



Tall Tales...plus Language Arts

All stories are true. Some stories are more true than others.

Besides Language Arts, consider Physics. Yes, we lied about this only connecting to Language Arts. The best tall tale tellers merge scientific facts with the story so that what starts as an ordinary day turns fantastic yet believable. Tall tales could be classic ones like Paul Bunyan and Pecos Bill while other tall tales or “lies” could be more present-day. Sayings such as “Every action has an equal and opposite reaction” adds humor. Look up those Laws of Physics. Use those phrases. Now you have Physics AND Language Arts.

Tall Tales Games

So Cold & So Hot

Main Skill Sets:
Voice
Tone
Word Choice

You need a paper fan and a glove. Have everyone sit in a circle. Tell everyone to pass the mitten and the fan around the circle, skipping every other person (i.e. one person has the fan while the other has the mitten). Direct the people to make up a short “tall tale” or exaggerated end to the sentence: If they receive the mitten, complete the sentence, “It was so cold that. . .” Give examples. If they receive the fan, complete the sentence, “It was so hot that. . .” Give examples. People can make the examples as wild and crazy as they want but should not repeat other’s answers.

Lists, Lists, & More Lists inspired by Asian storytelling technique/word play

Main Skill Sets:
Word Choice
Visualization
Adaptability
Listening

With two or more people, challenge as a pair or group on how many things you could list in a part of a story. You could decide on a story that all of you know or create a new one. Each person tells a few lines of the story and then passes onto the next person. An adult and/or referee can call at any time, “Lists, lists, and more lists!” When heard, the person in the middle of telling the story lists whatever connects to the story. For example, if someone said, “And she walked through a garden...” the list might include “with roses, tulips, brambles, peach trees, lilies, maple trees, vines, delightful benches, arches, and statues of jade”. The list needs to be 10 items. Continue story when list is complete.



Choose a quote below and discuss with someone else or write a tall tale with inspiration from that quote.

Lying Lessons from the Gashlers	
<p>Stephen Gashler</p> 	<p>“My favorite part about telling tall tales is the thrill of lying while still feeling good about myself.”</p> <p>Lying does not always have to be punished. There are contests around the world that search for the biggest liar and give out cash prizes or at least an honored title. You tap into everyday life and discover what could go wrong with it in the extreme. Then you can feel wonderful that you did not actually experience it!</p>
<p>Teresa Gashler</p>	<p>“A good tall tale stretches the imagination of the audience ... as well as the truth.”</p> <p>People need to imagine the crazy experience in their minds. Use imagery. Use the five senses. Often, people only focus on what looks funny or strange. There are plenty of smells and tastes and such to stretch the audience’s imagination.</p>
<p>Ariah Gashler</p>	<p>“The best part is making people laugh.”</p> <p>People are used to tall tales as being funny. Sometimes it is hard to find “the funny.” What could be funny to you could make others roll their eyes. Many tall tales use puns or word play. Plus, the more specific one is in the lie, then the more fun the audience has in the moment. For example, it is not just milk that spilled on the floor. It was the Grade A goat milk from your aunt’s maternity ward for four-legged creatures.</p>
<p>Aspen Gashler</p>	<p>“I can’t believe my parents are encouraging this.”</p> <p>Parents usually tell us not to lie. Yet, as Aspen’s father sometimes says, “A family that lies together, rises together.” If you are being deceptive or sneaky, then the lie is not a good idea. Yet, if you are lying for the sake of being an engaging storyteller, then those are lies that could puff the chest of any parent. Some professional storytellers tour the world with their lies and get paid big money.</p>
<p>Percy Gashler</p>	<p>“Here’s how you write a tall tale: first think of something totally normal, then times it by a billion.”</p> <p>Study the tall tales from the 1820s to 1860s with classics such as Paul Bunyan and Pecos Bill. People of that time were in awe of the majestic mountains, the endless forests, and the golden plains. These stories reflect that awe...”by a billion.”</p>
<p>Baby Aowyn</p>	<p>“Ah wah wah wah da da!”</p> <p>Trust your instincts and be prepared to lie an answer or interpretation.</p>