



## Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years

# SD54 – Rural Residency Project

Storytelling in the primary classroom.

Thursday, October 5th

2:00 – 4:00pm

Presenter:

Jen Kelly  
POPEY Teacher Consultant

## *Today we are exploring...*

- how we can support students' emergent literacy skills by focusing on oral storytelling through a variety of genres, activities and mentor texts

We will be sharing a collection of evidence-based strategies, activities, and routines for you to consider.

## Video: Three Year Old Telling a Story



What does this child already know about storytelling?

# Benefits of Oral Storytelling

- ✓ develops strong listening skills
- ✓ builds vocabulary
- ✓ enhances memory recall
- ✓ builds community
- ✓ students create pictures in their heads while listening



# Why use storytelling?

*Stories give a firm basis for the learning of language*

Learn new  
vocabulary

Words are  
said in  
context

Words are  
used in  
different  
ways

Connection  
between  
speaking  
and  
listening

# Why use storytelling?

## Stories form relationships ...

Provide connection between storyteller and listener

Learn what is important to students

Students come to see educators as real people

Students see that their voice is valued

# Talk Time and Oral Storytelling

- \* **Talk time starts with a talking circle and a simple story**

- Kai went to a birthday party this weekend.
- Slowly build on it with the class, throughout the week

- \* **Students get the chance to...**

- say a story themselves, and
- hear the story being told over & over again, with the same language



provides **scaffolded support** as students **build confidence** with oral storytelling and language

# *Different Kinds of storytelling*



## *Personal Stories*

*Students feel confident with their own stories - they know them inside out.*

### *Students:*

- ▶ own these stories
- ▶ cannot be corrected
- ▶ use language to describe their experiences
- ▶ work their memory muscle when telling stories



# *Different kinds of storytelling*



## *Making Up New Stories*

*Recipe for creating a story ...*

### *Basic Ingredients:*

- ▶ A main character – a person, creature, or even an object
- ▶ A task – delivering a gift, solving a problem, obtaining an object
- ▶ Incidents – encountering hardship, finding help, overcoming difficulties
- ▶ A resolution – problem solved, happiness secured, quest fulfilled

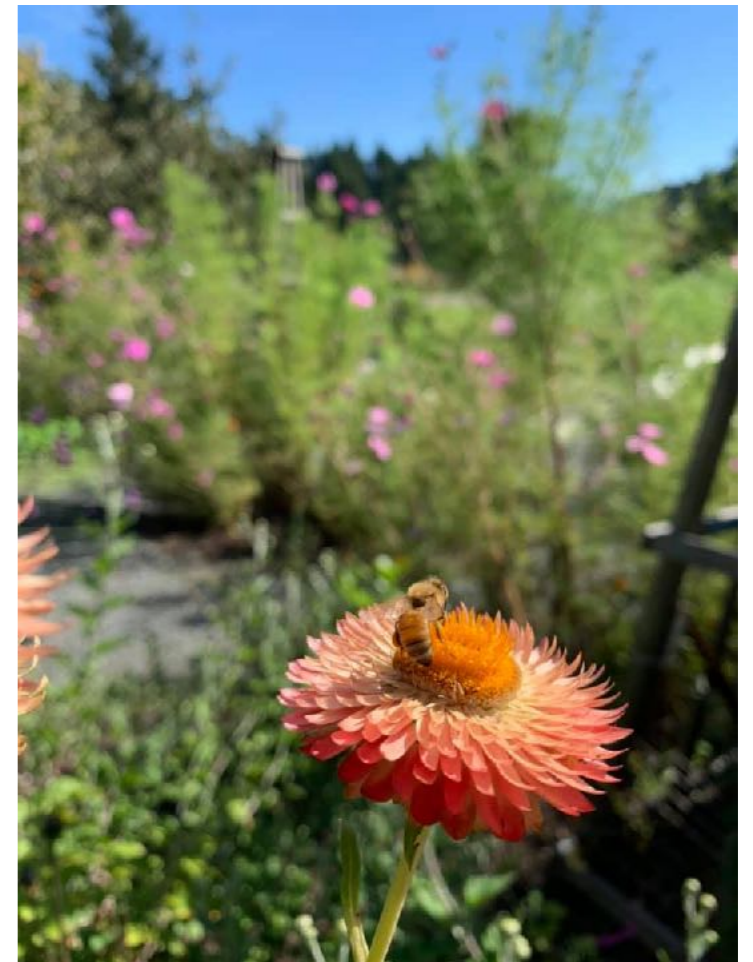
# Sit Spots: Storytelling inspired by observing nature



