The Art of Digital Storytelling

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:
7th Grade Language Arts

Keywords: Digital, Storytelling, Reading Strategies, Writing Strategies

Teaching Standards: See Appendix 1 for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

Synopsis: This unit addresses ways to incorporate reading, writing, storytelling, art and technology into the middle school classroom. Students will be asked to explore the commonalities that they find in stories from across the world and then insert those commonalities into their own stories. In addition, students will use digitals means to explore the use of pictures paying close attention to the use of color to make their stories come alive. Students will be asked to use technology to create the stories and then they will use storytelling techniques to engage the audience in front of them. They will be challenged to formulate a story, write, craft visuals, and recite the story to create an experience. They will do all of this by intensely studying folklore from different cultures and people groups.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 56 students in 7th Grade Language Arts.

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The Art of Digital Storytelling

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Abstract

We all tell stories. Some stories are good. Some are bad. Some of us are good at telling stories. Some of us lack the flare that makes a story really interesting. However, we all do it. In this unit, students will be taught the art of telling a story well, strategies for writing their own stories, along with embracing their love for technology to digitize the story they are telling.

In the beginning, students will read a variety of folklore from around the world and identify the commonalities and the cultural differences. My focus for my students will be on comparing Asian, African, and European stories as this is the area of study in their Social Studies class. However, my hope is to give teachers the strategies to use no matter what the stories. Therefore, I will make the strategies my primary focus rather than just the stories to make this as useful as possible to teachers at all grade levels. I want my students to see that language is used to express culture and pass down traditions.   To do so, I would like to focus their folklore on cultures that they study in their Humanities classroom making this transcend one class. The middle school philosophy embraces cross-curricular units. My school is also an IB (International Baccalaureate) Magnet. The idea of showing connections across contents and across continents is highly regarded. We are also a very diverse school. I think using something that would show connections between cultures would be fascinating while drawing diverse students in when they see their culture represented.

Using these commonalities and differences that they find across literature, I want my students to create a story of their own and incorporate the use of technology, art, and music. A huge focus in the North Carolina Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts is identifying story elements and comparing texts. My student will be able to show mastery of both standards using this project. Using Bloom's Taxonomy to challenge my students, I will have them create and publish their digital storyboards using iPads and thus embracing the 21st Century Skills deemed necessary by Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools and the Common Core State Standards. I would also like to see my students using their storyboard to create digital art.

Narrative

The stories of *Anansi the Spider* from the Ashanti people of West Ghana are the springboard for this curriculum unit. These stories are among my favorite folktales because they are so simple yet explain the origins of so many things. It led me to look at

other folktales and adaptations we see in our society. With that in mind, I found that as an inspiration for this curriculum unit. As I look across my classroom, the challenge that I face this year as well as in years past becomes evident once again. I need to find literature that speaks to the interest of and inspires students who are tired and bored with mundane selections read in yesteryears. I also need to find something that I can use to meet the requirements of the IB programme. I need to find activities that go beyond the typical Freytag's Pyramid and KWL charts. I need to light a fire of passion for literature in twelve year olds. Talk about a challenge. Yet every morning when I wake up and every afternoon when I sit in front of a lesson plan book, this is the beast I find myself trying to tackle. This year is no exception. I hear the groans of complaint as I ask my students to pull out a sheet of paper. They are already anticipating the mundane assignments that are boring and therefore do not inspire the student. I know those groans. The groans of boredom from completing the same graphic organizers over and over. The groans of protest that students simply do not want to answer questions at the end of the textbook story. I have heard them for years. Why should this year be any different? A new teacher does not necessarily mean fun and excitement in the Language Arts classroom. Little do they know that they are about to embark on an adventure that asks them to defy their typical approach to literature, confront literature from a new perspective, and threaten to leave them in love with international works of literature. Finally, my students will be able to act on this new passion. They will be the creators just like the creators of the stories. Traditionally, students are asked to read, comprehend stories, and answer questions, but are not usually asked to create and interact with the stories themselves. Students are used to works of literature that are defined by textbook companies. Most of the literature that they read is not from a diverse canon of authors nor written for a diverse audience. Our textbooks are full of Gary Soto, Ray Bradbury, O. Henry, and King Author legends. I would like to expose my students to more cultural pieces to help them understand that stories can reach an array of diverse audiences.

