

Stories

The Art of Story Telling

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Story telling is an ancient and honored art. Story tellers entertained during the long dark hours before sleep arrived after the sun disappeared over the western horizon. But the story teller's job is more than just entertainment. Before the printed page appeared, story tellers provided cultural continuity, preserving the past to serve as guide through the future. Story tellers told tales of heroes to provide positive examples, the legends that held the tribe together and provided its identity, and the stories of foolish or evil beings to remind young and old the penalties for not living correctly. Even behavior too horrible to speak of directly, such as cannibalism, cowardice or death, could be examined through the mediation of a story.

Even today, books, magazines, radio, television and movies still have not replaced the story teller. None of these permanent, reproducible media are able to deliver a personal, individualized message with the impact of a well told story. Whether the purpose of a story is to set a mood, to entertain, to teach a lesson, to amuse or to scare, nothing works like a good story at the right moment. A story with an obvious message concerning the results of "another persons" misbehavior can deliver a warning and deterrent that a direct confrontation can not produce and the story will do so without hurting egos. A positive relationship can be maintained and, sometimes, even strengthened while still delivering an unwelcome message. This is the power of the story teller.

Not every story will fit every situation. The story teller needs to select a story which will meet the needs of the situation and then the story teller must tailor the story to fit the time available, the age of the audience, the location and the mood desired. A good story choice will capture the interest of the audience. Audience members will relate to a location, experience or emotion that they share in common with the story teller and will suspend disbelief long enough to be drawn into the story as it unfolds. Good stories build to a climax with a beginning, a middle and an end. The elements of the story revealed in each section will lead to the next. Predicaments and solutions will depend on the details of the story revealed in an earlier section. However, better stories may add a twist to make the ending unexpected and, therefore, more interesting. Scary stories should be matched to the age of the audience. A little feeling of fright as the story is told may be beneficial in learning how to deal with scary things, but the use of lingering fear that is carried away from the story is simply terrorizing a susceptible person and helps no one. It is the responsibility of the story teller to determine what is appropriate and not to abuse the audience's good faith.

Stories can come from nearly anywhere. Folk tales, myths, legends, history (especially local history), Indian stories, adventure yarns and other story tellers are all sources of inspiration. A short listing of collected stories is appended along with several examples of good stories. However, the best sources of stories for good story tellers are their own experiences. When inspiration and opportunity unite, a story is ready to be born.

No matter what the source, the best stories are those of which the story teller has some personal experience or knowledge. This can be combined with other sources and a little practice to produce the tale to be told. When personal experience is the base on which a story is built, the story will "ring true" to the audience and have a greater vitality. A dislike of insects crawling on your skin, an encounter with a wild animal or the memory of a weird noise experienced when you were home alone can each provide the experience or feeling that will form the basis of a story. The experience need only be a wee part of the story, but that can be enough.

When you have chosen a source from a book or another story teller, learn the story thoroughly before giving it publicly. Do not memorize the story! Memorize the outline and flow of the story. Take special note of key points,



events and names that the story hinges on. Also note where and how they fit in the narrative. If there are key phrases make sure you anchor them in your memory so they come out naturally where they should. Don't try to deliver a story verbatim, a story should be told in your own words. Make the story a part of you and then share that part with your audience. Live the story as you tell it.

And always remember that telling a story is like baking a cake. When you know the recipe, have all the right ingredients, and mix them together in the right amounts and order, the results will produce an appetite in your audience and will be welcomed by everyone. However, every cook eventually has a cake that falls flat and not every story will work for you. Don't be discouraged.

As you continue, you will find that telling a story is more than choosing the right words to say, it also involves establishing your presence. When you are the story teller, you are in control. Walk confidently forward to your place, stand, pause, relax, gather your thoughts and become part of your story as you build anticipation, wait for quiet and attention, and then and only then, quietly start your story. Try not to explain what you are about to do, instead choose a first sentence that will capture the audience's interest. Speak slowly in your normal voice, establish a tempo and a mood appropriate to your story. Use gestures as needed, but avoid gestures that distract from the story. Use your words and their visual images to carry the story and the audience along. Establish contact with your audience, watch their body language and responses. Use these to guide and pace your delivery. Live the story as you tell it.

Present the story

- Briefly to stay within the audience's attention span,
- Clearly to make them understand,
- Forcibly to keep their attention,
- Visibly to make them remember,
- Accurately to get your message across, and, most importantly,
- With enjoyment of your role as story teller.

All that is left now is for you to go out and try your hand at this ancient art.

Good luck and good story telling



Resources

1. Trail and Campfire Stories,
Julia M. Seton, Seton Village Press, Santa Fe, 1968.
2. Campfire Stories... Things That Go Bump in the Night (1983),
Campfire Tales...Ghoulies, Ghosties and Long-legged Beasties (1989),
Campfire Stories, Volume 3, More... Things That Go Bump in the Night (1995),
William Forgey, M.D., ICS Books Inc., Merrillville.
3. Wilderness Plots,
Scott R. Sanders, W. Morrow & Co., New York, 1983.
4. Favorite Scary Stories of American Children,
Richard & Judy Dockery Young, August House Publ., Little Rock, 1990.
5. Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark (1981),
More Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark (1984),
Alvin Schwartz, Harper Trophy Books, New York.
6. The Walking Trees,
Roberta Brown, August House Publ., Little Rock, 1991.
7. Ripsnorting Whoppers,
Rick Sowash, Gabriel's Horn Publ., Bowling Green, 1994.
8. Campfire Chillers,
E.M. Freeman, Globe Pequot Press, Chester, 1980.
9. Stories Around the Campfire,
Ray Harriot, Campfire Publ., Laurel, 1982.
10. Creative Campfires,
Douglas R. Bowen, Thorne Publ., Nampa, 1974.
11. Keepers of the Animals,
M.J. Caduto, Joseph Bruchac, Fulcrum Publ., Golden, 1991.
12. Iroquois Stories, Heroes and Heroines, Monsters and Magic,
Joseph Bruchac, Crossing Press, Freedom, 1985.
13. Return of the Sun,
Joseph Bruchac, Crossing Press, 1990.
14. Turtle Meat and Other Stories,
Joseph Bruchac, Holy Cow! Press, Duluth, 1992.
15. Folktales of the Native Americans - Retold for Our Times,
Dee Brown, Holt, New York, 1993.
16. The Hiawatha Legends,
H.R. Schoolcraft, Avery Color Studios, 1994.
17. Creative Storytelling - Choosing, Inventing and Sharing Tales for Children,
Jack Maquire, Yellow Moon Press, Cambridge, 1985.
18. Awakening the Hidden Storyteller,
Robin Moore, Shambala Publ., Boston, 1991.
19. National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling
PO Box 309
Jonesborough, Tenn. 37659
20. <http://www.macscouter.com/Stories>



