**Story Fest** is a storytelling event that engages students in the pursuit of literature and the arts and nurtures the preservation of the oral tradition of storytelling. Students will develop an appreciation of literature, the art of storytelling; develop presentation skills and individual confidence in their ability to speak publicly.

Each school is encouraged to hold a school, in-house, *Story Fest*, or to provide an opportunity for students to tell their stories before the district festival.

Registration Forms Will Be Accepted Online at:

Event Guidelines

1. Stories must be told from memory and not read aloud. Stories should not be memorized and retold word for word, however.

2. Stories may be told individually or two people may tell a story in tandem. No groups larger than two will be accepted. [Note that it is recommended that students have individual storytelling experience before storytelling in tandem.]

3. Stories should be 3-6 minutes long. The presentation time and scoring ends at a maximum of 6 minutes.

4. Please, no props or costumes.

5. The story told may be a published folk tale, fairy tale, myth, legend, fable or tall tale. It is important, however, that each storyteller tells their story through their unique perspective.

Frequently Asked Questions:

- What are activities I can use with my students to help prepare them for Story Fest?
- Where do my students begin?
- What tips do you have for students when they’re actually telling the story?
- How will the storytellers be evaluated?
- What are examples of traditional tales?
- What will the district competition be like?
- Where can I get more information such as lesson plans, tips, and video resources?
- Who do I contact for more information?

“The most powerful person in the world is the storyteller. The storyteller sets the vision, values and agenda of an entire generation that is to come.”

– Steve Jobs
What are activities I can use with my students to help prepare them for Story Fest?

- Have students create and tell “Fractured Fairy Tales” (characters meeting from different folk tales etc.) or telling the story from another point of view.
- Tell most of an unfamiliar story and have students provide the ending.
- Play the “Add On” story game. One person begins the story. Each person in turn adds a sentence or part to the story.
- Have students act out, walk and talk, a character from a story.
- Read stories from a specific area or country. Read different versions of the same story.
- Have students bring a natural object such as an interesting stone, flower, leaf or bird’s nest to school. Then, in turn, have each child show the object and tell the story.
- Create a new adventure for a favorite character or add a new character to an existing story.
- Call out an emotion and have the students use their faces and/or bodies to show that emotion. Examples: Surprised, scared, mad, sad, silly, disappointed, thankful, excited, bored, shy, frustrated, happy.
- Have students bring in family heirlooms etc., and then write or tell stories to go with those pieces. Find and tell family stories.
- Tell “whoppers” or “tall tales.” Who can tell the wildest story or tale? This is especially useful for younger children who may be reluctant tellers.
- Check out the curated Units, Lesson Plans, and suggested books for teaching story at Story Crossroads.
Where do my students begin?

- Search for a story that you are eager to learn. Don’t waste time on material that does not inspire you. You can find stories in favorite books, magazines, newspapers, the local library, the internet or you can go to a local storyteller.

- You want to become very familiar with your story. You want to know the story, but you don’t want it to sound memorized.

- Develop story memory by chunking the events. Story memory does not mean learning the story word for word, sentence for sentence. It means developing an understanding of story structure. Make a storyboard/story map of your story.

- Visualize the scenes: Who are the people in each scene? What do they look like? How do they talk, move, and stand?

- Practice alone in your room or video yourself telling a story. Use body language and appropriate gestures.

- Practice your story out loud as much as possible. Get used to telling your story in front of other people. Make sure you are not looking at only one person.

- Speak clearly and speak up. Interpret even the narrative parts of the story with appropriate emotions or moods of happiness, sadness, apprehension, etc.

- If there is only narration in the story, change some of it into dialogue to make the story more exciting. Give characters different voices or dialects. You can also use your body differently with different characters.

- Interpret even the narrative parts of the story with appropriate emotions or moods of happiness, sadness, apprehension, etc.
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- Check out the Units, Lesson Plans, and suggested books for teaching story [here at Story Crossroads](#).
What tips do you have for students when they’re actually telling the story?

- **Grab the Audience’s Attention:** You must stand out from the rest of the crowd. Introduce the story with a short sentence or introduction.

- **Poise:** Stand shoulder width apart with slightly bent knees. Practice in the mirror or to a video camera.

- **Vocal Clarity:** Speak slowly enough for everyone to understand you. Make sure your words are not “mushy.”

- **Voice Expression:** Watch the tempo. Slow down! Make repetitious parts different. Practice emphasizing a different word each time you say a repeated sentence. Have enthusiasm or a reason to say something the same exact way every time.

- **Eye Contact:** Tell your story to the whole audience: front, back, middle and both sides. Play with and to the audience.

- **Body Language:** Avoid grabbing body, sleeves, pant legs or twirl jewelry, unless it is for a specific character. Know what your hands and feet are doing. Avoid standing right next to furniture or up against a wall.

- **Appropriate Gestures:** Put your body naturally into the story. Too many gestures get in the way of the audience listening to you.

- **Familiarity with Story:** Be familiar with your story. If you are, you will be more relaxed and able to engage the audience. Avoid big pauses or looking at the floor or ceiling.

