

Storytelling

Your Assignment:

Your class has been chosen by the children's museum to create a display about storytelling. You have been chosen to write an essay about storytelling in different cultures. Before writing your essay, you did some research and found three sources that provide information about storytelling in different cultures.

After you've looked at these sources, you will answer some questions about them. First, quickly look at the three sources and the questions that follow. After that, go back and carefully read each source to get the information you need to answer the questions and write an essay for the display.

In part 2, you will use the information from the sources you have read.

Directions for Beginning:

You may now look at the three sources. You can look back to these sources as much as you would like. Be sure to take notes when reading. You may want to use your notes while you are writing your story.

Research Questions:

After you have carefully read the sources, use the rest of the time in part 1 to answer three questions about them. Your answers to these questions will be scored. Also, your answers should help you think about the information that you have read in order to help you write your story.

You may refer back to your scratch paper to review your notes when you think it would be helpful. Answer the questions in the spaces below the questions.

Your written notes on scratch paper will be available to you in part 1 and part 2 of the performance task.

PART 1**Source 1**

You have found an article written by a history professor. The article explains some history of storytelling.

Storytelling
By: Francine Moss

Before people were able to write, they needed a way to share their history, beliefs, and way of life. They had to use their memory and listening skills to share information with future tribe members. This is how storytelling was born. Storytelling has been around for a very long time. No one knows when the first story was told. We do know that storytelling happens in every culture. Even though every culture has a form of storytelling, the meanings, themes, and styles may change from place to place. Even today, stories are used to amuse, teach, and explain. Storytelling was used as a way to have fun hundreds of years before books, plays, and movies ever existed.

Some believe storytelling started as a way to help explain the fears and questions of people. Small groups of families would tell these stories. Over time, more families of people came together to form bigger groups, called clans or tribes. In some groups, it became one person's job to keep the stories of the tribe or clan. These people were called storytellers. The storytellers had to keep the people interested. This was very important because they wanted the stories to be remembered by their group. They hoped that one day one of the listeners would become the new storyteller. Sometimes, storytellers would travel to other groups and tell their stories along the way. They would also learn new stories from the groups of people they visited. After some time, the storyteller would come home and share his or her new stories with their group. This caused the spread of stories all over the world.

Storytellers told many different types of stories for many different reasons. These types included myths, fairy tales, epic adventures, trickster tales, and fables. There are also stories that tried to explain events and weather, like earthquakes and lightning that may not have made sense to people a long time ago. These stories were sometimes unlikely, but tried to explain why these things happened. They were also fun to listen to. There are different reasons for each type of story, and many different types are used in each culture.

Being able to share our stories with each other is one thing that makes us different from all other animals on the planet. It is no wonder that people around the world still love to hear stories today, much like they did a long time ago.

Source 2

You found an article written by a Native American historian. The article reviews storytelling in the Native American culture.

Native American Storytelling

By: Jarod Newman

Native American culture is famous for its storytelling. Native Americans still tell stories today like they did a long time ago. Native American stories try to explain and teach about the world we live in. Their stories honor all parts of life, including animals and plants, as well as family members that have passed. They also tell stories about how the world was made and why natural things happened.

Native American storytellers were called shamans. Shamans told stories and helped heal sick people. These storytellers would learn the stories from their elders and would make a promise to tell them to the next generations of the tribe.

Animals are very common and important in Native American stories. Animals in Native American stories did not act like normal animals. They acted almost human. They would think and talk. Some of these animals were called "wisdom animals." They would share what they knew with the shaman. The shaman had to travel to other groups to share his stories because not all people could talk to the wisdom animals.

Native Americans also used music, song, and dance in their stories. For example, one tribe would do spiritual dances to tell stories. Sometimes stories were told in song with music. The music and dancing was meant to amuse the listeners while they heard the stories.

Source 3

You have found an article written by a history professor. This article outlines storytelling in the West African culture.

West African Storytelling
By: Ally Cruz

In West Africa, storytelling is still a big part of the culture. Storytelling is seen as an art in this culture. Africans are proud to share their stories. Stories are meant to be a performance and will usually include dance and music.

Griots, or the female Griotte, are the storytellers in African culture. There is usually only one storyteller for each village. If any other village tries to steal a storyteller from another, this could start a war. Griots are in charge of keeping the history from their time and sharing this information. They must also remember the stories told to them by their family members. Griots also serve the king and his family. They also sing at special events in the village.

