of the house.

Together : Galoomph, galoomph, galoomph, galoomph.

Teller : He climbed down the chimney.

Together : Scritch scratch, scritch, scratch.

Teller : But the three little pigs had put a big pot of boiling water onto the fire. So when the wolf climbed down the chimney he fell, kerplash! into the water and scalded his tail.

Together : YOWWEEEE!!!

Teller : And the big bad wolf scampered off and was never seen again. The three little pigs were so happy they sang a song.

Together : Who's afraid of the big bad wolf,

Big bad wolf, big bad wolf.

Who's afraid of the big bad wolf?

A ha, ha, ha, ha... Not Us!

Additional Material is available through Morgon's workshops and her books. Following is information about workshops for Early Childhood Professionals. They are available in Australia and Overseas. For further information on International storytelling please see her website.

www.schatzblackrose.com

The following workshops are available for parents and early childhood professionals in Australia. They are also available Overseas. (POA)

MANY STORIES MANY LANDS

A celebration of Storytelling in the World

Time: 3 hours - Cost :\$50 pp

Maximum 60 people

Participants learn 5 tales from different cultures and traditions, including a variety of ways they can be told. Culturally inclusive participation rhymes, bi-lingual songs and dances are also taught, so that participants will leave feeling confident in their ability to create diverse, dramatic and dynamic storytimes with their children. Worksheets are provided.

STORYTIMES FOR EVERYONE

A Workshop on Inclusive Storytelling

Time: 3 hours - Cost: \$50 pp

Maximum 60 people

Participants learn 12 new raps, rhymes, dances, stories and songs, some with accompanying Makaton signs. The focus is on exploring and applying inclusive ways of communicating, with an emphasis on movement and sensory experience. Worksheets are provided.

TALES FOR TERRIFIC TALKERS

Storytelling as Speech Therapy with Speech Therapist, Kerrie Murphy

Time: 3 hours - Cost \$70 pp - incl. book

Maximum 60 people

Participants learn 12 speech therapy techniques and how to incorporate them into storytelling and language sessions for young children. Stories and raps from our book tell me too! tales for terrific talkers are also taught. The material from this workshop, while specifically addressing the therapeutic needs of children with delays in speech and language development, is suitable for all children under 8.