Storytelling: Becoming an Effective Communicator Through Telling *and* Listening
**Library Integrated Resource Unit**
Grades: 6-8
Timeframe: 5 weeks, 3 50-minute sessions per week

1. Introduction and Overview

Purpose and rationale:
The major goals of this unit are to introduce the fundamental skills and history of storytelling, while giving middle school students an outlet to express their cultural, professional, and personal identities through self-selected outlets. Storytelling is an ideal unit topic for middle school students because it hones communication skills and offers adolescents a platform to openly express their unique senses of self. Most importantly, this unit is about listening and the importance of empathy. Strengthening perspective taking and listening promotes a more accepting and supportive middle school environment.

Concept Map:
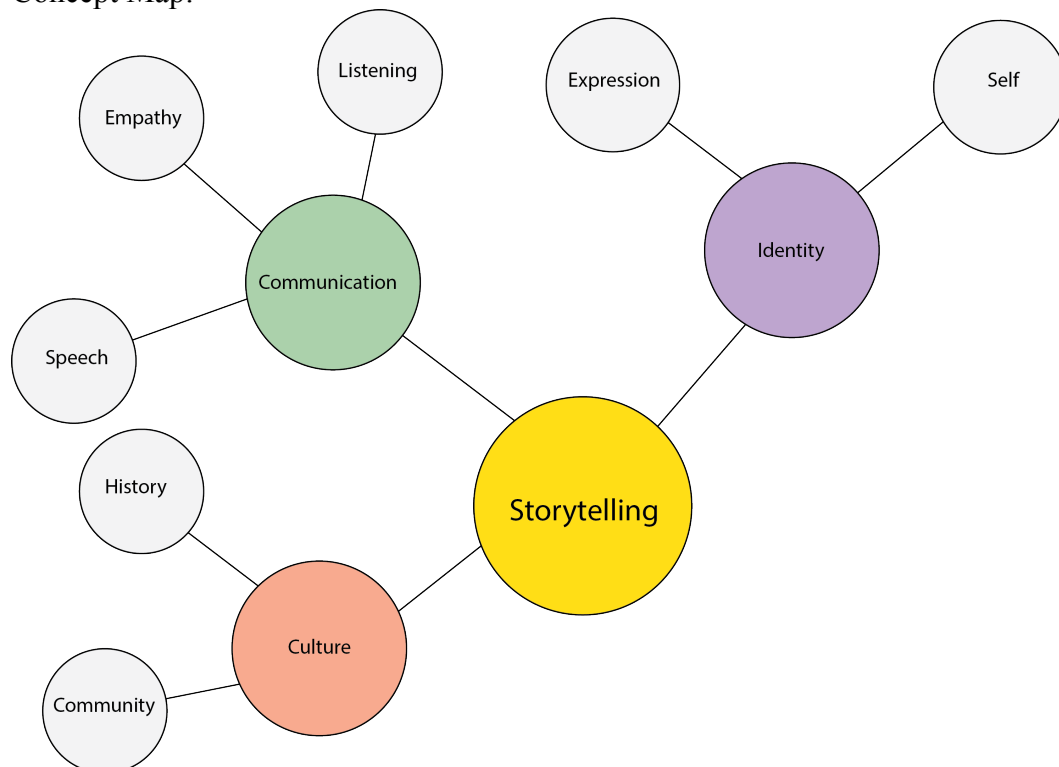
Each item included in this map is interrelated. The unit's topics simultaneously touch on each of these items, while focusing on how culture, communication, and identity influence the way students tell, listen to, and understand stories.

Essential Questions:
- o   Are stories just for little kids?
- o   How can I share my unique story?
- o   What platforms can I use to tell stories?
- o   Who tells stories?

- o What is to be gained from listening to stories?
- o Can storytelling be used as a professional tool?
- o What is empathy? Why does it matter?
- o What storytelling practices can help me be a better communicator?
- o How can I express my cultural identity through storytelling?
- o Is storytelling a community-centered practice?
- o How can I use storytelling to find and become a part of a community?
- o I don't like public speaking. Can I still be a good storyteller?
- o Does storytelling matter in everyday life? Will it matter to be ready for high school, college or career?
- o How are the stories of others different than mine? How do "other" stories affect my personal story?

Common Core State Standards:

(ELA- Reading: Literature)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.3 Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.7 Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

(ELA- Reading: Informational Text)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.7 Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.

