Learning Guide

Storytime with Joe Hayes

We hope you enjoyed hearing master storyteller Joe Hayes demonstrating his craft and talking about the importance of stories in our lives. Practice telling and creating your own stories with this print-ready Learning Guide!

What's in this Learning Guide?

Get Set to Listen
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2-8.2

Discussion Questions
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3-8.3

Writing Prompts and Extension Projects
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.2; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.3; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.4; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.7; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.8

Become a Better Storyteller: Resources & Activities
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1–8.1, SL.1–8.4, SL.1–8.6; TH:Pr4.1, TH:Pr6.1, TH:Re8.1, TH:Cr1.1

Story & Activity Guides for: "The Gum Chewing Rattler", "A Spoon for Every Bite", and "The Day It Snowed Tortillas
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3–8.1, RL.3–8.2, RL.3–8.3, RL.3–8.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3–8.3, W.3–8.4, W.3–8.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3–8.4, SL.3–8.6

Visualizing While Listening: Activity
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3–8.3, RL.3–8.7; VA:Cr1.1

Make an Audio Message That Matters: Activity
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3–8.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3–8.4, SL.3–8.6; MA:Cr1.1, MA:Cr2.1, MA:Pr6.1, TH:Pr6.1

Additional Resources & Book List

The Children's Hour
kids public radio

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https://www.childrenshour.org/storytime-with-joe-hayes/

Get Set to Listen

1. **Before listening!**

Write down your response to the question below. Share with a partner or small group when you are finished.

What is a story you remember? Why does it stay with you?

2. **After listening!**

Write down your response to the following question. Share with a partner or small group when you are finished.

How do you feel after listening to a good story?

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Discussion Questions

1. Joe's father was born in 1896. How was entertainment different when his father was growing up?
2. Joe says, "To be a human being is to be a storyteller." What do you think he means?
3. Why does Joe believe reading or listening to stories is different from watching TV or movies? Do you agree or disagree?
4. Why does Joe say a story depends on the listeners? What does he mean by this?
5. How does Joe feel about stories that try too hard to teach a moral? How do you feel about them?
6. What does Joe think is one important thing stories teach us about life? What do you think stories teach us?

Group Discussion Strategies

Think Pair Share:
1. Individually, student writes down their answer to a question.
2. Students pair up and tell each other their answers.
3. Teacher calls for volunteers to share with the whole class their answer (and/or their partner's answer). Teacher notes key words/phrases on board.

Round Robin:
1. Teacher poses one question (written on top of a large page) to students, who are assembled into small groups of 3 or 4.
2. Students take turns brainstorming the answers. The recorder of the group writes down all answers.
3. The leader reads the group's ideas to the entire class. Teacher moderates.

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Writing Prompts

Narrative Prompts

1. Write a funny or exaggerated story where something small saves the day.

Extensions:

- *Use hyperbole (extreme exaggeration) like Joe Hayes does.*
- *Add a surprise twist ending.*
- *Illustrate one dramatic scene.*
- *Record yourself telling it aloud and reflect on what changed from the written version.*

2. *Write a story where someone solves a problem using clever thinking.*

Extensions:

- *Make the solution surprising but believable.*
- *Add cultural traditions or family customs into your story.*
- *Identify the theme at the end in one sentence.*
- *Write a reflection explaining how cleverness helped more than strength.*

3. Write about a time when something seemed bad but turned out okay.

Informative/Explanatory Prompts

1. **Interview a friend or family member and invite them to share stories from their life.**

Extension:

- ***Record your story for StoryCorps and the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress archives.***

Their website includes tips for a great conversation, great questions to guide your conversation, access to a facilitator, and self-directed recording tools!

2. Compare listening to a story to watching a movie.

Extensions:

- *Create a Venn diagram before writing.*
- *Include a paragraph about imagination and brain activity.*
- *Survey classmates and include results in your writing.*

3. Research folktales from your own heritage.

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Become a Better Storyteller

Everybody is a storyteller. To be a human being is to be a storyteller."
-Joe Hayes

Prepare

Check out the unit lesson plans, **The Art of Storytelling from MENSA for Kids**, to get great practical activities and lessons about the history of storytelling, getting ready to tell a story, finding and mapping a story, getting your story ready, presenting the story, and extensions.

Watch

- **Penny's Top 5 Storytelling Tips**
- **7 Tips to Master Storytelling: Become a Great Early Years Storyteller**

Write

instructions for becoming a storyteller.

- Include tips about voice, pacing, and audience awareness.
- Add examples of exaggeration or humor.
- Include a "Do's and Don'ts" chart.
- Teach your lesson to younger students.

