



The Jewish Education Center Of Cleveland's גך-- a newsletter for educators

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י"ד שבט תשס"ג

Storytelling

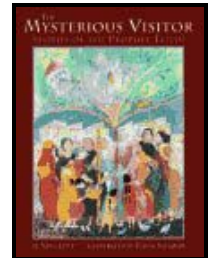
Why Tell Jewish Stories?

"Never underestimate the power of stories, especially in the mind of children. They create worlds of wonder, they change lives, they unlock secret doors. The gift that comes with Jewish stories is the unimaginably rich lore of Jewish tradition, going back to the first Midrashim. It's a vein of pure gold that never runs out. For the more we mine it, the richer it becomes because as we dig, and we become part of it ourselves."

Adapted from Eric A. Kimmel's Sydney Taylor Book Award Acceptance Speech for Gershon's Monster, San Deigo, CA, June 2001

The Mysterious Visitor: Stories of the Prophet Elijah, by Nina Jaffe (NY: Scholastic Press, 1997).

Bright, engaging illustrations accompany these hopeful, magical tales of the prophet Elijah. Cast as a miracle worker, messenger, healer, and savior, among other roles, Elijah visits Jewish families all over the world. Always, he carries with him the message that life will improve and the caution to not ignore those less fortunate.



Websites

Rabbi Scheinerman's site (<http://scheinerman.net/judaism/jewish-education/stories.html>), encourages the novice to try storytelling by providing tips, techniques and story suggestions. Click on the links at the bottom of the page to connect to a longer collection of Jewish stories.

Jewish Stories (<http://www.wujs.org.il/activist/activities/stories/index.shtml>). This website, sponsored by WUJS, has a large collection (more than 50) Jewish – mostly Chassidic – stories. The site is organized by themes with stories about:

- **The Baal Shem Tov** (including, The Sword of Wood)
- **The Early Rebbes** (including, Reb Baruch's *Tallit*)
- **Rav Nachman** (including, The Prince who Thought he was a Turkey)
- **Reb Shlomo**
- **Reincarnation and other miscellaneous stories**

Jewish Stories ([http://www.haruth.com/Jewish Stories.html](http://www.haruth.com/Jewish%20Stories.html)), organized by Harry Leichter (from various other websites), is a collection of Jewish stories from all over the world. Some modern, some slightly older, these tales show the plurality of Jewish life across the globe. Of note is the story "The Bronx Bomber," about Colin Powell's knowledge of Yiddish.

-Reviewed by Rachel Raviv, Curriculum Associate

JESP OFFERING

Once Upon a Story

Learn and practice storytelling skills for use in the classroom and beyond. Share the delight of telling stories from family histories, folklores and Jewish traditions. Learn techniques for enriching storytelling by using puppets, masks, costumes and other props. Offered four Tuesday nights beginning February 4th, 2003.

To register, call Sandra at The Jewish Education Center of Cleveland, (216) 371-0446, x134.

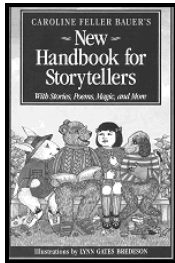
The RMC has a good folklore collection, with tales about the Fools of Chelm, Hershel of Ostropol, Honi the Circlemaker, and Biblical figures like Elijah and King Solomon, among many others.



Bringing the Story Home, The Complete Guide to Storytelling for Parents, by Lisa Lipkin, (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2000).

Intended for parents, but easily adaptable to any classroom, this book contains fun and creative ideas to motivate children to become more imaginative through stories. Lipkin suggests asking kids to “become” one of the dishes in the dishwasher in order to tell their story of that object, or have kids put on their magical “driving hats” and describe how the hat looks, feels and what it might do! All these ideas can be shifted into Jewish contexts. The author also includes a section called “Who Towed Noah’s Ark? Bringing Bible Stories to Life,” in which she describes ways to encourage children to enjoy Bible stories and develop personal *midrashim*.

-Reviewed by Melissa Bernstein, Curriculum Associate



New Handbook for Storytellers: With Stories, Poems, Magic and More, by Caroline Bauer Feller, illustrated by Lynn Gates Bredeson (Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 1993).

A treasure trove of practical advice, ideas, and inspiration for telling stories to people of every age, using traditional sources such as folklore. This book also introduces multimedia storytelling with puppets, flannel boards, magic and music.

Storytelling Time: Tips, Techniques, and Tools for Story Time. Monday Morning Books, 1995, VHS, color, 50 minutes.

A preschool teacher presents many different ways to engage young children in stories and to create literacy rich classrooms with books, puppets, musical instruments, and an amazing array of easy-to-make storytelling “props.”



Storytelling: Learning and Sharing. Coyote Creek Productions, 1995, VHS, color, 45 minutes. An experienced teacher and storyteller demonstrates ways to include storytelling in the curriculum and offers techniques for finding, learning, and sharing stories with children and teens.

Storytelling with Caroline Feller Bauer. H.W. Wilson, 1986, VHS, color, 28 minutes.

An accomplished storyteller discusses the purpose of storytelling and demonstrates techniques for telling stories, including setting the stage, finding stories, practicing and presenting the story.

-Reviewed by Linda R. Silver, JECC Librarian

From the Teacher Center

The Teacher Center has numerous “Big Books” for teachers and students. Younger students will be able to share in the storytelling as they say a familiar rhyme (*Queen Esther, Queen Esther, what do you see? I see ... looking at me*) or sing a familiar song. Older students can follow along as the teacher reads in Hebrew or English. The Teacher Center staff is available to help teachers transform personal favorites to written form, illustrations included.



-Ronna Fox and Marci Rogozen, Teacher Center Co-Directors