Preparing to Tell a Story

Who is in the audience?

- Ages
- Number
- Common Experiences
- Group History

What is the setting?

- Indoors/ Outdoors
- Comfort Level - temperature, rain, etc.
- Lighting
- Special Features - camp fire, history, etc.
- Time of Day

What mood should the story set?

What is the goal of the story?

- Closing for campfire
- Preparation
- Entertainment - comedic, scary
- Teaching
- Reminder

What are the time constraints?

- Audience
- Place in Program

What resources are available?

- Stories in memory
- Day's Events
- Site History

Select your story and then prepare to give it.

- What is the story line?
- What modifications are needed for the story?
Place, time, characters
- What are the pivotal points of the story?
Key set-up, descriptive and action points and their order
- What are the opening and closing lines?

Become a part of the story and, then, live the story as you tell it.



Example Stories

Freddy Fish

Greater St. Louis Area Council

Freddy Fish and Sam Clam were the best of friends, and did everything together. One day, though, both perished in a freak mishap. Freddy Fish went to heaven, and immediately looked around for his best friend. Not finding him, he asked St. Peter where Sam was.

"Sorry, he didn't make it in."

"You mean he's down there?" asked Freddy.

"Yes."

"Well, I want to go see him."

"This is highly unorthodox," said St. Peter. "I'll ask the big guy."

Moments later St. Peter returned and said:

"You can go, but you can only stay for one hour."

"Great!" said Freddy, and grabbed his harp before anyone changed his or her minds. He went to the elevator, and went down. When the elevator doors opened, Freddy saw a huge sign:

SAM'S DISCOTHEQUE

He went in, and discovered that it was run by his old friend. They sat down and reminisced about old times, and had a few drinks. Time flew by, and when Freddy noticed his watch, he saw that he had fifteen seconds left to return. He jumped out of his chair, yelled a goodbye to Sam Clam, and raced to the elevator. The elevator doors opened in heaven with only one second to spare. St. Peter was standing there with a stopwatch.

"You just barely made it," said St. Peter.

"I know," panted Freddy, out of breath. "But I have to go back there!"

"What do you mean!?!?" asked an incredulous St. Peter.

So Freddy Fish say (*Groan*): "I left my harp in Sam Clam's Disco!"

Rap ... Rap ... Rap

As told by Richard and Judy Dockery Young

Shylock Bones was the greatest ghost detective of them all. There wasn't ever a mystery about a ghost that he couldn't solve-including this one. One fine day a lady came into Shylock Bones's office and said, "Help me, Mr. Bones, I am afraid my house is haunted."

Shylock Bones got out his big plaid hat and his big rubber boots and his big magnifying glass that made things look bigger, and off they went to the lady's house in the spookiest part of town. They went inside, and the lady said, "Listen!"

Shylock Bones listened. He heard something very far away in the big old house going,

"Rap ... rap ... rap!" Shylock frowned and said, "it may be a ghost, Ma'am. Never fear, my dear, Shylock Bones is here." And he went to work.

Shylock Bones searched the basement. "Rap ... rap ... rap!" he heard in the distance. He searched the first floor. "Rap ... rap ... rap!" It was a little louder. He went upstairs.

"Rap ... rap ... rap!" He searched all the bedrooms and looked under all the beds. He searched the bathroom and tried to look under the bathtub. He searched all the closets and looked inside all the shoes.

"Rap ... rap ... rap!" It sounded a little bit louder. He searched all the drawers and shook out all the pajamas and looked inside the toy chest. Then he turned to the lady, who had been following him. "Let's search the attic," he said.

They went out in the hall. They heard, "Rap ... rap ... rap!" It sounded louder than downstairs. The lady pulled on a rope and the ladder to the attic came down from the ceiling.



"Rap ... rap... rap!" It was definitely louder. They climbed up into the attic. Shylock got out his flashlight and his magnifying glass. He looked through his magnifying glass. Everything looked bigger, but that didn't help any.

"Rap ... rap ... rap!" It sounded nearby. They started searching the attic. They searched in the trunks and they searched in the old boxes. They searched in the old birdcage and they searched in the pickle barrel. Shylock Bones didn't ask why there was a pickle barrel in her attic.

"Rap ... rap ... rap!" They were getting closer. Shylock shined his flashlight on an old chest-of-drawers.

"Rap ... Rap ... Rap!" He opened the top drawer. Nothing.

"Rap ... Rap ... RAP!" He opened the second drawer. Nothing!

"Rap ... RAP ... RAP!" He opened the third drawer. Still nothing!"

"RAP ... RAP .. RAP!" He opened the bottom drawer. And there it was! A sheet of WRAPPING PAPER!

Stop the Coughin'

As told by Richard and Judy Dockery Young

Once upon a time, a long time ago, there was a country boy who went to town to see the sights. He didn't have much money, so he couldn't stay in a hotel. He decided to sleep where no one would bother him: he went to sleep in the cemetery.

In the middle of the night, he woke up when something bumped him on the foot. He looked up, and there was a shiny rosewood coffin. He got up and moved. The coffin moved, too. He moved a little further. The coffin moved a little further. He got up and started to run. The coffin floated up into the air and started to follow him.

