

Program Name: Interactive Storytelling

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Artist: John Mulvey

## Special Requirements:

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Large, open space.

## Special Points of Interest:

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One of the earliest surviving records of storytelling is found in the Westcar Papyrus of the Egyptians (thought to have been composed during the Middle Kingdom, c.2040-1786 BCE) in which the sons of Cheops entertained their father with stories.

## Workshop Description

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In this workshop, Teaching Artist John Mulvey helps students refine their skills as storytellers and actors. John, a veteran theater and comedic performer, guides participants as they explore their innate abilities to communicate through story. He coaches the students on how to use their body, voice, and imagination to bring stories alive for the audience.

The students break off into groups and watch each other perform. John's goal is to bring each storyteller "into the light" so they can shine on stage.

John contributes fun and engaging stories to the workshop. These tales, handed down through

time, come from diverse cultures and reflect the customs and ideals of their authors. John plays the role of narrator in each story as he directs each member into refining their delivery, pacing, and presentation.

Though staying true to the original material, John encourages the actors to use improvisation to develop and add to their roles with original lines of dialog and movement.



## Educational Objectives & Standards

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### Students will:

- Use improvisation to tell stories
- Explore the customs and cultures of diverse storytellers from around the globe
- Use props to communicate

### Behavioral Studies:

- Knows how people define and use resources

### Language Arts

- Uses descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas

## Artist Bio: John Mulvey

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John Mulvey holds a Bachelor of Theatre Arts degree from Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. He has performed in plays such as *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, as well as children's theater productions.

John has taught acting classes at Longview Community College and currently teaches at KCYA's Community School of the Arts and Theatre for Young America.

John performs regularly with the improvisational and sketch comedy group *Out on a Limb*. His group headlines shows for the Stanford's Comedy Clubs. *Out on a Limb* has also been featured on KCPT's Marquee and on the FOX network.

## List of Resources:

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### Books:

Children Tell Stories: A Teaching Guide  
by Martha Hamilton R.C. Owen;  
(April 1, 1990) ASIN:  
0913461202

Stories in My Pocket: Tales Kids Can Tell  
by Martha Hamilton, Mitch Weiss,  
Annie Campbell; Fulcrum  
Publishing; (January 1, 1997)  
ISBN: 155591957X

Shake-It-Up Tales!: Stories to Sing, Dance, Drum, and Act Out  
by Margaret Read MacDonald,  
Jen Whitman, Nat Whitman,  
Wajuppa Tossa  
August House Publishers;  
(May 1, 2000)  
ISBN: 0874835704

Ready-To-Tell Tales: Sure-Fire Stories  
by David Holt, Bill Mooney  
August House Publishers;  
(October 1, 1994) ISBN:  
0874833817

Contact KCYA for more  
information about this and  
other programs

816.531.4022  
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## Vocabulary

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**Actor:** A theatrical performer.

**Character:** A person portrayed in an artistic piece, such as a drama or novel.

**Comedy:** A dramatic work that is light and often humorous or satirical in tone and that usually contains a happy resolution of the thematic conflict.

**Improvisation:** creating without prior preparation.

**Performance:** A presentation, especially a theatrical one, before an audience.

**Script:** The text of a play, broadcast, or movie.

**Story:** An account or recital of an event or a series of events, either true or fictitious.

## Post-Workshop Activities

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1. Create a story about an event at school. Use dialog, acting, and movement to tell the tale to your family. See if you can elicit from the audience the emotions you felt while the events were taking place.
2. Go to the library and look for biographies about storytellers. What made them popular with their audiences? What performance techniques did they use to captivate a crowd?
3. Develop and write an original story with original characters. Perform the story with a friend then refine the material based on input from friends.
4. Improvise a story based on an activity you are sharing with your family.