(ELA- Writing)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1.D Establish and maintain a formal style.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.5 With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.B Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.C Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.E Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

(ELA- Speaking & Listening)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.5 Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 (or grade 7), topics texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

(History/Social Studies)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.5 Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6 Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.8 Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- SS.G.2.6-8.LC Explain how humans and their environment affect one another.
- SS.G.2.6-8.MdC Compare and contrast the cultural and environmental characteristics of different places or regions.

Illinois Social/Emotional Learning Standards:

- 1B. Recognize personal qualities and external supports.
- 1B.3a. Analyze how personal qualities influence choices and successes.
- 1C.3a. Set a short-term goal and make a plan for achieving it.
- 1C.3b. Analyze why one achieved or did not achieve a goal.
- 2A. Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.

American Library Association Standards for the 21st Century Learner

- 1.1.6 Read, view, and listen for information presented in any format (e.g., textual, visual, media, digital) in order to make inferences and gather meaning.
- 1.4.2 Use interaction with and feedback from teachers and peers to guide own inquiry process.

- <u>2.3.1</u> Connect understanding to the real world.
- <u>2.3.2</u> Consider diverse and global perspectives in drawing conclusions.
- <u>2.1.4</u> Use technology and other information tools to analyze and organize information.
- <u>4.4.4</u> Interpret new information based on cultural and social context.
- <u>4.2.2</u> Demonstrate motivation by seeking information to answer personal questions and interests, trying a variety of formats and genres, and displaying a willingness to go beyond academic requirements.

ISBE Art Standards

- <u>27.A.3b</u> Compare and contrast how the arts function in ceremony, technology, politics, communication and entertainment.
- <u>27.B.3</u> Know and describe how artists and their works shape culture and increase understanding of societies, past and present.
- <u>26.B.3b</u> Drama: Demonstrate storytelling, improvising and memorizing scripted material supported by simple aural and visual effects and personal background knowledge needed to create and perform in drama/theatre.

2. Unit Activities

Students will be required to complete at least one self-selected activity per topic. Each topic will be covered in a span of one week, totaling in a five-week unit, which will culminate with a week reserved for student presentations and final projects. However, with more time permitted, this unit could last much longer. Depending on teacher requirements and/or preferences, students could complete more activities over the course of the unit. Students who work ahead or would like to earn extra credit have the option of completing more than one activity per topic.

Each of the activities completed along the way will introduce new storytelling techniques or practices to students. While some of the activities are not blatantly about story creation or telling, they are designed to get students thinking about the various components of storytelling (such as bias, personal influence, empathetic thinking, listening, public speaking, community, etc.). These activities will give students familiarity and practice with communicating and listening, which will prepare them for their formal storytelling in their final projects.

As students complete their activities, they will collect their work in physical and/or digital portfolios. With available technology and equipment, students can compile their work on Weebly webpages. If technology is not available, or if students prefer physical portfolios, students also have the option of creating binders or folders with their completed activities. All reflections written along the way should be saved in student files and either uploaded to digital portfolios or printed for physical portfolios.

Introduction

On day one, the librarian/teacher will begin this unit by sharing a personal story. This will vary depending on the teacher and context, but it should exemplify the power of story and humanize

the teacher figure for students. Ideally, the story should represent some aspect of cultural or personal identity, to model cultural storytelling for students. Mem Fox's *Reading Magic: Why Reading Aloud to Our Children Will Change Their Lives Forever* is a useful text for teachers or librarians who are new to storytelling.

The unit will then move toward student-centered questions. Once the librarian/teacher has introduced the broad unit topic of "Storytelling," students will present relevant questions, which will be listed in a visible space in the classroom for the duration of the unit. The librarian/teacher might consider guiding questions so that students inquire about the culture, history, and uses of storytelling.

*Many of the activities require students to "research" or access information via databases, the library catalog, or online resources. These research methods are introduced and reinforced between 5th-7th grade, and this unit assumes that students have familiarity and comfort with basic research processes and effectively utilizing library materials.

Topic 1: Storytelling of you
This topic will get students thinking about their perspectives, backgrounds, and identities through story sharing. To get students comfortable with storytelling and/or public speaking, they have options to privately or publicly tell stories. Each of these activities gives students an opportunity to express something about their unique personalities.

A. Storytelling through pictures
Materials: Media paper, art supplies (colored pencils, markers, crayons, scissors, etc.), photo-editing software (Photoshop, Lightroom, Illustrator, Gimp, etc.), computers or tablets if available, cameras or smartphones if available
Objective: Students will exemplify knowledge of story structure and visual storytelling by using art materials or software to create or manipulate a series of images or panes to communicate a narrative arc (introduction, body, and conclusion).
Procedure: Students should first use library resources to research graphic novels, comics, or picture books that communicate stories effectively. Students will select at least three works to serve as source material or inspiration, and then create or manipulate photos or artwork to tell a story of their choice. This story can be personal, or can be a retelling of an existing story. Students will cite their source material(s) and present their finished work to the full group or directly to the librarian/teacher. Students should consider discussing why they chose to communicate their selected story, what this story says about their personality/culture/community/etc., and what changes they would make (if any) to their finalized visual story.