Practice

Sit in a circle and take turns telling a short, dramatic story using the above storytelling tips that answers the question: "How was your day?"
Extension: *Retell the same event in a boring way. Compare the difference.*
Discuss: *What makes something a "story" instead of just information?*

Retell

Using voice, gestures, and facial expressions, retell one of the stories Joe Hayes told or another story (see "Book List" for some ideas).
Focus on:

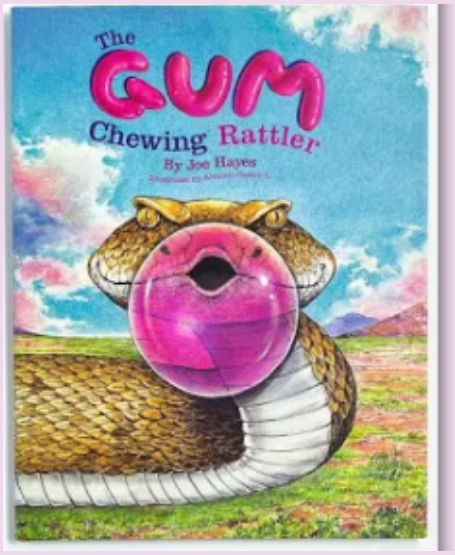
- Pacing
- Tone
- Audience reaction

Extension: *Memorize and perform your story for an audience.*
Reflect: *How did the audience change your storytelling?*

Remember! *Stories are for the listeners, so pay attention to how they are responding to your story as you tell it!*

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“The Gum Chewing Rattler”
Activity Guide



Re-read Joe Hayes’s story in this illustrated book.

Practice the storytelling techniques described in the “Storyteller Circle” activity and tell your own version of his story!

Listen

- [Part 1: “The Gum Chewing Rattler”]

Reflect

1. Do you think “The Gum Chewing Rattler” really happened? Why or why not?
2. What makes this story funny?
3. Why do you think Joe’s mother said he would grow up to be a storyteller?
4. What does this story show about imagination and exaggeration?
5. What is a possible theme from this story?
6. Change one part of this story — how would that affect the ending?

Make It Your Own

Retell this story in your own words. Use the tips described in the “Storyteller Circle” activity.

Tall Tale Challenge

Write and perform a short “tall tale” where something ordinary saves the day.
Your story must include:

- Exaggeration
- Suspense
- A dramatic ending

Extension: *Vote on “Most Dramatic,” “Funniest,” or “Most Creative.”*

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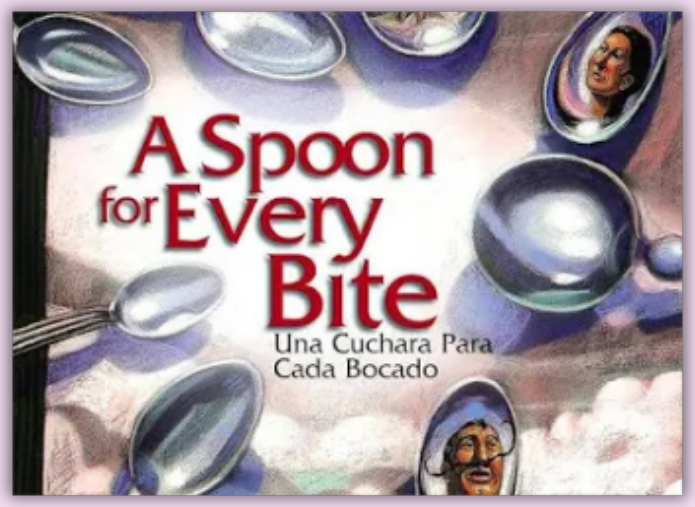
“A Spoon for Every Bite”
Activity Guide

Listen

- Part 2: “A Spoon for Every Bite”

Reflect

1. Why did the poor couple buy a third spoon?
2. How did the rich man react when he learned they only owned three spoons?
3. Why did the rich man lose all his money?
4. What lesson do you think this story teaches?
5. How is the poor couple different from the rich man?
6. Why is the tortilla called a “spoon” in the story?
7. What does this story say about greed or pride?
8. What is a possible theme from this story?
9. Change one part of this story — how would that affect the ending?



Re-read Joe Hayes’s story in this illustrated book.

Practice the storytelling techniques described in the “Storyteller Circle” activity and tell your own version of his story!

Write

about a character who takes something too literally.

- Show how greed or pride affects the character.
- Compare your character to the rich man in the original story.
- Write an alternate ending where the character learns earlier.
- Create a comic strip version.

Debate

Analyze the theme from “A Spoon for Every Bite” by debating whether it’s better to be clever or rich.

- Pairs or teams debate which is more powerful. Include text evidence from the story.

Spanish Word Exploration

Joe Hayes blends different Southwestern cultures, including Spanish, Native, and English speakers.

