

The Storytellers Bookshelf

Judy Sima

Books are a treasure-trove for many storytellers. Though written stories must sometimes be “reworked” to be used as spoken tales, books have preserved versions of stories down through history and from around the world. Just as a visual artist needs paints and brushes, a storyteller needs books. Here is a list of the books for a “storytellers bookshelf.”

FOLKTALE BOOKS FOR BEGINNERS

Baltuck, Naomi. *Crazy Gibberish and Other Story Hour Stretches (from a Storyteller's Bag of Tricks)*. Linnet Books. 1993. Includes book and cassette.

Wonderful collection of chants, short audience participation stories, action songs, musical games, jokes, tongue twisters plus section on how to use the story stretchers and creating and adapting your own. It is a good idea to have a few of these in your own bag of tricks for those times when you have a few extra minutes or need to get the audience with you, especially when working with children. *Apples from Heaven: Multicultural Folk Tales About Stories and Storytellers*.

Bauer, Caroline Feller. *New Handbook for Storytellers: with Stories, Poems, Magic, and More*. American Library Assoc., 1993.

Over 500 pages of ideas, activities, themes, kinds of stories, multimedia and props, and developing programs for preschool children to young adult. Practical resource for anyone who tells stories to children and wants to find new ways to present stories. Includes ideas for decorating and promoting programs; using objects, magic, puppets, poetry, and music; book talks; and lists of books to go along with every storytelling idea and theme.

Cole, Joanna. *Best-Loved Folktales of the World*. Doubleday. 1982.

This “must-have” collection of 200 tales is arranged by regions of the world, east and west Europe, the British Isles, Middle East, Asia, Africa, North and South American, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. Index in the back list stories by categories: Especially good for young children; Humorous tales; Legends; Tales with a moral; Witches, ogresses and female monsters; Trickster-Heroes; Married couples, and others. One of the best collections of world tales.

Holt, David and Bill Mooney, editors. *Ready-To-Tell Tales: Sure-fire stories from America's Favorite Storytellers*. August House. 1994.

Forty of the country's most popular professional storytellers – all of whom have been featured at the National Storytelling Festival – contribute stories they believe a beginning storyteller can be successful with. Multi-cultural collection includes stories from Africa, India, ancient Greece, Egypt, Japan, Mexico, Thailand, as well as African-American, Cajun, Appalachian, Jewish, and Native American oral traditions. Includes “a word about fair use” for storytellers who wish to tell the tales. Telling tips and story sources are given. Also: *More Ready to Tell Tales from Around the World*.

Young, Richard and Judy Dockery. *Favorite Scary Stories of American Children*. August House. 1990.

Contains "23 tales newly collected from children 5 to 10." The authors rate each story by its "fearfulness" and gives an appropriate age level range: 5-6, 7-8, 9-10. Some of the stories are familiar. All are written to tell easily but can be adapted and expanded to fill one's own personal style. The Afterward contains advice for parents and teachers. Also by the authors: *Classic American Ghost Stories and Ghost Stories from the American South*.

Yolen, Jane. *Favorite Folktales from Around the World*. Pantheon. 1988.

Another "must-have" collection, Yolen presents more than 150 stories from all parts of the world, including stories of ghosts, lovers, tricksters, noodleheads and heroes; tales of wisdom; tall tales; fooling the devil tales; life and death tales; and stories of stories. One of the best story collections, some tales can be told as is; others need work to become tellable. There is no index. Also: *Gray Heroes: Elder Tales from Around the World*.

MORE ADVANCED FOLKTALE BOOKS

Nature Stories

Caduto, Michael J. *Earth Tales from Around the World*. Fulcrum. 1997.

Organized into ten themes such as Earth, Water, Sky, Plants, Fire, and Wisdom, the stories come from every continent. Includes suggestions for lessons inspired by the stories and additional extensions for further exploration.

Caduto, Michael J. and Joseph Bruchac. *Keepers of the Earth: Native American Stories and Environmental Activities for Children*. Fulcrum. 1988.

Twenty-three Native American stories about creation, fire, earth, water, seasons, plants, and animals are presented along with discussion questions and activities. Tribe of origin is given. The authors have written several other books along the same lines: *Keepers of the Animals: Native American Stories and Wildlife Activities for Children*; *Keepers of the Night: Native American Stories and Nocturnal Activities for Children*.