B. Blogging your story
Materials: Access to computers or tablets, Blogger, Weebly, or other blog resource login access
Objective: Students will show an understanding of perspective and bias by first analyzing at least two blog posts on one student-selected topic, and then creating an original blog post framing the same story through a new lens.
Procedure: Students will illustrate knowledge of perspective and bias by finding at least two "versions" of the same story in blogs of their choice. Then, students will write a blog post (either

on an existing blog or in a blog created for this activity) providing their unique perspective about the same topic. Students should link related posts, sources, or images in their post. As students write their posts, they should keep a narrative arc in mind, and write in a style and pace that reflects their chosen topic. Students who complete the blog activity will also read at least one other blog post created by a classmate and leave a respectful comment, providing feedback and/or support for that classmate. Students will be encouraged to consider how their culture, background, and experiences have affected their perspective on their chosen issue.

C. Show and tell
Materials: Student-selected material, paper/pencil or computer/tablet for writing
Objective: Students will illustrate a foundation in public speaking by bringing an object from home and presenting it with an introduction, body, and resolution to the class, paying special attention to body language and presentation.
Procedure: Students will watch at least three online presentations (I strongly recommend that students select TED talks as their source material). Students will create a list of qualities that make a strong public speaker. Following a familiar and comfortable school activity, students should select an item from their lives that has personal significance. Students will bring that item to the library and spend 3-5 minutes of show and tell presenting this item to the class. Students should do their best to incorporate as many items on their list of qualities for strong public speaking into their presentation and evaluate their performance in a short paragraph or verbal reflection for the librarian/teacher. Students will be encouraged to answer questions such as: What makes an effective public speaker? What qualities did I attempt to emulate in my presentation? Was I successful? How could I improve?

D. Personal narrative
Materials: Paper/pencil or computer/tablet for writing
Objective: Through the process of selecting a true personal story, mapping it out in a story template, and writing a short personal narrative, students will illustrate their understanding of creative writing, story structure, and first-person perspective.
Procedure: Students will search in the library catalog for at least one example of a personal narrative (this might be a book, an article, a chapter of a longer work, etc.) Students will then brainstorm a personal story to communicate through writing. Students will be prompted to think about a turning point in his or her life, and frame that story through a traditional story template. After selecting and formally structuring their story, students can follow the personal narrative resources provided by TIME to create a short, written personal narrative (about 500 words is plenty). As an optional addition, students can include a creative title, cover page, or images to add personal flare to their narrative. Students who are inclined to share this narrative will be encouraged to read it aloud to the class or a peer partner.

E. Journaling your story
Materials: Paper/pencil or computer/tablet for writing
Objective: Students will practice writing journal entries once a day for five days in order to illustrate an understanding of personal and/or therapeutic writing and the difference between formal and casual writing styles.
Procedure: Students will practice journaling by using the resource 750 Words (http://750words.com/) at least once. After students have experience free writing and analyzing

their results from 750 Words, they will practice keeping a journal for one school week (5 days in a row). This can be kept digitally or on paper. Students also have the option of utilizing 750 Words for the full five days, but should make sure to create accounts and keep track of their daily progress to have evidence for their portfolios. In their journals, students are free to write about whatever they would like (doodling, drawing, or collaging are also welcomed sources of creative expression). After their five journal entries are complete, students will have the option to either write a brief summary about their journaling experience, or they can give a brief (3-5 minute) explanation to the class about their five days of journaling. Students can discuss issues such as: Was journaling difficult or easy... why? What kinds of things did I write about? Did I pay attention to the stories I told in my journal or were they flow of consciousness? How is writing in a journal different from writing a formal essay? Etc. If students for any reason did not complete all five journal entries, they should reflect on why they were unable to meet that goal and what obstacles stood in the way to their success.

Topic 2: Storytelling as a professional tool
Now that students have gained some experience communicating through stories, they will learn about a practical way to utilize storytelling skills. The activities for this topic encourage students to consider how they present themselves professionally, and how to become an effective and practiced communicator.