Objective

While teaching the unit based on digital storytelling, I will use the following questions to guide the unit: How do story elements such as plot, theme, characters, and setting go beyond just one culture and can be seen in stories from many cultures? What do stories reveal about a culture? How can we use stories to tell our own story? Students will use the stories that we read as a guide to write stories that reveal their own culture. I want my students to understand that stories and storytelling are the gateway to understanding the cultures that are being studied. Therefore, it is important for the students to demonstrate their own cultures through the art of storytelling. Part of their way of life is the use of technology as it penetrates everything that they do. Therefore, we will use technology to pull them in and interest them in learning. We will develop the concepts of culture, creation, and traditions. These stories contain these concepts that all human souls are begging to explore.

My long term goals for this unit are to enhance communication skills in both the written and verbal forms, refine critical thinking skills, and offer rigorous, yet entertaining, ways to explore new literature. The strategies found within this unit involve a large amount of written and verbal communication in private, small group, and whole class settings. I will use multiple instructional tools and strategies which will be presented in a variety of formats. The unit will also contain a technology piece as part of their 21st Century Skills that are vital to their success in the future. Communication is vital for middle school students who are college bound, those that seek a leadership role, and the students who want to be active participants in their community and professions.

Another long term goal is to teach writing through the use of literature. Students will be asked to respond to literature through creative means. I want students to use creative, digital outlets to express their stories. By this, I mean I want students to explore different applications on the iPads to figure out which platform is the best fit for them. I want them to have the opportunity to not only read and write, but to creatively express their writing through digital storytelling. The purpose of this is two-fold. First, students must be able to, again, effectively communicate via the written word. Second, they must be able to understand the literature to appropriately respond. This will be used to monitor both writing aptitude and reading comprehension. Both of these skills are important for students to be successful.

Finally, my ultimate goal is to inspire. I want my students to fall in love with stories and the art of literature. The best way to accomplish this goal is to show students that literature is important, easy to connect with and relate to, and enjoyable. Often, literature is lost on our students because they are inundated with strategies. In our data driven world, the focus for teachers, unfortunately, becomes the skills required to pass a test and not the love of the literature that inspired them to be teachers in the first place. In this unit, my goal is to teach students how to use those skills to play with the literature, to respond to the literature in such a way that they are not bored, but rather inspired by the work.

Background

Randolph Middle School stands out among local middle schools. Our school has worked hard, and our students even harder, to shine in our large urban school district. We are an Honor School of Excellence. There are over 1100 students representing 32 nationalities, among the most diverse in the city, enrolled in my school which encompasses three programs: International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IB), Exceptional Children Program, and Horizons.

According to the IB website, the programme is a non-profit educational foundation that is focused on the well rounded, internationally minded student. As a magnet school, our students come from across the county and chose to be at our school. It is important

that as teachers we make the curriculum unique and engaging. A student attending a school with this programme benefits by actively participating in the components which heighten critical thinking, gaining an understanding of issues that impact people both domestically and abroad, and developing a true concept of the role of the individual in the international community. The Exceptional Children's Program focuses on the personal development of students with physical and/or mental disabilities that inhibit them from participating in a regular education program. These students, however, still meet IB requirements that are tailored to their specific needs within the Exceptional Children's Program making this program unique among Special Education programs in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools. Horizons students are among some of the most talented in the district. It is a talent development and advanced studies program that offers a challenging and motivating environment for highly gifted students. These students must have an IQ of at least 145, be able to work independently on specially tailored curriculum and be working two to three years above grade level among other qualifications.

Basic demographic information of the school is as follows: 49% female, 51% male, 45% free or reduced lunch, 47.31% African American, 15.95% Hispanic, 28.34% White, 8% Asian, .86% Other Ethnicities, and 87% of students are at or above grade level in mathematics and reading. My class specifically is a 7th Grade Honors Language Arts and 7th Grade Social Studies. These students are performing at or above grade level on North Carolina End-of-Grade standardized tests for English/Language Arts. Two students are on Individualized Education Plans for physical and mental health issues. I have four students on 504s for medical issues. Finally, I have 2 students among the four classes that are considered English Language Learners and 7 that have tested out of ELL services, but English is not the language primarily spoken at home. All of these students have specific needs that must be met while at the same time I am trying to challenge my students that scored significantly above grade level.

Rationale

These stories will serve as a catalyst for critical and creative thinking skills that are vital to the middle school education philosophy. The stories will spur discussion of creation and change and launch the students into a conversation concerning a range of valued ideologies. A unit of instruction and study constructed around international folktales will stimulate the learner to examine a text and respond in a creative manner. The origin stories and the movie re-creations allow for a more intertextual approach to the literature to set an example of the expectations that the students will meet during this unit.