He ran out the gate of the graveyard. The coffin followed him. He ran across the flower

bed, trampling the flowers. The coffin came, too. He ran through the poultry yard and scared all the chickens. The coffin scared them, too.

He ran through the park and knocked over a picnic table. The coffin knocked one over, too. He ran through the stable and scared all the horses. The coffin scared the horses, too.

He ran through the grocery store and pushed over the cracker barrel. The coffin pushed one over, too.

He jumped through the back window and broke the window out. The coffin broke a window out, too.

He ran into the drug store and there it all ended.

He opened a box and ate some cough drops ... and stopped the coughin'.

The Indian Chief's Wait

As told by Doc Forgey

There is a legend about a great Cherokee Indian Chief who lived many years ago in what is now called the Great Smokey Mountains. He had led his people wisely for many years, through many troubled times, and then finally in a time of great plenty. But he was growing old and knew that it would soon be time to find his replacement as War Chief over all of the Cherokee.

He had a nephew named Failing Rock who had found great favor with him. The young man was clever, he was strong and skilled, perhaps as important, he was kind and considerate. But he was an unproven brave who had never been tested in battle, he had no credentials that would allow the chief to place him above any of the other young warriors without drawing criticism that he was simply choosing his nephew.

The old chief decided he would design a test for all of the warriors. He knew that his nephew would try hard to win the War Chief position and that he would probably have the best chance of anyone, if a fair test could be arranged.

He meditated long and hard about what sort of test he should conduct. He wanted it to test all of the skill, stamina, drive, and ability of each of the warriors volunteering for it. Finally, he decided upon a plan.

He assembled all of the warriors one spring day on a bluff looking out over the mountains stretching towards the west. With his back to the west, he addressed the assembled warriors: "You braves are among the best that our nation



has ever reared. From among your number your next War Chief will be chosen. Who it will be is up to you, for I am challenging you to a test."

"This test has no end, but each of you must decide when you have had enough. It will require all of your skills. Perhaps you will learn many things and see much during your test. What I command for you to do is to travel west, beyond the distance that any of us has ever gone. See what wonders there are and bring us back a totem so that we may see how far you have gone. He who can go the furthest and who can return, he shall I name the War Chief of the Cherokee."

The braves painted themselves as if for a war party, took their hunting equipment, and each left on his separate way - towards the unknown west.

Several months passed and the first of the braves started returning. This brave brought leaves from western Tennessee and tales of encounters with their neighboring tribes. Finally a brave came back with the skin of a channel catfish and the story of having seen a great river, the Mississippi. But the old chief sat by the edge of the bluff, watching with great expectation for his nephew.

Fall turned to winter and another of the great braves returned. He brought the skin of an animal they had never seen, a prairie dog, and told tales of grass lands that stretched as far as the eyes could see. He had many adventures with tribes along the way and had survived by his great skill and cunning. The members of the tribe thought that surely the chief would pick him as his replacement. But still the old chief sat by the edge of the bluff, watching for his nephew.

Winter came with a fury and the tribe worried about the old chief's health. He sat bundled in heavy robes, staring into the drifting snow clouds, watching always for his nephew.

Out of a storm one day a figure approached. It was another of the braves who had stories to tell of another and greater mountain range to the west. That which we now call the Rocky Mountains. He had stories of tremendous numbers of beaver in the streams, of magnificent elk, and he brought back the teeth of a grizzly bear.

Surely no one could go further than that! The tribe expected this brave to be named War Chief. But the old chief refused to give up his hope. He continued to sit by the bluff's edge, watching for his nephew.

An entire summer passed and the tribe grew impatient. They wanted the failing chief to pass this title on to a younger and more powerful warrior. Had not one such warrior distinguished himself far beyond the others and lived to tell the tales of great and distant lands? But the chief was steadfast in his hope for his nephew's return, so he watched from the bluff for a distant glimmer of his homecoming.

The tribe would have said more, but the old chief was dearly loved, and they did not want to disturb him in his sorrow. Finally even he had to admit that his nephew may have been killed or otherwise prevented from returning to them. He named the last of the returning warriors as the new War Chief, but he vowed to keep up the vigil on the bluff, watching for his nephew -- never entirely giving up hope.

The old chief's health failed during the following winter. As he lay dying, the members of his tribe drew around him, mournful because of his condition. The new War Chief cradled him in his arms. With his dying breath, the old chief asked for a last request, that the tribe swear him an oath. The new War Chief, speaking for the entire tribe, made his vow.

The old chief made them swear that from that day on they should keep a vigil, watching for his nephew. The War Chief and the people, in respect for this great chief whom they loved so much, swore that they would.

And that is the reason, that to this very day, as one drives through the Great Smokey Mountains, one sees signs everywhere reminding us all to "Watch for Falling Rock."



The Story of La Cucaracha Mine

As told by Doc Forgey

Not so many years ago there was a group of young men, a little older than you boys, who were in college. They developed a hobby, and that hobby was to try and find buried treasure. They felt that the best way of doing that was to learn Spanish. Not regular Spanish, but the old Spanish, the Spanish spoken by the conquistadores. These ancient soldiers had captured the Indians of Central America -- the Inca, the Mayan, the Aztec. Stealing their gold and other treasures, they would bring it back to Spain in their galleons. They kept meticulous records because this gold was the property of the king. The instant they laid their hands on it, it was considered the king's property. So they kept very good track of it -- their lives were forfeit were they to lose their accounting of these treasures.

In Spain at the Alhambra, the old royal castle where these records were sent, there are piles of ancient documents which are old records of the gold shipments. The boys felt that within those archives there could be some secret that might let them find a lost treasure. Indeed they studied these records carefully. They went over there during the summer and spent weeks and weeks poring over all sorts of these ancient journals. They had explained to the officials that they were there for academic purposes and therefore they were allowed access to the archives to help their studies.