- Identify Spanish words used (compadre, leñador, mujer y marido).
- Research their meanings and any cultural significance.
- How do Joe’s stories reflect Southwestern culture?

Extension: *Write a short bilingual mini-story including at least three Spanish or Native words.*

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“The Day It Snowed Tortillas”
Activity Guide

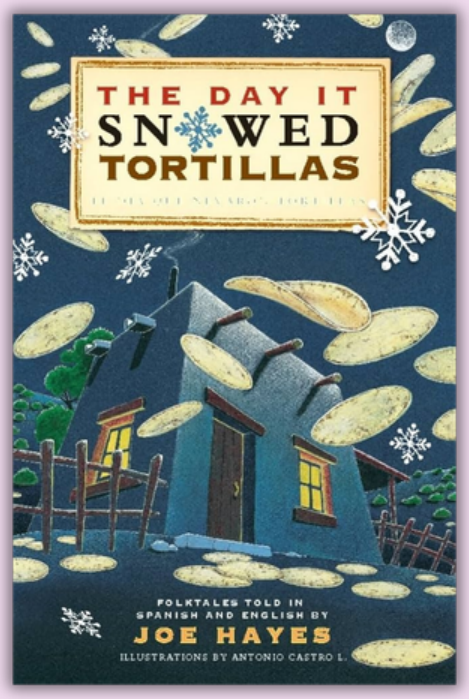


Listen

- [Part 3: “The Day It Snowed Tortillas”]

Reflect

1. Why was the woodcutter’s wife worried about the gold?
2. Why did she make tortillas and throw them outside?
3. How did pretending it “snowed tortillas” save them?
4. What role does cleverness play in this story?
5. Why do you think folktales often have a “foolish” character and a “clever” character?
6. Is it okay that they kept the gold? Why or why not?
7. What is a possible theme from this story?
8. Change one part of this story — how would that affect the ending?



Re-read Joe Hayes’s story in this illustrated book.

Practice the storytelling techniques described in the “Storyteller Circle” activity and tell your own version of his story!

Write

Imagine it “snowed” something unusual. Illustrate the scene and write a one-page story.

Extensions:

- *Explain scientifically (in a humorous way) how it might have happened.*
- *Write a newspaper article about the strange event.*
- *Create a sequel: What happens a week later?*

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Visualizing While Listening

“Kids are really good at creating the story with their mind while I'm telling the story. That's one of the things I like about telling a story. Each child is seeing something different. That's what's great about reading, too. You get to create the pictures yourself. No two people read exactly the same book. No two people hear exactly the same story because they're making it up in their mind as they read or hear the story. So, they make it just right for themselves. When you look at a movie or you look at TV, everybody sees the same thing. But when you read, when someone tells a story, then you create it in the way that's just right for you.” -Joe Hayes, storyteller

Listen

- **Part 1: “The Gum Chewing Rattler”**
- **Part 2: “A Spoon for Every Bite”**
- **Part 3: “The Day It Snowed Tortillas”**

Illustrate

a scene from one of the stories as you listen.

Share

Display drawings and compare. *Why does everyone picture something different?*

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Make an Audio Message That Matters

*In this activity inspired by **PBS Kids' Molly of Denali**, you'll explore how and why people share important messages. You'll think about different kinds of important messages, plan your own short and clear announcement, and record it to share with friends or family. As you work, remember: keep it short and sweet!*

Let's get started and see how powerful your voice can be!

Watch

this episode of "Molly of Denali" in which Molly and Tooey record a radio message to help find their missing dog, Anka.

Discuss

- What are some important messages people share?
- (Examples: community events, invitations, big news, missing pets, calls to action)
- Why are these messages important?
- Who needs to hear these messages?

How Do People Share Messages?

Brainstorm different ways people send important messages.
List at least 4:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What are the advantages and disadvantages of each way of sending messages?
When might you use one over another?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Make an Audio Message That Matters

Plan Your Audio Message

Think of a special message you would like to share with friends, family, or the public.
What is your message about?

- □ Call to action
- □ Invitation
- □ Announcement
- □ Missing pet
- □ Thank you
- □ Other: _____

Fill in the important details:

Who is the message for? _____
What is happening? _____
When is it happening? _____
Where is it happening? _____
Why is this message important? _____

Write Your Script

(Remember: Keep it short and sweet!)