A. Being the interviewee
Materials: Computers/tablets with access to Internet, library resources, pencil/paper
Objective: Students will illustrate their knowledge of professional storytelling by researching possible interview questions, preparing answers, and practicing professional body language and interview etiquette.
Procedure: Students must work in pairs to complete this activity. All students who complete this activity should research possible interview questions that might be asked in an interview. Students will be encouraged to envision what their future career paths might look like, and what questions might be specifically relevant to interviews in their chosen careers. As students conduct this preliminary research (using library resources or online web searching), they should take notes about these questions and prepare possible responses for them. Student pairs should arrange two times to interview each other (so that both students experience being both the interviewer and interviewee). Students should treat this as an actual interview by dressing appropriately and practicing proper body language. Interviewees should then write a brief reflection on what they did well, how they could improve, and how this experience will affect their future interviews. A few links to possible resources for storytelling and interviewing are:
- http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/2014/04/17/the-secret-to-a-successful-interview-great-storytelling
- https://www.themuse.com/advice/the-interview-technique-you-should-be-using
- https://www.glassdoor.com/blog/importance-story-telling-job-interview/

Once students complete the interview process, they should write a brief reflection (250 words) explaining any challenges they faced during the interview and how they overcame them. Because this will likely be a first-time interview experience for many students, they should also consider how this will benefit them and how they might utilize their interview skills in middle school and high school.

B. Storytelling through data
Materials: Computers, access to Excel or graph-making software
Objective: Students will showcase an understanding of the basics of data visualization by creating at least one chart, graph, or Infographic that communicates data about a self-selected topic. Students will reflect on their data representation and explain what their story is, how it is told, and what obstacles they faced along the way.
Procedure: First, students will visit http://www.storytellingwithdata.com/ and watch the video "The Cat in the Hat Knows a lot about Data Visualization." Then, students will brainstorm (either through writing, mind map, doodling, etc.) at least three topics that they could communicate through data (or numbers). For example, students might tell a story about the environment by expressing statistics about air pollution over the span of the last ten years through graphs. Once students have brainstormed possible topics, they should select one and access basic statistics about their selected topic using library resources. Then, students should use Excel or other graph making software or programs (Infographic makers such as those available on websites like Canva.com are also acceptable) to create at least one graph or chart that tells a "story." Students should write a brief paragraph explaining what their story is and how it is communicated through data. If students struggled at any point during this activity, they should reflect about what gave them trouble and how they overcame hurdles.

C. Documentary project
Materials: Student-selected documentary (library resources will be available), storyboard template, paper/pencil
Objective: After viewing and reflecting on one documentary, students will hypothesize and plan a theoretical documentary they would like to create by mapping out a detailed storyboard.
Procedure: Students will select a documentary to watch at home or in the library during study hall time. If multiple students want to view the documentary as a group, they are more than welcome to work together. While viewing the documentary, students should take notes about the following questions: Does the documentary play on viewers' emotions? If so, how? How does the documentary present information and/or data? Does the documentary use credible sources? What did you learn about the subject of the documentary? What did you learn about storytelling factual information? After reflecting on the documentary, students should create a mock-up storyboard or plan about a documentary they would like to create or see. This will include a topic, possible guest speakers, critical information to convey, and possible images or scenes. Students can draw or include collected or collaged images and photographs. Craftsmanship is not critical, but students should work hard to keep their storyboard readable and clear. A possible example of a printable storyboard template is linked here:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/myplacemyspace/downloads/promote-your-day-out/storyboard-template.pdf.

D. Website
Materials: Internet access, computers/tablets, paper/pencil
Objective: Students will showcase digital storytelling skills by analyzing what makes a successful and readable website, and then creating an original website that communicates a self-selected topic or story on its homepage.
Procedure: Students will compile a list of their favorite websites with short annotations explaining why they like each website (discussing graphic design elements, content, layout, etc.).

These lists should include at least five websites. Then, students will create a basic website using a free online program (such as Weebly). Students are by no means required to complete a fully fleshed-out website. However, they should finish the design and layout, and have a complete homepage detailing what the website is, and what it is used for. Students will then write a brief reflection paragraph about their goals for their website, explaining how this website communicates a story. Students also have the option of verbally outlining their website's concept and story to the class instead of writing a reflection paragraph.

