

Be a Storyteller

Week 20 • Wednesday • Hands-On: Tell, Retell, and Perform

Reading Time

Being a great storyteller takes skill and practice! Native storytellers didn't just say words — they PERFORMED. They changed their voices for each character, used their hands and faces, paused at exciting moments, and sometimes added songs and drum beats.

Storytellers also had memory tricks. Some nations used **wampum belts** — designs made of shell beads — to help remember important stories and agreements. Others used pictures painted on hides.

Today it's YOUR turn to join the oral tradition. You will learn a story, remember it with pictures, and perform it for your family — no book allowed, just like a true storyteller!

Reading Questions

1. How did storytellers make stories exciting?

2. What were wampum belts used for?

Hands-On: The Storyteller Challenge

Step 1: Choose a story you know well — a family story, a folk tale, or a trickster tale you make up.

Step 2: Draw the story in the four boxes below — beginning, problem, trick or surprise, ending. These pictures are your 'memory belt.'

Step 3: Practice telling it OUT LOUD using only your pictures. Use different voices! Add gestures!

Step 4: Perform it for your family tonight — no reading allowed!

My Memory Pictures

Draw your story in four scenes: 1) beginning, 2) problem, 3) trick or surprise, 4) ending.

After Your Performance

1. How did your performance go? What did your audience like best?

2. Did your memory pictures help you remember? How?

3. What would you do differently next time?

True or False

Write T for true or F for false in each circle.

- ☐ Storytellers used voices, hands, and faces.
- ☐ Wampum belts were made of shell beads.
- ☐ Storytellers always read from books.
- ☐ Pictures can help you remember a story.
- ☐ Songs and drums were sometimes part of stories.
- ☐ You joined the oral tradition today!

Review

I did it!	Circle one
I made memory pictures for my story	YES / NOT YET
I practiced with voices and gestures	YES / NOT YET
I performed without reading	YES / NOT YET