



Introduction

The fifteen rewritten tales found in *Participation Stories* are a delightful combination of traditional tales, folk tales, original tales, tales from other countries, and tales in rhyme. The stories and activity ideas will improve language skills, listening skills, and stimulate a love of words and reading in young children.

The following stories can be told, and retold, using all of the following techniques:

1. Traditional Storytelling (Auditory)

The first storytelling technique is for the teacher to become a traditional storyteller. Using this method, the teacher would simply tell the tale without the use of any text and the children would become an audience of eager listeners. Traditional storytellers must understand the content of their stories and be incredibly comfortable telling the tale. The teacher will need to spend a good deal of time practicing it before presenting the story to a group of children.

Once the teacher feels secure with the story content, gather the children together and bring the story to life by simply using your own words, facial expressions, gestures, and by utilizing a variety of voice inflections. Your audience will not only be captivated, but they will also be busy creating mental images as they listen to the words of the story.

Research has shown that this is a powerful tool for increasing language skills, listening skills, and for motivating young children to want to learn how to read and write.

2. Participation (or Action) Stories (Auditory and Kinesthetic)

The second technique for telling these stories is to turn them into participation or action stories. There are two different ways in which the children can participate — with **physical movements**, such as pantomiming the action words, or by **oral participation** as the children recite choral chants or repetitive phrases.

Physical Movements/Pantomime: Young children love being able to listen and move all at the same time. Each story has a variety of action words or phrases that are printed in **bold-italized** type. As the teacher reads the story, she should emphasize these words by slowing down each time she comes to a **bold-italized** word or phrase. This will signal the children to listen more carefully and to pantomime the actions. For example, “The bear was **sleeping** in his cave.” The children would then pantomime that they are sleeping.

Some of the **bold-italized** words or phrases encourage the children to make various facial expressions, such as, “Then the little mouse **looked** at the duck.” The children might squint or hold a hand over their eyes and pretend to be looking. This storytelling technique is an effective tool for building receptive language skills and for increasing vocabulary.

Oral Participation: In several of the stories there are **bold-italized** phrases that allow the children to orally participate. The children will learn a repetitive phrase or rhyme and will repeat it as a group each time a specific story clue for that phrase is read by the teacher. For example, in the tale, *Why the Bear is Stumpty-Tailed*, each time the teacher pauses and points, the children recite together, “**The longest and bushiest and most beautiful tail in the forest.**” These are fun extra touches that can help the children learn basic concepts, increase language, and develop early literacy skills.





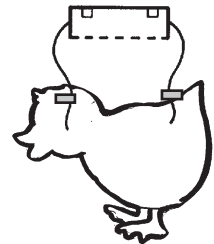
3. Prop Stories (Visual)

The third technique for telling these stories is to turn them into visual presentations. For hundreds of years storytellers have used visual techniques to enhance their tales. Hans Christian Andersen would create cut-out silhouettes of his story characters and use them like puppets. In China, the storyteller would bring visual movement to the stories by using hand shadows to create animated characters. In Japan, they made Kamishibai cards which are small paintings used to represent scenes from the story. Today, the storyteller is the classroom teacher who brings language and literature to life through words, print, and visual images, such as using story puppets or creating flannel board or magnetic board presentations.

All of the tales included in *Participation Stories* come with reproducible patterns that can be turned into puppets (*stick puppets* or *simple string puppets*), as well as props for the flannel board or magnetic board. Use the following directions to turn the patterns from this book into a variety of visual storytelling aids.

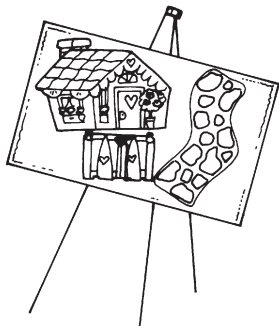
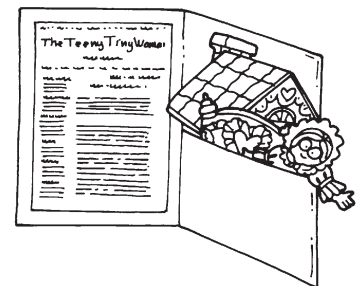
Stick Puppets: Copy, color, cut out the patterns, and laminate them for durability. Attach each pattern to a craft stick or tongue depressor using double-sided tape. To create larger stick puppets, simply enlarge the patterns on a photocopy machine and finish as directed above. Attach these laminated patterns to paint stir sticks, 12-inch rulers, or wooden spoons.

String Puppets: Copy, color, cut out the patterns, and laminate them for durability. Fold a 3" x 5" index card in half lengthwise. Place a 24" piece of yarn or string along the fold and tape the card closed. Tape the two ends of the string to the back top of the pattern. The card is now a handle that the children can use to manipulate the string puppet. These string puppets have nice movement and are easy for small hands to manipulate.



Flannel Board or Magnetic Board Patterns: Copy, color, cut out the patterns, and laminate them for durability. For use on a flannel board, glue sandpaper or felt to the back of each pattern piece, or use self-stick Velcro®. For use on a magnetic board, attach a small piece of self-stick magnetic tape (*found at most craft or hardware stores*) on the back of each pattern.

Story Folders: Store the contents for each story in a pocket folder, or create your own pocket folder by stapling a 5.5" x 8.5" piece of card stock to the inside of a file folder. Pattern pieces can also be stored in a self-sealing plastic bag that is taped to the inside of the file folder. Attach the story to the left side of the folder and store the characters and/or scenery patterns in the pocket or bag on the right side of the folder (*see illustration*).



Make Your Own Flannel Board: Foam board can be purchased at most craft or school supply stores. Cover the foam board with black felt by using glue (*only around the edges*) or wide double-sided tape. These flannel boards are lightweight for the children to use and are inexpensive to create. As an alternative for black felt, create a flannel board scene by using light blue felt for the sky, green felt for the grass, white felt for the clouds, and a yellow felt circle for the sun.