E. Resume: My professional story
Materials: Computers, paper/pencil
Objective: Students will compile their professional experiences on a formal resume, which will express their personal identity through individual design choices.
Procedure: First, students should look for images of "good" or "bad" resumes online, and take notes about what they learn. They should answer questions such as: What makes a successful resume? What do employers or schools look for in a good resume? What should be included on a resume? Then, students should use either Word, Pages (or an online resource such as Canva) to create a resume that tells the student's professional story. The resume should include school and (if any) work experiences, and should reflect the student's personality in some way (through color, layout, logo, etc.). While most students won't have a lot to include on a resume as a middle school student, this activity should prepare students for the experience of compiling their professional stories. Students should consider the *layout* of their resumes, and should also think about the similarities between story plot arcs and the communication of resume information. (Ex: What comes first? Why? What should be at the end? What is the "title?" etc.)

Topic 3: Cultural storytelling/Storytelling of other people
This topic is intended to give students an outlet to learn about their personal, cultural backgrounds and unique characteristics, while also gaining exposure to new and diverse stories.

A. My past and present
Materials: Photographs (or access to camera to take photographs), computer/tablet, paper/pencil
Objective: Students will create a short narrative (around 750 words) outlining their history, including family background, cultural identity, and their goals for the future.
Procedure: First, students will create an outline of their history, from birth to where they currently are. This should include major milestones in their lives, and students should consider writing about how those milestones affected them and changed their "life story." Students should then outline their goals for the future. They should pay special attention to their culture, the culture of their families, and the cultures of their friends. Students should then ask themselves how their culture affects their personalities, goals, and daily lives. Because this is such a broadly stated goal, students can consider leading questions such as: Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten years? What is your number one priority right now? Why is that? Where is your dream home? Your dream job? How will you attain those goals? After creating outlines, students should compile their ideas in the form of a short narrative. Students should write creatively and include pictures, drawings, or links to videos whenever possible.

B. Family tree, my family's story

Materials: Paper/pencil, computer/tablet (optional), camera or photographs (optional), art supplies (encouraged, but optional)

Objective: Students will ask their family or family friends questions about their personal, family history. Students will then create a family tree and reflect on how the experience affected their identities.

Procedure: Students will interview family members or family friends to learn about their family's history. Students are encouraged to use a video recorder (such as one on a smart phone) or to take detailed notes during this interview, but they will not be required to submit these notes or recordings. Students should map out a family tree to their best ability (as many generations back as possible). To aid students along this process, they are welcome to utilize a tool such as Family Echo (http://www.familyecho.com/) to create their family tree. Once finished, students can either present their family tree to the class or write a brief reflection, answering the question: What did this process teach me about my family that I didn't know before? Family trees will be shared in a public space (such as a class bulletin board or blog), and students should look at other students' family trees to gain exposure to diverse student backgrounds.

C. Interactive story about culture

Materials: Tablets/computers, paper/pencil

Objective: Students will investigate a story from their cultures and retell their chosen stories through an interactive app (using a tool such as BookBuilder: http://bookbuilder.cast.org/).

Procedure: Students should first utilize library resources to find a story from individual, cultural histories. Students should then summarize this story to simplify it for an app adaptation. A good guideline is to streamline stories into 3-4 scenes (more can always be added later). Students should then utilize an online tool or app to make their selected story into an interactive app. BookBuilder and Book Creator (https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/book-creator-free-make-books/id661166101?mt=8) are both great options. Whenever possible, students should include visuals (either created by hand and scanned, created digitally, or photographs). Once finished, students should reflect on the following questions in a brief written or verbal reflection: How does the app or digital format change my story? How is this story different as a verbal or traditional book format? Why might someone use an app like this to tell stories? (Or why not?) Once finished, students who completed interactive stories should partner with each other so that students can read or learn about diverse, cultural stories.

D. These are a few of my favorite things

Materials: Camera/pictures, magazines or collage materials, poster board and other art supplies (scissors, markers, crayons, colored pencils, glue, etc.)

Objective: Students will create a large-scale collage (12"x12" or larger) using various art supplies, photographs, or drawings that expresses at least 15 "favorite things," arranged in a purposeful format that communicates a personal visual story.

Procedure: Students should create a list of (at least 15) "things" that are important to them. These things should have some personal significance or meaning to students, and each item on the list should have a brief (about 1 sentence) annotation that explains why the item is important to them. Then, students should collect or create images of at least 15 of these items and collage them onto a poster board. Students should consider the layout and design of the storyboard, and make sure that the order, pattern, or format of the images communicates some kind of narrative or story about themselves. Students are welcome to use text to write blurbs, captions, speech

bubbles, etc. on their collage project. Students will be responsible for submitting their lists and collages, along with a brief description of what story their collage communicates. Student collages will be displayed in the library or in the hallway, so that all students will have the opportunity to see the diverse "favorite things" of their classmates.

