

Teacher's Tips for Terrific Storytelling!

1. Come to the performances with an open mind

Recognize and appreciate different styles of storytelling. At Dream On we strive to offer access to a great variety of storytelling styles, a variety of cultural traditions, and also variety of role models, all of which allow students the freedom to pursue different ways of expressing themselves.

2. Student Participation

Students need to be prepared to listen but also realize that some of the stories will be interactive. When prompted they should to join in, clap, chant and sing, always as appropriate.

3. Teacher Participation

It is very helpful if the teachers participate as much as possible during the performances. When teachers listen attentively during the presentation (and avoid other activities like cell phones, grading homework, chatting, etc.) they contribute positively to the overall experience by showing the children how to be good audience members. If the storytelling is interactive, we ask that teachers join in; this way the model correct behavior to the students and show that storytelling is important.

4. Discipline

We expect teachers to do some basic crowd control if necessary, but not so as to overly inhibit the students' responses. If the groups include special needs children, please let the storyteller know in advance.

5. Before the event!

The most successful events are those for which the children have been prepared in the classroom. Before the day of our visit, discuss with the children what the Storyteller might do during the performance. What tools might he/she use? Do the students think there will be props, puppets, instruments or just the Storyteller's voice? Ask students if they have heard or seen a Storyteller before. What happened? What kinds of stories have they heard before?

6. Videotaping

You are welcome to have someone from your school to videotape and photograph the performances, as long as we can receive copies upon request.

7. Technical Requirements

Please provide a microphone so that all students can hear clearly. Other important items are:

- A chair
- A bottle of water for each presentation
- Light refreshments

The room where the storytelling takes place should be quiet, large enough to accommodate all of the audience members, and away from areas of loud noise and traffic.

8. Introduce the Storyteller in English

Introduce the Storyteller at the beginning of each performance by telling the audience the Storyteller's name and place of origin. Prepare the children by telling them that the performances will be in English. It is important that the students know that they may not understand every word at first, but this is OK; the meanings will be revealed as the stories unfold. It is NOT important to understand every word. Set positive expectations by saying things like, "I know you will have a good time," "I know you will listen well."

Note: If you would like an example of an introduction, you can find one on Dream On's website, included as part of the Pre-Visit Kit.