This unit fits well into the IB curriculum. The stories will reveal aspects of the country and culture of origin that students cannot get from a textbook. Stories reveal the thoughts of the people, the traditions of the people, the beliefs of the people that are more intimate than facts found in informational texts. This forces students to determine those elements on their own rather just being told. It requires them to think and explore.

Strategies for Instruction

Cooperative Learning Groups

Cooperative Learning Groups allow students to interact on a smaller scale. Many of the lessons found within this unit will depend on Cooperative Learning Groups. These groups can be selected by the teacher or by the students depending on preference, activity, focus, and/or rigor. The groups are small so the students feel more comfortable, but it still allows me as the teacher to challenge students. Often, I will divide the groups homogeneously, so that I can give specific instructions based on capability. High achievers and those who are deemed "Talent Development" will receive more rigorous activities to suit their needs while giving me the opportunity to focus on those who are struggling and seeing that all students will receive activities tailored to their needs. Other times, I will divide them into small, heterogeneous teams, each with students on varying achievement levels. The groups are small enough so that each student feels that they can contribute to the task and work together while no one is being "left behind." Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. Students must work through conflicts and problems that arise until all members understand the concepts and can successfully complete the assignment. This gives students a sense of ownership and achievement in their work within the group.

Read Alouds

Read-Aloud is a strategy seen most often at the elementary level, but best practice dictates that Read Alouds be used across the grade levels. According to *Unwrapping the Read Aloud*, students at every grade level benefit from this teacher-driven strategy. In a Read Aloud, the teacher models the skills of a good reader while reading a text to the students. These skills include making connections between the text and the reader, evaluating the text and forming opinions, asking questions, visualizing the text as the student reads making predictions about what will happen next in the story, and making inferences based on the information in the text. In addition, Read Alouds allow teachers to model fluent and expressive reading as well as the thinking and reading process that goes along with reading. As the class completes the Read Aloud, it helps to show the pictures to the students to help create visuals as the teacher reads to them. Also, take the time to discuss the pictures in the books. Ask students:
-How does the visual aid in your understanding of the story?
-How does the visual in the text compare to the visual in your head?
-Why is the picture important to the story?
-Why do you think the illustrator chose to draw the scene or character as they did?

-Is there any other things you notice about the picture? Color? Size? Shape? How is this important to our interpretation of the story?

Book Creator, Book Writer, and Comic Book!

These are apps that can be downloaded on the iPad or iPhones. During this unit, students will write and create their own folktales using digital pictures and iPads. The great thing about these apps is that you can also use them on an iPhone, so if your school does not have iPads, your students can still create these books. All of these apps allow the user to read the story in iBooks and also to create PDFs that can be read in other operating systems. Book Creator is free, but less user friendly. Book Writer costs $4.99 while Comic Book! costs $2.99. This could be a hindrance for some teachers and some schools.

TED Talks

TED Talks are a nonprofit devoted to spreading ideas in the form of short talks about 18 minutes or less. According to TED.com, it began as a conference based on the convergence of technology, entertainment, and design. However, today TED Talks cover almost any topic and are distributed in a 100 languages. The mission behind TED Talks is to spread ideas to the global community. According to blog posts on the TED website, students value the use of these Talks because they spur conversation and debate. I encourage teachers to investigate the use of this free resource. They cover a wide range of issues from storytelling, like those used in this unit, to science and global awareness. They can be used for any number of things in the classroom.

In this unit, I am combining two TED resources. The first is a book entitled *23 Storytelling Techniques from the Best Storytelling TED Talks* by Akash Karia. This is a teacher resource to use to guide instruction on the types of storytelling techniques as laid out a variety of TED Talks. The second resource is the TED Talk entitled The Danger of a Single Story by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

Evidence Based Terms Anchor Chart

At the beginning of the school year, I always teach my children about "Evidence Based Terms." These are terms that students should be familiar with in order to reference evidence from the text. This is important so that students know to always go back to the text to prove their answers. I create an anchor chart defining and providing an example of these terms. According to the book *Chart Sense,* anchor charts create a learning environment that is visually stimulating for students and support them in the learning process.

Journals

Journaling is a long held teaching strategy. Journaling is allowing students to write informally about a topic. It allows risk taking and encourages students to think in their writing. It can be used for a variety of things within the classroom such as making personal connections, tracking a story, documenting thoughts and building a relationship between the student and their writing. I will most often use journals as a warm-up exercise to introduce the topic of the day and allow students to collect their thoughts on the topic.