- **Satisfying Ending:** End your story with energy. The audience wants to be able to pick it up and take it home with them.
How will the storytellers be evaluated? ¹

Set-up and Engaging Introduction
Takes the stage with confidence.
Captures the attention of the audience.
Introduces themselves and story title clearly.
Has thought about the story enough to give it a clear, concise introduction.

Poise
Teller likes the tale.
Nerves do not affect the teller or the telling.
Teller recovers from trouble that may arise.
Has a natural manner as the story is delivered.

Enunciation
Voice volume is up and teller can be heard.
Teller’s voice is pleasant and easy to listen to.
Voice has clarity and words are enunciated.

Voice Expression
Voice is used to bring interest into the story.
Voice is not monotone.
Teller uses pitch and pacing to vary the story.
If different voices and/or dialects are used, they were consistent and done well.

Eye Contact
Looks naturally at the entire audience.
Makes eye contact with people from the middle, front, back and both sides of the audience.

Facial Expression
Uses entire face as a nice complement to the storytelling.
Face is engaged and not detached from the story.
Face adds to, does not detract from the telling.
Face adds effortless additions to the character

Body Language
Body is used to reflect physicality of character.
Body is relaxed and part of the story.
Teller uses body to reflect the emotion of the character.
Physical habits to not disturb the story.

Appropriate Gestures
Remember, “Less is More!” Teller does not act out the story.
Gestures fit the story and help interpret characters or setting.

¹ (Used by permission from the Timpanogos Storytelling Festival and from Youth Tells: Nanette Watts)
Teller’s gestures help tell and move the story along.
Telling is free of distracting or nervous action.

**Pacing**
Teller varies the speed of the tale: fast, slow, and in-between.
Teller regulates tempo to hold and include audience in the tale.
Dramatic pause is used effectively.
Teller waits for audience response: laughter, sighs, gasps, etc.

**Enthusiasm and Connection**
Teller likes the story.
Teller is mentally engaged and makes connections with the tale.
Teller “has a sparkle behind the eyes” and shows spirit in the telling.
Teller is part of the story and has a mental picture of where they are in the story.

**Satisfying Ending**
Teller brought the audience back from the journey, letting them “off” appropriately.
There was a final resolution to the plot, a denouement.
Storyteller allowed the ending moments of appreciation and did not rush off the stage.
Storyteller exists with confidence.

**Familiarity with Story**
Teller can “play” with the story on the spot, if needed.
Teller has told this story so many times it is a natural part of them.
Teller does not stumble over words.
Teller does not need to look up or into the “mind’s eye” to remember the story.

**Story Flow**
Story was not made up on the spot.
Story ideas are combined in a thoughtful way.
Teller adds a “twist” to a well-known tale, and it works.
Story is well crafted and clever.

**Uniqueness**
Is the tale an original choice?
Does the length of the story fit the storyteller?
Is the story appropriate for school-age listeners?
Were instructions followed if a specific genre or theme was assigned?
### Story Fest
#### Evaluation Sheet - Rubric

Name: _______________________________________________         Grade: _______

Story Title: ______________________________________________________________

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<th>Needs Work</th>
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Comments:
What are examples of Traditional Tales?

**Fable:** A narration intended to enforce some universal truth or precept, especially one in which animals and even inanimate objects talk and act as human beings.

**Fairy Tale:** A narrative containing supernatural or improbable events, scenes or personages; often has a whimsical, satirical or moralistic character.

**Folktale:** A tale circulated by word of mouth among the common people, especially a tale characteristically anonymous, timeless and placeless.

**Legend:** A story coming down from the past that is popularly regarded as historical although it is not entirely verifiable.

**Myth:** A story that is usually of unknown origin, and at least partly traditional, that ostensibly relates historical events usually of such character to explain some practice, belief, institution or natural phenomena that is especially associated with religious rites and beliefs.

**Tall Tale:** A story that claims to explain the reason for some natural phenomenon or sometimes illustrates that the subject of the tale was skilled, intelligent and/or powerful. In either case, the tall tale is fictional and usually obviously so. It can, however, be based on a real figure in history.
What will the district competition be like?

During the event, students will be set up with a microphone, introduced to the audience, and then they will walk to the front of the audience. When they are finished they will walk away from the front of the room, return the microphone, and be given a Participation Certificate.

After everyone has told their story, the judges will tally scores, winners will be announced and given 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} place ribbons. These students will then have the opportunity to meet with representatives from Story Crossroads to compete in their storytelling events.
Who do I contact for more information?

If you have other questions or are looking for more resources, you can always reach out to your site-based Achievement Coach, your External Coach, or any member of the ISD Story Fest team listed below:

**Your ISD Story Fest Team Includes:**

Leslie Robinet at [leslie.robinet@canyonsdistrict.org](mailto:leslie.robinet@canyonsdistrict.org)

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Sharee Jorgensen at [sharee.jorgensen@canyonsdistrict.org](mailto:sharee.jorgensen@canyonsdistrict.org)

Scott Christensen at [scott.christensen@canyonsdistrict.org](mailto:scott.christensen@canyonsdistrict.org)