West African stories tell of shared knowledge and help teach lessons about what is right and wrong. There is a common theme of wit, independence, and courage. Stories in West African culture are usually proverbs, epic narrations, genealogies, or songs. Proverbs are stories that share knowledge, truth, ideas, and life lessons. Epic narrations tell the story of a real hero that played an important part in the tribe's history. Even though the person may have been real, the events in the story may be hero-like to show greater importance. Genealogies share the history of the group. These are usually sung by Griots while playing a musical instrument. They usually include facts such as numbers, dates, and important names. Songs are a huge part of African culture and their storytelling. Songs are sung in all parts of life.

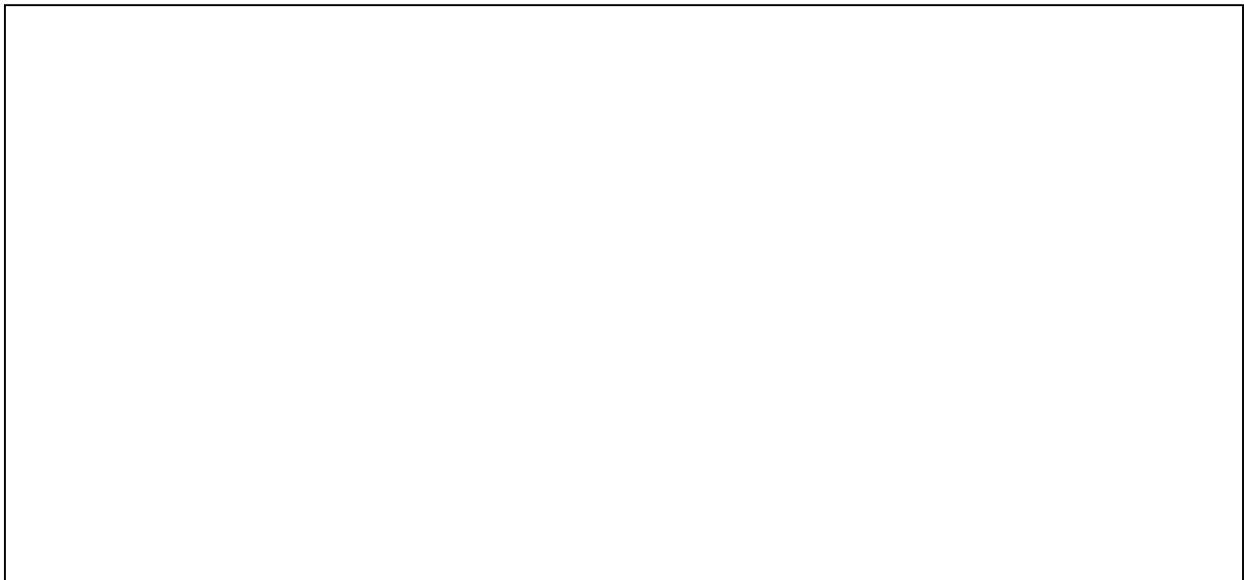
Research Questions

Using the information you have just read from the three articles, answer the questions below.

- 1. Which source would *most likely* be most helpful in explaining how stories spread throughout the world? Explain why this source is *most likely* the most helpful. Use two details from the source to support your explanation.**



- 2. Explain why telling stories was important for people a long time ago to do. Give *three* reasons, one from Source 1, one from Source 2, and 1 from Source 3. For each reason, include the source title and number.**



- 3. Mark the boxes to match each source with the information it mentions.
Some pieces of information may have more than one source marked.**

Information	Source 1: Storytelling	Source 2: Native American Storytelling	Source 3: West African Storytelling
song and dance in storytelling			
animals in stories			
job of a storyteller			
how stories spread			

END OF PART 1

PART 2**Directions:**

You will now look at your sources, review your notes, plan, draft, and revise an essay. You may use your notes and go back to the sources provided. Read your assignment and the information about how your story will be scored. Then begin your work.

Your assignment:

Your class is putting together a display about storytelling for the children's museum. Each person in your class has been assigned a different task to help complete the display.

Your assignment is to write an essay about storytelling in different cultures. In your essay, talk about the history and importance of storytelling and how it differs in some cultures; make sure to use information from both Native American and West African cultures in your essay. Include evidence from the sources in part one to help support the information you include in your essay.

Remember:

A good informational essay:

- has a clear main idea
- is well-organized and stays on the assigned topic
- has an introduction and a conclusion
- uses transitions and linking words
- uses details from the sources
- clearly develops ideas
- uses clear language
- follows the rules of writing (spelling, punctuation, grammar)

You may begin working on your essay. Make sure that you manage your time so that you can plan your essay, write your essay, and revise and edit the final draft.

For part 2, you are being asked to write a multi-paragraph essay, so be as thorough as possible.

Remember to check your notes and your prewriting/planning as you write and then revise and edit your essay.