Socratic Seminar/Paideia Seminar

Socratic Seminars will be implemented once throughout the course of the unit to gain an insight into the students' perspective on the information being presented within the unit. The lesson is conducted using a strategy known as Paideia Seminar, which is a great tool for fostering students' participation in the whole class interaction. According to the National Paideia Center's website, Paideia increases students' factual recall, develops students' literacy skills, and strengthen students' conceptual understanding. This is done through "didactic instruction which increases students' factual recall, intellectual coaching which develops students' literacy skills and seminar dialogue which strengthens students' conceptual understanding." Seminar is a student lead activity during which I serve as facilitator. These strategies are appropriate for my students because it allows them an opportunity to enhance peer interaction, writing skills, verbal communication, problem solving and critical thinking skills. The idea behind the Socratic Seminar is to engage students in conversations with the teacher as the facilitator and not a participant. If you are anything like me, you will find it very difficult not to contribute. However, it is important to remain unbiased and not contributing. The seminar is best if you do not guide the conversation but rather allow the students to guide themselves to explore the topics at hand.

Modeling

Research shows that teachers should model what they want their students to imitate. For example, it is important that if you want your students to understand how to properly annotate a text, it is more effective if you model how to annotate rather than just giving directions. It does not matter how simple the directions, it is always better for the student if the teacher first models their expectations. Throughout the course of this unit, teachers will rely heavily on modeling in order for students to understand how to analyze texts and how to effectively create their stories.

Turn and Talk

Turn and Talk is a basic strategy that can be used across the curriculum. When students are finished reading a selection or answering questions, have them turn and talk to the others seated near them. This allows the students to discuss openly with their neighbors on things they are confused about, gets everyone involved, and helps them process content in a quick and easy way. This strategy should be used on a regular basis to set a precedent on procedure.

Think-Pair-Share

This strategy is simple and effective. The idea is that students are asked to think about a question or a selection that they just read and identify key facts or points. Then they pair up with a classmate to talk about their thoughts. Finally, they share out with the class. This strategy gets all students involved in the learning process.

Classroom Activities

Day 1: TED Talks, *The Anatomy of Story,* and how to tell a good story.

     Warm-up: *Give the students the following quote:*
"People are hardwired to listen to stories. Stories are the way human knowledge was passed down before the written word. Storytelling is hardwired into our brains. It's the natural way that our brains learn and process information." -Akash Karia
Have students take a few moments to collect their thoughts and then write a journal in response to the quote. Ask questions such as: What does this quote mean? What are your thoughts on stories? Reflect on the truth behind this quote. Do you agree? Why or why not?

     Lecture: This is based on *The Anatomy of Story.* However, I took the most important points to keep it simple and easy for my students to understand. If you teach younger grades, you can keep trimming this down, and you may want to add more details for older children. Discuss with students what good storytelling techniques include:
1. Every part of the story must be essential. Keep it simple.
    - Anything that does not affect the outcome should be excluded from your final draft.
    - This keeps your reader's attention and also helps develop the theme
2. The writer must have a hook in your opening
    - This gets your reader's attention and encourages the reader to keep listening.
3. Draw a theme out of the story
    - This gives the story depth and purpose. Everything that is discussed should point to the theme.

4. Use vivid language
   - It is argued that telling stories is one of the primary ways that children learn language. Vivid language allows children to accurately express themselves while giving a verbal visual to their audience.
5. Change your voice with different characters.
   - This helps give personality to each of the characters.
6. Have a strong ending
   - This is the last thing that the audience will hear.
7. Make the characters relatable.
   - The goal is for the audience to "root for" the characters.
   - This also allows students to identify with their characters making them more appealing.

TED Talk: Next, students will listen to the TED Talk entitled *The Danger of a Single Story* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichi. Adichi is a Nigerian writer and storyteller. Give students a copy of the transcript and have them annotate their thoughts and feelings as they listen to her speak. Once they have listened, students will participate in a Socratic Seminar. Ask students the following questions:
- Why are stories important to society?
- Why is it important to hear other people's stories?
- What are some of the dangers of not listening to other stories?
- What are some of the dangers of not telling your own story?

Day 2: Modeling

Warm-up: Journal- *How does the story of another person affect you?*

Preface the story of *Beatrice's Goat* by explaining that this is a story about an impoverished girl from Uganda whose life is changed by the gift of a goat. The ultimate reason for selecting *Beatrice's Goat* for my class is because it fits well into the Social Studies curriculum for my 7th Grade students. We talk about poverty issues around the world at the end of the school year, so this is a nice segue into that discussion, thus making this book cross-curricular.

