

STUDY GUIDE

DISCIPLINE:
LITERARY ARTS

ARTIST:
JENNIFER CAYLEY



The following package is provided as a supplemental resource to enhance and support the artist’s visit.

It includes curricular connections, assessment strategies, and suggested classroom extensions. All materials are intended for use at the teacher’s discretion and may be adapted as necessary to suit the specific needs of the students.

THIS STUDY GUIDE

Discipline / Artist Example:

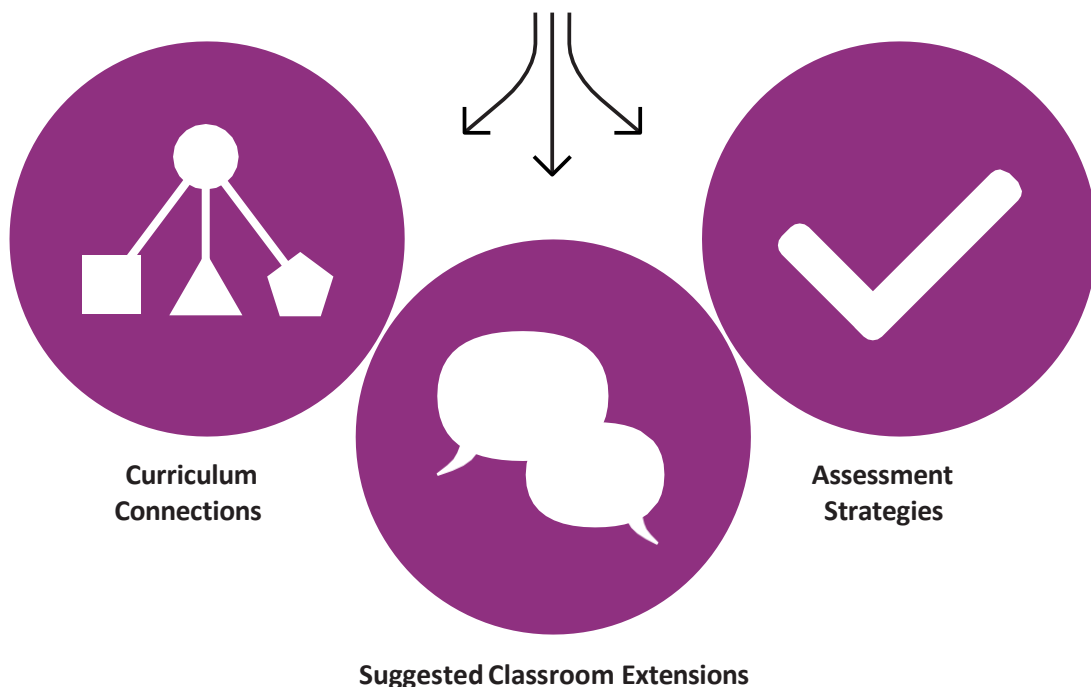


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STUDY GUIDE: LITERARY ARTS

THEATRE BEFORE THEATRE: WORLD OF STORIES

Program Overview

Artist Name: Jennifer Cayley

Artist Bio: Jennifer Cayley has performed storytelling for over 30 years, focusing on folk, fairy tales, and world epics. She has toured internationally, appeared at festivals, and worked extensively with youth in schools and communities. Co-founder of MASC, Jennifer is part of several arts rosters, including the Ontario Arts Council and TD Canada Trust's Children's Book Week Tour.

Program Description: Oral storytelling is one of the oldest and perhaps most compelling forms of dramatic and imaginative activity. The engaging and age-appropriate selection of traditional folk and fairy tales of this program opens up a world of adventure and imagination for your students, encouraging empathy, self-reflection, intercultural respect, language development, and active listening. There are simple interactive tales for the very young, wonder tales shining with vivid imagery and remarkable exploits for middle grades and the grandeur of the world's great epics for older participants.

Artistic Discipline: Literary Arts, Drama

Recommended Grade Levels: K - 12

Session Logistics: In person or online



Vocab bank/glossary: [Click here](#)



THEATRE BEFORE THEATRE: WORLD OF STORIES

Curriculum Connections

Learning Themes:

- Demonstrate knowledge and skills gained through exposure to and engagement in drama, dance, music, and visual arts. (K)
- Strand B – Reflecting, Responding and Analysing
 - Apply the critical analysis process to communicate feelings, ideas, and understandings in response to a variety of drama works and experiences. (Grades 1-8)
 - Use the critical analysis process to reflect on and evaluate their own and others' drama works. (Grades 9-12)
 - Demonstrate an understanding of how societies present and past use or have used drama, and of how creating and viewing drama can benefit individuals, groups, and communities. (Grades 9-12)
- Strand C - Exploring Forms and Cultural Contexts
 - Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of drama and theatre forms and styles from the past and present, and their social and/or community contexts. (Grades 1-8)
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the origins and development of drama and theatre arts and their influence on past and present societies. (Grades 9-12)

THEATRE BEFORE THEATRE: WORLD OF STORIES

Extend the Learning (Discussion Prompts)

Here are optional discussion prompts to extend the artist session in the classroom. These are recommended and are not mandatory. Please use what is best for your classroom. You can also find suggested activities in the additional resources package.

