

10 TELLING STORIES IN THE DELTA

Common Core State Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6-8.3

Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6-8.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Everyone has a story to tell, especially in Louisiana. Throughout history, even before the written story, oral narratives played an important role in passing on important or humorous information about a culture. Today we tell jokes on the playground, play riddles in the car while going on a trip, or tell family stories whenever everyone gets together. All of these are different forms of storytelling.

How do you know when you are about to hear a story? If it is a fairytale, we might hear “Once upon a time.” Often, in everyday life we hear, “Did I tell you about,” or “That reminds me of” or “One time I” as story starters.

Louisiana has a long history of storytelling. Through ghost stories, political yarns, buried treasure fables, tall tales, and animal stories, Louisianans learn about the diverse voices and outlooks of the residents of the state. In the Louisiana Delta area, because hunting and fishing are such integral parts of the culture, hunting and fishing tales are very common. Stories about hunting and fishing predate the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock in 1620 as Native Americans have long told their stories, too.

The activity for students involves them following directions to create their own folktale about seeing a large animal or catching a large fish. Their stories will vary.



DELTA PIECES ESSAYS

- “The Big One”: Deer Hunting in Northeast Louisiana
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/LFJhunting.html
- Whitey Shockley: Mississippi River Fisherman
http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/DeltaShockley.html

LOUISIANA VOICES LINK

- Louisiana Voices Educator’s Guide Unit V Lesson 1 Introduction to Traditional Oral Narratives
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit5/edu_unit5_lesson1.html

OTHER RESOURCES

- “A Tale about a Catfish”: Here is a good Louisiana fish story from the book, *Swapping Stories: Folktales from Louisiana*.
http://www.louisianavoices.org/Unit5/edu_ss129_tale_catfish.html
- Below are some graphic organizers to further your students’ storytelling experience.
http://www.edhelper.com/teachers/Storytelling_graphic_organizers.htm

Name _____

Date _____

DELTA PIECES TELLING STORIES ACTIVITY

A folktale is a traditional tale. In Northeast Louisiana, one common form of folktale is "The Big One" about sighting a large buck during deer hunting season or a big fish that got away from the fisherman. Read the tales in the essay "The Big One": Deer Hunting in Northeast Louisiana on the Delta Pieces site at http://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/LFJhunting.html.



ELEMENTS IN COMMON

- The hunter/fisherman knows the exact time and place of the sighting.
 - Each animal seems to appear out of nowhere.
- The animal is always the biggest the hunter/fisherman has ever seen.
 - The hunter/fisherman is always overwhelmed by the beauty of the animal.
- The hunter/fisherman always gets a good look, but he or she is the only one to see it.
 - Something or someone always stops the hunter/fisherman from getting a good shot.