Read Aloud: Read Aloud *Beatrice's Goat* to demonstrate good storytelling techniques and fluency in reading. Talk to the students about what was done during the Read Aloud and what techniques were used to engage the audience. A few things to mention:
-Be sure to use a variety of voices for the characters.
-Make eye contact with the audience.
-Use bodily language to enhance the story and not overwhelm the listener.

Video: CBS' 60 Minutes: View the *60 Minutes* clip interviewing Beatrice at http://youtube.com/watch?v=9x_HMGRa0SY.

Class Discussion: Discuss with the students why it might be important to tell Beatrice's story. How does her story change our view of the world? How does it relate to our discussion on poverty issues around the world?

Day 3 and 4: *Sundiata Lion King of Mali*

I think this should take at least two days as a block scheduled class (one and a half hours), though depending on the scheduling of your class time, it could easily take longer.

Warm-up: Journal- *Define setting and discuss why setting may be important to the story as a whole?*

Sudiata Lion King of Mali: Read the first part of the picture aloud with students in traditional Read Aloud style. The book does not have page numbers, so I stop on the tenth page. First, read the story without the visuals. Then reread the story. As the story is being reread, project pictures from the picture book using the Docu-Cam. Discuss with students the importance of the visuals in the story. As I read this story, I talk with my students about the facial expressions in the pictures. The facial expressions of the characters are very reserved. The author discusses on the back of the book how he tried to create the visuals as accurate as possible. The reason his characters are so reserved speaks to the value placed on personal dignity and self-control within the Malinke people. Discuss with students the bright, vivid colors used in the story and the emphasis on the colors yellow and red throughout the picture book and the relationship between those colors and the African tradition. Finally, I talk with students about the actual creation of the pictures. The author, David Wisniewski, created each illustration as a paper collage cut using an X-Acto knife. This discussion can be further propelled by reading the note at the end of the book.

Cooperative Group Work: Have students complete the reading of the story in groups. Students should discuss the following questions as they read:
-How do the images of the witches help create the mood in that section of the story?
-After the scene with the witches, the colors in the pictures change drastically. Why is this important to the story?
-The clothing of the characters change from the first half to the second half of the book. Using textual evidence and evidence based terms, why do you think this is so?
-Looking again at the images, why do you think the author chose the colors he did for Sumanguru, Sundiata, and Balla Fasseke at the end of the book?

Comparing Texts: Once students have studied the visuals of the text, they should determine the setting and the importance of the setting as well as the themes they see. To do this, students should watch the following video clips from Disney's *The Lion King*.

Using the video clips, instruct students to discuss in their foldable, found in Appendix 2, the importance of setting and themes they see across the two texts.

Setting video - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YekUQYLG4Qo and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwSKkKrUzUk

Theme video - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1bWSYG3zgo

Finally, have students discuss the differences they see in the visuals of the two texts. Discuss the use of color and the creation of the visuals. I would also talk with my students about digital animation versus the creation of pictures using an X-Acto knife. This should be done in the last part of the foldable.

   Plot Diagram and Integration of Technology: The last activity begins the integration of technology and helps students become familiar with the resource to create their own plot. Students should go to: http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/plot-diagram/ and complete the interactive activity on plot using *Sundiata* and then again with *The Lion King*. Allow students to continue working in their groups. With this program, be sure students click "Exposition, Climax, and Resolution" in order to show the use of academic vocabulary. Then have students determine if the rising action should be longer or the falling action by sliding the triangle. Have students justify their answers when they finish creating their plot.

Day 5: *Arabian Nights*

   Warm-up: Journal- *Begin brainstorming a list of potential story ideas for your storytelling project.*

   Arabian Nights: Have students read independently from *One Thousand and One Nights* the selection entitled "Aladdin." Break up the selection into four parts. Have students read each selection, highlight and annotate, and Turn and Talk. Require students to show examples of close reading. I create an anchor chart with my students at the beginning of the year that has the traits of a good reader:
-Visualize
-Predict
-Connect
-Question
-Evaluate
-Clarify
As they read, they should highlight and annotate places in which they do these things. They should highlight in another color places where they are confused with their question written in the margin. Once they have finished each section, have them turn and talk to their neighbors about things they highlighted focusing on where they marked their confusion. Finally, come together as a class to discuss the any final questions or burning comments in a Think-Pair-Share format.