E. Pieces of me, pieces of you
Materials: Paper/pencil, computers and access to printer
Objective: Students in groups of 2-3 will create individual lists of 10 "I statements," and then combine their statements to participate in an activity. During the activity, students will compare and contrast their "I statements" to learn about their unique and/or comparable qualities, which they will write about in a brief reflection.
Procedure: In self-selected groups of 2-3, students will compile separate lists of "I statements" that communicate snippets of their personal stories. These statements should describe students in some way (these can be silly or serious but should all be true). For example, some of my "I statements" might be: I love to read. I hate raw onions. I am from Iowa. I have Norwegian ancestors., etc. Students should create these individually and should not share with their group members until the activity begins. (For optimal anonymity, students can use computers and print their lists to avoid having their handwriting recognized.) Then, student groups should get together, cut their sentences individually, and put them in a basket, hat, bag, etc. One at a time, students will draw one sentence and read it aloud. If the sentence applies to group members, they should raise their hand (or signal in some way). Students should continue this cycle until all statements are drawn. At the end of the activity, each student should write a reflection (about 250 words) about the experience. They should consider the following questions: What did I learn about myself? What did I learn about my group members? How are my experiences similar to those of my friends? How are they different (how am I unique)? Is my *story* similar to my friends' stories? How or how not?

Topic 4: Listening is telling
The last topic is designed to encourage active listening during storytelling. Half of sharing stories is *listening* to stories, and this topic gives students an opportunity to pay attention to silence, body language, and physical communication.

A. Charades!
Materials: Paper/pencil, computer/printer (optional), space to play charades
Objective: Students will practice silent storytelling and learn about communicative body language through a game of charades.
Procedure: Students will get into small groups (3-5 people) for this activity, and will begin by creating a list of things to act out in a game of charades. Each student will submit three (secret!) ideas into a hat or bag. If students struggle to come up with ideas, they can access a resource such as: http://grammar.yourdictionary.com/games-puzzles-and-worksheets/charades-word-lists-kids.html. Then, students will play a game of charades by individually acting out randomly drawn items from the hat or bag. Students are not allowed to use props or any type of noise, and will be disqualified from their round if they do. (They should take this seriously and try their best to use body language, motion, and action to communicate their ideas.) Once the game is completed, student groups should work together to create a chart or diagram expressing tips for effective body language or nonverbal communication. (Students could think about: What makes

nonverbal communication effective? What makes it more difficult? In what instances is nonverbal communication necessary? How can it be used?) Venn diagrams, pro/con lists, mind maps, and graphs are all suggested ways to organize student thoughts and ideas. Each student should include a copy of this project in his or her portfolio.

B. Question everything
Materials: Paper/pencil, computer/tablet (optional)
Objective: In groups of 2, students will practice conversation and listening skills by responding to each other with only questions.
Procedure: Students will choose a partner (this activity is best with groups of only 2), and will sit across from each other to have a conversation. Students should set a timer for 5 minutes, and during this time, students should only communicate in questions. No preparation is necessary for this activity, but if students struggle for a place to start, one student can ask an icebreaker question such as: What's your favorite class this year? What do you do in your spare time? Etc. Students should practice careful listening, and make sure that the follow-up questions they ask are relevant and meaningful responses, in line with the direction of the conversation.   Though this activity can seem silly in the moment, students should challenge themselves to take it seriously. Once the 5 minutes are up, students will write a brief reflection (about 250 words) about their experience. They should consider the following questions: Why is questioning important? Was this conversation easy to have or difficult? Why? Did asking questions push you to learn more about your partner? Students are encouraged to work on reflections together and discuss these thoughts with their partners, but should include individual reflections in their portfolios.

C. Tell me more... conversation skills
Materials: Paper/pencil, computer/tablet
Objective: Students will practice communication skills and idea development by responding in "Yes, but" and "Yes, and" statements.
Procedure: In small groups (2-4 students), students will sit in a circle and begin with the prompt: "We are going on a vacation to _____." Student groups can pick a destination of their choice. One student will begin by saying this statement out loud. Moving clockwise around the circle, each group member will add to this conversation with a statement starting with "Yes, but..." or "Yes, and..." Once the student group has participated in this activity for at least 5 minutes, they should reflect on the experience through a written or visual reflection. Students can either write a brief (250 word) reflection about how this conversation changed or effected their vacation plans, or they can create a drawing, chart, etc. that visualizes the evolution of their vacation plans. In either reflective activity, student groups should consider: How did our plans change? How did "Yes, and..." statements influence our vacation plans? How did "Yes, but..." statements influence our vacation plans? Which statements were more useful and why? What did this conversation teach me about communication and/or listening? Each student should include a copy of the reflection in his or her portfolio.

