

This classroom activity introduces students to the context of the performance task. This ensures that students are not disadvantaged in completing the skills the task intends to assess. Contextual elements include understanding the situation of the task, potentially unfamiliar concepts associated with the situation or setting, and key terms or vocabulary students will need to understand in order to engage with the performance task. This classroom activity is also intended to interest the students in the task they are to complete. This activity should be easy to implement and contains clear instructions.

Please read through the entire classroom activity before beginning the activity with students. This will ensure that all classroom preparation is completed before the activity begins.

Resources Needed:

- Chart paper, white board, or chalkboard
- Markers or chalk
- One piece of paper and pencil per student (If needed accommodations may be made for a different writing tool)
- A method of displaying the figures such as a projector

Learning Goal:

- Students will understand the different genres of stories
- Students will understand the key terms:
 - **Epic:** a lengthy narrative poem, ordinarily concerning a serious subject containing details of heroic deeds and events significant to a culture or nation
 - **Fable:** a short story, typically with animals as characters, conveying a moral
 - **Fairy Tale:** story about fairies or other magical creatures, usually for children
 - **Genre:** a category of literary composition
 - **Moral:** the moral teaching or practical lesson contained in a fable, tale, experience, etc.
 - **Myth:** a traditional or legendary story, usually concerning some being or hero or event, with or without a determinable basis of fact or a natural explanation, especially one that is concerned with deities or demigods and explains some practice, rite, or phenomenon of nature
 - **Oral Tradition:** a community's cultural and historical traditions passed down by word of mouth or example from one generation to another without written instruction

Definitions are provided here for the convenience of facilitators. Students are expected to understand these key terms as they arise in the context of the task, not to be able to recite the definitions.

[Purpose: The facilitator's goal is to help students understand that stories have many different genres. This activity will allow students to be active participants as they further explore the concept of storytelling.]

[Distribute paper and pencil to each student.]

Facilitator says: "Today, we will get ready for the Storytelling Performance Task, which is about stories. Let's start by discussing what you know about stories. Does anyone have any favorite stories?"

[Take responses for two minutes or until all students who would like to respond have been given the chance.]

Facilitator says: "Those stories can be quite different from each other. In fact, there are actually different types of stories, called genres. Among them, there are myths, epics, fables, and fairy tales. Let's start with myths."

[Display **Figure 1: Story Genres** or distribute to students as a handout.]

Facilitator asks: "Who knows what a myth is?"

[Call on student volunteer.]

Facilitator says: "A myth is a made-up story that tries to explain a natural phenomenon. They were created when people did not understand the world as much as we do today. Sometimes they feature supernatural beings such as spirits or gods and goddesses."

[Record the information in **Figure 1** or ask students to record the information on their handout. Make sure they fill out the chart correctly. For students with visual impairments or reading disabilities, repeat the information aloud.]

Facilitator asks: "Does anybody have any examples of myths?"

[Call on student volunteers. Record student responses in **Figure 1** or ask students to record the information on their handout. Make sure they fill out the chart correctly.]

Note: The list below is only for the facilitator's reference and does not have to be used. Items already addressed by students should not be repeated.

- Prometheus and Fire
- Thor and lightning
- Arachne the Spinner

Facilitator says: "The next genre is called an epic. It is usually a long, serious story about heroes or great events. It can have some parts with mythology in it. If the story is serious and has a heroic main character who goes through a long adventure with lots of action, the story is most likely an epic."

[Record the information in **Figure 1** or ask students to record the information on their handout. Make sure they fill out the chart correctly. For students with visual impairments or reading disabilities, repeat the information aloud.]

Facilitator says: "We still have a lot of epics today. Can anyone name a few?"

[Call on student volunteers. Record student responses in **Figure 1** or ask students to record the information on their handout. Make sure they fill out the chart correctly.]

Note: The list below is only for the facilitator's reference and does not have to be used. Items already addressed by students should not be repeated.

- Heracles
- Iliad
- Odyssey
- Star Wars
- Lord of the Rings

Facilitator says: "Myths and epics are usually serious but the next genres are more fun. A fable is a story meant to teach a moral, which teaches you the proper way to act. They are usually short and sometimes the characters are animals that do things that people do, such as talking and walking on two legs."

[Record the information in **Figure 1** or ask students to record the information on their handout. Make sure they fill out the chart correctly. For students with visual impairments or reading disabilities, repeat the information aloud.]

Facilitator says: "Does anyone know any fables? Remember, they are just short stories that try to teach a lesson."

[Call on student volunteers. Record student responses in **Figure 1** or ask students to record the information on their handout. Make sure they fill out the chart correctly.]

Note: The list below is only for the facilitator's reference and does not have to be used. Items already addressed by students should not be repeated.

- The Tortoise and the Hare
- The Fox and the Crow
- The Boy Who Cried Wolf

Facilitator says: "The next genre should be the most familiar for you. Fairy tales are short stories that deal with fantasy characters. They have characters such as fairies and witches and usually have magic involved in the story."

[Record the information in **Figure 1** or ask students to record the information on their handout. Make sure they fill out the chart correctly. For students with visual impairments or reading disabilities, repeat the information aloud.]

Facilitator asks: "Does anyone know a good fairy tale?"

[Call on student volunteers. Record student responses in **Figure 1** or ask students to record the information on their handout. Make sure they fill out the chart correctly.]

Note: The list below is only for the facilitator's reference and does not have to be used. Items already addressed by students should not be repeated.

- Cinderella
- Sleeping Beauty
- Snow White and the Seven Dwarves

Facilitator says: "Stories can be quite fun. The different genres can keep you interested. In your performance task, you will be learning more about stories and storytelling. The work you did today should help prepare you for the research and writing you will be doing in the performance task."

[Collect all notes from students and remind them that they cannot be used during the performance task.]

Resource Document
Figure 1. Story Genres

Genre	Definition or characteristics	Example
Myth		
Epic		
Fable		
Fairy Tale		