Visualization: Have students complete the visualization activity (Appendix 3). The students should stop and visualize the story at the end of each selection. Remind students to pay special attention to colors.

Comparing Texts: Have students view the following clips from Disney's Aladdin:
"The Thief": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0wH4ZCdce0
"Prince Ali": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEryAoLfnAA
"You're Free": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FTWneI5lT4E
"The End": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQPRBUoyDWE
Then have students complete a Venn diagram (Appendix 4) on the differences between the video clips and the story that they read. When they have completed this task, they should compare their visuals to the Disney version of the story found in the visualization activity completed previously (Appendix 3).

Day 6: Identifying Commonalities

Warm-up: Journal- *Think about your favorite stories. What are some commonalities you notice in the stories you love the most?*

Collaborative Group Work: Students should self-select groups using at least two of the texts listed in the Reading Lists for Students listed below. I would encourage teachers to individually select stories to use as it fits your curriculum. As I also teach Social Studies, I picked selections that lend themselves to be used in both my classes. Have students read the stories in groups and brainstorm commonalities that they see between the stories we have read earlier in the unit and the stories they are reading in their groups. Finally, have the groups come together. On chart paper, list all of the commonalities that the group discovered together. Discuss how the stories come from a variety of cultures and countries. Talk about what all stories have in common.

Day 7: Rough Draft

Warm-up: *Narrow down your topic from Day 5. Identify the idea that best fits the requirements for story commonalities.*

Rough Draft: Students will once again access http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/plot-diagram/ and complete a plot diagram for their stories. This will guide their writing. I always instruct my students to identify the exposition, climax, and resolution and then fill in details for the rising action and falling action. Then have students work on a rough draft.

Day 8: Storyboard Creation

Warm-up: *Proofread your rough draft from yesterday.*

Rubric: To allow students to take ownership of their own work, create a rubric regarding requirements and commonalities that should be used. Do this as a class on www.rubistar.org. Guide students to including a justification for the pictures that they select. Students should be able to access this rubric throughout the writing process.

Storyboard Creation: Students will create a storyboard by carefully selecting pictures for their stories using the website http://www.storyboardthat.com/. As they work on their storyboards, the teacher should conference with individual students about their work. First, the student should read their stories aloud to the teacher to see if they find mistakes. Then the teachers can conference about grammatical errors, confusion, awkward wording, story order, and whether the student used common elements from stories read in class.

Days 9-10: Story Creator

Warm-up: *Turn and Talk to your neighbor: Show them the pictures that you selected for your story yesterday while creating your storyboard. Discuss with them why you selected the pictures you did.*

Story Creator and Story Maker: Students will have access to iPads to complete their digital storyboards using Story Creator or Story Maker to publish their works.

Storytelling: Students should be given enough time to practice telling their stories before performing for the class. As a class, create a rubric for storytelling techniques.

Day 11: Story Telling

Have students share their stories and grade them based on the class created storytelling rubric.

Appendix 1: Common Core State Standards Objectives

RL.7.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
-Students will need to be able to determine the theme of the story and analyze how it is developed in the sample stories that we use in order to complete a story on their own. This will be demonstrated at the beginning of the unit as students read the story and trace the theme.

RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).
-Students will discuss how the setting plays an important role in the stories we read and they will need to determine their own setting as it influences the plot.

RL.7.7: Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).
-Students will compare the stories (*Arabian Nights* and *Sundiata*) that we read in class to the animated Disney version (*Aladdin* and *The Lion King* respectively*).* I will also ask students to compare the visuals in the Disney version to their own visualizations developed during the reading of the text.

RW.7.1: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
-Using this standard, students will need to ensure that their writing meets the styling of the stories that we read.

RW.7.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing source.
-Students will use iPads to create, illustrate, produce, and publish their own writing.

RSL.7.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly
-Students will work together on several of the tasks to accomplish them quickly and efficiently.

RSL.7.5: Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.
-Students will use digital storyboards to complete a visual display for their storytelling presentation.

RI.7.9: Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.
-Students will analyze a variety of texts by different authors to determine common themes, plots, and interpretations of events.

L.7.2: Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.
-Conventions in writing will be important in the production of the stories. Students will need to be precise in their word choice as this is a short story assignment.

L.7.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
-Again, connotation and word choice will be of the upmost importance during this assignment.

