

Tall Tree Tales – developing storytelling skills

Suitable for Years 3-6, March to November

Using the Arboretum's magnificent surroundings students will have the opportunity to engage creatively with the natural setting, listen to a variety of tree stories and explore a range of story telling skills.

Key Concepts

Story structure, description, characters, creating atmosphere, speaking and listening

Learning outcomes

By the end of the programme students should be able to:

- Generate a variety of imaginative story ideas
- Use description to set the scene
- Explore and convey situations, characters and emotions
- Create atmosphere and mood through description and sound
- Tell stories, real and imagined, describing events and experiences

Before you come

Q What makes a good story?

Programme Outline

Learning Objectives	Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess the group's prior knowledge about stories, story structure and language 	<p>Introduction : warming up our imagination What makes a good story? Brainstorm storytelling skills After brainstorming stories based in woodlands and forests, the children prepare for an expedition to discover and create their own woodland story ideas.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To describe the difference between factual and fictional stories • To understand that story telling provides the opportunity to give a different perspective about a place or object 	<p>Douglas Mouse A short Native American story about how the Douglas fir tree helped Mouse escape being Eagle's tea.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use adjectives to describe personal experiences • To set the scene of a woodland story through descriptive language 	<p>Silent Exploring: noticing the world around you Individually, children are invited to creep through the trees, listening, smelling, looking and touching as they go. In small groups the children then share and describe their discoveries. These are then brought together to create a description that could set the scene of a woodland story</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore sound effects as one way to add atmosphere to a story 	<p><i>Soundscape: adding atmosphere</i> Using natural woodland materials, the children add atmosphere to the retelling of a short poem by creating a soundtrack, or soundscape.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore key features of an object or person to create a fictional character 	<p><i>Tree People: building characters</i> The 'Yellow Cedar Sisters' story introduces the group to the idea of tree people characters. Small groups find a characterful tree, consider how it is feeling, create its face using clay and natural materials and then build the character's story.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To create a story around a natural object 	<p><i>Whatever is that? Creativity</i> Each child is invited to collect a fallen natural object from the woodland floor. They are then challenged to tell a creative story to a partner informing them what the object 'really' is – the one rule is they cannot say what it truly is!</p>

National Curriculum links

Spoken language

- Give well-structured descriptions and narratives
- Participate in discussions, role play and improvisations
- Use relevant strategies to build vocabulary
- Use spoken language to develop understanding through imagining and exploring ideas