



Research Title

# The Art of Storytelling

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Grade: 11th

Date: 2015 - 2016

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## **Introduction:**

Everybody around the world knows different stories to tell, and many of these people can memorize stories easily and they are used to tell them to others in a very interesting way. Some people took storytelling as a job, and they became professionals at it, and many people pay them to tell stories. Sometimes they pay them because they are very good, and sometimes it's because they want to transfer a moral lesson to their children. So, the question is (how) do storytellers attract people to listen to them so badly? Moreover, (why) do people tend to transfer traditions through stories?

These questions lead us to a bigger question, which is the main question of this research:

## **Is storytelling good for societies?**

## **And if so, How?**

We will discover all of this in this research.

**I hope you will have fun and some precious information.**

## Section 1: Storytelling And Its Evolution

### Chapter 1: The Definition Of Storytelling

Too early in the past, people of all cultures have used stories to help them explain a practice, a belief, or a natural phenomenon. It is a universal means of communicating cultural traditions and values, as well as a vehicle for passing on information about history, science, government, and politics. Some stories are new; others have been handed down from the ancients. Regardless of the origin of stories, storytelling is unique and a dynamic interaction between the teller and the listener.<sup>1</sup>

### Chapter 2: The Evolution Of Storytelling

Telling stories has always been a way to express feelings and transfer information and tradition. However, the ways of telling a story are many and they are increasing within time.

#### Storytelling methods:

##### 1- Painting On Rocks

The first storytelling method was painting on rocks because there were no languages or alphabets or other ways to communicate or express ideas. Storytellers by then used mud and coal to paint on rocks and they used to draw symbols that are referring to humans or animals or anything the storyteller wants to say.



Picture -1- (painted stories)

## 2- Carving On Stones

Storytelling method has changed from painting on rocks to carving on them. They used to carve on rocks using sharp tools they made by themselves. Before alphabets were invented people carved shapes and symbols, and after the invention of the alphabet, they carved words that explain stories.



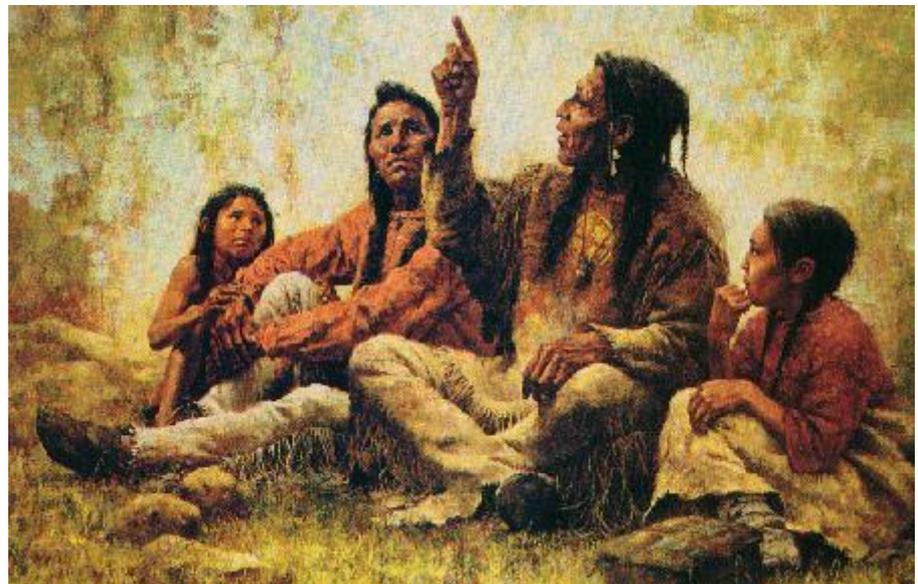
Picture -2- (carved shapes)



Picture -3- (carved words)

## 3- Oral Storytelling

After the invention of the alphabets and languages storytellers chose memorizing stories and telling them orally as a way of transferring them to others, and became professionals at this art. That is because the storyteller has to tell the story in a way that outfits the story theme. In fact, telling stories orally was a way for teaching lessons and improving the listeners' literacy. It was the most important method of transferring information and teaching moral lessons. Actually, it is a perfect way of keeping the legacy and the culture of our ancestors.



Picture -4- (oral storytelling)

Oral storytelling was used in two cases:

1) Long journeys between countries:

People used to listen to stories while traveling from one country to another to help them overcome the toil of the long journey. For this, some travelers used to tell stories at the end of the day when the caravan stops for relax at any point. They weren't necessarily professional storytellers. Yet, they could make money of telling stories, which helped them, continue their journey. Having passengers from different countries in the same caravan made it more exciting to listen to stories from all over the world. This actually helped the folklore of different civilizations to spread globally.

2) Between villagers:

Villagers enjoyed telling stories and listening to them as if they were rewarding themselves in the evenings after a long day of work. They used to tell stories from the folklore that were orally transmitted over successive generations.



Picture -5- (a travelling storyteller)

#### 4- Writing On Papers

After the invention of paper, people started writing stories on paper; because it is an easy way to keep stories from being forgotten or lost.



Picture -6-& Picture -7- (written stories)

#### 5- Shadow Plays (Storytelling With The Use Of Paper Puppets)

This method originated in India and was very famous all over the country, because the Indians used it to tell stories about their gods. Then, it spread around the world and became very popular! This method depended on the shadows of objects. The storyteller makes paper puppets that are similar to the story characters. Then he puts a curtain in front of them and some lights behind them so their shadows appear on the curtain. Finally, the storyteller moves the puppets and speaks in different voices that are suitable with the characters<sup>2</sup>.



