

# Young Audiences of Atlanta, Inc.

## Study Guide for Teachers

### Sherry Norfolk

#### "Young Voices Residency"

**Grades:** 2-12    **Limit:** 30 students per class, 4 classes per day    **Length:** 5 Days

#### Program Overview

Young Voices is a hands-on highly interactive program during which students get immediate exposure to the arts and processes of story-listening, telling and writing. At each grade level, a story is carefully chosen to support a curricular theme in cooperation with teachers. The residency engages students to listen to an initial story, re-tell and write the initial story, add dialogue and creative language, craft the story into a final draft and ultimately tell the new story to the entire class. NOTE: Each residency is planned with the grade-level teachers to address relevant curriculum topics (for example, simple machines or Georgia).

#### About the Artist: Sherry Norfolk

Sherry, with a B.A. in Elementary Education (Indiana University 1974) and a Masters in Library Science (Indiana University 1979), performs and teaches storytelling residencies through the Georgia Council for the Arts, Alabama State Council on the Arts, Tennessee Arts Council, Alaska Arts Council, South Carolina Arts Commission, and Young Audiences of St. Louis. Her 17-year career as a children's librarian led her to storytelling as an effective means of motivating children to read, and her years in the pre-K and primary classroom taught her the power of storytelling as an educational tool. Sherry currently serves as consultant to Turner South in developing and implementing their "Storytelling in Education" project. She and her husband Bobby are the co-authors of *The Moral of the Story: Folktales for Character Development* (August House Publishers, 1999).

#### Audience Etiquette

- Before the program, discuss with your students what makes a good audience.
- Compare appropriate behavior for different kinds of audience situations- e.g., rock concert, sporting event, ballet.
- Students will get more out of the program if they come prepared. Use this guide to help students anticipate what to listen and look for.
- Set a good example. Catch up on paperwork after the sessions.

## **"Young Voices" - Sherry Norfolk**

### **Program Description**

Young Voices provides the student with a wealth of hands-on, experiential activities that allows immediate feedback. The residency is designed to enable each student to become a full participant in crafting a story. On day one, the instructor will tell the story to the class, then lead the group in a visualization exercise; afterwards students will have an opportunity to share their new version of the story. Day one's assignment is for the students to put the new story on paper, creating a first draft for editing and revision during the week. On day two, students will be challenged to add dialogue, creative language and sound effects to their stories. Next, on day three, students will add action and descriptive language in addition to producing a final draft. Days four and five will be designated for students to finalize their drafts and present stories to the rest of the class.

### **Overview of the Art Form**

Storytelling is the art of using words, gestures, facial expression, and body language to bring a story to life in the listener's imagination. From the beginning of time, storytelling has been the way cultures have preserved and celebrated their memories, passed on their values and belief systems, entertained, instructed and reported. Today, storytelling is recognized as one of the most effective brain-compatible teaching strategies, accessible for children with diverse abilities and disabilities, and applicable to all "ways of knowing." Storytelling continues to unite us all to "Enter the Theater of the Mind-the Imagination!"

### **Learning Objectives**

- Students will enjoy, appreciate and evaluate language in all its forms.
- Students will listen, read and think critically, and speak effectively in front of an audience.
- Students will write effectively in an informal style.
- Students will pre-write, draft, revise and edit as a means of effective writing.
- Students will provide appropriate positive, supportive feedback for classmates.

### **Vocabulary, Terms, Definitions**

**Attitude** - The emotions a character conveys.

**Body language** - Using the body to convey emotions and attitudes or to portray characters.

**Characters** - The people or animals who are in the story.

**Context** - The circumstances surrounding a particular event within the story.

**Gesture** - Arm and hand movements that convey meaning.

## Pre and Post Activities

### PRE

**Language Arts**-Write three or four universal topics on the board., such as "How I Got This Scar," "My Most Embarrassing Moment," or "I Was So Scared" Tell the class that each person will choose one of these topics and tell a partner about it for 2 minutes. Explain that you want the partner to really be able to visualize what happened, therefore the teller must be as descriptive as possible.

**Language/Fine Arts**- This assignment must be done with partners. Set up chairs so that the partners are sitting back to back. Give each student a blank sheet of paper and some sketch pencils. Have them to draw a picture or design. Once they have finished, ask partner # 1 to draw partner #2's picture going only on the description provided by partner # 2. Once the drawing is finished, have them to compare the pictures. Then have partner #1 to describe her/his picture going through the same process.

### POST

**Language Arts**- Start a Storytelling Club in your school, encouraging children to continue to find and tell stories.

**Language Arts**- Have a Story Walk. Station student tellers at discrete intervals along a nature path near the school. Each teller should be prepared to tell a 3-5 minute story, and should be provided a space big enough for 5 or 6 kids to gather around and listen. Schedule classes to visit the story walk, rotating groups of 5 or 6 kids around the story at 5 minute intervals.

## Relevant Curriculum Standards

### **Language Arts- 2-5**

Students will integrate teaching of writing, listening and speaking.

### **Language Arts 6-8**

Students will use the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.

### **Dramatic Arts 9-12**

Students will learn principles of movement, oral interpretation, characterization and performance.

### **Character Education 2-12**

Students will learn to listen attentively not only to the teller, but to each other.

Students will learn to show appreciation and acceptance of other students' creativity.

## **Resources**

### **Books**

- Davis, Doris. *Writing as a Second Language: From Experience to Story to Prose*. August House, 2000.
- Hamilton, Martha and Mitch Weiss. *Children Tell Stories: A Teaching Guide*. Richard C. Owens Publishers, 1990.
- MacDonald, Margaret Read. *The Storyteller's Start-Up Book: Finding, Learning, Performing, and Using Folktales*. August House, 1993.
- National Storytelling Association. *Tales as Tools: The Power of Story in the Classroom*. National Storytelling Press, 1994.
- Rubright, Lynn. *Beyond the Beanstalk: Interdisciplinary Learning through Storytelling*. Heinemann, 1996.

## **Curriculum Connections**

This program is designed to be a powerful tool for connecting the language arts to critical aspects of character education. Story-making allows the student to become engaged in deeper levels of inquiry through utilizing the strategies associated with making predictions, making inferences. Additionally, this project gears the student toward sound writing practices as the student moves through critical writing stages. Then, in order to process the instruction of rewriting the story, the student must first have a clear understanding of elements of the original story, which gives rise to the exploration of contextual elements in the new story. Finally, the student needs to be able to make sense of the actions and motives of the characters in the original story to assure that the new story's elements are a good fit. In this case, the student will need to think about character traits, setting, tone and other elements. The entire process enhances the student's creativity, decision-making skills, patience, and tolerance skills among other traits.