



### *Visual Storytelling & Cinderella*

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:  
Kindergarten Literacy

**Keywords:** fairy tales, storytelling, Cinderella, visual learners, comparing, and contrasting

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

**Synopsis:** Storytelling gives me the opportunity to share experiences. Storytelling allows the listener to question, gain information and speak about certain things. Storytelling is used to: teach history, settle arguments, make sense of the world, satisfy a need for play and entertainment, honor supernatural forces, and record the actions and characteristics of ancestors for future generations. Storytelling is entertaining and energizing. Stories can enhance or change perceptions. Stories have a beginning, middle and end. I will enhance and promote language skills and literacy experiences during this unit.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to **23** students in **Kindergarten**.*

*I give permission for the Institute to publish my curriculum unit and synopsis in print and online. I understand that I will be credited as the author of my work.*

## **Visual Storytelling & Cinderella**

*Angela T.Boyce-Thornton*

### **Rationale**

Storytelling gives me the opportunity to share experiences. Storytelling allows the listener to question, gain information and speak about certain things. Storytelling is used to: teach history, settle arguments, make sense of the world, satisfy a need for play and entertainment, honor supernatural forces, and record the actions and characteristics of ancestors for future generations. Storytelling is entertaining and energizing. Stories can enhance or change perceptions. Stories have a plot and are constructed with a beginning, middle, and end.<sup>1</sup> I will enhance and promote language skills and literacy experiences during this unit.

### **Introduction**

I hope my work experience and the students I work with will assist me with creating a storytelling curriculum unit. I am a kindergarten teacher at a Title 1 and Project L.I.F.T. School. My students are energetic, eager and excited about learning. However, many are not prepared or equipped with the language skills and literacy expectations in kindergarten.

I have many students that come to me with little exposure to books, libraries and literacy experiences. Many students have no home libraries. That is why it is so important to expose them to as many different types of books as I can while they are in school. I want to create a unit that will inspire my students to want to read. I want to boost their imagination, creativity and desire to learn more about themselves and the world in which they live.

I feel that storytelling helps me create an intimacy with my students. I am able to gaze into their eyes, use words to capture their attention and create images in their minds to provoke thought and wonder. As they huddle at my feet hanging on my every word, I can tell stories that help problem solve, answer questions to unknowns, teach a lesson, improve a skill and enhance emotional development. I want my students to see all the possibilities that are before them.

I know all students learn differently and at a different pace. I feel when a new idea or concept is presented visually most of students have a tendency to have better recall. As students acquire and incorporate new knowledge with what they already have learned, my hope is to increase vocabulary, improve writing skills and critical thinking. I feel that visual storytelling will help my students meet those demands.

I intend for this unit to help my students better understand and retain information. I feel that storytelling will help students make connections to ideas, sequence and see patterns in a story. It is my hope that exposing students early with engaging material will increase their interest in literacy, making the learning process more enjoyable, and retaining the student's interest for longer periods. I believe that visual storytelling and motivational activities will improve the academic success of my kindergartners. I hope to find ways to hook and engage students to learn about the required concepts and skills as well as create a love for learning. I want my students to become lifelong learners. I feel that visual storytelling and motivational activities will improve the academic success of my kindergartners. I think the population that I serve would greatly benefit.<sup>2</sup>

### **Demographic Background**

Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools is a diverse district with many kinds of students and needs. There are 145,112 students in the district and there are 164 schools. The district is divided into learning communities. There are five learning communities in Charlotte Mecklenburg School district. I teach in the Project Lift zone. Project Lift means (Project Leadership & Investment for Transformation (L.I.F.T.) a public/private partnership organized as a non-profit organization, operating as one of five learning communities in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System. Project L.I.F.T. is a zone within CMS that will include West Charlotte High and the middle and elementary feeder schools that send students to West Charlotte High. There are nine schools in all. The goal is to help low achieving students be prepared for the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Project Lift approach has 5 basic principles. They are: time, talent, technology, and community and parent involvement. The approach is unique and the teaching and learning is different from the rest of the district.