Picture -8- (a shadow play)

<sup>2</sup>History of storytelling: from the basics of storytelling by Dr. Michael Lockett (2007) p.2

## 6- Videotaped Stories (Movies/Films)

After the technological advances, storytelling took a huge step forward in its methods; because of the invention of movies and films. Like this, people can film stories and save them. Then, anyone can go back and watch them whenever he wants. Actually, it is the most popular method these days and the most reachable for today whether busy or free.



Picture -9- (movies)

## Section 2: Kinds Of Stories

### Chapter 1: Narrative Stories

A narrative is some kind of retelling, often in words (though it is possible to mime a story), of something that happened<sup>3</sup>. Narrative stories talk about the past and its events, or they mention some of the events or experiences indirectly. These stories are short and monological, that means they try to touch the feelings of the reader or the listener and they are seen as a well-structured story about an event or a set of connected events<sup>4</sup>. It provided us with a capacity to project the concept of story about a particular subject even onto inanimate objects<sup>5</sup>.

### Chapter 2: Ante Narrative Stories

The word ante narrative refers to unsettled events and multiple choices for the future. These stories talk about the future and predictions, like when we read a story about the technological advancements and scientific fiction in the future. It actually improves the imagination and motivate people to apply their theories<sup>6</sup>.

### Chapter 3: Living Stories

When stories tend to mention events of the past, or the future, they become **living stories**. The reason is when we memorize events or when we predict the future, we imagine them as if we are living the moment we mention.

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<sup>3</sup><http://www.units.miamioh.edu/technologyandhumanities/nardef.htm>

<sup>4</sup>The dynamics of narrative and ante narrative and their relation to story, February 2007, P4  
<sup>5</sup>The dynamics of narrative and ante narrative and their relation to story, February 2007, P3 °

<sup>6</sup>The dynamics of narrative and ante narrative and their relation to story, February 2007, P5

## Section 3: How To Be A Professional Storyteller

### Chapter 1: The Qualities Of A Professional Storyteller

Professional storytellers have lots of qualities and experience that made them fluent and imaginative at telling stories. So, if you are thinking of becoming a professional storyteller, you must make sure you have the following qualities:

- ❖ Having a fertile and vivid imagination.
- ❖ Clever so you can deal with emergent conditions of any kind
- ❖ Being able to imitate the characters' voices.
- ❖ Having a good memory to keep the exact events of different stories and memorize long stories.

### Chapter 2: Tips For Being A Better Storyteller

Here are some tips to be better at storytelling:

- Know your audience, so you can choose the suitable story to tell.
- Listen to experts to get more experience from them.
- Try not to fumble when talking because when you do, listeners lose their attention.
- Practice your language, so you can talk fluently.
- The structure of the story is very important, because you should mention when and where the events of the story happened, so it will be more convincing.

## Section 4: The Importance Of Storytelling

### Chapter 1: The Importance Of Storytelling For Children

Storytelling is very important and useful for children in many ways and we will talk about these points:

1) Developing language and literacy skills:

When parents tell stories to their kids, they are actually enhancing their pronunciation, dialogue, speech and increasing their vocabulary<sup>7</sup>, because storytelling is an informal technique that gets children hooked on reading and writing<sup>8</sup>.

2) Transferring traditions and good manners:

When telling children a story about a hero, they will like him and try to imitate him. Therefore, if the story hero had good manners, children will try to be like him<sup>9</sup>.

3) Gives information to children:

Stories give information to children in an interesting way, so they do not get bored.

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<sup>7</sup>[http://aplaceofourown.org/question\\_detail.php?id=275](http://aplaceofourown.org/question_detail.php?id=275)

<sup>8</sup><http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ462356>

<sup>9</sup><http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ462356>

## Chapter 2: The Importance Of Storytelling In Marketing

Storytelling is increasingly used in advertising today in order to build customer loyalty<sup>10</sup>. Stories are illustrative, easily memorable, and allow any firm to create stronger emotional bonds with the customers<sup>11</sup>. A study shows consumers want a more personal connection in the way they gather information. Our brains are far more engaged by storytelling than by cold, hard facts. While reading straight data, only the language parts of our brains work to decode the meaning. But when we read a story, not only the language parts of our brains light up, but any other part of the brain that we would use becomes activated if we are actually experiencing what we're reading about . This means it is far easier for us to remember stories than hard facts<sup>12</sup>.

## Chapter 3: The Importance Of Storytelling For Societies

Storytelling has earned its place as the most important tradition humans possess. The most important reason for this is that every story contains a good lesson for the audience. Stories teach us to love, to forgive others, to be all fair and to strive for being better than what we are. The function of the greatest stories ever told is a reflection on the world we live in, and of both the goodness and the evil existing in our world. That is why storytelling motivates people to love each other, and unite their powers to build a better and stronger society<sup>13</sup>.

## Conclusions

The society we live in today could not exist without the influence from past generations. Human beings, as creatures of habits and traditions, hand down lessons and knowledge from one generation to the next. We like to be proud of leaving a legacy of knowledge for our descendants to utilize. Our ability to learn from our ancestors' past decisions and use that knowledge to give ourselves an insight into our own problems gives us an advantage rarely found in other species, that of a communal knowledge repertoire. Our tradition of storytelling facilitates this transfer of knowledge. As a result, storytelling remains to this day the most uniquely important tradition humans all over the world share and contribute to.

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<sup>10</sup>Lury, Giles (2004). Brand Strategy, Issue 182, p. 32

<sup>11</sup>Plain Language at Work. "The best story wins." Mar 25, 2012. Retrieved Dec 19, 2012

<sup>12</sup>By Rachel Gillett, Fast Company. "Why Our Brains Crave Storytelling in Marketing." June 4, 2014. September 9, 2014

<sup>13</sup>The importance of storytelling, P1 (<https://www.hslda.org/Contests/Essay/2013/Cat3/Carpenter.pdf>)

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