One summer they found it. There was a record of a mine, a very rich mine, located in a province that today is in southern Mexico. The Spaniards were running it with Indian slave labor and getting tremendous quantities of gold. Year after year the gold was being shipped back to Spain, when suddenly ... it stopped!

Something mysterious had happened. There was no more gold from this area.

Several things could have happened. The Indians could have mutinied and actually killed off the guards. But if that were to have happened, the Spaniards would have sent more guards and an army detail to restore order, for this was a very wealthy mine. So that could not have been it. A disease could have struck killing off everyone in that area. But again, with that much value to this mine, surely the mine would have been reopened regardless of the cost.

Something mysterious had happened to have caused this whole operation to have just closed down. The name given to the mine was: "La Cucaracha".

The three young friends took all of the money that they had and formed an expedition to go down deep into the jungles of lower Mexico. They had an approximate location from the old Spanish name of the district, and so they went to find La Cucaracha.

They went to small towns in the highlands on the jungle edge to see if they could get any clue about where some mysterious things may have occurred. In one town there was a bar with an old man there -- he did not know anything about La Cucaracha, but he said: "You know, there is an Indian legend about a mine called, La Antigua, in the back country. It means "The Old One. "

That was the closest of anything they had come upon, the only thing that they had to go with, it certainly sounded mysterious. Maybe the Indians had a different name for the mine than the Spanish Conquistadores. They asked the old man to take them to La Antigua and they headed off into the jungles on their quest.

They cut their way through the thick underbrush, SLASHING their way through the foliage, and finally after they had gotten way out in the jungles they found a mysterious shaft. This shaft HAD to be man made. It was cut out of solid rock, a shaft that just disappeared into the depths of the bedrock of the earth.

They had to find out what was at the bottom of this pit. They dropped a rock down it ... they could hear nothing. So they rigged up a wench, and one of the guys climbed into a parachute harness. The Indians working with his two friends would lower him into the shaft.

He had a head light on. Soon he was below the surface of the ground and the darkness of the musty pit closed in around him. As he was being lowered further and further into the shaft, the rope started to slowly spin around. He slowly twirled around and around as he went down deeper and deeper. Pretty soon he could see no light from the top of the shaft at all. There was just a tiny light way up above as he was being lowered into that shaft.

As he was being lowered deeper and deeper, he noticed that the walls were turning a rusty brown color. As he went further down he thought that maybe he could see the bottom of this mine shaft. But he was spinning faster and faster, too fast to clearly make out what was below.



He needed to slow down, so he reached his leg way out to touch the wall of the mine shaft to stop the rapid spinning. As he did this, while spinning around, his foot literally gouged into the wall of the shaft -- suddenly he realized what that rust color was. Thousands, millions of cockroaches had climbed up the side of the shaft -- indeed as he looked further down he could see that the bottom of the shaft -- the place to which he was being lowered -- was a teeming mass of cockroaches. He was being lowered to his death, he was about to be buried alive by cockroaches!

AAAUUUGGGHHH! He shouted as loud as he could, hoping his friends would hear him and stop lowering him into that ocean of writhing insects.

His foot had dislodged the cockroaches on the walls and millions came cascading down, some falling, thousands flying. A suffocating mass of whirling wings. Trying to get his breath for a second scream he choked on a mouth full of the vile insects. They were in his ears, in his nose. his throat gagged with wriggling, struggling insects. He was suffocating, he was gagging - trying to scream and vomit at the same time.

He had learned the dread secret of La Cucaracha mine. And now was coming closer to the bottom of this pit -- closer to being buried alive in a mountain of cockroaches. All light from his helmet obscured by the massive number of insects, he knew he was closer and closer to the bottom of the shaft. THOUSANDS, AND THOUSANDS OF THE ROACHES POUNDED HIM. ON ALL SIDES. HE COULDN'T GET HIS BREATH. BUT HE HAD TO BREATHE! Desperately he struggled for air.

They were down his shirt, swarming around his head, thousands, and thousands of them.

HELP!!!! His screams were muffled by the millions of whirling cockroaches. He shouted again, and he shouted again -desperate for help amongst this nightmare of cockroaches. Cascading cockroaches were burying him alive!

Suddenly ... he jerked to a stop!

He felt himself being raised, raised as rapidly as he knew his friends could. Once on the surface, he lay gagging and choking - trying to breathe. His friends on the surface had realized something was wrong. Thousands of cockroaches suddenly began swarming out of the entrance to the shaft, and when they saw that they stopped lowering him and immediately tried to get their friend out of there. They now all knew the secret of La Cucaracha!

Subsequently the village people made certain that the shaft was boarded up so that never again would somebody be lowered into the sprawling mass of insects that had taken over La Cucaracha mine.

The Lost Hunter

As told by Doc Forgey

The Adirondacks has many beautiful places to camp. It is an old, and in many places a wild area. There have been many stories that have come from the Adirondack Mountains. This particular story, told in the Pennsylvania region, is a story of a lost hunter.

One weekend a group of guys went hunting, back into the remote hills of the Adirondacks. In that country there are plenty of deer and they all hoped one of them would be lucky enough to get one for their families. It was a very cold day, one threatening to snow. They had permission to use a cabin from its owner, so they felt they would be safe in case of a storm.

At about the time that they arrived at the cabin, a very light snow had, indeed, already begun to fall. The one essential thing was to be able to keep warm in that cabin. They opened the door and found that everything was intact, no damage had been done. The cabin had a nice Franklin stove to one side of the room which looked sturdy and which should maintain a good, warm glow throughout the night.

There was one problem which they now discovered. There was no firewood where the wood pile should have been located. The previous occupant of the building had failed to cut firewood and replace what he had burned. There was not a stick to be found. Obviously they were going to have to get out in the few remaining moments of day light and gather some wood real fast. Darkness was coming as well as the possibility of an approaching storm. With snow clouds formed overhead, darkness would indeed come early.