My beliefs of student achievement and learning potential are aligned with the core competencies of Project Lift. There are many programs and initiatives that help students of urban population with special educational needs achieve academic expectations. We continue to make progress and gains in the zone that I serve. However, there is still work to be done. I see opportunities to work with minority students, students that are learning the English language, students with disabilities, homeless students, and neglected or delinquent students.

Ashley Park PreK-8 is in the Project Lift zone. The school is nestled in an older established community off Ashley Road, in west Charlotte. Many years ago, Ashley Park

Elementary was a school of thriving households. As we know, many families moved to the suburbs along with tax dollars. The schools and families in the urban communities suffered. Now with the re-vitalization neighbor and schools, we are moving forward. The recent decline in the economy led to school budget cuts. Academic performance at many school suffered and several middle schools in the district were closed. Our school became a pre K-8 school. It is now, Ashley Park Pre K-8.

There are currently 563 students enrolled. Our student demographic is made of 90% Afro-American, 5.8% Hispanic, 2.5% Asian, 0.7% White, and 0.7% other. About 95% of our students are considered economically disadvantage. Our population is very transient. Some are homeless, living in shelters, extended-stay motels, or with family members. Some family members offer temporary housing for students and their parents. Many students suffer from medical and mental health issues. 99% of our students qualify for free and/or reduced lunch.

The focus at Ashley Park is learning, achieving, building character and attending school regularly. Students participate in music, art, dance and technology in addition to traditional courses. Ashley Park Pre K-8 utilizes the Family Model. The Family Model is where our children are assigned a grade level family that they work with everyday instead of just one classroom teacher. The students work together in small groups that change throughout the day based upon the needs of each child. The staff members at Ashley Park are innovative and creative in teaching the students. The teachers create an environment where student learning is supported and tailored to the individual child. The teachers provide support to ensure that every child grows and develops in their academic success. We also work with different community social and mental health organizations to promote healthy students and families.

Some of the students that I serve suffer from emotional and or mental issues; this can make teaching and others' learning stressful. Others have not developed the skills and strategies to function. Many students are underservice and/or not yet been diagnosed, this is due to lack of resources.

The district strives to strengthen programs for my population by putting in place certain key conditions for reform. The district should continue focusing on developing promising practices and scaling up effective practices for improving the instruction of my students and preparing and developing effective teachers in literacy. The district and schools should continue to strengthen the ability of classroom teachers to effectively address the needs of students.

I believe that visual storytelling would address the needs of the students by engagement. I will help engage students by time on task activities; boost imagination, creativity, and oral language; and provide a positive experience. Students will be able to achieve higher level thinking by "analyzing and synthesizing" information from multiple sources and deciding how to illustrate that information, and making decisions about

presentation. Retaining and recalling information will not be enough for the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner.

Visual storytelling is entertaining and educational to the listener. It can provide images to life situations, teaching coping skills and strategies for students. Students may find a way to deal with their current emotional states and find alternatives for the challenges they face. Storytelling often provides guided fantasy experiences, and this offers relief from immediate stresses.

### **Type of Learner**

According to Zane Education, research indicates that more than 40% of students are visual learners, preferring to be taught through video and pictures. However, the vast majority of teachers teach using verbal clues, written text. The common core standard CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.2 Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood and CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.5.<sup>4</sup> Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail. I hope to create a unit that will use more sophisticated multimedia components to enhance the audience's understanding of a presentation.<sup>5</sup>

Your learning style is unique just like you are. The way you absorb and assimilate information is your learning style. Different people learn in different ways, and these ways are called learning styles or modalities. The characteristics of learning styles or modalities may vary from student to student. There are four major learning styles or modalities that educators focus on: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile. The visual learner or modality refers to sight. The auditory learner modality refers to hearing. The kinesthetic learner or modality refers to doing, moving, and acting. The tactile learner or modality refers to the sense of touch. "It is recommended that educators use a variety of learning methods, and encourage students to be receptive to different learning methods rather than try to link specific learning methods to specific learning styles".<sup>6</sup>

### **Strategies and Activities**

I believe using visual and graphics would increase creativity, imagination and increase vocabulary. It will also give students experiences and opportunities that may not have would not have happen. Brands use visual content to encourage and engage clients every day. They entice, create wonder, give you the feeling of hope, make you believe and expose you to possibilities. Young students are drawn to art and graphics, thanks to technology. This concept (visual storytelling) will stimulate and hopefully allow learners to make connections.