Appendix 2: Comparing Texts Foldable

Materials:
-One sheet of construction paper
-Scissors

Directions:
1. Fold the sheet of paper in half veritcally.
2. Hold the paper horizontal with the fold at the top and divide into four vertical pieces.
3. Open the fold and cut up the three fold lines to create four tabs.
4. Repeat this process with a second sheet of paper.
5. Label one foldable "Sundiata Lion King of Mali" and the other "Disney's The Lion King."
6. Label each tab as follows:
    a. Setting
    b. Theme
    c. Unique Qualities
    d. Visuals

Appendix 3: Visualization Activity

Reading Selection: _____
Draw the most exciting or interesting event that you could visualize in this
section of the story. Then list the key words that helped you:
*See the action   *Hear the action   *Smell something in the story
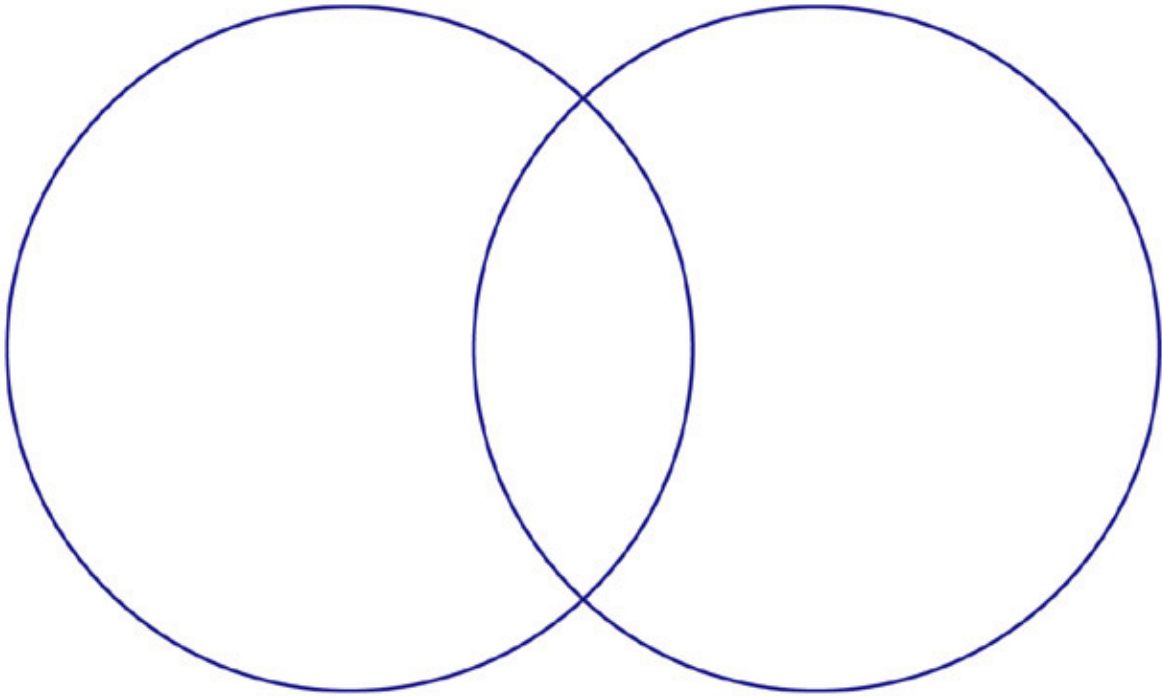*Touch or feel an object   *Feel the emotions of the character
*Taste something in the story
*****Remember to use evidence from the text and evidence based terms!!

**Words and Textual
Evidence:**

Visual:

Appendix 4: Venn Diagram

List of Materials for Classroom Use

Aladdin. Walt Disney Company, 1995. DVD.
        Use this film to compare to One Thousand and One Nights.

The Lion King. Disney, 2001. DVD.
        This film adaptation is great for comparing film to text and for showing the
difference in visualizations on screen and in books.

McBrier, Page, and Lori Lohstoeter. *Beatrice's Goat*. New York: Atheneum Books for
        Young Readers, 2001.
        Beatrice's Goat can be used to incorporate nonfiction into the study of stories.

TEDTalks: The Technology of Storytelling. Performed by Joe Sabia. Films Media Group,
        2011. Film.
        This TED Talk is great for both student and teacher. Students can gain a lot of
information including the history of the art of storytelling.

Wisniewski, David. *Sundiata: Lion King of Mali*. New York: Clarion Books, 1992.
        This book has the most beautiful pictures as the author cut them from paper and
collage them together.

Reading List for Students

Dwyer, Mindy. *The Salmon Princess: An Alaska Cinderella Story*. Seattle, WA:
        Sasquatch Books, 2004.
        This book allows teachers to show how diverse stories can even be found within
their own country.