They scattered out around the cabin, each man trying to find some wood. If a cabin has been built for any length of time, generally it means that all of the readily available wood suitable for burning in that area has been used. All of the easily gathered wood has been picked up or pulled off of trees already. One has to then go further



and further away to get a firewood supply. Ana that was just the case for these men. There was no wood that they could use right near the cabin and they had to spread out further and further to find the wood that they so desperately needed.

There was one man. John Butler, who did wander and wander. He strayed down into a little valley ravine where he hoped to find downed squaw wood to burn. The tricky part about wandering in an area which is cut up into ravines, ridges, and valleys is that you may feel you know where you are, but by climbing over a ridge into a wrong, ravine you can easily be lead into a maze of wrong ridges and your directions can easily become very twisted and confusing. You can end up not heading in the direction that you thought you were going. This, indeed, proved to be the fate of John Butler. For on this cold, stormy evening he disappeared into the night.

The snow was cascading down worse and worse. The darkness settled in, which combined with the swirling snow, made visibility virtually zero. His friends returned back to the cabin fairly soon for they realized how dangerous it was to be out at night in a snow storm, especially in territory that they really weren't familiar with. But John Butler had been caught, extending himself out too far, and was trapped in a swirling snow storm in the Adirondacks in Pennsylvania.

His friends were really quite concerned about him. They waited impatiently for him to appear. When he didn't return after about 2 hours, they felt they would have to get out there and look for him. It would take too long to get into town, the road may not be passable, and his tracks would certainly disappear if they waited much longer. The temperature was dropping and John could be getting into trouble, maybe he was even injured!

They took the lanterns that they had brought and placed kerosene lights in the cabin's two windows. They tried to follow what they thought might be his trail, each person trying to determine who had made the marks that they were following, trying to determine if they were following the trail of the lost hunter.

It became quite apparent after struggling in a fiercer and fiercer blizzard that it would be absolutely impossible to find him that night. The trails were becoming rapidly obscured. The weather was so bad, that the best they could do was to return to the cabin and try to survive the storm themselves. They had only found a few scraps of wood, so they didn't have a very pleasant night of it. But huddled there together, listening to the gale winds tearing at the cabin and the trees groaning outside, they feared for their friend's life.

When morning came, the snow continued. Two of the men took their 4-wheel drive vehicle and drove into town to get the sheriff who alerted the local Search and Rescue team. The rescue team soon congregated at the cabin site deep in the woods. They had brought their tracking dogs, food, clothing, and heaters to establish a base camp for the search operation .

They struck out looking for him. The dogs proved useless in the confusion of tracks and the blowing snow drifts. The search drug on for days. Ridges were combed. Valleys and ravines were checked. They gave up all hope of finding him alive. Indeed, when a person is lost in a driving snow storm, frequently their body will be covered so well that it might not be found until after the Spring thaw.

But the story of John Butler does not end there. While this area is very remote, it is still active with camping and hiking. A scout camp was located only thirty miles away and the Appalachian trail passes through a neighboring section of land. The next fall a group of scouts reported an unusual occurrence.

Members of Troop 91 from Colfield had left the scout camp 3 days before on a fifty mile hike. The evening of their third day, three members of the troop were sleeping somewhat apart from the others, but near the cooking fire embers left over from supper. Harold Johnson, a Patrol Leader, was asleep in the area that had been the wood pile. Had been, I said, because all of the fire wood had been consumed cooking supper and for general warmth and campfire fun afterward. After hiking all day one tends to be tired, very tired. Yet, in the middle of the night John sensed something wrong and he just popped awake...

And he wished that he hadn't!

Standing next to him he saw a man, and the man was holding an axe! In fact, it appeared to be his troop's axe. John broke out in a cold sweat, his eyes barely open, peeking at what the man was going to do next.

Suddenly the man moved, WHAM! QUICK AS A FLASH THE AXE SLAMMED INTO THE TREE NEAR HIS HEAD!

John opened his eyes wide in terror ... but the man was gone!



He bolted up out of his sleeping bag, paying no attention to the night's chill. He virtually landed on his two friends nearby, shaking them awake, telling them what he had seen. They fumbled for their flashlights and shined them around looking for any trace of the man John had just seen.

They did not see the man, but what they did see was a stack of firewood, left where they had laid their axe that night! Needless to say, the entire troop was awake within about 3 minutes with the guys looking for clues of this missing man. He vanished without a trace, no foot prints, nothing. Nothing but the stack of firewood and their axe stuck in the tree.

As the years went on, the stories of encounters with the Lost Hunter kept spreading out. The sightings started happening further and further away from the lonely cabin. People in nearby states started telling a story of a mysterious man visiting their campsite, of their finding firewood where none had been the night before.

It seemed that the ghost of this lost hunter was prowling around, just waiting, looking to find somebody who was impolite enough not to chop firewood to leave for people who might come afterwards, or perhaps lazy enough not to chop enough to have some there for emergencies -- or for people who had burned all of theirs up and did not have any left in case the weather became bad or some problem developed. It became real important to everyone in that area to remember one of the basic courtesies and rules of camping -- to plan ahead, to make sure that there was firewood available and to make sure that the campsite was left in better shape than when they first found it.

If you are out camping and the weather is bad, particularly as a snow storm swirls in, be sure that you have plenty of firewood, both for yourself or for others that might follow you. Campers who do not obtain enough firewood are apt to have a visit in the middle of the night from the Lost Hunter!

Border War

In a fashion unbecoming to a man in his position, Governor Mason of Michigan marched his troops upon Toledo, where they robbed melon patches and chicken coops, and kicked in the door of the house belonging to Major Stickney, whom they spirited away as prisoner of war. This proved to be a mistake, since Stickney's wife pursued the Michigan force back across the border, catching up with them at a ford of the Raisin River, where she delivered the Governor in the presence of his troops' a tongue-lashing which he would still remember wincingly in his old age.

The prisoner of war was returned. But Mrs. Stickney refused to budge until the Governor had paid her \$27.13 in compensation to the people of Toledo for melons stolen and nerve-racked chickens.