Many students do not have the same experiences as others. I must consider student diversity, competence and be sensitive to that. I must understand and capitalize

on their culture abilities and resilience. Brands change and shift with time and the way we tell stories should too. I want to better engage, make it real and relevant to my students. I hope the students will walk away deeply provoked in thought and want to return the next day wanting to learn more.

Visual storytelling is about telling a story and creating a closer connection with your audience. Our brains process a visual image faster than a text image. Many times a picture is more powerful than words. The connection is made and the viewer is hooked. I believe using visual storytelling would be a great way to teach fairy tales to the students.<sup>7</sup>

Fairy tales are fictional stories. According to dictionary.com, “fairy tales are stories about fairies or other mythical or magical beings, especially one of traditional origin told to children.”<sup>6</sup> The stories take place in unspecific places, at unspecific times and usually have one dimensional character. The purpose for fairy tales is to inspire, enlighten and entertain. They have universal themes and metaphors.

Cinderella is a fairytale. The most popular, modern version was written and published by Charles Perrault of France in 1697.<sup>10</sup> The story is about of a young girl who is mistreated by family or community but is eventually recognized and rewarded for goodness and virtue.<sup>11</sup> I will use Cinderella by [Charles Perrault](#), [Anthea Bell](#) (Translator), [Loek Koopmans](#) (Illustrator) and the Rafe Martin versions. The Rough-Face Girl, by Rafe Martin is a Native American version of Cinderella. A disfigured Algonquin girl wins the heart of a mysterious being, which lives by the lake near her village.

I will create a positive learning environment where students are encouraged to use their creativity and imagination. In order to develop a story, the student must first understand who he or she is creating the story for, developing their ability to empathize with others and improving their conflict resolution skills. Students creating visual stories are in charge of creating the characters of their story with media. Students can learn to put different pieces of media together in order to fully develop their story and effectively share it. Students are eager to learn new skills. Visual storytelling allows students to better comprehend material, making it easier for them to grasp the concepts of reading and writing. Storytelling also promotes logical thinking and mathematical skills. Students with limited oral language acquire skills to speak the language. Students are also gaining valuable technology skills that are important to them.

Students who are exposed to storytelling learn the process of creating and sharing an effective story. Students learn how to express and share emotions using auditory and visual elements with their audience. In order for their story to be effective, students must be able to express their emotion using video, pictures and sound. This learning process

can help students convey what they feel creativity using new ideas and different forms of communication. The storytelling process helps students learn to express their feelings. Albert Einstein said, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." Imagination gives hope, which fuels drive and rigor. And with drive and hard work possibilities and opportunities are created.

Storytelling is an art, a tool, a device, a gateway to the past and a portal to the future that supports the present. Students need many opportunities to exercise their imagination. Storytelling is a great way for them to get their creative juices flowing.

Visual storytelling will allow students to collaborate and share similar experiences and accomplishments.

This unit can be taught in a week or up to 2 weeks. If more time is needed, please make adjustments. The lessons can be used during read-alouds or with a small reading group. Students will have an opportunity to discuss, share and compare visual and comprehension strategies. This unit will have students look at the characters from the story element.

This unit will concentrate on the character of the story. A story has five essential parts. They are characters, setting, plot, conflict, and the resolution.<sup>7</sup> The character is a person or creature that interacts with others within a story.<sup>8</sup> Students will identify the elements of a story students are able to better comprehend. The main elements of a good story are setting, characters, sequence, exposition, conflict, climax, and resolution. Generally, the background information and setting are explained (exposition) at the beginning of the story. The particular conflict in the story is resolved during the climax. After the climax is resolved, you learn what happens to the characters during the resolution. Bill Johnson states, "The purpose of a story's elements is to move toward a meaningful resolution."<sup>9</sup>

The teacher will read the story to the students. The following strategies will be observed to create an environment for acquiring literacy:

1. Established a purpose for reading
2. Shared prior knowledge (about topic, author, character, event, etc.)
3. Predicted and previewed new vocabulary
4. Designed focus questions to use during reading
5. Selected note-taking strategy (graphic organizer, story map, outline, etc.)