D. Body language, silence is telling
Materials: Internet access, computers/tablets, paper/pencil
Objective: Students will learn basic tips about body language and practice their body language skills with a partner.

Procedure: This activity requires students to work in partners, so students should select a buddy to work with. Then, students should visit: http://www.scienceofpeople.com/quiz/, watch the video about effective body language, and take the quiz to see how much they already know about body language. Student pairs should then find a space to work together on improving their body language skills. To do this, students should sit or stand across from each other and engage in any kind of conversation. This can be treated formally (with prepared questions) or informally. Students can also complete this activity over lunch or after school (during extracurricular activities, at a birthday party, etc.). Then, students should prepare a written list of specific compliments and skills that need improvement for their partner. Each student should analyze what their partner did well (posture, attitude, hand gestures, etc.) and what they should consider working on. All feedback and suggestions should be positively framed and constructive, and the teacher/librarian should view each list before they get passed on to partners.

E. Reading, watching, and listening: the stories I've heard
Materials: Computer/tablet, paper/pencil
Objective: Students will consume one new story and will compile a list of ten stories that are personally significant. Students will also view their peers' lists and consider the diverse experiences, backgrounds, and stories of their classmates.
Procedure: Listening to stories is a great way to strengthen storytelling skills. Students who complete this activity should read one book, watch one movie, or listen to one story (audiobook, radio show, musical album) and create a bibliography of the stories that have most influenced them. Bibliographies should include at least 10 items (including the one selected for this activity), and each item should have a brief annotation (2-3 sentences) describing what the item is, what story it tells, and how that story has affected the student. Students who complete this activity will display their completed bibliographies on a bulletin board in the library, and will display one recommended item from their list. Each student should also take the time to read one other student's bibliography and then consider how their lists differ or are similar.

3. Unit Assessment

A. Final Portfolio

At the end of the unit, students will submit their final portfolios. Portfolios should include one completed activity (including any reflections) for each of the four topics. Student portfolios will primarily be evaluated on the basis of (1) completion of required work, (2) quality and thoroughness of work, and (3) organization and clarity. Many of the activities differ significantly, so completion is the foremost goal. Throughout the unit, each activity could include individual rubrics or grading scales to give students specific goals.

Rubric for final portfolio:

CATEGORY	Above and Beyond (4 pts. + 1 extra credit pt.)	Mission Accomplished (4 pts.)	Room for Improvement (3 pts.)	Let's Talk... (0-2 pts.)
Completion	More than 4 activities completed.	4 activities completed.	3 activities completed.	2 or fewer activities completed.
Quality of work	Covers topic in-depth with details and examples. Subject knowledge is excellent, complete with clear reasoning and evidence in each activity.	Includes essential knowledge about the topic. Subject knowledge is good. Clear and coherent, evidence included as appropriate.	Includes essential information about the topic. Clarity and coherence could be improved, but reasoning can be followed and/or could have included more evidence.	Content is minimal and/or incomplete. Little or no evidence or subject knowledge.
Organization	Portfolio is clearly labeled and divided by topic and activity. Activities are clean, labeled with names and titles, and appear very professional.	Portfolio is clearly labeled and divided by topic and activity. Most activities are clean and labeled appropriately.	Portfolio is mostly labeled and divided by topic, but might be unprofessional and/or messy looking.	Portfolio is poorly organized, not labeled clearly, and difficult to read.
Creativity	Makes excellent use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. to enhance the portfolio.	Makes good use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. to enhance to portfolio.	Makes use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. but occasionally these detract from the portfolio content.	Poor quality or distracting appearance
Sources	Source information collected for all graphics, facts and quotes. All documented in desired format.	Source information collected for all graphics, facts and quotes. Most documented in desired format.	Source information collected for graphics, facts and quotes, but not documented in desired format.	Very little or no source information was collected.

B. Digital Story

In addition to unit portfolios, students should also complete a final, digital story project. Digital stories should be worked on throughout the unit (not saved until the very last minute), and library space will be made available during advisory or study hall time for students to access computers or library resources and equipment. The last week scheduled in this unit is reserved for digital story work time, as well as any student presentations.

For the digital story, students should select one folk or fairy tale that interests them. The 398.2 Dewey Decimal Number section will be highlighted or pulled for the students, so they can easily browse and access the library's folk and fairy tale collection. After selecting one story, students should spend time researching the history and origins of that story. Students should compile their research and tell the "story of the story" using iMovie (or any available movie making/editing software). For example, a student might select *Snow White* and tell the history of *Snow White* (when the story was created, who created it, symbolism or meaning, current adaptations, uses in pop culture, retellings, etc.). Students should include images in their iMovie creation and use the recording feature to verbally communicate their research.