- \* self-selected spots that students can return to many times
- \* promotes careful observation and reflection
- \* stories can be factual or imaginary, or a blend of both
- \* stories can blend what they're seeing in the natural world with their own lives – e.g. *maybe that spider has soccer practice later*
- \* students might imagine what plants or animals are thinking or feeling; what would they say if they could talk?
- \* repeated visits to these sit spots can also highlight changes in the seasons and how these plants and animals are impacted

## Sit Spots - making up new stories in nature

- \* Choose one photo
- \* What story do you imagine taking place there?
- \* Write your ideas down and then share with the group



# Engaging Children in Storytelling




# Talk Time and Oral Storytelling



When children **tell their own stories**, they practice grammar and learn how to create tone and theme.

Storytelling is a social activity.



Children must recognize the needs of their audience and adjust their vocabulary choices, plot, and pacing for maximum understanding – and a positive reaction.



Image from [wallpaperhp.com](http://wallpaperhp.com)

# *Different kinds of storytelling*

## *Story Workshop*



*Story workshop invites children to think, imagine, design, and create when given purposeful materials.*

### *Students know that:*

- ▶ their story is worth telling and sharing
- ▶ there is no wrong way to tell a story
- ▶ they can problem solve through play
- ▶ they can invite friends to listen and engage in their story

# *What is the connection between literacy and arts?*

Questions that inspired the beginning of story workshop...

- \* What might be the role of play?
- \* What happens when we infuse writing workshop with ample use of the arts and time to play?
- \* How do the voice and the choice that results when we invite children to create and tell their stories lead to a classroom practice of democracy?
- \* How does this practice both rely on and reinforce equity and access for all?

Choose **one** question to reflect on and share your thoughts with your table.



# What is Story Workshop?

Story Workshop is a structure that supports language and literacy development. Adults work alongside children as they explore prepared environments and experiences.

They may consider...

- \* Where do stories live?
- \* What stories do I want to world to hear?
- \* What stories do I need to tell?
- \* How do stories influence me and our community?



# Why Story Workshop?



Story Workshop helps teachers work with students who exclaim they have nothing to write about during writing workshop.



Students start to understand that they:

- \* can be curious about the environment around them
- \* are competent communicators
- \* have important stories to tell
- \* can make connections to other people's stories
- \* have big emotions they can explore and share with others

# What role does curiosity play in learning?

The '**wonder**' aspect of curiosity – the why and the how quest for understanding rather than fact finding

A **goal of curiosity** is to prepare the mind for learning. It prepares us to be ready to decide which information we want/need to attend to in situations.



Asking an **engaging question** can create a more long-lasting value (desire) for learning novel information.

*For example – “What do you think happens when...?”*

Children have a natural motivation to explore the world, but we can encourage a more important motivator to explore the mind.