During reading of the text, the following strategies should be observed. The teacher will model. The teacher, students and/or cooperative groups should:

- Make, confirm and/or revise predictions
- Stop at an appropriate time to discuss focus questions and answers

- Use note-taking strategy to record information from text, story, etc.
- Paraphrase, summarize and retell at appropriate times
- Stop to identify and discuss new vocabulary in context

After reading the text, the following strategies should be observed. Teacher will model. The students should have opportunities to:

- Verbally discuss text (the fairy tale in this case)
- Describe text by giving an initial reaction (personal opinion.)
- Describe text by describing its general content and purpose (factual)
- Confirm and or revise predictions
- Use notes to answer focus questions and/or questions asked.”<sup>14</sup>

Cinderella” like most fairy tales is great ways to teach shared and guided reading. In most cases, fairy tales contain a clear story structure. Students should be able to easily identify the elements of the story (character, setting, plot, solution). Fairy tales can help with comprehending the difference between real and make believe. Many students are familiar with the story of “Cinderella”.

This is a kindergarten unit however it can be used for a mature audience as well. Cinderella has many layers it can reveal. The lessons can be adapted for a variety of learners. The objectives for this unit are:

The students will compare and contrast the main character in “Cinderella”. I would suggest Cinderella, by [Charles Perrault](#), [Anthea Bell](#) (Translator), [Loek Koopmans](#) (Illustrator) and [The Rough-Face Girl](#) by Rafe Martin. The students will develop comprehension skills by listening and examining the similarities and differences of the fairy tales.

Students will have an opportunity to discuss, share and compare visual and comprehension strategies. This unit will have students look closely at the characters especially the main character.

Students will look closely at the main character of the story. The students will identify details of the character and elements surrounding with the help of the teacher if necessary. The student will look at the surroundings and how it helps or hinder the main character of the story. The teacher will help the student look at colors used and the expressions on the characters faces.

## **Strategies**

Modeling - The teacher will demonstrate how to read, ask and answer questions about “Cinderella”.



Shared reading – Shared reading is a great opportunity to model reading for students. Students can think about the words, make connections to the characters, and identify the problems and solutions. The students will wonder about why certain things are happening.

Prediction – The students will predict what is going to happen in the story based in the illustration, vocabulary, and sentence/paragraph.

Making Connections – The student will talk about connections in the reading to their own experiences.

Retelling – The student retells information about the story to a partner.

Visualization – The students will draw a scene from the story to demonstrate comprehension.

Graphic Organizers – A graphic organizer help student’s visual express ideas and concepts about what they have learned. They help discover patterns and relationships in a story. It also helps fuel discussion and conversation about a specific part or the entire story. 16

The lessons are approximately 45 minutes long. If more or less time is needed please make adjustments. The lessons are designed for read aloud or shared reading time. It can also use in a literacy circle or with a small reading group.

## **Activities**

This unit has six activities based on the different variations of “Cinderella”. The time frame for each lesson is approximately 45 minutes.

### Lesson 1: Brainstorm about Cinderella

#### *Objectives*

Students will do a picture walk. The students will look at various Cinderella books from the school or local library. The students will look at the different versions of “Cinderella” (cover, pictures of the different characters, clothing and the settings). There are many versions. Some are listed below.

“Cinderella” versions:

[Cinderella](#) by [Charles Perrault](#)

[Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale](#) by [John Steptoe](#)

[The Rough-Face Girl](#) by [Rafe Martin](#)  
[Adelita: A Mexican Cinderella Story](#) by [Tomie dePaola](#)  
[Cinderella Penguin, or, The Little Glass Flipper](#) by [Janet Perlman](#)  
[Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China](#) by [Ai-Ling Louie](#)  
[Trollerella](#) by [Karen M. Stegman-Bourgeois](#)  
[Rufferella](#) by [Vanessa Gill-Brown](#)

### *Materials*

Various versions of Cinderella books, Cinderella puzzles, Cinderella pictures, Cinderella posters, crayons, markers, construction paper, felt, buttons, fabric, glue and scissors  
Chart paper and marker/pen

### *Procedure*

The teacher will demonstrate how to create a character using the materials available of the Cinderella character. The student will create his/her Cinderella character. The teacher will ask what fairy tales are. The teacher will chart answers & responses on a chart. The teacher can also list the fairy tales students know.

