

# How to Tell Stories with People With Disabilities

Jo Henwood

## Plan for the afternoon

- What we already know
- Stories in motion
- Call and response
- Conducted participation
- 5 Rs (rhythm, role, rhyme, repetition, ritual)
- Episode games
- Books of props
- Telling our own stories
- Where to from here?

## What we already know



## Multisensory



## Multi modality



## Distractability

- Hands on
- Individually presented
- Respond to cues

## Communication methods



## Stories in Motion

*Cassandra Wye*

- Sensory rich props
- Simple stories with lots of repetition
- Individually presented
- Responding to non verbal communication
- Simple signing

## Stories in Motion

*Cassandra Wye*



## Call and Response

*Keith Park*

- rhythm, response, repetition .
- Basic 4 beat builds momentum.
- Poetry. Musicality. Atmosphere created through sound and vision.
- Seated in a single line circle.
- Social communication: turn taking, anticipation, gaze alternation, seeking physical proximity.



1. Name games: Drum beats for syllables
2. Story, repeated several times, accompanied only by drums
3. Goodbye

## Co-created

*Tuula Pulli*

Storyteller as conductor:

- audience with props
- costumes
- movements



## ACTIVITY

In pairs/small groups adapt a traditional story to be shared as a Call and Response story.

- 1) Write the story in 10-30 short sentences.
- 2) Make the sentences have the same four beats.
- 3) Try to have some rhymes.
- 4) Add actions to match the words.

10 minutes preparation

Perform. Use a drum beat or hand claps for rhythm.

10 minutes performance

## 5 Rs

Lis N Tell: *Louise Coigley*

LIS N Tell:  
Live Inclusive  
Storytelling

- Rhythm
- & Role
- Rhyme
- Repetition
- Ritual



## Lis N Tell

Spontaneous intentional participation observed.

Any client can change the **rhythm**, actions or words

**Roles:** keeper of objects, scribe, illustrator, musician, narrator, director, character, eye gazer.

**Rhymes** can be repeated

**Musical and percussion instruments**

**Ritual:** activities related to the theme

**Repetition**

Acknowledgement of valued participation



## ACTIVITY

In pairs/small groups adapt a traditional story to be shared according to the 5 Rs.

- 1) A **ritual** to begin and end the session, related to the theme of the story
- 2) **Roles** for each participant
- 3) Write out the story in short sentences that sound musical. Find a **rhythm** in the words. You can use an instrument or body percussion.
- 4) Find some **rhyming** words that will fit .
- 5) **Repeat** some words or sentences within the story or repeat the whole story .

10 minutes preparation

Perform to one other pair or group.

10 minutes performance

## Episode games

- Odyssey NOW *Park, Grove*
  - variations on everyday activities
  - functional
  - promote interactions
  - simple
- Rules of drama games
- Use of quality images, music
-



## ACTIVITY

In pairs/small groups adapt an epic story or work of literature into a series of games.

- 1) Break the epic down into the **main episodes** and choose one episode.
  - 2) Identify the **action** in that episode and think of a **game** that has the same basic action
  - 3) Adapt the game to tell the story of that episode
  - 4) Add music or props or art work to support the story
- 10 minutes preparation

Find another small group or pair. Instruct them in how to play the game.

10 minutes performance

## Bag Books and boxes

*Chris Fuller, Barbara Fornfield*



Constant repetition

Short sentences



Unchanging sequence of the objects and actions





It tells the story of a young girl on a visit to the zoo. She asks her mum 'what animal am I?' and each page contains something to represent various animals including a rhino, pig, fish and giraffe. One of the animals is an elephant and this page comprises a long piece of grey hose with pink fabric on the end to represent an elephant's trunk. The storyteller puts their arm in the trunk and uses it as a puppet to interact with the listeners; it also has an elephant noise hidden inside.

Tom's teacher reads him this story every day, moving his hands over each page. If she does it with him, it isn't scary. The sounds in her voice tell him if each page is funny, happy or silly. Tom particularly enjoys the elephant page, it makes him giggle. When he giggles, Tom's teacher repeats this page. Slowly Tom realises that it is his giggle that makes this happen – he is in control.

## ACTIVITY

Individually or in pairs

- Create a 10-16 line story: traditional story, everyday event, or original story.
- Short sentences with an object and an action
- Rhymes
- Draft illustrations, props

10 minutes preparation

Share your stories with another individual or pair.

10 minutes performance

## Telling our own stories

### Story sharing

(Harwood, Grove)

for social inclusion

Building identity and relationships through remembering share anecdotes



### Openstorytellers

(Nicola Grove)



## Where to from here?

- Which strategies appeal the most?
- Why?
- What would you need in order to implement these techniques?
- Is there any way you can help each other achieve your goals?