_____

_____

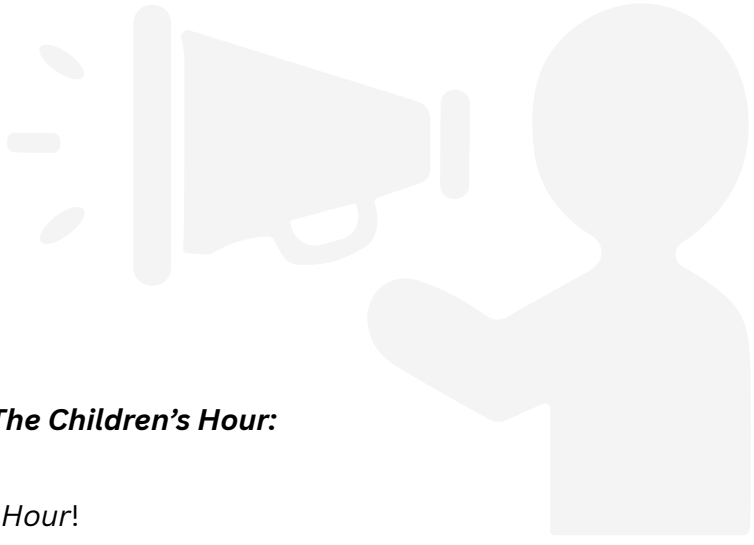
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Practice & Record

Before recording, check:

- □ Is my message clear?
- □ Is it short and easy to understand?
- □ Did I include who, what, when, and where?
- □ Am I speaking clearly and confidently?



Now record your message!

You can send your message to us at *The Children's Hour:*

Record a Voice Message

This might be used on *The Children's Hour*!

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Additional Resources

StoryCorps: Record the Conversation of a Lifetime

"Since 2003, StoryCorps has built the largest collection of human voices ever archived — and we want to add yours. Our mission is to build connections, encourage compassion between people, and share stories, big and small. Have an incredible story to tell? Want to have a meaningful talk with someone important in your life? We'd love for you to join in and preserve your voice for future generations. It's simple to get started!"

The Art of Storytelling from MENSA for Kids
This unit includes great practical activities and lessons on the history of storytelling, getting ready to tell a story, finding and mapping a story, getting your story ready, presenting the story, and extensions.

Family Storytelling: PBS Kids
A collection of storytelling activities and articles, tips on storytelling, and storytelling printables.

Making Storytime Magical: Engaging Storytelling Tips

Videos

Penny's Top 5 Storytelling Tips

7 Tips to Master Storytelling: Become a Great Early Years Storyteller

7 Fun and Easy Storytelling Activities to Boost Literacy Skills
Experts describe and demonstrate 7 activities: storytelling basket, play with open-ended toys, 3-part story, puppet play, story stick, act it out, and visual prompts.

Calypso: How I learned the art of storytelling
Colorin Colorado explains the importance of storytelling.

Fire-Talking
Patricia Polacco tells about her experiences with and the importance of storytelling.

Retelling Folktales
Ashley Bryan talks about how he uses African folktales that come from oral tradition in his books. **He reads aloud an excerpt from "Hen & Frog" here.**

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Book List



Ancestor Approved: Intertribal Stories for Kids
edited by Cynthia Leitich Smith

Edited by award-winning, bestselling author Cynthia Leitich Smith, this vibrant collection brings together new and established Native writers in intersecting stories filled with hope, joy, resilience, community strength, and Native pride.
ages 7-14



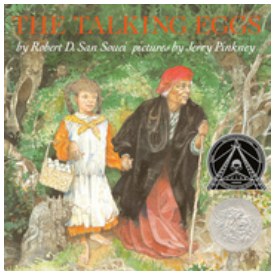
La Princesa and the Pea
by Susan Middleton Elya, illustrated by Juana Martinez-Neal

This Pura Belpre award-winning bilingual retelling of the classic fairy tale *The Princess and the Pea* features vibrant artwork inspired by the rich culture of Peru.
ages 4-8



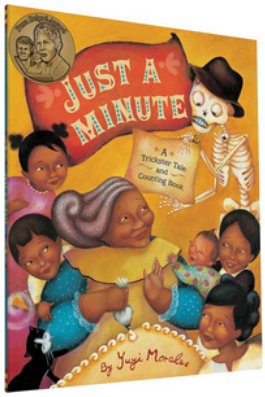
The Three Billy Goats Buenos
by Susan Middleton Elya, illustrated by Miguel Ordóñez

Three little cabritos discover why the troll is grumpy in this playful retelling of the classic tale, filled with kindness, humor, colorful illustrations, and sprinkled with Spanish words.
ages 4-8



The Talking Eggs
by Robert D. San Souci, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney

This beautifully illustrated Creole folktale follows kind Blanche and cruel Rose in Louisiana, where magical talking eggs reward goodness with silver, jewels, and even a splendid carriage.
ages 4-8



Just a Minute: A Trickster Tale and Counting Book
by Yuyi Morales

This lively original trickster tale features fun illustrations and engaging read-aloud text, celebrating Mexican cultural traditions while introducing counting in both English and Spanish. Available on **Epic!**
Listen to **Yuyi Morales talk about and read her book aloud.**
ages 2-7

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