Hearing of the skirmish, Governor Lucas of Ohio called out his own troops, crossed the border at Toledo and ransacked the whiskey still of Temperance, taking as prisoner Colonel Vinton, a doddering veteran of the Revolution. There was nothing doddering about Mrs. Vinton, however, who followed the Governor back into Ohio and, not content to deliver a tongue-lashing, crept upon him in the night and stabbed him in the thigh with a paring knife.

That, for all practical purposes, ended the war. Ambassadors duly arrived from Washington to negotiate matters. Both governors were anxious to avoid future raids, with or without prisoners of war. Land was swapped between Michigan and Ohio, entire creek beds and villages changed statehood overnight.

In three days the new border was drawn straight as a prairie railroad track, and the troops retired to their farms, the ambassadors to Washington. Afterward Mrs. Vinton hugged Mrs. Stickney, advising her to use a paring knife next time, because it saves breath.



Audience Participation Stories

There are many different kinds of audience participation stunts which can serve to get the whole audience involved in doing something together. Some kinds serve the purpose of letting the people stand and take a stretch by going through motions under the direction of a leader.

Others are in the form of a story, with either worthwhile points or just plain fun. In this type of stunt, the audience is usually divided into groups which respond to a key word read by the leader. Sometimes these stunts can be adapted into skits which can be performed by the boys.

Applause stunts are short and snappy and lots of fun for everyone. There are many different ones which can be adapted to fit the monthly theme.

Sometimes rounds and other songs are used as audience participation stunts. Whichever type of audience participation stunt you plan to use, remember that the key word is involvement. The more people who are involved, the more fun it will be for everyone. These stunts add variety, action and fun to den and pack meetings.

One of your best resources for audience participation stunts is Group Meeting Sparklers.

"The pack meeting seemed to drag that night, and people were tiring fast; The Cubmaster sensed the feeling and hoped through the meeting he'd last. Then came a lull in the meeting; the Cubmaster wiped sweat from his brow, if only he could perk things up, he sure wished that he knew how. Then suddenly quite like magic his assistant appeared on the stage. He held a book called Sparklers; opened to a certain page. With enthusiasm he announced that the whole audience would help out; He divided them into groups, and tested each one for their shout. Before they knew what was happening, they all joined in the fun; each group was doing their best to out-do the other one. They listened as the leader read, waiting to hear their key word; the fun that they were having could now be seen and heard. Right then and there the meeting perked up; things moved along in style. And the Cubmaster heard people murmur, "Best meeting we've had in a while." So when your meeting begins to lag, be prepared with something to do which will involve all the audience, whose enjoyment depends on you. Remember the word involvement - it's a very special key ... and your meetings will always be lots of fun ... as fun as they can be.



The Brutal Miner

(Each character in the skit has a distinctive sound to make when the Narrator says their name during the reading of the skit. The Narrator should pause, after reading the name of each character so they can make their sound and for audience reaction.)

Brutal Miner	Grrrrrrrrrr
Tired Wife	Oh dear.
Lazy Son	(Yawning sound)
Young Daughter	(Giggles)
Beautiful Daughter	"Ahhhhh"
Handsome Harry	Ah Ha !
Automobile	Honk Honk
Cat	Meow

Narrator:

Once upon a time in the far west, there lived a BRUTAL MINER, who had a TIRED WIFE, a LAZY SON, a giggling YOUNG DAUGHTER, and a BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER. On the other side of the mountain lived HANDSOME HARRY. This young man drove his AUTOMOBILE over the mountains and carried mail to the BRUTAL MINER.

One day, the TIRED WIFE was cleaning the house. The BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER was helping her. The YOUNG DAUGHTER was playing with the CAT on the steps and the LAZY SON was sleeping. The BRUTAL MINER came out and kicked the CAT. The TIRED WIFE and the BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER rushed out with brooms and hit the BRUTAL MINER, but this did not bother him. He grabbed the TIRED WIFE by one arm and the BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER by the other and shoved them into the house. The YOUNG DAUGHTER ran away with the CAT.

Just then, HANDSOME HARRY drove up in his AUTOMOBILE and saw the BRUTAL MINER beating the TIRED WIFE and the BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER. HANDSOME HARRY rushed to the rescue and grabbed the BRUTAL MINER and threw him down the mine shaft. The BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER flew into the waiting arms of HANDSOME HARRY, while the TIRED WIFE and the YOUNG DAUGHTER watched with enthusiasm. The LAZY SON slept on.

HANDSOME HARRY took the BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER in his AUTOMOBILE to the little church in the wildwood and they lived happily every after.



A Space Adventure

(revised slightly)

SPACE: "Way Out There" (Point ahead moving finger from left to right)

ASTRONAUTS: "Onward and Upward" (Stand up and thrust arm toward the sky)

In the whole Universe there's an enormous place,
Which we all refer too as merely as **SPACE**.
ASTRONAUTS spend many hours untold.
Searching that **SPACE** where mysteries unfold
They bring back dust and rocks galore.
Each **ASTRONAUT** striving to always learn more.
They circle around for days in **SPACE**
Keeping up such a strenuous pace.
Our country explored **SPACE** and then very soon.
Our **ASTRONAUTS** landed upon the far away moon.
Oh what a thrill as we witnessed the sight,
As **ASTRONAUTS** landed upon the far away moon.
Oh what a thrill as we witnessed the sight,
As **ASTRONAUTS** raised our flag on that first moon flight.
Right out there through outer **SPACE**.
Upon the moon stands our flag in place.
Just where the **ASTRONAUTS** left it that day.
As a part in history they did play.
One fact discovered which story writers weren't pleased
Was that the moon is not really made of green cheese.
So way out in **SPACE** when you see the man in the moon.
Remember the **ASTRONAUTS** proved we couldn't eat him at noon!



Johnny Fixes It Good!