The goal of the digital story is to tell a story *about* a story. The final iMovie product should be around 5 minutes long (3-5 minutes is ideal), and should include a bibliography at the end (with photo, story, and research credits).

Rubric for final digital story:

CATEGORY	Above and Beyond (4 pts. + 1 extra credit pt.)	Mission Accomplished (4 pts.)	Room for Improvement (3 pts.)	Let's Talk... (0-2 pts.)
Completion and Timeliness	Digital story is completed on time (or early) and shows evidence of extra student effort and care.	Digital story is completed on time and is between 3-5 minutes long.	Digital story is turned in 1-2 days late and is only 2-3 minutes long.	Digital story is turned in 2+ days late and is shorter than 2 minutes.
Quality of work	Very clear and coherent, multiple pieces of evidence when appropriate, logical, well-sequenced reasoning.	Clear and coherent, evidence included as appropriate, reasoning is logical.	Clarity and coherence could be improved, but reasoning can be followed and/or could have included more evidence.	Not coherent, very little evidence, and reasoning cannot easily be followed.
Clarity	Digital story is very easy to follow, makes use of iMovie transitions and features, and communicates a clear story.	Digital story is easy to follow, makes use of iMovie transitions, and communicates a story.	Digital story is somewhat difficult to follow and makes use of a few iMovie features. The story is difficult to discern.	Digital story is difficult to follow and does not make use of iMovie features.
Creativity	Makes excellent use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. to enhance the presentation.	Makes good use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. to enhance to presentation.	Makes use of font, color, graphics, effects, etc. but occasionally these detract from the presentation content.	Poor quality or distracting appearance

Sources	Source information collected for all graphics, facts and quotes. All documented in desired format.	Source information collected for all graphics, facts and quotes. Most documented in desired format.	Source information collected for graphics, facts and quotes, but not documented in desired format.	Very little or no source information was collected.

4. Bibliography/Resources

The following resources could be helpful for teachers/librarians preparing for this unit:

(2013). *The Center for Children's Books: Resources for Storytellers*. Retrieved from
   http://ccbarchive.ischool.illinois.edu/resources/storytellers.html.

Cox, D. A. (2015, May 17). *iMovie 2015 – FULL TUTORIAL*. Retrieved from
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9LcLENceNE.

Fox, M. (2001). *Reading magic: Why reading aloud to our children will change their lives
   forever*. Orlando: Harcourt.

McDowell, K. (2016). *A Storytelling Scholar*. Retrieved from
   http://www.katemcdowell.com/storytelling.html.

PRI Public Radio International. (2009, August 18). *Ira Glass on Storytelling*. [Video file].
   Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=loxJ3FtCJJA.

Trousdale, A. M., Woestehoff, S. A., & Schwartz, M. (1994). *Give a listen: Stories of
   storytelling in school*. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English.

Students might use the following resources during this unit:

(2016). *750 Words*. Retrieved from http://750words.com/.

(2016). *Blogger*. Retrieved from https://www.blogger.com/home.

(2016). *CAST UDL Book Builder*. Retrieved from http://bookbuilder.cast.org/.

(2016). *Charades Word Lists for Kids*. Retrieved from
   http://grammar.yourdictionary.com/games-puzzles-and-worksheets/charades-word-lists-
   kids.html.

(2016). *Family Echo*. Retrieved from http://familyecho.com/.

(2016). Storyboard template. Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/myplacemyspace/downloads/promote-your-day-out/storyboard-template.pdf.

 (2016). *Weebly*. Retrieved from https://www.weebly.com/.

Edwards, V. (2016). *Be the Most Memorable Person in the Room*. Retrieved from http://www.scienceofpeople.com/quiz/.

James, G. (2012, August 31). Storytelling: The Secret Weapon to Wow a Hiring Manager. Retrieved from https://www.glassdoor.com/blog/importance-story-telling-job-interview/.

Knaflic, C. N. (2016). *Storytelling With Data*. Retrieved from http://www.storytellingwithdata.com/.

Kuhel, B. (2014, April 17). *The Secret to a Successful Interview: Great Storytelling*. Retrieved from http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/2014/04/17/the-secret-to-a-successful-interview-great-storytelling.

Zhang, L. (2016). *The Interview Technique You Should Be Using*. Retrieved from https://www.themuse.com/advice/the-interview-technique-you-should-be-using.