

Program Name: The Traveling Storyteller

Artist: Brad Shaw

## Special Requirements:

Performance space on same level as audience; glass of water

## Special Points of Interest:

Medieval traveling storytellers called *Jongleurs* would often get together for memory competitions called *puy*s, where they challenged each other to tests of skill.

## Performance Description

Teaching artist Brad Shaw is “Da,” the traveling storyteller. Da offers students adventures in far-away places such as Africa, Russia, France, Germany, India, and Japan as he weaves tales from all corners of the world.

Brad’s goal is to do more than entertain his audience. Brad uses his stories to teach and communicate clear messages about morals, ethics, values, and common sense.

Student participation is welcomed in Brad’s performances. In the French story, *A Drake’s Tail*, students play along by throwing their hands in the air and quacking. *BaBa Yaga*, a Russian folk tale that warns about the dangers of going to a stranger’s house, finds Brad pinching his nose and tugging on his hair.

Other stories in Brad’s repertoire include the African tale, *Bim Weeli and the Singing Drum*. This story teaches responsibility as a girl lets her younger sister wander off. The East Indian story, *The King with Dirty Feet*, tells us about a short sighted ruler and how a little common sense helped keep his feet clean.



## Educational Objectives & Standards

### Students will:

- Develop listening skills
- Learn about different cultures through folk tales
- Stretch their imaginations as they create their own mental pictures from the words of the storyteller

### Behavioral Studies

- Knows how a culture’s art works and artifacts reflects its values and beliefs

### Theater

- Understands the emotional and social impact of dramatic performances in other cultures

## Artist Bio: Brad Shaw

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Brad Shaw, a graduate of the Kansas City Art Institute, is considered a “Renaissance Man” in the theater world. His name can be found on programs as actor, director, choreographer, costumer, set design, and playwright.

Brad has taught in the Kansas City Public Schools and in surrounding school districts. He was also an integral part of the building and opening of the Gem Theater at 18th and Vine where he wrote and produced the musical *18th and*

*Vine*.

Brad has worked with the Theater League to produce a professional partnership with Paseo High School and his teaching experience includes acting, improvisation, costuming, puppetry, creative writing, and storytelling.

Brad received the Lighton Prize from Kansas City Young Audiences in the Spring of 2004 for excellence in the arts.

## Vocabulary

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### List of Resources:

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#### **Books:**

Misoso : Once Upon a Time Tales from Africa by Verna Aardema  
Knopf Books for Young Readers (September 13, 1994)  
ISBN: 0679834303

The Black Cloth: A Collection of African Folktales by Bernard Binlin Dadie  
University of Massachusetts Press  
(May 1, 1987) ISBN: 0870235575

Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book by Muriel L. Feelings,  
Tom Feelings Puffin Books;  
(September 1, 1981) ISBN: 0140546529

Moja Means One: Swahili Counting Book  
by Muriel L. Feelings  
Puffin Books (April 1, 1976)  
ISBN: 0140546626

Contact KCYA for more information about this and other programs

816.531.4022  
KCYA.org

**Characters:** the people (or animals) in a story.

**Country:** land that has its own borders and government.

**Fable:** a story that teaches a lesson.

**Fairy tale:** a children’s tale about magic, fairies, giants, witches, etc.

**Folk tale:** a story that is passed down from generation to generation.

**Foliage:** leaves.

**Foreign:** having to do with a country

other than your own.

**Greeting:** a phrase or word of welcome.

**Plot:** what actually happens in a story.

**Setting:** where a story takes place.

**Story:** a tale that either really happened or was made up by someone to entertain others.

**Terrain:** ground or land (rocky, sandy, hilly, flat, forested, etc.)

**Vessel:** a ship; also, container for liquid.

## Post-Performance Activities

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1. Learn three different greetings in foreign languages. Discuss five different ways to greet someone in English.
2. What is your favorite story? Is it a fairy tale, folk tale, fable, straight fiction? What country is it set in? What is it that draws you to this story? Find out who wrote it and read another story by that same author.
3. Locate the countries on a world map used in the program as a setting for stories. Choose one of these countries and do a topographical map of it. Design a color key to indicate different terrains.
4. Four US Dollars equals 100 Russian Rubles. A Russian hat that you want costs 1,200 Rubles. How much change would you get from a \$50 bill? Develop other exchange rate formulas for other countries.
5. Interview your parent or guardian about a story (or song) that was passed down to them from their parents. Bring it back to the class to share.
6. Songs tell stories, too. What American songs do you know that tells a story? (*Star Spangled Banner, Farmer in The Dell, Workin’ on the Railroad, Oh Susanna*, etc.) Sing them as a class, and make a list on the board.