K

Pre

- What is a storyteller? What do you think they do?
- Have you heard a story told out loud? What did you like about it?
- What kind of characters do you like in stories, animals, heroes, or fairies?

During

- What is happening in the story right now?
- What does the storyteller's voice sound like? Is it loud, soft, silly?
- What part of the story made you laugh or feel excited?

Post

- What was your favorite story? Can you remember a part of it?
- Can you tell someone else the story in your own words?
- How did the story make you feel?

GRADES
1-3

Pre

- Why do you think people told stories before there were books?
- What makes a story fun to listen to?
- What do you think a folk tale or fairy tale is?

During

- What did the storyteller do that helped you imagine the story?
- What was your favorite part of the story, and why?

Post

- Which story would you want to tell your family or friends? Why?
- What did the story teach you about kindness, bravery, or sharing?
- Can you make up your own story with a hero and a surprise?

GRADES
4-6

Pre

- Why do you think people used to tell stories instead of writing them down?
- What kinds of lessons can stories teach us?
- What's your favorite folk or fairy tale, and why?

During

- How did the storyteller use her voice and gestures to bring the story to life?
- What do you notice about how the characters act or change?
- What message or moral do you think the story is trying to share?

Post

- Which story stayed with you the most, and why?
- Did you see yourself or your culture in any of the stories?
- How could you tell a story using just your voice and body?

GRADES

7-8

Pre

- How do you think oral storytelling is different from reading or watching a movie?
- Why do you think traditional stories are still told today?
- What role do heroes or villains play in stories from different cultures?

During

- What storytelling techniques stood out?
- How does hearing the story change your understanding of it?
- What emotions did you feel as the story was told?

Post

- Which cultural values or traditions were reflected in the story?
- How could storytelling be used to share your own history or experiences?
- Would you ever want to become a storyteller? Why or why not?

GRADES

9-12

Pre

- How has oral storytelling shaped history, education, and culture?
- Why is it important to preserve stories from many different cultures?
- How do you think performance affects a story's impact?

During

- What literary devices or motifs are present in the oral stories (e.g., archetypes, repetition)?
- How does live storytelling influence your emotional or intellectual engagement?
- What similarities and differences do you notice between the stories told and those in written literature?

Post

- What themes or social messages did the stories explore?
- How can oral storytelling build empathy and intercultural understanding?
- How could storytelling be used in your own life or future career?

LITERARY ARTS OVERVIEW

Literary Arts education consists of storytelling, poetry, and creative writing and is foundational to developing literate, reflective, and critically engaged members of society. By engaging with diverse stories, students gain insight into complex perspectives and histories, fostering inclusion and emotional resilience. Writing and sharing stories also supports mental health and builds a sense of community and belonging.

The creative and critical analysis process guide students in imagining, crafting, and reflecting on literary work. These frameworks align with MASC's core values and, when paired with artist-led sessions, empower students to become thoughtful creators and engaged learners.

Literary arts naturally support cross-curricular learning. In social studies, students explore historical context through narrative; in science they use writing to explain concepts. These interdisciplinary links help students see knowledge as interconnected and relevant to real-world applications.



APPENDIX

Vocabulary bank/glossary:

- **Storytelling:** Sharing stories aloud with words, voice, and imagination.
- **Oral Tradition:** Passing stories from person to person by speaking, not writing.
- **Folk Tale:** A traditional story told by people in a culture, often passed down for years.
- **Fairy Tale:** A magical story with imaginary creatures, like fairies, witches, or talking animals.
- **Epic:** A long, exciting story about a hero and their adventures, often from history or legend.
- **Imagination:** The ability to create pictures and ideas in your mind.
- **Empathy:** Understanding and caring about how someone else feels.
- **Cultural Respect:** Valuing the traditions and stories from different people and places.
- **Wonder Tale:** A kind of fairy tale filled with amazing characters, places, and events.

Student Health and Well-Being

How did today's activity make you feel (body and mind)?

- Choose a colour to describe that feeling. Use one word to describe how your energy changed after the activity.

Mini-Activity: Feelings Freeze Frame (Tableau)

- Ask students to create a freeze-frame (tableau) that shows how they're feeling right after the activity.
- Then, they can:
 - Share it with a partner or small group
 - Draw their freeze-frame in a journal
 - Write or talk about what made them feel that way

Additional Resources

- Assessment Guide
- Cultural Protocol/Sensitivity Guide
- Evaluation Document
- Resource Database for Further Learning