

Storyvalues and General Arts Education Requirements

About Storyvalues and The Arts

Storyvalues uses the art of storytelling; *the oral tradition* as a foundation for a multifaceted exploration of literature, social-emotional learning and cultural diversity. Support for Arts in Education is woven throughout the program. In fact, **Storyvalues** itself is an artistic expression that joins art, graphics, motion design, music, video and literature to create a visually and sonically rich interactive story-based learning experience.

Inspiring and facilitating individual and group creative expression is one of the main goals of **Storyvalues**. At the centre of the program is a collection of recorded and written multicultural folktales that reflect the diversity of world culture. The recordings, featuring narration enhanced with culturally accurate music and sound effects, provide rich audio experiences ideally suited for creative visualization.

The follow up activities that accompany each story contain numerous suggestions for story-based arts projects and further explorations into each stories' culture of origin, using literature, art and music as an entry point. These follow up materials are offered for both school and home use.

Using **Storyvalues**, educators can create study plans and creative projects that encompass a wide range of curricular and co-curricular areas of study: social studies, indigenous cultures, cooperative learning, science and many others.

Stories as a Foundation for Creative Learning

Classic traditional stories are fundamental expressions of creativity that embody archetypal situations and characters that communicate individual and cultural experience. Like music, drama, art and dance, stories speak across generational and cultural divisions to reveal the unity of experience that underlies individual and cultural diversity. The enduring appeal and relevance of classic stories is due to how effectively they unify imagination and intellect to create a holistic representation of human experience.

The *oral tradition* of storytelling brings language, tone and subtle expression to the mix, creating a gestalt of information that further inspires music, dance, drama and the visual arts.

Storyvalues expands the range of the oral tradition even further, using a variety of modern media to enhance literacy, promote positive personal development and assist in the creation of strong, unified school communities.

Arts skills students need to become literate in these four strands of arts-based learning:

1. **Drama**
2. **Music**
3. **Dance**
4. **Visual Art**

Storyvalues supports Arts education requirements in the following ways:

1. **Drama**

Stories are linked to the dramatic arts. Through **Storyvalues**, educators are provided with an easily accessible source of classic stories from around the world, presented in both recorded and written form. All the stories provide vivid characters and situations ideally suited for dramatic productions.

The recordings, with narration highlighted by music and sound effects, provide one example of how stories can be dramatically rendered. The narration models the effective use of language and tone, pace

and timing; the music underscores the emotional content and provides a sense of place. Along with delivering literary content, **Storyvalues** recordings provide an excellent model for students to work from as they create their own dialogue and music for dramatic interpretation.

Both the interactive website and the follow up materials contain background information about each story. In many cases, the follow up materials integrate suggestions for dramatic interpretation with visual art ideas for props and background imagery. Some follow ups contain lateral-thinking and multiple point-of-view exercises that instruct students to simulate aspects of a particular story, to imagine alternate endings and to empathetically reflect on the feelings and situations presented by characters in the story.

Finally, each story is represented by a written version, which can be a useful starting point for developing scripts.

2. Music

Each recorded story features culturally accurate music, providing an opportunity for students to become familiar with musical forms from a variety of world cultures. The interactive website also contains information, sound files, photographs and graphics designed to increase knowledge about specific genres and instruments, as well as to draw attention to how music is used in the context of a recorded story to create a sense of place or to express emotion.

The follow up materials invariably contain information about the music and instruments used in each recorded story, as well as suggested recordings for further exploration into the music of the story's culture of origin.

Storyvalues is a useful tool for educators and parents in helping elementary school students achieve a sophisticated understanding of music; to explore it's various forms and uses, and to achieve self-awareness of their own emotional responses.

3. Dance

Storyvalues is not a dance program, per se. However, the multicultural musical and literary components of the program can certainly be used creatively by educators as a foundation for story-related dance projects.

4. Visual Arts

Creative visualization is of central importance to **Storyvalues** and a fundamental reason why the recorded stories are such an integral part of the program.

As raw materials for visual art, the multicultural folktales featured in **Storyvalues** provide colourful characters and imaginative situations perfectly suited for visual art projects. The recordings bring these qualities to life through the interplay of narration, culturally accurate music and sound effects, to establish a sense of place, an emotional tone, a sense of drama and a mental image of what is happening in each story.

The follow up materials that accompany each story (for both school and home) contain a section specifically devoted to story-based creative visualization and art projects. These projects encourage students to arrive at their own creative solutions, with emphasis placed upon the inclusion of each student's creative perspective as an integral part of a group dynamic.

Additionally, the interactive website contains numerous examples of graphics, motion design and art consistent with the content or originating culture of each story. Many of these graphic items are also available for students to download and use in class projects, by way of the 'Toolbox' section that accompanies each story.

Summary

The ability to think creatively is an essential life skill. Creative thinking is related to self knowledge, awareness of others and an indication of a profound involvement with the dynamics of life and culture.

Every aspect of the Storyvalues program supports arts in education and the goal of inspiring creative and cultural literacy in students.

Using Storyvalues, students can learn about traditional world literature, gain insight into positive character attributes, partake in numerous cooperative and individual creative projects, become familiar with world music, interact with new media and learn to communicate through the ancient art of storytelling. The integration of traditional and new modes of expression provides educators and parents with a useful tool in grounding students in essential values and practices as they embark upon the creation of the future.