Ethnic Story Collections

Courlander, Harold and George Herzog. *The Cow-tail Switch and Other West African Stories*. Henry Holt. 1986.

This book contains seventeen tales about animals, kings, warriors and hunters, clever and foolish people, good and bad people, and how things came to be. Courlander is one of the foremost collectors of African folklore. Other books for children: *The Fire on the Mountain and Other Stories from Ethiopia and Eritrea*; *People of the Short Blue Corn: Tales and Legends of the Hopi Indians*; *The Tiger's Whisker and Other Tales from Asia and the Pacific*.

DeSpain. Pleasant. *Thirty-three Multicultural Tales to Tell*. August House. 1993.

DeSpain is a prolific writer of stories from around the world, written in a simple, uncomplicated manner, easy enough for kids to tell but probably should be embellished by the adult storyteller. This book includes stories from Mexico, Korea, Tibet, India, Russia, China, Fiji, Africa, and Japan. Also from August House by DeSpain: *The Books of Nine Lives Series*; *Twenty-two Splendid Tales to Tell from Around the World*; *Eleven Turtle Tales: Adventure Tales from Around the World*; *Eleven Nature Tales: A Multicultural Journey*; *The Emerald Lizard: fifteen Latin American Tales to Tell*.

- Goss, Linda and Marian E. Barnes. *Talk That Talk: An Anthology of African-American Storytelling*. Simon and Schuster. 1989.
Contains animal tales and fables, historical stories, sermons, stories of family and home, tales of ghosts and witches, humorous tales, raps rhythms and rhymes along with commentaries on the tales.
- Jacobs, Jacob. *English Fairy Tales*. Dover Dell. 1967.
Reprinted from the 1898 edition, by one of England's most well known folklorist. Many of the 43 tales are among our most familiar fairy tales: The Three Sillies, Jack and the Beanstalk, Teeny-Tiny, Henny-Penny, Three Bears, Mr. Fox, Tom Thumb, Lazy Jack, Three Pigs, Golden Arm. Other Jacob's books in this series: *Celtic Fairy Tales*, *More Celtic Fairy Tales*, *Indian Fairy Tales*.
- Peck, Catherine, editor. *Quality Paperback Book Club Treasury of North American Folktales*. Philip Life Group. 1998.
Excellent collection of stories collected from past and present storytellers. Includes good bibliographic citations in the index.
- Untermeyer, Louis. *The Firebringer and Other Great Stories: 55 Legends that Live Forever*. M. Evens and Company. 1968.
Readers will have some knowledge and awareness of the classic myths and legends contained in this book. They come from all over the world including Greek myths, the bible, Scandinavia, France, Spain, and Great Britain.
- Wolkstein, Diane. *The Magic Orange Tree and Other Haitian Folktales*. Schocken. 1978.
Contains Twenty-seven unique, sometimes scary folktales and songs from the Island of Haiti. A storytelling classic.

World Folklore Series. Libraries Unlimited.

These wonderful books highlight the folktales, myths, and legends from many diverse and unique cultures. It is difficult to find stories from many of these countries in any other source. New titles are being published each year. The books are usually co-authored by native authors, folklorists, and storytellers. In addition to the tales, each book contains background information, historical overview, beliefs and customs, maps, color photographs of the people, land, and crafts. The books are a little on the expensive side, but well worth the price. Several include audiotapes. For a complete list contact Libraries Unlimited at 800-237-6124 or via the web at: www.lu.com

STORYTELLING BUSINESS

- De Las Casas, Dianne. *The Professional Storyteller's Business Handbook: How to Manage and Organize Your Storytelling Business*. The Story Connection. 1999.
This book is only 53 pages long but contains a wealth of practical, step-by-step information for those interested in telling stories professionally.

STORYTELLING TECHNIQUES AND APPLICATIONS

- Collins, Rives and Pamela J. Cooper. *The Power of Story: Teaching Through Storytelling*. Prentice Hall. 1996.
Excellent resource for teachers. The eight chapters cover the "why" and "how to" of storytelling with activities, lists of resources and an interview of the storyteller who wrote each chapter. Includes: the value of telling stories, choosing and preparing stories, finding your own voice, dramatization, personal narratives, and storytelling activities along with a bibliography and internet sites.