# *Different kinds of storytelling*

## *Working with Picture Books*

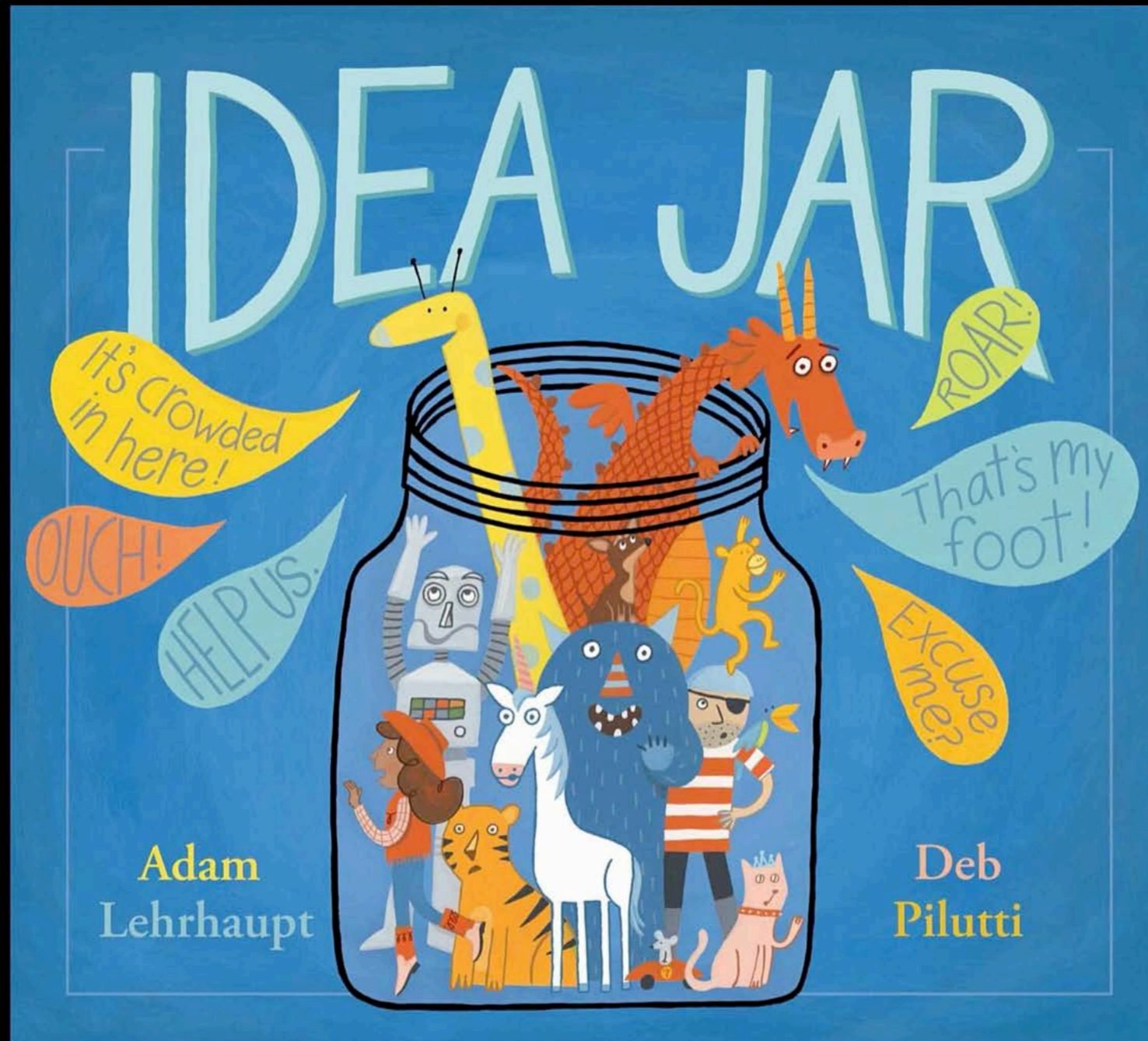


*Picture book stories are funny, surprising, or scary - they evoke emotion.*

### *Students can:*

- ▶ retell the story in their own words
- ▶ change endings or details of the story
- ▶ choose stories that they are most interested in
- ▶ describe beginning, middle, and end of a story

# Making Up New Stories



## Activity Time! Ideas for Oral Storytelling

Using one of the following ideas,  
come up with a **plot outline** for a story you could tell.


*a new slide at the playground*

*a summer holiday at the lake*

*a magic shell on the beach*

*a hollowed out tree in the forest*



A close-up photograph of a child's hand reaching out to touch a large, smooth, grey rock. The rock is covered with a layer of colorful autumn leaves in shades of yellow, orange, and red. The scene is set on a blue surface, likely a table. In the background, another child's hand is visible, and a hammer with a wooden handle and metal head is partially seen. The overall atmosphere is one of hands-on learning and exploration.

“Children learn by doing  
when they are engaged  
in projects and inquiries  
that extend their interests”

# Sharing the Wealth - your current practice

What instructional routines and strategies do you **currently** use to nurture and support **storytelling** in your classroom?

Share a **favourite** activity, genre, mentor text, or routine with your neighbour.





# Sources

## Books & Presentations

Units of Study – Calkins, The Reading and Writing Project

Storytelling and Story–Reading in Early Years – Medicott

Story Workshop: New Possibilities for Young Writers – MacKay

Motivating a Love of Learning presentation – Bonawitz

## Digital Resources

[Opal School: Why Story Workshop?](#)

[Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

[BC Early Learning Framework](#)

## Videos

[Twitter: Child reading a story](#)

[Youtube: Engaging Children in Oral Storytelling to Support Oral Language Development](#)

[J Allair – Kindergarten Story Workshop inspired by Opal School](#)



# the Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years



Contact me...



Jen Kelly

[jen@popey.ca](mailto:jen@popey.ca)