The characters and their sounds are:

Johnny: "I can fix it!"
Dad: "Be careful, son."
Wrench: "Oh Nuts!"
Screwdriver: "Straight or Phillips?"
Bike: "Drrrinnngggg, Drrrinnngggg"
Pliers: "Hold me tight!"

Johnny had a problem. His bike was broken. Now Johnny and his dog, Ralph, could not ride to the park to play with his friends. But Johnny, being a very smart Cub Scout, knew how to fix the bike. However, he needed a box-end wrench, a pair of pliers, and a screwdriver. So he asked his dad if he could borrow a box-end wrench, a pair of pliers, and a screwdriver. His dad said "Sure, but make sure you take care of the box-end wrench, pliers, and screwdriver and return them as soon as you're finished. "I will Dad," said Johnny. So Johnny and Ralph went into the back yard to fix his bike with the box-end wrench, pliers, and screwdriver. Since Johnny knew how to use a box-end wrench, a pair of pliers, and a screwdriver, bike was soon fixed and ready to ride. Ralph helped all he could. Johnny took a quick spin to make sure everything was alright and then he called Ralph to go with him to the park. "Oh," said Johnny. "I'd better return these tools to Dad before we go." But when he reached for the tools, the pliers and screwdriver were there but the pliers were missing. "Oh no! What would Dad think?" said Johnny. He looked all around for the pliers. He looked in the bushes, but no pliers! He looked all over the yard, but no pliers! Finally, he noticed Ralph digging in the garden. Johnny went over to Ralph and there were the pliers in his bone hole. So the pliers were found. And Johnny was able to return the box-end wrench, the pliers, and the screwdriver to his Dad. Everyone was happy the bike was all fixed-except Ralph!



The Case of the Missing Watson

From the Indians Nation Council

Sherlock Holmes	"The Game is afoot! "
Dr. Watson	"Brilliant Holmes "
Detective	" I Spy! "
Investigate	"Elementary "
Old Soldiers	"Yes, Sir! Yes, Sir! "

Ever wonder how **Dr. Watson** and **Sherlock Holmes** got together? They were the best detective team that ever **investigated** anything. You remember all the stories **Dr. Watson** chronicled or wrote? **Sherlock Holmes** was a consulting detective and poor old **Dr. Watson** wrote stories about their investigations. The way I heard their story went something like this:

One foggy morning in old London town **Sherlock Holmes** went to the corner newsstand on Baker Street to investigate the news to see if there were any advertisements for jobs for a Consulting **Detective**. Well, low and behold! There was one that just jumped off the page, literally!! (That's a word use in literature). Anyway, somebody needed **Sherlock Holmes** to **investigate** the disappearance of a local Doctor.

Sherlock Holmes hurried 'round to the address listed in the paper to detect if there were possibilities to **investigate** this disappearing act done by a **Dr. Watson**. When he reached the structure he found that the ad had been placed by the landlady/housekeeper of an **Old Soldiers'** home. A really boring place, wherein resided a group of **Old Soldiers** from the Boer War. In chatting with the **Old Soldiers** there and the landlady/housekeeper he was really investigating the activities of **Dr. Watson**. From the information he got from the **Old Soldiers** and the landlady/housekeeper, Mrs. Jones-Ridley, he detected that investigating this case of the missing **Dr. Watson** could turn out to be the best chance for **Sherlock Holmes** to make a NAME for himself.

The game was now officially "afoot"; he put his foot on the sidewalk and started to do what a **detective** always does, put the pieces together. **Sherlock Holmes** had gathered all of this:

- Item 1. **Dr. Watson** was an "Old Soldier".
- Item 2. He lived in a very boring place with others from the Boer War.
- Item 3. Not much went on there.
- Item 4. **Dr. Watson** liked to tell stories, mostly about that war.
- Item 5. **Dr. Watson** had run out of new stories and was very bored!

Elementary!! He shouted for all in the street to hear and **Sherlock Holmes** hailed a hansom cab (that's a horsedrawn taxicab in England). He called to the driver to take him to the nearest library to investigate the disappearance of **Dr. Watson**.

Upon reaching the library, **Sherlock Holmes** strolled through the bookcases called stacks to find **Dr. Watson**. The **Old Soldier** was trying to find new material to talk about at the **Old Soldier** home. The case was solved! The investigation was a success!! And **Sherlock Holmes** and **Dr. Watson** were forever to be partners in solving mysteries and writing stories that you can read today.



Tommy Joins A Cub Scout Pack

Greater St. Louis Area Council

Cubmaster: Tonight, I would like to tell you a story about a boy named Tommy and how he became a Cub Scout. I need your help to tell this story. Would you supply a part of the story by being one of it's characters, when you hear the name of your character, call out your part.

Characters:

Tommy or Tiger Cubs -	"Go Tigers"
Bobcats -	"Give a Roar"
Wolfs -	"Give a Howl"
Bears -	"Give a Growl"
Webelos -	"A Scoutin' we will go"
Mother, Father or Parents -	"That's my son"
All Cub Scouts -	"We'll Do Our Best"

Our story begins when Tommy started back to school after a summer of fun. One day his teacher passed out notes saying, "Be a Tiger Cub." All first grade boys and their Parents are invited to come to a meeting to hear about this Scouting Program.

He went to the meeting with his Mother and they learned that Tiger Cubs, BSA was a Scouting program planned especially for boys in the first grade. The lady at the meeting said the Tiger Cubs was not like Cub Scouts where the boys worked on advancement, starting as Bobcats and working to earn their Wolf Badge, moving on to the Bear Book and earning the Badge and then becoming Webelos. As Tiger Cubs, they would team with their Mother or Father to form a Tiger Cub den. The boys and their adult partners work together on activities called "Big Ideas": and once a month one of the family teams would plan a special activity for the whole group.