Davis, Donald. *Telling Your Own Stories: For Family and Classroom Storytelling, Public Speaking, and Personal Journaling*. August House. 1993.
A small book packed full of "story starters" and memory joggers written by America's foremost teller of personal stories. Gives ideas on how to build plot, structure stories, developing crisis, expanding descriptive skills, recovering memory, and telling personal stories.

Dailey, Sheila. *Putting the World in a Nutshell: The Art of the Formula Tale*. Wilson. 1994.
Easy-to-learn stories that follow set patterns for such tale types as the chain story, cumulative tale, circle story, endless tale, good/bad, question, air castles and the catch story are accompanied by an explanation of each type of formula tale and mention of additional stories. Useful for creating your own stories.

Lipkin, Lisa. *Bringing the Story Home: The Complete Guide to Storytelling for Parents*. W W Norton. 2000.
Full of tried and true ideas and information on how to use storytelling in the family.

Lipman, Doug. *The Storytelling Coach: How to Listen, Praise, and Bring Out People's Best*. August House. 1995.
Lipman is considered the foremost authority on storytelling coaching, this book presents principles for giving and receiving good coaching help for classroom, stage and other venues. Also by Lipman: *Improving Your Storytelling: Beyond the Basics for All Who Tell Stories in Work or Play*.

MacDonald, Margaret Read. *The Parent's Guide to Storytelling: How to Make Up New Stories and Retell Old Favorites*. August House. 2001.
Contains ideas form making storytelling easy, spontaneous and affirming. Includes traditional stories in an easy to follow format, helpful hints and techniques. Focuses on storytelling for the youngest listeners, bedtime stories, expandable tales, scary stories, improvisational ideas, and family folklore.

Maguire, Jack. *Creative Storytelling: Choosing, Inventing, and Sharing Tales for Children*. McGraw Hill. 1985.
Comprehensive book describing types of stories, how to find the right story for children of different ages and interests, how to adapt stories, create your own stories, improving your storytelling technique, and extending the story experience through music, poetry, puppetry etc. Includes several stories to illustrate types of stories.

Mooney, Bill and David Holt. *The Storyteller's Guide: Storytellers Share Advice for the Classroom, Boardroom, Showroom, Podium, Pulpit, and Center Stage*. August House. 1996.
The authors interviewed over 50 well known storytellers who are also teachers, librarians, clergymen, actors, musicians, and full-time professional storytellers. The book gives their opinions and advice on many topics such as: shaping stories from printed text; controlling stage fright; marketing; worst performance experiences; learning and rehearsing a story; creating original stories, making a program flow; copyright; using storytelling in the library; and recommendations for the "storyteller's bookshelf." Excellent source for anyone who is serious about telling stories.

Niemi, Loren and Elizabeth Ellis. *Inviting the Wolf In: Thinking About Difficult Stories*. August House. 2001.
Many excellent ideas for creating original stories.

Sawyer, Ruth. *The Way of the Storyteller*. Penguin Books. 1942. 1990.

A storytelling classic. Sawyer relates her own storytelling journey and vision. An inspiring book for the novice as well as experienced teller.

Schimmel, Nancy. *Just Enough to Make a Story: A Sourcebook for Storytelling*. Sister Choice Press; nancy@sisterschoice.com

Ideas for choosing and using stories in various settings. Includes several stories including "The Tailor," as well as two paper-folding stories. Annotated bibliography.

Sima, Judy and Kevin Cordi. *Raising Voices: Youth Storytelling Groups and Troupes*. Libraries Unlimited. Fall 2002.

Step-by-step guide for organizing and running student storytelling clubs including activities, story learning process, coaching and fund raising ideas, and a extensive annotated list of resources. A "must-have" for anyone working with young storytellers.

Walsh, John. *The Art of Storytelling: Easy Steps for Presenting Unforgettable Stories*. Moody Press. January 2003.

Written by Northlands' vice-president and containing a chapters written by Northlands' members Mike Mann, Karen Wollscheid, and Margie Reitsma, this book was written for the "faith based" community. It uses bible stories for its instruction, but can be applied to any traditional story. John presents a simple and accessible method for those interested in using storytelling in any part of their lives.



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