### *Closure*

Students will use material to draw, write, create, design, act-out characters of a fairy tale.

Lesson 2: Read “Cinderella” by Charles Perrault

### *Objectives*

- Students will listen, ask and answer questions about “Cinderella” by Charles Perrault.
- Students will identify the character, problem, setting, plot and solution of the story.

### *Materials*

Copy of “Cinderella by Charles Perrault or Walt Disney  
Story element sheet

### *Procedure*

Read the story aloud to the students. After reading the story ask the students questions about the story. The teacher can chart the responses.

### *Comprehension Questions*

1. Who is evil?
2. What did the main character wish to do?
3. What was magic?
4. Was it a “happily ever after” ending?

<http://www.troy.k12.oh.us/userfiles/1461/Question%20Stems.pdf> (question stems for Cinderella)

### *Closure*

Students will complete story element sheet.

Lesson 3: Read the Rough Face Girl by Rafe Martin and David Shannon

### *Objective*

Students will understand the importance to treat all people with kindness even if they are different.

### *Materials*

Copy of book – Rough Face Girl by Rafe Martin and David Shannon

### *Procedure*

Read the story aloud to the students. Ask if the characters remind them of any other characters and if so how? Ask the students what does “cruel” means and explain how it feels when you are treated cruelty or kindness.

- How did the step-sisters treat the rough face girl? How do you think she felt?
- Why do you think they treated her that way?
- How did the Invisible Being and her sister treat her? Why do you think they treated her that way?
- Ask a partner – How are the two different? Which choice is better and why?

### *Closure*

The teacher will chart and post the responses.

Lesson 4: Compare and Contrast characters

### *Objective*

Students will recognize and identify the similarities and the differences in the stories: “Cinderella” by Charles Perrault and Rough Face Girl by Rafe Martin

### *Materials*

Pictures from Rough Face Girl by Rafe Martin (cover of the book & where she is around the fire)  
Pictures from Cinderella by Charles Perrault  
List of character traits to help probe students thinking

### *Procedure*

Post both pictures side by side so the students can see the details of the characters on the page. Looking solely at the main character of the story (Cinderella & Rough Face Girl) ask the following character trait questions about the each.

- Describe each character.
- What are her strengths and weakness
- What are her challenges and how does she overcome them?
- Does she have or receive help from anyone?
- How does she resolve her problems? What is the solution?
- 

The teacher will scribe the answers to the questions. The teacher will list the descriptive words students use to describe the characters of the story. The teacher will review and discuss the vocabulary of character traits. The students will discuss the answers to the questions. The students will make recommendations and suggestions to the change the characters situation.

Lesson 5: Draw and write

### *Materials*

Paper, crayon, markers

### *Procedure*

The students will use the class Venn diagram to complete the activity and drawing paper. The student will compare and contrast the two characters. They will draw and write about one of the characters and tell how they think they are the only one doing chores.

The student will also draw a picture of themselves doing chores. They will tell why it is important for everyone to do their fair share of work and how it makes them feel.

### *Closure*

The teacher will post student work.

## **Appendix**

The students will actively participate in a literary discussion with their peers asking and answering questions about the text with assistance. The lessons will help build a strong background for reading and language comprehension. The lesson will also allow students to communicate effectively using and acquiring new vocabulary. The lessons will engage and get students to imagine and wonder.

The Common Core Standards in this unit are:

### *Key Ideas and Details:*

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.3](#) Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.K.9](#) Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.

### [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.1.a](#)

Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion).

### [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.6](#)

Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

### [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.K.1.d](#)

Understand and use question words (interrogatives) (e.g., *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, *how*).

### [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.K.3](#)

Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several

loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.

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