She said that their Tiger Cub Den would meet with the Cub Scout Pack for special events, also would be invited to the Blue and Gold Banquet and when they moved on to become Cubs, there would be a special graduation ceremony at the Pack Meeting. Each month, the Tiger Cub Den did something special and Tommy and his Mother would do the special things suggested in their "Family Activity Book." One month the Tiger Cub Den used the "Discover Nature and Energy" Big Idea and visited a Veterinarian in the community. At home they fed the birds and looked at the stars as part of that Big Idea. Each time they did an activity, he put a Tiger Cub sticker on his Activity Chart. February came and the Tiger Cub Den received invitations to the Pack's Blue and Gold Dinner. Each family in the Tiger Cub Den was invited to be guests of Den Two and he had a chance to meet the boys in the Den. Joe and Bill were still Bobcats but had completed the Wolf requirements and would get their badges at the dinner. Jerry and George were working on the Bear book; Jim and John would soon become Webelos. The Den made his family feel very welcome and Tommy knew that he wanted to be a Cub Scout.

As the meeting progressed he watched all of the Cub Scouts and their Parents go forward to receive their awards. The Cubs were presented with their Badges and Arrow Points. One Webelos Scout received his Arrow of Light. He was so proud. Two boys joined the Pack and received their Bobcat Badges. Tommy could hardly wait for the time when he would stand in front of the Pack and become a Cub Scout.

After the Blue and Gold, the Tiger Cub Den met each month as usual. The boys talked about the Blue and Gold, the fun they had, and when they would become Cub Scouts. They were becoming anxious.

One day, when Tommy came home from school, his Mother had great news for him. Mr. Smith, the Cubmaster, was coming over to talk to them about his graduation into the Pack. He could hardly eat his supper.

When Mr. Smith arrived, he talked to both of his folks about Cub Scouts and how the Parents of the boys in the Pack were the leaders. He said, that when Tommy became a Cub Scout the Pack would count on them for support, too. His Mother said that she had enjoyed working with the Tiger Cubs and that she looked forward to Cub Scouts. His Dad said that Scouting had become a part of the family and that he would be glad to help, too.

So the Big Day came, the Tiger Cub Den stood before the Pack, each boy was welcomed with his family to Cub Scouting and at last Tommy was a Cub Scout. He was ready to venture forward on the next step in his Scouting Adventure.



Thanksgiving Sparkler

San Francisco Bay Area Council

Father - Stand up and say "When I was your age, son"

Car - Stand up and say "Chuga, chuga, chuga"

Farmer - Stand up and put hands in suspenders and say "Where's my horse?"

Turkey - Stand up and say "Gobble, gobble, gobble"

Once upon a time, just before Thanksgiving a FATHER, a mother and Cub Scout climbed into the family CAR and drove into the country. They were looking for a FARMER with a TURKEY that they could buy for their Thanksgiving dinner. As they drove down the road in their CAR, they saw a FARMER standing in a yard with a TURKEY.

Turning into the yard, the FATHER stopped the CAR near the FARMER and the TURKEY. They all got out of the CAR and the FATHER purchased the TURKEY from the FARMER. "Now, if you will remove the TURKEY'S head, we will get into the CAR and drive home," said the FATHER to the FARMER.

As the FATHER the mother and the Cub Scout were riding home in the CAR an amazing thing happened! The TURKEY, although its head had been removed by the FARMER, began to speak! "Please don't eat me for Thanksgiving," the TURKEY pleaded. "I will make a fine pet for you," he told the Cub Scout. The FATHER, the mother and the Cub Scout talked about this astounding request as they rode home in the CAR.

And so it happened that the TURKEY joined the FATHER, the mother and the Cub Scout in their Thanksgiving dinner of hamburgers and French-fries.

The Turkey became a very good pet, as it did not chase CARS, cats or fire hydrants. The FATHER enrolled the Turkey at college as everyone know, with a good education, it is much easier to get a head . . .

Moaners and Groaners Stunt

Indian Nations Council

Divide the audience into two groups, Moaners and Groaners, have them practice sounds appropriate to their names. Then ask them to sound off when they hear their word as you read this story:

Moaner and Groaner were two little ghosts,

Who spent all their time with outrageous boasts.

If Moaner told Groaner a tale that was tall,

Groaner would not let that faze him at all.

For whatever Moaner said, Groaner said more,

And that made Moaner so mad he went through the door.

Left Groaner alone, and did he feel sorry?

He cried till he died, and thus ends my story of

Moaner and Groaner, two boasting ghosts,

Who died of an overdose of ghostly boasts.



Robinson Crusoe's Diary

Greater St. Louis Area Council

This is a nonsense game that never fails to crack them up - the sillier, the better! Names of objects are written on slips of paper and dropped into a container. As "Mr. Crusoe" reads his diary, each "sailor" takes turns drawing from the container to fill in the blanks.

Copy these phrases on slips of paper:

A ship A dove A bonfire

A big tree Dandelions A wild goat

30 cannibals A loud noise Some gunpowder

My tent A strong fence A chest of gold

A goatskin A pile of straw A piece of canvas

My fieldglasses All my belongings A table and chair

A cup of goat's milk The top of the hill

"This morning I woke up early and ate my breakfast, which consisted of _____ and _____. Afterward, I took my saw and hammer and built_____. Since I was shipwrecked and alone, I had to go hunting in the woods to see what I might have for lunch. I forgot my gun, so I had to capture_____ with my bare hands. I also tried to catch_____ to but could not run fast enough. I went home to my cave, sat down in_____ and ate my lunch. Since my clothes were all lost at sea, I decided to make myself something to wear. I made a pretty neat hat from and a coat out of _____. I decided to wrap my feet in_____. Suddenly, I heard a_____ and rushed out and climbed into_____. I looked through_____ just in case I might see_____. I didn't but there on the beach I saw_____ dancing in wild glee around_____. Running up the trail toward my hideout was_____ crying out and looking very frightened. I hid the poor thing behind_____. I then found my gun, loaded it with_____ and stood guard over_____. When it seemed safe, I got busy and built_____ all around. Then I finally lay down in my comfortable bed, made of_____, and slept soundly.