Gerson, Mary, and Carla Golembe. *Why the Sky Is Far Away: A Nigerian Folktale*.
        Boston: Little, Brown, 1994.
        This story is Nigerian in origin and uses a lot of descriptive language to help
students visualize.

Kimmel, Eric A., and Janet Stevens. *Anansi and the Magic Stick*. Holiday House, 2001.
        Another beautiful origin story about Anansi the Spider, this picture book is a
great way to integrate a variety of retellings and visuals into the classroom. If paired with
Anansi stories, the reader will begin to see how many different ways the story can be
visualized.

Kroll, Virginia L., and Nancy Carpenter. *Masai and I*. New York: Four Winds Press ;,
      1992.
      Masai and I shows the blending of two beautiful cultures.

Louie, Ai, and Ed Young. *Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China*. New York:
      Philomel Books, 1982.

This story offers diversity in my selection to discuss fairy tales from many different
      cultures. McCaughrean, Geraldine, and Rosamund Fowler. "The Wonderful
      Lamp." In *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights*. Oxford: Oxford University
      Press, 1999.
      This story is a springboard for comparing text to film adaptations.

McDermott, Gerald. *Anansi the Spider*. New York: HARCOURT SCHOOL
      PUBLISHERS, 1972.
      This story is inspiring and fun. The visuals are stunning allowing for great
conversation about how visuals can enhance the story telling process.

Medearis, Angela Shelf, and Daniel Minter. *Seven Spools of Thread: A Kwanzaa Story*.
      Morton Grove, Ill.: Albert Whitman, 2000.
      This selection is African in origin making it perfect for cross-curricular study.

Norfolk, Bobby, and Sherry Norfolk. *Anansi & the Pot of Beans*. Atlanta, Ga.: August
      House Story Cove, 2006.
      This book is another Anansi the Spider story to compare how people visualize
the same stories in vastly different ways.

Stanley, Diane, and Peter Vennema. *Shaka: King of the Zulus*. New York: Morrow Junior
      Books, 1988.
      Another book set in Africa, Shaka has beautiful illustrations which lends itself to
discussion of the visuals and how they impact the story.

Steptoe, John, John Steptoe, and Lee Lothrop. *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African
      Tale*. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1987.
      This book is great to use to teach characterization.

Bibliography for Teachers

Fisher, Douglas, and Nancy Frey. *Teaching Students to Read like Detectives:
      Comprehending, Analyzing, and Discussing Text*. Bloomington, IN: Solution
      Tree Press, 2012.

This book is excellent for ways on teaching students to read closely. It also helps to understand how and why to annotate.

Hamilton, Martha, and Mitch Weiss. *Children Tell Stories: Teaching and Using Storytelling in the Classroom*. Katonah, N.Y.: R.C. Owen Publishers, 1990.
This book is another great resource on incorporating storytelling into the classroom.

Karia, Akash. *TED Talks Storytelling: 23 Storytelling Techniques from the Best Storytelling TED Talks*. AkashKaria.com, 2014.
This book is available as a Kindle Edition only. It is a great resource on storytelling techniques.

Laminack, Lester L. *Unwrapping the Read Aloud: Making Every Read Aloud Intentional and Instructional*. New York: Scholastic, 2009.
Use this book for further research on the use of Read Alouds in the classroom. It also helps in effective ways to use Read Aloud across the curriculum.

Linder, Rozlyn. *Chart Sense: Common Sense Charts to Teach 3-8 Informational Text and Literature*. Literacy Initiative, 2014.
This book is great as a reference tool for teachers on creating powerful anchor charts for both fiction and nonfiction works.

Rogers, Spence. *Teaching Tips: 105 Ways to Increase Motivation & Learning*. Evergreen, CO: Peak Learning Systems, 1999.
This book introduces several PEAK Learning Systems strategies on motivation and learning. It is a great as a quick reference on a variety of teaching strategies.

Truby, John. *The Anatomy of Story: 22 Steps to Becoming a Master Storyteller*. New York: Faber and Faber, 2007.
This text is a great reference for storytelling techniques. I strongly recommend skimming sections of it before starting storytelling in front of a class.

Wood, Karen D., and D. Bruce Taylor. *Literacy Strategies across the Subject Areas: Process-oriented Blackline Masters for the K-12 Classroom*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2001.
This book provides Blackline Masters for pre-, during, and post- reading strategies. They can be used across the content for reading fiction and nonfiction works.